

1. KHADI IN KATHIAWAD

Readers must be aware that in order to make the khadi activity more extensive and more popular a Committee has been set up. Shri Nanabhai has been appointed its President and Shri Nagardas Doshi is its Secretary. The money which was collected on the occasion of the *Rentia Jayanti*¹ and which I had deposited with Shri Narandas Gandhi has been given to the Committee.² I have received a report of this khadi activity for the period 1938 to 1941 entitled *Kathiawadna Khadikamno Heval*, published by Pandya Khadi Karyalaya, Chalala. The following paragraphs³ from that will give some idea of the khadi activity.

The number of spinners in 1938 was 150 which rose to 600 in 1941. In 1941 there were 500 caste Hindus, 18 Muslims and 12 Harijan spinners. In 1938 the wages given came to Rs. 3,481 while in 1941 the amount was Rs. 18,948. The monthly income of a spinner in 1938 was Rs. 4-12 while in 1941 it rose to Rs. 10. The weavers' wages increased from Rs. 12 to Rs. 30 and that of carders to Rs. 18 from Rs. 7.

The report is good. There is scope for raising the figures. The progress of the work is satisfactory. We can easily gauge the efforts of Shri Nagardas. But Kathiawad is a small province with a population of 26 lakhs. There is scope for much work. How can we increase the number of workers? In other words how can we make the work more interesting and attractive?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-6-1942

¹ Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Calendar

² *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 30-6-1942.

³ Not translated here. The report stated that the Chalala Khadi Karyalaya had become the headquarters for khadi production and sales centres in Kathiawar. There was no paid worker to carry On the routine office work, which was done by workers over and above their other activities.

2. RAJAJI

Although I retain the opinion I have expressed about my differences with Rajaji, and although I adhere to every word I have said and he has quoted, and although I reaffirm my opinion that my language taken in its context does not bear the interpretation Rajaji puts upon it. I do not propose henceforth to enter into any public controversy with him. I join him in hoping that some day I shall see the error of my views which he sees so clearly. But public controversy with close companions like Rajaji repels me. He has a new mission and he has need to speak.

SEVAGRAM, June 7, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

3. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 7, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

Nonsense. You are not fallen. These differences mean nothing. I have already written a note¹ for *H[arijan]* that I shall no longer enter into controversy with you. You must not feel dejected either. Therefore you should come here for rest, jokes and a renewal of strength and joy.

Your argument I do not understand. Come here and explain.

Tell me in whose name the houses should go. Better write to Kamalnayan.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2088

4. NO SALVATION WITHOUT SACRIFICE

Accounts pour in upon me from all quarters about the action of the authorities demanding evacuation without notice. Sometimes it is a zamindar who is to surrender his bungalow and sometimes it is a middle-class man who has to surrender his house with fans and

¹ *Vide* the preceding item

furniture for the use of the military. More often it is villagers or labourers who are called upon under promise of compensation to vacate their quarters. The condition of these people is piteous. They do not know where to go. To these I can only say, 'Do not move—and take the consequences. They cannot be forcibly ejected. Even if they are, their cry will be heard whereas newspaper articles will be of little avail.

SEVAGRAM, June 8, 1942

Harijan, 14-6-1942

5. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 8, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

Sushila comes here on 18th for a week. I think she has come first—nothing much among five candidates. Sushila says nothing about the place she has got.

I hope there is nothing serious with S.'s eyes.

J.L. came in yesterday. He slept in Sevagram, Maulana comes tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4130. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7439

6. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 8, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. Since there is already an agreement between us made long ago that you should consult me before taking up anything new, where is the need of a fresh one? You have assumed heavy responsibilities, and the work about Hindustani is not an easy one either. However, you must fulfil this responsibility. Do it as well as you can. You must categorically refuse to go anywhere else, whether it is to Vanasthali or Vedchhi or Ambala. If you cannot remember the decisions taken by you, you should ask either Amritlal or Saroj to remind you and to get them implemented.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10958

7. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM,

June 8¹, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I could read the whole of your letter only today. It did help me to understand your mind but it did not satisfy me. That is because the task which you seek to accomplish cannot be accomplished with what you intend doing. Many vaidyas have raised farms of the kind you want. No doubt you can improve upon them, but you cannot reform the vaidyas.

I offered to entrust my entire treatment to the vaidyas but I was disappointed. Lakshmipati wanted to settle here and made all the preparations but never turned up. I sent a patient to him whom he dismissed telling him that he was all right. The patient came back as ill as ever. I tried to lure you to come and settle down here and conduct experiments but there were difficulties in your way.

¹ Pyarelal Papers has "9".

Although I have said all this my blessings are with you. Your intentions are pure; may they bear fruit.

At present it is allopathy that commands enterprise, industry and knowledge. It is a developing science. It has many defects. Its pharmacopoeia is vast and yet very restricted. But it is systematic and so can draw upon whatever is special in Ayurveda. However, it is worth reflecting upon that if Ayurveda were to take what is special in allopathy the latter would be left with nothing but a few drugs.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
23 SAURASHTRA SOCIETY
AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C.W. 2921. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

8. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 8, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What you say about Ram Prakashji is true, but we should have the strength to assimilate such persons. Some work should be found for them. And if they cannot do it they should be clearly told that they cannot live in the Ashram. As to your first letter all I can say is that you should continue to do the work that you have been doing. I will write whenever you say. So long as you do not have confidence in Chi. it is better to keep quiet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4430; also S.N. 24481

9. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 9, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I am having long and pleasant chats with J. L. I have a journalist with me recommended by J. L. He leaves tomorrow. L. Fischer is his

name.

Khurshedbehn is still here. She has been looking after the guests. Maulana comes tonight.

Here is a letter from Benares. Perhaps you remember the thing.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4131. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7440

10. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 9, 1942

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. It is good the resolutions were passed. There is no harm in there having been amendments.

Jawaharlal stayed at the Ashram for two days. He has gone to Wardha today because the Maulana is coming. He will now be here for at least a day. We are having discussions.

S. has written to me in detail about you. In this way we often get unexpected help. He is a gentleman. Obtain the book regarding Juthabhai.

I have been told about Kamala Devi being appointed President. My congratulations to her.

Take care of your health. Why did you have bleeding from the nose ? Does it happen occasionally ? Your suggestions about the bulletin, etc. are good. Right now the conditions are not congenial. Let me see what can be done. This time it is likely to be a bitter fight. We are ready for anything that may happen.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11228. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

11. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
June 9, 1942

BABUJI,

I was delighted to have your letter. I had also received your book. I have even glanced through it.

I think what I am doing these days is the thing you want. Be it as

it may, I feel overwhelmed by your great effort. May God keep you with us for many many years for the sake of India, for the sake of the world.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BABUJI DR. BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAM
BANARAS

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

12. LETTER TO KRISHNACHNDRA

June 9, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

What kind of a letter have you sent me? I had thought that I could fearlessly write to you whatever I felt and you would read the right meaning in it. I did not write what I did because I had lost faith in you. I only feel that so long as you have no confidence in Chi. as manager you should dedicate to God whatever work you do and thus you will continue to be happy. In my view this is quite easy to see. But if you do not see it this way, you should tell me. There is no cause for you to feel unhappy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4424; also S.N. 24478

13. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 10, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note yesterday evening after prayer. I feel that sending for Krishna Varma¹ here will not help. It would be better to give him fifteen days. That will pay. You will soon be able to judge whether there was any improvement. If no improvement is observed, you need not stay. But it does appeal that you will not be able to judge before fifteen days. The earlier you go the better. Go today if

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Krishna Varma", 22-5-1942.

you can. You will have returned by the time Shriman arrives.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

A letter¹ for Varma is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10959

14. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 10, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

It is good that you are leaving for Bombay. Remember that you are going to Varma not only to gain something from him, if possible, but also to give him the benefit of your company. Restrain his bad habits. He talks too much. His language also is not always pure. Pull him up. He listens to criticism lovingly made and reforms himself too. Understand his remedies. If you do not like any of them, leave them alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10960

15. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA (C. P.),

June 10, 1942

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I had a long talk with Dhebarbhai. I do not think that that gingili will yield any oil. There is no sense in your meeting him² not as a Congressman, not as a representative of the Prajamandal, but only as an old friend. You should not meet him.

You should issue no statement. We need not go into the question whether or not there was a settlement. Those who can stand on their own feet may do so and fight on. Let the Rulers, if they desire, carry

¹ Not traceable

² Fatehsinh, the *darbar* of Limdi; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-6-1942.

on business among themselves. But the boycott committee should continue and keep up the boycott. Even if one single person remains firm, he will be looked upon as a symbol of the struggle, and it can well be said that it is still carried on although it should not be worth even a pice.

I am going (to Wardha) to see Maulana Saheb. He has really become weak. I hope you are all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 278

16. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,

June 10, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Why do you feel tired? You are right in saying that you can have no cause for enmity or malice towards Chi. or any one else. You should therefore cheerfully do what work you have agreed to do. It should not be hampered. You have my co-operation and my blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4431

17. LETTER TO TARACHAND

SEVAGRAM,

June 10, 1942

BHAI TARACHANDJI,

I had your letter. I have sent your reply as it was for being published in *Harijan*.¹

You of course have to be in the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I am

¹ *Vide* "Dr. Tarachand and Hindustani", 6-6-1942.

trying my best to rope in Maulvi Abdul Huq Saheb. Enclosed is Maulvi Saheb's reply. Please do what you yourself can.

Kindly return the letter.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

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

18. INTERVIEW TO PRESTON GROVER¹

WARDHA,

[*June 10, 1942*]²

Q. There has been a great deal of questioning in America and India as to the nature of your activities during the balance of the War. I should like to know what it will be like.

GANDHIJI: But can you tell me when the War will end?

Q. There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?

A. It depends on the response made by the Government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside.

Q. When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal?

A. Oh yes, I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end today. Are you startled?

Q. I am not. You have been asking for it and working for it.

A. That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go today for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances the Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. Today the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse—a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain, I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Throw Away the Carcass". Preston Grover of the Associated Press of America had especially come over from New Delhi for the interview.

² From *Gandhi—1915-1948*

and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt.

Q. Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?

A. I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. Tomorrow whatever the help, it will be real help from a *free* India.

Q. You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression?

A. It does.

Q. When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India?

A. Not necessarily.

Q. It is on this that there is a lot of misconception.

A. You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*.¹ I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India.

Q. But suppose your proposal is rejected, what will be your next move?

A. It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not interfere with the movement of British troops, but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India free and independent will play a prominent part in defending China. Today I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the stranglehold on India. And today it amounts to that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts

¹ *Vide* "Question Box", 12-6-1942.

servility it means good-bye for ever to freedom.

Q. All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?

A. I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the stranglehold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races.

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India *after* an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of victory? Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law and Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity—by no means due to the grace of the Government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains—when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

Q. You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India.

A. I do indeed.

Q. With any possibility of success?

A. There is every possibility, I should think. I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of the Indian cause.

Q. You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?

A. I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organized in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not affect the administration.

Q. It may, slowly.

A. Slowly? I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China.

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue.

Q. What specific things would be done by India to save China, if India is declared independent?

A. Great things, I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them today. For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organizations here which I expect would be able to work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies.

Q. By dead weight you mean a menace to Britain and to American interests here?

A. I do. It is a menace in that you never know what sullen India will do at a given moment.

Q. No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself?

A. Myself? I do not count—with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the co-operation—whatever it can give willingly—of a free and mighty nation. My co-operation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by my writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. Today because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and therefore helping the Allied cause.

Q. May I concretely ask—will the difference be the difference that there is between what Burma did and what, say, Russia is doing?

A. You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of

the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little co-operation from Burmans; on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say *today* that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt India becomes a powerful ally.

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States.

G. I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks. Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears.

Q. Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?

A. No good. We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself.

Q. May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?

A. I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking *at* valued colleagues. My differences with him stand, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public.

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C.R.'s crusade for the formation of a national government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that C. R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmoizne with them".

G. You are right. It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no

flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause.

Q. What are the exact steps by which you will save China?

A. The whole of India's mind would be turned away from Japan. Today it is not. C. R. knows it, and it worries him as it should worry any sane patriot. It worried me no less, but it drives me to a contrary conclusion. India lying at the feet of Great Britain may mean China lying at the feet of Japan. I cannot help using this language. I feel it. You may think it startling and big. But why should it be startling? Think of 400 million people hungering for freedom. They want to be left alone. They are not savages. They have an ancient culture, ancient civilization, such variety and richness of languages.

Britain should be ashamed of holding these people as slaves.

You may say: 'You deserve it!' If you do, I will simply say it is not right for any nation to hold another in bondage.

P. G. I agree.

G. I say even if a nation should want to be in bondage it should be derogatory to one's dignity to keep it in bondage. But you have your own difficulties. You have yet to abolish slavery !

Q. In United States, you mean?

A. Yes, your racial discrimination, your lynch law and so on. But you don't want me to remind you of these things.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

19. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"¹

[Before June 11, 1942]²

Q. Till the last day you said there can be no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence?

A. Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Only If They Withdraw", 11-6-1942

² *ibid*

whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organizations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominantly non-violent.

Anyway, up to my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

20. EDUCATION THROUGH HANDICRAFTS¹

[On or before *June 11, 1942*]²

Shrimati Ashadevi sends the following interesting figures:

The 27 basic schools in the small compact area in the Bettiah Thana, Dist. Champaran, Bihar, completed three years of work in April 1942. The annual economic chart of Grade I, II and III of these schools for the year 1941-42 makes encouraging study for all workers of basic education. The chart will be published in detail in '*Nai Talim*', the monthly organ of basic education. Here we give a brief summary of the principal facts for all who are

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

² The Hindi translation of this which appeared in *Harijan Sevak* is dated June 11.

interested in the progress of basic education. The average attendance for these 27 schools is 70% in Grade I, 76% in Grade II and 79% in Grade III; the average individual earning is 0-11-0 in Grade I, Rs. 2-4-2 in Grade II and Rs. 6-1-1 in Grade III. The total earning of 390 (number based on average attendance) children of 10,264 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 267-8-6 in Grade I, of 356 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,082 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 804-13-8 in Grade II, and of 319 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,362 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 1,935-14-11 in Grade III, i.e., the total earning of 1,065 children is Rs. 3,008-2-1 for the whole year. The average maximum individual earning of these schools is Rs. 15-12-0 in Grade III, Rs. 6-2-0 in Grade II and Rs. 2-10-1 in Grade I. The average maximum speed is 480 rounds per hour on the charkha and 281 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade III; 350 rounds per hour on the charkha and 242 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade II; and 164 rounds per hour on the *takli* for Grade I.

These figures are not given to show the output and the income, important as they are in their place. The output and the income have a secondary place in an education chart. But they are given to demonstrate the high educational value of handicrafts as a means of training the youth. It is clear that without industry, care and attention to detail the work could not have been done.

Harijan, 21-6-1942

21. QUESTION BOX

ITS MEANING

Q. What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognize their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India.

This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India.

Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free State to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

WHAT ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE?

Q. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last twenty-two years to show the efficiency of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a free India in alliance with the Allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war-chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment.

WHAT ABOUT RADIO MESSAGES?

Q. You do not hear the radio messages. I do most assiduously. They interpret your writings as if your leanings were in favour of the Axis powers and you had now veered round to Subhas Babu's views about receiving outside help to overthrow the British rule. I would like you to clear your position in this matter. Misinterpretation of your known views has reached a dangerous point.

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they

will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty co-operation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

SEVAGRAM, June 12, 1942

Harijan, 21-6-1942

22. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[June]¹ 12, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I am writing this in Gujarati. I got your letter. The discussions with the Maulana and Jawaharlal take up a good deal of my time. They will continue for one or two days more. They are carried on peacefully. The weather seems to have changed somewhat today. A hot wind is still blowing.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7899. Also C.W. 4267. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

¹ The source has the date 12-2-42, which is obviously an error, as the date of the postmark is June 12.

23. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

June 12, 1942

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You have volunteered to shoulder the responsibility for Lilavati¹. Her college reopens on the 20th. I am trying to spare you. But if I fail, will you please see, or have someone see, about her boarding and lodging?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4739. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

24. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 12, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Mill sugar should not be bought. But so long as Ba is there it will have to continue. And if it comes others may also take it. Try to prevent this.

If rice is cooked for Ba and a guest wants it, it is difficult not to serve it to him also. I explained about this. But who listens?

Asha's sari is nothing when we have to put up with so many other things.

I understand the utility of Parnerkar's septic tank. It is all right.

Lilavati has committed a heinous crime. I consider it unforgivable. I shall write to her.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4432

25. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 13, 1942

MY DEAR C.R.,

Your letters. The big people will be going in a day or two. You must come and have a little rest before you embark on another tour. I

¹ Lilavati Asar

want you to come for a little rest, a little fun. But you should try to let me see my error which you see so clearly.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2090

26. *LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,
June 13, 1942

MY DEAR SINGER,

I had love letters from all of you three. But this is to draw your attention to the enclosed. I want you to show the note to your son and my friend the Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung. If the facts are as stated why should they happen where you and your son live?

Love to the family.

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

27. *LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI*

June 13, 1942

CHI. VALJI,

I have got your articles. I am returning them. You will get them back safe. It is not advisable to publish such articles at present. They forget every time to send you the money. I am sending you the amount on condition that you will use it only for your family needs and not for helping Gopalan or others like him.

From among the articles that you wanted, one seems to be still missing. I will send it when I find it.

I hope all of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.W. 7498. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

28. QUESTION BOX

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Q. What will you do if in response to your invitation the British Government withdraws from India and as you predict there is chaos in the country? What advice will you give to the workers who follow you? What non-violent steps will you take to put an end to the chaos?

A. If such a situation arises I myself and my co-workers will take such steps as are necessary to overcome the chaos. That is to say, we shall plead with those who are responsible for creating the chaos and dissuade them. If in doing so we have to die we shall die. If we have enough co-workers with the spirit of non-violence in them the chaos will soon come to an end. Here one must bear in mind that there is no place for the non-violence of the weak once the British Government withdraws. Those who want to plunder and loot are neither going to arrest anyone nor show mercy to anyone. Because they themselves are weak they will not have any other slogan except “kill, kill” and it will not be easy to arouse in them feelings of kindness or to appeal to their reason. In other words we shall have to sacrifice many lives to awaken the humanity of such men.

I am afraid when there is chaos non-violence alone will not operate. Some other agencies will have appeared which will be engaging themselves in subduing by force those who indulge in looting and plundering. When there is chaos it will be a test for everyone.

IF YOU ARE ARRESTED

Q. What will you do if the Government arrests you because of your strong writings appearing in the *Harijan*? And what will happen if all the other leading Congressmen are also arrested?

A. I can't say at the moment what we shall do in the jail if the Government arrests me and others because I myself do not know. I shall have to do what occurs to me at the time. What is more important is what those who stay behind will do. The conditions which are imposed every time will not be there this time. There will be only one condition, that of ahimsa, and that is indispensable. This should not be interpreted to mean that people will be exempted from constructive work. Those who know its value will never give it up. But when masses are called upon to sacrifice themselves on the altar of independence some specified conditions will be relaxed as had been done in the

earlier mass movements. So when the leaders are arrested every Indian will consider himself a leader and will sacrifice himself, and will not worry if his action results in anarchy. The blame for the anarchy will go to the Government which under the pretext of anarchy or under some other pretext goes on consolidating its own anarchy. Our ahimsa will remain lame as long as we do not get rid of the fear of anarchy. This is the time to prove that there is no power stronger than ahimsa in this world.

[From Hindi]

Harijanbandhu, 14-6-1942

29. JODHPUR TRAGEDY

As I had feared, Jodhpur satyagraha has taken a serious and ugly turn. Heaps of papers have come in. From these I gather that arrests are multiplying. Lathi charges are a daily occurrence. Official circulars have been issued prohibiting the use of private premises by satyagrahis. In fact all the worst things that were experienced during the satyagraha campaigns in British India are being repeated in Jodhpur. Only in Jodhpur they are being done far from the public gaze and a first-class tragedy may pass unnoticed and may be buried like many such that have been buried and are being buried even today. The cause of all these troubles is one and so is the remedy. Till it is successfully applied, the painful drama will continue in some shape or form. The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligation to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur in the name of law and order. The prisoners have no respite even behind the prison bars. The food is bad, usual facilities are denied to them. By way of protest Shri Jai Narayan Vyas has undertaken hunger-strike till the grievances are redressed or unto death. If he has to die, the death will be upon those who are primarily responsible for the grievances which compel hunger-strikes unto death. Dr. Dwarkanath Kachru¹ has sent an instructive note on Jodhpur from which I take the following for public information:

The direct authority of the Jodhpur Government extends over 17% of the total area of the State; the remaining area—about 83% —is owned by the

¹ He was not a “Dr.”; *vide* “Jodhpur”, 29-6-1942.

Jagirdars, about 1,300 in number. These Jagirdars are mostly autonomous internally and pay fixed tributes to the Maharaja .

For a long time now the Political Department has been controlling the affairs in Jodhpur. Thrice during this century the State passed under the direct control and supervision of the Political Department. At present Englishmen—a large number of them—occupy prominent positions in the State. The Prime Minister is also a retired British official.

Apart from the British officials, other non-State subject elements also predominate in the State administration. There is thus a “Mulki Movement” which is becoming stronger day by day. There is also a very strong rivalry between the different castes, Rajputs, Brahmins, etc., which is very often exploited by the government to play one against the other or to prevent the Lok Parishad from growing stronger.

The Marwar Lok Parishad, formed in 1938, became, during the course of these four years, a tremendous force in Jodhpur. Because of the general political backwardness of the Rajputana States, a more advanced mass movement in Jodhpur was destined to lead the vanguard of the popular movement in the whole of Rajputana. An All-Rajputana Political Conference was also announced to be held in Jodhpur in March 1940. The mass awakening in Rajputana caused grave anxiety to the Political Department and the Jodhpur Government was instructed to act promptly. The Jodhpur Government therefore declared the Lok Parishad illegal and put all its prominent men in jails. Mass arrests, followed by terrible repression, ended in a compromise with the Government. Marwar Lok Parishad began its constructive work once again and soon came to be recognized by all the people in Marwar, both in the *khalsa* and *jagiri* territories. The Parishad contested the Municipal elections and emerged as the majority party in the Board. Its leader became the chairman.

Since the war began the governments of Indian States have changed their attitude towards popular movements. The war had in fact provided an excuse to suppress civil liberties and check the growth of popular forces. In Jodhpur, where the Political Department has a hand in shaping the policy of the government, Prime Minister Sir Donald Field set to work according to the instructions from above. Funds had to be procured for war and the whole State had to be put on war footing. Money had largely to be procured from the Jagirdars, who must in turn be protected against the popular movement in the Jagirs led by the Lok Parishad. The State Government thus assumed an attitude of neutrality towards the Jagirs and allowed the Jagirdars to squeeze even the last drop of blood from their subjects.

But the Lok Parishad could not ignore the grievances and demands of the masses of Marwar living in Jagirs. The Parishad did not want the abolition of the Jagirs, but it certainly wanted the betterment of the people of Jagirs. Repeated requests were made to the Government to intervene and secure a just and a humane treatment for the tenants in Jagirs, but unfortunately the Government chose to act differently. They encouraged the Jagirdars and suppressed the Lok Parishad workers. Briefly stated the conditions in Jagirs are: (a) the tenants demand regular *latai* (allocation of the shares of the Jagirdars and their tenants). But the Jagirdars would not arrange to do it regularly and often evaded with the result that the tenants suffered, (b) the tenants also want the abolition of such cesses which have been declared illegal in the courts of the States.

The Government of Jodhpur repeatedly refused to come to the help of the tenants and even refused to stop the exaction of such cesses which were declared illegal in their own courts of law. The Government went a step further and encouraged the Jagirdars themselves to take up cudgels against the Lok Parishad. Thus when the Jagirdars beat and victimized and even burnt the houses of the Parishad workers the government refused to intervene.

SEVAGRAM, June 14, 1942

Harijan, 21-6-1942

30. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

SEVAGRAM,
June 14, 1942

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta.¹ I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

¹ *Vide* "Discussion with Chiang Kai-Shek and Wife", 18-2-1942.

I have thus felt greatly attracted towards your great country and, in common with my countrymen, our sympathy has gone out to you in your terrible struggle. Our mutual friend, Jawaharlal Nehru, whose love of China is only excelled, if at all, by his love of his own country, has kept us in intimate touch with the developments of the Chinese struggle.

Because of this feeling I have towards China and my earnest desire that our two great countries should come closer to one another and co-operate to their mutual advantage, I am anxious to explain to you that my appeal to the British power to withdraw from India is not meant in any shape or form to weaken India's defence against the Japanese or embarrass you in your struggle. India must not submit to any aggressor or invader and must resist him. I would not be guilty of purchasing the freedom of my country at the cost of your country's freedom. That problem does not arise before me as I am clear that India cannot gain her freedom in this way, and a Japanese domination of either India or China would be equally injurious to the other country and to world peace. That domination must therefore be prevented and I should like India to play her natural and rightful part in this.

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free we can do nothing to prevent it, and the same process might well occur again, crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

Our proffered help has repeatedly been rejected by the British Government and the recent failure of the Cripps Mission has left a deep wound which is still running. Out of that anguish has come the cry for immediate withdrawal of British power so that India can look after herself and help China to the best of her ability.

I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method if the whole nation could turn to it. That faith in it is as firm as ever. But I realize that India today as a whole has not that faith and belief, and the Government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation.

Today the whole of India is impotent and feels frustrated. The

Indian Army consists largely of people who have joined up because of economic pressure. They have no feeling of a cause to fight for, and in no sense are they a national army. Those of us who would fight for a cause, for India and China, with armed forces or with non-violence, cannot under the foreign heel, function as they want to. And yet our people know for certain that India free can play even a decisive part not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of China and world peace. Many like me feel that it is not proper or manly to remain in this helpless state and allow events to overwhelm us when a way to effective action can be opened to us. They feel, therefore, that every possible effort should be made to ensure independence and that freedom of action which is so urgently needed. This is the origin of my appeal to the British power to end immediately the unnatural connection between Britain and India.

Unless we make the effort there is a grave danger of public feeling in India going into wrong and harmful channels. There is every likelihood of subterranean sympathy for Japan growing simply in order to weaken and oust British authority in India. This feeling may take the place of robust confidence in our ability never to look to outsiders for help in winning our freedom. We have to learn self-reliance and develop the strength to work out our own salvation. This is only possible if we make a determined effort to free ourselves from bondage. That freedom has become a present necessity to enable us to take our due place among the free nations of the world.

To make it perfectly clear that we want to prevent in every way Japanese aggression, I would personally agree that the Allied Powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the country as a base for operations against the threatened Japanese attack.

I need hardly give you my assurance that, as the author of the new move in India, I shall take no hasty action. And whatever action I may recommend will be governed by the consideration that it should not injure China, or encourage Japanese aggression in India or China. I am trying to enlist world opinion in favour of a proposition which to me appears self-proved and which must lead to the strengthening of India's and China's defence. I am also educating public opinion in India and conferring with my colleagues. Needless to say, any movement against the British Government with which I may be connected will be essentially non-violent. I am straining every nerve to avoid a conflict with British authority. But if in the vindication of the freedom which has become an immediate desideratum, this becomes

inevitable, I shall not hesitate to run any risk however great.

Very soon you will have completed five years of war against Japanese aggression and invasion and all the sorrow and misery that these have brought to China. My heart goes out to the people of China in deep sympathy and in admiration for their heroic struggle and endless sacrifices in the cause of their country's freedom and integrity against tremendous odds. I am convinced that this heroism and sacrifice cannot be in vain; they must bear fruit. To you, to Madame Chiang and to the great people of China, I send my earnest and sincere wishes for your success. I look forward to the day when a free India and a free China will co-operate together in friendship and brotherhood for their own good and for the good of Asia and the world.

In anticipation of your permission, I am taking liberty of publishing this letter in *Harijan*.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Non-violence in Peace and War, Vol. I, Also C.W. 10367. Courtesy: India Office Library, London. Also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 346-8

31. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

June 14, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have yours about Ramanathan. He has written. I am giving it immediate attention.² When you come, you will discuss the thing with me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2089

¹ It was not published. On July 8, H. Seymour reported to Eden that in answer to this letter Chiang Kai-shek had sent to Gandhiji a message to the following effect: "Situation in Egypt appears to be at critical stage and Chiang Kai-shek's fervent wish is that nothing should take place in India to harm prosecution of the war and which would also harm India in those countries sympathetic to her." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 351-2

² *Vide* "Letter to Ramanathan", 18-6-1942.

32. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,

June 14, 1942

CHI. VALLABHBHAI,

We had long talks. Mahadev will write about that. Somebody should go to Jodhpur.¹ If Sri Prakasa is willing I will ask him to go. Otherwise Munshi, if his health permits it. Discuss it with Jawaharlal.

But my aim in writing this letter is different. Cases of robbery are on the increase in Gujarat. We must find some means to cope with that. I do not mind if the people get ready to defend themselves with lathis. But they must get ready. Think over this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 279

33. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 14, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You have given me good news about Jayaprakash. I have to send him a book, which I will after getting it from Acharya. You may come here when you can, and I will set you right. Sushila is expected tomorrow. Ba's health is fine. Sushila will stay here for ten days. She will be free in July.

I am sending this letter with Ramananda².

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3577

¹ *Vide* "Jodhpur Tragedy", 14-6-1942.

² A worker in Gandhiji's office

34. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 15, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I was unable to send you anything yesterday. M.¹ left this morning and J. L. will leave for Bombay this evening. He is passing the day here and dining with Mahadeo. In one sentence, M. is not satisfied with my demand or the manner of enforcement; he needs time for thought. J. L. not quite so dissatisfied as M. but not quite convinced either. The W. C. will meet early July.

The weather is better but still oppressive. No sign of a downpour.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just got today's post. Your knee has got to be right soon.

From the original: C.W. 3688. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6497

35. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 15, 1942

I am glad I have been opening your post. I have dealt with Madalasa, I have advised you about Prema. Now this extraordinary letter². You should reply. It is easy. Unity must come. Without it there will be no real independence. But with the third party in possession, no unity—cultural, political or other—is possible. That is why withdrawal is a necessary preliminary to unity. But you will deal with the letter as you like.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4133. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7442

¹ Maulana Azad

² This was Atulanand's letter to Amrit Kaur, on which Gandhiji was writing the note.

36. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[June 15, 1942]¹

CHI. PRABHA,

I am sending your report with this letter, but by separate book post. I read it. It is good. My note is enclosed. You will like it.

Heavy rains have started here. No more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3571

37. LETTER TO MADALASA

June 15, 1942

CHI. MADALASA,

I was sorry to learn about Surendra Narayan². Let him be on a simple diet for the present. He may take milk, curds, fruit juice and vegetable juice. He must see that he does not swallow seed or shell. Mud-pack on the abdomen will help. He should not groan. If he cannot pass stools without straining he should take light enema. He should take the earliest opportunity to go to Bombay and do as the doctors there advise. There is every chance that with the diet I have prescribed the pain will cease if it is only due to inflammation. He can take chapatis provided he masticates them well. Pulses should be eschewed. Strenuous exercise should be avoided. Hip-baths can help a lot. Also friction-baths.

Do not give any medicine to the baby. Vegetable soups and fruit juice will be as good as medicine to him. Exercise is of course necessary. The rest when you come. Shriman should go to Allahabad and settle everything there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 473-4

¹ From *Bapuna Patro-10*; *Shri Prabhavatibehnne*

² Addressee's brother-in-law

38. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 15, 1942

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

It is good that the ashes have been consigned to the Ganga. Mother will now have peace of mind. Stay in Hardwar as long as you wish.

There is no harm in sending Madan here. If he wants to come, he may.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3057

39. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,
June 14/16, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Yours. What is wrong with your knee? Why should you have anything wrong with you there unless you are erring about your diet?

June 16, 1942

The foregoing was begun on 14th and then the whole pad was forgotten.

Did I suggest your writing to Mayurbhanj¹? The authorities are molesting people for building a bund. If you feel like it you may write to them.

Sushila came in yesterday with a bad wound on the skull. A lot of luggage fell on her head leaving a fairly deep cut. She lay in that condition for six hours. The wound was dressed and stitched in

¹ A princely State in Orissa

Wardha. Brijkrishna has come in. Shri Prakasa has also come for a few days.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4132. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7441

40. A CHALLENGE

I have before me three letters rebuking me for not going to Sind to face the Hurs personally. Two are friendly. The third comes from a critic who has no faith in non-violence. His letter demands an answer. Its main part runs as follows:

I am deeply interested in your writings and in the effect that they make upon the minds of the ignorant masses and your blind followers. I would therefore feel obliged if you enlighten me on the following points, especially because points nos. 3 & 4 raise novel and fundamental issues about non-violence.

You have been training a number of satyagrahis in your Ashram and they must have had the advantage of your supervision and instruction. You have been proclaiming that violence could be effectively met by non-violent means. Japan is now attacking India in the East and Hurs are creating trouble in the West. Is this not then the long-awaited opportunity when you can practise what you have so long preached?

Instead of doing that, you are contenting yourself by writing articles in the *Harijan*. Imagine Hitler or Stalin, without sending their armies to the front line, writing such articles in *Pravda* or such other paper. Instead of asking the Sind M.L.A.s to resign and go to Hurs, why should you not send a 'company' of your trained satyagrahis and try the luck of your doctrine?

Is it not the duty and business of a satyagrahi to go and meet the danger where it exists and threatens the country? Or is it your case that your satyagrahis will meet it only when it reaches the Ashram and not before? If so, is not your doctrine a doctrine of inaction?

I have no doubt that if I could have gone to Sind, I might have been able to do something. I have done such things before, not without success. But I am too old for such missions. What little energy I have, I am storing up for what promises to be the last fight of my life.

I have not conceived my mission to be that of a knight-errant

wandering everywhere to deliver people from difficult situations. My humble occupation has been to show people how they can solve their own difficulties. So far as Sind is concerned, I maintain that my advice was perfect. It was clearly Congressmen's duty to proceed to the infested areas and spend themselves in the effort to convert the Hurs to the way of peace. Indeed they could have used arms if they had no faith in non-violence. They should have resigned from the Congress to free themselves from the obligation to observe non-violence. If we are to be fit for independence, we have to learn the art of self-defence either non-violently or violently. Every citizen should consider himself liable to render help to his neighbour in distress.

If I had adopted the role my critic has suggested, I would have helped people to become parasites. Therefore it is well that I have not trained myself to defend others. I shall be satisfied if at my death it could be said of me that I had devoted the best part of my life to showing the way to become self-reliant and cultivate the capacity to defend oneself under every conceivable circumstance.

My correspondent has committed the grave error of thinking that my mission is to deliver people from calamities. That is an arrogation only claimed by dictators. But no dictator has ever succeeded in proving the claim.

Indeed if I could say, as the correspondent thinks I could, that if the menaces of the kind described by him face the Ashram, it will give a good account of itself, I should be quite content and feel that my mission was wholly successful. But I can lay no such claim. The Ashram at Sevagram is only so called. The visitors gave it the name and it has passed current. The Ashram is a medley of people come together for different purposes. There are hardly half a dozen permanent residents having a common ideal. How these few will discharge themselves when the test comes remains to be seen.

The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not

one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient satyagrahis who can cope with external and internal menaces? My answer then would be that twenty-two years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent.

SEVAGRAM, June 18, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

41. LETTER TO RAMANATHAN

June 18, 1942

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have now had an hour's chat with Jajuji. I have gone through the correspondence that has passed between you and him. Perhaps I read more into Jajuji's complaint than was warranted by the word. Your letters betray irritation. I want you to be patient with Jajuji. We shall never get a more careful and painstaking Secretary¹.

It is nonsensical to think of resigning. We are all members of a family having to bear with one another. We must straighten out everything when we meet at the end of the month.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9259; also C.W. 3076

42. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 19, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I have your letters. Rajaji has just come. He should be in the

¹ Of A.I.V.I.A.; vide "Passing of the First Stage of the A.I.V.A.", 9-2-1942.

Ashram any moment.

Later

He has come.

J.L.'s statement¹ you must have seen. That is his latest. Let us see what God has in store for us. I am satisfied with things as they are shaping themselves. Difficult of course everything is.

There's the bell.

Later

The day passed in discussions with C. R.

Love

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3689. courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6498

43. LETTER TO K. SUBBA RAO

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
June 19, 1942

DEAR SUBBA RAO,

Do let me know if you had further development over that Press correspondence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI K. SUBBA RAO
FREE PRESS
P.O.B. 400
MADRAS

From a photostat: G.N. 5665. Also C.W. 2977. Courtesy: K. Subba Rao

44. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 19, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

My true help is in my good wishes. The eyes should either be fixed on the ground, or on the work which is to be done. The image

¹ In an interview to the Press on June 17, Jawaharlal Nehru had reaffirmed his and Gandhiji's opposition to Fascism and Nazism but said that the defence of India was primarily an Indian concern and free India would defend herself to the utmost.

of the monkey should be engraved on the heart. Every woman is either a sister or a mother. There should never be any other feeling. Ramanama should be uttered every moment. Forget whatever has happened. Take care of the present. Do not be unhappy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4433; also S.N. 24482

45. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 19, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your unhappiness is understandable, but there is no cause to be disheartened. If you make the effort success will be yours. Yes, there is a lesson of humility, which you should learn. There is no need to give up work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4434; also S.N. 24483

46. INTERVIEW TO THE UNITED PRESS

June 19, 1942

In an interview by the representative of the United Press of London regarding Sir Stafford Cripps' statement¹ published in the Press Gandhiji said:

I have read Sir Stafford Cripps' statement to the United Press representative in London. It is not conducive to the proper understanding between different parties, if ascertainable facts are not admitted by all. Sir Stafford knows that I was disinclined to proceed to New Delhi. Having gone there, I intended to return the same day that I reached there. But Maulana Saheb would not let me go. I wish that I could have induced the Working Committee to take up its stand on pure non-violence. But it did not and could not. With it, rightly,

¹ On June 16, 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps referring to Gandhiji's repeated demand for British withdrawal from India had observed: "We are not going to walk out of India right in the middle of the war though we have no wish to remain there for any imperialistic reasons."

politics were all important and it could not, not having the conviction, allow its deliberations to be affected by the issue of non-violence. The deliberations, therefore, of the Working Committee at New Delhi were carried on without any interference or guidance on my part. Therefore, the negotiations had nothing to do at any stage with the question of non-violence. I would not have brought out this fact, if it was not relevant to a calm consideration of the situation that faces British and Indian statesmen.

Nor do I like Sir Stafford's description of my appeal for withdrawal of the British power as a walk-out. The appeal has been made in no offensive mood. It is the friendliest thing that I could do. It is conceived in the interest of the Allied cause. I have made it in a purely non-violent spirit and as a non-violent step. But this is merely personal to me. It is necessary to remember in considering my proposal that it is essentially a non-violent gesture. Such non-violence as India has or may have becomes impotent without the Withdrawal of the British power—even as that part of India which will put up an armed fight becomes impotent. The step that I have conceived overcomes all difficulties, shuts all controversy about violence and non-violence and immediately frees India to offer her best help to the Allied cause and more especially to China which is in imminent danger. I am convinced that the independence of India, which the withdrawal of the British power involves, would ensure China's freedom and put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis.

Harijan, 28-6-1942

47. INTERVIEW TO REUTER¹

[Before *June 21, 1942*]

Asked by Reuter's London representative to amplify his statement about the possibility of Free India entering into a treaty with the United Nations, Gandhiji said:

There can be no limit to what friendly Independent India can do. I had in mind a treaty between United Nations and India for

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes", dated Sevagram May 21, 1942. The source does not mention where and when Reuter interviewed Gandhiji, but May 21 could be a misprint for June 21 for it is unlikely that the item would have been kept for five weeks before it was published. Besides, Gandhiji first mentions a treaty with the United Nations in answer to a question on June 6; *vide* "Important Question", 6-6-1942.

defence of China against Japanese aggression. But given mutual goodwill and trust, the treaty should cover protection of human dignity and rights by means other than resort to armament. For this involves competition in capacity for greatest slaughter. I wish British opinion could realize that Independence of India changes character of Allied cause and ensures speedier victory.

Replying to the criticism of the *London Times* on his latest proposal Gandhiji said:

Every time nationalists have suggested solutions, however sound intrinsically, there has been distortion of their speeches and writings, followed later by persecution. My latest proposal, conceived in the friendliest spirit and in my opinion intrinsically sound, has already begun to be distorted. I regard my proposal as foolproof. The operations of the Allied forces against Japanese aggression have been left intact under my proposal which amounts to this that Britain should become true to her declaration, withdraw from India as conqueror and therefore controller of her destiny, and leave India to shape her own destiny without the slightest interference. This, as I can see, puts her case on a moral basis and gives her in India a great ally not in the cause of Imperialism but in the cause of human freedom. If there is anarchy in India, Britain alone will be responsible, *not* I. What I have said is that I would prefer anarchy to the present slavery and consequent impotence of India. Any person, however great he may be, who distorts the proposals I have made will be condemned by history as an enemy of the Allied cause. Sir Stafford Cripps' proposals have been weighed by India and after great deliberation rejected by all parties. It is an insult to India to repeat those proposals as the final word of British statesmanship.

Harijan, 28-6-1942

48. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 21, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Here the monsoon has set in in right earnest. So the heat of May is over. However, I do not advise you to come just yet. It would be better to rest there for some time. The knee must be put right.¹

¹ This paragraph is in Gujarati. What follows is in English.

Our course is absolutely clear. Risk there is. But attainment of freedom without risk is not worth looking at.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4268. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7900

49. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

June 21, 1942

CHI, MATHURADAS,

I have not been writing to you because I believe that you are out of danger. Your postcard today has startled me. Whatever is to happen, let it happen. Even while striving to live, does not man keep himself ready for death ?

What is the advantage of going to Poona? I for one feel that you should go to Bombay. You can certainly get medical treatment there. In Poona there was only Trivedi¹ who could have given you any help you needed. But he is no more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nanyar and Dr. Sushila Nanyar

50. *A POSER*

A correspondent writes to Mahadev Desai:

Referring to Gandhiji's demand for an orderly withdrawal of the British from India or for a complete and immediate ending of the British rule in this country, some friends here want to clearly understand the implications of the suggestion that on free India becoming an ally of the United Nations, British and American troops may remain on Indian soil and operate from here under a treaty with free India, because defence of India will be then our 'common cause'. *Theoretically* from the standpoint of India's independence the position is no doubt quite clear. But some questions arise as to its practical implications. It is of course understood that Gandhiji here is not stating his personal non-violent position but is visualizing one of the possibilities,

¹ J. P. Trivedi

namely, that of a free nationalist India going in for a policy of armed resistance or of collaboration of some kind with foreign troops in armed resistance, to aggression. But what about the British position? A cordial acceptance of Gandhiji's demand by the British will not only completely change the moral basis of the war but will in fact negative, for them, its political and economic *sine-que-non*. If the British are not driven out of India by force of circumstances, but they give up their hold on India as a voluntary repayment of a debt long overdue, this moral act cannot, by its very nature, be an isolated one, but should fundamentally affect Britain's relations with her other Asiatic and African possessions also. If Britain is *forced* to leave India to God or to the Japanese she will go on fighting to save her other possessions on Asia and Africa and to regain those already lost; but if she voluntarily dispossesses herself of her ill-gotten properties, her *material* reasons for prosecuting the war will practically vanish. From the economic point of view, Britain could never inflict upon herself this terrible costly war if she did not hope afterwards to reimburse herself somehow out of the possessions she was fighting to retain. It will be absolutely beyond the resources of Britain, divested of her foreign possessions, to carry on the war on anything like its present scale. To try to do that would be a most senseless and inhuman infliction on the British people themselves.

As regards *ideal* reasons, these have no substance now, because so long as Britain is holding millions upon millions of human beings in subjugation she has no right to speak for democracy, etc. But the *ideal* reasons will gain substantiality on Britain responding to Gandhiji's appeal. And then it is true Britain may look forward to the sympathy and co-operation of the peoples she will have freed and may to some extent rely on their resources too. But just here we are brought face to face with the old question of means and ends, namely, whether war can be a proper and effective instrument of policy for the attainment of the democratic ends of justice and human freedom. It would be a disaster if anything were said or done that would give rise to a misunderstanding on this issue so as to jeopardize or prejudice the historic lead which Gandhiji has given in this matter to the world at this unprecedented crisis in human affairs. On no account can that moral world leadership be endangered. Why does not Gandhiji persist in the line which he enunciated sometime ago, namely, that the voluntary abdication of the British power in respect of her imperial possessions is sure to bring about a moral situation in the world that will baffle Hitler and Mussolini and their war machines? The voluntary liquidation of British Imperialism in India, if it comes about, will be a tremendous act of non-violence on the part of the British. When we are visualizing its effect, why should we not think in terms of non-violence also?

If the tree is non-violence the fruit also should be non-violence

There are so many side issues arising from the question of allowing foreign troops on Indian soil. Foreign troops cannot at all function in this part of the world without India being made a vast arsenal and supply-base for the United Nations. Any suggestion, however tentative and hypothetical, in this direction is fraught with danger.

While Gandhiji is desperately anxious to prove his *bona fides* as to his determination to keep the Japanese out, his utterances regarding the future position of foreign troops in India are likely to be misunderstood by the other party who may be already seeking an opening for bargaining. Not that negotiations as such are objectionable, but if the other party's approach is vitiated by the spirit of bargaining, that will not only detract from the value of the British action, if any, but will also introduce unwanted complications on the Indian side. The effect on the mind of the Indian masses has to be taken into consideration. At this stage of the new movement it is most essential to attune the public mind to the thought and conviction that India must get ready to fall back exclusively upon her own resources, moral and material. Can we at this psychological moment emphasize a possibility which will suggest to the man in the street that 'after all they will be here'? The mind of the man in the street will hardly be able to juxtapose national freedom and the presence of thousands and thousands of foreign troops in the country.

This letter demands an answer. The difficulty about the confusion in the public mind by the contemplated stay of the Allied troops in the country is very real. Neither the masses nor even the classes will appreciate the necessity of the military operations of the Allied powers after the declaration of withdrawal. But if the necessity is proved, the public may be expected to reconcile themselves to the inevitable.

There was obviously a gap in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers. Non-violence demands the strictest honesty, cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness, if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee foolproof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to

remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal.

The writer's argument about Britain having no cause left for pursuing the war, if she accepts my proposal and logically follows it in Africa, is sound. But that is the acid test proposed. India has every right to examine the implications of high-sounding declarations about justice, preservation of democracy and freedom of speech and individual liberty. If a band of robbers have among themselves a democratic constitution in order to enable them to carry on their robbing operations more effectively, they do not deserve to be called a democracy. Is India a democracy? Are the States a democracy? Britain does not deserve to win the war on the ground of justice if she is fighting to keep her Asiatic and African possessions. I am not unaware of the tremendous change in Britain's economic policy that the acceptance of my proposal involves. But that change is a vital necessity if this war is to have a satisfactory ending.

Who knows if Britain's acceptance of my proposal will not by itself mean an honourable end of the war resulting in a change even in the mentality of the Axis powers?

The writer is afraid that my reconciliation to the presence of the British troops would mean a descent on my part from my non-violent position. I hold that my non-violence dictates a recognition of the vital necessity. Neither Britain nor America share my faith in non-violence. I am unable to state that the non-violent effort will make India proof against Japanese or any other aggression. I am not able even to claim that the whole of India is non-violent in the sense required. In the circumstances it would be hypocritical on my part to insist on the immediate withdrawal of the Allied troops as an indispensable part of my proposal. It is sufficient for me to declare that so far as India is concerned, she does not need troops to defend herself, having no quarrel with Japan. But India must not by any act of hers short of national suicide let China down or put the Allied powers in jeopardy. So long therefore as India lacks faith in the capacity of non-violence to protect her against aggression from without, the demand for the withdrawal of the Allied troops during the pendency of the war would itself be an act of violence, if the

controllers of the troops hold it to be necessary for their defence to keep them in India for that purpose and that alone.

SEVAGRAM, June 22, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

51. TWO ACTIONS

My proposal for the withdrawal of the British power involves two actions. One is to deal with the present emergency, and the other to secure freedom from British supremacy. The second admits of delay. There is a lot of confusion about its implications. I am trying to the best of my ability to deal with the questions as they arise from time to time.

The first admits of no delay and demands specific action irrespective of the proposal for British withdrawal. This is in connection with (1) the behaviour of troops, (2) the impending salt famine, (3) control of food grains, (4) evacuation for the sake of the military, (5) discrimination between Europeans and Anglo-Indians and Anglo-Burmans on the one hand and Indians on the other.

On the first item the people have the law and public opinion wholly on their side. The Government machinery is always slow to move, more so now, when it is all pre-mortgaged for military preparations. People must everywhere learn to defend themselves against misbehaving individuals, no matter who they are. The question of non-violence and violence does not arise. No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly. It must be shunned at all cost. Pandit Nehru told me that at the stations in the north, platform hawkers have banded themselves for self-defence, so the troops are careful at those stations.

As to salt famine, the law is not quite on the people's side but right is wholly on their side. I am hoping that the Government will put the widest construction on the clause referring to salt in Gandhi-Irwin pact and allow people to manufacture salt wherever they can. And I would advise them to manufacture salt even at the risk of prosecution. Necessity knows no law. A starving man will help himself to food wherever he finds it. Rishi Vishwamitra did so.

Number three is difficult to deal with. But the same rule applies as to the second. Food cannot be manufactured as easily as salt. It is

up to the merchants to band themselves to do what they can and force the hands of the Government to do the right thing by suggesting wise rules for the supply of food to the poor people at fixed prices. If this is not done in time looting shops is sure to be a daily event.

As to four, I have no doubt that the authorities may not ask people to vacate except where they are ready to offer equivalent land and buildings and cart the people and their belongings to the places prepared for them and pay them a living wage till they find suitable occupation. The people, if they have nowhere to move to, should simply refuse to vacate and suffer the consequences.

As to the fifth, the people should refuse to submit to discrimination and it will break down. Most of these difficulties take place because we have cultivated the habit of submitting to them. In the words of the late Lord Willingdon, we must learn resolutely to say 'no', when that is the real answer possible and take the consequences.

SEVAGRAM, June 22, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

52. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 22, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope what I have written in *Harijanbandhu* is all right.¹ Abha must now be a familiar figure there. I hope all of you like her. Is it necessary to give some more help to Gokibehn². Send arrears of the money that goes to Pyarelal's home from the day it became due to the present day, to Mohanlal Nayyar, Arya Samaj Mandir Building, Hanuman Road, New Delhi.

Here the monsoon has started very well indeed. Kanaiyo³ is fine. Kusum must be well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8605. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

¹ *Vide* "Yarn Currency", 5-6-1942.

² Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister

³ Addressee's son, Kanu Gandhi

53. THE LATE DR. DATTA

In Dr. Datta, Principal of Forman Christian College, the country has lost a staunch Christian nationalist. I had the privilege of knowing him intimately soon after my return from South Africa. He was an intimate friend of the late Deenabandhu Andrews and he would not be satisfied until he had brought me in touch with every one of his friends. Dr. Datta worked whole-heartedly day and night at the Unity Conference during the anxious time of my 21 days' fast in 1924 in Delhi. I saw him again equally earnestly at work at the time of the Second Round Table Conference. His loss at this critical juncture in the country's history would be doubly felt. I tender my condolences to Mrs. Datta. His numerous friends will share her sorrow.

SEVAGRAM, June 23, 1942

Harijan, 28-6-1942

54. TALK WITH HORACE ALEXANDER¹

SEVAGRAM,

[On or after *June 23, 1942*]²

HORACE ALEXANDER: We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India, when you were asking the British to withdraw. Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party.

GANDHIJI: My first writing did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend—as you have come as

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Friends' Ambulance Unit in Indian". Some of the members of the Unit felt that their experience in the bombed areas of Britain might prove of value in India and so a band of eight workers was sent to work in co-operation with the volunteer agencies in India. Horace Alexander, who arrived a little earlier with Richard Symonds, was the leader of the party.

² Horace Alexander arrived in Sevagram on June 23.

Friends—and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognized as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end forever. And so when I said ‘withdraw’, I meant ‘withdraw as masters’. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

Really speaking, therefore, this should become the major part of your mission, and even the India Office who facilitated your coming here cannot possibly misunderstand you. You have, therefore, not only the humanitarian mission—there may not be any bombing here, and in this vast country even if there is bombing you may not be able to reach everywhere—but you have also this peculiar mission of interpretation and reconciliation. And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you.

You will see that I have used the words ‘orderly withdrawal’. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For there left Burma and Malaya neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: ‘Don’t repeat that story here. Don’t leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner. . . . So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger.

H. A. We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

55. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 24, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

The weather is oppressive. I am not going to ask you to come here before August or even later. If there is anything serious I will tell you.

Khurshedbehn comes on 28th.

Horace Alexander and his friend Symonds are here for 3 days.

The train incident is startling. Has it any significance?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If Richardson writes, I shall let him come.

From the original: C.W. 4134. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7443

56. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
June 24, 1942

CHI. LILA,

I had been anxiously awaiting your letter. Something somewhere will be arranged. Do not worry. You must be attending college regularly. If a separate room is the only remedy, try that. Do not lose courage.

Vasumati has arrived. The Ashram is full. Sushila has gone to Delhi today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

57. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 24, 1942

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

As Swami is going, I am sending this with him.

I feel this meeting of Goseva Sangh was inevitable. The land and other things given to us are in two parts. One is that which Jamnalalji gave and the other that for which the Ashram has paid. This money was given for both immovable and movable property. What the Ashram has paid now was from the money mostly given by you brothers. That means it was your donation. We shall now do what you consider best. If you want to draw the amount from the Goseva Sangh, you will save that much money; otherwise that will be your additional donation to Goseva Sangh. I on my part can neither make donation out of a donation nor earn any merit from it. I hope I have been able to make myself clear. Now do whatever you think best.

My mind is working fast on what I have undertaken. The Empire's wickedness is terrible. I feel unhappy and also angry at what is said against me. But one should not feel either unhappy or angry—all these things are transitory.

I have almost finalized the strategy for the struggle. I am waiting for the Working Committee meeting. As far as I am concerned, I am fully prepared. The rest when we meet. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8059. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

58. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,

June 24, 1942

BHAI GOPICHAND,

You are carrying on your struggle well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND
LAJPAT BHAWAN
LAHORE
PUNJAB

From the Hindi original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

59. LETTER TO ABDUL WADOOD SARHADI

June 24, 1942

SAHEBZADA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter. I sincerely want unity among Hindus and Muslims, but I do not know how it is to be brought about.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

60. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

June 25, 1942

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote. I am pleased that you saw your error. Improve now.

I believe that your good lies in living with Munnalal, but only after Munnalal is more properly settled. Then also you must watch what happens to me. You should, therefore, work with Manjubehn for the present, and become proficient in work. If you engross yourself in work, no matter what it is, it will do you good. It will be desirable for you to spend at least a year there. Keep writing to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8269. Also C.W. 7171. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

61. FOR THE SIKH FRIENDS

Thus writes Sardar Mangal Singh:

I wish to bring to your notice the objections raised against the Congress and against your personal attitude towards the Sikhs. I hope you will deal with them in a proper way in *Harijan*.

(1) The first and the great point made against the Congress is that the Congress does not care for the Sikhs. No Sikh has been taken on the Working Committee or even specially invited to attend the Working Committee meetings during the last 7 years. We tell them that Working

Committee is not constituted on a communal basis, but this does not carry conviction with the general Sikh masses.

(2) Several years ago while discussing the thesis of non-violence in *Young India* you said that 'Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot' or words to that effect.¹ When fiery speakers mention this it makes a great sentimental appeal to the Sikhs. I think you should explain your point of view.

(3) That you are against the bearing of *kirpan* by the Sikhs.

(4) That you said to certain Sikhs that they should either follow Guru Govind Singh or yourself.

I personally know that the last two allegations have no foundation, but lies when repeated do acquire some importance. I hope you will agree with me that some elucidation is necessary from you. This will help the nationalist Sikhs and the Congress in the Punjab.

It is painful for me to have to write on this subject. Some of the points have been discussed threadbare. When however suspicion usurps the place of reason, it becomes most difficult to remove it. But I cannot resist the inquiry of a fellow worker especially when he makes it to smooth his way.

The first question is really for the Congress Secretary to answer. But I can say that for years Sardar Shardul Singh Caveeshar was a member of the Working Committee. It is not always possible to provide for communal representation on the Working Committee. The policy should be and is to get the best men. The fact is that the Congress has always given the greatest consideration to the Sikh sentiment. It was for them that a special committee was appointed on the question of the colour of the National Flag. It was for them that the famous Lahore resolution² on the communal question was framed. They have therefore the least cause for complaint against the Congress.

As to what I am supposed to have said about Guru Govind Singh, I can only repeat what I have said about the charge that I have no recollection whatsoever of having made the remark attributed to me. Whoever brings the charge should at least refer me to the passage

¹ *Vide* also "Guru Govind Singh", 4-7-1942.

² In December 1929. This assured the Sikhs, Muslims and other minorities that no solution of the communal question in any future constitution "would be acceptable to the Congress that did not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned".

in question in my writings. I have searched in vain. What is however more to the point is to know what I think about Guru Govind Singh. I have the highest regard for him. The popular belief is that it was he who gave the sword to the Khalsa. I have believed that to the extent that he did so he departed from the non-violence of his predecessors. This is not the place to examine or question the justification for the great Guru's step. A learned Sikh friend tells me that he could show that Guru Govind Singh never departed from the teachings of the preceding Gurus on non-violence. But such proof may have an academic value. The common belief as I have understood it among the Sikhs is that Guru Govind Singh accepted resort to the sword in well-defined circum-stances as quite valid. Be that as it may, there never was the slightest disrespect on my part for the great Guru or the Sikh *Panth*. Indeed among the *bhajans* sung at the Ashram prayers there are several of Guru Nanak's.

As to *kirpans* I am afraid I must say that I do not like the wearing of *kirpan* or the like by human beings as part of their religion. But my likes or dislikes can produce no effect on the Sikh practice. If by the question is meant whether I should vote for legislation prohibiting the wearing of *kirpans* by the Sikhs, I can unhesitatingly say 'no' for the simple reason that I do not believe in making people non-violent by legislation.

The suggestion made in the fourth question is ridiculous. I have never considered myself as a religious teacher. I have never asked anyone to disown his own faith, in order to accept non-violence or my teaching. I have not known any religion to make violence obligatory. Most religions have permitted it where non-violence is not possible. But I have no right to judge other religions. I entertain equal respect for all religions. I must if I expect others to respect mine.

SEVAGRAM, June 26, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

62. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 26, 1942

. . .¹ it is good that you wrote, but stop worrying about it. . .² If I am alive by then, I will definitely see about the selection of a

¹ Omission as in the source

² *ibid*

husband for her.¹ However, today's children will make the selection for themselves and they should be allowed to do so. . . .²

Why do you despair? Death is not an enemy but a friend. Nobody can live outside His realm and those who submit themselves to His rule are always happy. I will keep you with me if you come over here. I cannot offer you cool air, but everything else is there. If, however, it is not possible for you to come, bear in mind that you are getting more than what millions get and be content. Why should you worry about what will happen when you are no more. Leave that to God. Anyone to whom you may entrust the charge is in the same battered boat. What will you gain by relying on them?

[From Hindi]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 183-4

63. *LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

June 26, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Chandra Singh will leave in a few days. Till then it is your duty to put up with his tantrums. You should not even notice his insults.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4435; also S.N. 24484

64. *SPEECH TO THE STUDENTS OF KHADI VIDYALAYA*³

June 26, 1942

These examinations are unlike the orthodox university examinations which are at best a test of book-knowledge and depend on the whims of examiners. Here even if you do not pass in your examinations what you have learnt is not lost; it has profited the country. Failure means inadequate practice or work, and the next year

¹ The addressee was worried about the marriage of his daughter Jyotsna.

² Omission as in the source

³ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Khadi Workers". The occasion was the distribution of certificates.

you will increase your knowledge and production. Then the orthodox examinations prepare the examinees at best for clerkships, and those who pass have no illusions about adding anything to the wealth of the country, while even the failures amongst you have added something to the wealth of the country, if not quite as much as those who have passed. Then there is another very vital difference. The boys in the schools and colleges pay heavy fees, but far heavier than their fees are the expenses incurred by Government on their education. The country gets nothing by way of return for this enormous expenditure; if there is any little gain it belongs to an alien government. Then the system of examinations is most mechanical and tiring and calculated to add little to the examinees' intellectual calibre. Here the end in view is to qualify students to add more and more to the country's wealth, to stimulate originality and, apart from giving them a living, render service of the country. One last point which if you have not grasped I want you to grasp today. Inasmuch as service of the country is the final aim, the failures have no cause for disappointment, the passes have no reason to look down upon the failures, and there is little scope for unhealthy rivalry. The students in the ordinary schools and colleges throw away their books after they have passed their examinations, for they think they are no longer going to be of use to them. Here you cannot afford to throw away your books or tools, for they are always of value, and once a khadi student is always a khadi student, he goes on adding to his knowledge and fitness as a khadi worker.

Gandhiji next addressed himself to a vital difference between spinning as practised in ancient times and as it is being taught and practised now. It is a thing which has to be borne in mind by both the taught and the teachers and the examiners, for the latter not only teach the students but teach themselves in the process

The distinction I desire to invite your attention to is fundamental. Our ancestors did spin and weave and produce their own cloth, but they were just spinners and weavers, toiling either for their bread or for their employers, e.g., the East India Company. There was little joy about their work, and no spirit of service or knowledge. They toiled because they could not help it, and often it was such irksome drudgery that it drove them to cut off their own fingers in order that the slave-drivers may drive them no more. Their toil was their slavery. They have left nothing for us to emulate. We have to do penance for and wipe out that slavery. Their toil would have been perfectly honourable, if there had been knowledge at the back of it, as also the

desire for the country's freedom, the determination not to bend the knee to the slave-driver, and a sense of art. A revival of the industry means adoption of all these life-giving virtues, it means infusing new life into the dead bones of the old industry.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

65. DISCUSSION WITH KHADI WORKERS¹

SEVAGRAM,
June 26, 1942

The first question discussed was about adding to the capital by making collections and raising loans. The collections could, it was explained, be made by every one of the branches, but they should be made on behalf of the A.I.S.A., which must determine the way of their disposal. Gandhiji had no objection to raising loans, but those who advanced loans must be told, in this uncertain time of war, they were taking obvious risks, though perhaps no more than deposits in banks. If we survive the war and the terrible struggle ahead, we should repay every pie, but if we don't survive, they stand every risk of losing their money. It is likely that no one would care to advance loans. It was better therefore to concentrate on self and sacrificial spinning, and on getting gifts of yarn and cotton.

"But those who advance loans to us may have another fear," someone asked "Even as it is, there is the obvious risk of war, but by advancing loans to *us* they may feel that they add to their risk."

GANDHIJI: Then let them know they will have earned the merit of having lost money in a good cause.

Q. Would the struggle involve the khadi workers?

A. I am not going to make a call to the khadi workers. But if there is a general conflagration khadi workers cannot escape it, *should* not escape it. You must know the full implications of that beautiful phrase, 'livery of freedom' applied to khadi by Jawaharlal. Khadi must not fetter us. You must also understand that I am not thinking of civil disobedience or non-co-operation of old. But there may be quixotic and arbitrary orders given to the people in the midst of whom we are working. We could reason with the authorities, but if they do not listen, we might be involved in spite of ourselves. Therefore no hard and fast rules can be laid down this time. Let us go

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Khadi Workers". The khadi workers were those who had come to attend the annual meeting of the A. I. S. A.

on as usual unmindful of risks. Our inflexible rule is not to take part in politics, not to meddle with them.

There were a number of administrative questions asked and discussed. Summing up Gandhiji said:

All these may well prove irrelevant before the crisis that faces us. You must make no mistake about it. A conflagration is imminent and let us not have the slightest thought of saving our skins. If we do, we shall have plied our wheels and worn khadi in vain. Let it never be said the A.I.S.A. was an institution which would run no risk.

And with this he invited the workers to vivisection him regarding his new move.

If you feel it is mid-summer madness you must unhesitatingly tell me so. If you think anything I am doing is prompted by anger or passion you must not spare me. I think all that I am doing is prompted by the highest sense of non-violence and therefore for universal good. My readiness to allow foreign armies to stay in India for their own self-protection and for saving China should be enough proof of this.

Harijan, 5-7-1942

66. OH! THE TROOPS

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all. In vain do I argue that the Allied troops, if they remain, will do so not to exercise authority over the people, or at India's expense, but they will remain under treaty with the Government of free India at the United Nations' expense for the sole purpose of repelling Japanese attack and helping China.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstance the reverse of the existing. They will remain under permission of free India and not at all in the role of masters but of friends. My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the

presence of Allied troops.

May I suggest also that it is altogether premature and wrong to pore over the weakest points of a very difficult project which may not be accepted even with the troops remaining in India? It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean. The virtue and the value of the renunciation in my opinion will not be affected in the least, because the Allied troops will be operating in India with the sole object of preventing Japanese attack. After all India is as much interested as the Allies in warding off the attack and yet under my proposal India will not have to pay a single pie over the expenses of the troops.

As I have already said in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops. I would therefore ask the doubters to concentrate their attention upon the grandeur of the proposed renunciation and help to the utmost of their power the fruition of the great act. Let them not dread the presence of the troops in India for the purpose indicated but regard it as an inevitable part of the proposal so as to make it not only justifiable but foolproof. So far as I can see free India will run no risk by their presence. Her freedom will certainly suffer no diminution thereby.

The implications of my proposal are:

- (1) India becomes free of all financial obligation to Britain;
- (2) The annual drain to Great Britain stops automatically;
- (3) All taxation ceases except what the replacing government imposes or retains;

(4) The dead weight of an all-powerful authority keeping under subjection the tallest in the land is lifted at once;

(5) In short, India begins a new chapter in her national life, as I shall hope to affect the fortunes of the war with non-violence as her predominant sanction. This non-violence will no longer take the shape of non-co-operation and the like. It will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass, I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has.

SEVAGRAM, June 27, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

67. HOOLIGANISM¹

The report of hooliganism at Rajaji's meeting in Matunga makes painful reading. Has Rajaji lost every title to respect because he has taken what seems to be an unpopular view? He went to Matunga on invitation. He was entitled to a patient hearing. Those who did not share his views might have abstained from attending the meeting, but having gone there they should have given him a hearing. They might have cross-questioned him. Those who tarred him and created a disturbance have disgraced themselves and have harmed their cause. Their way is neither the way to swaraj nor 'Akhand Hindustan'. It is to be hoped that the hooliganism at Matunga will be the last exhibition of barbarism. The calmness, good humour, presence of mind and determination that Rajaji showed at that trying time were worthy of him. These must bring him many admirers, if not even followers. For people generally do not weigh the pros and cons of a problem. They follow their heroes. And Rajaji has never lacked the qualities that go to make a hero.

SEVAGRAM, June 28, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

68. QUESTION BOX

A FALLACY

Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a foolproof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years.

SEVAGRAM, June 28, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

69. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 28, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You may not expect long letters from me. I have read both the enclosed.

Sri Prakasa came last night. He did good work in Jodhpur.¹ It is good he went.

¹ *Vide* "Jodhpur", 29-6-1942.

Khurshed too came today. Rajen Babu is here. I won't ask you to come down so long as I can help. It is good for you and Shummy that you are there during this season. For the last two days the weather is mild. We are having magnificent rains.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4135. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7444

70. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

June 28, 1942

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have already told you that Ayurveda cannot be saved either by money or by State help. Would the State be able to revive Ayurveda even if it gave thousands of rupees every month to the purveyors of indigenous tonics? Hundreds of people have laid down their lives to spread allopathy. Allopathy by itself is not expensive but the doctors and the chemists have made it so. You have not seen their books giving the formula and cost of each important medicine. The cost price of Bayer's Sarsaparilla is one and a half pice but its market price today is ten rupees. The same is true of the doctors' fees. Ayurvedacharya Gananath Sen charges one thousand rupees for a day when he goes out of station. Without *yajna* there can be no achievement. *Yajna* implies ceaseless intelligent labour to the extent that it makes a person sweat and all that, again, dedicated to the Lord. Ayurveda has not yet become a science. In a science there is always scope for progress. Where is any progress here? Come when you feel like it.

Shankerlal Banker has again gone there. He has again fallen ill. Go and see him. Treat him if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2919. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

71. QUESTION BOX

A BENGALI MOTHER'S Two Questions

Q. Bengal is threatened by the Japanese menace. It is time now the political workers in this province composed their differences. I believe they will readily forget their domestic squabble only if the right person mediates. Would you not exert yourself to that end and save Bengal from the impending disaster?

A. What you say is too true. But I doubt if I am the right person to mediate. A Bengali should tackle the question. I would go to Bengal today, if I had the confidence that I could perform the trick. When one comes to think of it, the differences are too trivial to need any mediation.

Q. My husband is a teacher employed in a school of Calcutta. His income is already alarmingly diminished. It is apprehended in a month or so he will have no income at all. He has now seven dependants. Formerly he earned just enough to provide his family with the ordinary necessities of life. He has now nothing to fall back upon. I know my husband is patriotic and Congress-minded. But in order to be able to give us food he finds no alternative but to join war-service. What else can he do? What is your advice to those who are similarly stranded?

A. This is a very serious question. I know that joining the military is the shortest cut to bread-winning. If you and your husband are averse to all war like me, you will face starvation and prove your aversion. God will prevent you from dying of starvation. You might have to revise your way of living. Middle classes have to come down to the level of the peasantry. Then only shall we know real India and the way to deal with growing distress of the millions. But if you have no such aversion, I see no harm in your husband joining military service. He will do no worse than many are doing.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

72. JODHPUR¹

Shri Sri Prakasa who went to Jodhpur at my request to do whatever he could to ease the atmosphere, interview the authorities and know their version of the affair has returned and given me his report which leaves no doubt that free use has been made by the authorities of the lathi in order to repress the people. He nevertheless tells me that some members of the Lok Parishad have not always been discreet in

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

their language. He was told by the authorities that they had no objection to the Lok Parishad holding meetings and asking for responsible government so long as the language was kept within bounds. He also tells me that the Jodhpur Government are anxious to reduce to some kind of order the admitted irresponsibility of Jagirdars, but that the passage from feudalism to legalism must take some time. So far as the treatment of political prisoners is concerned, Shri Sri Prakasa has hope that it would be better, though he has also hope that, given some accommodation on the part of the local workers, there should be no political prisoners at all. If all his hopes are fulfilled, the visit although brought about accidentally will have borne ample result and the hunger-strike of the prisoners and the sad death of Balmukund Bisa would not have gone in vain. Shri Sri Prakasa tells me too that though the death was due somewhat, no doubt, to bad prison accommodation, there was no callousness on the part of the prison authorities. Deaths will occur even in the best of circumstances. We may not therefore always blame authorities whenever a death occurs in a prison. Every case has to be examined and judged on merits. I understand that Balmukund Bisa was a very fine worker. He leaves a large family to mourn him. It is hoped that the citizens of Jodhpur will provide for the widow and children to whom I send my condolences.

Shri Sri Prakasa has brought me a leaflet from Beawar, which contains language which a satyagrahi will not use. It is to be hoped that the workers will be careful in the choice of the language they use. I would ask them to keep themselves in touch with Shri (not Dr. as I had called him by mistake)¹ Kachru who will be in Jodhpur till the whole trouble has subsided.

SEVAGRAM, June 29, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

73. LETTER H.E.B. CATLEY

SEVAGRAM,
June 29, 1942

DEAR MR. CATLEY,

I wish I could send you an encouraging reply to your effort.

¹ *Vide* "Jodhpur Tragedy", 14-6-1942.

Time alone will show which way the right lay.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. B. CATLEY ESQ.

EDITOR, "PIONEER"

LUCKNOW

From a Copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

74. LETTER TO F. A. FAJALBHAI

June 29, 1942

BHAI FAJALBHAI,

The ideal must be what you state. But it is difficult to win over the trustees at once. I have not gone deep into this, nor have I the time for that.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10665

75. LETTER TO GAJANAN T. MADKHOLKAR

June 29, 1942

BHAI MADKHOLKAR¹,

Your letter is lying before me. The thing is I am in a dilemma. I fully endorse the idea of bringing together all the areas of Maharashtra into one province. But I am doubtful about the wisdom of starting a movement for the purpose at the present juncture. I don't know how far it is proper to attach special importance to this one problem when everything is threatened. If in the end India attains independence all such problems will be solved automatically. That being my view, what help can I give you?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

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

¹ Marathi novelist and editor of *Tarun Bharat* of Nagpur

76. LETTER TO PARACHURE SHASTRI

June 29, 1942

SHASTRIJI,

Prof. Rajwade's opinion is the best. He may come whenever he feels like it. I will try to give him some time, however little it may be.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10672

77. BADSHAH KHAN'S POPULARITY

The Associated Press has circulated the following note about Khan Saheb:

The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has released the following statement:

"We warn the public against the false propaganda that is being carried on against Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the undisputed leader of the Pathans and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, in certain sections of the Press. It has been hinted that the differences have arisen among the workers and party-politics is raising its ugly head. Not a single Khudai Khidmatgar has so far resigned. They are all united like one man under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership. All talk about parties among them has no foundation whatsoever. All these so-called differences, etc., exist only in the imagination of a few interested people who are craving for offices and think that by encouraging such talk they can gain their end. The Government is at the back of all such propaganda. But these people have no following among the Frontier masses. Every true nationalist in the Frontier clearly realizes that we can have nothing to do with the British Government in India, much less with offices. Whatever attraction the parliamentary programme may have elsewhere in India, it has certainly no place in the Frontier.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's peaceful constructive humanitarian work among the villages for the maintenance of internal security and self-sufficiency in matters of food and cloth has further endeared him to the people especially the poor. He has been hoping to carry his message of peace and goodwill even to the neighbouring tribes. He has been devoting all his energy to raise a non-violent and peaceful army who can render true service

to the people under difficult days ahead. What the Government has failed to achieve at the cost of millions of rupees he is attempting to do with purely voluntary help. He deserves the sympathy and co-operation of every man, woman and child of the Frontier in this noble work. We hope that the Frontier masses will respond to his call and the Press and journalists of India who have the true interests of the country at heart will take a dispassionate interest in his work.”

The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has done well to pass the resolution and circulate the note. But Badshah Khan’s reputation rests on much more solid ground than the resolution of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. It rests on the strength of selfless service rendered for nearly a quarter of a century and the affection of the people won through that service. In spite of traducers Khan Saheb has come triumphant through every ordeal so far. And I have little doubt that when the next test comes, he will show the same popularity as he has shown before.

SEVAGRAM, June 30, 1942

Harijan, 5-7-1942

78. *LETTER TO SYED JAMIL WASTI*

June 30, 1942

DEAR SYED SAHEB,

Many thanks for your letter with enclosure. I have read the letter with interest. Whether social reform has connection with political liberty in the manner you state or not, I agree with you that it must come. I am doing all I can in that direction.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

79. *LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS HARAKHCHAND*

June 30, 1942

BHAI BHAGWANLAL,

You have not been fair. You are angry. It is not a question of trusting or not trusting. I have not read Dhebarbhai’s report at all. It is a question of how one looks at it. The terms which you find

satisfactory might be irksome to me.¹ That is why I suggested that you should let a person who could see it with my eyes examine it. Are you and Rasiklal opposed to each other there? You were always together. How come you have suddenly turned adversaries? Under the circumstances how can I have the facts?

I can understand your inability to have one of my men admitted, but I cannot understand your anger.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

80. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1942

CHI. NARANDAS,

What did you expect?

The whole plan about Jayanti was yours. I do not think it is proper to wind up the work. Let them do what they like in Chalala. You may keep the fund you have collected for Rajkot only. Consult the Association if you want. It would not be proper if you do not. However, I cannot insist if you are not keen.

It is really a sad thing that Abha fell ill soon after arriving there. It would be better to give her a mosquito-net. She should be careful about her chronic constipation. Here we are having welcome rains.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8606. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

81. LETTER TO FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (INDIA.),

July 1, 1942

DEAR FRIEND,

I twice missed coming to your great country. I have the privilege [of] having numerous friends there both known and

¹ The reference is to the compromise over the struggle in the State of Limdi; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 3-6-1942 and 10-6-1942.

unknown to me. Many of my countrymen have received and are still receiving higher education in America. I know too that several have taken shelter there. I have profited greatly by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson. I say this to tell you how much I am connected with your country. Of Great Britain I need say nothing beyond mentioning that in spite of my intense dislike of British rule, I have numerous personal friends in England whom I love as dearly as my own people. I had my legal education there. I have therefore nothing but good wishes for your country and Great Britain. You will therefore accept my word that my present proposal, that the British should unreservedly and without reference to the wishes of the people of India immediately withdraw their rule, is prompted by the friendliest intention. I would like to turn into goodwill the ill will which, whatever may be said to the contrary, exists in India towards Great Britain and thus enable the millions of India to play their part in the present war.

My personal position is clear. I hate all war. If, therefore, I could persuade my countrymen, they would make a most effective and decisive contribution in favour of an honourable peace. But I know that all of us have not a living faith in non-violence. Under foreign rule however we can make no effective contribution of any kind in this war, except as helots.

The policy of the Indian National Congress, largely guided by me, has been one of non-embarrassment to Britain, consistently with the honourable working of the Congress, admittedly the largest political organization, of the longest standing in India. The British policy as exposed by the Cripps mission and rejected by almost all parties has opened our eyes and has driven me to the proposal I have made. I hold that the full acceptance of my proposal and that alone can put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis. I venture to think that the Allied declaration that the Allies are fighting to make the world safe for freedom of the individual and for democracy sounds hollow so long as India and, for that matter, Africa are exploited by Great Britain and America has the Negro problem in her own home. But in order to avoid all complications, in my proposal I have confined myself only to India. If India becomes free, the rest must follow, if it does not happen simultaneously.

In order to make my proposal foolproof I have suggested that, if the Allies think it necessary, they may keep their troops, at their own expense in India, not for keeping internal order but for preventing Japanese aggression and defending China. So far as India is

concerned, we must become free even as America and Great Britain are. The Allied troops will remain in India during the war under treaty with the free Indian Government that may be formed by the people of India without any outside interference, direct or indirect.

It is on behalf of this proposal that I write this to enlist your active sympathy.

I hope that it would commend itself to you.

Mr. Louis Fischer is carrying this letter to you.

If there is any obscurity in my letter, you have but to send me word and I shall try to clear it.

I hope finally that you will not resent this letter as an intrusion but take it as an approach from a friend and well-wisher of the Allies.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

From a photostat: G.N. 873. Also facsimile in *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 152 and 153

82. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 1, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

Do not stop writing to me altogether. Pyarelal and Mahadev have gone to Bombay today. M. has gone there for the recommended check-up and Pyarelal for his eyes. Mahadev will return within two days. Pyarelal will be staying on for eight days if necessary. My health one may say is good. The times are hard. Mostly I observe silence. Janakibehn has come today.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR, M.D.

L.H.M.C.

NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

83. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,

July 2, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I venture to approach you again on a humanitarian matter wholly unconnected with politics.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who has been touring in Bihar, brings me the news that British and American troops are spread all over Bihar and that numberless cattle are slaughtered for their beef. These include milch cows and plough cattle. Though the number of cattle in India is great a vast number, if not the majority, are, as you are aware, a burden upon the land. Now if plough cattle and milch cows are slaughtered the burden increases and ploughing becomes difficult and the milk supply which is already poor suffers further reduction. I wonder if you can use your influence with the Military so as to save milch cows and plough cattle from slaughter.¹

When you write to them please send my regards to Lady Anne² and Southby³. I hope they and the baby are getting on well.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, p. 303

84. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 2, 1942

CHI. KRI [SHNA] CH [ANDRA],

Let Sinhraj be there. I will see about Chandrashekhar.

I understand about Mohan Singh. I think it should suffice to put some potassium permanganate in the water but it would be better for those who have any doubt to boil it. Ask them. We shall manage with

¹ For further correspondence on the subject, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 27-7-1942.

² Lady Anne Hope, eldest daughter of Lord Linlithgow

³ Patrick H. J. Southby, R.N., Lady Anne Hope's husband

some other cereal in place of wheat. We shall live on potatoes and other roots if we do not get even *bajra*, *jawar*, rice, etc., or, if the situation worsens still further, on whatever God gives. However, everything should be given by weight.

If you can give facilities to Rajarao without much difficulty, then do so.

Let the Ferozepur people stay.

Whatever is necessary should be done for Ramdas's friends.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4436; also S.N. 24485

85. QUESTION BOX

AN OMISSION

At the Goseva Sangh Conference of 1st February last held at Wardha I said:

Chaunde Maharaj . . . whilst he accepts my facts and even arguments . . . says, 'what about the public sentiment? They somehow want to save the cow from the butcher.'

And again

But the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred.¹

Shri Chaunde Maharaj of Govardhan Sanstha, who was present at the meeting, came to me and told me that the remark could not be applied to him as he did not favour the purchase of cows from butchers and did not discard the use of dead cattle hide. I told him that I would mention his assurance in *Harijan*. He reminds me that the report has appeared without the mention and it is likely to harm the Institution. I am sorry, I forgot to mention the conversation in *Harijan* and that my omission caused grief to the Maharaj. As to the use of dead cattle hide, I may point out that it is not enough not to discard the use of dead cattle hide, it is necessary to discard the use of

¹ *Vide* "Speech at All-India Goseva Sangh Conference", 1-2-1942.

slaughter hide and insist on the use of dead cattle hide where slaughter hide was used. Probably that is what his letter means but has failed to convey.

Sevagram, July 3, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

86. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 3, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

You are too much disturbed about me. There is nothing but fatigue. I shall try to give me as much rest as possible.

J. L. and Mridula are coming tomorrow. Satyavati comes tonight. Profulla tomorrow.¹ Ku. and Kamla are here. So you see we are a large family. Kher was here about Goseva and several others. They all went yesterday or the day before.

Jodhpur's letter is bad but what more can you expect from these gentlemen. Let us hope that Sri Prakasa's visit will be fruitful.

Ba has a little fever today after a long spell of freedom. I think she will be free tomorrow.

Narendra Dev is splendid. He has 4 lb. of milk and still feels hungry !!!

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4136. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7445

87. *LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

July 3, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

This is for you to see. I have written to Shirin that I shall decide after consulting Mahmud and Zohra. I have called Dr. Yusuf. If you have any suggestions, you will let me know.

The weather is quite cool at the moment and so I am feeling

¹ In the margin somebody has written "has come today".

quite fit. Ba had fever yesterday. Today it has almost come down. She is fine. Her temperature is 99 . Pyarelal is in Bombay.

Amar is spinning, reading and having a good time.

You will be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

88. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[About *July 3, 1942*]¹

CHI. AMRIT,

Don't worry about me. The fatigue is due purely to want of rest. You may descend when you wish to but not so as to offend Shummy. Of course I will send for you when necessary. The weather just now is superb.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4269. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7901

89. GURU GOVIND SINGH

At last after diligent search Mahadev Desai and others have traced the writing in which I have referred to Guru Govind Singh.² It appears in *Young India* of 9th April, 1925. It is headed 'My Friend the Revolutionary'. I would commend it to my Sikh friends and, for that matter, others the whole of the article. It is seasonable and they will profit by it, whether they accept or reject the views propounded in it. Here I must content myself with only relevant extracts from that article. Here they are:

¹ *Vide* the preceding item where too Gandhiji speaks of fatigue.

² In the article "For the Sikh Friends", 26-6-42, Gandhiji had said that he could not find the writing in which he was alleged to have said that Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot. For the text of the article, *vide* "My Friend, The Revolutionary", 9-4-1925.

One of your objections against the revolutionaries is that their movement is not mass-movement, consequently the mass at large will be very little benefited by the revolution, for which we are preparing. That is indirectly saying that we shall be most benefited by it. Is it really what you mean to say? Do you believe that those persons who are ever ready to die for their country—those mad lovers of their country—I mean the revolutionaries of India in whom the spirit of *Nishkama Karma* reigns, will betray their motherland and secure privileges for a life—this trifling life? It is true that we will not drag the mass just now in the field of action, because we know that it is weak; but when the preparation is complete we shall call them in the open field. We profess to understand the present Indian psychology full well, because we daily get the chance of weighing our brethren along with ourselves. We know the mass of India is after all Indian, it is not weak by itself but there is want of efficient leaders; so when we have begot the number of leaders required by constant propaganda and preaching, and the arms, we shall not shrink from calling, and if necessary, dragging the mass in the open field to prove that they are the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh. Besides we have been constantly preaching that the mass is not for the revolution but the revolution is for the mass. Is it sufficient to remove your prejudice in this connection?

I neither say nor imply that the revolutionary benefits if the masses do not. On the contrary, and as a rule, the revolutionary never benefits in the ordinary sense of the word. If the revolutionaries succeed in attracting, not ‘dragging’, the masses to them, they will find that the murderous campaign is totally unnecessary. It sounds very pleasant and exciting to talk of ‘the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh’. But is it true? Are we all descendants of these heroes in the sense in which the writer understands it? We are their countrymen, but their descendants are the military classes. We may in future be able to obliterate caste, but today it persists, and therefore the claim put up by the writer cannot in my opinion be sustained.

Last of all, I shall ask you to answer these questions: Was Guru Govind Singh a misguided patriot because he believed in warfare for noble cause? What will you like to say about Washington, Garibaldi and Lenin? What do you think of Kamal Pasha and De Valera? Would you like to call Shivaji and Pratap well-meaning and sacrificing physicians who prescribed arsenic when they should have given fresh grape-juice? Will you like to call Krishna Europeanized because he believed also in the *vinasha of dushkritas*? This is a hard or rather awkward question. But I dare not shirk it. In the first instance Guru Govind Singh and the others whose names are mentioned did not believe in secret murder. In the second, these patriots knew their work and their men,

whereas the modern Indian revolutionary does not know his work. He has not the men, he has not the atmosphere, that the patriots mentioned had. Though my views are derived from my theory of life I have not put them before the nation on that ground. I have based my opposition to the revolutionaries on the sole ground of expedience. Therefore, to compare their activities with those of Guru Govind Singh or Washington or Garibaldi or Lenin would be most misleading and dangerous. But by test of the theory of non-violence I do not hesitate to say that it is highly likely that, had I lived as their contemporary and in the respective countries, I would have called every one of them a misguided patriot, even though a successful and brave warrior. As it is, I must not judge them. I disbelieve history so far as details of acts of heroes are concerned. I accept broad facts of history and draw my own lessons for my conduct. I do not want to repeat it in so far as the broad facts contradict the highest laws of life. But I positively refuse to judge men from the scanty material furnished to us by history. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. Kamal Pasha and De Valera too I cannot judge. But for me as a believer in non-violence out-and-out they cannot be my guides in life in so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be there. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck.

I reverted to the same subject in another article written a short time after, from which I need take only the following lines:

My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all deeply religious

teachers and reformers, that they were all Hindus, and that Guru Govind Singh was one of the greatest defenders of Hinduism. I believe too that he drew the sword in its defence. But I cannot judge his actions nor can I use him as my model so far as his resort to the sword is concerned.¹

It must be clear even to him who runs that I never applied the word 'misguided patriot', to the Great Guru and that I have not written a word in disrespect or of which I have any reason to be ashamed or to repent. I abide by every word I have said in that article. I hope that now that the source of the mischief has been traced it will abate entirely and the Sikhs will count me, though a humble Hindu, as a fellow devotee of the Panth.

SEVAGRAM, July 4, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

90. "SARVODAYA"²

Lovers of Hindi already know that the *Sarvodaya* is a monthly published from Wardha. Kaka Kalelkar and Dada Dharmadhikari are its editors. In fact there are three editors because Kishorelal generally contributes to every issue. The aim of this monthly is to conduct a theoretical discussion of the science of satyagraha and to propagate it in its purest form, so that the whole world may be uplifted. This monthly is being published for the last four years but every year there has been a loss of about two to three thousand rupees. The question therefore is whether it should be continued in spite of so much loss. Many friends are of the opinion that *Sarvodaya* should be continued even at a loss. While others ask if it is any use continuing it when it is not worth the cost of its production. Both these views can be defended to some extent. But the middle course would be to consult the subscribers. They do not have a clear picture of the loss. If they think that the publication of *Sarvodaya* is necessary, then each one of them should enroll at least one new subscriber, then alone can we make up the loss. At present there are about nine hundred subscribers. The loss can be covered if there are two thousand of them. Those who are unable to enroll new subscribers but are rich can themselves pay for one or two subscribers. There are always some people who are curious

¹ *Vide* "Sikhism", 1-10-1925.

² This appeared under the heading "Notes".

but would want a free copy. In fact they cannot afford to pay the subscription. So if we have someone to pay their subscription, *Sarvodaya* can be sent to them regularly. The main reason for publishing this in *Harijan Sevak* is that those other than the subscribers of *Sarvodaya* may also know about the loss. The policy of *Sarvodaya* is exactly the same as that of *Harijan*. But in *Sarvodaya* the policy advocated in *Harijan* is discussed theoretically and objectively. However, it is not obligatory on the part of the editors of *Sarvodaya* to follow the policy of *Harijan*. They propagate it as far as they agree with it. There is another temptation in continuing *Sarvodaya*, i. e., since its editors try to keep it away from so-called politics it will remain safe in case *Harijan* is in danger and people will get at least something through it.

SEVAGRAM, July 4, 1942

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-7-1942

91. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 4, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

There is nothing wrong with me. What can I report? What was to be reported I did report. The magnificent weather has not brought me strength. It can come only from rest. I am making adjustments.

Your letter to Jodhpur is quite all right; not much is to be expected from these people.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is much better.

From the original: C.W. 4137. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7446

92. LETTER TO B. M. CHAUNDE

July 4, 1942

It is good you have reminded me. I shall correct the error.¹ You say that you do not refuse to use hides of dead cattle. You should have said that you object to hides of slaughtered animals and use leather got only from dead cattle.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GORAKSHA SAMSTHA

455 SADASHIV PETH

POONA CITY

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

93. QUESTION BOX

THE CONFLAGRATION

Q. What is the difference between Nero and yourself? Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning. Will you be also fiddling in Sevagram after you have ignited the fire which you will not be able to quench?

A. The difference will be known if match, if I have ever to light it, does not prove a 'damp squib'. Instead of fiddling in Sevagram you may expect to find me perishing in the flames of my own starting if I cannot regulate or restrain them. But I have a grouse against you. Why should you shove all the blame on to me for all that may happen by reason of my taking action for the discharge of an overdue debt and that, too, just when the discharge has become the necessary condition of my life?

In their schools the rulers teach us to sing "Britons never shall be slaves." How can the refrain enthuse their slaves? The British are pouring blood like water and squandering gold like dust in order to preserve their liberty. Or, is it their right to enslave India and Africa? Why should Indians do less to free themselves from bondage? It is misuse of language to liken to the action of Nero that of a man who, in order to escape living death, lights his own funeral pyre to end the agony.

¹Vide "Question Box", 3-7-1942.

ANDHRA SEPARATION

Q. You have, no doubt unintentionally, rather adversely affected Maharaj Kumar Sir Vijaya Anand's popularity in Andhra by your ridiculing a part of Sir Vijaya's letter on Andhra separation;¹ and do you regard Andhra separation in the same light as Pakistan, as some people in Andhra fear you do?

A. You are right in saying that I ridiculed Sir Vijaya's letter. I could take that liberty with him. But nothing could be further from my thought than to discredit him in any way. What reflection there was was meant for his informants. As his letter showed, he had given me the impressions of his informants. Every one of us is liable to be misled by our informants. He is among the very few zamindars who have taken up the popular cause. It will be a pity if the Andhras, by putting a wrong construction on my letter to him, fail to avail themselves of his services.

As to the second question, there can be no comparison between Pakistan and Andhra separation. The Andhra separation is a redistribution on a linguistic basis. The Andhras do not claim to be a separate nation having nothing in common with the rest of India. Pakistan on the other hand is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be treated as a wholly independent sovereign State. Thus there seems to be nothing common between the two.

SEVAGRAM, July 5, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

94. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 5, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

Mahadev was telling me how sad you were over my obstinacy in not appreciating what was so plain to you.² All I can say is that there is no want of will about me. But I am built that way. Once an idea possesses me I can't easily get rid of the possession. I suppose you are of the same build. Therefore there seems to be no escape but to suffer

¹ *Vide* "The Andhras", 20-3-1942.

² The addressee was of the opinion that in order to hasten the formation of the National Government, the Congress should acknowledge the Muslim League's claim for separation.

each other's limitations.

But the reason for writing this is different. Vallabhbhai came today. He is firmly of opinion that in carrying on your propaganda, you are breaking the written word. So long as you remain a member of the Assembly under the Congress ticket, which binds its members to carry out the policy from time to time laid down by the A. I. C. C., you are bound to carry it out. If that is so, it is your duty to resign the membership of the Assembly.¹ You may not discuss at this stage the reasonableness or otherwise of the pledge. I want you to be above board. You should obey Vallabhbhai's ruling. The other members too feel likewise.

And in any case I have told you it will be most becoming for you to sever your connection with the Congress and then carry on your campaign with all the zeal and ability you are capable of.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2091

95. TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

"How can you think of a mass movement for liberation without first closing with Muslims?", ask Muslim correspondents whose letters fill my file. I used at one time to think like my correspondents. But I see that for the moment I cannot reach the Muslim mind. The Muslim League blocks my way. I try to read the League newspapers. They give me a peep into the League mind in so far as they represent it. In their opinion I am thoroughly untrustworthy. Even my services during the Khilafat days wear for them a sinister meaning. I am quite clear in my mind that this is a passing phase. I am not aware of having done a single disservice to any Muslim cause or a Muslim person. Thank God, even today I claim numerous Muslim friends.

I do not know how to get rid of the distrust. "Give Pakistan," say my critics. I answer, "It is not in my giving." If I felt convinced of the rightness of the demand, I should certainly work for it side by side with the League. But I do not. I would like to be convinced. Nobody has yet told me all its implications. Those that are described

¹ He resigned from the Congress and the Assembly on July 15. *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 12-7-1942.

in the anti-Pakistan Press are too terrible to contemplate. But I cannot take them from the opposition. Only the protagonists know what they want and mean. I plead for such an exposition. Surely Pakistanis want to convert the opposition, not to force them? Has an attempt been ever made to meet the opposition in a friendly manner and to convert them? I am sure the Congress is willing to be converted, let alone me.

But what am I to do meanwhile? I feel that now is the time for India to play an effective part in the fortunes of the war, if she becomes free from British servitude. I am convinced too that nothing stands in the way of that freedom except British unwillingness to give up India as the happy hunting-ground for the British that she has been for three centuries. If she gives up India, she might as well give up fighting, says the imperialist. If such is the case, what is all this war for? The original fighters are Great Britain and Germany. Was India the hidden stake between the two? This is all speculation I know. The truth will be known presently. Thinking Indians cannot idle away their time. I think that even a large number, if not all of us, are prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe too that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight, not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may.

What will happen after, if ever we reach that stage, will depend upon how we act when the all-powerful British hand is withdrawn. We may quarrel among ourselves or we may adjust our quarrels and agree to set up ordered rule on behalf of the people. It may be a democratic constitution or unadulterated autocracy or oligarchy. The conception is not that of a settlement with the British Government. That could happen only if there is a settlement between the principal parties, and as a preliminary the Congress and the League. But that so far as I can see is not to be.

Therefore the only settlement with the British Government can be that their rule should end leaving India to her fate. Thus assuming that the British leave, there is no government and no constitution, British or other. Therefore there is no Central Government. Militarily the most powerful party may set up its rule and impose it on India if the people submit. Muslims may declare Pakistan and nobody may

resist them. Hindus may do likewise, Sikhs may set up their rule in territories inhabited by them. There is no end to the possibilities. And to all this idle speculation let me suggest one more addition. The Congress and the League being best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly elected Constituent Assembly.

The movement has only one aim—that is, of displacing the British Power. If that happy event comes about and if it is followed by a stable government, it will most assuredly decide the fate of the war—I shall hope in a non-violent manner. India can show no other strength during this war at any rate. Why should not Muslims who believe in Pakistan but also believe in independent India join such a struggle? If on the other hand they believe in Pakistan through British aid and under British aegis, it is a different story. I have no place in it.

SEVAGRAM, July 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

96. A. I. S. A. AND KINDRED INSTITUTIONS¹

The question of the connection with present politics of the members and the staff of the A.I.S.A., A. I. V. I. A., the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the kindred institutions was raised at the recent meeting of the A. I. S. A. held in Wardha and is being raised by numerous correspondents. It is better therefore for me to give my opinion in sufficient detail for the guidance of the persons concerned. These institutions, though some are creations of the Congress, are wholly autonomous and unconnected with Congress or other politics. Their mission is humanitarian, social, educational, economic or all combined. Their work is wholly constructive and creative. But it is true that most men and women in charge of them are Congressmen or Congress-minded, though they are open to all. There are cases of men unconnected with the Congress being found actively engaged in working or aiding them. These institutions must not lose this non-political character of theirs, if they are to retain their prestige, usefulness, and efficiency such as it is.

This is simple enough. But the question raised is complicated. It is clear that the members and the staff may not take part in any civil

¹ This appeared under the heading “Notes”.

resistance movement and be still connected with these organizations. But what are they to do if they see a civil resister belaboured or a general lathi charge takes place in front of them? I say unhesitatingly that the workers in these institutions are bound to render such aid as they can at the moment without considering the consequences. This intervention is itself pure humanitarian work. Persons engaged in these institutions must not be cowards nor may their work be used as a halter round their necks making them useless for service. It is this fear of losing one's job or risking the safety of one's organization that has played a large part in hindering our march to freedom. During the previous struggles all the most scrupulous care to avoid even the remotest suspicion of participation in politics did not save the men and these organizations from the attention of the authorities. Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe. Those who feel the urge to take part in the coming movement must resign before joining it. In all other respects the organizations should run their even course. Every moment they are building the temple of liberty and when it is won they will all be required as specialists for the numerous nation-building activities. Let them therefore diligently add to their knowledge and usefulness. During all these twenty-two years the true workers have proved their worth, they are responsible for creating and distributing lacs worth of material and lacs of rupees among lacs of poor men and women who, but for the work provided, would have lived in a state of semi-starvation.

SEVAGRAM, July 6, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

97. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 6, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

M. and Sardar came yesterday. The W. C. is sitting today. All have not yet arrived. I have been excused from attendance for today. Maulana and J. L. are coming in at 5 p. m. Mira and Mahtab came last night. Mira is cheerful. Satyavati and Brijkishen went today and Kamala went yesterday. Mridula came with M. Ba is quite well. Khurshed had a scorpion sting on her finger. She is brave about it.

This completes the news.

I am well. The weather has given me more energy. I sleep as much as I can—three times in the day and four sometimes. Silence and closed eyes during walks.

Shummy should have nature-cure. He can certainly have a renewed constitution. But that is like preaching to the winds.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4138. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7447

98. *LETTER TO D.*

July 6, 1942

MY DEAR D.,

Your letter does not surprise me. But you have to smile over these trifles. You should come here and assist. You know there is always a place for you with me. I am writing this in the midst of work. Come in when you can. Drop a line or a wire in advance.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. *FOR MIDDLEMEN*¹

I am having pathetic letters from a number of² people bitterly complaining about grain merchants. The substance of these letters is, “why should we serve these merchants when they will not sell grain, though they have the stock, unless we pay prices higher than those fixed by the Government and in every case at prices beyond our reach? ‘What is there left for us but to starve or loot?’”

The complaint is just and universal. The Government is no doubt most answerable for this state of things. They have sent out grain and they do not know how to deal with the stock there is in the country. Prices must be regulated and there must be grain offices like post offices where people can buy grain like stamps. But people

¹ This appeared under the heading “Notes”.

² The source has “from upper poor people”.

cannot starve while Government are learning wisdom. It is therefore the duty of the whole mercantile community to take the matter into their own hands and ensure a regular supply of grain to the poor at reasonable rates. The Government can't interfere with any such humanitarian effort. It will be a real help to them if the merchants perform what is their obvious duty. This requires voluntary co-operation of the whole mercantile community of India. But the beginning must be made with the provinces or even districts. The matter brooks no delay. Hunger knows no law and bread—or rather grain—riots are sure to break out all over the country if energetic benevolent measures are not taken in time.

SEVAGRAM, July 7, 1942

Harijan, 12-7-1942

100. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,
July 5, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You have sought my permission to come here. So far as I am concerned, you have it. Deo's permission also is essential. Get your doubts removed when you come. If you use your intelligence, you yourself can solve all your doubts. I assure you that there is no substance in them. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10428. Also C.W. 6867. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

101. LETTER TO JAGDISH AND CHANDRAMUKHI

SEVAGRAM,
July 8, 1942

CHI. JAGDISH AND CHI. CHANDRAMUKHI,

Chi. Kamalnayan has sought my blessings for both of you through Jankibehn. How can I refuse? I hear that money was spent without any restraint on your marriage. As far as I am concerned I do not like all that. Live long, be happy and at the same time have

consideration for the poor and serve them in whatever you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 345

102. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,

July 9, 1942

RAJKUMARI

MANORVILLE

SIMLA WEST

CONSERVING ENERGY. DON'T WORRY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4139. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7448

103. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 9, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your dear letter. Of course you will do as the spirit moves you. You will come when you like and so will Symonds. But when you find anything to criticize you will do so as frankly and fearlessly as Charlie used to do. Of course your primary mission is ambulance work and if you found avoiding of me or Sevagram necessary, you will unhesitatingly avoid me.¹ I shall not misunderstand you in any way whatever.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1435

¹ The addressee, after a visit to New Delhi, had written to say that he had sensed that his association with Gandhiji was not liked there.

104. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 9, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have seen the doctors' bulletin in the Press. There is no cause for worry at all. The Sardar unnecessarily called them. I feel nothing but exhaustion. He only suggests rest. I have given up *roti*. I am taking more of *mosambis*. I am of course taking vegetables.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

105. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE¹

July 9, 1942

Events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of the Congressmen that British rule must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination, even at its best, is an evil in itself, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating men and their possessions; that is to say not merely in the interests of India, but for the safety of the world and for the destruction of Nazism, Fascism and whatever other 'ism' Japan stands for. Ever since the outbreak of the war the Congress has studiously pursued the policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective it deliberately

¹ This is the earliest available revised version of the resolution, finally passed by the Congress Working Committee on July 14 (various other intermediate versions of the Resolution are to be found in the *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*). The original draft was by Gandhiji. To Nehru Gandhiji says: "I have read the resolution. I note that you have tried to include some of my points" (p. 293). In a Press interview he says: "... the Working Committee has worked on my draft ... the Working Committee tried to accommodate me as much as they could ..." (p. 294). To Amrit Kaur again, he writes: "The resolution is my draft. Changes have been made for J. L.'s satisfaction, and of course Maulana's", p. 306. For the text, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

gave it a symbolic character, in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its extreme limit would be duly appreciated, and that enough real power would be transferred to the popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's stranglehold on India. These hopes have however been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. It has also been observed that the ill-will against the British is rapidly increasing and people openly wish success to the Japanese arms. The Congress would like to avoid the experience of Singapore, Malaya and Burma and turn ill-will into goodwill and make India a willing partner in their trial and troubles. This is possible only if India feels the glow of freedom from foreign domination.

The Congress is convinced that the only cure for this intolerable state of affairs is that the British rule in India should end forthwith. The Congress representatives tried their utmost to come to a settlement. But this has been made impossible by reason of the presence of the foreign power whose history has been to follow relentlessly the policy of divide and rule. Only after withdrawal of the British power can the wise men and women of the country put their heads together and evolve a scheme whereby a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a constitution for the Government of India. When the British power is withdrawn the present unreality will give place to reality *and the prince and the peasant will stand on a par*, the present political parties formed chiefly with an eye to the attention of the British power will probably be dissolved. For the first time in India's history realization will come home that Princes, *jagirdars*, zamindars, propertied and monied classes derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields or factories to whom alone all power and authority must belong. In making the proposal for withdrawal the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in their prosecution of the War. The proposed withdrawal therefore should not in any way be interpreted as an invitation to Japan or the other members of the Axis to attack India and thus immediately to suffocate China. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied

powers. Therefore the Congress would be reconciled, if the Allies regard it to be necessary, to the presence *at their own expense* of their troops in India in order to ward off Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China.

The proposal of withdrawal was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others.

If the withdrawal takes place with goodwill, it is highly likely that there would be little difficulty in establishing a stable provisional government in India. The Congress however is not unmindful of the possibility of a temporary breakdown of the ordered machinery of government. Anarchy may set in and instead of different parties coming together for the common good they may compete with one another in establishing their own authority. It is a risk which has got to be run in any country in order to achieve freedom. The Congress therefore wishes to take no hasty step but would bespeak the help of the Allies in securing British acceptance of its demand.

Should however the appeal fail, the Congress will be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of political rights and liberty. The struggle this time would have to resolve itself into a mass movement on the widest scale possible involving voluntary strikes, voluntary non-co-operation on the part of all those who are in Government employ or in departments connected with Government in any shape or form and it may involve also non-payment of land revenue and taxes.

For the regulation and quick development of the mass movement the Working Committee authorize Gandhiji to take charge of it and regulate it in the manner he may think advisable. In order that adequate time may be given to the Allied powers to consider and respond to the Congress appeal, as also to educate public opinion and to let the A.I.C.C. share the responsibility with the Working Committee for the tremendous step contemplated, the Committee fixes . . . for the meeting of the A. I. C. C. at . . . until which time the resolution should remain suspended.

SEVAGRAM, July 9, 1942

From a typed copy: Jawaharlal Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

106. CONGRESS AND WAR CONTRACTS¹

Q. Is it proper for Congressmen, especially members of Congress committees, to accept war contracts?

A. This question should be properly addressed to the Working Committee. Personally however I think that Congressmen cannot accept war contracts.

SEVAGRAM, July 10, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

107. QUESTION BOX

HONOURABLE MEANS OF DYING

Q. Will you please explain more fully your dictum that “a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying”? Do you endorse suicide in such cases? Or do you suggest that mere intense will to die will result in death?

A. I would not rule out suicide in such cases as a means of escape from torture—not for the pain of it, but for showing the tyrant that his torture would not bend the suicide. Tyrants have prevented suicide for the purpose of the pleasure tortures give them. But I do not regard suicide as necessarily an honourable means of dying. Of course, the most honourable means would be the intense longing to die, so intense as to induce death for the mere will. But this is given to one in a billion. What I had in mind when I wrote the paragraph was a variety of struggles of the prisoners with the warder in which resistance through non-violence must end in death. Thus supposing that A compels B to crawl on his belly, resistance can be carried to the breaking point. Every form of such resistance unto death I would count as honourable. This resistance can be offered by the weakest as well as the strongest—by the weakest perhaps more effectively, certainly more expeditiously. The indispensable condition is the possession of a stout heart and an iron will. I am not writing theory. My opinion is based on personal experience and that of others who have been under my observation. A very weak woman could not be bent under the cruel will of her imperious husband. Youngsters frail in body have successfully defied the orders of hard schoolmasters or

¹ This appeared under the heading “Notes”.

heartless parents. The crux of the question is whether there is real readiness, nay, will to die. The will will most assuredly point the way.

INEFFECTIVE SYMPATHY

Q. Why should not the Congress declare that as long as India is herself in bondage, she can be neither a friend nor an enemy of any country? What is the value of her sympathies with China, Russia, etc., when she has no freedom to assist them in her own way? Has Russia thought of India?

A. You are right. India's sympathy can give no effective help as her enmity can do no harm to any person or nation so long as India is herself not free. Nevertheless Pandit Jawaharlal with his international outlook and generosity has accustomed us to express our sympathy to nations in distress without expectation of like return. We lose nothing by expressing sympathy even though we realize that it can cut no ice. If Russia has no thought of India today, in the long run she is bound to recognize the utterly unselfish character of our sympathy. It should not be forgotten that sympathy without ability to render effective help has its own moral value. We receive with appreciation sympathy from those who we know are unable to render us effective help in our struggle.

Your question is itself an additional justification for our demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British power. Having learnt to show sympathy to nations in distress the knowledge of our helplessness and the knowledge that if we are free we can render much effective help makes us or should make us specially anxious and oblige us to realize our ambition even during the war.

SEVAGRAM, July 10, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

108. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"¹

[Before July 11, 1942]

Q. Would you say that your movement will make it more difficult or less difficult for us to keep the Japanese out of India?

A. Our movement will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But of course if there is no co-operation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say.

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Two Minutes' Interview" dated 11-7-1942

Q. But think of the war as a whole. Do you think that your new movement will help the Allied nations towards victory, which you have said you also desire?

A. Yes, if my submission is accepted.

Q. What do you mean by your submission—that Britain should offer non-violent battle?

A. No, no. My submission that British rule in India should end. If that is accepted victory for the Allied powers is assured. Then India will become an independent power, and thus a real ally, while now she is only a slave. The result of my movement, if it is sympathetically responded to, is bound to be speedy victory. But if it is misunderstood by the British and they take up the attitude that they would like to crush it, then they would be responsible for the result, not I.

Q. Mr. Gandhi, you have been in London yourself. Have you no comment to make on the heavy bombings which the British people have sustained?

A. Oh yes. I know every nook and corner of London where I lived for three years so many years ago, and somewhat of Oxford and Cambridge and Manchester too; but it is London I specially feel for. I used to read in the Inner Temple Library, and would often attend Dr. Parker's sermons in the Temple Church. My heart goes out to the people, and when I heard that the Temple Church was bombed I bled. And the bombing of the Westminster Abbey and other ancient edifices affected me deeply.

Q. Then don't you think, it would be wiser to postpone your movement until we have settled with the Germans and the Japanese?

A. No, because I know you will not settle with the Germans without us. If we were free, we could give you cent per cent co-operation in our own manner. It is curious that such a simple thing is not understood. Britain has today no contribution from a free India. Tomorrow as soon as India is free, she gains moral strength and a powerful ally in a free nation—powerful morally. This raises England's power to the *n*th degree. This is surely self proved.

Harijan, 19-7-1942

109. IF "HARIJAN" IS SUPPRESSED

Anxious inquiries are being made as to what I would do if *Harijan* was suppressed. Rumours are afloat that orders are on their way. I would ask inquirers not to be agitated if *Harijan* is suppressed. The paper may be suppressed. The manager has been instructed to

stop the paper immediately orders are served on him. It is no part of the movement to publish *Harijan* in defiance of orders. But *Harijan* may be suppressed, its message cannot be, so long as I live. Indeed, the spirit will survive the dissolution of the body and somehow speak through the millions. For, with due apologies to Veer Savarkar and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I claim to represent the joint spirit of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, and other non-Hindus who call themselves children of Hindustan. I am living, and hope to have the strength to die, for the freedom of every inhabitant of this land.

Let us see what *Harijan* is today. It is being published in English, Hindi, Urdu (2 places), Tamil, Telugu (2 places), Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Kanaree (2 places). It is ready to be published in Bengali, only awaiting legal permission. Applications have come from Assam, Kerala and Sind. All but the one edition have a large circulation compared to the other weeklies. I suggest that it is no small matter to suppress such a paper. The loss will be more Government's than the people's. They will incur much ill-will by suppressing a popular paper.

Let it be known too that *Harijan* is a views-paper as distinguished from a newspaper. People buy and read it not for amusement but instruction and regulating their daily conduct. They literally take their weekly lessons in non-violence. It cannot pay the authorities to deprive the people of their weekly food.

And *Harijan* is not an anti-British paper. It is pro-British from head to foot. It wishes well to the British people. It tells them in the friendliest manner where in its opinion they err.

The Anglo-Indian papers I know are Government favourites. They represent a dying Imperialism. Whether Britain wins or loses, Imperialism has to die. It is certainly of no use now to the British people whatever it may have been in the past. In that sense therefore Anglo-Indian papers are really anti-British as *Harijan* is pro-British. The former are disseminating hatred day by day by hiding the reality and bolstering Imperialism which is ruining Britain. It is in order to arrest the progress of that ruin that, frail as I am, I have put my whole soul into a movement which, if it is designed to free India from the imperial yoke, is equally intended to contribute the mightiest war effort in their behalf. If they suppress *Harijan* let them know what they will seek to suppress.

Let me add too that without needing any pressure from outside,

I am using the greatest restraint in the choice of printing matter. Nothing is being consciously published that would give any clue to the 'enemy' as to military objectives or dispositions. Care is being exercised to avoid all exaggeration or sensational matter. Adjectives and adverbs are well-weighed before being used. And they know that I am ever ready to acknowledge errors and mend them.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

110. NOTES

IN CASE OF ILLNESS

Someone tells me that B.B.C. have been asking how I can hope to lead the impending non-violent movement if I am ill and bed-ridden. Well, the doctors have not pronounced me such. I am fatigued and they advise rest and a change to a cooler place for a fortnight. I am struggling to give myself rest. But sometimes duty, maybe passion or infatuation, forbids it. But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God—the Unseen, even Unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue, is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas I am far from the perfection I am aiming at.

TIMELY ACTION

Numerous inquiries have been made as to what should be done by evacuees and others who find it difficult and even impossible to comply with orders. The comprehensive instructions of the Working Committee in the matter are quite timely. The persons affected should know that these instructions are no part of the impending movement. They are necessary in every case for the very existence of the persons affected. Therefore, as the Working Committee very properly say, every precaution should be taken for obtaining relief through negotiation. Disregard of orders should be resorted to only when it

becomes peremptory. Needless to say there is no room here for profiteering or exorbitant demand.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

111. PERTINENT QUESTIONS

1. If non-violent activity is neutralized by and cannot go along with armed violence in the same area, will there remain any scope for non-violent resistance to aggression in the event of India allowing foreign troops to remain on her soil and operate from here?

2. If the maintenance of India's freedom is allowed to be made dependent upon arms which, in the existing circumstances, will be led and controlled by Britain and America, can there be a feeling of real freedom experienced by the people of India, at any rate during the duration of the war?

3. Whatever may be the terms of the 'treaty', if the Anglo-American military machine is allowed to operate for the 'defence' of India, can Indians play any but a minor and subordinate role in the defence of this country?

4. Supposing the British, not from any moral motive but only to gain a political and strategical advantage for the time being, agree to a 'treaty' under which they are allowed to maintain and increase their military forces in India, how can they be dislodged afterwards if they prefer to remain in possession?

5. Is not the position postulated in the preceding question comparable to the position that would arise if, for instance, Subhas Babu made a treaty with Germany and Japan under which India would be declared 'independent' and the Axis forces would enter India to drive the British out?

6. If the Congress, as Maulana Saheb has just stated, 'considers defence as armed defence only', is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources 'independently' to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4,000 miles of coastline and no navy and ship-building industry?

7. What material aid could India send to China today, even if she

were declared 'independent' by the British?

A. (1) The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never been claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy. And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstand a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength. The demand therefore is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure was wrong? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain moral status which should ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have any reason to fight is a question I need not consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

Such being the case my honesty and honour require me to provide for the flaw. If to ask for the withdrawal of the Allied forces means their certain defeat, my demand must be ruled out as dishonest. Force of circumstances has given rise to the demand and also to its limitations. It must be admitted therefore that there will be little scope for non-violent resistance of aggression, with the Allied troops operating in India, as there is practically none now. For the troops are there today enjoying full mastery over us. Under my demand they will operate under the nation's terms.

2. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my

terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

3. The conception in my scheme is that we do not want these troops for our defence or protection. If they left these shores we expect to manage somehow. We may put up non-violent defence. If luck favours us, the Japanese may see no reason to hold the country after the Allies have withdrawn, if they discover that they are not wanted. It is all speculation as to what can happen after withdrawal, voluntary and orderly or forced.

4. We assume their or rather British honesty. It would be not a matter of dislodging them, it is one of their fulfilling their plighted word. If they commit breach of faith, we must have strength enough, non-violent or violent, to enforce fulfilment.

5. Surely there is as much difference between the South Pole and the North as there is between the imagined conditions. My demand deals with the possessor; Subhas Babu will bring German troops to oust the possessor. Germany is under no obligation to deliver India from bondage. Therefore Subhas Babu's performance can only fling India from the frying pan into the fire. I hope the distinction is clear.

6. Maulana Saheb, it is well known, does not hold my view that any country can defend itself without force of arms. My demand is based on the view that it is possible to defend one's country non-violently.

7. India at present gives such indifferent and ill-conceived aid as the Allies think desirable. Free India can send men and material that China may need. India has affinities with China being part of Asia which the Allies cannot possibly possess and exploit. Who knows that free India may not even succeed in persuading Japan to do the right by China?

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

Harijan, 19-7-1942

112. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

July 12, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I like your letter to the President of your Committee immensely. Of course your resignation adds to your dignity.¹

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2092

113. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

July 12, 1942

CHI. SUSHILA,

How much did you get by way of fees ? I have no idea at all if I shall still be here when you come or where I shall be. But you must complete your term there.

Pyarelal has been having fever for the last three days. It has come down a little today. The Bombay doctors attribute it to vitamin deficiency. That is also the cause of his weak eyes. Let me see what I can do.

It has been raining quite well here. The air is cool.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

114. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 13, 1942

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I have read the resolution. I note that you have tried to include some of my points. I do not desire any modification.

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 5-7-1942.

But I do desire that, as far as possible, all of us should interpret the appeal in the same way. It will not be good if we speak in different voices.

I stick to the hundred per cent support I gave you in what you said about yourself. I have thought over the matter a great deal and still feel that your capacity for service will increase if you withdraw. And to that extent you will find satisfaction. You may attend the Committee occasionally as I do or as Narendra Dev does. This will ensure your help being available and at the same time your fully retaining your freedom.

This is my plea about Maulana Saheb. I find that the two of us have drifted apart. I do not understand him nor does he understand me. We are drifting apart on the Hindu-Muslim question as well as on other questions. I have also a suspicion that Maulana Saheb does not entirely approve of the proposed action. No one is at fault. We have to face the facts. Therefore I suggest that the Maulana should relinquish Presid-entship but remain in the Committee, the Committee should elect an interim President and all should proceed unitedly. This great struggle cannot be conducted properly without unity and without a President who comes forth with a hundred per cent co-operation.

Please show this letter to Maulana Saheb. At the moment it is intended for you two only. If you do not like either or both of my suggestions, you may reject them. My motive in writing this is only to help. Whether you approve of it or not, it should not cause any unpleasantness.

The date and venue for the A.I.C.C. have not been indicated in your draft.

As far as I am concerned, you are free to issue this appeal to the Press.

It is not necessary to come here for a discussion of the resolution. But it has to be as Maulana Saheb orders.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

115. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS¹

July 14, 1942

To a question whether the Working Committee's resolution met with his approval, Gandhiji said:

It is difficult for me to answer the question. When you are working in a committee you can't have it all your own way. Therefore, you have to compromise. All this has happened in the Committee. If I were an autocrat, undoubtedly the resolution would have been perhaps in somewhat different language. As a matter of fact, the Working Committee has worked on my draft and I must say, too, that the Committee has been most considerate. It was not humanly possible for people, however they may be alike in thought, to agree to the same language. Here the Working Committee tried to accommodate me as much as they could and therefore, I must be entirely satisfied.²

Q. Is it possible for you to tell us the things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W. C. resolution?

A. Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the A. I. C. C. vetoes the resolution, the whole thing wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include.

Q. Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops?

A. It will depend on the circumstances. I don't want rioting as a direct result. In spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped.

Q. Will you court imprisonment?

A. I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not involve courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible.

Q. Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?

A. It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court

¹ Mahadev Desai's report of the interview published in *Harijan* under the heading "The Wardha Interview" has been collated with the report published in *The Hindu*.

² This question and answer have been taken from *The Hindu*.

imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I *can* fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible.

Q. Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?

A. They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For it is not a question of placating one party or another. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British Power without reference to the wishes of any party that is our demand. The demand is therefore based on its justice. Of course it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however, late, the wisdom of recognizing the independence of India, without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this, viz., that there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal. Either they recognize independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war.

Q. After the recognition of free India it starts to function at once?

A. Yes, from the very next moment. For independence will not be on paper, but in action. But your next legitimate question would be— 'How will free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said 'Leave India to God or anarchy'. But in practice what will happen is this—if withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a Provisional Government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory.

Q. Can you visualize the composition of the Provisional Government?

A. I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress— will automatically dissolve. Of course other parties may come into being afterwards.¹

¹ This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. No party can grow at the expense of another.¹ Then, as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the phenomenon every day.

Q. But looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?

A. Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature's upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence.

Q. But there is an apparent contradiction in your resolution. The first paragraphs recount the fact that there is no intention on the part of the British to part with power. Then suddenly you postulate such a desire on their part!

A. There is nothing inconsistent. The facts are narrated in order to justify the suddenness of the demand for withdrawal. The other paragraphs refer to possibilities. Many things may happen and they may be altogether creditable to the British.

Q. May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?

A. No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies, it should not hamper the Allied effort.

Q. But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?

A. You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill will may be changed into goodwill if the British people respond. But even if they don't respond, when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today.

Asked if this was the last chance that was being given to the British Government, Gandhiji said:

This is open rebellion of a non-violent character. There is no question of last chance.²

Q. But only last week Mr. Amery reminded us that nothing is going to be done?

A. I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms if possible. But

¹ This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

² This paragraph has been taken from *The Hindu*.

it can't change the will of a group of people who are determined to go their way.

Q. You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies. Will free India carry out total mobilization and adopt methods of total war?

A. That question is legitimate but it is beyond me. I can only say free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that if I can turn India to non-violence I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation.

Q. But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?

A. I have no such desire. I cannot oppose free India's will with civil disobedience; it would be wrong.

Harijan, 19-7-1942, and *The Hindu*, 15-7-1942

116. A MESSAGE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 15, 1942

This is an occasion when everyone—rich and poor, young and old, men and women—ought to take up spinning for the sake of the country. If the charkha is not there, there is a distinct possibility of a time coming when we shall have to go about naked.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Sutarne Tantane Swaraj*

117. INTERVIEW TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS¹

WARDHA,
[July 15, 1942]²

STUART EMENY: Could you give me an idea of the plans of your movement? Would it include breach of the Salt Laws, calling out Government servants and labour?

GANDHIJI: As I said yesterday the programme covers every activity of a strictly non-violent character included in a mass movement. Therefore undoubtedly the things you have mentioned are included. But it is not my intention to undertake at once any overwhelming programme. I want to watch and see, because whatever may be said to the contrary, even in conducting the movement I want to guard against a sudden outburst of anarchy or a state of things which may be calculated to invite Japanese aggression. I believe that India's demand is fundamental, it is indispensable for national existence as I conceive it to be. Therefore I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced on the British Government or the Allied Powers. I hold it to be legitimate to make the Allied Powers responsible for all that may happen in India, because it is open to them in the interests of the common cause to prevent the happening of anything that might disturb the even course of the war. I think I have sufficiently answered your very pertinent question. I am unable to give you a more detailed answer, not because I want to suppress or shirk it, but I am not ready with a planned programme as yet.

E. It will be your biggest movement?

G. Yes, my biggest movement.

E. But if there is no response, what time limit would you set before launching your campaign?

G. Assuming that the A. I. C. C. confirms the resolution there will be some time—but not very long—taken. As far as I can see just

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "With Three Press Correspondents". The correspondents were Steele of the *Chicago Daily News*, Stuart Emeny of *The News Chronicle* and Richard Jen of the Central News Agency of China.

² According to Mahadev Desai this interview took place the day following the general Press interview, which was on the 14th; vide "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1942.

now it may be a week or two.

E. But you will give time?

G. Of course—as I have always done before launching on every struggle.

E. If the Viceroy asks you to go to Delhi, will you accept his invitation?

G. Oh yes. And then you forget that the Viceroy and I have become personal friends, if a public man and a Viceroy may be so called.

E. Will your campaign collapse if Government sent you and thousands of your followers to jail?

G. I hope not, on the contrary it should gain strength if it has any vitality.

E. With the enemy at the gates, what is your objection to calling a truce?

G. This struggle has been conceived in order to avert a catastrophe. At the critical moment an unfree India is likely to become a hindrance rather than a help. The Congress resolution itself hints at the possibility of a large number of Indians going over to the Japanese side—if they effected a landing on the Indian shores—as we now know happened in Burma, Malaya and for aught I know Singapore too. I am of the opinion that this might have been prevented at least so far as Burma is concerned, if she had been made independent. But it was not done. We know the result. We are determined so far as it is humanly possible to secure our independence, so that no Indian worth the name would then think of going over to the Japanese side. It would then become as much India's interest as the Allies' interest to resist Japanese aggression with all her might.

E. But with time so short don't you think you have a moral duty to stand beside the Russians and the Chinese?

G. Don't you see if it was a purely personal question, what you say would have been perfectly possible. But even with the combined influence of every member of the Working Committee, it would have been impossible to enthuse the masses in favour of the Allied cause, which they do not understand, cannot understand.

E. But I have the feeling myself that you could, if you would, with your tremendous authority with the masses, do anything. They are sure to listen to you.

G. You credit me with an influence which I wish I had but, I assure you, I do not possess. And in proof of this I shall give you two solid facts. If I had that influence you will agree that we would already

have won our independence without causing any trouble to anybody. But, as you know, I have no influence, nor has the Working Committee with the Muslim League and the Princes. That is one solid fact. Then, there is another thing. During the last War as you perhaps know, I had thrown myself heart and soul into it. I had become a voluntary recruiting agent for the British. And I began my agency in the district in which I had just been leading a campaign for agricultural relief with fair success. I should have made great headway there. But I tell you I did not do so. I used to walk miles in the hot burning sun in order to collect recruits and to make an impression on the people about the urgency of it. But I could not. You will see, therefore, that my influence, great as it may appear to outsiders, is strictly limited. I may have considerable influence to conduct a campaign for redress of popular grievances because people are ready and need a helper. But I have no influence to direct people's energy in a channel in which they have no interest.

STEELE: Then, what part of the people, you think, will believe in your movement?

G. I wish I could tell you definitely. It is all problematical. I simply trade on the absolute purity of the cause and the equal purity of the means which are non-violent.

S. Are you not apprehensive that the Working Committee's resolution will antagonize American opinion?

G. Of course it may. But I have never embarked upon any campaign in the belief that I would have world sympathy at my back. On the contrary, the odds, almost in every case, have been against me. And in the very first satyagraha struggle which started in South Africa, every outward element was hostile to me. I had stated then—though I had no experience of the working of satyagraha that I have now—that a handful though we were in the midst of millions who had no sympathy for us, we had to rely upon our own inner strength and the absolute justice of our cause. And that sustained us through the long-drawn-out agony lasting eight years. I do not know why I should lose the sympathy of the American people, or the British people, for that matter. And why should they fight shy of a just demand for absolute freedom?

s. Speaking as an American, I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war.

G. This belief is born of ignorance. What possible internal complication can take place if the British Government declare today that India is absolutely independent? It would be in my opinion the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction. If anybody could convince me that in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardising the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one.

s. If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?

G. Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk *at* me, swear *at* me, but never condescend to talk *to* me.

RICHARD JEN: You have implicit faith in non-violence. But we have seen that armed resistance alone can succeed against the Japanese.

G. China never tried any experiment in non-violence. That the Chinese remained passive for some time is no proof that it was a non-violent attitude. For the first time in history non-violence instead of being confined to individuals, religious enthusiasts and mystics, has been brought down to the political field and been experimented on by vast masses of mankind. Just imagine, that instead of a few Indians, or even a million or so, all 400,000,000 Indians were non-violent, would Japan make any headway in India, unless they were intent upon extermin-ating all the four hundred million?

s. If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis.

G. Here we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attack. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April 6, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them.

R. J. What can free India do for China?

G. If India were to listen to me, she would give non-violent help to China. But I know that will not be. Free India would want to be militarist. She will then get all the material and men she needs—

although it appears that China with her vast populations will not need men. Today unfree India cannot send a single person to China. I go further—free India can even plead with Japan and Japan will have to listen.

R. J. Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a Provisional Government—you, Congress, or the Muslim League?

G. The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No *one* party would take the lead.

R. J. Would it be within the present constitutional structure?

G. The constitution will be dead. The Government of India Act of 1935 *is* dead. The I. C. S. would have to go and it might be anarchy but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. Free India Government would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside. But whether India would be cut up into autonomous provinces or not, I do not know. The permanent structure may take time—all the time the war may require. But the Provisional Government may continue to function. It may be somewhat after the pattern of the present government, but with great modifications. The two communities will certainly work in hearty combination. It would be a combination not superimposed, but brought about by internal effort. The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom. And I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us.

R. J. Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such?

G. We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people.

E. Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal?

G. The answer is simple. Why can't a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian

Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan.

Q.¹ You have said there is no more room for negotiation. Does it mean that you would ignore any conciliatory gesture if it was made?

G. So far as we are concerned, we have closed our hearts. As we have said in our resolution all hopes have been dashed to pieces. The burden is shifted. But it is open to America, to Britain, to China and even to Russia to plead for India which is pining for freedom. And if an acceptable proposal is made, it would certainly be opened to the Congress or any other party to entertain and accept it. It would be churlish on our part if we said 'We don't want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and should not be seeing Press representatives.

Harijan, 26-7-1942

118. TELEGRAM TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

July 16, 1942

TANDONJI WHOM I SHOWED YOUR LETTERS HAS DEM-
ONSTRATED MY ERROR IN READING WRONG MEANING
IN THEM. ITS PLAIN MEANING IS THAT YOUR
DONATION WAS GIVEN PURELY TO RASHTRABHASHA
SAMITI FOR HINDI ONLY. OTHERS TOO READ SAME
MEANING. HAVE THEREFORE CREDITED WHOLE AMOUNT
SAMITI.²

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 16, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

There is comparative rest today. All the meetings and Press interviews are over. All my fatigue and physical weakness are gone.

¹ This was from all the three correspondents.

² *Vide* also "Letter to Padampat Singhanian", 16-7-1942.

There is no cause for worry. This change is due I think to the increase in the milk intake. I have dropped bread and butter.

If Shummy wants you there till 15th August you can stay there. Nothing extraordinary is likely to happen meanwhile.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3690. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6499

120. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1942

MY DEAR RATHI,

I have been long dealing with your letter. I had not a moment to spare. Now I am comparatively free. Either you come to Wardha for a day and we may discuss plans for using the money or you may send me your proposals which I would circulate among the trustees. Better still it would be if you sent me your proposals for my examination and if I approve you can save me the labour by circulating the proposals among the others.

I hope you are keeping well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

SEVAGRAM,
July 16, 1942

BHAI PADAMPATJI,

I deliberately postponed answering your letters. Tandonji was to come here. I wanted to see him first, since he is the spirit behind the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. In regard to questions pertaining to Hindi I always try to take him along with me. I placed all your letters before him with a few introductory remarks. He thought the burden of your letters was that your donation to the Rashtrabhasha [Prachar] Samiti was for the spread of Hindi alone. I showed the letters to other

members also. They too were of the same opinion. And later when Tandonji, having examined the Samiti's records, showed me Jamnalalji's note no doubt remained in my mind. It was only out of stupidity that I troubled you. Please excuse me. I am certainly obliged to Tandonji who opened my eyes to my own foolishness. My folly lay in my wanting to know Jamnalalji's wishes, which made me place on your letters an arbitrary construction. I am now crediting all the money to the account of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar [Samiti].

The second point concerns the inclusion of your name on the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I had not read the letter you wrote to the Secretary. Tandonji pointed out that the letter showed that you did not want to be a member and had agreed to become one only at my insistence. I have no right to prevail upon you in this manner. Hence if you so wish I shall have your name struck off.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have also sent you a telegram.¹ Enclosed is a copy of it.

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

122. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 17, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter.

The A. I. C. C.: takes place in Bombay. You may come if you wish. I hope to be there on 4th or may be even 3rd.

P:² is down with fever—103. Something wrong with the bladder.

Asaf Ali went because he was indisposed. But he is *against* the resolution. The Maulana's statement you must have seen.

The resolution³ is my draft. Changes have been made for

¹ This is not traceable.

² Pyarelal

³ For the draft and the resolution as passed, *vide* "Draft Resolution for the Congress Working Committee", 9-7-1942 and Appendix "Resolution Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

J. L.'s satisfaction, and of course Maulana's.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3691. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6500

123. LETTER TO SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,

[July 17, 1942]¹

MY DEAR SAILEN,

I have your letter. The girls came at Father's wish. They are in Rajkot with Father's consent and at their wish. If they wish to return or if they must be taken away, this can also be done. I may not be expected to spend public money on these charges. As for Abha's marriage I am wholly indifferent. She is too young to decide for herself. The parents must be her guides. I will not have her married until they consent or Abha comes of age and makes her own choice.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat : C. W. 10571. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

124. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

July 17, 1942

MY DEAR KU,

Of course you are coming on Saturday to eat and also talk as little as possible. The limitation does not apply to eating!!!

I am due in Bombay on 4th—may even go a day earlier. Therefore the meeting must be before 2nd or after return from B[om]bay.

Love,

BAPU

¹ The source has 1947, but from the reference to Abha's stay in Rajkot, the correct year would appear to be 1942; *vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", 1-6-1942 and "Letter to Amrit Lal Chatterjee", 3-8-1942.

[PS.]

What progress in Hindi and Urdu?

From a photostat: G.N. 10166

125. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
July 17, 1942

BABUJI,

I have gone through your letter. I am amazed at the amount of work you do at your age. I should be very happy if I could send you a satisfactory reply. But I am helpless. How can I give something I do not possess?

We just cannot have a scheme for swaraj from the Working Committee. I therefore cannot give you what you want. I shall however endeavour to present my own conception through *Harijan*.

As was only to be expected I could not read the whole of the book you so lovingly sent me. But I have acquainted myself with parts of it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BHAGWANDAS

SIGRA

KASHI

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

126. QUESTION BOX

VILLAGE SWARAJ

Q. In view of the situation that may arise at any moment in India, would you give an outline or skeleton of a village swaraj committee, which could function in all village matters in the absence of, and without relying upon, an overhead Government or other organization? In particular, how would you ensure that the Committee should be fully representative and that it would act impartially, efficiently and without favour or fear? What should be the scope of authority and the machinery to enforce its commands? And what should be the manner in which a committee or an individual

member of it could be removed for corruption, inefficiency or other unfitness?

A. My idea of village swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow *useful* money crops, thus excluding *ganja*, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own waterworks, ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the co-operative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of satyagraha and non-co-operation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by a Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become such a republic today without much interference even from the present Government whose sole effective connection with the villages is the exaction of the village revenue. I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour.

The reader may well ask me—I am asking myself while penning these lines—as to why I have not been able to model Sevagram after the picture here drawn. My answer is: I am making the attempt. I can see dim traces of success though I can show nothing visible. But there

is nothing inherently impossible in the picture drawn here. To model such a village may be the work of a lifetime. Any lover of true democracy and village life can take up a village, treat it as his world and sole work, and he will find good results. He begins by being the village scavenger, spinner, watchman, medicine man and schoolmaster all at once. If nobody comes near him, he will be satisfied with scavenging and spinning.

SEVAGRAM, July 18, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

127. TO EVERY JAPANESE¹

I must confess at the outset that though I have no ill-will against you, I intensely dislike your attack upon China. From your lofty height you have descended to imperial ambition. You will fail to realize that ambition and may become the authors of the dismemberment of Asia, thus unwittingly preventing World Federation and brotherhood without which there can be no hope for humanity.

Ever since I was a lad of eighteen studying in London, over fifty years ago, I learnt, through the writings of the late Sir Edwin Arnold, to prize the many excellent qualities of your nation. I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram in Sevagram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unfailing devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances and his natural smile, which was positive evidence of his inner peace, had endeared him to all of us. And now that owing to your declaration of war against Great Britain he has been taken away from us, we miss him as a dear co-worker. He has left behind him as a memory his daily prayer and his little drum, to the accompaniment of which we open our morning and evening prayers.

In the background of these pleasant recollections I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your unprovoked

¹ This was published in three Japanese newspapers—*Nichi Nichi*, *Yomiuri* and *Miyako*.

attack against China and, if reports are to be believed, your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land.

It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the great powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis powers was surely an unwarranted excess of the ambition.

I should have thought that you would be proud of the fact that that great and ancient people, whose old classical literature you have adopted as your own, are your neighbours. Your understanding of one another's history, tradition, literature should bind you as friends rather than make you the enemies you are today.

If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, maybe my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong you are doing to China and the world and therefore to yourself.

But I enjoy no such freedom. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours and Nazism. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago.

Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China. I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or

your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into freed India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is no body's monopoly. If not the Allies some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skilfully achieved.

Even if you win it will not prove that you were in the right; it will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of

a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you.

I am,
Your friend and well-wisher,
M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, July 18, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

128. TO MY CRITICS

The critics who impute motives to the Working Committee or to me harm the cause they profess to serve. The members of the Working Committee are all seasoned servants of the nation with full sense of their responsibility. It is no use damning me as a dictator like Herr Hitler. He does not argue with his co-workers if he may be said to have any. He merely issues orders which can only be disobeyed on pain of death or worse. I argue with my friends for days. I argued at the last meeting for eight days. The members agreed when their reason was satisfied. My sanction with my friends as well as self-styled enemies has ever been reason and love. It is a travesty of truth therefore to compare me with Hitler or to call me a dictator in any current sense of the term. It is an equal travesty of truth to abuse the Congress by calling it a Hindu or communal organization. It is national in the fullest sense of the term. It is a purely political organization with which can undoubtedly be compared the Liberal Party which is without the slightest communal taint. Unfortunately today although it has politicians who have a record of distinguished service, it has admittedly little or no following in the country by reason of its members holding unpopular views. Thus the Congress remains the sole representative national organization in India with a mass following. Its gains belong not merely to itself but to the whole nation, irrespective of caste or creed or race. It is mischievous and misleading to discredit this organization in America and Great Britain as a communal or pro-Axis or a purely Hindu organization. If it was a

pro-Axis organization, it has courage and influence enough to make a public declaration to that effect in disregard of the consequences that might overtake it. It is not, and has never been, a secret or a violent organization. If it had been either, it would have been suppressed long ago.

So much about some manifest misrepresentations.

Now about suppression of relevant Congress position.

Nobody has contended that the demand for withdrawal of British power is not an inherent right of the nation, irrespective of the demand to the contrary by those who by centuries of habit have lost the sense of freedom. It is said that it is wrong not intrinsically, but because of the Congress declaration of non-embarrassment to ask for such withdrawal at this moment.

The critics conveniently omit to mention the fact that in order to prove its *bona fides* and to prevent the Japanese attack the Congress has agreed that, in spite of the withdrawal of the British, the Allied troops should remain in India, naturally under a treaty with the free India Government to be. So long as that Government, provisional or otherwise, has not come into being, there will be no authority to check their operations save their honour. For by declaring India free they will have absolved themselves from consulting anybody formally as they have to consult today members of their nomination. In this sense the declaration of independence leaves them freer to adopt the military measures they may consider necessary. I know that this is an anomalous position for a free country to be in. But honesty dictates the course. As I have said and repeat here the Congress demand is foolproof. Critics who are anxious to serve the Allies would do well to examine the Congress position and point out flaws if there are any. Let me inform them that those who have come to me to understand my demand and who had serious misgivings went away convinced that it was wholly just and that if justice was not done the Congress would be right in taking action to vindicate its position.

SEVAGRAM, July 19, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

129. QUESTION BOX

FIVE QUESTIONS BY A HARIJAN M. L. A.

Q. 1. What will be the position of the Harijans in the future constitution to be framed?

2. Will you advise the Government and the Congress to agree to fix the seats from a Panchayat Board upwards to the State Council on population basis?

3. Will you advise the Congress and the leaders of the various majority parties in the legislatures in the provinces to nominate the cabinet members from among the Scheduled Caste legislators who enjoy the confidence of the majority of Scheduled Caste members?

4. In view of the backwardness of the Harijans will you advise the Government to make a provision in the Act that executive posts in the Local Boards and Municipal Councils be held on communal rotation so as to enable the Harijans to become presidents and chairmen?

5. Why do you not fix some percentage of seats for Harijans from District Congress Committee upwards to the Working Committee of the Congress?

A. 1. The constitution which I could influence would contain a provision making the observance of untouchability in any shape or form an offence. The so-called 'untouchables' would have seats reserved for them in all elected bodies according to their population within the electoral area concerned.

2. You will see that the answer is covered by the foregoing.

3. I cannot. The principle is dangerous. Protection of its neglected classes should not be carried to an extent which will harm them and harm the country. A cabinet minister should be a topmost man commanding universal confidence. A person after he has secured a seat in an elected body should depend upon his intrinsic merit and popularity to secure coveted positions.

4. In the first place I am not interested in the present Act which is as good as dead. But I am opposed to your proposal on the ground already mentioned.

5. I am opposed for the reasons mentioned. But I should like to compel large elective Congress organizations to ensure the election of Harijan members in proportion to their numbers on the Congress register. If Harijans are not interested enough in the Congress to become 4-anna members, they may not expect to find their names in

elective bodies. But I would strongly advise Congress workers to see that they approach Harijans and induce them to become members of the Congress.

SEVAGRAM, July 19, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

130. FOR MUSLIM FRIENDS

I have read with attention Quaid-e-Azam's reply to my article¹ in *Harijan*. "Pakistan," according to him, "in a nutshell," "is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be wholly treated as an independent and sovereign State."² This sovereign State can conceivably go to war against the one of which it was but yesterday a part. It can also equally conceivably make treaties with other States. All this can certainly be had, but surely not by the willing consent of the rest.

But it seems he does not want it by consent. For he says:

Pakistan is an article of faith with Muslim India and we depend upon nobody except ourselves for the achievement of our goal.

How is one to offer one's service in these circumstances?

But later he gives me hope, for he says: "Show your sincerity and frankness for an honourable settlement." In order to show both, I wrote the article to which the Quaid-e-Azam has objected. How else is one to show sincerity and frankness except through one's action and speech or pen?

Let me state my limitations. I cannot speak as a mere Hindu, for my Hinduism includes all religions. I can speak only as an Indian. If Pakistan as defined above is an article of faith with him, indivisible India is equally an article of faith with me. Hence there is a stalemate. But today there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan. It is Englistan. So I say to all India, let us first convert it into the original Hindustan and then adjust all rival claims. This is surely clear. After the restoration of India to the nation, there will be no Central Government. The representatives will have to construct it. It may be one Hindustan or

¹ *Vide* "To Muslim Correspondents", 6-7-1942.

² The words are Gandhiji's (*vide* "Question Box", sub-title, "Andhra Separation", 5-7-1942). Jinnah quoting them had said, "He has himself put the Muslim demand in a nutshell."

many Pakistans.

If the Quaid-e-Azam really wants a settlement, I am more than willing and so is the Congress. He will forgive me for suggesting that his reply leaves on one the impression that he does not want a settlement. If he wants one, why not accept the Congress President's offer that Congress and League representatives should put their heads together and never part until they have reached a settlement. Is there any flaw or want of sincerity in this offer?

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

131. PANDIT KACHRU EXTERNEED

Pandit Kachru is a well-known public worker attached to the States People's Conference. When Shri Jainarayan Vyas went on hunger-strike at Jodhpur, he was deputed by the President Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to proceed to Jodhpur and watch events and report to me. For reasons known to the authorities and unknown to Pandit Kachru he was served with an externment order on the 5th instant, at 11.40 p.m., to depart from Jodhpur the next morning by 7.15 a. m. train. He telephoned to me for instructions and Mahadev Desai who answered the phone advised him in the first instance to obey the order and report. He is now in Wardha trying to finish his report to the point he was able to reach in Jodhpur.

Here is the order:

From information received the Government of Jodhpur is satisfied that Dwarkanath Kachru (name) is acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order and the efficient prosecution of war.

With a view to prevent the said Dwarkanath Kachru from so acting, the Government of Jodhpur, in exercise of its powers conferred by Rule 26(I)(a) of the Defence of India Rules as applied to the Jodhpur State territory is pleased to order that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall remove himself from Marwar in railway train I up of 6-7-42 (manner) which leaves Jodhpur at 7.15 a.m. (*via* Marwar Junction) and further that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall not return to Marwar for a period of one year from the date of this order.

The Inspector General of Police, Jodhpur, is hereby directed to see that the above order is promptly carried out.

The important question arising is how long will the States regard

people from outside their jurisdiction as foreigners and deal with them summarily as the Jodhpur authorities have done? And how long must they allow themselves to be treated as such? The Congress has exercised the greatest self-restraint in this matter. Its men deserve a better treatment. If the authorities have justification for their order, they should publicly state it. It is not a matter that can be forgotten. Pandit Kachru ought to be able to return unless satisfactory explanation is offered for his externment.

SEVAGRAM, July 12, 1942

[PS.]

Since the foregoing was written, much is reported to have happened in Jodhpur. Fortunately the fast has satisfactorily ended. But repression is said to be going on merrily. I refrain from giving the details. I understand that the State has made a generous use of my last note for it contains certain statements crediting them with what appeared to be praiseworthy. Now I have angry letters repudiating principally the admission made by Shri Sri Prakasa that Balmukund Bisa's death was not due to any ill-treatment by the State. My correspondents say that Shri Sri Prakasa having not had much time was misled. I have asked the correspondents for proofs and if I get them I hope to submit them to the authorities, instead of publishing them straightway. I can only hope that the favourable impression created on Shri Sri Prakasa will not be belied by any action of the authorities. I hope next week to deal with the simple demands of the Lok Parishad.

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

132. FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION

If the struggle which we are seeking to avoid with all our might has to come, and if it is to remain non-violent as it must in order to succeed, fasting is likely to play an important part in it. It has its place in the tussle with authority and with our own people in the event of wanton acts of violence and obstinate riots for instance.

There is a natural prejudice against it as part of a political struggle. It has a recognized place in religious practice. But it is considered a vulgar interpolation in politics by the ordinary politician

though it has always been resorted to by prisoners in a haphazard way with more or less success. By fasting, however, they have always succeeded in drawing public attention and disturbing the peace of jail authorities.

My own fasts have always, as I hold, been strictly according to the law of satyagraha. Fellow satyagrahis too in South Africa fasted partially or wholly. My fasts have been varied. There was the Hindu-Muslim unity fast of 21 days in 1924 started under the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's roof in Delhi. The indeterminate fast against the MacDonald Award was taken in the Yeravda Prison in 1932. The 21 days' purificatory fast was begun in the Yeravda Prison and was finished at Lady Thakersey's, as the Government would not take the burden of my being in the Prison in that condition. Then followed another fast in the Yeravda Prison in 1933 against the Government refusal to let me carry on anti-untouchability work through *Harijan* (issued from prison) on the same basis as facilities had been allowed me four months before. They would not yield, but they discharged me when their medical advisers thought I could not live many days if the fast was not given up. Then followed the ill-fated Rajkot fast in 1939. A false step taken by me thoughtlessly during that fast thwarted the brilliant result that would otherwise certainly have been achieved. In spite of all these fasts, fasting has not been accepted as a recognized part of satyagraha. It has only been tolerated by the politicians. I have however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of satyagraha programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given circumstances. Not everyone is qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training.

I may not burden this note with an examination of the circumstances under which fasting may be resorted to and the training required for it. Non-violence in its positive aspect as benevolence (I do not use the word love as it has fallen into disrepute) is the greatest force because of the limitless scope it affords for self-suffering without causing or intending any physical or material injury to the wrongdoer. The object always is to evoke the best in him. Self-suffering is an appeal to his better nature, as retaliation is to his baser. Fasting under proper circumstances is such an appeal *par excellence*. If the politician does not perceive its propriety in political matters, it is because it is a novel use of this very fine weapon.

To practice non-violence in mundane matters is to know its true value. It is to bring heaven upon earth. There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'. As Jeans has demonstrated, the whole universe including the most distant stars, invisible even through the most powerful telescope in the world, is compressed in an atom. I hold it therefore to be wrong to limit the use of non-violence to cave-dwellers and for acquiring merit for a favoured position in the other world. All virtue ceases to have use if it serves no purpose in every walk of life. I would therefore plead with the purely political-minded people to study non-violence and fasting as its extreme manifestation with sympathy and understanding.

SEVAGRAM, July 20, 1942

Harijan, 26-7-1942

133. LETTER TO NAZIR AHMAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,

July 20, 1942

DEAR FAKIR SAHEB,

I have your kind letter. There is no question of my or the Congress's changing attitude if doubts are removed. Both are ready at any moment to settle with the League on the usual terms, i.e., arbitration in the absence of agreement.

For myself what I have said is that I would accept Pakistan if I know its contents and if it satisfied my sense of justice. You must have seen Q. A.'s reply to my note. His definition of Pakistan must be unacceptable to you as it is to me.¹

If an honourable understanding can be effected many things are, no doubt, possible. The best of possibilities is inexhaustible.

The rest of your letter does not call for any answer.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

¹ *Vide* "For Muslim Friends", 20-7-1942.

134. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I get not a moment for letter-writing. *Harijan* and interviews absorb my time.

I have replied to your repeated question. You can join me in Bombay. But if S[hummy] would be better pleased for you to stay in Simla till 15th August, I should stay on if I were you. You will gain nothing in Bombay. But I leave it entirely to you. You can do whatever pleases you.

Mira is still in Delhi doing good work. P. is better today. Sushila is due today for his sake. I have gained 2 lb. during the week. This increase is solely due to the increase in the milk in-take.

I hope S. is better and that your knee trouble you are going to leave there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4140. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7449

135. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 20, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was about to write to you when your letter¹ came.

Of course I understand and appreciate the exquisite consideration running through your letter. I invite you all four to come here and pour out your love and argument to wean me from what appears to be an error. Anyway your monthly visit is due. You can come any day you like.

¹ The letter expressed misgivings of the addressee and others about the Working Committee's resolution of July 14. For the text, *vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

What I wanted to write to you about was this. Why don't you form a league with Muslim friends to propagate your idea of settlement?¹ Have you seen Q.A.'s reply to my note²? Do you accept his definition of Pakistan?

What is the common idea about independence.³ Surely you should have a common understanding over fundamentals before you come to an agreement.

Let not your fear of the Japs betray you into a worse state of things.

But more of all this when you come.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10922. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan. Also *The Indian Annual Register, 1942*, Vol. II, p. 207

136. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

July 20, 1942

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. I see that your work is going on well. It is good. Who can say at the moment what is going to happen? We should all be ready and do whatever comes to our lot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1092

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Rajagopalachari's Formula", July 1942.

² *Vide* "For Muslim Friends", 20-7-1942.

³ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "If Japanese Come?", 21-7-1942. The questions were cabled by the United Press.

137. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS⁴

[On or before *July 21, 1942*]

Q. 1. Whether Gandhiji is willing to see British go while Japanese on the frontier.

A. This question should not occur to anybody who has read my writings, for they contemplate Allied arms operating in India during the war.

Q. 2. Whether he would urge non-co-operation with Japanese after Japanese occupation.

A. Japanese occupation is inconceivable while Allied arms are operating on the Indian soil. If Japanese inflict defeat on Allied arms and succeed in occupying India I would most decidedly advise full non-co-operation.

Q. 3. Whether he would persist in urging non-co-operation if Japs shot non-co-operators .

Q. 4. Whether he would rather be shot than co-operate himself.

A. TO 3 & 4: Non-co-operation worth the name must invite shooting. In any case I would rather be shot than submit to Japanese or any other power.

Harijan, 26-7-1942

138. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,

July 21, 1942

CHI. MIRA,

You are living up to the certificate I have given you—you a born letter-writer of descriptive character. Your picture of your talk with Laithwaite is true to life.

I can understand and even appreciate the Viceroy's hesitation

about seeing you. But your talk with L. will serve the purpose.¹

Sushila has told me about your meeting Maulana Saheb and J.L. It was good both were in Delhi. Give my love to Maulana Saheb if he is still there and tell him I hope he is completely restored.

I hope you had a good time in Haryana. You will return here or meet me in Bombay as time demands. I expect to leave here on 2nd, reaching Bombay on 3rd. I am keeping well. Pyarelal who was ill is definitely on the mend.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10365. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, p. 343

¹ The Viceroy, writing to Amery, summarized Mirabehn's talk with Laithwaite on July 17, as follows: (a) She continued to insist on vital necessity for full acceptance of Gandhi's demand for recognition of Indian independence. Nothing else could possibly save a situation which was very rapidly deteriorating. Gandhi was inspired by pure friendship for us. We were loathed through the country by all parties, Congress or non-Congress. Only Congress (subject to the declaration of independence) could remedy the situation. Once the declaration had been made everything would fall properly into its place. Disunity would disappear, etc., etc. (b) Gandhi had on the last occasion taken steps to call off the movement where there had been cases of violence. On this occasion, he would do his very utmost to ensure non-violence. But he would not feel justified in calling the movement off merely because cases of violence occurred. He could not do so without doing greater violence to the ideals for which he was working. (c) Gandhi was greatly moved in his decision to press this policy by the state of moral degradation into which he thought the country had fallen. It must regain its own soul. At the moment it was prepared, while hating the British, to lick their boots. This is an intolerable position and no price was too high to pay to remedy it. (d) On the last occasion Congressmen put in prison had obeyed the rules and been strictly non-violent. That would not be so now. It would be a case of victory or death. Gandhi might be put in prison, etc., but could not be kept there. She hinted definitely that he intended to see the business to a finish, even at the cost of his own life. He would do all he could to guide the movement on non-violent lines, but must be left free to guide it. If he was not left to guide it by word or writing there was nothing left for him but death. (That no doubt may be the meaning of Gandhi's statement to the Press about a short and swift struggle.) She was given no reason to hope that any modification of our attitude could be looked for or that the Congress claim could be entertained. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 407-8

139. LETTER TO RANVIRSINH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
July 21, 1942

BHAI RANVIRSINH,

You showed great enthusiasm in bringing the letters of Mirabehn and others. Service should be the aim of everyone.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1221-a

140. CHARKHA JAYANTI¹

‘Gandhi Jayanti’ is just a pretext, the real thing is Charkha Jayanti. Had there been no charkha, there would perhaps have been no Jayanti (Birthday) celebrations, and even if there had been such celebrations, they would have had little importance. There is no point in having birthday celebrations of any person without any definite end in view, otherwise they must be confined to just the innocent rejoicings of relatives and friends. But because Gandhi Jayanti has been turned into Charkha Jayanti—a great and comprehensive end—the celebration has assumed a national importance.²

The Charkha Sangh has decided to celebrate the Jayanti by collecting funds for khadi work, by enlisting self-spinners, and making yarn collections. In fixing up its programme it has had before it the example of Shri Narandas Gandhi’s annual work in this direction. He and those who associate with him pledge themselves to do a certain amount of work each year, and he has had more and more success every year. There is no reason why such success should not attend the Charkha Sangh’s efforts. Only it needs workers with a will to bring the work to fruition. Without khadi there may come a time when people may have to go without any clothing. Only the Charkha Sangh can prevent this catastrophe. I hope that all will co-operate with the Sangh in its noble endeavour.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

¹ This was originally published in Hindi in *Khadi Jagat*.

² In the source here are added the words “and comprehensive end in view”—apparently a printer’s error.

141. LETTER TO BALKRISHANA BHAVE

July 22, 1942

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

It is surprising that your appetite was not fully restored there. Stay there as long as you can preserve your strength. There is no need at all for you to worry about me. Of course, my weight had gone down. It is now going up. It has reached 103.5. This time even persons like you will be able to sacrifice themselves. Wait and see. If such a time is to come, it will come of itself.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BALKRISHNA
TUPAROO, DALHOUSE
PUNJAB

From Gujarati: C.W. 807. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhawe

142. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 22, 1942

CHI. PRABHA,

You seem to be somewhat worried. There is no cause for worry. You can come here whenever you can free yourself. In the meantime take care of your health. There has been no letter from Jayaprakash recently, but I assume that he is all right. I am well. I take milk. Sushila has arrived here as Pyarelal had fallen ill. She will be returning on Sunday. Pyarelal has recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3569

143. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

July 23, 1942

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. May your aspirations be fulfilled. Everything is covered by this.

Meet me in Bombay and, if you are not satisfied with that you may accompany me, if at all I come back. “Enjoy yourself today, for who has seen tomorrow?”

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10429. Also C.W. 6868. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

144. TELEGRAM TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

[On or after *July 23, 1942*]¹

RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

SANTINIKETAN

BETTER COME AFTER RETURN FROM BOMBAY ABOUT
10TH.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. THE FIRST VICTIM

Shri Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has been arrested² and sentenced to two years imprisonment for disobedience of an order under 26(1) of the Defence of India Rules. His offence consisted in advising distressed people not to move from their places unless provided with an equivalent. This procedure was in strict accord with my writings in *Harijan* and the recent resolution of the Congress Working Committee.

¹ The telegram was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 23, 1942.

² He was arrested in Noakhali on July 23.

There is no doubt that Satis Babu's breach was deliberate. It was broken at the dictates of humanity, as will be clear from his letter to the District Magistrate printed elsewhere. Satis Babu and his men have worked for years in these parts and distributed thousands of rupees among the spinners and weavers. Satis Babu's letter shows that the grievance is real. A great war claimed to be for the emancipation of the human mind and human body cannot be won by the suppression of those whose willing association is desired and desirable. The masses of India are undoubtedly steeped in ignorance. They are meek and regarded by historians as the gentlest on earth. They are easily led. They follow the guidance of their leaders. Hence the proper way to deal with them is to deal with the leaders.

Leaders are of two kinds: self-styled, who become leaders to exploit them, and those who become leaders by right of service. They are the trusted ones. It is quite easy to distinguish between the two species. It is wrong to tear these latter from their men.

Satis Babu belongs to the second category. He is no politician, though he knows politics. He is a businessman. He is one of the favourite pupils of Acharya Ray, the distinguished scientist and life-philanthropist, who never earned a pie for himself. Satis Babu is one of the makers of the famous Bengal Chemical Works—one of Acharya Ray's many creations. He gave up the Chemical Works of which he was the manager on a high salary. He took up khadi and became a poor man. His partner in his joys and sorrows followed him heart and soul in his austere life, and so did his brother and promising sons, one of whom died while he was serving. His brother Shri Kshitish Chandra Das Gupta is also a chemist, and has dedicated himself to the Khadi Pratishthan, giving all his time and energy to handicrafts like bee-keeping, paper-making and so on. Satis Babu deprived his sons of the high education he had himself taken. He threw himself into his new work with such great energy that he became an expert in khadi work and built up Khadi Pratishthan, which has become a great centre of philanthropic activities. Satis Babu is one of the truest and gentlest of men I have had the privilege of working with. He tries with all his might to live up to the message of truth and

non-violence which he accepted not as a political expedient but as a rule of life. If this country was not ruled by the law of exploitation on behalf of its conquerors but by popular representatives, men like Satis Babu would be much in demand by those in authority in times of need. This is a time of great need. But all the use the authorities have for him is to punish him for the breach of their laws which express not the will of the nation but of one man whose rule is imposed upon them. Satis Babu has kindled a light which will not be extinguished. The law is wrong, Satis Babu the servant of his people is right.

SEVAGRAM, July 24, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

146. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 24, 1942

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There is nothing in Kanchan's letter which would require a telegram to be sent. Your letter is enough. Let us await her reply.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8472. Also C.W. 7173. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

147. INTERVIEW TO JOURNALIST¹

[Before July 25, 1942]²

He talked of the public feeling in his province. "It is more anti-British than pro-Japanese", he said. "There is a vague notion that we have had enough of this rule, and almost anything would be better than the existing state of things. People are happy when Subhas Babu says on the radio that there are no differences between him and you and when he says you are now out to fight for liberty at any cost."

GANDHIJI: But I suppose you know that there he is wrong and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. 'Liberty at any cost' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. 'At any cost' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not for instance include bringing in foreigners in order to help us win our liberty. I have no doubt that it means exchanging one form of slavery for another possibly much worse. But of course we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired Press of Britain and America I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India they did not mean it. So far as I am concerned I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice, and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't, they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get rid of it. 'Convert the deepening ill-will into goodwill' is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world, we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is *our*

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Fire Raging in Me", 25-7-1942. The journalist was present not in his capacity as a journalist "but as one interested in Gandhiji's movement".

² *Ibid.*

record? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us Heaven help our country !

We are betraying a woeful cowardice. I do not mind the blood-bath in which Europe is plunged. It is bad enough, but there is a great deal of heroism—mothers losing their only children, wives their husbands and so on. Lord Lytton's only son was killed the other day. British history is filled with such heroic sacrifice. It is not the criticism of the British and American Press that worries me, but it is our Press listening to the British censor. If only to resist that awful atmosphere I must gird up my loins.

I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says I am right. I am not right in the sense he means. For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover that by some strange miscalculation I had not realized the fact that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would to resist the British.

But it won't be the work of human hands. It will be the work of a Force—incalculable and invisible—which works, often upsetting all our calculations. I rely implicitly on it. Otherwise I should go mad in face of all this torrent of what I must call irritating criticism. They do not know my agony. I cannot express it except perhaps by dying.

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India may be destroyed? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such notion.

Destruction of the British Power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. But what matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if someone comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way.

I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the

manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralize the Congress ranks. It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige; no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration.

Harijan, 2-8-1942

148. A PLEA FOR REASON

The chorus of indignation from Great Britain and America with which the Working Committee resolution on the contemplated mass action has been greeted and the veiled or open threats which it has hurled at the Congress will not deter the Congress from its purpose. Hitherto it has thriven on opposition and attempts at suppression. It will not be otherwise this time. The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted.

The Daily Herald and the Labour Party¹ have excelled all other critics in exaggeration and abuse. How nice it would have been if they had taken the trouble to understand the Congress demand.

The justice of the demand for ending the British Power has never been questioned, the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it. India is not playing any effective part in the War. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the World War which has yet to reach its climax. We know that if India does not become free *now*, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration is to court disaster.

¹ A resolution passed by the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party on July 23 had denounced the "very contemplation" of a civil disobedience movement as "a proof of political irresponsibility". *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, Note, p. 455fn.

But the critics say: “To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal?” It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has said:

The Congress always stands, firstly for sympathy towards democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and, thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join.

The Congress President added that he

had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party provided it was real independence. That party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the co-operation of other parties.

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that during the war period the Allied troops will operate to stem Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

Surely, there is nothing here to cavil at for anyone. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy’s numerous Indian councillors are dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties operate without mutual support? In a free India even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For in a free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will serve the National Government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, that free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms. On the contrary, they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all India has by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there today and tomorrow and till the end of the War

whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this presentation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' Press or the Allies themselves, Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organized with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance.

SEVAGRAM, July 26, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

149. MESSAGE TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

July 26, 1942

Amid universal bullying, *The Daily Herald's* is the unkindest cut.¹ This bullying seems inspired, for it has no foundation.

The Hindu, 28-7-1942

150. TALK WITH VINOBA BHAVE AND OTHERS

July 26, 1942

I have sent for you here so that I can lay before you what is going on in my mind, and if you find in me impatience or any other fault you may let me know.

I have tried, as I am trying, my best to give up the idea of fasting which has occupied my mind these days. But I find that it has taken firm hold of my mind. So far I have undertaken a number of fasts and I do not think any of them was unsuccessful. Some of these were resorted to for personal or domestic reasons. Their result was also good. The fast undertaken for Hindu-Muslim unity, too, had a good effect though it did not last long. The fast unto death undertaken against the proposed separation of the Harijans had instantaneous effect. People did not come and sit down with me but went into action.

¹ *The Daily Herald*, replying the following day, denied having been inspired and said it was merely "interpreting the outlook of Labour men and women. . . ." However, Amery, writing to Linlithgow on July 24, said, "Gandhi's antics have really been too much this time for the Press here and in America. I dare say I may have helped by some very frank talks to the Lobby correspondents. . . . Even *The Daily Herald* and now the official Labour Party have turned against him. . . ." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 454-5

Even the president of the Hindu Mahasabha came to me and conceded my point. I liked all that. The twenty-one days' self-purification fast, occasioned by the impurity which had crept into the movement, was intended to be the first of a series of such fasts which was to go on for a year. But co-workers did not like the idea and I had to postpone it. But now I find that I cannot postpone it further. At the moment violence is on the rampage and darkness has descended upon the world. The poison has spread to India also. The Government wants to pit our own people against us and watch the spectacle. How can I tolerate that? I therefore feel that without sacrifice this raging fire cannot be quenched.

There are two kinds of fasts: one which is undertaken of one's own volition and the other which is undertaken in obedience to a general. What happens in a violent war? The soldiers put their faith in the general and plunge into the fire. Why cannot this be done in a non-violent war? This time I have also made a slight change in my concept of non-violence. In 1920 and 1930 I had laid down that observance of ahimsa in thought, word and deed was indispensable. Now I feel that it is not right to expect four hundred million people to accept this view and to wait till they do. Now I only tell them to abstain from violence in word and deed. When I send any satyagrahi to break a law, I merely say: "Leave your lathi here and go and do this work without using abusive language." The success of the work which this will ensure will drive out thoughts of violence from his heart also. Supposing a non-violent struggle has been started at my behest and later on there is an outbreak of violence, I will put up with that too, because eventually it is God who is inspiring me and things will shape as He wills. If He wants to destroy the world through violence using me as His instrument, how can I prevent it? He is so subtle that it is beyond man to know Him. Though electricity is a subtler power, we can certainly find out something about it. But God is still subtler and all-pervading. All that we can say about Him is that it is a Power at whose bidding everything goes on. But it is impossible to find out what that Power is. We can only put our faith in Him and it is that faith which is moving me.

When I hear of the destruction of the Germans, the British and the Japanese, the value of their sacrifices greatly increases in my eyes. How brave must have been the man who sank H. M. S., *Prince of Wales*! He threw himself against the engine and sank the enemy ship. What courage!

We have not shown any courage as yet. After going to jail we

have fought for small things. A few like you have studied there. But that has no place in my present programme. If Pyarelal says that he would like to finish the Koran or if you say that you would like to complete the writing of an unfinished book, it will not do. This time we have to finish the entire work in three or four days. Breaking all the laws of the Government includes fasting also. If they put us in jail we will give up food and water and immolate ourselves.

Now the question arises—with whom should the beginning be made? For that I have selected myself because the work won't make any progress without my sacrifice. I want your co-operation. There is no cause for anyone to get alarmed or feel unhappy. It is only a matter of doing one's duty. After all the body has to perish one day. It is therefore better to let it perish in a noble cause.

KISHORELAL : If the General himself should die at the beginning, what would happen to the army? Therefore in my opinion you should choose someone and begin with him. You should first make use of his sacrifice and offer yourself only afterwards, when you think the time has arrived.

GANDHIJI: Who can that be? Suppose Jankibehn says 'My body is not worth much, let me go' or Shastriji says 'I will go!'

KISHORELAL: No, no, I meant those who count.

GANDHIJI: That is what I say. Suppose Shastriji is worth a pice, Jankibehn worth a rupee and I worth a guinea. If we have to pay a guinea for the thing, then I must sacrifice myself. Moreover who will decide that the time to sacrifice myself has come?

KISHORELAL: You yourself will decide.

GANDHIJI: If that is so I decide it right now that first of all I should sacrifice myself. What do you think?¹

VINOBA BHAVE: I think you are right. But let me repeat what I have understood you to say. To my mind you mean that a fast may be undertaken from one's own choice or in obedience to a general in whom one has faith.

GANDHIJI: That is right. Let me add that to check the violence that is raging there is no other alternative. This therefore has become necessary. I am prepared to find more time for a fuller discussion if it is considered necessary.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, pp. 335-8

¹ Gandhiji here turned to Vinoba Bhave.

151. FOR THE PRINCES

A kind of nervousness creeps over me as I think of the Princes of India, although I have the privilege of knowing many and some even intimately. My nervousness arises from the painful knowledge that they are a creation of the British rulers. Though some of them pre-existed before the British advent, their existence thereafter depended solely on British goodwill, which in its turn depended upon the price the then incumbents paid for that commodity. The present incumbents are sole creation of the Imperial Power. Its simple frown can undo them.

But they need not feel so helpless if they could consider themselves as an integral part of the nation instead of being, as they are, an integral part of the Imperial machine. If the machine topples they may disappear unless they become part of, and depend upon, the nation.

The Empire is going either by the will of the British people or by the force of circumstances beyond their control. India shall not always be a slave country. Will the Princes march with the times or must they remain tied to the Imperial chariot-wheel? If they take their courage in both their hands and make common cause with the nation they can run the risk of dispossession.

This I admit is a heroic step. They can adopt the middle course. They may earn the goodwill of their people by sharing their powers with them. They will never be able to retain their absolutism for all time. But they may certainly hope to retain much if they can secure the contentment and active co-operation of the people within their jurisdiction, in the administration of their own affairs. I think it is wrong of the Princes to let their critics say of their people that they are too backward to deserve freedom. It is a reflection on them. The people in the States belong to the same stock as those outside their borders. The Princes can lose nothing by being liberal. And they can lose everything by holding on to their autocracy.

For my part I desire not abolition, but conversion of their autocracy into trusteeship, not in name but in reality. The arbitrary powers they enjoy should go. The liberty of the people should not depend upon the will of an individual however noble and ancient may be his descent. Nor can any person, whether Prince or a Princely zamindar or merchant, be the sole owner and disposer of possessions hereditary or self-acquired. Every individual must have the fullest

liberty to use his talents consistently with equal use by his neighbours but no one is entitled to the arbitrary use of the gains from the talents. He is part of the nation or say the social structure surrounding him. Therefore, he can only use his talents not for self only but for the social structure of which he is but a part and on whose sufferance he lives. The present inequalities are surely due to people's ignorance. With a growing knowledge of their natural strength, the inequalities must disappear. If the revolution is brought about by violence the position will be reversed, but not altered for the better. With non-violence, i.e., conversion, the new era which people hope for must be born. My approach and appeal are in terms of non-violence pure and undefiled. The French have a noble motto in Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. It is a heritage not for the French only but for all mankind.

What the French never realized it is open to us to do. Will the Princes and the Princely landholders and merchants take the lead? It is for them to take the lead, not for the 'have-nots', who have nothing to share with anybody except their pauperism and abjectness. I am addressing weekly appeals to the British Power. They are made exactly in the same friendly spirit as this is. The British may not respond. If the 'haves', who are in fact the pillars on which the mighty British Power rests, can realize their obvious duty, the British Power must yield. It was because I had despaired of response from the pillars, that I have thought of moving the masses on whom the pillars rest. I may not leave a single stone unturned to avoid, if I can, what is undoubtedly a great risk. Hence this appeal.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

152. URDU EXAMINATION¹

The Hindustani Prachar Sabha has begun its work in right earnest. It is purely a body of workers who believe in the message and mission of the Sabha. The message is that the national language of India is not English but Hindustani, i.e., Hindi plus Urdu. Shri Purushottamdas Tandon, who is the soul of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, was the author of the Congress resolution on Hindustani. It was he who made it crystal clear to me that Hindustani at present must

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

mean Hindi plus Urdu. Everyone who attends Congress meetings realizes this truth, for when a Congressman speaks in Hindi the Urdu-speaking men do not fully understand him, if at all, and the same thing applies to Urdu speakers. Therefore if you wish to be understood by all, you have to speak a combination of the two as I have heard Malaviyaji and Babu Bhagwandas doing. Hence the necessity of Indian nationalists speaking both the varieties of Hindustani speech. No one may be said to speak Hindustani who is not equally at home with both the varieties. Hence the necessity also of their knowing equally well both the scripts. To supply this felt want is one of the main causes of founding the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Its founders were and are members of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. But their ambition was not satisfied with mere Hindi propaganda. Therefore, with the approval of the Sammelan, they have founded the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. Naturally the Sabha's first act should be to induce all the Hindi-knowing persons to learn Urdu and to provide facilities for them. To this end I am in communication with Maulana Abdul Haq Saheb, the learned secretary of the Anjuman Taraqui-e-Urdu for help and guidance. The council of the Sabha has decided to hold the first examination in Urdu on the 22nd November. The particulars, including the syllabus, will be published as soon as possible. Those who would appear for this examination are requested to send in their names to Acharya Shriman Narayan Agarwal, Hindustani Prachar Office, Wardha. I hope that all those who have passed the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan examinations will be eager to pass the forthcoming Urdu examination. Of course those who do not know Hindi would also be welcome. A knowledge of any language at any time enriches one's mind and enables one to cultivate closer contact with the people who speak that language. How much more valuable must a knowledge of Urdu be to the one who knows Hindi only, as that of Hindi must be to the one who knows Urdu only? If living Hindustani is to come into being it can only be through a natural and happy fusion of the two. Such a fusion is impossible without a large number of persons having an equal command over both the sister languages.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

153. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

July 27, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

How exceedingly nice of you to have listened to the cry of the dumb cow?¹ May I say, God bless you for your kind act!

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, p. 469

154. NOTE TO BALVANTSINHA

July 27, 1942

Do not have any anxiety on my account.² It is worth considering whether one can undertake a fast for the sake of others. I have discussed it only from a theoretical standpoint.

I keep thinking about you. But I do not worry at all. I do not have any fear about you. Your remaining here and keeping yourself busy with Ashram work is enough for me and you must take it that Goseva work is included in those activities. Meet Swami and others and love them. Your being here is like a fire bucket. You know how powerful a fire bucket is. In case I perish, God will show you the way. In fact you have been in the Ashram from its inception, so you should die here. I shall send for you if I get the time, but it is difficult.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 338

¹ Vide "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 2-7-1942. The Viceroy, writing on July 25, had said that he had "taken steps which will I hope result in reducing to quite insignificant proportions any future accidents of this kind".

² The addressee was haunted by the fear that Gandhiji would not live long and had wanted to know what he must do after Gandhiji's death.

155. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS¹

Q. 1. Will you be satisfied by a joint guarantee by America, China and Soviet Russia?

A. No guarantee is contemplated by the Congress demand, because present delivery of independence is the need of the hour, not because of distrust about future delivery but because India as an independent Power wants to play, if it is at all possible, a decisive part in favour of the Allies. India today is becoming progressively hostile to the Allied Powers notwithstanding their ability to command recruits and the like. What is wanted is an enthusiastic response from a free and willing India. Many of us think that that is the indispensable condition of the success of Allied arms.

Q. 2. What should be the nature of the provisional government and who should be the possible members?

A. It is difficult to foresee what will happen when India is declared free but I imagine that any provisional government to be stable in the absence of outside imposition can only be by the willing consent of different popular parties. This willing consent is impossible so long as the third party is present to look up to for favours. The Congress President has already suggested that the Government may simultaneously with the declaration of independence deliver their power to any of the organized popular parties including the Muslim League and the Congress. It will be up to the deliverer to compose with the remaining parties in order to secure stability, because in free India Government must depend wholly upon the willing consent of the people. It should be remembered that all the time that free India Government is functioning, the Allied troops will carry on their operations without let or hindrance, subject to the treaty that will be negotiated between free India Government and the Allied Powers.

Q. 3. How do you hope to avert anarchy during the transitional period?

A. The anarchy is automatically averted if a provisional Government is formed, which will be the case under the Congress president's suggestion.

Q. 4. Will you accept a joint guarantee by the Socialist and Liberal parties of England for Indian independence?

A. Reply to this is contained in reply to the first.

SEVAGRAM, July 28, 1942

Harijan, 2-8-1942

¹ The questions were from the United Press, London.

156. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

July 28, 1942

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

Many thanks for your letter. The propaganda you refer to is vicious. I am going to notice it in *Harijan*.¹

As to the charges against me, it has been my lot for the past 50 years to be misunderstood. This last attack is not surprising. I shall, however, see what is to be done. Both the Congress and I will survive the venom. My love to you both.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 36

157. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

SEVAGRAM,

July 28, 1942

MY DEAR BHARATANAND,

I have your letter. You will misunderstand me. I told you that I was at one with you and that I was trying to take the Congress and everybody towards world federation. I also tell you that if it ever comes it will come through Sevagram or Sevagram way. I want free India too for that purpose. If I can get freedom for India now through non-violent means, power of non-violence is firmly established, Empire idea dissolves and world State takes its place, in which all the States of the world are free and equal, no State has its military, there may be a world police to keep order in the absence of universal belief in non-violence.

If this cannot satisfy your ambition, nothing else will. This is not said to tempt you to come back to Sevagram. That you will do when you are tired of being outside your natural surroundings.

But your return to your profession is not necessary to enable you to do federation work. Return to the profession will be a

¹ *Vide* "Unseemly If True", 9-8-1942.

hindrance. You may carry on a whirlwind campaign for the idea, if that satisfies your soul.

Keep your health.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

158. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

DELHI,
July 28, 1942

BHAI SAHEB,

I am sending herewith a copy of the constitution of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. You will find some mistakes of Urdu. I do not have anyone who is proficient in Urdu. I am looking for such a person. Can you help? The person must know Hindi as well.

I have left it to you whether or not you will join the Sabha. I remain hopeful that you will come when you find the right occasion. You will see from the constitution that all the posts on the executive committee have not been filled in the hope that an opportunity will certainly come for you to be included.

And now I come to the main purpose of this letter. In Hindustani Prachar our first step should be to hold an examination for beginners. We have decided to hold one such examination on November 22. Does your Anjuman hold any examination which even those who know no Urdu can take? If so we shall prepare candidates for such an examination provided you open examination centres wherever candidates are available. If you like we are willing to be your agents. If you are not equipped to do this, can you send us some instructions? Can you suggest some books? Will you agree to be the examiner or will you send some names from your office? We shall all be obliged to you for any help you can give.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. LETTER TO SYED MAHMOOD

July 28, 1942

BHAI MAHMOOD,

I read the book from the first page to the last. It reflects your mind. It is good but in my opinion it is not worth publishing. All your information does not seem correct. It should be such that there is not any scope for two opinions. In the last three chapters there are many things which are not desirable. Your information should be such as both Hindus and Muslims can accept. Let their conclusions be different.

Your duty is to bring the two together. I do not wish that your book should start a controversy.

My last advice is: do what Maulana Saheb says.

I hope you have started learning Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5116

160. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 29, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Nothing from you for the last two days. I must not expect, if I do not write regularly. And I can't. I hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4141. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7450

161. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,

July 29, 1942

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

Nothing from your pen I can possibly disregard. If I had the slightest faith in a Round Table Conference when British authority

reigns supreme, I would accept your proposal. You know what happened when Sir Sankaran Nair presided, when I presided in Delhi—was it not?—and in London when I was thrust into the chair. Of course you are at liberty to say that each time the fault was mine. My interpretation is different. The result is the same. I am not the fit person for such a task. But if you have faith and you call it, I shall be at your service. You at least will acquit me of haste or pride. I have seen nothing impossible of acceptance in my or, rather, now, the Congress demand.

I hope you have got rid of all your illness.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7578

162. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

WARDHAGANJ,
July 30, 1942

AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERTBRIDGE ROAD
LONDON SW 11

HAVE NO ANXIETY. ANDREWS WITH ME.¹ TRUST GOD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1523

163. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

July 30, 1942

MY DEAR GLADYS,

Your dear letter just received. Andrews' spirit is ever with me just as it is with you. I have only discussed the possibilities. No fast of

¹ The addressee has noted: "Shortly before the Quit India resolution was passed in August 1942, I had written or cabled Gandhiji reminding him of his words in 'Andrews' Legacy', (about both sides coming together)."

the nature you have in mind immediately in view. Be careful for nothing. God's will be done. I shall not act in haste. Do come after my return from Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

MISS GLADYS OWEN

NEW MANZIL

LALBAGH

LUCKNOW, U.P.

From a photostat: G.N. 6198

164. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

July 30, 1942

CHI. JAISUKHLAL¹,

It is good that you wrote. Chi. Manu² is a very sensible and smart girl. She serves Ba devotedly. She has become friendly with all. There is no complaint against her. She is quite good in her studies too. I see that she is happy. She comes every evening to massage my legs. Of course she also accompanies me in my walks. There is no need for- you to worry about her. It is enough if you keep yourself mentally ready. There is no need for you to resign. Cultivate self-control as much as possible. But that should not be done out of compulsion. Do not at all worry about me. I am in God's hands and always seek shelter in Him. And so I enjoy supreme peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U.-IXXIV

165. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 30, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

The accompanying letter was left behind here. It was meant for me to see, was it not? I have read it.

Send a note about that dictionary.

¹ Gandhiji's nephew

² Addressee's daughter

We should have a book-store through which we can sell books selected by us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10961

166. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 30, 1942

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are responsible for the conduct of the Ashram inmates all the twenty-four hours. How you can discharge that responsibility is a different thing. This can be possible only when they willingly submit to observation. You should act as if I was not there. Do what you can. See how far your ahimsa goes. If things are thrust on you of which you do not even have any knowledge you should put up with it. By all means take my help whenever it is needed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4437; also S.N. 24486

167. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,

July 31, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

I was wrong in telling [you] there was nothing from you for two days. M. had no time to give me your letters.

You were wrong in not wanting to tell me of your illness. You do no good by such well-meaning but ill-serving suppression. However, that is past. I hope you are now fully restored.

I am quite clear that it is far better that you miss Bombay to be with S. than that you should cause him grief to come to Bombay. If it turns out (which I hope it won't) as S. imagines, you would never forgive yourself for not being with him as long as you could.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4142. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7451

168. *LETTER TO TEJA SINGH*

July 31, 1942

Many thanks for your letter¹. You will pardon me for not entering into a discussion of the question. I would say the same thing of everyone, including Krishna, as a man who cannot create but can only destroy. But that would not diminish my regard for him or his bravery.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. *LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA*²

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 31, 1942

DEAR UMA,

I have your two dear letters. I cannot be offended by what you write. I appreciate your frankness. You do not want me to argue with you.

I hope you are better.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You must not mind the old method of addressing and subscribing. We may differ in opinions but there should be no change in our love.

SHRI UMADEVI

RAMANA ASHRAM

TIRUVANNAMALAI

S. INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 1205 and 8059. Also C.W. 5100. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

¹ The addressee in his letter had taken exception to Gandhiji's description of Guru Govind Singh as "a misguided patriot"; *vide* "Guru Govind Singh", 4-7-1942.

² A Polish admirer of Gandhiji

170. LETTER TO KRISNACHANDRA

July 31, 1942

CHI. KRI[SHNA]CHA[NDRA],

How can I test you in this way? Why should you take it as a defeat if you cannot keep anyone? No, the question simply was whether you could be naturally generous and tolerant in your dealings with difficult persons or not. For that you yourself will be both the examinee and the examiner.

You gave good news about Ramji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4438; also S.N. 24487

171. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,

July 31, 1942

BHAI GOPICHAND,

I have only now been able to read your letter of July 24. The case is sad. Your reply is very good. But who will listen ? There is nothing for me to do in the matter, is there ? And what after all can one do ? Please reassure Dukhiya's relatives on my behalf.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
C/O THE POSTMASTER, BATOTE
(JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE)

From the Hindi original : Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

172. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

July 1942

The discussion that took place yesterday on Kishorelal's instructions¹ was not proper. He had issued those instructions to

¹ Kishorelal Mashruwala had issued instructions, in July, 1942, that no one could see Gandhiji without the previous permission of the Managing Committee. Munnalal Shah and Balvantsinha protested against this and spoke about it to other inmates of the Ashram including Kishorelal after the prayers.

protect me. This is a dharmashala, but even then there should be some rules. This is also a hospital. Even the patients have to observe rules. However, Bhansali is the best person of us all. Why should he observe any rules? Munnalal is also free. He is a king unto himself. We have ourselves seen, at Kishorelalbbhai's house, how much work he does. He too is an exception. Balvantsinha is the best labourer among us all. He cannot remain alive without the cow and farming. But today he is at my service. He is also an exception.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 334

173. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
[August]¹ 1, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. You must not worry. You have remained for the sake of S. There must be joy in that sacrifice. Why should you doubt the correctness of the step? You will gain more by your restraint than by coming to Bombay and this notwithstanding what happens in Bombay. I hope to be back in Sevagram before 14th and not before 10th. You may leave when you know the date for certain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3692. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6501

174. INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ASHRAM INMATES

[August 1, 1942]²

I am going to Bombay tomorrow. I cannot say what will happen. But I hope to be back by August 11, and in any case not later than August 13. Those who are in the Ashram should know that anything can befall them. It is possible that Government may even stop the supply of our food. Only those therefore should stay here who are ready to live even on leaves. The rest should leave. It will be a matter of shame for us if they leave after the trouble.

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen, p. 339

¹ The source has "1-9-1942" in Hindi in Gandhiji's hand which appears to be a slip for 1-8-1942.

² Gandhiji left Sevagram for Bombay on August 2.

175. SPEECH AT OPENING OF HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH BHAWAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 1, 1942

So far, we could not produce better results in the basic education system, which has been introduced in Government-controlled institutions, but we hope to do so in the Hindustani Talimi Sangh Bhawan, as we have free scope here for research, experiments and development in the seven years' course prescribed under what is called the Wardha Education System.

An institution founded on truth is bound to succeed. The world is based on Truth. Truth is better than any other religion. God is Truth and *vice versa*. Truth alone lives even though all things perish. I bless this institution whose guiding principle is stated to be Truth, and appeal to you all to give your blessings and help it whole-heartedly.

The Hindu, 3-8-1942

176. QUESTION BOX

SEVAGRAM,
[On or before August 2, 1942]¹

WORLD FEDERATION

Q. Instead of striving for India's freedom why would you not strive for a far greater and nobler end—world federation? Surely that will automatically include India's freedom as the greater includes the less.

A. There is an obvious fallacy in this question. Federation is undoubtedly a greater and nobler end for free nations. It is a greater and nobler end for them to strive to promote federation than be self-centred, seeking only to preserve their own freedom. They are finding it difficult if not impossible for individuals to retain freedom without a combination. It has become a necessity while the war lasts and it

¹ This and the following item were written in Sevagram where Gandhiji remained up to this date.

would be good if they voluntarily pledge themselves now, to remain united even after the war. Defeat of any one member should make no difference. The survivors will not rest content till the defeated member is avenged. Still this won't be a world federation. It would be a mere defensive alliance between a certain combination. The very first step to a world federation is to recognize the freedom of conquered and exploited nations. Thus, India and Africa have to be freed. The second step would be to announce to and assure the aggressor powers, in the present instance, the Axis powers, that immediately the war ends, they will be recognized as members of the world federation in the same sense as the Allies. This presupposes an agreement among the members of the world federation as to the irreducible fundamentals. If this is not forthcoming, the federation will fall to pieces under the slightest strain. Therefore it has to come about voluntarily. I suggest that non-violence is the basis of voluntariness. It is because of all the nations of the world India is the one nation which has a message, however limited and crude it may be, in that direction that it must have immediate freedom to enable it to play its part. You may not quote against me Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I know that they do not hold the view I hold on non-violence. When India gets her freedom the probability is that I shall no longer be wanted by any party and everybody would be war-mad. Nevertheless there will be, I am quite sure, a respectable number of votaries of nonviolence who will make their contribution. But this subject is not germane to the question. Moreover, I am discussing that aspect more fully elsewhere. I hope you will agree with me that India, in seeking first to be free, is not retarding federation. It wants her freedom for the sake of the nations in distress, especially China and Russia and for the whole of humanity—in your language world federation. You will also, I hope, see that no universal federation is possible without India becoming free now. It would be an earnest too of the Allied declarations.

WHAT ABOUT NEPAL?

Q. When India is free will she treat Nepal as an independent country that she is now or will she be annexed to free India?

A. If I know India's mind at all, having tasted the bitter fruit of dependence, she will not want to annex or steal any country. She can have no imperial ambition. Nepal therefore will be an honoured and independent neighbour. I am not sure that Nepal is as independent as you think it is. But I do not know enough of Nepal to challenge your statement. I hope that you are wholly right.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

177. HINDUSTANI

SEVAGRAM,

[*On or before August 2, 1942*]

Apropos of the work that is now being done by Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Kakasaheb sends me the following excerpt from *Young India*, August 18th, 1921.

So many Hindi-speaking friends have been anxious for me to make myself responsible for publishing a Hindi edition of the *Navajivan*....

I know that several translations in Hindi appear in different parts of India. But the desire has been to put under one cover an authorized free translation of selected articles from the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. This is now being done. The Hindi of the edition will really be Hindustani, a resultant of Hindi and Urdu—simple words understood by both Hindus and Mussalmans. An attempt will be made to avoid ornamentation. Indeed I would love to give a simultaneous transcript in the Urdu characters. But that cannot be as yet.

It reminds the readers and me that I expressed years ago the views I am now expressing and seeking to emphasize. The way to accomplish the end has been only now found, namely, that a large number of persons should speak and write Hindi and Urdu with equal facility. The forthcoming first examination will show how many have accepted the way.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

178. PRODUCE KHADI¹

You should apply the slogan "Grow more food" which we hear everywhere to khadi also. If we do not produce khadi crores of people

¹ This was originally published in *Khadi Jagat*.

will be compelled to remain naked just as if we do not produce food crores of people will die of starvation —and the number will be much larger than the number of those dying in war. The only difference will be that in the war they die knowingly and they are honoured as heroes while no one remembers those who die of starvation. And they die because of our ignorance and lethargy.

We shall not die for want of clothes, but we would not like to remain naked either. If the war is prolonged the mills will cease to function [as at present]. They will produce war material.

How can then khadi be produced? I have already said that at the moment we can get the yarn produced not by hired labour but by plying the charkha voluntarily in every home. If we keep an account of every minute and put that to good use, there will never be a scarcity of cloth. Since the yarn given to us as a gift will definitely be cheaper than that produced by hired labour, the khadi will also be comparatively cheaper.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 2-8-1942

179. 'MAGAN DIPa'

Gram Udyoga Patrika is little known to the general public. It is the organ of the A.I.V.I.A., edited by Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa and published from Maganwadi. It contains solid reading matter for those who are interested in the revival of village industries. The worth of such writings is specially appreciated during these times when we are compelled more and more to rely upon what villages can supply. Thus we may have no paraffin for domestic use. We have very little even now. Maganwadi has produced a lamp which enables one to use the indigenous oils. The experiment that has so far succeeded refers to the use of *sarso*¹ oil. The success is so gratifying that in Maganwadi only that oil is used for lighting purposes. The lantern is an adaptation of the usual hurricane article. Sri Satyan of the Nalwadi Ashram is its inventor. He is adopting these lanterns for dispatch as samples only. The current number of the *Patrika* is devoted solely to the 'Magan Dipa' as the adapted lantern has been named. For the inventive faculty as applied to village tools and products is the special legacy of

¹ Mustard

the late Maganlal Gandhi after whom the institution and the museum are named. For further particulars I must refer the curious reader to the *Patrika* which can be had on application to the Manager, Maganwadi, Wardha.

SEVAGRAM, August 2, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

180. AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION

[August 2, 1942]¹

I take the following from *The Hindu*:

The *Manchester Guardian*, in an editorial commenting on the Wardha resolution, says that the resolution suggested that if Britain would immediately withdraw, India would help her and the Allies to 'resist aggression'. In India, as here, it is being asked what is meant by 'resistance'. Would it be armed resistance or would it be 'resistance' of the kind which Mr. Gandhi has always advocated—non-violent non-co-operation? The text of the resolution ought to settle the question, but it does not. Pandit Nehru and some other Congress leaders have said that they themselves believe in offering armed resistance, provided that Britain makes the necessary political concessions. But Mr. Gandhi's belief is that Indians would most effectively 'resist' Japan and any other aggressor by pure non-violence. How is Britain to know what sort of 'resistance' the proposed Indian Government would organize, concludes the *Manchester Guardian*.

This is a good question. But who can speak for the proposed Indian Government? It must be clear that it won't be Congress Government; nor will it be Hindu Mahasabha Government, nor Muslim League Government. It will be all-India Government. It will be a government not backed by any military power unless the so-called military classes seize the opportunity and overawe the populace and declare themselves the Government as Franco has done. If they play the game then the proposed government would be a government though provisional in the first instance, broad-based upon the will of the people. Let us assume that the military-minded persons being without the backing of the powerful British arms will think [it] wise not to seize power. The popular Government to be must represent Parsis, Jews, Indian Christians, Muslims and Hindus not as separate

¹ From the Gujarati version published in the *Harijanbandhu*, 9-8-1942

religious groups but as Indians. The vast majority won't be believers in non-violence. The Congress does not believe in non-violence as a creed. Very few go to the extreme length I do as the *Manchester Guardian* properly puts it. The Maulana and Pandit Nehru believe in offering armed resistance. And, I may add, so do many Congressmen. Therefore, whether in the country as a whole or in the Congress, I shall be in a hopeless minority. But for me even if I find myself in a minority of one my course is clear. My non-violence is on its trial. I hope I shall come out unscathed through the ordeal. My faith in its efficacy is unflinching. If I could turn India, Great Britain, America and the rest of the world, including the Axis Powers, in the direction of non-violence I should do so. But that feat mere human effort cannot accomplish. That is in God's hands. For me, 'I can but do or die.' Surely the *Manchester Guardian* does not fear the real article, genuine non-violence. Nobody does nor need.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

181. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

AT THE STATION,
August 2, 1942

CHI. KAKA,

I got your note. Continue on the Board¹ for the present. If necessary we will consider leaving it when the time comes.

You will have to make a concrete suggestion about the Sammelan. I shall then be able to give my decision. Otherwise my intellect will simply not work. You know its problems better than anybody else, and so you will have to take an active part. You may also make whatever suggestion you like regarding the election of the President. I understand your difficulty. Rest assured that it will be solved.

I understand about the books. Do not neglect your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10962

¹ Hindi Board of the Bombay Government

182. DEMANDS OF MARWAR LOK PARISHAD

The following are the demands of the Marwar Lok Parishad in Jodhpur as supplied to me:

1. The Government of Jodhpur shall reaffirm the terms of the compromise of 1940 arrived at between the Government and the Marwar Lok Parishad as a result of the last satyagraha movement in Marwar.

2. The Government shall see that rule of law is established in the State and more especially in the jagiri areas and that full civil liberties (in terms of the agreement of 1940) are enjoyed by the Lok Parishad workers without any fear of intimidation or victimization (i.e., physical violence or damage to property, etc.) at the hands of jagirdars or their subordinates.

3. The New Reforms (Advisory Assembly) recently introduced shall immediately be scrapped and the Constitutional Reforms originally passed in the Council and assented to by His Highness the Maharaja shall instead be introduced as an earnest of further constitutional development on the path to full responsible government under the aegis of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur.

4. The Municipal Act (passed in 1940 but not yet enforced) shall be revised consistently with the growing needs and aspirations of the people and real local self-government shall be established with the people's representatives enjoying real powers.

5. Government shall make effective and satisfactory arrangements for regular *Latai*.

NOTE: In this connection mention must be made of the circular of the Government to the district officers ordering them to arrange for regular *Latai* at places where it was delayed. The circular was unfortunately withdrawn by the Government in 1941 thereby leaving the district authorities powerless and the cultivators at the mercy of the jagirdars.

6. The exaction of illegal and unlawful cesses and other exactions shall immediately be stopped and proper arrangements shall forthwith be made to see that the practice is not resumed. In addition, the Government shall appoint a commission of inquiry to go into the jagiri problem as a whole to make necessary recommendations regarding the levy of various cesses, taxes and other exactions held lawful at present.

7. The Government shall immediately enforce the Registration of Arms Act in the case of jagirdars also. The present policy of making invidious discrimination between the jagirdar class, in whose case the date of registration is being postponed from month to month, and the rest of the

people, who have been compelled to register their arms and secure licences for possessing them, is fraught with grave consequences for the internal peace and security of Marwar, especially In these days of grave crisis.

8. An inquiry shall also be held into the following happenings:

(a) The excesses committed by the jagirdars and their men on the Lok Parishad workers in the jagirs of Chandawal, Ladnun, Roru, etc

(b) Ill-treatment meted out by the jail authorities to the political prisoners.

(c) The lathi charge and other excesses of the 19th June and the subsequent days.

There is nothing in the demands that one can cavil at. There is nothing extravagant in them. They take note of the limitations of Rajputana States whatever the cause thereof. It is for the compliance with these demands that Shri Jainarain Vyas and his companions are in jail and Bisa lost his life.¹ It is for that reason that many Jodhpuris including women—a strange sight in Jodhpur—have resolved to offer civil disobedience. Let me hope that the Jodhpur Durbar will satisfy the moderate demands of the Parishad and let me further hope that the people of Jodhpur having resolved upon achieving their purpose through suffering will not rest till they have reached their immediate goal.

ON WAY TO BOMBAY, AUGUST 2, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

183. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

ON WAY TO BOMBAY,

August 3, 1942

DEAR FRIENDS,

As I am supposed to be the spirit behind the much discussed and equally well abused resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on independence, it has become necessary for me to explain my position. For I am not unknown to you. I have in America perhaps the largest number of friends in the West—not even excepting Great Britain, British friends knowing me personally

¹ *Vide* “Jodhpur”, 30-5-1942, “Jodhpur Tragedy”, 14-6-1942, “Jodhpur”, 29-6-1942 and “Pandit Kachru Externed”, 20-7-1942.

are more discerning than the American. In America I suffer from the well-known malady called hero worship. The good Dr. Holmes, until recently of the Unity Church of New York, without knowing me personally became my advertising agent. Some of the nice things he said about me I never knew myself. So I receive often embarrassing letters from America expecting me to perform miracles. Dr. Holmes was followed much later by the late Bishop Fisher who knew me personally in India. He very nearly dragged me to America but fate had ordained otherwise and I could not visit your vast and great country with its wonderful people.

Moreover, you have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay on the 'Duty of Civil Disobedience' scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa. Great Britain gave me Ruskin, whose *Unto This Last* transformed me overnight from a lawyer and city-dweller into a rustic living away from Durban on a farm, three miles from the nearest railway station and Russia gave me in Tolstoi a teacher who furnished a reasoned basis for my non-violence. He blessed my movement in South Africa when it was still in its infancy and of whose wonderful possibilities I had yet to learn. It was he who had prophesied in his letter to me that I was leading a movement which was destined to bring a message of hope to the downtrodden people of the earth. So you will see that I have not approached the present task in any spirit of enmity to Great Britain and the West. After having imbibed and assimilated the message of *Unto This Last*, I could not be guilty of approving of Fascism or Nazism, whose cult is suppression of the individual and his liberty.

I invite you to read my formula of withdrawal or, as it has been popularly called, 'Quit India', with this background. You may not read into it more than the context warrants.

I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim 'Truth is God' instead of the usual one 'God is Truth'. That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel Him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for Britain boldly

to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the un murmuring world conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonderworking engineers and financial resources can produce.

I know that interested propaganda has filled your ears and eyes with distorted versions of the Congress position. I have been painted as a hypocrite and enemy of Britain under disguise. My demonstrable spirit of accommodation has been described as my inconsistency, proving me to be an utterly unreliable man. I am not going to burden this letter with proof in support of my assertions. If the credit I have enjoyed in America will not stand me in good stead, nothing I may argue in self-defence will carry conviction against the formidable but false propaganda that has poisoned American ears.

You have made common cause with Great Britain. You cannot therefore disown responsibility for anything that her representatives do in India. You will do a grievous wrong to the Allied cause if you do not sift the truth from the chaff whilst there is yet time. Just think of it. Is there anything wrong in the Congress demanding unconditional recognition of India's independence? It is being said, 'But this is not the time.' We say, 'This is the psychological moment for that recognition.' For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's independence as a war measure of first class magnitude.

I am,

Your Friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 9-8-1942

184. QUESTION BOX

WHAT EDITORS CAN DO

Q. What do you expect the editors to do in the crisis that has overtaken us?

A. I am proud of the way the Indian Press as a whole has reacted to the Congress resolution. The acid test has yet to come. I hope that the Press will then fearlessly represent the national cause. It is better not to issue newspapers than to issue them under a feeling of suppression. At the same time I do not want them to be blind followers of the Congress and to endorse what their reason or conscience rebels against. The national cause will never suffer by honest criticism of national institutions and national policies. The danger to be guarded against is the inflaming of communal passions. The forthcoming movement will mean nothing if it does not end in bringing communal harmony and honourable peace with the British people. Whatever may be said to the contrary I maintain that the Congress policy has been framed in no hostile spirit against the British people. For the spirit behind the policy is wholly non-violent. I do hope, therefore, that the Press will warn those who have the nation's cause at heart against countenancing violence either against the British people or among ourselves. It must retard our progress towards our goal.

ON THE WAY TO BOMBAY, August 3, 1942

Harijan, 9-8-1942

185. NOTE ON LETTER FROM HORACE ALEXANDER¹

[August 3, 1942]²

This is a letter from a well-known English friend, who is also one of the best English friends India has. It demands as gentle and genuine an answer as his letter is gentle and genuine. I believe every

¹ The source does not identify Horace Alexander as the author of the letter which elicited this note. But it is clear from the contents as also the following item that it was he. In the letter Horace Alexander had conveyed to Gandhiji the strong feelings aroused in England by the 'Quit India' resolution, which had come at a time when England was facing "the greatest ordeal that her population has ever known" and must be seen by even friends of India in England as "a most cruel stab in the back". He had asked Gandhiji to say something "that will show... why you have felt driven to open this way to their possible annihilation".

² *Vide* the following item, where Gandhiji says he wrote the note in the train.

word of what he says about British emotion. Agatha Harrison sends me cable after cable revealing her deep pain over what I am doing and the Congress is doing. And Agatha Harrison, weak in body though she is, is wearing herself out in removing the cobwebs of misunderstanding. She sees every responsible English statesman who will see her (and let me admit that they all see her) and pleads for India's cause. But she is up against a blind wall. I seem to have lost the credit that I thought I used to enjoy in those circles. It is most difficult to repair a loss for which there is no accountable reason that the loser can see. For the moment I must content myself with repetition of assurances and protestations of good faith. I would not lose credit even for entrance into heaven. But there are moments when it becomes necessary to risk (not to incur) the loss of credit for the sake of the creditor himself.

I began my experiments in non-co-operation with the members of my family. I had no occasion to regret the adventure, for the risks were run for their sakes as they themselves discovered, some soon and some late. Love and truth are as gentle as they are sometimes hard beyond endurance.

I have passed many sleepless nights to discover the various ways of ending the struggle with the least commotion. But I saw that some form of conflict was inevitable to bring home the truth to the British mind. I have no doubt that events would show that I was right, that I acted in the spirit of pure friendship. British authority would deal summarily with the movement. The sufferings will be all on the side of the people. True, but in the end Britain will lose in the moral fibre. But to let her continue as she is doing is to make her bankrupt and, perhaps, lose the battle, whereas the movement, which I have advised the Congress to take up, is designed to prevent bankruptcy and enable Great Britain to acquire a moral height which must secure victory for her and her Allies. There is no claim here for philanthropy.

The fact stands and nobody has ever denied it that by this movement India stands to gain her goal of independence. But this is irrelevant here. What is relevant here is the fundamental fact that the movement is designed to help Britain in spite of herself. This is a very big, almost arrogant claim. I am not ashamed to advance it because it comes from an agonized heart. Time alone will show the truth or

falsehood of the claim. I have no doubt as to the verdict. For the testimony of reason may be wrong, but of the heart never.

From a photostat: G.N. 1438

186. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,

August 3, 1942

MY DEAR HORACE,

I read your touching letter¹ for the second time in the train. And I decided to print it without giving your name and without the prefatory part. If possible I shall enclose a copy of my note on it.² I wrote it then and there in the train. I could not do better than that. Often I have found that silence is more eloquent than speech and action the best of all. But as I have been writing and explaining, I thought I must not make an exception in this case. Moreover your letter has invited an answer.

If there is anything more you think I should do, I am ever ready. Do tell me fully and frankly; no stone should be left unturned to remove misunderstandings. My grave misgiving is that those who are in authority do not want to part with India. With them it seems that to lose India is to lose the battle. It is terrible if it is true. In my opinion to keep India as a possession is to lose the battle. Help me to solve my doubt which I have expressed in the columns of *Harijan*.

Love.

HORACE ALEXANDER
BUCHANAN'S HOTEL
SUDDAR STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1436; also File No. 3001/41/(p.69) of the Police Commissioner's office, Bombay

187. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CAHATTERJEE

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,

August 3, 1942

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I am pained over the two brothers' behaviour but much more so

¹ *Vide* the preceding item. It was not however published in *Harijan*.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

over yours.¹ They said definitely to me (Dhiren after reconsideration) that Abha should marry Kanu. You said definitely that she should wait till she was a major and then marry K. if she so wished even if by then her mother's consent could not be received. I informed all parties accordingly. I was disinclined to bring Vina but you persuaded me. I sent her to Rajkot with your consent. Abha, too, I brought out at your wish and sent her to Rajkot with your consent. All this has meant public money. Now you have unsettled everything. Poor Narandas and his wife are disconcerted and so are the girls. I won't spend anything more from public money. If they are to be withdrawn, you should do so immediately. For they cost something to keep them in Rajkot. You may withdraw the boys also. What will they do, if they are so unreliable? The girls are miserable over the prospect of going to Calcutta. But I will send them if you want them and if you send enough money.

You are proving so hopelessly unreliable that I cannot guide you about the struggle or anything else. I am sorry that false pity moved me to take you to the Ashram. Please disengage me from all this bother.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10345. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

¹ The addressee had written to say that, since his wife and his two sons were opposed to the idea of Abha marrying Kanu Gandhi, it might be better to abandon the proposal. He had also asked that his two daughters, who were in Rajkot, be sent back to the family.

188. DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CIVIL RESISTERS¹

Confidential

BOMBAY,

For Working Committee Members Only

August 4, 1942²

On the day of the hartal no processions should be taken out nor meetings held in the cities. All the people should observe a twenty-four hours' fast and offer prayers. If the owners of shops approve of our satyagraha struggle, they will all close their shops, but no one should be made to close his shop under coercion. In the villages, however, where there is no fear of violence or disturbance, meetings may be held and processions taken out and responsible Congressmen who believe in mass civil disobedience should explain the meaning of the contemplated satyagraha struggle to the people. The object of our satyagraha is to secure the withdrawal of British rule and the attainment of independence for the whole of India. After the withdrawal of British rule, the constitution of the future government of the country will be settled by the joint deliberation of the whole nation, including all parties. That government will belong not to the Congress nor to any particular group or party, but to the entire 35 crores of the people of India. All Congressmen should make it clear

¹ In his introduction to this dated Panchgani, 24-7-1944, Gandhiji says: "The following is the literal translation of draft instructions for the guidance of civil resisters. The draft was in Hindustani and copies were prepared in both Devanagari and Persian scripts. It was prepared on 7th August 1942 and was placed before the Working Committee and discussed on the 8th of August. The Working Committee was again to have met on the morning of the 9th August. But that was not to be.

I was to put before the Working Committee my view of the negotiations which I was to carry on with the Government. They were to cover a period of at least three weeks. The instructions were to see the light of day only on failure of the contemplated negotiations.

The object of publishing the draft at present is twofold. It shows how my mind was running at the time. The draft is an additional answer to the adverse suggestions made in the Government indictment about my non-violence. The second and more relevant object is to let Congress workers know how I would have acted at the time.

I have come to know that my name was freely used to justify acts of sabotage and the like. I would like every Congressman and for that matter every Indian to feel that on him and her lies the responsibility of freeing India from the incubus of foreign rule. Non-violent suffering is the only way. Freedom of India means everything for us but it means also much for the world. For, freedom won through non-violence will mean the inauguration of a new order in the world.

There is no hope for mankind in any other way."

² Although Gandhiji says in his introduction that this "was prepared on 7th August" the copy of the original Hindu available clearly dates it: "Bombay, 4-8-42."

that it will not be the rule of the Hindus or of any particular community. It should also be well explained that this satyagraha is not directed against Englishmen but against British rule only, for we regard no one as our enemy. This should be brought home to villagers.

Local Congress workers should send all reports about the hartal and other activities to their Provincial Congress Committee and the latter to the central Congress office. In case the leader in a particular place is arrested by the Government, another should be chosen in his place. Every province should make necessary arrangements suited to its particular circumstances. In the last resort, every Congressman is his own leader and a servant of the whole nation. A final word: No one should think that those whose names are on the Congress register are the only Congressmen. Let every Indian, who desires the freedom for the whole of India and fully believes in the weapon of truth and non-violence for the purpose of this struggle, regard himself as a Congressman and act as such. If anybody has the spirit of communalism or harbours hatred or ill-will in his heart against any Indian or Englishman, he will best help the struggle by keeping aloof. Such an individual will hinder the cause by joining the struggle.

Every satyagrahi should understand before joining the struggle that he is to ceaselessly carry on the struggle till independence is achieved. He should vow that he will be free or die. Those employed in Government offices, Government factories, railways, post offices, etc., may not participate in the hartal, because our object is to make it clear that we will never tolerate Japanese, Nazi or Fascist invasion, nor British rule. Therefore, we shall not for the present interfere in the above-mentioned Government departments. But an occasion may certainly arise when we shall ask all those people who are employed in Government offices to give up their positions and join the satyagraha struggle. But all Congress members in the Central and Provincial Assemblies ought to vacate their seats and come out forthwith. In case an attempt is made to fill their places with enemies of the country's freedom, or henchmen of British Government, local Congressmen should be put up to oppose their election. The same applies to the Congress members of the municipalities and other public bodies. As conditions in different provinces are not the same, every Provincial Congress Committee shall make arrangements suited to its special circumstances.

If any government servant is called upon to perpetrate excesses or injustice it will be his clear duty to resign at once, giving the real reasons. Free Indian Government will be under no obligation to continue in its service all those Government functionaries who are at present serving the Empire on huge salaries; nor will it be under an obligation to continue the large pensions which are being drawn at present.

All students reading in institutions conducted or controlled by the Government should come out of these institutions. Those who are above sixteen years of age should join the Satyagraha. Those who so leave these institutions should do so with a clear understanding that they are not to return to them until independence is achieved. There should be no coercion whatsoever in this matter. Only those who of their own free will wish to do so, should come out. No good can come out of coercion.

If excesses are committed in any place by the Government, people should offer resistance and endure the penalty. For instance, if villagers, labourers or householders are ordered to vacate their farms or homes they should flatly refuse to obey such orders. If an adequate compensation is offered or if they are suitably provided for by grant of land, etc., elsewhere, they may vacate their farms or homes. Here there is no question of civil disobedience, but of simply refusing to submit to coercion or injustice. We do not want to hinder military activities, but neither shall we submit to arbitrary high-handedness.

The salt tax causes great hardship to the poor. Therefore, wherever salt can be made, poor people may certainly manufacture it for themselves and risk the penalty.

Land tax is due only to a government which we recognize as our own. It is long since we have mentally ceased to recognize the existing Government as such, but until now we have not gone to the length of refusing the payment of land tax because we felt that the country was not prepared to go so far. But the time has now come when those who have the courage and are prepared to risk their all, should refuse to pay it. The Congress holds that the land belongs to those who work on it and to no one else. If they part with a share of the produce to anyone, it is for the furtherance of their own interests. There are various systems of collecting land revenue. Where the zamindari system prevails the zamindars pay the tax to the Government and the

ryot to the zamindar. In such cases, if the zamindar makes common cause with the ryot, his portion of the revenue, which may be settled by mutual agreement, should be given to him. But if a zamindar wants to side with the Government, no tax should be paid to him, This will, in the immediate present, spell ruin to the ryot. Therefore, only those who are prepared to face utter ruin should refuse payment of land revenue.

Besides these, there are several other items which could be taken up. Directions in regard to these will be issued when the occasion arises.¹

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 286-8. Also from Hindi: Nehru Papers. Subject file No. 31 B, Vol. 130, pp. 419-23. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

189. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

YOUR STRANGE WIRE². HOW CAN DISTRUSTED MAN
PROFITABLY GO.³ LOVE.⁴

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10929. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

¹ At the time of the publication of the above instructions Gandhiji added the following postscript dated "Sevagram, 28-6-45": "These would have been issued, if they had been passed by the Working Committee. Now they are a part of historical record only."

² Dated August 2 which said: "Jinnah's statement should not upset your decision."

³ Jinnah in his statement on July 31, 1942, to the foreign Press had said: "The latest decision of the Congress Working Committee on July 14, 1942, resolving to launch a mass movement if the British do not withdraw immediately from India is the culminating point in the policy and programme of Mr. Gandhi and his Hindu Congress of blackmailing the British and coercing them to concede a system of Government and transfer power to that Government which would establish a Hindu raj immediately under the aegis of the British bayonet thereby throwing the Muslims and other minorities and interests at the mercy of the Congress raj." *Vide* also "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 4-8-1942.

⁴ In reply to this Rajaji wired: "Your telegram. Earnestly plead see remove distrust."

190. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

CHI. AMRIT,

Everything going on well. J. came yesterday an hour after me. Maulana came today. Prabhavati has come. Doctors pronounce me to be quite fit and better than when they saw me at Sevagram the other day. Of the company now only you are missing. For Mira too is here. But the loss here is Shummy's gain. So I am quite satisfied.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3693. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6502

191. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

MY DEAR C. R.,

How can you expect me to approach Q. A. after his performance?¹ Will he not be right in showing me the door if I dare to go to him? I should certainly refuse to see a person whom I thoroughly distrust and discredit. Supposing he is great and good enough to see me, what am I to say to him? Begin by giving him an explanation of all the charges? I had thought that you would wire to me not to go and that you were disowning him after his performance. The Muslims who had expected me to see him no longer think so. I do not think I shall wire you to come here. This has nothing to do with your wire. There is not the atmosphere.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Of course you must pay your monthly visit.

From a photostat: G. N. 2093

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari", 4-8-1942.

192. LETTER TO T. B. SAPRU

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
August 4, 1942

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

I have your kind letter.¹ On the question of C. D. we have differed from the very commencement years ago. Yet its mere mention has brought new hope to the people and set the world athinking. Nevertheless you may depend upon my doing all I can to avert the crisis, if by milder measures I can possibly reach the same result. But I have no faith in my capacity to shoulder the burden² you would put upon me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Papers. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta. Also G.N. 7577

193. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

August 5, 1942

I want to make a remark or two about the manner in which the Government have got this document.³ I think that the procedure thus adopted of searching the A.I.C.C. Office and seizing documents was in itself reprehensible. The Congress is not an illegal organization. It is acknowledged to be the oldest representative national organization.

¹ The addressee in his letter to Gandhiji, of August 1, had said: "I fear that if civil disobedience is started at this juncture it may lead to very serious consequences, some of which we do not realize".

² The addressee had suggested that Gandhiji should call an inter-communal conference.

³ On May 28, the police raided the offices of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad and seized certain documents, including what appeared to be a record of discussions in the Congress Working Committee on the "War Resolution" (*vide* "Draft Resolution to A.I.C.C.", before 24-4-1942) and a resolution in which the Committee "noted with dismay that frequent and well-authenticated reports have been received of molestation of women by soldiers in railway trains and evacuated and other places". Publication of the latter had been banned by Government.

On August 1 Linlithgow telegraphed to Amery saying, the Viceroy's Council were arranging for publication of these documents in morning papers of August 5 for they could be "taken as evidence of Gandhi's readiness to surrender to Japan and of which telling use could be made". *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 5 and 516.

Its representatives have, under the partial autonomy given by the Government of India Act, successfully administered seven large provinces of India, and, so far as I am aware, without a single exception, the Governors of those provinces have nothing but praise for the considerable administrative talent and devotion to duty shown by the Ministers who were Congress representatives.

Such an organization deserves, to say the least, a better treatment than the Government had accorded it by its procedure with the A.I.C.C.

Their action becomes more reprehensible when they make what I consider illegitimate use of the documents seized. They might have had the courtesy of referring the documents to the A.I.C.C. and heard what the Committee had to say before making public use thereof.

In spite of the effort of the Home Department to discredit the members of the Working Committee, *the reading of the notes*, unauthenticated though they are, will not make any difference, at least in India, in the prestige which the Congress enjoys. There is nothing in it of which any member has any cause to be ashamed.

I do not know what should be the journalistic attitude to such use of documents seized in the manner I have shown and sprung upon an unsuspecting public at a most critical time both for the Government and the people. But I leave the profession to judge for itself.

Q. The whole inference of Pandit Nehru's statements in the documents is that your belief is that Japan and Germany will win the war. Does that represent your considered opinion?

A. You have been good enough to show me Panditji's statement¹ on the document issued by the Government. After his full and frank explanation I hardly think I need answer your questions. I wholly agree with the opinion expressed by him.

That, however, is his own reaction to the draft resolution² sent to the Working Committee.

As the language of that draft shows, it had many i's to be dotted and t's to be crossed. It was sent through Mirabeau to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission,

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Jawaharlal Nehru's Statement to the Press", 5-8-1942.

² *Vide* "Draft Resolution to A.I.C.C.", before 24-4-1942.

deliberate, from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.

For as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

But I may add that I have never even in the most unguarded moment expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that. I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers, it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—she had most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half.

The suppressed races of the earth will never see the fine distinction that Panditji and following him I can see and make between Fascism and imperialism. The difference, if any, discerned by the man in the street will be not of kind but only of degree, and therefore I have pleaded and shall plead even as I am fighting with all the earnestness I command that Britain will shed that taint, and that her great ally America will make her do so, and then be sure of victory, no matter how prolonged the struggle and what cost it requires.

To say the least, then the Allied Powers will earn the blessings of the dumb but countless millions, apart from the gain in men and material that the free association of these peoples will bring to the Allies. I would count their blessings to be of far higher value than every other consideration.

I have, therefore, nothing to withdraw and nothing to be ashamed of about the draft I had the privilege of sending to the Working Committee.

Q. Nehru states that according to your plans after British withdrawal, India would possibly negotiate with Japan and even allow her a large measure of civil control, military bases in India and right of passage for her troops

A. As to your second question, I can only say that you have put it because, I regret to have to say, you have not studied my writings in *Harijan* before the draft was written and after. Having such

confidence—for which many of my friends say I have no warrant—in the efficacy of the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation with all its implications that I have presented to the nation, I maintain that I could not be guilty of harbouring any such thought you have attributed to me. Panditji has explained quite clearly what could be his own meaning and interpretation of my draft.

I add by way of emphasis that I had purposely incorporated the sentence about negotiations with Japan, and if ultimately it was dropped and I associated myself with the deletion, I did so out of my regard for my co-workers not because I was uncertain as to what I meant to do.

It is the essence of the use of the weapon that you will always give your opponent the opportunity of doing the right thing, and if India became an independent nation tomorrow and I was witness to the grand phenomenon, I would certainly advise and plead with the Provisional Government to send me—old as I am—to Japan and I would plead with her in the first instance, to free China, her great neighbour, from the menace that Japan has become and to tell her that if she does not do this elementary justice, she will have to count upon the stubborn resistance of millions who had at long last found themselves in possession of a thing which every nation prizes before everything else.

That gentle notice—or entreaty it should be called—that entreaty will not be backed at least tomorrow with any military show, because I will not dangle before Japan the show that will still be made by the Allied Powers whose operations will still go on in India with the free consent of India. [India] become free will carry with it the power implied in the use of the matchless moral weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. And I am sure I will make the appeal not without hope of success.

That was the meaning of the sentence the use of which at the present juncture is intended to bring discredit upon my devoted head. I shall take the discredit and so much the better if I can take India's freedom also with it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1942

194. INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNMENT SECRET CIRCULAR¹

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

I have had the good fortune to have friends who have supplied me with titbits of national importance such as I am presenting to the public herewith. Mahadev Desai reminds me that such an occasion occurred some seven years ago when a friend had unearthed the famous Hallett Circular. Such was also an occasion when the late Swami Shraddhanandji was given an important document, though not of the sensational character as the Hallett Circular or Sir Frederick Puckle's very interesting production and that of his lieutenant Shri D. C. Das. The pity of it is that the circulars were secret.

They must thank me for giving the performance as wide a publicity as I can. For it is good for the public to know to what lengths the Government can go in their attempt to suppress national movements, however innocent, open and above board they are. Heaven knows how many such secret instructions have been issued which have never seen the light of day. I suggest an honourable course. Let the Government by all means influence public opinion in an open manner and abide by its verdict. The Congress will be satisfied with a plebiscite or any other reasonable manner of testing public opinion and undertake to accept the verdict. That is real democracy. *Vox populi vox dei*.

Meanwhile, let the public know that these circulars are an additional reason for the cry of "Quit India", which comes not from the lips but the aching hearts of millions. Let the Dases know that there are many other ways of earning a living than betraying national interests. Surely it is not part of their duty to lend themselves to the

¹ Immediately after the July 14 resolution of the Congress Working Committee, Frederick Puckle, Director-General of Information, Government of India, issued on July 17, a circular to the Chief Secretaries of all the local governments to mobilize public opinion against the Congress resolution, which he described as a party manifesto, opposed by other communities and organizations. He made a number of suggestions for publishing cartoons and posters, among which one was to show Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, each with microphones saying, "I vote for the Congress Resolution" *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, pp. 374-5

very questionable methods as evidenced by Sir Frederick Puckle's instructions.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. II, p. 360; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942

195. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I got your postcard. There is still time to rope you in. Have patience. When the time comes, you will certainly get the call some way or another. Your *sadhana* lies in improving your health, for the sake of this *yajna* at any rate. But that also without worrying. We may try every remedy we know, and remain unconcerned with the result. I wrote out this letter in the early morning, having got a few moments to spare.

I hope everybody is well there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 808. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhawe

196. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOMBAY,
August 6, 1942

Q. Does the resolution¹ mean peace or war? There is an interpretation particularly among the foreign journalists, that it means declaration of war and that the last three paragraphs of the resolution are the really operative part. Is the emphasis on the first part or the last part of the resolution?

A. The emphasis in any non-violent struggle, projected or in operation, is always on peace. War, when it becomes an absolute necessity.

Q. Do you contemplate the immediate establishment of a provisional government and, if so, how do you expect it to come into being? 'Do you think that

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee", 8-8-1942.

there would be a period of interregnum between the endorsement of the resolution by the A. I. C. C. and the starting of the mass struggle?

A. If independence is ushered in with perfect British goodwill, then I expect an almost simultaneous establishment of a provisional government which, being just now based, as it must be of necessity, on non-violence, will, to command universal confidence, represent the free and voluntary association of all parties.

Q. Do you contemplate any negotiation between the Congress and the British Government before launching a mass struggle?

A. I have definitely contemplated an interval between the passing of the Congress resolution and the starting of the struggle. I do not know that what I contemplate doing according to my wont can be in any way described as being in the nature of negotiation, but a letter will certainly go to the Viceroy, not as an ultimatum but as an earnest pleading for avoidance of a conflict. If there is a favourable response, then my letter can be the basis for negotiation.

Q. What is the maximum time you are prepared to wait to see if there is any response from the British Government and the United Nations to the 'last-minute appeal' of the A. I. C. C.

A. The object with which the demand for immediate withdrawal is made does not allow of a long interval for the simple reason that the war will not be suspended while, in expectation of something turning up, the interval is contemplated. The Working Committee itself, which is sincerely eager to mobilize the whole of free Indian opinion in favour of the war effort, is impatient to do so, and in view of the terrible suspense created throughout India it is altogether wrong both for the Congress and British Power to prolong the suspense for a day longer than is warranted by force of circumstance beyond control.

The Statesman, 7-8-1942, and *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, pp. 54-5

197. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOMBAY,
August 7, 19/2

RAJAJI
THYAGARAYANAGAR
MADRAS

EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN AND WILL BE MADE IN

DIRECTION INDICATED BY YOU¹ THOUGH NOT IDENTICAL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10934. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

198. MESSAGE TO CHINA

August 7, 1942

Let China know that this struggle is as much for her defence as it is for India's liberation, for, in that liberation is involved her ability to give effective assistance whether to China or to Russia or even to Great Britain or America.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-8-1942

199. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,

August 7, 1942

Before you discuss the resolution, let me place before you one or two things. I want you to understand two things very clearly and consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. There are people who ask me whether I am the same man that I was in 1920 or whether there has been any change in me. You are right in asking that question. I may tell you that I am the same man today that I was in 1920. The only difference is that I am much stronger in certain things now than I was in 1920. I may explain it by pointing out that a man goes about heavily clothed in winter but the same man may be found without such clothing in summer. This outward change does not make any difference in the man. There are people who may say that I say one thing today and another thing tomorrow. But I must tell you that there is no change in me. I stick to

¹ The addressee in his telegram of August 6, 1942, had said: "Nothing new in Jinnah's allegations. Feel you should ignore them and definitely offer him such quota of Provisional Government as he wants and ask him to nominate his men. This along with your names on behalf of Congress will rationalize your demand of Britain and force acceptance of proposals." *Vide* also Appendix "Letter from C. Rajagopalachari", 8-8-1942.

the principle of non-violence as I did before. If you are tired of it then you need not come with me. It is not necessary or incumbent upon you to pass this resolution. If you want swaraj and independence and if you feel that what I place before you is a good thing and a right thing then only accept it. It is only that way you can give me complete support. If you do not do that I am afraid you will have to rue for what you do. There is not much harm if a man does a wrong thing and repents but in the present case you will be putting the country also in danger. If you do not believe fully in what I say then I will request you not to accept it but leave it. But if you accept it and do not understand me properly then there is bound to be friction among us although it may be of a friendly nature.

Another point I want to impress upon you is your responsibility. The members of the All-India Congress Committee are like members of Parliament representing the whole of India. The Congress from its very inception has not been of any particular group or any particular colour or caste or of any particular province. It has claimed ever since its birth to represent the whole nation and on your behalf I have made the claim that you represent not only the registered members of the Congress but the entire nation.

Referring to the Princes, Mahatma Gandhi stated that they were the creation of British power.

Their number may be six hundred or more. They were created by the ruling power as you know to create differences between Indian India and British India. It may be true that there are differences in the conditions obtaining in British and Indian India but according to the people of the Indian States there is no difference as such. The Congress claims to represent them as well. The policy which the Congress has adopted towards States was drawn up at my instance. There has been some change but the basis remains the same. Whatever the Princes may say, their people will acclaim that we have been asking for the very thing that they want. If we carry on this struggle in the way I want it, the Princes will get more through it than they can ever expect [from the British power]. I have met some Princes and they stated their helplessness by saying that we are more free than they are because they can be removed by the paramount power.

I will remind you that you should accept the resolution only if you approve of it from the heart because if you do not you may expose yourself to danger.

We had the opportunity of running the Government at least in seven provinces. We did put in good work which was praised even by the British Government. Your work does not finish with the attainment of freedom. There is no place for dictators in our scheme of things. Our object is to achieve independence and whoever can take up the reins may do so. It may be, you decide to place it in the hands of Parsis. You should not say why the Parsis should be entrusted with power. Maybe that power may be given to those whose names had never been heard of in the Congress. It will be for the people to decide. You should not feel that the majority of those who fought for it were Hindus and the number of Muslims and Parsis in the fight was small.¹ Once they got freedom, they should change their whole mentality. If there is the slightest communal taint in your minds, keep off the struggle.

There are people who have hatred in their hearts for the British. I have heard people saying that they were disgusted with them. Common people's mind does not differentiate between British Government and British people. To them both are the same. They are the people who do not mind the advent of the Japanese. To them perhaps it would mean change of masters. But it is a dangerous thing. You must remove it from your mind. This is a crucial hour. If we keep quiet and do not play our part it would not be right on our part. If it is only Britain and the United States who fight this war and if our part, is only to give monetary help, whether given willingly or taken from us unwillingly, it is not a very happy proposition. But we can show our real grit and valour only when it becomes our own fight. Then even a child will be brave. We shall get our freedom by fighting. It cannot fall from the skies. I know fully well that the Britishers will have to give us freedom when we have made sufficient sacrifices and proved our strength. We must remove any hatred for the British from our hearts. At least in my heart there is no such hatred. As a matter of fact, I am a greater friend of the British now than I ever was. The reason for this is that at this moment they are in distress. My friendship demands that I must make them aware of their mistakes. As I am not in the position in which they are, I can point out their mistakes. I know they are on the brink of a ditch and about to fall into it. Therefore, even if they want to cut off my hands, my friendship demands that I should try to pull them out of that ditch.

¹ The following two sentences have been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

This is my claim, at which many people may laugh, but all the same I say this is true. At a time when I am about to launch the biggest fight in my life there can be no hatred for the British in my heart. The thought that because they are in difficulties I should give them a push is totally absent from my mind. It never has been there. Maybe that in a moment of anger they might do things which might provoke you. Nevertheless you should not resort to violence and put non-violence to shame. When such a thing happens you may take it that you will not find me alive, wherever I may be. My¹ blood will be on your head. If you don't understand this it will be better if you reject this resolution. It will redound to your credit. How can I blame you for things which you may not be able to grasp. There is one principle in the fight which you must adopt. Never believe—as I have never believed—that the British are going to fail. I do not consider them to be a nation of cowards. I know before they accept defeat every soul in Britain will be sacrificed. They may be defeated and they may leave you just as they left the people of Burma, Malaya and other places with the idea of recapturing the lost ground when they can. That may be their military strategy. But supposing they leave us what happens to us? In that case Japan will come here. The coming in of Japan will mean the end of China and perhaps of Russia, too. In these matters Pandit Nehru is my guru (teacher). I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's defeat nor of China's. If that happens I would hate myself.

You know I like to go at a rapid speed. But it may be I am not going as rapidly as you want me to. Sardar Patel is reported to have said that the campaign maybe over in a week. I do not want to be in a hurry. If it ends in a week it will be a miracle and if this happens it would mean melting the British heart. Maybe wisdom will dawn on the British and they will understand that it will be wrong for them to put in jail the very people who want to fight for them. Maybe that a change may come in Mr. Jinnah's mind after all. He will think that those who are fighting are the sons of the soil and if he sits quiet of what use would Pakistan be for him.

Non-violence is a matchless weapon which can help everyone. I know we have not done much by way of non-violence and therefore, if such a change comes about I will take it as the result of our labours during the last twenty-two years and that God has helped us to achieve it. When I raised the slogan 'Quit India' the people in India who were

¹ The source has "Their".

then feeling despondent felt I had placed before them a new thing. If you want real freedom you will have to come together and such coming together will create true democracy—democracy the like of which has not been so far witnessed nor have there been any attempts made for such type of true democracy. I have read a good deal about the French revolution. Carlyle's works I read while in jail. I have great admiration for the French people. Pandit Jawaharlal has told me all about the Russian revolution. But I hold that though theirs was a fight for the people it was not a fight for real democracy which I envisaged. My democracy means every man is his own master. I have read sufficient history and I did not see such an experiment on so large a scale for the establishment of democracy by non-violence. Once you understand these things you will forget the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. The resolution that is placed before you says we do not want to remain frogs in a well. We are aiming at a world federation¹ in which India would be a leading unit. It can come only through non-violence. Disarmament is only possible if you use the matchless weapon of non-violence. There are people who may call me a visionary but I tell you I am a real bania and my business is to obtain swaraj.² Speaking to you as a practical bania, I say, if you are prepared to pay the full price [of nonviolent conduct], pass this resolution, otherwise, do not pass it. If you do not accept this resolution I won't be sorry for it, on the contrary I would dance with joy because you would then relieve me of the tremendous responsibility which you are now going to place on me. I want you to adopt non-violence as a matter of policy. With me it is a creed, but so far as you are concerned I want you to accept it as policy. As disciplined soldiers you must accept it *in toto* and stick to it when you join the struggle.

The Hitavada 9-8-1942; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942

200. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

CONGRESS HOUSE,
VITHALBHAI PATEL ROAD, BOMBAY,
August 7, 1942

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

I have your dear letter. I miss you at this meeting which you would have liked. But your contribution to the struggle is to restore

¹ The rest of the sentence has been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

² The following sentence has been taken from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

your broken body to full health and then report yourself to me for the next order. Therefore, concentrate on the full restoration of your health. First thing first. Cheer up.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

From the original : Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

201. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[On or after *August 7, 1942*]¹

MALAVIYAJI

TREASURE YOUR BLESSINGS. THEY WILL ENCOURAGE
ME ALONG ARDUOUS JOURNEY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 11-8-1942

202. LETTER TO A MUSLIM²

[*August 8, 1942*]

With reference to your letter giving me the purport of your conversation today with the Quaid-e-Azam, I wish to say in as clear language as possible that when in a *Harijan* article I reproduced Maulana Azad's published offer to the Muslim League I meant it to be a serious offer in every sense of the term. Let me explain it again for your edification. Provided the Muslim League co-operated fully with the Congress demand for immediate independence without the

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated 7-8-1942.

² The source has quoted the letter from *The Times of India* with the following explanation from 'Candidus': "The writer reproduces below the transcript of notes dictated to him by the late Mr. Mahadev Desai, being extracts from correspondence between a Muslim citizen of Bombay and Mr. Gandhi a few hours before the arrest."

slightest reservation, subject, of course, to the proviso that independent India will permit the operations of the Allied armies in order to check Axis aggression and thus to help both China and Russia, the Congress will have no objection to the British Government transferring all the powers it today exercises to the Muslim League on behalf of the whole of India, including the so-called Indian India.¹ And the Congress will not only not obstruct any Government that the Muslim League may form on behalf of the people, but will even join the Government in running the machinery of the free State. This is meant in all seriousness and sincerity. Naturally I cannot give all the implications of the offer and its far-reaching consequences in a hurried reply to your note. You are at liberty to show this to Quaid-e-Azam and to any person who is interested in the question of immediate independence for India and of a free India.

The Hindu, 20-8-1942

203. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS²

BOMBAY,

August 8, 1942

If the resolution goes through this evening, I shall be the chief actor in the tragedy; it is therefore dreadful if any responsible Englishman considers me to be guilty of hatred of the British and admitted partiality for appeasement. In recent times I have not heard any other Englishman accusing me of hatred of the British. Anyway, I emphatically plead not guilty. My love of the British is equal to that of my own people. I claim no merit for it, for I have equal love for all mankind without exception. It demands no reciprocity. I own no enemy on earth. That is my creed.

I have never admitted any partiality for “appeasement” which has become a term of reproach in the English language. Peace I want among all mankind, but I don’t want peace at any cost, and certainly not by placating the aggressor or at the cost of honour. Anyone,

¹ Gandhiji’s offer in the letter was taken serious exception to by C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar who called it a “very astute and menacing move” and used it as an occasion for taking “his gloves off and definitely and publicly to arouse the States to a sense of impending danger” (*The Transfer of Power*, p. 759). He resigned from the Viceroy’s Executive Council ostensibly on this issue.

² Gandhiji was replying to a *News Chronicle* editorial.

therefore, who thinks I am guilty of either vice will do great harm to the immediate purpose.

The resolution is intended to compass the very end which the article in question has at heart. We here feel that Britain cannot be extricated from its critical position unless India's hearty co-operation is secured. That co-operation is impossible without the people realizing that they are independent today. And they have to act swiftly, if they are to retain the independence regained after an insufferable period of foreign domination. No one can change the nature of a whole mass of mankind by promises, when the reality [of freedom] is the indispensable requisite for energizing them.

The resolution has provided for difficulty that the framers could anticipate. They have accounted for every valid criticism and I can say on behalf of the Congress that it would any time be prepared to consider and make allowance for any valid difficulty. No one responsible has even taken the trouble of discussing with the Working Committee of the Congress the difficulty there is about immediate recognition of India's independence. The Congress consent of the military operation of the Allied arms during pendency of the War surely is sufficient answer to any difficulty that we could conceive. British or the Allies run no risk in recognizing independence.

The risk is all on the side of India, but Congress is prepared to take it. Not only the British run no risk so far as conduct of war is concerned, but they gain by this one act of justice an ally counting 400 millions, and accession of strength that is derived from a consciousness of having done that justice.

By that act alone could Great Britain be distinguished from Nazis and Fascists and by no other.

It therefore passes comprehension that such tremendous fuss is being made over doing a tardy act of simple justice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-8-1942

204. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING¹

BOMBAY,

August 8, 1942

I congratulate you on the resolution that you have just passed. I also congratulate the three comrades on the courage they have shown in pressing their amendments to a division, even though they knew that there was an overwhelming majority in favour of the resolution, and I congratulate the thirteen friends who voted against the resolution. In doing so, they had nothing to be ashamed of. For the last twenty years we have tried to learn not to lose courage even when we are in a hopeless minority and are laughed at. We have learned to hold on to our beliefs in the confidence that we are in the right. It behoves us to cultivate this courage of conviction, for it ennoble man and raises his moral stature. I was, therefore, glad to see that these friends had imbibed the principle which I have tried to follow for the last fifty years and more.

Having congratulated them on their courage, let me say that what they asked this Committee to accept through their amendments was not the correct representation of the situation. These friends ought to have pondered over the appeal made to them by the Maulana to withdraw their amendments; they should have carefully followed the explanations given by Jawaharlal. Had they done so, it would have been clear to them that the right which they now want the Congress to concede has already been conceded by the Congress.

Time was when every Mussalman claimed the whole of India as his motherland. During the years that the Ali Brothers were with me, the assumption underlying all their talks and discussions was that India belonged as much to the Mussalmans as to the Hindus. I can testify to the fact that this was their innermost conviction and not a mask; I lived with them for years. I spent days and nights in their company. And I make bold to say that their utterances were the honest expression of their beliefs. I know there are some who say that I take things too readily at their face value, that I am gullible. I do not think I am such a simpleton, nor am I so gullible as these friends take

¹ Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English. This is a translation of his Hindi speech. For the English speech, *vide* the following item.

me to be. But their criticism does not hurt me. I should prefer to be considered gullible rather than deceitful.

What these Communist friends proposed through their amendments is nothing new. It has been repeated from thousands of platforms. Thousands of Mussalmans have told me that if the Hindu-Muslim question was to be solved satisfactorily, it must be done in my lifetime. I should feel flattered at this; but how can I agree to a proposal which does not appeal to my reason? Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new thing. Millions of Hindus and Mussalmans have sought after it. I consciously strove for its achievement from my boyhood. While at school, I made it a point to cultivate the friendship of Muslim and Parsi fellow students. I believed even at that tender age that the Hindus in India, if they wished to live in peace and amity with the other communities, should assiduously cultivate the virtue of [good] neighbourliness. It did not matter, I felt, if I made no special effort to cultivate the friendship with Hindus, but I must make friends with at least a few Mussalmans. It was as counsel for a Mussalman merchant that I went to South Africa. I made friends with other Mussalmans there, even with the opponents of my client, and gained a reputation for integrity and good faith. I had among my friends and co-workers Muslims as well as Parsis. I captured their hearts and when I left finally for India, I left them sad and shedding tears of grief at the separation.

In India, too, I continued my efforts and left no stone unturned to achieve that unity. It was my life-long aspiration for it that made me offer my fullest co-operation to the Mussalmans in the Khilafat movement. Muslims throughout the country accepted me as their true friend.

How then is it that I have now come to be regarded as so evil and detestable? Had I any axe to grind in supporting the Khilafat movement? True, I did in my heart of hearts cherish a hope that it might enable me to save the cow. I am a worshipper of the cow. I believe the cow and myself to be the creation of the same God, and I am prepared to sacrifice my life in order to save the cow. But, whatever my philosophy of life and my ultimate hopes, I joined the movement in no spirit of bargain. I co-operated in the struggle for the Khilafat solely in order to discharge my obligation to my neighbour who, I saw, was in distress. The Ali Brothers, had they been alive today, would have testified to the truth of this assertion. And so would many

others bear me out in that it was not a bargain on my part for saving the cow. The cow, like the Khilafat, stood on her own merits. As an honest man, a true neighbour and a faithful friend, it was incumbent on me to stand by the Mussalmans in the hour of their trial.

In those days I shocked the Hindus by dining with the Mussalmans, though with the passage of time they have now got used to it. Maulana Bari told me, however, that though he would insist on having me as his guest, he would not allow me to dine with him, lest some day he should be accused of a sinister motive. And so, whenever I had occasion to stay with him, he called a Brahmin cook and made special arrangements for separate cooking. Firangi Mahal, his residence, was an oldstyled structure with limited accommodation; yet he cheerfully bore all hardships and carried out his resolve from which I could not dislodge him. It was the spirit of courtesy, dignity and nobility that inspired us in those days. The members of each community vied with one another in accommodating members of sister communities. They respected one another's religious feelings, and considered it a privilege to do so. Not a trace of suspicion lurked in anybody's heart. Where has all that dignity, that nobility of spirit, disappeared now? I should ask all Mussalmans, including Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, to recall those glorious days and to find out what has brought us to the present impasse. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah himself was at one time a Congressman. If today the Congress has incurred his wrath; it is because the canker of suspicion has entered his heart. May God bless him with long life, but when I am gone, he will realize and admit that I had no designs on Mussalmans and that I had never betrayed their interests. Where is the escape for me if I injure their cause or betray their interests? My life is entirely at their disposal. They are free to put an end to it, whenever they wish to do so. Assaults have been made on my life in the past, but God has spared me till now, and the assailants have repented for their action. But if someone were to shoot me in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal, he would kill not the real Gandhi, but the one that appeared to him a rascal.

To those who have been indulging in a campaign of abuse and vilification I would say, 'Islam enjoins you not to revile even an enemy. The Prophet treated even enemies with kindness and tried to win them over by his fairness and generosity. Are you followers of that Islam or of any other? If you are followers of the true Islam, does

it behove you to distrust the words of one who makes a public declaration of his faith? You may take it from me that one day you will regret the fact that you distrusted and killed one who was a true and devoted friend of yours.' It cuts me to the quick to see that the more I appeal and the more the Maulana importunes, the more intense does the campaign of vilification grow. To me, these abuses are like bullets. They can kill me, even as a bullet can put an end to my life. You may kill me. That will not hurt me. But what of those who indulge in abusing? They bring discredit to Islam. For the fair name of Islam, I appeal to you to resist this unceasing campaign of abuse and vilification.

Maulana Saheb is being made a target for the filthiest abuse. Why? Because he refuses to exert on me the pressure of his friendship. He realizes that it is a misuse of friendship to seek to compel a friend to accept as truth what he knows is an untruth.

To the Qaid-e-Azam I would say: 'Whatever is true and valid in the claim for Pakistan is already in your hands. What is wrong and untenable is in nobody's gift, so that it can be made over to you. Even if someone were to succeed in imposing an untruth on others, he would not be able to enjoy for long the fruits of such coercion. God dislikes pride and keeps away from it. God would not tolerate a forcible imposition of an untruth.'

The Qaid-e-Azam says that he is compelled to say bitter things but that he cannot help giving expression to his thoughts and his feelings. Similarly I would say: I consider myself a friend of the Mussalmans. Why should I then not give expression to the things nearest to my heart, even at the cost of displeasing them? How can I conceal my innermost thoughts from them? I should congratulate the Qaid-e-Azam on his frankness in giving expression to his thoughts and feelings, even if they sound bitter to his hearers. But even so why should the Mussalmans sitting here be reviled, if they do not see eye to eye with him? If millions of Mussalmans are with you, can you not afford to ignore the handful of Mussalmans who may appear to you to be misguided? Why should one with the following of several millions be afraid of a majority community, or of the minority being swamped by the majority? How did the Prophet work among the Arabs and the Mussalmans? How did he propagate Islam? Did he say he would propagate Islam only when he commanded a majority? I, therefore, appeal to you for the sake of Islam to ponder over what I

say. There is neither fair play nor justice in saying that the Congress must accept a thing even if it does not believe in it and even if it goes counter to principles it holds dear.

Rajaji said: 'I do not believe in Pakistan. But Mussalmans ask for it, Mr. Jinnah asks for it, and it has become an obsession with them. Why not then say 'yes' to them just now? The same Mr. Jinnah will later on realize the disadvantages of Pakistan and will forgo the demand.' I said: 'It is not fair to accept as true a thing which I hold to be untrue and ask others to do so in the belief that the demand will not be pressed when the time comes for settling it finally. If I hold the demand to be just, I should concede it this very day. I should not agree to it merely in order to placate Jinnah Saheb. Many friends have come and asked me to agree to it for the time being to placate Mr. Jinnah, disarm his suspicions and to see how he reacts to it. But I cannot be party to a course of action with a false promise. At any rate, it is not my method.'

The Congress has no sanction but the moral one for enforcing its decisions. It believes that true democracy can only be the outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally abjured from world affairs. If this is true, the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question, too, cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If the Hindus tyrannize over the Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that I do not believe in the possibility of establishing world peace through violence as the English and American statesmen propose to do. The Congress has agreed to submitting all the differences to an impartial international tribunal and to abide by its decisions. If even this fairest of proposals is unacceptable, the only course that remains open is that of the sword, of violence. How can I persuade myself to agree to an impossibility? To demand the vivisection of a living organism is to ask for its very life. It is a call to war. The Congress cannot be party to such a fratricidal war. Those Hindus who, like Dr. Moonje and Shri Savarkar, believe in the doctrine of the sword may seek to keep the Mussalmans under Hindu domination. I do not represent that section. I represent the Congress. You want to kill the Congress which is the goose that lays golden eggs. If you distrust the Congress, you may rest assured that there is to be a perpetual war between the Hindus and the Mussalmans, and the country will be doomed to continue warfare

and bloodshed. If such warfare is to be our lot, I shall not live to witness it.

It is for that reason that I say to Jinnah Saheb, 'You may take it from me that whatever in your demand for Pakistan accords with considerations of justice and equity is lying in your pocket; whatever in the demand is contrary to justice and equity you can take only by the sword and in no other manner.'

There is much in my heart that I would like to pour out before this assembly. One thing which was uppermost in my heart I have already dealt with. You may take it from me that it is with me a matter of life and death. If we Hindus and Mussalmans mean to achieve a heart unity, without the slightest mental reservation on the part of either, we must first unite in the effort to be free from the shackles of this Empire. If Pakistan after all is to be a portion of India, what objection can there be for Mussalmans against joining this struggle for India's freedom? The Hindus and Mussalmans must, therefore, unite in the first instance on the issue of fighting for freedom. Jinnah Saheb thinks the war will last long. I do not agree with him. If the war goes on for six months more, how shall we be able to save China?

I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. Freedom cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices necessary for it will have to be much greater than would have otherwise sufficed. But the Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. And forget not that the freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for the Congressmen alone but for all the forty crores of the Indian people. Congressmen must forever remain humble servants of the people.

The Qaid-e-Azam has said that the Muslim League is prepared to take over the rule from the Britishers if they are prepared to hand it over to the Muslim League, for the British took over the Empire from the hands of the Muslims. This, however, will be Muslim raj. The offer made by Maulana Saheb and by me does not imply establishment of Muslim raj or Muslim domination. The Congress does not believe in the domination of any group or any community. It believes in democracy which includes in its orbit Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Parsis, Jews—every one of the communities inhabiting this vast country. If Muslim raj is inevitable, then let it be; but how can we give it the stamp of our assent? How can we agree to the domination of one

community over the others?

Millions of Mussalmans in this country come from Hindu stock. How can their homeland be any other than India? My eldest son embraced Islam some years back. What would his homeland be—Porbander or the Punjab? I ask the Mussalmans: 'If India is not your homeland, what other country do you belong to? In what separate homeland would you put my son who embraced Islam?' His mother wrote him a letter after his conversion, asking him if he had on embracing Islam given up drinking which Islam forbids to its followers. To those who gloated over the conversion, she wrote to say: 'I do not mind his becoming a Mussalman so much as his drinking. Will you, as pious Mussalmans, tolerate his drinking even after his conversion? He has reduced himself to the state of a rake by drinking. If you are going to make a man of him again, his conversion will have been turned to good account. You will, therefore, please see that he as a Mussalman abjures wine and women. If that change does not come about, his conversion goes in vain and our non-cooperation with him will have to continue.'

India is without doubt the homeland of all the Mussalmans inhabiting this country. Every Mussalman should therefore cooperate in the fight for India's freedom. The Congress does not belong to any one class or community; it belongs to the whole nation. It is open to Mussalmans to take possession of the Congress. They can, if they like, swamp the Congress by their numbers, and can steer it along the course which appeals to them. The Congress is fighting not on behalf of the Hindus but on behalf of the whole nation, including the minorities. It would hurt me to hear of a single instance of a Mussalman being killed by a Congressman. In the coming revolution, Congressmen will sacrifice their lives in order to protect the Mussalman against a Hindu's attack and *vice versa*. It is a part of their creed, and is one of the essentials of non-violence. You will be expected on occasions like these not to lose your heads. Every Congressman, whether a Hindu or a Mussalman, owes this duty to the organization to which he belongs. The Mussalman who will act in this manner will render a service to Islam. Mutual trust is essential for success in the final nation-wide struggle that is to come.

I have said that much greater sacrifices will have to be made this time in the wake of our struggle because of the opposition from the Muslim League and from Englishmen. You have seen the secret

circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle. It is a suicidal course that he has taken. It contains an open incitement to organizations which crop up like mushrooms to combine to fight the Congress. We have thus to deal with an Empire whose ways are crooked. Ours is a straight path which we can tread even with our eyes closed. That is the beauty of satyagraha.

In satyagraha, there is no place for fraud or falsehood, or any kind of untruth. Fraud and untruth today are stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness to such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to an extent it was possible for a human being to do. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire upheld on untruth and violence. However gigantic the preparations that the Empire has made, we must get out of its clutches. How can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under the bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive, God will take me to task for not using up the treasure He had given me, in the midst of the conflagration that is enveloping the whole world. Had the condition been different, I should have asked you to wait yet awhile. But the situation now has become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it.

Nevertheless, the actual struggle does not commence this moment. You have only placed all your powers in my hands. I will now wait upon the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. That process is likely to take two or three weeks. What would you do in the mean while? What is the programme, for the interval, in which all can participate? As you know, the spinning-wheel is the first thing that occurs to me. I made the same answer to the Maulana. He would have none of it, though he understood its import later. The fourteenfold constructive programme is, of course, there for you to carry out. What more should you do? I will tell you. Every one of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman, and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism.

It is not a make-believe that I am suggesting to you. It is the very essence of freedom. The bond of the slave is snapped the moment he considers himself to be a free being. He will plainly tell

the master: 'I was your bonds slave till this moment, but I am a slave no longer. You may kill me if you like, but if you keep me alive, I wish to tell you that if you release me from the bondage of your own accord, I will ask for nothing more from you. You used to feed and clothe me, though I could have provided food and clothing for myself by my labour. I hitherto depended on you instead of on God, for food and raiment. God has now inspired me with an urge for freedom and I am today a free man and will no longer depend on you.'

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. Maybe, he will propose the abolition of salt tax, the drink evil, etc. But I will say: 'Nothing less than freedom.'

Here is a *mantra*, a short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra* is: 'Do or Die.' We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congressman or [Congress] woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge. Keep jails out of your consideration. If the Government keep me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted.

A word to the journalists I congratulate you on the support you have hitherto given to the national demand. I know the restrictions and handicaps under which you have to labour. But I would now ask you to snap the chains that bind you. It should be the proud privilege of the newspapers to lead and set an example in laying down one's life for freedom. You have the pen which the Government can't suppress. I know you have large properties in the form of printing-presses, etc., and you would be afraid lest the Government

should attach them. I do not ask you to invite an attachment of the printing-press voluntarily. For myself, I would not suppress my pen, even if the press was to be attached. As you know my press was attached in the past and returned later on. But I do not ask from you that final sacrifice. I suggest a middle way. You should now wind up your Standing Committee, and you may declare that you will give up writing under the present restrictions and take up the pen only when India has won her freedom. You may tell Sir Frederick Puckle that he can't expect from you a command performance, that his Press notes are full of untruth, and that you will refuse to publish them. You will openly declare that you are whole-heartedly with the Congress. If you do this, you will have changed the atmosphere before the fight actually begins.

From the Princes I ask with all respect due to them a very small thing. I am a well-wisher of the Princes. I was born in a State. My grandfather refused to salute with his right hand any Prince other than his own. But he did not say to the Prince, as I feel he ought to have said, that even his own master could not compel him, his minister, to act against his conscience. I have eaten the Princes' salt and I would not be false to it. As a faithful servant, it is my duty to warn the Princes that if they will act while I am still alive, the Princes may come to occupy an honourable place in free India. In Jawaharlal's scheme of free India, no privileges or the privileged classes have a place. Jawaharlal considers all property to be State-owned. He wants planned economy. He wants to reconstruct India according to plan. He likes to fly; I do not. I have kept a place for the Princes and the zamindars in India that I envisage. I would ask the Princes in all humility to enjoy through renunciation. The Princes may renounce ownership over their properties and become their trustees in the true sense of the term. I visualize God in the assemblage of people. The Princes may say to their people: 'You are the owners and masters of the State and we are your servants.' I would ask the Princes to become servants of the people and render to them an account of their own services. The Empire too bestows power on the Princes, but they should prefer to derive power from their own people; and if they want to indulge in some innocent pleasures, they may seek to do so as servants of the people. I do not want the Princes to live as paupers. But I would ask them: 'Do you want to remain slaves for all time? Why should you, instead of paying homage to a foreign power, not accept the sovereignty of your own people?' You may write to the Political

Department: 'The people are now awake. How are we to withstand an avalanche before which even the large Empires are crumbling? We, therefore, shall belong to the people from today onwards. We shall sink or swim with them.' Believe me, there is nothing unconstitutional in the course I am suggesting. There are, so far as I know, no treaties enabling the Empire to coerce the Princes. The people of the States will also declare that though they are the Princes' subjects, they are part of the Indian nation and that they will accept the leadership of the Princes, if the latter cast their lot with the People, but not otherwise. If this declaration enrages the Princes and they choose to kill the people, the latter will meet death bravely and unflinchingly, but will not go back on their word.

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle, we have to work openly and to receive the bullets on our chest, without taking to heels.

I have a word to say to the Government servants also. They may not, if they like, resign their posts yet. The late Justice Ranade did not resign his post, but he openly declared that he belonged to the Congress. He said to the Government that though he was a judge, he was a Congressman and would openly attend the sessions of the Congress, but that at the same time he would not let his political views warp his impartiality on the bench. He held Social Reform Conference in the very pandal of the Congress. I would ask all the Government servants to follow in the footsteps of Ranade and to declare their allegiance to the Congress as an answer to the secret circular issued by Sir Frederick Puckle.

This is all that I ask of you just now. I will now write to the Viceroy. You will be able to read the correspondence not just now but when I publish it with the Viceroy's consent. But you are free to aver that you support the demand to be put forth in my letter. A judge came to me and said: "We get secret circulars from high quarters. What are we to do?" I replied, "If I were in your place, I would ignore the circulars. You may openly say to the Government: 'I have received your secret circular. I am, however, with the Congress. Though I serve the Government for my livelihood, I am not going to obey these secret circulars or to employ underhand methods.' "

Soldiers too are covered by the present programme. I do not ask them just now to resign their posts and leave the army. Soldiers come to me, Jawaharlal and to the Maulana and say: "We are wholly with you. We are tired of the governmental tyranny." To these soldiers I would say: "You may say to the Government, 'Our hearts are with the Congress. We are not going to leave our posts. We will serve you so long as we receive your salaries. We will obey your just orders, but will refuse to fire on our own people.' "

To those who lack the courage to do this much I have nothing to say. They will go their own way. But if you can do this much, you may take it from me that the whole atmosphere will be electrified. Let the Government then shower bombs, if they like. But no power on earth will then be able to keep you in bondage any longer.

If the students want to join the struggle only to go back to their studies after a while, I would not invite them to it. For the present, however, till the time that I frame a programme for the the struggle, I would ask the students to say to their professors: 'We belong to the Congress. Do you belong to the Congress or to the Government? If you belong to the Congress, you need not vacate your posts. You will remain at your posts but teach us and lead us unto freedom.' In all fights for freedom, the world over, the students have made very large contributions.

If in the interval that is left to us before the actual fight begins, you do even the little I have suggested to you, you will have changed the atmosphere and will have prepared the ground for the next step.

There is much I should yet like to say. But my heart is heavy. I have already taken up much of your time. I have yet to say a few words in English also. I thank you for the patience and attention with which you have listened to me even at this late hour. It is just what true soldiers would do. For the last twenty-two years, I have controlled my speech and pen and have stored up my energy. He is a true *brahmachari* who does not fritter away his energy. He will, therefore, always control his speech. That has been my conscious effort all these years. But today the occasion has come when I had to unburden my heart before you. I have done so, even though it meant putting a strain on your patience; and I do not regret having done it. I have given you my message and through you I have delivered it to the whole of India.

Mahatma, Vol. VI, pp. 154-64

205. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,

[August 8, 1942]¹

I have taken such an inordinately long time over pouring out what was agitating my soul to those whom I had just now the privilege of serving. I have been called their leader or, in military language, their commander. But I do not look at my position in that light. I have no weapon but love to wield my authority over anyone. I do sport a stick which you can break into bits without the slightest exertion. It is simply my staff with the help of which I walk. Such a cripple is not elated, when he is called upon to bear the greatest burden. You can share that burden only when I appear before you not as your commander but as a humble servant. And he who serves best is the chief among equals.

Therefore I was bound to share with you, such thoughts as were welling up in my breast and tell you in as summary a manner as I can, what I expect you to do as the first step.

Let me tell you at the outset that the real struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial as I always do. The burden is almost unbearable and I have got to continue to reason in those circles with whom I have lost my credit for the time being. I know that in the course of the last few weeks I have forfeited my credit with a large number of friends, so much so that some of them have now begun to doubt not only my wisdom but even my honesty. Now, I hold that my wisdom is not such a treasure which I cannot afford to lose; but my honesty is a precious treasure to me and I can ill afford to lose it.

Such occasions arise in the life of a man who is a pure seeker after truth and who would seek to serve humanity and his country to the best of his lights without fear or hypocrisy. For the last fifty years I have known no other way. I have been a humble servant of humanity and have rendered on more than one occasion such service as I could to the Empire; and here let me say without fear of challenge that throughout my career never have I asked for any personal favour. I have enjoyed the privilege of friendship, as I enjoy it today, with

¹ From *The Indian Annual Register 1942*, Vol. II, p. 144

Lord Linlithgow. It is a friendship which has outgrown official relationship. Whether Lord Linlithgow will bear me out I do not know; but there has sprung up a personal bond between him and myself. He once introduced me to his daughter. His son-in-law, the A.D.C., was drawn towards me. He fell in love with Mahadev more than with me, and Lady Anne and he came to me. She is an obedient and favourite daughter. I take interest in their welfare. I take the liberty to give out these titbits only to give you an earnest view of the personal bond which exists between us. And yet let me declare here that no personal bond will ever interfere with the stubborn struggle which, if it falls to my lot, I may have to launch against Lord Linlithgow, as the representative of the Empire. It seems to me that I will have to resist the might of that Empire with the might of the dumb millions, with no limit but non-violence as policy confined to this struggle. It is a terrible job to have to offer resistance to a Viceroy with whom I enjoy such relations. He has more than once trusted my word, often about my people. I mention this with great pride and pleasure. I mention it as an earnest of my desire to be true to the British nation, to be true to the Empire. I mention it to testify that when that Empire forfeited my trust, the Englishman who was its Viceroy came to know it.

Then there is the sacred memory of Charlie Andrews which wells up within me at this moment. The spirit of Andrews hovers about me. For me he sums up the brightest tradition of English culture. I enjoyed closer relations with him than with most Indians. I enjoyed his confidence. There were no secrets between us. We exchanged our hearts every day. Whatever was in his heart he would blurt out without the slightest hesitation or reservation. It is true he was friend of Gurudev, but he looked upon Gurudev with awe, not that Gurudev wanted it. Andrews had that peculiar humility. But with me he became the closest friend. Years ago he came to South Africa¹ with a note of introduction from the late² Gokhale. He is unfortunately gone.³ He was a fine Englishman.⁴ I know that the spirit of Andrews is listening

¹ The words "to South Africa" were added by Gandhiji.

² The words "the late" were added by Gandhiji.

³ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had: "Pearson and he are both unfortunately gone."

⁴ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had: "They were the finest specimen of Englishmen."

to me. Then I have received a warm telegram from the Metropolitan (Dr. Westcote¹) of Calcutta, conveying his blessings, though, I know, he is opposed to my move today. I hold him to be a man of God. I can understand the language of his heart, and I know that his heart is with me.

With this background, I want to declare to the world that, whatever may be said to the contrary, and although I might have forfeited the regard and even the trust of many friends in the West, and I bow my head low, but even for their friendship or their love, I must not suppress the voice within, call it 'conscience', call it the 'prompting of my inner basic nature'. There is something within me impelling me to cry out my agony. I have known humanity. I have studied something of psychology though I have not read many books on it. Such a man knows exactly what it is. That something in me which never deceives me tells me now: 'You have to stand against the whole world although you may have to stand alone. You have to stare the world in the face although the world may look at you with bloodshot eyes. Do not fear. Trust that little thing which resides in the heart.' It says, 'Forsake friends, wife, and all; but testify to that for which you have lived, and for which you have to die.'

Believe me, friends, I am not anxious to die. I want to live my full span of life. According to me, it is 120 years at least. By that time India will be free, the world will be free. Let me tell you, too, that I do not regard England, or for that matter America, as free countries. They are free after their own fashion, free to hold in bondage the coloured races of the earth. Are England and America fighting for the liberty of these races today? You shall not limit my concept of freedom. The English and American teachers, their history and their magnificent poetry have not said you shall not broaden the interpretation of that freedom. And according to my interpretation of that freedom, I am constrained to say, they are strangers to that freedom which their poets and teachers have described. If they will know the real freedom, they should come to India. They have to come not with pride or arrogance but in the spirit of earnest seekers of Truth.

¹ This name was added by Gandhiji.

It is the¹ fundamental truth with² which India has been experimenting for 22 years. Unconsciously, from its very foundations, long ago, the Congress has departed though non-violently from what is known³ as the constitutional method. Dadabhai and Pherozshah who held the Congress India in the palm of their hands had held on to the latter⁴. They were lovers of the Congress. They were its masters. But above all they were real servants. They never countenanced murder and secrecy and the like. I confess there are many black sheep amongst us Congressmen. But I trust the whole of India to launch upon a non-violent struggle on the widest scale⁵. I trust⁶ the innate goodness of human nature which perceives the truth and prevails during a crisis as if by instinct. But even if I am deceived in this, I shall not swerve⁷. From its very inception the Congress based its policy on peaceful methods, and the subsequent generations added non-co-operation. When Dadabhai entered the British Parliament, Salisbury dubbed him as a black man, but the English people defeated Salisbury, and Dadabhai, went to Parliament by their vote. India was delirious with joy. These things, however, now India has outgrown.

It is with all these things as the background that I want Englishmen, Europeans and all the United Nations to examine in their heart of hearts what crime India has committed in demanding independence today. I ask: Is it right for you to distrust us? Is it right to distrust such an organization with all its background, tradition and record of over half a century and misrepresent its endeavours before all the world by every means at your command? Is it right, I ask, that by hook or crook, aided by the Foreign Press, aided, I hope not, by the President of the U.S.A. or even by the Generalissimo of China, who has yet to win his laurels, you should present India's stand in shocking lights?

I have met the Generalissimo. I have known him through Madam Chiang who was my interpreter, and though he seemed

¹ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had 'a'.

² The word "with" was added by Gandhiji.

³ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "been building on non-violence known".

⁴ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "become rebels".

⁵ The words "son the widest scale" were added by Gandhiji.

⁶ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "because of my nature to rely upon".

⁷ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "I shall not flinch".

inscrutable to me, not so Madam Chiang. And he allowed me to read his mind through her. He has not as yet said that we were wrong in demanding our independence. There is a chorus of disapproval and protest all over the world against us. They say we are erring, the move is inopportune. I had great regard for the British, but now British diplomacy stinks in¹ my nostrils. Yet others are learning their lessons. They may succeed in getting, through these methods, world opinion on their side for a time; but India will raise her voice against all the organized propaganda. I will speak against it. Even if the whole of the world forsakes me, I will say: 'You are wrong. India will wrench with non-violence her liberty from unwilling hands.'

Even if my eyes close and there is no freedom for India, non-violence will not end. They will be dealing a mortal blow to China and to Russia if they oppose the freedom of non-violent India which today is pleading with bended knees for the fulfilment of a debt long overdue. Does a creditor ever go to the debtor like that? And even when India is met with such angry opposition, she says: 'We won't hit below the belt. We have learnt sufficient gentlemanliness. We are pledged to non-violence.' I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking this strong language. My non-embarrassment plea was always qualified by the proviso 'consistent with our honour and safety'. If a man holds me by the neck and wants to drown me, may I not struggle to free myself directly? There is no inconsistency in our position today.

There are representatives of the Foreign Press assembled here today. Through them I wish to say to the world that United Nations, who say that they have need for India, have the opportunity now to declare India free and prove their *bona fides*. If they miss it, they will be missing opportunity of their lifetime, and history will record that they did not discharge their obligations to India in time and lost the battle. I want the blessing of the whole world, so that I may succeed with them. I do not want the United Powers to go beyond their obvious limitations. I do not want them to accept non-violence and disarm today. There is a fundamental difference between Fascism and even this imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get today is from the India which they hold in bondage. Think what difference it would make if India was to

¹ This is in Gandhiji's hand. The original had "into".

participate as a free ally. That freedom, if it is to come, must come today. It will have no taste left in it if today you, who have power to help, do not exercise it. If you can exercise it, what seems impossible today will, under the glow of freedom, become possible tomorrow. If India feels that freedom, she will command that freedom for China. The road for running to Russia's help will be opened. Englishmen did not die in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. What shall enable us to retrieve this situation? Where shall I go and where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this vast mass of humanity to be aflame in the cause of world-deliverance, unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today they have no touch of life left. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre is to be put into their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. I have, therefore, pledged the Congress and the Congress has pledged herself that she will do or die.

From a typed office copy. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

206. MESSAGE TO KARNATAKA

August 8, 1942

I hope the people of Karnataka will all participate in this *yajna*.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 224 and 225

207. UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

Asaf Ali Saheb, President of the Delhi P.C.C. writes:

The enclosed complaint was first brought up before the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee. The writer has now secured two supporters. I know the writer personally as a truthful and unbiased nationalist and I believe his word.

I had heard of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and its activities; and I also knew that it was a communal organization. The slogan and the speech complained of have been brought to my notice for the first time. I can think of no means of counteracting the effect of such slogans and speeches on other communities, except inviting your attention to them. Perhaps you will take notice of it in the *Harijan*.

The complainant's letter is in Urdu. Its purport is that the organization referred to in Asaf Ali Saheb's letter consisting of 3,000

members goes through a daily lathi drill which is followed by reciting the slogan, "Hindustan belongs to Hindus and to nobody else." This recital is followed by a brief discourse in which speakers say: "Drive out the English first and then we shall subjugate the Muslims. If they do not listen, we shall kill them." Taking the evidence at its face value, the slogan is wrong and the central theme of the discourse is worse. I can only hope that the slogan is unauthorized and that the speaker who is reported to have uttered the sentiments ascribed to him was no responsible person. The slogan is wrong and absurd, for Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore, it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of "driving out" the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word 'intelligent' because, I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent. Members of society based on non-violence must all be so educated as to be able to think and act for themselves. If their thought and action be one, it will be because they are directed both to a common goal and common result even as the thought and action of a hundred men pulling a rope in one direction would be one.

I hope that those in charge of the Swayamsevak Sangh will inquire into the complaint and take the necessary steps.

Harijan, 9-8-1942

208. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY¹

BOMBAY,
5 a.m., August 9, 1942

Everyone is free to go the fullest length under ahimsa. Complete deadlock by strikes and other non-violent means. Satyagrahis must go out to die not to live. They must seek and face death. It is only when individuals go out to die that the nation will survive.

*Karengē ya marengē.*²

M. K. GANDHI

From the documents in the office of the D. I. G., I. B., West Bengal Government

209. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY³

August 9, 1942

Let every non-violent soldier of freedom write out the slogan 'do or die' on a piece of paper or cloth and stick it on his clothes, so that in case he died in the course of offering satyagraha, he might be distinguished by that sign from other elements who do not subscribe to non-violence.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 53; also Mahatma, Vol. VI, p. 174

210. LETTER TO SIR ROGER LUMLEY

[THE AGA KHAN'S PALACE, POONA,]
August 10, 1942

DEAR SIR ROGER LUMLEY⁴,

After the train that carried me and other fellow prisoners reached Chinchwad on Sunday, some of us were ordered to alight. Shrimati Sarojini Devi, Shrimati Mirabai, Shri Mahadev Desai and I

¹ On the morning of August 9, Gandhiji, along with the Working Committee and some fifty Congress leaders of Bombay, was taken into custody.

² "We will do or die."

³ This, according to Pyarelal, was the parting message Gandhiji gave the country through him at the time of his arrest.

⁴ Governor of Bombay

were directed to get into a car. There were two lorries lined up alongside the car. I have no doubt that the reservation of the car for us was done out of delicate considerations. I must own too that the officers in charge performed their task with tact and courtesy.

Nevertheless I felt deeply humiliated when the other fellow prisoners were ordered to occupy the two lorries. I realize that all could not be carried in motor-cars. I have been before now carried in prison vans. And this time too we should have been carried with our comrades. In relating this incident my object is to inform the Government that in the altered conditions and the altered state of my mind, I can no longer accept special privileges which hitherto I have accepted though reluctantly. I propose this time to accept no privileges and comforts which comrades may not receive, except for the special food so long as the Government allow it for my bodily need.

There is another matter to which I must draw your attention. I have told my people that this time our method is not courting imprisonment, that we must prepare for much higher sacrifice and so those who choose may peacefully resist arrest. So a young man¹ who was in the party offered such resistance. He was therefore hauled to the prison van. This was ugly enough.

But it was a painful sight when an impatient English sergeant rough-handled him and shoved him into the lorry as if he was a log of wood. In my opinion the sergeant deserves correction. The struggle has become bitter enough without such scenes.

This temporary jail is commodious enough to take in all who were arrested with me. Among them are Sardar Patel and his daughter. She is his nurse and cook. I have great anxiety about the Sardar who never got over the intestinal collapse which he had during his last incarceration. Ever since his release I have been personally regulating his diet, etc. I request that both he and his daughter be placed with me. And so should the other prisoners though not on the same imperative grounds as are applicable in the case of the Sardar and his daughter. I submit that it is not right to separate co-workers arrested for the same cause unless they are dangerous criminals.

I have been told by the Superintendent that I am not to be supplied with newspapers. Now I was given by one of my fellow

¹ G. G. Mehta

prisoners on the train a copy of the Sunday edition of the *Evening News*. It contains the Government of India's resolution¹ in justification of their policy in dealing with this crisis. It contains some grossly incorrect statements which I ought to be allowed to correct. This and similar things I cannot do, unless I know what is going on outside the jail.

May I expect an early decision on the points raised herein?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 1-2

211. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

August 13, 1942

BAPA,

Look into the accounts of Dharmaprakash and pay him what you think right. I hope you are fully recovered.

BAPU

BAPA

HARIJAN NIWAS

KINGSWAY

DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

212. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

THE AGA KHAN'S PALACE,

August 14, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

The Government of India were wrong in precipitating the crisis. The Government resolution justifying this step is full of distortions and misrepresentations. That you have the approval of your Indian "colleagues" can have no significance, except this, that in India you

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Resolution of the Government of India", 7-8-1942.

can always command such services. That co-operation is an additional justification for the demand of withdrawal irrespective of what people and parties may say.

The Government of India should have waited at least till the time I inaugurated mass action. I had publicly stated that I fully contemplated sending you a letter before taking concrete action. It was to be an appeal to you for an impartial examination of the Congress case. As you know, the Congress has readily filled in every omission that has been discovered in the conception of its demand. So could I have dealt with every difficulty if you had given me the opportunity. The precipitate action of the Government leads one to think that they were afraid that the extreme caution and gradualness with which the Congress was moving towards direct action might make world opinion veer round to the Congress, as it had already begun doing, and expose the hollowness of the grounds for the Government's rejection of the Congress demand. They should surely have waited for an authentic report of my speeches on Friday and on Saturday night after the passing of the resolution by the All-India Congress Committee. You would have found in them that I would not hastily begin action. You should have taken advantage of the interval foreshadowed in them, and explored every possibility of satisfying the Congress demand.

The resolution says:

The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope.

I suppose wiser counsels here means abandonment of its demand by the Congress. Why should the abandonment of the demand legitimate at all times be hoped for by a Government pledged to guarantee independence to India? Is it a challenge that could only be met by immediate repression instead of patient reasoning with the demanding party? I venture to suggest that it is a long draft upon the credulity of mankind to say that the acceptance of the demand; "would plunge India into confusion". Anyway the summary rejection of the demand *has* plunged the nation and the Government into confusion. The Congress was making every effort to identify India with the Allied cause.

The Government resolution says:

The Governor-General-in-Council has been aware too for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful and in some

cases violent activities, directed among other things to interruption of communications and public utility services, the organization of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures including recruitment.

This is a gross distortion of the reality. Violence was never contemplated at any stage. A definition of what could be included in non-violent action has been interpreted in a sinister and subtle manner, as if the Congress was preparing for violent action. Everything was openly discussed among Congress circles, for nothing was to be done secretly. And why is it tampering with your loyalty if I ask you to give up a job which is harming the British people?

Instead of publishing behind the backs of principal Congressmen the misleading paragraph the Government, immediately they came to know of the “preparations”, should have brought to book the parties concerned with the preparations. That would have been the appropriate course. By their unsupported allegations in the resolution they have laid themselves open to the charge of unfair dealing.

The Congress movement was intended to evoke in the people the measure of sacrifice sufficient to compel attention. It was intended to demonstrate what measure of popular support it had. Was it wise at this time of the day to seek to suppress a popular movement avowedly non-violent?

The Government resolution further says:

The Congress is not India’s mouthpiece. Yet in the interests of securing their own dominance and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded efforts made to bring India to full nationhood.

It is a gross libel thus to accuse the oldest national organization of India. This language lies ill in the mouth of a Government which has, as can be proved from published records, consistently thwarted every national effort for attaining freedom and sought to suppress the Congress by hook or by crook.

The Government of India have not condescended to consider the Congress offer that if simultaneously with the declaration of the independence of India, they could not trust the Congress to form a stable provisional government, they should ask the Muslim League to do so and that any national government formed by the League would be loyally accepted by the Congress. Such an offer is hardly consistent with the charge of totalitarianism against the Congress.

Let me examine the Government offer:

It is that as soon as hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself, with full freedom of decision and on a basis embracing all and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions.

Has this offer any reality about it? All parties have not agreed now. Will it be any more possible after the war? And if the parties have to act before independence is in their hands? Parties grow up like mushrooms, for without proving their representative character, the Government will welcome them as they have done in the past and if they, the parties, oppose the Congress and its activities, though they may do lip homage to independence, frustration is inherent in the Government offer. Hence the logical cry of withdrawal first. Only after the end of the British power and a fundamental change in the political status of India from bondage to freedom, will the formation of a truly representative government, whether provisional or permanent, be possible. The living burial of the author of the demand has not resolved the deadlock, it has aggravated it.

Then the resolution proceeds:

The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invaders, is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country.

I do not know about the millions, but I can give my own evidence in support of the Congress statement. It is open to the Government not to believe the Congress evidence. No imperial power likes to be told that it is in peril. It is because the Congress is anxious for Great Britain to avoid the fate that has overtaken other imperial powers that it asks her to shed imperialism voluntarily by declaring India independent. The Congress has not approached the movement with any but the friendliest motives. Congress seeks to kill imperialism as much for the sake of the British people and humanity as for India. Notwithstanding assertions to the contrary, I maintain that the Congress has no interests of its own, apart from that of the whole of India and the world.

The following passage from the peroration in the resolution is interesting:

But on them lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's

capacity to wage war, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour.

All I can say is that it is a mockery of truth after the experience of Malaya, Singapore and Burma. It is sad to find the Government of India claiming to hold the "balance" between the parties for which it is itself demonstrably responsible.

One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that the freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can—and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism. He dreads much more than I do the success of Fascism and Nazism. I have argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally. If notwithstanding the common cause, the Government's answer to the Congress demand is hasty repression, they will not wonder if I draw the inference that it was not so much the Allied cause that weighed with the British Government, as the unexpressed determination to cling to the possession of India as an indispensable part of the imperial policy. This determination led to the rejection of the Congress demand and precipitated repression. The present mutual slaughter on a scale never before known to history is suffocating enough. But the slaughter of truth accompanying the butchery and enforced by the falsity of which the resolution is reeking adds strength to the Congress position.

It causes me deep pain to have to send you this long letter. But however much I dislike your action, I remain the same friend you have known me. I would still plead for reconsideration of the Government of India's whole policy. Do not disregard the pleading

of one who claims to be a sincere friend of the British people. Heaven guide you!¹

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 702-5; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, pp. 12-6

213. TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH²

August 15, 1942

CHIMANLAL, ASHRAM

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

MAHADEV DIED SUDDENLY GAVE NO INDICATION. SLEPT
WELL LAST NIGHT HAD BREAKFAST WALKED WITH
ME SUSHILA. JAIL DOCTORS DID ALL THEY COULD
BUT GOD HAD WILLED OTHERWISE. SUSHILA AND I
BATHED BODY. BODY LYING PEACEFULLY COVERED
WITH FLOWERS, INCENSE BURNING. SUSHILA AND I
RECITING GITA. MAHADEV HAS DIED YOGI'S AND
PATRIOT'S DEATH. TELL DURGA, BABLA³ AND SUSHILA
NO SORROW ALLOWED. ONLY JOY OVER SUCH NOBLE
DEATH. CREMATION TAKING PLACE FRONT OF ME.
SHALL KEEP ASHES. ADVISE DURGA REMAIN ASHRAM,
BUT SHE MAY GO TO HER PEOPLE IF SHE MUST. HOPE
BABLA WILL BE BRAVE AND PREPARE HIMSELF
FILL MAHADEV'S PLACE WORTHILY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: File No. 3/21/42, Vol. I. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 5

¹ The Viceroy replying on August 22 said that he feared "it would not be possible for me either to accept the criticism which you advance of the resolution of the Governor-General in council, or your request that the whole policy of the Government of India should be reconsidered."

² The authorities posted this as a letter; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 27-8-1942.

³ Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son

214. A NOTE

[After August 15, 1942]¹

We should make an announcement that the programme is meant for the inmates of the Ashram and those connected with the Ashram. There should be fasting, recitation of the *Gita* and hymns from the Vedas and prayer. Then those who knew Mahadev should speak on the life of the departed for five minutes each. This will stretch the prayer time a little. This is not a public meeting and so is not open to the general public. This programme is not intended for a public gathering. Do what you think right and inform people accordingly.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 11324

215. PREFACE²

For the benefit of the readers of *Indian Opinion* (South Africa), I wrote a few articles under the heading “Guide to Health” in or about the year 1906.³ These were later published in book form. I found that it was known to the Indian public. But copies were not available in India. The late Swami Akhandanand asked for my permission to publish an Indian edition. The enterprise proved very popular. The book was translated into several Indian languages. An English translation also appeared. This reached the West, and was translated into several European languages. The result was that the book became the most popular of all my writings. I have never been able to understand the reason for this popularity. I had written those articles casually, and I did not attach much importance to them. But perhaps the reason for the popularity is to be sought in the fact that I have looked upon the problem of health from a novel point of view, somewhat different from the orthodox methods adopted by doctors

¹ From the contents; Mahadev Desai died on August 15, 1942.

² In “A Word by the Publisher”, in the source, Jivanji D. Desai explains: “The original was written in Gujarati and Gandhiji got it translated into Hindustani and English by Dr. Sushila Nayyar under his own guidance. He also went through both the translations to give them the final touches. The reader can therefore take the translation as Gandhiji’s own rendering.” The item here is placed according to the date on which the last chapter of the book was revised by Gandhiji.

³ The articles were serialized under the title “General Knowledge about Health” in 1913. They appeared in thirty-three instalments from January 4 to August 16.

and vaidyas. Whether my presumption is correct or not, many friends have been pressing me to publish a new edition, putting forth my views to date. I have never been able to revise the original. I have never had the time for it. The present enforced rest¹ offers me such an opportunity and I am taking advantage of it. I have not even got the original with me. The experience of so many years cannot but have left its mark upon my thought. But those who have read the original book will notice that there is no fundamental difference between my ideas of today and those of 1906. But my mind is responsive. Therefore whatever change the reader may find will, I hope, be in the nature of a progress.

I am giving a new name: “Key to Health”. Anyone who observes the rules of health mentioned in this book will find that he has got in it a real key to unlock the gates leading him to health. He will not need to knock at the doors of doctors or vaidyas from day to day.

M. K. GANDHI

AGA KHAN PALACE, YERAVDA,

August 27, 1942

Key to Health

**216. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY**

DETENTION CAMP,
August 27, 1942

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

With reference to the Government orders about the writing of letters by the security prisoners, it seems that the Government do not know that for over thirty-five years, I have ceased to live family life and have been living what has been called Ashram life in association with persons who have more or less shared my views. Of these Mahadev Desai, whom I have just lost, was an associate beyond

¹ In the Aga Khan's Palace, Poona

compare. His wife and only son have lived with me for years sharing the Ashram life. If I cannot write to the widow and her son or the other members of the deceased's family living in the Ashram, I can have no interest in writing to anyone else. Nor can I be confined to writing about personal and domestic matters. If I am permitted to write at all, I must give instructions about many matters that I had entrusted to the deceased. These have no connection with politics which are the least part of my activities. I am directing the affairs of the A.I.S.A. and kindred associations. Sevagram Ashram itself has many activities of a social, educational and humanitarian character. I should be able to receive letters about these activities and write about them. There is the Andrews Memorial Fund. There is a large sum lying at my disposal. I should be able to give instructions about its disposal. To this end I must be in correspondence with the people at Santiniketan. Pyarelal Nayyar who was co-secretary with Mahadev Desai, and whose company as also that of my wife was offered to me at the time of my arrest, has not yet been sent. I have asked the I.G.P. about his whereabouts. I can get no information about him, nor about Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who was under my care for the control of his intestinal trouble. If I may not correspond with them about their health and welfare, again the permission granted can have no meaning for me.

I hope that even if the Government cannot extend the facilities for correspondence in terms of this letter, they will appreciate my difficulty.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 3-4

**217. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY**

DETENTION CAMP,
September 19, 1942

THE SECRETARY
HOME DEPTT.
BOMBAY GOVT., BOMBAY
SIR,

Khan Bahadur Kateley kindly handed me yesterday the letters written by late Shri Mahadev Desai's wife and son. At the time of

handing me the letters, Khan Bahadur told me that he has to explain to me the delay caused in sending my “letter”¹. He could however give no explanation. I missed even a formal expression of regret for the inordinate delay. There appears to have been in the Bombay Secretariat a disregard of the feelings of a bereaved wife and bereaved son.

From these letters I gather that what was on the face of it a telegram, and was handed to the I.G.P. with the request that it should go as an express telegraphic message was posted as a letter. I should like to be informed why the telegraphic message was posted as a letter. May I remind the Government that I am without any reply to my letter of 27-8-42? The widow and her son are instances in point. They cannot but be comforted to receive letters from my wife and me. But under the prohibitory orders we may not write to them.

I am,
Yours etc.,
(Security Prisoner)
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 6

**218. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

September 23², 1942

To,
THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT
SIR,

In spite of the chorus of approval sung by the Indian Councillors and others of the present Government policy in dealing with the Congress, I venture to assert that, had the Government but awaited my contemplated letter to His Excellency the Viceroy and the

¹ *Vide* “Telegram to Chimanlal N. Shah”, 15-8-1942.

² In “Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India”, 19-1-1943, Gandhiji by mistake referred to this letter as of September 21 which led to some confusion in the House of Commons. Amery clarified that it was “referred to in Mr. Gandhi’s letter of January 19, though incorrectly, as the letter of September 21 and was consequently so described in the correspondence given to the Press in London”. Hence also the error in *The Transfer of Power* which carries the date as September 21.

result thereafter, no calamity would have overtaken the country. The reported deplorable destruction would have most certainly been avoided.

In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, I claim that the Congress policy still remains unequivocally non-violent. The wholesale arrest of the Congress leaders seems to have made the people wild with rage to the point of losing self-control. I feel that the Government, not the Congress, are responsible for the destruction that has taken place. The only right course for the Government seems to me to be to release the Congress leaders, withdraw all repressive measures and explore ways and means of conciliation. Surely the Government have ample resources to deal with any overt act of violence. Repression can only breed discontent and bitterness.

Since I am permitted to receive newspapers, I feel that I owe it to the Government to give my reaction to the sad happenings in the country. If the Government think that as a prisoner I have no right to address such communications, they have but to say so and I will not repeat the mistake.¹

I am,

Yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, pp. 16-7; The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 1002-3

¹ Government did not send any formal reply to this letter, which was acknowledged orally. It was also not included in Gandhiji's correspondence with the Viceroy as released to the Press. This gave rise to a widespread feeling that Government had suppressed the letter expressing Gandhiji's disapproval of acts of violence. Rajagopalachari, in a statement on March 9, 1943, deplored the suppression of this letter and Sorensen, on June 24, 1943, asked in the House of Commons why no reference had been made to it either by the Viceroy or the Secretary of State.

**219. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY**

September 26¹, 1942

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

With reference to your letter² of 22nd September, I beg to say that I cannot exercise the privilege extended by the Government since I may not refer in my letters even to non-political matters mentioned in my letter of 27th August, 1942.

*I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat: C.W. 10366; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*, p. 5

**220. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY**

DETENTION CAMP,
October 26, 1942

THE SECRETARY
BOMBAY GOVERNMENT
(HOME DEPARTMENT) BOMBAY

SIR,

I beg to enclose herewith a cutting³ from *The Bombay Chronicle* dated 24th instant. I shall be obliged if I am told whether the fear

¹ *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government* has September 25. However the photostat has September 26.

² In this the addressee had asked Gandhiji to furnish a list of the inmates of the Sevagram Ashram with whom he wished to correspond on personal and domestic matters only. But in response to Gandhiji's request that he should be allowed to write and receive letters on certain other matters he was informed that this could not be allowed.

³ It reported the seizure of the Navajivan Press and feared the destruction of the old files of the *Harijan* publications. The Bombay Government replied on 5th of November that the old files had actually been destroyed.

expressed by the writer of the note in question is justified and if it is, to what extent.

*I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI*

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 7

221. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
November 5, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have just read about the sad but heroic death of Hon'ble Peter Wood¹ in action. Will you please convey to Lord Halifax my congratulations as well as condolences on the sad bereavement?²

*I am,
Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI*

The Transfer of Power, Vol. III, p. 209

222. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

Express

November 24, 1942

SECRETARY HOME DEPARTMENT
BOMBAY GOVERNMENT

PROFESSOR BHANSALI, ONE TIME FELLOW ELPHINSTONE
COLLEGE, LEFT COLLEGE 1920 AND JOINED ASHRAM
SABARMATI. HE IS REPORTED BY DAILY PRESS TO BE

¹ Son of Lord Halifax

² According to a note in the source Lord Linlithgow acknowledged this letter on November 14, adding that he would at once forward the letter to Lord Halifax. He did this on November 16 when writing to Amery he said: "I have had from Gandhi a manuscript letter forwarding a letter of sympathy to Edward Halifax on his son's death in action and I am sending it so that it can go on to Halifax by this bag. It is characteristic of the Mahatma in more ways than one." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 268

FASTING¹ WITHOUT WATER NEAR SEVAGRAM ASHRAM
 WARDHA OVER ALLEGED CHIMUR EXCESSES. WOULD LIKE
 ESTABLISH DIRECT TELEGRAPHIC CONTACT WITH HIM
 THROUGH SUPERINTENDENT FOR ASCERTAINING CAUSE FASTING
 HIS CONDITION. I WOULD LIKE TO DISSUADE HIM
 IF I FIND HIS PAST MORALLY UNJUSTIFIED. I MAKE
 THIS REQUEST FOR HUMANITY'S SAKE.²

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1942-44, p. 10. Also File
 No. 3/21/42, Vol I. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

223. LETTER TO INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS

November 25, 1942

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY

SIR,

About 8.45 a.m. yesterday I sent you the text of an express telegram to the Secretary, Bombay Government, Home Department, about Professor Bhansali who is reported to be fasting. As the Professor seems to have been fasting since 11th instant according to the report in the *Hindu* of Madras and since last Wednesday according to the *Bombay Chronicle*, I am naturally filled with anxiety. Time in such cases is the greatest factor. I shall therefore be obliged if you could convey by telephone or wire my request to the Bombay Government for an urgent reply in regard to my wire.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 10

¹ G. P. Bhansali began his fast on or about November 12, demanding inquiry into the outrages committed by British and Indian troops and police men at the village of Chimur. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 440

² The Government refused Gandhiji's request to be allowed to communicate with Bhansali. Linlithgow, in a cable to Amery on January 11, said he had no intention of agreeing to an enquiry and if Bhansali wanted to die, "I am perfectly prepared to let him die." (*The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 483) Bhansali broke his fast on January 12, 1943.

**224. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY**

DETENTION CAMP,
December 4, 1942

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (D. H.)

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter¹ of 30th ultimo received by me yesterday afternoon (3rd instant). I note with deep regret that my telegraphic message² with regard to a dear co-worker, whose life seems to be in jeopardy, should have been answered by a letter which reached me ten days after the despatch of my message !

I am sorry for the Government rejection of my request. As I believe in the legitimacy and even necessity of fasting under given circumstances, I am unable to advise abandonment of Prof. Bhansali's fast, unless I know that he has no justifying reason for it. If the newspaper report is to be believed, there seems to be legitimate ground for his fast and I must be content to lose my friend, if I must.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44, p. 11

225. KEY TO HEALTH³

December 18, 1942⁴

PART I

1. THE HUMAN BODY

It is necessary to understand the meaning of the word health,

¹ In this the addressee had said, "Government is unable to sanction your request to be allowed to communicate with him. If, however, you desire to advise him, for humanitarian reasons, to abandon his fast, this Government will make arrangements to communicate your advice to him."

² *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Home Department Government of Bombay", 24-11-1942.

³ In "A Word by the Publisher", in the source, Jivanji D. Desai explains: "The original was written in Gujarati, and Gandhiji got it translated into Hindustani and English by Dr. Sushila Nayyar under his own guidance. He also went through both the translations to give them the final touches. The reader can therefore take the translation as Gandhiji's own rendering." The item here is placed according to the date on which the last chapter of the book was revised by Gandhiji. For Gandhiji's Preface to this, *vide* "Preface", 27-8-1942.

⁴ This and the subsequent date-lines are reproduced from *Arogyani Chavi*, the Gujarati original.

before entering upon a description of the human body. 'In health' means body ease. He is a healthy man whose body is free from all diseases; he carries on his normal activities without fatigue. Such a man should be able with ease to walk ten to twelve miles a day, and perform ordinary physical labour without getting tired. He can digest ordinary simple food. His mind and his senses are in a state of harmony and poise. This definition does not include prize fighters and such like. A man with extraordinary physical strength is not necessarily healthy. He has merely developed his musculature, possibly at the expense of something else.

It is necessary to have enough knowledge of the human body which is expected to attain the above standard of health.

God alone knows what kind of education was prevalent in ancient times. Research workers on the subject may be able to tell us something, but only something, about it. But all of us have some experience of modern education in this country. It has no relation with our everyday life. Thus it leaves us almost utterly ignorant about our own body. Our knowledge of our own village and our fields shares a similar fate. We are taught, on the other hand, much about things that have no bearing on our daily life. I do not mean to say that such knowledge is of no use. But everything has its own place. We must first know enough of our own body, our own house, our village and its surroundings, the crops that grow there and its history before going on to anything else. General knowledge broad-based on this primary knowledge alone can enrich life.

August 29, 1942

The human body is composed of what the ancient philosophers have described as the five elements. These are earth, water, ether, light and air.

All human activity is carried on by means of the mind aided by the ten senses. These are the five senses of action, i.e., hands, feet, mouth, anus and the genitals, and the five senses of perception, i.e., the sense of touch through the skin, of smell through the nose, of taste through the tongue, of seeing through the eyes and of hearing through the ears. Thinking is the function of the mind and some people have called it the eleventh sense. In health all the senses and the mind act in perfect co-ordination.¹

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Few enjoy such good health."

The inner working of the human machine is wonderful. The human body is the universe in miniature. That which cannot be found in the body is not to be found in the universe. Hence the philosopher's formula¹, that the universe within reflects the universe without. It follows therefore that if our knowledge of our own body could be perfect, we would know the universe. But even the very best of doctors and hakims and vaidas have not been able to acquire it. It will be presumptuous for a layman to aspire to it. No one has yet discovered an instrument which can give us any information about the human mind. Scientists have given attractive descriptions of the activities going on within and without the body, but no one can say what sets the wheel going. Who can explain the why and wherefore of death or foretell its time? In short, after infinite reading and writing, after infinite experience, man has come to know how little he knows.

A happy working of the human machine depends upon the harmonious activity of the various component parts. If all these work in an orderly manner, the machine runs smoothly. If even one of the essential parts is out of order, it comes to a stop. For instance, if the digestion is out of order, the whole body becomes slack. Therefore he who takes indigestion and constipation lightly does not know the A B C of the rules of health. These two are the root causes of innumerable ailments.

August 30, 1942

The question that demands our attention next is: What is the right use of the human body? Everything in the world can be used and abused. This applies to the body also. We abuse it when we use it for selfish purposes, for self-indulgence or in order to harm another. It is put to its right use if we exercise self-restraint and dedicate ourselves to the service of the whole world. The human soul is a part of the universal spirit of God. When all our activity is directed towards the realization of this link, the body becomes a temple worthy for the spirit to live in.

The body has been described as a mine of dirt. Looked at in its proper perspective, there is no exaggeration in this statement. If the body was nothing else but this, there could be no point in taking such pains to look after it. But if this so-called mine of dirt can be put to its

¹ यथा पिण्डे तथा ब्रह्माण्डे ।

proper use, it becomes our first duty to cleanse it and keep it in a fit condition. The mines of precious stones and gold also have the look of ordinary earth on the surface. The knowledge that there are gold and precious stones underneath, induces men to spend millions and engage scientific brains in order to get at what lies in those mines. Similarly, we cannot take too much pains over keeping in a fit condition the temple of the spirit—the human body.

Man came into the world in order to pay off the debt owed by him to it, that is to say, in order to serve God and (or through) His creation. Keeping this point of view before him, man acts as a guardian of his body. It becomes his duty to take such care of his body as to enable it to practise the ideal of service to the best of its ability.

August 31, 1942

2. AIR

No one can live without air as one can without water for a few days and without food much longer. Therefore, nature has surrounded us with air on all sides so that we can get it without any effort.

We take in air through the nose into our lungs. The lungs act as a sort of bellows. The atmospheric air which we breathe in has a life-giving substance—a gas known as oxygen. The air that we breathe out contains poisonous gases. These can kill us if they are not immediately allowed to spread out and get diluted by the atmospheric air. Hence the necessity of proper ventilation.

The air comes into close contact with blood in the lungs and purifies it. Many people do not know the art of breathing. This defect prevents an adequate purification of their blood. Some people breathe through the mouth instead of through the nose. This is a bad habit. Nature has so designed the nose that it acts as a sort of filter for the in-going air and also warms it. In mouth-breathers the atmospheric air reaches the lungs without the preliminary filtration or warming. It follows therefore that those who do not know how to breathe should take breathing exercises. They are as easy to learn as they are useful. I do not wish to go into a discussion of the various *asanas* or postures. I do not mean to say that these are not important or useful. But I do wish to emphasize that a well-regulated life outweighs the advantage

of studying and practising elaborate postures or exercises. Any comfortable posture that ensures breathing through the nose and free chest expansion is enough for our purpose.

If we keep the mouth tightly closed, the breathing will have to be carried out by the nose. Just as we wash our mouth every morning, the nose should also be cleaned. Clean water, cold or lukewarm, is the best agent for that purpose. It should be taken in a cup or in the palm of the hand and drawn up through the nostrils. It is possible to draw the water up through one nostril, the other remaining closed, and expel it through the other by opening it and closing the former. The process should be carried out gently so as to avoid discomfort. In order to cleanse the back portion of the nose known as nasopharynx, water should be brought out by the mouth or even swallowed.

We must see that the air that we breathe in is fresh. It is good to cultivate the habit of sleeping in the open under the stars. The fear of catching a chill should be dismissed from the mind. Cold can be kept out by plenty of covering. This covering should not extend beyond the neck. If cold is felt on the head, it can be covered with a separate piece of cloth. The opening of the respiratory passage—the nose—should never be covered up.

The day clothes should be changed for loose night clothes before retiring. As a matter of fact no clothes are necessary at night when one sleeps covered with a sheet. Tight-fitting clothes should be avoided even during the day.

The atmospheric air around us is not always pure, neither is it the same in every country. The choice of the country does not always lie in our hands but the choice of a suitable house in a suitable locality does rest with us to some extent. The general rule should be to live in a locality which is not too congested and insist upon the house being well-lighted and well-ventilated.

September 1, 1942

3. WATER

Next to air, water is a necessity of life. We cannot live without it for more than a few days, just as without air we cannot live for more than a few minutes. Therefore, as in the case of air, nature has provided us with ample amount of water. Man cannot live on barren land where there is no water. Vast tracts of desert land such as Sahara lie utterly uninhabited.

In order to keep healthy, everyone should take 5 lb. of water or other liquid food in 24 hours. Drinking-water must be pure. In many places it is difficult to get pure water. There is always risk in drinking well water. The water of shallow wells, and even deep wells with a staircase leading down to the water level, should be considered absolutely unfit for drinking purposes. The difficulty is that the appearance and even the taste of water are no guide to its purity. Water which appears perfectly harmless to look at and to taste can act as a poison. The old custom of not drinking from an unknown well or from a stranger's house is worth copying.

In Bengal almost every house has a cutcha tank attached to it. As a rule the water of these is unfit for drinking purposes. River water also is frequently not fit for drinking, particularly where the river is used for navigation or where it passes by a big city and receives its drainage and sewage water.

In spite of what I have said, I know there are millions of people who have to drink what I have described as impure water. But that does not mean that their example is worthy of being copied. Nature has provided us with sufficient reserve of vitality. But for that, man would have long ago disappeared from the face of the earth because of his own mistakes and transgressions of the rules of health.

Here we are concerned merely with the role of water with regard to health. Wherever we are doubtful about the purity of water, it should be boiled before drinking. In practice it amounts to this that everyone should carry his drinking-water with him. Many orthodox Hindus in India do not drink water whilst travelling on account of religious prejudices. Surely the enlightened can do for the sake of health what the unenlightened do in the name of religion.¹

September 2, 1942

4. FOOD

Whilst it is true that man cannot live without air and water, the thing that nourishes the body is food. Hence the saying, food is life.

Food can be divided into three categories: vegetarian, flesh and

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The custom of straining water deserves mention. Dirt is in this way removed from the water though not the microscopic germs. For that one has to boil the water. The cloth used for straining water should always be clean. There should not be any holes in it."

mixed.¹ Flesh foods include fowl and fish. Milk is an animal product and cannot by any means be included in a strictly vegetarian diet. It serves the purpose of meat to a very large extent. In medical language it is classified as animal food. A layman does not consider milk to be animal food. On the other hand, eggs are regarded by the layman as a flesh food. In reality, they are not. Nowadays sterile eggs are also produced. The hen is not allowed to see the cock and yet it lays eggs. A sterile egg never develops into a chick. Therefore he who can take milk should have no objection to taking sterile eggs.

Medical opinion is mostly in favour of mixed diet although there is a growing school, which is strongly of the opinion that anatomical and physiological evidence is in favour of man being a vegetarian. His teeth, his stomach, intestines, etc., seem to prove that nature has meant man to be a vegetarian.

Vegetarian diet, besides grains, pulses, edible roots, tubers and leaves, includes fruits, both fresh and dry. Dry fruit includes nuts like almond, pistachio, walnut, etc.

I have always been in favour of pure vegetarian diet. But experience has taught me that in order to keep perfectly fit, vegetarian diet must include milk and milk products such as curds, butter, ghee, etc. This is a significant departure from my original idea. I excluded milk and ghee from my diet for six years. At that time I felt none the worse for the denial. But in the year 1918², as a result of my own ignorance, I was laid up with severe dysentery. I was reduced to a skeleton, but I stubbornly refused to take any medicine and with equal stubbornness refused to take milk or buttermilk. But I could not build up my body and pick up sufficient strength to leave the bed. I had taken a vow of not taking milk. A medical friend suggested that at the time of taking the vow, I could have had in mind only the milk of the cow and buffalo, why should the vow prevent me from taking goat's milk? My wife supported him and I yielded.³ Truly speaking, for one who has given up milk, though at the time of taking the vow only the cow and the buffalo were in mind, milk should be taboo. All animal milks have practically the same composition, though the proportion of the components varies in each case. So I may be said to have kept

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Countless people take mixed diet."

² The source, however, has "1917"; *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", on or about 14-8-1918.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", 10-1-1919.

merely the letter, not the spirit of the vow. Be that as it may, goat's milk was produced immediately and I drank it. It seemed to bring me new life. I picked up rapidly and was soon able to leave the bed. On account of this and several similar experiences, I have been forced to admit the necessity of adding milk to the strict vegetarian diet. But I am convinced that in the vast vegetable kingdom there must be some kind, which, while supplying those necessary substances which we derive from milk and meat, is free from their drawbacks, ethical and other.¹

In my opinion there are definite drawbacks in taking milk or meat. In order to get meat we have to kill. And we are certainly not entitled to any other milk except the mother's milk in our infancy. Over and above the moral drawback, there are others, purely from the point of view of health. Both milk and meat bring with them the defects of the animal from which they are derived. Domesticated cattle are hardly ever perfectly healthy. Just like man, cattle suffer from innumerable diseases. Several of these are overlooked even when the cattle are subjected to periodical medical examinations. Besides, medical examination of all the cattle in India seems to be an impossible feat, at any rate for the present. I am conducting a dairy at the Sevagram Ashram. I can easily get help from medical friends. Yet I cannot say with certainty that all the cattle in the Sevagram Dairy are healthy. On the contrary, a cow that had been considered to be healthy by everybody was found to be suffering from tuberculosis. Before this diagnosis was made, the milk of that cow had been used regularly in the Ashram. The Ashram also takes milk from the farmers in the neighbourhood. Their cattle have not been medically examined. It is difficult to determine whether a particular specimen of milk is safe for consumption or not. We have to rest content with as much safety as boiling of the milk can assure us of. If the Ashram cannot boast of fool-proof medical examination of its cattle, and be certain of the safety of its dairy products, the situation elsewhere is not likely to be much better. What applies to the milch cattle applies to a much greater extent to the animals slaughtered for meat. As a general rule, man just depends upon luck to escape from such risks. He does not seem to worry much about his health. He considers himself to be quite safe in his medical fortress in the shape of doctors, vaidas and hakims. His main worry and concern is how to get wealth and position

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "But this discovery is yet to come,"

in society. This worry overshadows all the rest. Therefore so long as some selfless scientist does not, as a result of patient research work, discover a vegetable substitute for milk and meat, man will go on taking meat and milk.

Now let us consider mixed diet. Man requires food which can supply tissue-building substances to provide for the growth and daily wear and tear of the body. It should also contain something which can supply energy, fat, certain salts and roughage to help the excretion of waste matter. Tissue-building substances are known as proteins. They are obtained from milk, meat, eggs, pulses and nuts. The proteins contained in milk and meat, in other words the animal proteins, being more easily digestible and assimilable, are much more valuable than vegetable proteins. Milk is superior to meat. The medicos tell us that in cases where meat cannot be digested, milk is digested quite easily. For vegetarians milk, being the only source of animal proteins, is a very important article of diet. The proteins in raw eggs are considered to be the most easily digestible of all proteins.

But everybody cannot afford to drink milk or eat eggs. Nor are they available in every place. I would like to mention here a very important fact with regard to milk. Contrary to the popular belief, skimmed milk is a very valuable article of diet. There are times when it proves even more useful than whole milk. The chief function of milk is to supply animal proteins for tissue-building and tissue-repair. Skimming, while it partially removes the fats, does not affect the proteins at all. Moreover the available skimming instruments cannot remove all the fat from milk. Neither is there any likelihood of such an instrument being constructed.

September 4, 1942

The body requires other things besides milk, whole or skimmed. I give the second place to cereals—wheat, rice, *juwar*, *bajri*, etc. These are used as the staple diet. Different cereals are used as staple in different provinces of India. In many places, more than one kind of cereals are eaten at the same time; for instance, small quantities of wheat, *bajri* and rice are often served together just for the sake of taste. This mixture is not necessary for the nourishment of the body. It makes it difficult to regulate the quantity of food intake, and puts an extra strain upon digestion. As all these varieties supply starch mainly, it is better to take one only at a time. Wheat may well be described as the king among cereals. If we glance at the world map,

we find that wheat occupies the first place. From the point of view of health, if we can get wheat, rice and other cereals become unnecessary. If wheat is not available and *juwar*, etc., cannot be taken on account of dislike or difficulty in digesting them, rice has to be resorted to.

September 6, 1942

The cereals should be properly cleansed, ground on a grinding-stone, and the resulting flour used as it is. Sieving of the flour should be avoided. It is likely to remove the *bhusi* or the pericarp which is a rich source of salts and vitamins, both of which are most valuable from the point of view of nutrition. The pericarp also supplies roughage, which helps the action of the bowels. Rice grain being very delicate, nature has provided it with an outer covering or epicarp. This is not edible. In order to remove this inedible portion, rice has to be pounded. Pounding should be just sufficient to remove the epicarp or the outer skin of the rice grain. But machine-pounding not only removes the outer skin, but also polishes the rice by removing its pericarp. The explanation of the popularity of polished rice lies in the fact that polishing helps preservation. The pericarp is very sweet and unless it is removed, rice is easily attacked by certain organisms. Polished rice and wheat without its pericarp, supply us with almost pure starch. Important constituents of the cereals are lost with the removal of the pericarp. The pericarp of rice is sold as rice polishings. This and the pericarp of wheat can be cooked and eaten by themselves. They can be also made into chapatis or cakes.¹ It is possible that rice chapatis may be more easily digestible than whole rice and in this form a lesser quantity may result in full satisfaction.

We are in the habit of dipping each morsel of the chapati in vegetable or dal gravy before eating it. The result is that most people swallow their food without proper mastication. Mastication is an important step in the process of digestion, especially that of starch. Digestion of starch begins on its coming into contact with saliva in the mouth. Mastication ensures a thorough mixing of food with saliva. Therefore starchy foods should be eaten in a relatively dry form, which results in a greater flow of saliva and also necessitates their thorough mastication.

After the starch-supplying cereals come the protein-supplying

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "In Konkan, poor people use rice flour for making chpatis."

pulses—beans, lentils, etc. Almost everybody seems to think that pulses are an essential constituent of diet. Even meat-eaters must have pulses. It is easy to understand that those who have to do hard manual work and who cannot afford to drink milk, cannot do without pulses. But I can say without any hesitation whatsoever that those who follow sedentary occupations as, for instance, clerks, businessmen, lawyers, doctors, teachers and those who are not too poor to buy milk, do not require pulses. Pulses are generally considered to be difficult to digest and are eaten in a much smaller quantity than cereals. Out of the varieties of pulses, peas, gram and haricot beans are considered to be the most and *mung* and *masoor* (lentils) the least difficult to digest.¹

Vegetables and fruits should come third on our list. One would expect them to be cheap and easily available in India. But it is not so. They are generally considered to be delicacies meant for the city people. In the villages fresh vegetables are a rarity and in most places fruit is also not available. This shortage of greens and fruit is a slur on the administration of India. The villagers can grow plenty of green vegetables if they wish to. The question of fruit cannot be solved so easily. The land legislation is bad from the villagers' standpoint. But I am transgressing.

Among fresh vegetables, a fair amount of leafy vegetables must be taken every day. I do not include potatoes, sweet potatoes, *suran*, etc., which supply starch mainly, among vegetables. They should be put down in the same category as starch-supplying cereals. A fair helping of ordinary fresh vegetables is advisable. Certain varieties such as cucumber, tomatoes, mustard cress and other tender leaves need not be cooked. They should be washed properly and then eaten raw in small quantities.

As for fruits, our daily diet should include the available fruits of the season, e.g., mangoes, *jambu*, guavas, grapes, papaws, limes—sweet or sour—oranges, *mosambi*, etc., should all be used in their season. The best time for taking fruit is early in the morning. A breakfast of fruit and milk should give full satisfaction. Those who take an early lunch may well have a breakfast of fruit only.

Banana is a good fruit. But as it is very rich in starch, it takes the place of bread. Milk, banana and leafy vegetable make a perfect meal.

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "It is quite obvious that non-vegetarians do not need dal at all. They eat it just for the taste. Whole pulses soaked in water overnight and about a *tola* of them chewed after they sprout, are beneficial."

A certain amount of fat is also necessary. This can be had in the form of ghee or oil. If ghee can be had, oil becomes unnecessary. It is difficult to digest and is not so nourishing as pure ghee. An ounce and a half of ghee per head per day should be considered ample to supply the needs of the body. Whole milk also is a source of ghee. Those who cannot afford it should take enough oil to supply the need for fat. Among oils, sweet oil, groundnut oil and coconut oil should be given preference. Oil must be fresh. If available, it is better to use handpressed oil. Oil and ghee sold in the bazaar are generally quite useless. It is a matter of great sorrow and shame. But so long as honesty has not become an integral part of business morals, whether through legislation or through education, the individuals will have to procure the pure article with patience and diligence. One should never be satisfied to take what one can get, irrespective of its quality. It is far better to do without ghee and oil altogether rather than to eat rancid oil and adulterated ghee. As in the case of fats, a certain amount of sugar is also necessary. Although sweet fruits supply plenty of sugar, there is no harm in taking one to one and a half ounces of sugar, brown or white, in the day. If one cannot get sweet fruits, sugar may become a necessity. But the undue prominence given to sweet things nowadays is wrong. City folk eat too much of sweet things. Milk puddings, milk sweets and sweets of other kinds are consumed in large quantities. They are all unnecessary and are harmful except when taken in very small quantities. It may be said without any fear of exaggeration that to partake of sweetmeats and other delicacies, in a country where the millions do not even get an ordinary full meal, is equivalent to robbery.

What applies to sweets applies with equal force to ghee and oil. There is no need to eat food fried in ghee or oil. To use up ghee in making *puris* and *laddus* is thoughtless extravagance. Those who are not used to such food cannot eat these things at all. For instance, Englishmen on their first coming into our country cannot eat our sweets and fried foodstuffs. Those that do eat them, I have often seen, fall ill. Taste is acquired, not born with us. All the delicacies of the world cannot equal the relish that hunger gives to food. A hungry man will eat a dry piece of bread with the greatest relish, whereas one who is not hungry will refuse the best of sweetmeats.

September 8, 1942

Now let us consider how often and how much one should eat.

Food should be taken as a matter of duty—even as a medicine—to sustain the body, never for the satisfaction of the palate. Thus pleasurable feeling comes from satisfaction of real hunger. Therefore we can say that relish is dependent upon hunger and not outside it. Because of our wrong habits and artificial way of living, very few people know what their system requires. Our parents who bring us into this world do not, as a rule, cultivate self-control. Their habits and their way of living influence the children to a certain extent. The mother's food during pregnancy is bound to affect the child. After that, during childhood the mother pampers the child with all sorts of tasty foods. She gives the child a little bit out of whatever she herself may be eating and the child's digestive system gets a wrong training from its infancy. Habits once formed are difficult to shed. There are very few who succeed in getting rid of them. But when the realization comes to man that he is his own bodyguard and his body has been dedicated to service, he desires to learn laws of keeping his body in a fit condition and tries hard to follow them.

September 9, 1942

We have now reached a point where we can lay down the amount of various foods required by a man of sedentary habits, which most men and women who will read these pages are.

Cow's milk	2 lb.
Cereals (wheat, rice, <i>bajri</i>) in all	6 oz.
Vegetables leafy	3 oz.
„ others	5 oz.
„ raw	1 oz.
Ghee	1_ oz.
Or butter	2 oz.
<i>Gur</i> or white sugar	1_ oz.

Fresh fruit according to one's taste and purse. In any case it is good to take two sour limes a day. The juice should be squeezed and taken with vegetables or in water, cold or hot.

All these weights are of raw stuff. I have not put down the amount of salt. It should be added afterwards according to taste.

Now, how often should one eat? Many people take two meals a day. The general rule is to take three meals: breakfast early in the morning and before going out to work, dinner at midday and supper in the evening or later. There is no necessity to have more than three

meals. In the cities some people keep on nibbling from time to time. This habit is harmful. The digestive apparatus requires rest.

5. CONDIMENTS

I have not said anything about condiments in the last chapter. Common salt may be rightly counted as the king among condiments. Many people cannot eat their food without it.¹ The body requires certain salts, and common salt is one of them. These salts occur naturally in the various foodstuffs but when food is cooked in an unscientific way, e.g., throwing away the water in which rice, potatoes or other vegetables have been boiled, the supply becomes inadequate. The deficiency then has to be made up by a separate addition of salts. As common salt is one of the most essential salts for the body, I have said in the last chapter that it might be supplemented in small quantities.

But several condiments are not required by the body as a general rule, e.g., chillies, fresh or dry, pepper, turmeric, coriander, caraway, mustard, *methi*, asafoetida, etc. These are taken just for the satisfaction of the palate. My opinion, based on my personal experience of fifty years, is that not one of these is needed to keep perfectly healthy. Those whose digestion has become very feeble might take these things as medicines for a certain length of time, if considered necessary. But one should make it a point to avoid their use for the satisfaction of the palate. All condiments, even salt, destroy the natural flavour of vegetables and cereals, etc. Those whose palate has not become vitiated enjoy the natural flavour of the foodstuffs much more than after the addition of salt or other condiments. That is why I have said that salt should be taken when necessary as an adjunct. As for chillies, they burn the mouth and irritate the stomach. Those who are not in the habit of taking chillies cannot bear them in the beginning. I have seen several cases of sore mouth caused by the taking of chillies. I know of one case who was very fond of chillies, and an excessive use resulted in his premature death. The Negro in South Africa will not touch condiments. He cannot bear the colour of turmeric in his food. In the same way, Englishmen also do not readily

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "That is why it is also called *sabras*"

take to our condiments.

6. TEA, COFFEE AND COCOA

None of these is required by the body. The use of tea is said to have originated in China. It has a special use in that country. As a rule, one cannot rely on the purity of drinking water in China and therefore it must be boiled before use to ensure safety. Some clever Chinaman discovered a grass called tea which when added to boiling water in a very small quantity gave it a golden colour. The colour did not appear unless the water was really boiling. Thus the grass became an infallible test for seeing when a given quantity of water was boiled. The way the test is used is to put the tea leaves in a strainer and let the boiling water pass through the strainer. If the water is boiling it will assume a golden colour. Another quality of tea leaves is said to be that they impart a delicate flavour to the water.

September 10, 1942

Tea prepared as above is harmless. But the tea that is generally prepared and taken has not only nothing to recommend it, it is actually harmful. The leaves contain tannin which is harmful to the body. Tannin is generally used in the Tanneries to harden leather. When taken internally it produces a similar effect upon the mucous lining of the stomach and intestine. This impairs digestion and causes dyspepsia. It is said that in England innumerable women suffer from various ailments on account of their habit of drinking tea which contains tannin. Habitual tea-drinkers begin to feel restless if they do not get their cup at the usual time. In my opinion, the usefulness of tea, if any, consists in the fact that it supplies a warm sweet drink which contains some milk. The same purpose may well be served by taking boiled hot water mixed with a little milk and sugar.

What I have said about tea applies more or less to coffee also. There is a popular saying about coffee in Hindustani which says, 'Coffee allays cough and relieves flatulence, but it impairs physical and sexual vigour and makes the blood watery, so that there are three disadvantages against its two advantages.' I do not know how far the saying is justified.

October 7, 1942

I hold similar opinion with regard to cocoa. Those whose digestion works normally, do not require the help of tea, coffee or cocoa. A healthy man can get all the satisfaction that he needs out of

ordinary food. I have freely partaken of all the three. I used to suffer from one ailment or another while I was using them. By giving them up I have lost nothing, and have benefited a good deal. I can get the same satisfaction from a clear vegetable soup that I used to derive from tea, etc. Hot water, honey and lemon make a healthy nourishing drink, which can well substitute tea or coffee.

October 8, 1942

7. INTOXICANTS

The intoxicants used in India might be taken as the following: alcohol, *bhang*, *ganja*, tobacco and opium. Alcohol or liquor includes the country-made liquor and *arak*, besides the large quantities of liquor imported from foreign countries. All these should be strictly prohibited. Alcohol makes a man forget himself and while its effects last, he becomes utterly incapable of doing anything useful. Those who take to drinking ruin themselves and their people. They lose all sense of decency and propriety.

There is a school who favour limited and regulated consumption of alcohol and believe it to be useful. I have not found any weight in their argument. Even if we accept their view for a moment, we have still to face the fact that innumerable human beings cannot be kept under discipline. Therefore it becomes our duty to prohibit alcoholic drinks even if it were only for the sake of this vast majority.

Parsis have strongly supported the use of toddy. They say that although toddy is an intoxicant, it is also a food and even helps to digest other foodstuffs. I have carefully examined this argument and have read a fair amount of literature pertaining to this subject. But I have been a witness of the terrible straits to which toddy reduces the poor and therefore I have come to the conclusion that it can have no place in man's food.

October 9, 1942

The advantages attributed to toddy are all available from other foodstuffs. Toddy is made out of *khajuri* juice. Fresh *khajuri* juice is not an intoxicant. It is known as *nira* in Hindustani and many people have been cured of their constipation as a result of drinking *nira*. I have taken it myself though it did not act as a laxative with me. I found that it had the same food value as sugar-cane juice. If one drinks a glass of *nira* in the morning instead of drinking tea, etc., he should not need anything else for breakfast. As in the case of

sugar-cane juice, palm juice can be boiled to make palm jaggery. *Khajuri* is a variety of palm tree. Several varieties of palm grow spontaneously in our country. All of them yield drinkable juice. As *nira* gets fermented very quickly, it has to be used up immediately and therefore on the spot. Since this condition is difficult to fulfil except to a limited extent, in practice, the best use of *nira* is to convert it into palm jaggery. Palm jaggery can well replace sugar-cane jaggery. In fact some people prefer it to the latter. One advantage of palm jaggery over sugar-cane jaggery is that it is less sweet and therefore one can eat more of it. The All-India Village Industries Association has done a great deal to popularize palm jaggery, but much remains to be done. If the palms that are used for making toddy are used for making jaggery, India will never lack sugar and the poor will be able to get good jaggery for very little money. Palm jaggery can be converted into molasses and refined sugar. But the jaggery is much more useful than refined sugar. The salts present in the jaggery are lost in the process of refining. Just as refined wheat flour and polished rice lose some of their nutritive value because of the loss of the pericarp, refined sugar also loses some of the nutritive value of the jaggery. One may generalize that all foodstuffs are richer if taken in their natural state as far as possible.

Talking of toddy, I naturally began to talk of *nira* and from that I went on to the topic of jaggery. But let us return to liquor for the moment.

None of the public workers perhaps have the same bitter experience of the evils of drinks as I have had. In South Africa, most of the Indians going there as indentured labourers were addicted to drinking. The law there did not in my time permit Indians to take liquor to their houses except under a medical certificate. They could go to the drinking booths and drink as much as they liked. Even the women had fallen victims to this evil habit. I have seen them in a most pathetic condition. One who has seen those scenes near the public bars will never support drinking.

African Negroes were not given to drinking originally. Liquor may be said to have simply ruined them. Large numbers of Negro labourers are seen to waste all their earnings in drinking so that their lives become devoid of any grace.

And what about Englishmen? I have seen respectable Englishmen falling in the gutter under the effect of alcohol. There is

no exaggeration in this statement. During the war many Englishmen had to leave the Transvaal. Some of them were taken in my home. One of them was an engineer and a good man in every way, when not under the effects of alcohol. He was a theosophist. Unfortunately, he was addicted to drink and lost all control over himself when he was drunk. He tried hard to give up the habit but as far as I know he never succeeded.

October 10, 1942

On my return from South Africa to India I had a similar painful experience of the evils of drink. Several Princes have been and are being ruined by liquor. What applies to them applies more or less to many a rich youth. The condition of labour as a result of taking alcohol is also pitiable. That as a result of such bitter experiences, I have become a staunch opponent of alcohol will not surprise the readers.

In a nutshell, alcohol ruins one physically, morally, intellectually and economically.

8. OPIUM

The criticism levelled against alcohol applies equally to opium, although the two are very different in their action. Under the effects of alcohol a person becomes a rowdy, whereas opium makes the addict dull and lazy. He becomes even drowsy and incapable of doing anything useful. The evil effects of alcohol strike the eye every day, but those of opium are not so glaring. Anyone wishing to see its devastating effect should go to Assam or Orissa. Thousands have fallen victims to this intoxicant in those provinces. They give one the impression of living on the verge of death.

But China is said to have suffered the most from the evils of opium. The Chinese possess a better physique than the Indians. But the Chinese addicted to opium look miserable and more dead than alive. An opium addict will stoop to anything in order to procure his dose of opium.

Several years ago, what is known as the Opium War took place between China and Great Britain. China did not wish to buy opium from India. But the English wanted to impose it on China. India was also to blame, in that several Indians had taken opium contracts in India. The trade paid well and the treasury received crores of rupees as opium revenue. This was obviously an immoral trade and yet it

went on flourishing. Finally, as a result of a mighty agitation in England, it was stopped. A thing of this type, which simply ruins people, should not be tolerated for a single minute.

October 11, 1942

After having had my say on opium as an intoxicant, I must admit that its place in *Materia Medica* is incontestable. It is impossible to do without this drug as a medical agent. But that can be no reason for using it as an intoxicant. Opium is a well known poison and its use as an intoxicant should be strictly prohibited.

9. TOBACCO

Tobacco has simply worked havoc among mankind. Once caught in its tangle, it is rare to find anyone get out again. The use of tobacco is prevalent all over the world in one form or another. Tolstoy has called it the worst of all intoxicants. This verdict of that great man should command our attention and respect. He had freely indulged in the use of tobacco and alcohol in his early days and was familiar with the harmful effects of both. I must admit, however, that in spite of this, I cannot talk about the evils of tobacco with the same authority and knowledge as in the case of alcohol and opium. But I can certainly say that I am not aware of a single advantage accruing from the use of tobacco. Smoking is an expensive habit. I know of an Englishman who used to spend five pounds, i.e., seventy-five rupees on tobacco every month. His monthly earnings were twenty-five pounds, that is, he smoked away one-fifth of his monthly income !

Tobacco-smokers become callous and careless of others' feelings. Non-smokers generally cannot bear the smell of tobacco smoke, but one often comes across people in railway trains and tramways who just go on smoking, heedless of the feelings of their neighbours. Smoking causes salivation and most smokers have no hesitation in spitting anywhere.

Tobacco-smokers' mouths emit a foul smell. Probably tobacco kills the finer feelings and perhaps it is to this end that men take to smoking. There is no doubt that tobacco is an intoxicant and while under its effect one forgets one's worries and misfortunes. One of Tolstoy's characters had to do a ghastly deed. Tolstoy makes him drink liquor at first. The man was to murder someone. In spite of the effects of liquor, he hesitated to do so. Lost in thought he lights a cigar and begins to smoke. As he watched the smoke curling up he

exclaimed, 'What a coward I am! When it is my duty to commit this murder, why should I hesitate to do so? Get up, go ahead and do your job.' Thus his wavering mind finally decided to commit it. I know this argument is not very convincing. All smokers are not bad men. I know that millions of smokers seem to live ordinary straightforward lives. All the same the thoughtful should ponder over the above quotation. What Tolstoy perhaps means is that the smoker keeps on committing minor crimes which generally pass unnoticed.

In India, people use tobacco for smoking, snuffing and also for chewing. Some believe that snuff produces a beneficial effect, and they use it under the advice of vaidas and hakims. I think that it is not necessary. A healthy man should never have such requirements.

As for chewing tobacco, it is the dirtiest of the three ways in which tobacco is used. I have always maintained that its usefulness is a mere figment of the imagination. I have found no reason to change my opinion. There is a popular saying in Gujarati which says, 'All the three are equally guilty—the smoker fills his house with smoke, the chewer dirties every corner and the snuffer his clothes.'

Tobacco-chewers, if they are sensible, keep a spittoon at hand. But the vast majority spit on the floor, in the corners and on the walls unabashed. The smoker fills his house with the smoke and runs the risk of its catching fire, and he who takes snuff soils his clothes. If there are any who keep handkerchiefs and thus save their clothes from soiling, they are exceptions that prove the general rule. Lovers of (or seekers after) health, if they are slaves to any of these evil habits, will resolutely get out of the slavery. Several people are addicted to one, two or all the three of these habits. They do not appear loathsome to them. But if we think over it calmly, there is nothing becoming about blowing off smoke or keeping the mouth stuffed with tobacco and *pan* practically the whole day long or opening the snuff-box and taking snuff every now and then. All the three are most dirty habits.

10. BRAHMACHARYA

Brahmacharya literally means that mode of life which leads to the realization of God. That realization is impossible without practising self-restraint. Self-restraint means restraint of all the senses. But ordinarily *brahmacharya* is understood to mean control over the sexual organs and prevention of seminal discharge through complete control over the sexual instinct and the sexual organs. This becomes natural for the man who exercises self-restraint all round. It is only

when observance of *brahmacharya* becomes natural to one that he or she derives the greatest benefit from it. Such a person should be free from anger and kindred passions. The so-called *brahmacharis* that one generally comes across behave as if their one occupation in life was the display of bad temper.

One notices that these people disregard the ordinary rules of *brahmacharya* and merely aim at and expect to prevent seminal discharges. They fail to achieve their object. Some of them become almost insane while others betray a sickly appearance. They are unable to prevent the discharge and if they succeed in restraining themselves from sexual intercourse, they think they have attained all that was needed. Now mere abstention from sexual intercourse cannot be termed *brahmacharya*. So long as the desire for intercourse is there, one *cannot* be said to have attained *brahmacharya*. Only he who has burnt away the sexual desire in its entirety may be said to have attained control over his sexual organs. The absence of seminal discharges is a straightforward result of *brahmacharya*, but it is not all. There is something very striking about a full-fledged *brahmachari*. His speech, his thought, and his actions, all bespeak possession of vital force.

Such a *brahmachari* does not flee from the company of women. He may not hanker after it nor may he avoid it even when it means rendering of necessary service. For him the distinction between men and women almost disappears. No one should distort my words to use them as an argument in favour of licentiousness. What I mean to say is that a man, whose sexual desire has been burnt up, ceases to make a distinction between men and women. It must be so. His conception of beauty alters. He will not look at the external form. He or she whose character is beautiful will be beautiful in his eyes. Therefore, the sight of a woman called beautiful will not ruffle or excite him. Even his sexual organs will begin to look different. In other words, such a man has so controlled his sexual instinct that he never gets erections. He does not become impotent for lack of the necessary secretions of sexual glands. But these secretions in his case are sublimated into a vital force pervading his whole being. It is said that an impotent man is not free from the sexual desire. Some of my correspondents belonging to this group tell me that they desire erection but they fail to get it and yet have seminal discharges. Such men have either become impotent or are on the way to become so for loss of the necessary secretions. This is a pitiable state. But the cultivated

impotency of the man, whose sexual desire has been burnt up and whose sexual secretions are being converted into vital force, is wholly different. It is to be desired by everybody. It is true that such a *brahmachari* is rare to find.

I took the vow of *brahmacharya* in 1906.¹ In other words, my effort to become a perfect *brahmachari* started 36 years ago. I cannot say I have attained the full *brahmacharya* of my definition, but in my opinion I have made substantial progress towards it. If God wills it, I might attain even perfection in this life. Anyway, there is no relaxation of effort nor is there any despondence in me. I do not consider thirty-six years too long a period for the effort. The richer the prize, the richer must the effort be. Meanwhile my ideas regarding the necessity for *brahmacharya* have become stronger. Some of my experiments have not reached a stage when they might be placed before the public with advantage. I hope to do so some day, if they succeed to my satisfaction. Success might make the attainment of *brahmacharya* comparatively easier.

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But the *brahmacharya* on which I wish to lay emphasis in this chapter is limited to the conservation of sexual secretions. The glorious fruit of perfect *brahmacharya* is not to be had from the observance of this limited *brahmacharya*. But no one can reach perfect *brahmacharya* without reaching the limited variety.

And maintenance of perfect health should be considered almost an utter impossibility without the *brahmacharya* leading to the conservation of the sexual secretions. To countenance wastage of a secretion which has the power of creating another human being is, to say the least, an indication of gross ignorance. A firm grasp of the fact that semen is meant to be used only for procreation and not for self-indulgence, leaves no room whatsoever for indulging in animal passion. Assimilation of the knowledge that the vital fluid is never meant for waste should restrain men and women from becoming crazy over sexual intercourse. Marriage will then come to have a different significance and the way it is treated at present will appear disgusting. Marriage ought to signify a union of hearts between the two partners. A married couple is worthy of being considered *brahmacharis* if they never think of sexual intercourse except for the

¹ Vide "An Autobiography—Part III, Chapter VII".

purposes of procreation. Such an intercourse is not possible unless both parties desire it. It will never be resorted to in order to satisfy passion without the desire for a child. After intercourse which has been performed as a matter of duty, the desire to repeat the process should never arise.

What I am saying may not be taken as copy-book wisdom. The reader should know that I am writing this after a long personal experience. I know that what I am writing contrary to the common practice. But in order to make progress we have often to go beyond the limits of common experience. Great discoveries have been possible only as a result of challenging the common experience or commonly held beliefs. The invention of the simple match-stick was challenge to the common experience and the discovery of electricity confounded all preconceived notions.

What is true of physical things is equally true of things spiritual. In the early days there was no such thing as marriage. Men and women, as in the case of animals, mated promiscuously. Self-restraint was unknown. Some advanced men went beyond the rut of common practice and discovered the law of self-restraint. It is our duty to investigate the hidden possibilities of the law of self-restraint. Therefore, when I say it is the duty of every man and woman to take the marital relations to the state indicated by me, it is not to be dismissed as utterly impracticable. If human life is moulded as it ought to be, conservation of the vital fluid can become a natural thing for everyone.

The sexual glands are all the time secreting the semen. This secretion should be utilized for enhancing one's mental, physical and spiritual energy. He who would learn to utilize it thus will find that he requires very little food to keep his body in a fit condition. And yet he will be as capable as any of undertaking physical labour. Mental exertion will not tire him easily nor will he show the ordinary signs of old age. Just as a ripe fruit or an old leaf falls off naturally, so will such a *brahmachari* when his time comes pass away with all his faculties intact. Although with the passage of time the effects of the natural wear and tear must be manifest in his body, his intellect instead of showing signs of decay should show progressive clarity.¹ If all this

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The lustre on his face should also increase. One in whom this lustre is not seen is to that extent lacking in *brahmacharya*. He has not learnt the art of conserving the vital force."

is correct, and I claim that it is, the real key to health lies in the conservation of vital energy.

December 12, 1942

I give here the rules for the conservation of vital force, as I know them.

1. Sexual desire has its root in one's thought. Therefore complete control over thought is necessary. The way to achieve it is this: Never let your mind remain idle. Keep it filled with good and useful ideas. In other words keep thinking of whatever duty you have on hand. There need be no worry about it, but think out how you can become an expert in your department and then put your thoughts into action. There should be no waste of thought.¹ *Japa* (repetition of God's name) is a great support when idle thoughts haunt you. Contemplate God in the form you have pictured Him unless you know Him as formless. While *japa* is going on, no other thought should be allowed to enter one's mind. This is the ideal state. But if one cannot reach it and all sorts of uninvited thoughts invade one's mind, one should not become disheartened. *Namajapa* should be continued faithfully and in the confidence that ultimate victory is bound to follow.

2. As with our thoughts, so with our reading and talking. These should be healthy and clean. Erotic literature should be avoided. Idle, indecent talk leads to indecent action.² It is obvious that one who does not wish to feed his animal passions will avoid occupations which tend to induce them.

3. Like the mind, the body must also be kept well and usefully occupied, so that the fatigue of the day may lead to refreshing dreamless sleep. As far as possible, work should be in the open. Those who for some reason or the other cannot undertake physical labour, should make it a point to take regular exercise. In my opinion, a brisk walk in the open is the best form of exercise. During the walk the mouth should be closed and breathing should be done through the

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "But man is not occupied all the time. He feels tired and the body needs rest. When he does not get sleep, it is possible that such uninvited thoughts invade his mind."

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "There is a good deal of prurient literature about. One should not let one's attention turn to it. One should read and ponder over noble works or works pertaining to one's occupation. Arithmetic, etc., have an important place here."

nose. Sitting or walking, the body must be held erect. To sit or stand otherwise is a sign of laziness and laziness is the enemy of self-restraint. Yogic exercises—*asanas*—are also useful. This much I can say from my personal experience that one who keeps his hands and feet, eyes and ears healthily occupied does not have much difficulty in controlling the animal appetite. Everyone can test this for himself.

4. A Sanskrit text says that a man becomes what he eats. A glutton who exercises no restraint in eating is a slave to his animal passions. One who has not been able to control his palate, will never be able to control the other senses. If this is true, it is clear that one should take just enough food for the requirements of the body and no more. The diet should be healthy and well-balanced. The body was never meant to be treated as a refuse bin holding the foods that the palate demands. Food is meant to sustain the body. His body has been given to man as a means of self-realization. Self-realization means realization of God. A person who has made this realization the object of his or her life, will never become a slave to the animal passion.

5. Man should look upon every woman as his mother, sister or daughter. No one ever entertains impure thoughts with regard to his mother, sister or daughter. Similarly woman should look upon every man as her father, brother or son.

I have given more hints than these in my other writings, but they are all contained in the five given above. Anyone who observes them should find it easy to overcome what has been called the greatest of all passions. A person who has a real desire for *brahmacharya* will not give up the effort because he or she regards the observance of these rules as impossible or at least within the reach of one in a million. The effort is a joy in itself. To put it in another way, the joy of possessing perfect health is not to be compared with any other, and perfect health is unattainable by slaves. Slavery to one's animality is perhaps the worst of all.

A few words about contraceptives will not be out of place here. The practice of preventing progeny, by means of artificial methods, is not a new thing. In the past such methods were practised secretly and they were crude. Modern society has given them a respectable place and made improvements. They have been given a philanthropic garb. The advocates of contraceptives say that sexual desire is a natural instinct. Some call it a blessing. They therefore say that it is not

desirable to suppress the desire even if it were possible. Birth-control by means of self-restraint is, in their opinion, difficult to practise. If a substitute for self-restraint is not prescribed, the health of innumerable women is bound to suffer through frequent pregnancies. They add that if births are not regulated, over-population will ensue; individual families will be pauperized and their children will be ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-educated. Therefore, they argue, it is the duty of scientists to devise harmless and effective methods of birth-control. This argument has failed to convince me. The use of contraceptives is likely to produce evils of which we have no conception. But the worst danger is that the use of contraceptives bids fair to kill the desire for self-restraint. In my opinion it is too heavy a price to pay for any possible immediate gain. But this is not the place to argue my point. Those who would like to pursue this subject further should procure the booklet called *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence*¹, read and digest what I have said therein and then do as their heads and hearts may dictate. Those who have not the desire or the leisure to read the booklet will, if they follow my advice, avoid contraceptives as poison. They should try their best to exercise self-restraint. They should take up such activities as would keep their bodies and minds fully occupied and give a suitable outlet to their energy. It is necessary to have some healthy recreation when one is tired by physical labour. There should not be a single moment of idleness for the devil to creep in. In this way, true conjugal love will be established and directed into healthy channels. Both the partners will make a progressive rise in their moral height. The joy of true renunciation once they come to know it, will prevent them from turning to animal enjoyment. Self-deception is the greatest stumbling block. Instead of controlling the mind, the fountain of all animal desire, men and women involve themselves in the vain endeavour to avoid the physical act. If there is a determination to control the thought and the action, victory is sure to follow. Man must understand that woman is his companion and helpmate in life and not a means of satisfying his carnal desire. There must be a clear perception that the purpose of human creation was wholly different from that of the satisfaction of animal wants.

¹ Containing a collection of Gandhiji's and Mahadev Desai's writings as reproduced from *Young India* and *Harijan*. For Gandhiji's Prefaces to the second and third editions of the book, vide "Preface to Second Edition of *Self Restraint v. Self-Indulgence*", 24-3-1927, and "Preface to *Sel-Restraint v. Self-Indulgence*", 3-8-1928.

December 13, 1942

PART II

NATURAL THERAPEUTICS

1. EARTH

These chapters are written in order to introduce the reader to this most important branch of therapeutics and tell him how I have made use of these methods in my own life. The subject has been touched upon in the foregoing chapters. It will be dealt with in some detail here. The science of natural therapeutics is based on a use, in the treatment of disease, of the same five elements which constitute the human body. To refresh the reader's memory, these are earth, water, ether, light and air. It is my effort to point out how they can be utilized for health purposes.

Up till the year 1901, although I did not rush to doctors whenever I happened to get ill, I did use their remedies to a certain extent. I used to take fruit-salt for constipation. The late Dr. Pranjivan Mehta who had come to Natal introduced me to certain drugs to remove general lassitude. This led me to read literature on the uses of drugs. Add to this a little more knowledge I gained by a certain amount of work I had put in at a cottage hospital in Natal. This enabled me to carry on for sometime, but none of the drugs did me any good in the end. Headaches and loss of a sense of general well-being persisted.¹ I was very dissatisfied with this state of things and what little faith I had in medicines began to fade.

All through this interval my experiments in dietetics were continued. I had great faith in nature-cure methods, but there was nobody to help me with practical guidance in their use. With the help of whatever knowledge I could gather by reading a little of nature-cure literature, I tried to treat myself by diet regulation. My habit of going out for long walks also stood me in good stead, and thanks to that habit I did not have actually to take to bed. While I was thus managing to keep going somehow, Mr. Polak handed me Just's² book, called *Return to Nature*. He did not follow Just's instructions himself, except that he tried to regulate his diet more or less according

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "So I used to take iron and *nux vomica* prescribed by Dr. Pranjivan Mehta."

² Adolf Just

to Just's teaching. But knowing me as he did, he thought I would like the book. Just lays great emphasis on the use of earth. I felt that I ought to give it a trial. For constipation, Just advises cold mud-poultices on the lower abdomen. I made a mud-poultice by mixing clean, dry earth with water, packed it in a piece of thin cloth and kept it on the abdomen throughout the night. The result was most satisfactory. I had a natural well-formed motion the next morning and from that day onwards I have hardly ever touched fruit-salt. Occasionally I feel the need of a purgative and take less than a dessert-spoonful of castor oil early in the morning. The mud-poultice should be three inches broad, six inches long and half an inch thick. Just claims that mud can cure man bitten by a poisonous snake. He would pack wet earth all round the body. I mention this for what it is worth. I would like to put down here what I have tested and proved for myself. It is my experience that a mud-poultice applied to the head, relieves headache in most cases. I have tried it in hundreds of cases. Headache may be due to several causes, but whatever the cause, as a general rule, an application of mud-poultice relieves it for the time being.

Mud-poultices cure ordinary boils. I have applied mud to discharging abscesses as well. For these cases I prepare the poultice by packing the mud in a clean piece of cloth dipped in potassium permanganate lotion, and apply it to the abscess after washing clean with permanganate lotion. In the majority of cases this treatment results in complete cure. I do not remember a single case in which it has failed me. Mud application immediately relieves the pain of a wasp sting. I have used it in many cases of scorpion sting, though with much less success. Scorpions have become a nuisance in Sevagram. We have tried all the known treatments for scorpion sting, but none has proved infallible. I can say this that the results of mud application are not inferior to those of any other form of treatment.

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In high fever, an application of mud-poultice on the head and abdomen is very useful. Although it does not always bring down the temperature, it does invariably soothe the patient and make him feel better, so that the patients themselves ask for these applications. I have used it in several cases of typhoid fever. The fever no doubt runs its own course but mud applications seem to relieve restlessness and abate the suffering. We have had about ten cases of typhoid fever in

Sevagram with complete recovery in every case, so that the inmates of the Ashram are no longer afraid of typhoid fever. I have not used any drugs in the treatment of these cases. I have made use of other nature-cure methods besides mud-poultices, but about those in their own place.

In Sevagram we have made free use of hot mud-poultices as a substitute for antiphlogistine. A little (mustard) oil and salt is added to the mud and it is heated sufficiently long to ensure sterilization.

I have not told the reader what kind of earth should be used for mud-poultices. In the beginning I used to procure sweetsmelling clean, red earth. It emits, a delicate smell when it is mixed with water. But this kind of earth is not easy to obtain. In a city like Bombay it is a problem to get any kind of earth. It is safe to use soft alluvial clay, which is neither gritty nor sticky. One should never use earth taken from manured soil. Earth should be dried, pounded and passed through a fine sieve. If there is any doubt as to its cleanliness, it should be well heated and thus sterilized. Mud used as a poultice on a clean surface need not be thrown away after use. It can be used again and again after drying it in the sun or on fire and pounding and sieving it. I am not aware that mud-poultice made out of the same earth again and again as described above, is any the less efficacious. I have myself used it in this way and did not find it any the less efficacious for repeated use. Some friends who regularly use mud-poultices, tell me that mud from the Jumna banks is particularly good for this purpose.

EATING EARTH: Just¹ writes that clean earth may be eaten in order to overcome constipation. Five to ten grams is the maximum dose. The rationale is said to be this. Earth is not digested. It acts as roughage and must pass out. The peristalsis thus stimulated pushes out the faecal matter as well. I have not tried it myself. Therefore those who wish to do so should try it on their own responsibility. I am inclined to think that a trial or two is not likely to harm anyone.

2. WATER

Hydrotherapy is a well-known and ancient form of therapy. Many books have been written on the subject, but in my opinion the form of hydrotherapy suggested by Kuhne² is simple and effective.

¹ *Arogyani Chavi*, however, has “Kuhne”.

² Louis Kuhne

Kuhne's book on nature cure is very popular in India. It has been translated in several languages of India. Andhra has the greatest number of Kuhne's followers. He has written a good deal about diet as well, but here I wish to confine myself to his experiments in hydrotherapy.

Hip-bath and sitz-bath¹ are the most important of Kuhne's contribution to hydrotherapy. He has devised a special tub for use though one can do without it. Any tub thirty to thirty-six inches long according to the patient's height generally serves the purpose. Experience will indicate the proper size. The tub should be filled with fresh cold water so that it does not overflow when the patient sits in it. In summer the water may be iced, if it is not cold enough to give a gentle shock to the patient. Generally water kept in earthen jars overnight answers the purpose. Water can also be cooled by putting a piece of cloth on the surface of the water and then fanning it vigorously. The tub should be kept against the bathroom wall and a plank put in the tub to serve as back rest. The patient should sit in the tub keeping his feet outside. Portions of the body outside water should be kept well covered so that the patient does not feel cold.² After the patient is comfortably seated in the tub, gentle friction should be applied to his abdomen with a soft towel. This bath can be taken for five to thirty minutes. When it is over, the body should be rubbed dry and the patient put to bed.

Hip-bath brings down the temperature in high fever, and given in the manner described above, it never does any harm, and may do much good. It relieves constipation and improves digestion. The patient feels fresh and active after it. In cases of constipation, Kuhne advises a brisk walk for half an hour immediately after the bath. It should never be given on a full stomach.

I have tried hip-baths on a fairly large scale. They have proved efficacious in more than 75 cases out of 100. In cases of hyperpyrexia, if the patient's condition permits of his being seated in the tub, the temperature immediately invariably falls at least by two to three degrees, and the onset of delirium is averted.

December 15, 1942

¹ *Arogyani Chavi*, however, has "friction-bath",

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The room where the tub is kept should have sufficient light and proper ventilation."

The rationale of the hip-bath according to Kuhne is this: Whatever the apparent cause of fever, the real cause in every case is one and the same, i.e., accumulation of waste matter in the intestines. The heat generated by the putrefaction of this waste matter is manifested in the form of fever and several other ailments. Hip-bath brings down this internal fever so that fever and other ailments which are the external manifestations thereof subside automatically. How far this reasoning is correct, I cannot say. It is for experts to do so. Although the medical profession have taken up some things from nature-cure methods, on the whole they have given a cold shoulder to naturopathy. In my opinion both the parties are to be blamed for this state of affairs. The medical profession have got into the habit of confining themselves to whatever is included in their own curriculum. They present an attitude of indifference, if not that of contempt, for anything that lies outside their groove. On the other hand, the nature-curists nurse a feeling of grievance against the medicos and, in spite of their very limited scientific knowledge, they make tall claims. They lack the spirit of organization. Each one is self-satisfied and works by himself instead of all pooling their resources for the advancement of their system. No one tries to work out in a scientific spirit all the implications and possibilities of the system. No one tries to cultivate humility (if it is possible to cultivate humility).

I have not said all this in order to belittle the work of the naturopaths. As a lay co-worker, I wish them to see things in their true colour so that they may make improvements wherever possible. It is my conviction that so long as some dynamic personality, from among the naturopaths themselves, does not come forward with the zeal of a missionary, things will continue as they are. Orthodox medicine has its own science, medical unions and teaching institutions. It has too a certain measure of success. The medical profession should not be expected to put faith, all of a sudden, in things which are yet to be fully tested and scientifically proved.

In the mean time the public should know that the speciality of nature-cure methods lies in the fact that being natural, they can be safely practised by laymen. If a man suffering from headache wets a piece of cloth in cold water and wraps it round his head, it can do no harm. The addition of earth to cold water enhances the utility of the cold pack.

Now about the sitz or friction-bath. The organ of reproduction

is one of the most sensitive part of the body. There is something illusive about the sensitiveness of the glans penis and the foreskin. Anyway, I know not how to describe it. Kuhne has made use of this knowledge for therapeutic purposes. He advises application of gentle friction to the outer end of the external sexual organ by means of a soft wet piece of cloth, while cold water is being poured. In the case of the male the glans penis should be covered with the foreskin before applying friction. The method advised by Kuhne is this: A stool should be placed in a tub of cold water so that the seat is just about the level of water in the tub. The patient should sit on the stool with his feet outside the tub and apply gentle friction to the sexual organ which just touches the surface of the water in the tub. This friction should never cause pain. On the contrary the patient should find it pleasant and feel rested and peaceful at the end of the bath. Whatever the ailment, the sitz-bath makes the patient feel better for the time being. Kuhne places sitz-baths higher than hip-baths. I have had much less experience of the former than of the latter. The blame, I think, lies mostly with myself. I have been lax. Those whom I advised sitz-baths, have not been patient with the experiment, so that I cannot express an opinion on the efficacy of these baths, based on personal experience. It is worth a trial by everyone. If there is any difficulty about finding a tub, it is possible to pour water from a jug or a *lota* and take the friction-bath. It is bound to make the patient feel rested and peaceful. As a general rule people pay scant attention to the cleansing of the sexual organ. The friction-bath will easily achieve that end. Unless one is particularly careful, dirt accumulates between the foreskin and the glans penis. This must be removed. Insistence on keeping the sexual organ clean and patiently following the treatment outlined above will make the observance of *brahmacharya* comparatively easier. It will result in making the local nerve endings less sensitive and unwanted seminal emissions less likely. To say the least it is very unclean to allow seminal emissions to occur. Greater insistence on cleanliness should and will cause a feeling of revulsion against the process and make one much more particular than otherwise in taking all the precautions to avoid them.

Having dealt with the two Kuhne baths, a few words about wet-sheet packs will not be out of place. It is very useful in pyrexia and insomnia. The method of giving wet-sheet packs is this: Spread three or four thick broad woollen blankets on a cot and on top of them a thick cotton sheet dipped in cold water with the water wrung

out. The patient lies flat on the wet sheet with his head resting on a pillow outside the sheet. The wet sheet and the blankets are wrapped round the patient covering the whole body except the head which is covered with a damp towel treated after the manner of the wet sheet. The sheet and the blankets are wrapped round the patient, so that outside air cannot get inside. Though the patient feels a gentle shock when first laid in the wet-sheet pack, he finds it pleasant afterwards. In a minute or two he begins to feel warm. Unless the fever has become chronic, in about five minutes it begins to come down with sweating. In resistant cases I have kept the patient wrapped in the wet-sheet pack up to half an hour. This has finally resulted in sweating. Sometimes there is no sweating but the patient goes off to sleep. In that case he should not be awakened. The sleep indicates that the wet-sheet pack has produced a soothing effect and he is quite comfortable. The temperature invariably falls at least by one or two degrees as a result of the wet-sheet pack.

It was over thirty years ago that my second son¹ suffered from double pneumonia and high fever resulting in delirium. I had a medical friend advising me as to his condition. I would not, much to his sorrow, try his prescription. But I tried water cure. I used to put him in wet-sheet packs when fever shot up very high. After six or seven days the temperature went down. So far as I remember I gave him orange juice also, but nothing else. Typhoid supervened. It lasted 42 days.² There was no treatment beyond simple nursing. I gave him milk and water for food. He had daily sponges. He was completely cured and is today the strongest and healthiest of all my four sons. At least this much might be said of the treatment that he was none the worse for it.

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Wet-sheet packs are also useful in the treatment of prickly heat, urticaria, other forms of skin irritation, measles, smallpox, etc. I have tried them on a fairly large scale for these ailments. For smallpox and measles cases, I added enough potassium permanganate to the water to give it a light pink colour. The sheet used for these patients should afterwards be sterilized by soaking it in boiling water and leaving it in

¹ Manilal Gandhi; vide *"An Autobiography—Part III, Chapter XXII.*

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "The temperature went up to 103°. It is possible that my memory fails me as to degrees. I gave this treatment against the advice of my doctor friends. I did not give him any medicine."

it till it cools down sufficiently and then washed with soap and water.

In cases where circulation has become sluggish, the leg muscles feel sore and there is a peculiar ache and feeling of discomfort in the legs, an ice massage does a lot of good. This treatment is more effective in summer months. Massaging a weak patient with ice in winter might prove a risky affair.

Now a few words about the therapeutics of hot water. An intelligent use of hot water gives relief in many cases. Application of iodine is a very popular remedy for all sorts of injuries and the like. Application of hot water will prove equally effective in most of these cases. Tincture of iodine is applied on swollen and bruised areas. Hot water fomentations are likely to give equal relief, if not more. Again, iodine drops are used in cases of earache. Irrigation of the ear with warm water is likely to relieve the pain in most of these cases. The use of iodine is attended with certain risks. The patient may have allergy towards the drug. Iodine mistaken for something else and taken internally might prove disastrous. But there is no risk whatever in using hot water. Boiling water is as good a disinfectant as tincture of iodine. I do not mean to belittle the usefulness of iodine or suggest that hot water can replace it in all cases. Iodine is one of the few drugs which I regard most useful and necessary, but it is an expensive thing. The poor cannot afford to buy it and moreover its use cannot be safely entrusted to everybody. But water is available everywhere. We may not despise its therapeutic value because it is obtained so easily. Knowledge of common household remedies often proves a godsend in many a crisis.

In cases of scorpion-stings where all remedies have failed, immersion of the part in hot water has been found to relieve the pain to a certain extent.

A shivering fit or a *rigor* can be made to subside by putting buckets of hot boiling water all round the patient who is well wrapped up or by saturating the atmosphere of the room with steam by some other device. A rubber hot-water bag is the most useful thing, but it is not to be found in every household. A glass bottle with a well-fitting cork, filled with hot water and wrapped in a piece of cloth, serves the same purpose. Care should be taken to choose bottles that will not crack on hot water being poured into them.

Steam is a more valuable therapeutic agent. It can be used to make the patient sweat. Steam-baths are most useful in cases of

rheumatism and other joint-pains.¹

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The easiest as well as the oldest method of taking steambath is this: Spread a blanket or two on a sparsely but tightly woven cot and put one or two covered vessels full with boiling water under it. Make the patient lie flat on the cot and cover him up in such a way that the ends of the covering blankets touch the ground and thus prevent the steam from escaping, and the outside air from getting in. After arranging everything as above, the lid from the vessels containing boiling water is removed and steam soon gets on to the patient lying between the blankets. It may be necessary to change the water once or twice. Usually in India people keep an *angithi* under pots to keep the water boiling. This ensures continuous discharge of steam, but is attended with risk of accidents. A single spark might set fire to the blankets or to the cot and endanger the patient's life. Therefore it is advisable to use the method described by me even though it might seem slow and tedious.

Some people add *neem* leaves or other herbs to the water used for generating steam. I do not know if such an addition increases the efficiency of steam. The object is to induce sweat and that is attained by mere steam.

In cases of cold feet or aching of legs, the patient should be made to sit with his feet and legs immersed up to the knees in as hot a water as he can bear. A little mustard powder can be added to the water. The foot-bath should not last for more than fifteen minutes. This treatment improves the local circulation and gives immediate relief.

In cases of common cold and sore throat a steam kettle which is very much like an ordinary tea kettle with a long nozzle can be used for applying steam to the nose or throat. A rubber tube of required length can be attached to any ordinary kettle for this purpose.

3. AKASH (ETHER?)

Akash is a difficult word to translate as are indeed all the other four elements so-called. For *pani* is not mere water in the original, nor *vayu* wind, or *prithvi* earth, or *teja* light. *Akash* is ether least of all. Perhaps the nearest equivalent is emptiness taken in its literal sense.

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Steam is very useful for people who are overweight."

And it is horribly inexpressive of the original. All the five in the original are as living as life. If, however, we take ether as the nearest equivalent for *akash*, we must say that we know very little about ether itself and *akash* much less. Our knowledge of its therapeutic uses is still more limited. *Akash* might be taken for the empty space surrounding the earth and the atmosphere round it. On a clear day, on looking up, one sees a beautiful mauve blue canopy which is known as the *akash* or sky. So far as we are concerned, this sky or the ether is limitless. We are surrounded by it on every side, and there is no nook or corner without it. Generally we imagine that the sky is something resting upon the high—it is the blue canopy above us. But the sky is as much above us as below and all around us. We move round and round with the earth. Therefore the *akash* is round and everybody is within it. It is an envelope whose outermost surface is measureless. The lower strata of the *akash* for a number of miles are filled with air. But for this man would become suffocated in spite of the emptiness. True, we cannot see the air, but we can feel it when in motion. Sky or the ether is the abode of the atmosphere. One can pump out air, say, from an empty bottle and create a vacuum, but who can pump out the vacuum itself?¹ That is *akash*.

This *akash* we have to make use of to maintain or to regain health. Air being most essential to sustain life, nature has made it omnipresent. But the omnipresence of air is only relative. It is not limitless in reality. Scientists tell us that after a certain number of miles above the earth there is no air. It is said that earthly creatures cannot exist outside this atmosphere. This statement may or may not be true. All that we are concerned with here is that *akash* extends beyond the atmosphere. Some day the scientists might prove that what we call ether is also something which fills the empty space—*akash*. Then we will have to discover a new name for the empty space that holds neither air nor the ether. Be that as it may, the mystery of this empty space all around us is most intriguing. We cannot solve it unless we can solve the mystery of God Himself. This much might be said that the more we utilize this great element *akash* the healthier we will be. The first lesson to be learnt is this, that we should not put any partition between ourselves and the sky—the infinite—which is very near and yet very far away. If our bodies could be in contact with the sky

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: “We do fill the sky but because it is infinite any number of people can be accommodated in it.”

without the intervention of houses, roofs and even clothes, we are likely to enjoy the maximum amount of health. This is not possible for everyone. But all can and should accept the validity of the statement and adapt life accordingly. To the extent that we are able to approach the state in practice, we will enjoy contentment and peace of mind. This train of thought taken to the extreme leads us to a condition where even the body becomes an obstacle separating man from the infinite. To understand this truth is to become indifferent to the dissolution of the body. For, to lose oneself in the infinite is to find oneself. The body thus ceases to be a vehicle for self-indulgence. Man will make use of his body for the realization of this unity with the infinite. In the course of the attempt he will discover that he is part of and one with all the life that surrounds him. This must mean service of mankind and through it finding God.

To return from the high flight, this train of thought will make the thinker keep his surroundings as open as possible. He will not fill the house with unnecessary furniture, and will use the minimum of clothes that are necessary. Many households are so packed with all sorts of unnecessary decorations and furniture which one can very well do without, that a simple living man will feel suffocated in those surroundings. They are nothing but means of harbouring dust, bacteria and insects. Here in the house where I am under detention, I feel quite lost. The heavy furniture, chairs, tables, sofas, bedsteads, innumerable looking-glasses, all get on my nerves. The expensive carpets on the floors collect large amount of dust and act as a breeding place for insect life. One day the carpet in one of the rooms was taken out for dusting. It was not one man's work. Six men spent the afternoon in doing the job. They must have removed at least ten pounds of dust. When the carpet was put back in its place it had a new feel about it. These carpets cannot be taken out and dusted everyday. Such treatment will wear out the carpets and greatly increase the expenditure of labour. But this is by the way. What I meant to say is that my desire to be in tune with the infinite has saved me from many complications in life. It led not merely to simplicity of household and dress but all round simplicity in the mode of my life. In a nutshell, and in the language of the subject under discussion, I have gone on creating more and more contact with *akash*. With the increase in the contact went improvement in health. I had more contentment and peace of mind and the desire for belongings almost disappeared. He who will establish contact with the infinite possesses nothing and yet

possesses everything. In the ultimate analysis, man owns that of which he can make legitimate use and which he can assimilate. If everybody followed this rule, there would be room enough for all and there would be neither want nor overcrowding.

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It follows that one should make it a point to sleep in the open. Sufficient covering should be used to protect oneself against the inclemencies of the weather—against cold and dew. In rainy season an umbrella like roof without walls should be used for keeping the rain out. For the rest, the starlit blue canopy should form the roof so that whenever one opens one's eyes, one can feast them on the everchanging beautiful panorama of the heavens. One will never tire of the scene and it will not dazzle or hurt one's eyes. On the contrary, it will have a soothing effect on one. To watch the different starry constellations floating in their majesty is a feast for the eyes. One who establishes contact with the stars as living witnesses to all his thoughts will never allow any evil or impurity to enter his mind and will enjoy peaceful, refreshing sleep.

Let us descend from the *akash* above to the *akash* within and immediately about us. Thus the skin has millions of pores. If we fill up the empty space within these pores, we simply die. Any clogging of the pores, therefore, must interfere with the even flow of health. Similarly we must not fill up the digestive tract with unnecessary foodstuffs. We should eat only as much as we need and no more. Often one overeats or eats indigestible things without being aware of it. An occasional fast, say once a week or once a fortnight, will enable one to keep the balance even. If one is unable to fast for the whole day, one should miss one or more meals during the day. That nature abhors a vacuum is only partially true. Nature constantly demands a vacuum. The vast space surrounding us is a standing testimony of the truth.

4. SUN

As in the case of the other elements, which have been already dealt with, man cannot do without sunlight. The sun is the source of light and heat. If there was no sun, there would be neither light nor warmth. Unfortunately we do not make full use of sunlight and consequently we are unable to enjoy perfect health. Sun-bath is as useful as ordinary water-bath though the two cannot replace one

another. In cases of debility and slow circulation, exposure of the uncovered body to the morning sun acts as an all-round general tonic and accelerates the metabolism. The morning sun has the largest amount of ultra-violet rays which are a most effective component of the sun's rays. If the patient feels cold, he should lie in the sun covered up and gradually expose more and more of his body as he gets used to it. One can also take sun-bath pacing up and down in the sun without any clothes on, in a private enclosure or in any other place away from public gaze. If such a place is not within easy reach, one can just cover up the private parts by tying up a piece of cloth or a *langoti* and expose the rest of the body to the sun.

I know of many persons who have been benefited by sun-baths. It is a well-known treatment for tuberculosis. Sun-baths or heliotherapy is no longer confined to the sphere of naturopathy. Orthodox medicine has taken it up from naturopathy and developed it further. In cold countries, special glass buildings have been constructed under medical supervision, so that the glass lets in the sun's rays and at the same time protects patients against the cold.

Sun treatment often results in the cure of intractable ulcers. To produce sweating, I have made patients lie in the sun at about 11 a.m., i.e., a little before midday. The experiment has been successful and the patients are soon bathed in sweat. In these cases the head should be protected from the sun by means of a cold mud-poultice. Banana or any other leaves can be used to cover up the head and face and thus further help in keeping the head cool and well protected. The head should never be exposed to strong sunlight.

5. AIR

This fifth element is as important as the four already discussed in the foregoing pages. The human body which is composed of the five elements cannot do without any one of them. Therefore no one should be afraid of air. Generally, wherever our people go, they make devices to keep out the sun and the air and thus jeopardize their health. If one cultivates the habit of living in the open in the midst of plenty of fresh air, right from childhood, the body will become hardened and one will never suffer from cold in the head and the like ailments. I have said enough about the importance of fresh air in an earlier chapter. There is no occasion, therefore, to repeat here what has already been said.

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¹ In the source, this is preceded by “Contents” and is followed by “Preface”. The publisher explains: “This synopsis of the topics discussed in the book was prepared by Gandhiji himself in the original Gujarati. . . . We have thought it proper to include it in the English translation in place of an index at the end. . . .” The page numbers, however, denote the references here.

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: “Indigestion—constipation”

³ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: “Day clothes”

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¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Filtered water", and "What type of cloth to be used"

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Fertilized eggs"

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¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Sprouted pulses"

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Seasonal fruits"

³ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Fatty food-stuffs"

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¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Sweetmeat"

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¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: “Place of toddy in man’s diet”

² *Chavi* adds: “Qualities of refined sugar made out of *nira*”

³ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: “Liquor and Englishmen”

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¹ Arogyani Chavi adds; "Vital force and indulgence"

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¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Shortcomings in a *brahmachari*"

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Sexual desire and sleep", "Place of arithmetic in conservation of vital force", and "Sexual desire and business"

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¹ Arogyani Chavi adds: "Iron (dylyde)", and "Nux Vomica"

² From Arogyani Chavi

³ Arogyani Chavi adds: "Ways of cleaning earth"

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¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "How to sit in the tub"

² *Arogyani Chavi* adds: "Man and humility"

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- Key to Health*

¹ *Arogyani Chavi* adds: “Hot water and swelling”

226. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal

DETENTION CAMP¹,
New Year's Eve, 1942

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

This is a very personal letter. Contrary to the biblical injunction, I have allowed many suns to set on a quarrel I have harboured against you, but I must not allow the old year to expire without disburdening myself of what is rankling in my breast against you. I had thought we were friends and should still love to think so. However what has happened since the 9th of August last makes me wonder whether you still regard me as a friend. I have perhaps not come in such close touch with any other occupant of your gadi as with you.

Your arrest of me, the communique² you issued thereafter, your reply³ to Rajaji and the reasons given therefor, Mr. Amery's attack⁴ on

¹ The Aga Khan Palace, Poona, where Gandhiji was detained without any charge being framed against him, after his arrest in Bombay on August 9, 1942.

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

³ The reference, presumably, is to the Viceroy's refusal to forward C. Rajagopalachari's telegram to Gandhiji, dissuading him from any intended fast, or to permit him to meet Gandhiji. A request from Rajagopalachari for an interview with the Viceroy had also been negatived. The Viceroy's correspondence as published in *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. II, pp. 683-4 and 840, discloses that he was "not prepared to allow communication with Gandhi or the Working Committee. Once that starts, there would be no end to it." Also "a talk with Mr. Rajagopalachari . . . would certainly be taken to mean that we are willing to discuss, and would be regarded as a sign of approaching compromise, possibly even of weakness, by the many substantial interests in this country which are not in agreement with the point of view represented by him."

⁴ According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 350-1, on September 11, 1942, L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for India, replying to a debate in the House of Commons had, *inter alia*, said: "... soon after Sir Stafford Cripps left India, it became clear that under Mr. Gandhi's inspiration, the Congress was steadily swinging towards a policy of direct defiance aimed at paralysing the existing Government of India. . . . He was reported by his secretary, Mr. Desai, in June as saying: 'My attitude has undergone a change. I cannot afford to wait. I must even at obvious risks ask the people to resist slavery.' Mr. Gandhi declared that for national independence they might have to face bombs, bullets and shells. Does this look like a purely non-violent movement? Mr. Gandhi added, as to the method of resistance: 'No doubt the non-violent way is the best but where that does not come naturally . . . violent way is both necessary and honourable, and inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly.'... The Government of India showed remarkable patience.... It took no action as long as there was a possibility of the All-India Congress Committee not endorsing the sinister designs of the Working Committee influenced by Mr. Gandhi."

me and much else I can catalogue go to show that at some stage or other you must have suspected my *bona fides*. Mention of other Congressmen in the same connection is by the way. I seem to be the *fons et origo* of all the evil imputed to the Congress. If I have not ceased to be your friend, why did you not, before taking drastic action, send for me, tell me of your suspicions and make yourself sure of your facts? I am quite capable of seeing myself as others see me, but in this case I have failed hopelessly. I find that all the statements made about me in Government quarters in this connection contain palpable departures from truth. I have so much fallen from grace that I could not establish contact with a dying friend; I mean Prof. Bhansali¹ who is fasting in regard to the Chimur affair; and I am expected to condemn the so-called violence of some people reputed to be Congressmen, although I have no data for such condemnation save the heavily censored reports of newspapers. I must own that I thoroughly distrust these reports. I could write much more but I must not lengthen my tale of woe. I am sure that what I have said is enough to enable you to fill in details.

You know I returned to India from South Africa at the end of 1914 with a mission which came to me in 1906, namely, to spread truth and non-violence among mankind in the place of violence and falsehood in all walks of life. The law of satyagraha knows no defeat. Prison is one of the many ways of spreading the message, but it has its limits. You have placed me in a palace where every reasonable creature comfort is ensured. I have freely partaken of the latter purely as a matter of duty, never as a pleasure, in the hope that some day those that have the power will realize that they have wronged innocent men. I had given myself six months. The period is drawing to a close, so is my patience. The law of satyagraha, as I know it, 'prescribes a remedy in such moments of trial. In a sentence it is: "Crucify the flesh by fasting." That same law forbids its use except as a last resort. I do not want to use it if I can avoid it. This is the way to avoid it: convince me of my error or errors, and I shall make ample amends. You can send for me or send someone who knows your mind and can carry conviction. There are many other

¹ Jaikrishna P. Bhansali, an inmate of Sevagram Ashram, was on an indefinite fast from November 26 in protest against the Government's refusal to institute a public inquiry into Chimur atrocities of October 17, 1942.

ways, if you have the will. May I expect an early reply? May the New Year bring peace to us all.¹

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 18-9; also Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 5

227. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal

January 19, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I received your kind letter² of 13th instant yesterday at 2.30 p.m. I had almost despaired of ever hearing from you. Please excuse my impatience.

Your letter gladdens me to find that I have not lost caste with you.

My letter³ of 31st December was a growl against you. Yours is a counter-growl. It means that you maintain that you were right in arresting me and you were sorry for the omissions of which, in your opinion, I was guilty.

The inference you draw from my letter is, I am afraid, not correct. I have re-read my letter in the light of your interpretation, but have failed to find your meaning in it. I wanted to fast and should still want to, if nothing comes out of our correspondence and I have to be a helpless witness to what is going on in the country, including the privations of the millions owing to the universal scarcity stalking the land.

If I do not accept your interpretation of my letter, you want me to make a positive suggestion. This I might be able to do, only if you put me among the members of the Working Committee of the Congress.

¹ According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, pp. 439 and 458 the Viceroy cabled the text of this letter on January 3 to Amery, who in his reply dated January 5 ruled out any "great haste for an immediate reply". The addressee, however, sent his reply, after consultations with Amery and the British Cabinet, on January 13; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 13-1-1943.

² *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 13-1-1943.

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

If I could be convinced of my error or worse, of which you are evidently, I should need to consult nobody, so far as my own action is concerned, to make a full and open confession and make ample amends. But I have not any conviction of error. I wonder if you saw my letter to the Secretary to the Government of India of 21st¹ September, 1942. I adhere to what I have said in it and in my letter² to you of 14th August, 1942.

Of course, I deplore the happenings which have taken place since 9th August last. But have I not laid the whole blame for them at the door of the Government of India? Moreover I could not express any opinion on events which I cannot influence or control, and of which I have but a one-sided account. You are bound *prima facie* to accept the accuracy of reports that may be placed before you by your departmental heads. But you will not expect me to do so. Such reports have before now often proved fallible. It was for that reason that, in my letter of 31st December, I pleaded with you to convince me of the correctness of the information on which your conviction was based. You will perhaps appreciate my fundamental difficulty in making the statement you have expected me to make.

This, however, I can say from the house-top, that I am as confirmed a believer in non-violence as I have ever been. You may not know that any violence on the part of Congress workers I have condemned openly and unequivocally. I have even done public penance³ more than once. I must not weary you with examples. The point I wish to make is that on every such occasion I was a free man.

This time the retracing, as I have submitted, lies with the Government. You will forgive me for expressing an opinion challenging yours. I am certain that nothing but good would have resulted, if you had stayed your hand and granted me the interview, which I had announced⁴ on the night of the 8th August, I was to seek. But that was not to be.

Here may I remind you that the Government of India have before now owned their mistakes as, for instance, in the Punjab when

¹ It was actually dated 23rd; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 23-9-1942.

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942.

³ From November 19 to 21, 1921; February 12 to 16, 1922; and August 7 to 13, 1934.

⁴ *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

the late Gen. Dyer was condemned,¹ in the United Provinces when a corner of a mosque in Kanpur was restored,² and in Bengal when the partition was annulled³? All these things were done in spite of great and previous mob violence.

To sum up—

1. If you want me to act singly, convince me that I was wrong, and I will make ample amends.

2. If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress, you should put me among the Congress Working Committee members. I do plead with you to make up your mind to end the impasse.

If I am obscure or have not answered your letter fully, please point out the omissions, and I shall make an attempt to give you satisfaction.

I have no mental reservation.

I find that my letters to you are sent through the Government of Bombay. This procedure must involve some loss of time. As time is of the essence in this matter, perhaps you will issue instructions that my letters to you may be sent directly by the Superintendent of this Camp.⁴

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 21-2; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 6-7

¹ As an aftermath of the Jallianwala Bagh firing on April 13, 1919, Gen. Dyer was censured by an inquiry committee and required to resign from the Army.

² In 1913 there was rioting in Kanpur when a part of a mosque was demolished to broaden a street. Lord Hardinge had to order the mosque to be rebuilt.

³ The partition of Bengal in 1905 led to grave unrest and the partition was annulled in 1912.

⁴ According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 536, in his reply dated January 25, the Viceroy reiterated his view that Gandhiji and the Congress were responsible for the disturbances. He reassured Gandhiji that should he “repudiate” the resolution of August 8, he would be “very ready to consider the matter further”. The Viceroy also said: “It is of course very necessary to be clear on that point and you will not, I know, take it amiss that I should make that clear in the plainest possible words”.

228. INDEPENDENCE DAY PLEDGE¹

[January 25, 1943]²

My immediate objective is and for years has been for India to gain her independence, complete in every sense of the term by truthful and non-violent means. And in prosecution of that objective, I re-pledge myself on this [thirteenth anniversary of]³ Independence Day not to rest; [nor will I let those on whom I have some influence to rest]⁴ till it is gained. I seek for the fulfilment of my pledge the assistance of that divine and unseen Power which we recognize by such familiar names as God, Allah and *Paramatma*.

The Hindu, 24-1-1945

229. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
January 29, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you warmly for your prompt reply⁴ to my letter of 19th instant. I wish I could agree with you that your letter is clear. I am sure you do not wish to imply by clearness simply that you hold a particular opinion strongly. I have pleaded and would continue to plead till the last breath, that you should at least make an attempt to convince me of the validity of the opinion you hold that the August

¹ The pledge appeared under the date-line "Wardhaganj, January 22", as given in a statement by Pyarelal, who explained that Gandhiji wrote it while in detention "for celebrating the Independence Day" on January 26. Pyarelal also stated: "The pledge was revised by Gandhiji and his companions on the first anniversary of August 8, 1942 [Quit India Movement], and also on the Independence Day in 1943 and 1944." Originally drafted by Gandhiji on January 10, 1930 (*vide* "Draft Declaration for January 26", 10-1-1930), the pledge was amended by the Congress Working Committee in December 1939 (*vide* Appendix "Resolution on Independence Day Pledge", 30-12-1939), to which Gandhiji added a paragraph on January 11, 1941; *vide* "Instructions for Independence Day", 11-1-1941. In *Bapuki Karavas-Kahani*, Sushila Nayyar, however, explains that the pledge was written by Gandhiji while observing silence on January 25, 1943.

² *ibid*

³ From *Bapuki Karavas-Kahani*

⁴ *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943

resolution¹ of Congress is responsible for the popular violence that broke out on 9th August last and after, even though it broke out after the wholesale arrest of principal Congress workers. Was not the drastic and unwarranted action of the Government responsible for the reported violence?

You have not even said what part of the August resolution is bad or offensive in your opinion. That resolution is in no way a retraction by the Congress of its policy of non-violence. It is definitely against Fascism in every shape or form. It tenders co-operation in war-effort under circumstances which alone can make effective and nation-wide co-operation possible.² The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware, the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Qaid-e-Azam³ Jinnah to form a national government, subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary, for the duration of the war, such government being responsible to a duly elected assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee except Shrimati Sarojini Devi, I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind. Is all this open to reproach? Objection may be raised to that clause of the resolution which contemplated civil disobedience. But that by itself cannot constitute an objection since the principle of civil disobedience is impliedly conceded in what is known as the “Gandhi Irwin Pact”.⁴ Even that civil disobedience was not to be started before knowing the result of the meeting for which I was to seek from you an appointment.

Then, take the unproved and in my opinion unprovable charges⁵ hurled against the Congress and me by so responsible a Minister as the Secretary of State for India.

Surely I can say with safety that it is for the Government to

¹ *Vide* Appendix “Resolution Passed by All-India Congress Committee”, 8-8-1942.

² The following five sentences, “inadvertently omitted” and hence included as a postscript in the original letter, were, however, restored to their proper place, as found here, in a fair copy of the letter which Gandhiji enclosed along with the letter dated February 7, 1943, to the Viceroy.

³ Honorific meaning ‘the supreme leader’

⁴ *Vide* Appendix “Provisional Settlement”, 12-3-1931.

⁵ *Vide* 4th footnote of “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 31-12-1942 .

justify their action by solid evidence not by mere *ipse dixit*.

But you throw in my face the facts of murders by persons reputed to be Congressmen. I see the fact of the murders as clearly, I hope, as you do. My answer is that the Government goaded the people to the point of madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of the arrests already referred to. That violence is not any the less so because it is organized on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth by that of ten thousand for one—not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic law, i.e., of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ. I cannot interpret in any other manner the repressive measures of the all-powerful Government of India.

Add to this tale of woe the privations of the poor millions due to India-wide scarcity which I cannot help thinking might have been largely mitigated, if not altogether prevented, had there been a *bona-fide* national government responsible to a popularly elected assembly.

If then I cannot get soothing balm for my pain, I must resort to the law prescribed for satyagrahis, namely, a fast according to capacity. I must commence after the early morning breakfast of the 9th February, a fast for 21 days ending on the morning of the 2nd March. Usually, during my fasts, I take water with the addition of salts. But nowadays my system refuses water. This time, therefore, I propose to add juices of citrus fruits to make water drinkable. For, my wish is not to fast unto death but to survive the ordeal, if God so wills. This fast can be ended sooner by the Government giving the needed relief.

I am not marking this letter 'Personal' as I did the two previous ones¹. They were in no way confidential. They were a mere personal appeal.²

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 24-6; also Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 8-9

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 31-12-1942.

² For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 5-2-1943.

230. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

DETENTION CAMP,
February 7, 1943

DEAR SIR GILBERT¹,

I was delighted to see your signature after such a lapse of time. When I said that the two personal letters were not confidential, I certainly meant what you say.² But I meant also that though they were not confidential on my part, if His Excellency wanted to treat them as such, being personal, he was free to do so, and therefore equally free to regard his two replies also as such. In that case he could have the four letters withheld from publication. So far as I am concerned my request of course is that the whole correspondence beginning with my letter of 14th August last, and including my letter to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, should be published.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 29

231. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
February 7, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you for your long reply³, dated the 5th instant, to my letter of 29th January last. I would take your last point first, namely, the contemplated fast which begins on 9th instant. Your letter, from a satyagrahi's standpoint, is an invitation to fast. No doubt the responsibility for the step and its consequences will be solely mine.

¹ Private Secretary to the Viceroy

² In his letter dated February 5, the addressee had referred to the last paragraph in Gandhiji's letter dated January 29 to the Viceroy (*vide* the preceding item), and said: "As you would no doubt have expected, H. E. had hitherto attached to the word 'personal' its normal conventional meaning, and had accordingly given the same marking to his replies. He assumes . . . you would have no objection to his publishing these letters with his replies. . . ."

³ *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 5-2-1943.

You have allowed an expression to slip from your pen for which I was unprepared. In the concluding sentence of the second paragraph, you describe the step as an attempt “to find an easy way out”. That you, as a friend, can impute such a base and cowardly motive to me passes comprehension. You have also described it as “a form of political blackmail”. And you quote my previous writings on the subject against me. I abide by my writings. I hold that there is nothing inconsistent in them with the contemplated step. I wonder whether you have yourself read those writings.

I do claim that I have approached you with an open mind when I asked you to convince me of my error. “Profound distrust” of the published reports is in no way inconsistent with my having an open mind.

You say that there is evidence that I—I leave my friends out for the moment “expected this policy to lead to violence”, that I was “prepared to condone it”, and that “the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders”. I have seen no evidence in support of such a serious charge. You admit that part of the evidence has yet to be published. The speech of the Home Member¹, of which you have favoured me with a copy, may be taken as the opening speech of the prosecution counsel and nothing more. It contains unsupported imputations against Congressmen. Of course he has described the violent outburst in graphic language. But he has not said why it took place when it did. I have suggested why it did. You have condemned men and women before trying them and hearing their defence. Surely there is nothing wrong in my asking you to show me the evidence on which you hold them guilty. What you say in your letter carries no conviction. Proof should correspond to the canons of English jurisprudence.

If the wife of a member of the Working Committee is actively engaged in “planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism”, she should be tried before a court of law and punished, if found guilty. The lady you refer to could only have done the things attributed to her after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last, which I have dared to describe as leonine violence.

You say that the time is not yet ripe to publish the charges against the Congress. Have you ever thought of the possibility of their

¹ Reginald Maxwell, who spoke on September 15, 1942, in the Central Legislative Assembly

being found baseless when they are put before an impartial tribunal? Or that some of the condemned persons might have died in the mean while or that some of the evidence that the living can produce might become unavailable?

I reiterate the statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the settlement¹ of 5th March, 1931, arrived at between the then Viceroy on behalf of the Government of India and myself on behalf of the Congress. I hope you know that the principal Congressmen were discharged before the settlement was even thought of. Certain reparations were made to Congressmen under that settlement. Civil disobedience was discontinued only on conditions being fulfilled by the Government. That by itself was, in my opinion, an acknowledgment of its legitimacy, of course, under given circumstances. It, therefore, seems somewhat strange to find you maintain that civil disobedience “cannot be recognized as being in any circumstances legitimate” by your Government. You ignore the practice of the British Government which has recognized its legitimacy under the name of “passive resistance”.

Lastly, you read into my letters a meaning which is wholly inconsistent with my declaration, in one of them, of adherence to unadulterated non-violence. For, you say in your letter under reply that ‘acceptance of my point of view would be to concede that the authorized Government of the country on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow movements to take place that would admit preparations for violence, interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for murders of police officers and others to proceed unchecked’. I must be a strange friend of yours whom you believe to be capable of asking for recognition of such things as lawful.

I have not attempted an exhaustive reply to the views and statements attributed to me. This is not the place nor the time for such a reply. I have only picked out those things which in my opinion demanded an immediate answer. You have left me no loophole for escaping the ordeal I have set before myself. I begin it on the 9th instant with the clearest possible conscience. Despite your description of it as “a form of political blackmail”, it is on my part meant to be an appeal to the Highest Tribunal for justice which I have failed to secure from you. If I do not survive the ordeal, I shall go to the

¹ Gandhi-Irwin Pact; *vide* Appendix “Provisional Settlement”, 12-3-1931.

Judgment Seat with the fullest faith in my innocence. Posterity will judge between you as representative of an all-powerful Government and me as a humble man who has tried to serve his country and humanity through it.

My last letter was written against time, and therefore a material paragraph went in as postscript.¹ I now send herewith a fair copy typed by Pyarelal who has taken Mahadev Desai's place. You will find the postscript paragraph restored to the place where it should have been.

I am,

Your sincere friend,

M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

From a photostat: C.W. 10377. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 30-2, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 11-2

232. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

February 8, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD².

I have very carefully studied your letter³. I am sorry to say that there is nothing in the correspondence which has taken place between His Excellency and myself, or your letter, to warrant a recalling of my intention to fast. I have mentioned in my letters to His Excellency the conditions which can induce prevention or suspension of the step.

If the temporary release is offered for my convenience, I do not need it. I shall be quite content to take my fast as a detenu or prisoner. If it is for the convenience of the Government, I am sorry I am unable to suit them, much as I should like to do so. I can say this much that I, as a prisoner, shall avoid, as far as is humanly possible, every cause of inconvenience to the Government save what is inherent in the fast itself. The impending fast has not been conceived to be taken as a free man. Circumstances may arise, as they have done before now, when I

¹ *Vide* 3rd footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943.

² Additional Secretary to the Government of India in the Home Department

³ Dated February 7, this informed Gandhiji of the Government's proposal to set him at liberty "for the purpose and for the duration" of his proposed 21-day fast.

may have to fast as a free man. If, therefore, I am released, there will be no fast in terms of my correspondence above mentioned. I shall have to survey the situation *de novo* and decide what I should do. I have no desire to be released under false pretences. In spite of all that has been said against me, I hope not to belie the vow of truth and non-violence which alone makes life livable for me. I say this, if it is only for my own satisfaction. It does me good to reiterate openly my faith, when outer darkness surrounds me, as it does just now.

I must not hustle the Government into a decision on this letter. I understand that your letter has been dictated through the telephone. In order to give the Government enough time, I shall suspend the fast, if necessary, to Wednesday next, 10th instant.

So far as the statement proposed to be issued by the Government is concerned, and of which you have favoured me with a copy, I can have no opinion. But if I might have, I must say that it does me an injustice. The proper course would be to publish the full correspondence and let the public judge for themselves.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 38; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 13

¹ In his reply dated February 9, the addressee said: “. . . The Government of India note your decision with great regret. Their position remains the same. . . . But if you are not prepared to take advantage of that fact and if you fast while in detention, you will do so solely on your own responsibility and at your own risk. In that event, you will be at liberty to have your own medical attendants, and also to receive visits from friends with the permission of Government during its period. Suitable drafting alterations will be made in the statement which the Government of India would, in that event, issue to the Press.”

233. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
February 12, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI¹,

You have told me that the Government have instructed you to convey to them urgently any wish I might have to express. You have also given me a copy of the instructions² of the Government about the regulating of friends' visits. This is my submission about the visits:

1. It is not fair to leave the initiative to me. In the present state of my mind I have no initiative about such visits. If, therefore, the Government wish that I should receive visitors, they should inform the public that, if any member of the public specially desires to see me, they will give him the permission. Their names need not be referred to me. For, I will not thwart the wish of any friend to see me. It is highly probable that my children and other relatives as also inmates of the Ashram and other friends who are intimately connected with me through one or more of my many activities may want to see me. If Rajaji, for instance, who had already applied to the Government for permission to see me in connection with the communal problem, wants to see me about that matter or any other, I should be glad to see him. But even regarding him I would not take the initiative of submitting his name to the Government.

2. If the visitors are permitted to see me without any restrictions as to the matters they might discuss with me, the object of discussions would be largely frustrated if the discussions cannot be published. I would, of course, always and in every circumstance, myself rule out, without needing any external pressure, any discussion that can, by any stretch of imagination, be helpful to the Fascist powers, including Japan. If visits contemplating discussions are to be allowed, the

¹ Madan Gopal Bhandari, Inspector-General of Prisons, Bombay

² In *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 46, Pyarelal reproduces the following as "communicated by Col. Bhandari personally to Gandhiji at 1.10 p.m. on February 12, 1943": "(1) In respect to procedure, the initiative is left entirely to Gandhiji. (2) The absence of any restrictions on the subjects discussed. (3) The fact that an official will be present during interviews. (4) Restrictions on the publications of discussions."

declaration I have suggested to be made by the Government should obviously be made forthwith so that such visits may take place in the early stages of the fast.

3. It is possible that those who have been serving or nursing me in the Ashram or those who were attending on me during my previous fasts may want to stay with me to take part in the nursing. If they should so wish, they should be permitted. I see difficulty in the way of making public announcement on this point. If my proposal commends itself to the Government, I suggest their addressing Shrimati Janaki Devi, the widow of the late Seth Jamnalal Bajaj telling her that if anyone desires during my fast to take part in serving me, he would be permitted to do so on her submitting their names to the Government. She knows all those who have served me before.

Then there are two other matters. I have been most anxious all these months to know all about the state of health of Shri Mathuradas Trikumji, ex-Mayor of Bombay, a grandson of one of my sisters long since dead. The Government may either let me have the information or they may permit Shri Mathuradas Trikumji himself to write to me, or if he is physically unable to do so, anybody may be allowed on his behalf to give me the fullest information. When I was arrested, his life was almost despaired of. I read in the papers, however, that he had undergone a successful operation.

The other thing is in connection with the news that appears in *The Bombay Chronicle* received here today, that Professor Bhansali has embarked on another fast, this time out of sympathy with me. I would like, in order to save time, the Government to convey the following message to him by express wire or through telephone, whichever may be the quickest way:

“I have just read about your sympathetic fast. You have just ended your very long fast over Chimur. You have made that your special task. You should therefore quickly rebuild your body and fulfil the self-allotted task. Leave God to do with me as He likes. I would not have interfered, if you had not just risen from a fast that might have proved fatal and if you had not imposed on yourself a special duty.”

If the Government would comply with my request on this point, I would like them to send the message without any alteration and

further to let me correspond with him if my message does not produce the desired result.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10381. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 44-5, and *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, pp. 665-7

234. INTERVIEW TO SYED ABDULLAH BRELVI²

February 21, 1943

From those who had already seen him, I had gathered that Gandhiji was passing through unprecedented mental agony. It distressed him beyond words that of all persons Lord Linlithgow should have so far misunderstood him as to believe that he who had dedicated his life to non-violence and who valued non-violence more than life itself, could ever countenance or condone violence of any kind. It hurt him deeply that though grave charges were made by Government against him and the Congress, no opportunity was given to them to refute them. This agony as well as the anxiety of the fast was writ large on his face.

He responded to my salutation with his characteristic smile. When I sat beside him he asked me in a whisper if I had anything to tell him. I replied that I had come only to pay my respects to him and had nothing to tell him, adding that I had already learnt from friends, who had seen him, what he had told them. He closed his eyes and thought. For half a minute he remained silent, I could sense that he was making a great effort to speak. Then he began speaking in whispers, and as he spoke his voice grew more and more audible. "Yes," he said, "but I had not completed what I wanted to

¹ The Government's reply dated February 14, conveyed by the addressee to Gandhiji on February 16, explained that (1) "no public announcement" could be made about the visitors; (2) no account of any interview should be published "without their specific approval"; (3) requirement of "extra nurses" would be "considered sympathetically"; (4) the message to Bhansali would not be communicated to him because of "the reference to Chimur", but that he would be informed that Gandhiji wished him "to give up his fast", or any alternative "message in Gandhiji's own words"; and (5) the Bombay Government would after enquiry inform Gandhiji about Mathuradas Trikunji, and in the mean while permission was being granted to him to "write letters to Gandhiji on personal and domestic matters".

² The interviewer, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, was a nationalist Muslim and a member of the All-India Congress Committee. The report is extracted from a communication on behalf of the Home Secretary, Bombay, to Richard Tottenham of the Home Department for "orders of Government of India" for its publication. The interview was in the afternoon.

say.” He added, he could never approve of violence, but he did not want to criticize or condemn those who were reported to have resorted to it, until he had studied all facts. If he had not been arrested, he would have carried on negotiations with the Viceroy for a settlement. If he had been compelled to start a mass movement, he would never have permitted violence of any kind. His intention was, if the movement was started, to raise it to the highest pitch of non-violence yet reached in history.

Then, referring to Hindu-Muslim problem, he said, in a most earnest and touching tone, that before his arrest this question was nearest to his heart and he had determined to do all he could to have it settled and had, therefore, decided to go to Mr. Jinnah even if the latter did not give him an appointment.¹

File No. 33/4/43. Courtesy: National Archives of India

235. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

February 22, 1943

I had sent you a message that you should restrain yourself and not come here. Now get well completely so that you can be pardoned for having come here.²

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 189

236. DISCUSSION WITH HORACE G. ALEXANDER³

February 23, 1943

The question was put:

If you were assured now, by the Viceroy, that you would be given full opportunity to examine the evidence about your and Congress’ alleged

¹ Brelvi concluded: “There is no Indian leader today who is more anxious to settle the communal problem to the satisfaction of the Muslims than Mahatma Gandhi. None, too, who could be more helpful. May I appeal to my Muslim brethren to ponder over the words of the great leader who is now hovering between life and death?”

² *Vide* also “Letter to M. G. Bhandari”, 12-2-1943.

³ This was an enclosure to a letter from Horace Alexander, leader of Friends’ Ambulance Unit in India, to Sir Lawrence Roger Lumley, Governor of Bombay; *vide* Appendix “Letter from Horace G. Alexander to Sir Roger Lumley”, 24-2-1943. According to the source, the report was “revised under the direction of Gandhiji on February 24, 1943”.

responsibility for violence and to discuss it with the Viceroy himself or with someone chosen by him, would you be willing to break your fast?

I got the impression that Mr. Gandhi did not seriously think of the possibility, now, of ending his fast before the 21 days are ended. He was looking further ahead, as if the question had been, 'Under what circumstances would you be prepared to review and redirect the whole Congress effort?'

I understood him to indicate that the proposal suggested in the question was good enough as a first step, but it did not go far enough. Supposing that, after his examination of the evidence, he was still unconvinced, what then? A judicial inquiry is needed, which can really decide the case. He is accused of being the very fount and origin of all the violence that has taken place. Surely he can fairly claim that this accusation against him and against other Congress leaders should be judicially considered and decided.

If he was out of detention, he would naturally deal with all the forces of violence in the way he knows, and he would also naturally plunge into the task of bringing relief to those who are suffering from the present scarcity of food and other necessities.

From a photost.at: C.W. 10437. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, pp. 733-5

237. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
February 24, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

There seems to be between Khan Bahadur Kateli¹ and me a conflict in the understanding of Government instructions about interviews. From the correspondence and instructions you were good enough to read to me, I had gathered that those who were permitted to visit me were not restricted as to the nature of discussion or its duration, a Government representative, if necessary, being present. Where I

am physically unable to carry on discussion I leave it to Shri Pyarelal to finish it. Naturally also the visitors who are intimately connected with me are seen and talked to by my wife. I personally can do very little talking. Doctors, for one thing, have to limit it to the fewest possible minutes. The Khan Bahadur's instructions are that the

¹ Ardeshir Eduljee Kateli, Superintendent of Prisons on special duty

talk must be confined only as between them and me. If such is the position, it is hopeless. Thus Seth R. D. Birla came and so did Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj. They know all about the trusts that I used to regulate. Naturally I took the opportunity of their visits and instructed Shri Pyarelal accordingly, and he has been talking to them regarding them. The Khan Bahadur had a very delicate duty to perform. He did it firmly but as gracefully as was possible under the circumstances. The Khan Bahadur also says, he has strict instructions not to allow visitors to take any notes or papers. During the remaining days of the fast and convalescence, I would like, if possible, to be undisturbed by such things. I would, therefore, like clear instructions which Khan Bahadur and I can mutually understand. I have no desire to go behind them.

Shri Devdas Gandhi, my son, has permission to stop at the Palace as long as he likes. During the permission period he talks during odd minutes when he thinks he can. Naturally the Khan Bahadur cannot be present at those times. I have asked Shri Pyarelal to show him all the correspondence that has passed between the Government of India and the Government of Bombay and myself. I had also the intention of supplying him with copies of such correspondence. But since the Khan Bahadur's prohibition, pending Government instructions, I have asked my son not to take any copies.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 47-8

¹ According to Pyarelal, the addressee, in reply to this, communicated to Gandhiji the following "order dated February 26", which, *inter alia*, read: "It has throughout been the intention of Government that an official should be present during all interviews. . . . Government has not so far insisted on this . . . with Devdas and Ramdas Gandhi in view of the condition of their father, but now that he is improving . . . they should be allowed . . . subject to the same conditions as other interviews. . . . Government has no objection . . . other detainees . . . joining in the conversation, but when Mr. Gandhi himself terminates an interview or is unable to continue it, it should be regarded as closed. . . . Government does not think that copies of its correspondence with Gandhiji should be allowed to go out. . . ."

238. AN EXPLANATION¹

February 26, 1943

I had to choose between death on the one hand and sweet lime-juice on the other. I had promised to live; I must try to live and hence mixed sweet lime-juice with water on Sunday² to enable me to drink water and get over nausea.

The Hindu, 27-2-1943

239. TALK WITH MIRABEHN³

February 27, 1943

What does it matter if people try to distort the meaning of my fast.

This fast was taken solely for service of God and in His presence. Other people may believe it or not, that does not worry me. Those against me are thinking they can make a good job of falsehood, but they are bound to fail. Truth will out—I have said everything that is to be said in my letters.

No fast of mine has ever had such a wonderful ending as this

¹ The correspondent explained that Gandhiji was “reported” to have said this on “the seventeenth day of his fast” while “recalling the happenings of last week-end”. The correspondent added: “Doctors found Gandhiji in a cheerful mood when they visited him at 10 o’clock: ‘His pulse and heart are in the same condition as yesterday. He continues to drink water mixed with sweet lime-juice, but he has further reduced the quantity of lime-juice as he is now able to take water freely. His mental alertness is as bright as ever. He distinctly remembers his condition was grave on Saturday and Sunday last.’ Gandhiji spends most of his time on the eastern verandah of the Aga Khan Palace sunning himself for some time. On a carpet spread near his cot, Mrs. Kanu Gandhi and Pyarelal sit and recite *Gita*. Two chairs have been placed near his cot for visitors. . . .”

² February 21; according to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 719, “a bulletin signed by Mr. Gandhi’s six doctors and published by Bombay Government” read: “After a restless day on 21st, Mr. Gandhi entered a crisis at 4.30 p.m. He was seized with severe nausea and almost fainted, and pulse became nearly imperceptible. Later he was able to take water with sweet lime-juice. He rallied from the crisis and slept for about 5_ hours during the night”

³ The talk has been written down by Mirabehn under the following note: “Bapuji to me on morning of February 27, 1943”. In this and other talks with Mirabehn, the text, as written down by Mirabehn, has been corrected by Gandhiji.

one is having. I do not mean what is going on in the outside world, but what is going on inside me. There is a heavenly peace.¹

Correct, March 7, 1943.²

From a photostat: G.N. 9099

240. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,
March 2, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

You were good enough yesterday, my day of silence, to tell me that the Government had restricted to my two sons the admission of outsiders at the breaking of the fast tomorrow. Whilst I am thankful for the concession, I am unable to avail myself of it. For, as the Government know, I make no distinction between sons born to me and numerous others who are as dear to me even as they are. I told you three or four days ago that, if the Government allowed any outsiders to be present at the breaking of the fast, they should allow all—nearly fifty—who are at present in Poona, and who have been allowed to visit me during the fast. I see that that was not to be.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 49

¹ Mirabehn continues: "Bapuji murmured something more which I could not catch. Something about liking to take complete silence and not troubling to answer or explain anything further—but that he must not turn down Rajaji and others like that—and something about gaining strength to fling himself against the whole world and dying in peace and joy."

² This remark was written by Gandhiji, evidently, after he read through the talk.

241. TALK BEFORE BREAKING THE 21-DAY FAST¹

March 3, 1943

Before sipping it, the Mahatma, in a feeble voice thanked the doctors for the great care and attention which they bestowed on him, and said that more than anything else it was their love and affection for him that must have saved his life. Further, he told those present, there must be something higher than the doctors' power that had saved him.²

I do not know why Providence has saved me on this occasion. Possibly, it is because He has some more mission for me to fulfil.

The Indian Annual Register, 1943, Vol. I, pp. 337-8

242. ANSWER TO QUESTIONS³

[After March 3, 1943]⁴

QUESTION: It is alleged that you have compromised with your faith in non-violence. Is it true?

ANSWER : Not only does my faith in non-violence remain unshaken but you could even say that after the detention of six months, my faith in non-violence has, if possible, gone up further

¹ N. N. Mitra explains: "Mahatma Gandhi broke his fast at 9.34 a.m. I.S.T. (and 8.34 a.m. according to time maintained at Aga Khan Palace). . . . Besides the doctors only inmates of the detention camp were present.... The earliest to arrive . . . was Dr. B. C. Roy, and at 9 a.m., the Surgeon-General to the Government of Bombay, Maj-Gen. R. H. Candy, Lt.-Col. M. G. Bhandari and Lt.-Col. B. Z. Shah drove in. The inmates . . . sang . . . 'Vaishnava jana to' and two stanzas from . . . *Gitanjali*. "Lead Kindly Light" and the Koran were also recited. After prayers, those present observed a five minutes' silence. With folded hands Mahatma Gandhi was seen to close his eyes and to be in meditation. Prayers over, Kasturba . . . handed him a glass containing six ounces of orange juice. He is reported to have taken twenty minutes to sip the juice."

² What follows, according to the source, was "revealed by Dr. B. C. Roy, presiding at a meeting of the staff and students of Calcutta University held at the Darbhanga Hall on March 7, 1943, in observance of the 'Thanks-giving Day' for the successful termination of Gandhiji's fast". For Dr. Roy's impressions of the fast at an interview to the United Press before he left Poona on March 4, and at the Calcutta University, *vide* Appendix "Dr. B. C. Roy's Impressions on Gandhiji's Fast", 4-3-1943.

³ G. D. Birla explains: "These are the recorded answers to questions put to Gandhiji while he was interned."

⁴ From the reference to Gandhiji's fast which ended on March 3

high.

How do you then reconcile your faith in non-violence with the allegations made against you and the Congress that all these acts of sabotage and violence that took place after the 8th of August so happened because of some secret instructions issued by you or by the Congress?

There is absolutely no truth in it. I never issued any secret or overt instructions in favour of sabotage or any other kind of violence. Had Congress issued instructions, I would have known it. No such instructions were issued either by me or by the Congress.

Do you then disapprove of these acts of sabotage and violence?

I definitely disapprove of them. I have made it clear to all those friends who have met me during the period of my fast. I do not want to judge anyone who believes in violence. But then I would say to them to declare it unequivocally that they are committing these acts of violence on their own behalf and because of their belief in violence. It is but fair to the Congress that these perpetrators of violence and sabotage should make it absolutely clear. I would also say that though one may not be a Congressman and yet has respect for me, should give up all methods of secrecy and violence. If they would listen to my advice, I would suggest that they should surrender themselves to the police. In this way they would only help the cause of the country. But if one does not believe in the Congress creed and my method, he should make it clear to all concerned.

It has been suggested that you started this movement under the notion that the Allies were going to be defeated and that you synchronized the movement with the time when Allied nations were in difficulties and that you wanted to take undue advantage of their position.

There is absolutely no truth in it. You can read my writings in *Harijan*, and I have made it more than clear that this was not my intention.

Yes, I have read your articles in *Harijan*, and what I gathered therefrom was that you are not only not pro-German or pro-Japan, but you are anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist. Am I right?

Definitely. No one has used stronger words than myself about Nazism and Fascism. I have called the Nazis and Fascists the scum of the earth. I wrote a letter¹ some time in May 1942 to Mirabehn while she was in Orissa. I cannot give you a copy of that letter since I am in

¹ Vide "Letter to Mirabehn", 31-5-1942.

jail. I understand Mirabehn has sent a copy of that letter to the Government. You can ask the Government to supply you with a copy of it and satisfy yourself. I have given in that letter complete instructions as to how to resist the Japanese, if they at all invade India. No one after reading that letter could charge me with any sympathy with Nazism and Fascism or with Japan.

Is it not the position that the Congress has pledged itself to give military help for Allied cause in case of India being free and a national government being established?

You are absolutely correct in drawing the conclusion that you have drawn. The national government will, no doubt, in case of India being made free, fight for the Allies' cause with all the military resources at its disposal and will co-operate with the Allied nations in every possible manner.

Yes, this is the policy of the Congress. But you being a pacifist, would you obstruct the Congress plan to give military help to the Allied nations?

Certainly not. I am a pacifist. But if the national government is formed and takes power on the basis of giving military help to the Allied nations, I obviously cannot obstruct and will not obstruct. I cannot directly participate in any act of violence. But Congress is not pacifist in the manner as I am. And I naturally would not do anything to obstruct the execution of the Congress intention.

It would surprise you to know that, although you claim to be the best friend of U. K., you are just now very much distrusted.

I know this and say that this is very unfortunate. But I am not at all worried about it. I have no doubt that the distrust will disappear, and the trust will come back with the same strength as the distrust.

From a copy: C.W. 7867. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 261-3

243. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
March 5, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

Gandhiji wishes me to inquire whether he is to be favoured with a copy of the

pamphlet¹ issued by the Home Department containing a portion of the evidence in support of the charges against the Congress and himself.

Yours truly,

PYARELAL

SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 89; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 33

244. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

DETENTION CAMP,

March 13, 1943

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

With reference to this morning's conversation about Kanu Gandhi's presence with me during the convalescence period, not extending beyond a month according to the doctors' opinion, I beg to say that, if the Government will not permit him to stay with me during that period, I am afraid, I must go without his services however valuable they are. I must confess that I do not like this kind of treatment which seems to me to be one of the sharp reminders, even during my helpless period, for which I am quite aware I am solely responsible, that I am a prisoner. But even a prisoner may give himself the privilege of denying himself conveniences whose acceptance may humiliate him, as the offer to give a substitute for Kanu Gandhi seems to do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, p. 50

¹ The reference is to *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances*, 1942-43, which the addressee sent to Gandhiji on April 5. The pamphlet, released by the Government of India on February 22, was, however, withdrawn in January 1946. For Gandhiji's detailed reply to the pamphlet, *vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

245. NOTE ON DIARY OF MANU J. GANDHI

March 13, 1943

You must keep an account of the yarn you have spun. Thoughts coming into your mind should also be noted down. You should keep a record of all that you have read.

BAPU

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

246. NOTE ON DIARY OF MANU J. GANDHI

May 3, 1943

You should improve your handwriting. You have not kept the account of the yarn spun. Write down whatever you learn from others. It will show how much you have digested.

BAPU

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

247. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

DETENTION CAMP,
May 4, 1943

DEAR QAID-E-AZAM,

When some time after my incarceration the Government asked me for a list of newspapers I would like to have, I included the *Dawn* in my list. I have been receiving it with more or less regularity. Whenever it comes to me, I read it carefully. I have followed the proceedings of the League as reported in the *Dawn* columns. I noted your invitation² to me to write to you. Hence this letter.

¹ Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi, and granddaughter of Amritlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin

² According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, p. 982, on April 24, in his Presidential address to the annual session of the Muslim League at Delhi, Jinnah had said: "Nobody would welcome it more than myself, if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. . . . If he has made up his mind, what is there to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me? . . . I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me. . . ."

I welcome your invitation. I suggest our meeting face to face rather than talking through correspondence. But I am in your hands.

I hope that this letter will be sent to you and, if you agree to my proposal, that the Government will let you visit me.

One thing I had better mention. There seems to be an “if” about your invitation. Do you say I should write only if I have changed my heart? God alone knows men’s hearts. I would like you to take me as I am.

Why should not both you and I approach the great question of communal unity as men determined on finding a common solution, and work together to make our solution acceptable to all who are concerned with it or are interested in it?¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

QAID-E-AZAM M. A. JINNAH

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD

BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 10434 b. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji’s Correspondence with the Government*, p. 71, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 14

¹ The Government did not forward the letter to the addressee; *vide* the following item; also “Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham”, 27-5-1943.

*248. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA*

DETENTION CAMP,
May 4, 1943

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

Will you please forward the enclosed¹ to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah?

I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10434 a. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 71, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 14

¹ *Vide* the preceding item. In his reply dated May 24, the addressee, E. Conran-Smith, informed Gandhiji of the Government's decision to withhold the letter to Jinnah. He also drew Gandhiji's attention to an advance copy of the Government's Press communique dated May 26, which he had enclosed. The Communique stated: "The Government of India have received a request from Mr. Gandhi to forward a short letter from himself to Mr. Jinnah expressing a wish to meet him. In accordance with their known policy in regard to correspondence or interviews with Mr. Gandhi, the Government of India have decided that this letter cannot be forwarded and have so informed Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah. They are not prepared to give facilities for political correspondence or contact to a person detained for promoting an illegal mass movement which he has not disavowed, and thus gravely embarrassing India's war effort at a critical time. It rests with Mr. Gandhi to satisfy the Government of India that he can safely be allowed once more to participate in the public affairs of the country, and until he does so the disabilities from which he suffers are of his own choice." However, from the document published in *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III, pp. 974-6, it is evident that the Viceroy of India was of the view that the letter should be forwarded and that Jinnah, if he wished to meet Gandhiji, should be allowed to do so.

249. LETTER TO LORD SAMUEL

DETENTION CAMP,
May 15, 1943

DEAR LORD SAMUEL¹,

I enclose herewith a cutting from *The Hindu* dated 8th April last, containing Reuter's summary of your speech in the House of Lords during the recent debate. Assuming the correctness of the summary, I feel impelled to write this letter.

The report distressed me. I was wholly unprepared for your unqualified association with the one-sided and unsifted² statement of the Government of India against the Congress and me.

You are a philosopher and liberal. A philosophic mind has always meant for me a detached mind and liberalism, a sympathetic understanding of men and things.

As it seems to me, there is nothing in what the Government has said to warrant the conclusion to which you are reported to have come.

From the summary, I select below a few of the items which, in my opinion, are inconsistent with facts.

1. The Congress Party has to a great extent thrown over democratic philosophy.

The Congress Party has never "thrown over democratic philosophy". Its career has been one progressive march towards democracy. Everyone who subscribes to the attainment of the goal of independence through peaceful and legitimate means and pays four annas per year can become its member.

2. It shows signs of turning towards totalitarianism.

You have based your charge on the fact that the Working Committee of the Congress had control over the late Congress Ministries. Does not the successful party in the House of Commons do likewise? I am afraid even when democracy has come to full maturity, parties will be running elections and their managing committees will be controlling the actions and policies of their members. Individual Congressmen did not run elections independently of the party machinery. Candidates were officially chosen and they were helped

¹ Herbert Louis Samuel, First Viscount; Liberal Party leader

² *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government* has "unjustified".

by all-India leaders. 'Totalitarian', according to the Oxford Pocket Dictionary, means "designating a party that permits no rival loyalties or parties". 'Totalitarian State' means "with only one governing party". It must have violence as its sanction for keeping control. A Congress member, on the contrary, enjoys the same freedom as the Congress President, or any member of the Working Committee. There are parties within the Congress itself. Above all the Congress eschews violence. Members render voluntary obedience. The All-India Congress Committee can at any moment unseat the members of the Working Committee and elect others.

3. They (Congress Ministers)¹ resigned (not?)² because they had not the support of their Assemblies.

They resigned because *de jure* they were responsible to their electorates, *de facto* they were responsible to the Working Committee of the Congress and the High Command. That is not democracy. That is totalitarianism .

You would not have said this if you had known the full facts. The *de jure* responsibility of the Ministers to the electorate was not diminished in any way by their *de facto* responsibility to the Congress Working Committee, for the very simple and valid reason that the Working Committee derives its power and prestige from the very electorate to whom the Ministers were responsible. The prestige that the Congress enjoys is due solely to its service of the people. As a matter of fact, the Ministers conferred with the members of their parties in their respective Assemblies and they tendered their resignations with their approval. But totalitarianism is fully represented by the Government of India which is responsible to no one in India. It is a tragic irony that a Government which is steeped in totalitarianism brings that very charge against the most democratic body in India.

4. India is unhappy in that the line of party division is the worst any country can have—it is a division according to religious communities.

Political parties in India are not divided according to religious communities. From its very commencement the Congress has deliberately remained a purely political organization. It has had Britishers and Indians, including Christians, Parsis, Muslims and

¹ Words in parentheses are Gandhiji's.

² *ibid*

Hindus, as Presidents. The Liberal Party of India is another political organization, not to mention others that are wholly non-sectarian. That there are also communal organizations based on religion and that they take part in politics is undoubtedly true. But that fact cannot sustain the categorical statement made by you. I do not wish in any way to minimize the importance of these organizations or the considerable part they play in the politics of the country. But I do assert that they do not represent the political mind of India. It can be shown that historically the politico-religious organizations are the result of the deliberate application by the alien Government of their “divide and rule” policy. When the British imperial influence is totally withdrawn, India will probably be represented solely by political parties drawn from all classes and creeds.

5. The Congress can claim at best barely more than half the population of India. Yet in their totalitarian spirit they claim to speak for the whole.

If you measure the representative character of the Congress by the number of members on the official roll, then it does not represent even half the population. The official membership is infinitesimal compared to India’s vast population of nearly four hundred millions. The enrolled membership began only in 1920. Before that the Congress was represented by its All-India Committees whose members were mainly elected by various political associations. Nevertheless the Congress has, so far as I know, always claimed to speak the mind of India, not even excluding the Princes. A country under alien subjection can only have one political goal, namely, its freedom from that subjection. And considering that the Congress has always and predominantly exhibited that spirit of freedom, its claim to represent all India¹ can hardly be denied. That some parties repudiate the Congress, does not derogate from the claim in the sense in which it has been advanced.

6. When Mr. Gandhi called upon the British Government to quit India, he said it would be for the Congress to take delivery.

I never said that when the British quitted India, “the Congress would take delivery”. This is what I said in my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy, dated 29th January last:

The Government have evidently ignored or overlooked the very material

¹ *Gandhiji’s Correspondence with the Government* has “the whole of India”.

fact that the Congress by its August resolution asked nothing for itself. All its demands were for the whole people. As you should be aware, the Congress was willing and prepared for the Government inviting Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah to form a national government, subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary, for the duration of the war, such government being responsible to a duly elected assembly. Being isolated from the Working Committee, except Shrimati Sarojini Devi, I do not know its present mind. But the Committee is not likely to have changed its mind.¹

7. If this country or Canada, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa or the United States had abstained from action as the Congress in India abstained . . .² then perhaps the cause of freedom everywhere would have gone under. . .³ It is a pity that the leaders of the Congress do not realize that glory is not to be won in India by abandoning the cause of mankind.

How can you compare India with Canada and other dominions which are virtually independent entities, let alone Great Britain or the United States—wholly independent countries? Has India a spark of the freedom of the type enjoyed by the countries named by you? India has yet to attain her freedom. Supposing the Allied powers were to lose, and supposing further that the Allied forces were to withdraw from India under military necessity, which I do not expect, the countries you name may not lose their independence. But unhappy India will be obliged to change masters, if she is even then in her defenceless state. The Congress does not abstain out of cussedness. Neither the Congress nor any other organization can possibly kindle mass enthusiasm for the Allied cause without the present possession of independence, to use your own expression either *de jure* or *de facto*. Mere promises of future independence cannot work that miracle. The cry of “Quit India” has arisen from a realization of the fact that if India is to shoulder the burden of representing, or fighting for the “cause of mankind”, she must have the glow of freedom now. Has a freezing man ever been warmed by the promise of the warmth of sunshine coming at some future date?

The great pity is that the ruling power distrusts everything that the Congress does or says under my influence which it has suddenly discovered is wholly evil. It is necessary for a clear understanding that you should know my connection with the Congress and Congressmen.

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 29-1-1943.

² Omissions as in the source

³ *ibid*

It was in 1935 that I was successful in my attempt to sever all formal connections with the Congress. There was no coolness between the Congress Working Committee members and myself. But I realized that I was cramped and so were the members whilst I was officially connected with the Congress. The growing restraints which my conception of non-violence required from time to time were proving too hard to bear. I felt therefore that my influence should be strictly moral. I had no political ambition. My politics were subservient to the demands of truth and non-violence as I had defined and practised for practically the whole of my life. And so I was permitted by the fellow members to sever the official connection even to the extent of giving up the four-anna membership. It was understood between us that I should attend the meetings of the Working Committee only when the members required my presence for consultation in matters involving the application of non-violence or affecting communal unity. Since that time I have been wholly unconnected with the routine work of the Congress. Many meetings of the Working Committee have, therefore, taken place without me. These proceedings I have often seen only when they have been published in the newspapers. The members of the Working Committee are independent-minded men. They engage me often in prolonged discussions before they accept my advice on the interpretation of non-violence as applied to the problems rising from new situations. It will be, therefore, unjust to them and to me to say that I exercise any influence over them beyond what reason commands. The public know how even until quite recently in matters of moment the majority of the members of the Working Committee have on several occasions rejected my advice.

8. They have not merely abstained from action, but the Congress has deliberately proclaimed the formula that it is wrong to help the British war effort by men or money and that the only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance. In the name of non-violence they have led a movement which was characterized in many places by the utmost violence, and the White Paper gives clear proof of the complicity of the Indian leaders in the disorders.

This charge shows to what extent the British public has been misled by imaginary stories as in the Government of India publication on the disturbances; statements have been torn from their context and put together as if they were made at one time or in the same context. The Congress is committed to non-violence so far as the attainment of freedom is concerned. And to that end the Congress has been

struggling all these twenty years, however imperfectly it may be, to express non-violence in action, and I think it has succeeded to a great extent. But it has never made any pretence of war resistance through non-violence. Could it have made that claim and lived up to it, the face of India would have been changed and the world would have witnessed the miracle of organized violence being successfully met by organized non-violence. But human nature has nowhere risen to the height which full non-violence demands. The disturbances that took place after the 8th of August were not due to any action on the part of the Congress. They were due entirely to the inflammatory action of the Government in arresting Congress leaders throughout India and that at a time which was psychologically wholly wrong. The utmost that can be said is that Congressmen or others had not risen high enough in non-violence to be proof against all provocation.

It surprises me that although you have admitted that “this White Paper may be good journalism but it is not so good as a State document”, you have based your sweeping judgment on the strength of that paper. If you would read the very speeches to which the paper makes reference, you will find there ample material to show that the Government of India had not the slightest justification in making those unfortunate arrests on August 9 last and after, or in making the charges they have brought against the arrested leaders after their incarceration—charges which have never been sifted in any court of law.

9. Mr. Gandhi faced us with an utterly illegitimate method of political controversy, levying blackmail on the best of human emotions, pity and sympathy, by his fast. The only creditable thing to Mr. Gandhi about the fast was ending it.

You have used a strong word to characterize my fast. His Excellency the Viceroy has also allowed himself to use the same word. You have perhaps the excuse of ignorance. He had no such excuse, for he had my letters before him. All I can tell you is that fasting is an integral part of satyagraha. It is a satyagrahi's ultimate weapon. Why should it be blackmail when man under a sense of wrong crucifies his flesh? You may not know that satyagrahi prisoners fasted in South Africa for the removal of their wrongs; so they have done in India. One fast¹ of mine you know, as I think you were then a Cabinet Minister. I refer to the fast which resulted in the alteration of the

¹ From September 20 to 26, 1932.

decision of His Majesty's Government. If the decision had stood, it would have perpetuated the curse of untouchability. The alteration prevented the disaster.

The Government of India communique, announcing my recent fast issued after it had commenced, accused me of having undertaken the fast to secure my release. It was a wholly false accusation. It was based on a distortion of the letter¹ I had written in answer to that of the Government. That letter dated the 8th February was suppressed at the time when the communique was issued. If you will study the question, I refer you to the following which were published in the newspapers:

My letter² to His Excellency the Viceroy dated New Year's Eve, 1942.

His Excellency's reply³ dated January 13, 1943.

My letter⁴ dated January 19, 1943.

His Excellency's reply⁵ dated January 25, 1943.

My letter⁶ dated January 29, 1943.

His Excellency's reply⁷ dated February 5, 1943.

My letter⁸ dated February 7, 1943.

Sir R. Tottenham's letter⁹ dated February 7, 1943.

My reply¹⁰ dated February 8, 1943.

And I do not know from where you got the impression that I ended the fast, for which supposed act you give me credit. If you mean by it that I ended the fast before its time, I would call such an ending a discredit to me. As it was, the fast ended on its due date, for which I can claim no credit.

10. He (Lord Samuel) considered that the negotiations broke down on points on which they could not have broken down, had there been any real desire on the part of the Congress to come to a settlement.

The statements made by the President of the Congress, Maulana

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 31-12-1942.

³ *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 13-1-1943.

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.

⁵ *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.

⁶ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943.

⁷ *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 5-2-1943.

⁸ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 7-2-1943.

⁹ *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.

¹⁰ *Vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.

Abul Kalam Azad, and Pandit Nehru, who carried on the prolonged negotiations, I venture to think, make it quite clear that no true man could have shown more real or greater desire for a settlement. In this connection it is well to remember that Pandit Nehru was and, I have no doubt, still remains, an intimate personal friend of Sir Stafford Cripps at whose invitation he had come down from Allahabad. He could, therefore, leave no stone unturned to bring the negotiations to a successful issue. The history of the failure has yet to be written. When it is, it will be found that the cause lay elsewhere than with the Congress.

I hope my letter has not wearied you. Truth has been overlaid with much untruth. If not, justice to a great organization, the cause of Truth, which is Humanity, demands an impartial investigation of the present distemper.¹

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure 1

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD SAMUEL
HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON

From a photostat: C.W. 10378. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 75-82, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 25-9

¹ In his reply dated July 25, 1944, the addressee reiterated his view and said: "Let me add how much I regret that the policy adopted hitherto by yourself and the Congress Party during the present war has compelled me, with almost all the friends of the Indian national movement in this country, to take up an attitude of opposition, and how much I should rejoice if the case should be altered."

250. *LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA*

DETENTION CAMP,
May 15, 1943

SIR,

Will you please forward the enclosed¹ to the Right Hon'ble Lord Samuel?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 25

251. *LETTER TO SIR REGINALD MAXWELL*

DETENTION CAMP,
May 21, 1943

DEAR SIR REGINALD MAXWELL,

It was only on the 10th instant that I read your speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly on the 15th February last on the adjournment motion² about my fast. I saw at once that it demanded a reply. I wish I had read it earlier.

I observe that you are angry, or at least were, at the time you delivered your speech. I cannot in any other way account for your palpable inaccuracies. This letter is an endeavour to show them. It is written to you, not as an official, but as man to man. The first thought

¹ *Vide* the preceding item. In his reply dated May 26, the addressee conveyed to Gandhiji that "for reasons which have been explained to you in another connection", the Government decided that the letter could not be forwarded. Gandhiji, however, after his release in 1944, sent a copy of the letter to Lord Samuel and some correspondence ensued; *vide* "Letter to Lord Samuel", 8-6-1945.

² In *The Indian Annual Register, 1943*, Vol. I, p. 156, N. N. Mitra explains that the adjournment motion moved by L. K. Maitra "appealed to members of the House to set aside all political considerations and unite in demanding the 'immediate and unconditional' release of a great Indian who was revered by all classes of people". Maitra was supported by N. M. Joshi, Sant Singh, Dr. P. N. Banerjee and T. T. Krishnamachari.

that came to me was that your speech was a deliberate distortion of facts. But I quickly revised it. So long as there was a favourable construction possible to put upon your language, the unfavourable had to be rejected. I must assume, therefore, that what appeared to me to be distortions were not deliberate.

You have said that “the correspondence that led to the fast is there for anyone to interpret as he chooses,” yet you have straightway told your audience that “it can perhaps be read in the light of the following facts.” Did you leave them the choice?

I now take your “facts” seriatim:

1. When the Congress Party passed their resolution of August 8, a Japanese attack on this country was thought to be likely.

You seem to have conveyed the meaning that the thought was that of the Congress and that it was gratuitous. The fact is that the Government gave currency to the thought and emphasized it by action which even seemed ludicrous.

2. By demanding the withdrawal of British power from India and by placing the Congress in open opposition to it, the Congress Party might be thought to have hoped for some advantage to themselves if the Japanese attack succeeded.

Now this is not a fact, but your opinion wholly contrary to facts. Congressmen never hoped for, nor desired any advantage from Japanese success, on the contrary, they dreaded it and that dread inspired the desire for the immediate end of the British rule. All this is crystal clear from the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee (8th August, 1942) and my writings.

3. Today, six months after, the Japanese danger has, at any rate for the time being, receded and there is little immediate hope from that quarter.

This again is your opinion; mine is that the Japanese danger has not receded. It still stares India in the face. Your fling that “there is little immediate hope from that quarter” should be withdrawn unless you think and prove that the resolution and my writings adverted to in the previous paragraphs did not mean what they said.

4. The movement initiated by the Congress has been decisively defeated.

I must combat this statement. Satyagraha knows no defeat. It flourishes on blows the hardest imaginable. But I need not go to that bower for comfort. I learnt in schools established by the British Government in India that “freedom’s battle once begun” is

“bequeathed from bleeding sire to son”. It is of little moment when the goal is reached so long as effort is not relaxed. The dawn came with the establishment of the Congress 60 years ago. Sixth of April 1919, on which All India satyagraha¹ began, saw a spontaneous awakening from one end of India to the other. You can certainly derive comfort, if you like, from the fact that the immediate objective of the movement was not gained as some Congressmen had expected. But that is no criterion of “decisive” or any “defeat”. It ill becomes one belonging to a race which owns no defeat to deduce defeat of a popular movement from the suppression of popular exuberance—maybe not always wise—by a frightful exhibition of power.

5. Now, therefore, it is the object of the Congress Party to rehabilitate themselves and regain, if they can, the credit they have lost.

Surely your own experience should correct this opinion. You know, as well as I do, that every attempt at suppression of the Congress has given it greater prestige and popularity. This the latest attempt at suppression is not likely to lead to a contrary result. Hence the question of “lost credit” and “rehabilitation” simply does not arise.

6. Thus they are now concerned to disclaim responsibility for the consequences that followed their decision. The point is taken up by Mr. Gandhi in his correspondence with the Viceroy. The awkward facts are now disowned as unproved.

“They,” here can only mean me. For, throughout your speech I was the target. “Now” means at the time of my fast; I remind you that I disclaimed responsibility on 14th August last when I wrote² to His Excellency the Viceroy. In that same letter I laid it on the Government who, by the wholesale arrests of 9th August, provoked the people to the point of madness. “The awkward facts” are not awkward for me when the responsibility rests on the Government and what you put forward as “facts” are only one-sided allegations awaiting proof.

7. Mr. Gandhi takes up his stand: “Surely I can say with safety that it is for the Government to justify their action by solid evidence.” To whom are they to justify themselves?³

Was not Sardar Sant Singh’s answer a proper answer? How nice

¹ As a protest against the Rowlatt Act

² *Vide* “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 14-8-1942.

³ To this question, Sant Singh answered; “Before an impartial enquiry committee”.

it would have been, if you had not put in the interjection. For, have not the Government of India been obliged before now to justify their acts by appointing inquiry committees as, for instance, after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre? But you proceed:

8. Elsewhere in his letters Mr. Gandhi makes this clear. He says: "Convince me that I was wrong and I will make ample amends."¹ In the alternative he asks: "If you want me to make any proposal on behalf of the Congress, you should put me among the Working Committee members."² So far as can be seen, these were the demands when he conceived his fast. There is no other solid demand made.

Here there is a double wrong done to me. You have ignored the fact that my letters were written to one whom I considered to be a friend. You have further ignored the fact that the Viceroy in his letter had asked me to make clear proposals. If you had borne these two facts in mind, you would not have wronged me as you have done. But let me come to the ninth count of your indictment, and it will be clear to you what I mean.

9. But now, fresh light emerges. Government without granting any of his demands informed Mr. Gandhi that they would release him for the purpose and for the duration of the fast in order to make it dear that they disclaimed responsibility for the consequences. On that Mr. Gandhi replied⁴ that if he was released, he would at once abandon the fast, and that he had conceived the fast only as a prisoner. Thus, if he were released, the objects for which he declared his fast, although still unfulfilled, would recede into the background. As a free man he would neither demand these objects nor fast. Interpreted in this way, his fast would seem to amount to little more than a demand for release.

Together with the letter containing the offer of release, a copy of the draft communique that was to be issued by the Government was delivered to me. It did not say that the offer was made in order "to make it clear that the Government disclaimed responsibility for the consequences". If I had seen that oflending sentence, I would have sent a simple refusal. In my innocence, I put a fair meaning on the offer and in my reply I argued why I could not accept it. And, according to my wont, in order that the Government may not be misled in any shape or form, I told them how the fast was conceived and why it could not be taken by me as a free man. I went out of my way even to postpone for the convenience of the Government the

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943.

² *Vide* "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 8-2-1943.

commencement of the fast by a day. Mr. Irwin¹ who had brought the offer and the draft communique appreciated the courtesy. Why was this reply of mine withheld from the public at the time the revised communique was issued, and why was an unwarranted interpretation given instead? Was not my letter a material document?

Now for the second wrong. You say that if I were released, my objects for which I had declared the fast would recede into the background, and even gratuitously suggest that as a free man I would neither demand these objects nor fast. As a free man I could and would have carried on an agitation for an impartial public inquiry into the charges brought against Congressmen and me. I would also have asked for permission to see the imprisoned Congressmen. Assume that my agitation had failed to make any impression on the Government, I might then have fasted. All this, if you were not labouring under intense irritation, you could have plainly seen from my letter, supported as you would have been, by my past record. Instead you have deduced a meaning which, according to the simple rules of construction, you had no right to deduce. Again, as a free man I would have had the opportunity of examining the tales of destruction said to have been wrought by Congressmen and even by non-Congressmen. And if I had found that they had committed wanton acts of murder, then also I might have fasted as I have done before now. You should thus see that the demands made in my letter to His Excellency the Viceroy would not have receded to the background, if I had been released, for they could have been pressed otherwise than by the fast, and that the fast had not the remotest connection with any desire for release. Moreover imprisonment is never irksome to a satyagrahi. For him a prison is a gateway of liberty.

10. I could quote several resolutions of the Congress Working Committee against him. . . Mr. Gandhi himself took up the subject in *Harijan* dated 19th August, 1939. There he says:² "Hunger-strike has positively become a plague."

11. On the ethics of hunger-striking, Mr. Gandhi had something to say³ in the *Harijan* of 20th May, 1939, after his Rajkot fast: "I now see that it was tainted with *himsa*." Further on he remarks: "This was not the way of ahimsa

¹ Joseph Boyd Irwin, Secretary to the Government of Bombay

² *Vide* "Hunger-Strike", 14-8-1939.

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939.

or conversion.”

My views quoted by you have not undergone the slightest change. If you had read the quotations without passion, it would have prevented you from putting upon my letter the construction you have.

I am sorry to have to say that you have wholly misread my article. Fortunately I happen to have Anand Hingorani’s collection of my writings, *To the Princes and Their Peoples*. I quote from the *Harijan* article referred to by you:

At the end of my fast I had permitted myself to say that it had succeeded as no previous fast had done. I now see that it was tainted with *himsa*. In taking the fast I sought immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not the way of ahimsa or conversion; it was the way of *ahimsa* or coercion. My fast to be pure should have been addressed only to the Thakore Saheb, and I should have been content to die, if I could not have melted his heart. . . .

I hope you realize that you misapplied the stray sentences taken from their setting. I described my fast as “tainted” not because it was bad *ab initio* but because I sought the intervention of the Paramount Power. I have given you the credit of being unaware of the article. I wish you could read it. In any case, may I expect you to correct the error? For me the Rajkot episode is one of the happiest chapters of my life, in that God gave me the courage to own my mistake and purge it by renouncing the fruits of the award. I became stronger for the purging.

12. I must confess that speaking for myself it is certainly repugnant to Western ideas of decency to exploit against an opponent his feelings of humanity, chivalry or mercy or to trifle with such a sacred trust as one’s own life in order to play on the feelings of the public for the sake of some purely mundane object.

I must tread with extreme caution upon the ground with which you are infinitely more familiar than I can be. Let me, however, remind you of the historic fast of the late MacSwiney. I know that the British Government let him die in imprisonment. But he has been acclaimed by the Irish people as a hero and a martyr. Edward Thompson in his *You Have Lived Throuh All This* says that the late Mr. Asquith called the British Government’s action a “political blunder of the first magnitude”. The author adds:

He was allowed to die by inches, while the world watched with a passion of admiration and sympathy, and innumerable British men and women begged

their Government not to be such a damned fool.

And is it repugnant to Western ideas of decency to exploit (if that expression must be retained) against the opponent his feeling of humanity, chivalry or mercy? Which is better, to take the opponent's life secretly or openly or to credit him with finer feelings and evoke them by fasting and the like? Again, which is better, to trifle with one's own life by fasting or some other way of self-immolation, or to trifle with it by engaging in an attempt to compass the destruction of the opponent and his dependants?

13. What he says, in effect, is this: 'You say, Government is right and the Congress is wrong. I say the Congress is right and the Government is wrong. I choose to put the burden of proof on you. I am the only person to be convinced. You must either admit you are wrong or submit your reason to me and make me the sole arbiter in the matter. . . .' It seems to me that Mr. Gandhi's demand is rather like asking the United Nations to appoint Hitler to adjudge the responsibility for the present war. It is not usual in this country to put the accused person on the bench to judge his own case.

This is an unbecoming caricature of my letters to the Viceroy. What I said, in effect, was this: 'You have allowed me to consider myself as your friend. I do not want to stand on my rights and demand a trial. You accuse me of being in the wrong. I contend that your Government is in the wrong. Since you would not admit your Government's error, you owe it to me to let me know wherein I have erred. For, I am in the dark as to how I have erred. If you convince me of my guilt, I will make ample amends.' My simple request you have turned against me and compared me to an imaginary Hitler appointed to adjudge his own case. If you do not accept my interpretation of my own letters, can I not say, 'let an impartial judge examine the rival interpretations'? Will it be an offensive comparison, if I recall the fable of the wolf who was always in the right and the lamb who was always in the wrong?

14. Mr. Gandhi is the leader of an open rebellion. . . . He forfeits that right (the right of being heard) so long as he remains an open rebel. He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method. He cannot take part in public life under the protection of the law that he denies. He cannot be a citizen and yet not a subject.

You are right in describing me as the leader of an open rebellion except for a fundamental omission, namely, strictly non-violent. This omission is on a par with the omission of 'not's

from the Commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc. You may dismiss the phrase or explain it away in any manner you like. But when you quote a person you may not omit anything from his language, especially an omission which changes the whole aspect of things. I have declared myself an open rebel on many occasions, even during my visit¹ to London on the occasion of the Second Round Table Conference. But the anathema that you have pronounced against me has not been pronounced before. You will perhaps recall the time when the late Lord Reading was willing to hold a Round Table Conference in which I was to be present, although I was leading a mass civil disobedience movement.² It was not called because I had insisted that the Ali Brothers who were then in prison should be released. British history which I was taught as a lad had it that Wat Tyler³ and John Hampden⁴ who had rebelled were heroes. In very recent times the British Government treated with Irish rebels whilst their hands were still red with blood. Why should I become an outcaste although my rebellion is innocent and I have had nothing to do with violence.

In spite of the validity of my claim that you have enunciated a novel doctrine, I admit that you made a perfect statement when you said, "He cannot claim to function except through the success of his own method." My method, being based on truth and non-violence, ever succeeds to the extent it is applied. Therefore I function always and only through the success of my method and to the extent that I correctly represent, in my own person, its fundamentals.

The moment I became a satyagrahi, from that moment I ceased to be a subject but never ceased to be a citizen. A citizen obeys laws voluntarily and never under compulsion or for fear of the punishment prescribed for their breach. He breaks them when he considers it necessary and welcomes the punishment. That robs it of its edge or of the disgrace which it is supposed to imply.

15. In some of the published correspondence, Mr. Gandhi has made much of his intention to seek an interview with the Viceroy. But the Congress resolution still stood, together with Mr. Gandhi's own words "do or die". The

¹ In 1931.

² In December 1921.

³ Leader of the "Peasant Revolt" (1381) who was killed by the King's men

⁴ English Parliamentary leader (1594-1643) who led the popular resistance against the tax levied by King Charles I without the sanction of the Parliament

Government communique on the subject of his fast has already reminded the public of Mr. Gandhi's statement¹ made on 14th July that there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. . . . I may again quote Mr. Gandhi's own words: "Every one of you should, from this moment onwards, consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this imperialism." Now listen to this:

"You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for Ministries or the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. We shall do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt. This is open rebellion."

Let me first of all make a vital correction of the quotation you have taken from my Press statement made on the 14th July and reported in the *Harijan* of 19th July. You have quoted me as saying that "there was no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation." The real quotation is, "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal." You will admit that the difference is material. The faulty quotation apart, you have omitted from my statement, which occupies nearly three columns of the *Harijan*, all the things which amplify my meaning and show the caution with which I was working. I take a few sentences from that statement.

It is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognizing the freedom of India without reference to the various parties, all things are possible but the point I want to stress is this.

Here follows the sentence misquoted by you. The paragraph then proceeds:

Either they recognize independence or they don't. After recognition many things can follow; for, by that single act, the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed on behalf of the British people, it will be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of the war.

From this fuller quotation, you will see how everything that was being done was done in order to ensure victory and ward off Japanese

¹ Vide "Interview to the Press", 14-7-1942.

aggression. You may not appreciate my wisdom but you may not impugn my good faith.

Though I have no verbatim report of my speeches before the All-India Congress Committee, I have fairly full notes. I accept the correctness of your quotations. If you bear in mind that all things were said with non-violence always as the background, the statements become free from any objection. "Do or die" clearly means do your duty by carrying out instructions and die in the attempt, if necessary.

As to my exhortation¹ to the people to consider themselves free, I take the following from my notes:

The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the mean while? I will tell you. There is the spinning-wheel. I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteenfold constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom before it comes physically. The chains of a slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: 'I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For, henceforth instead of depending upon you, I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge for freedom and therefore I deem myself to be a free man.'

Apart from your resentment of the "Quit India" cry, ask yourself whether the quotation as found in its own setting is in any way offensive? Should not a man, longing to be free, first of all cultivate the spirit of freedom and act accordingly irrespective of consequences?

16. It is not the method of peaceful persuasion to go to the person whom you wish to convince armed with a resolution declaring mass rebellion. The essence of negotiation is that both parties should be uncommitted and that neither should exert the pressure of force on the other. That is true in any

¹ *Vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

circumstances. But as between a subject and the State which rules him, the position is still more emphatic. It is not for the subject to deal with the State on equal terms, still less to approach it with an open threat.

At the outset let me make one correction. The resolution did not “declare” mass rebellion. It merely sanctioned the “starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle”. I was to “guide the nation in the steps to be taken”. The paragraph sanctioning the mass struggle also “appeals to British and the United Nations in the interest of world freedom”.

The essence of negotiation should undoubtedly be that the parties are uncommitted and that neither “exerts the pressure of force” on the other. In the case under consideration the actual position is that one party has overwhelming force at its disposal and the other has none. About non-committal too the Congress has no commitments except the immediate attainment of freedom. Subject to that there is the widest latitude for negotiation.

Your proposition about the subject and the State is I know a reply to the cry of “Quit India”. Only the cry is intrinsically just and the subject-and-the-State formula is too antediluvian to have any real meaning. It is because the Congress has felt the subjection of India as an insufferable reproach, that it has been against it. A well-ordered State is subject to the people. It does not descend upon the people from above but the people make and unmake it.

The resolution of 8th August did not contain any threat open or veiled. It prescribed the limitations under which the negotiations could be carried on and its sanction was free of all “force”, i.e., violence. It consisted of self-suffering. Instead of appreciating the fact that the Congress laid all its cards on the table, you have given a sinister meaning to the whole movement by drawing unwarranted inferences. In so far as there was any violence after the 8th of August last on the part of any Congressman, it was wholly unauthorized as is quite clear from the resolution itself. The Government in their wisdom left me no time whatsoever for issuing instructions. The All-India Congress Committee finished after midnight on the 8th August. Well before sunrise on the 9th, I was carried away by the Police Commissioner without being told what crime I had committed. And so were the members of the Working Committee and the principal Congressmen

who happened to be in Bombay. Is it too much when I say that the Government invited violence and did not want the movement to proceed on peaceful lines?

Now let me remind you of an occasion of an open rebellion when you played an important part. I refer to the famous Bardoli satyagraha¹ under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He was conducting a campaign of civil disobedience. It had evidently reached a stage when the then Governor of Bombay felt that there should be a peaceful end to the struggle. You will remember that the result of an interview between His Excellency the then Governor and the Sardar was the appointment of a committee of which you were a distinguished member. And the committee's findings were for the most part in favour of the civil resisters. Of course, you may say, if you wish, that the Governor made a mistake in negotiating with a rebel, and so did you in accepting the appointment. Consider the reverse position, what would have happened if, instead of appointing a committee, the Governor had attempted heavy repression. Would not the Government have been held responsible for any outbreak of violence, if the people had lost self-control?

17. Government does hold Mr. Gandhi responsible for the recent happenings that have so disturbed the peace of India, caused so much loss of life and property of innocent persons and brought the country to the brink of a terrible danger. I do not say, he had any personal complicity in acts of violence . . . but it was he that put the match to the train carefully laid beforehand by himself and his colleagues. That he was forced to do so prematurely was not his fault but our fortune. This was the method by which they hoped to gain their ends. They may seek to repudiate it, now that it has proved unsuccessful, but the responsibility is theirs none the less. . . . If Mr. Gandhi wished to dissociate himself from them, he could have spoken for himself without consulting the members of the Working Committee. Can he then, without cancelling the Congress rebellion, without reparation, without even assurances for the future, claim at any moment to step back as though nothing had happened into the public life of the country and be received by Government and society as a good citizen?

I can accept no responsibility for the unfortunate happenings described by you. I have no doubt whatsoever that history will record that the responsibility for the happenings was wholly that of the Government. In the nature of things I could not put a match to a train

¹ From February 12 to August 6, 1928.

which for one thing was never laid. And if the train was never laid, the question of prematureness does not arise. The deprivation of the people of their leaders you may consider “our fortune”. I consider it a misfortune of the first magnitude for all concerned. I wish to repudiate nothing of what I have done or intended. I have no sense of repentance for I have no sense of having done any wrong to any person. I have stated times without number that I detest violence in any shape or form. But I can give no opinion about things of which I have no first-hand knowledge. I never asked for permission to consult the Congress Working Committee to enable me to dissociate myself from violence. I asked for permission to see them, if I was expected to make any proposals on behalf of the Committee. I cannot cancel the Congress rebellion which is of a purely non-violent character. I am proud of it. I have no reparation to make, for I have no consciousness of guilt. And there can be no question of assurances for the future when I hold myself guiltless. The question of re-entering the public life of the country or being received by Government and society as a good citizen does not arise. I am quite content to remain a prisoner. I have never thrust myself on the public life of the country or on the Government. I am but a humble servant of India. The only certificate I need is a certificate from the inner voice. I hope you realize that you gave your audience not facts but your opinions framed in anger.

To conclude, why have I written this letter? Not to answer your anger with anger. I have written it in the hope that you may read the sincerity behind my own words. I never despair of converting any person even an official of the hardest type. Gen. Smuts was converted, or say reconciled, as he declared in his speech introducing the Bill giving relief in the terms of the settlement arrived at between him and me in 1914. That he has not fulfilled my hope or that of the Indian settlers which the settlement had inspired is a sad story, but it is irrelevant to the present purpose. I can multiply such recollections. I claim no credit for these conversions or reconciliations. They were wholly due to the working of truth and non-violence expressing themselves through me. I subscribe to the belief or the philosophy that all life in its essence is one, and that the humans are working consciously or unconsciously towards the realization of that identity. This belief requires a living faith in a living God who is the ultimate arbiter of our fate. Without Him not a blade of grass moves. My belief requires me not to despair even of converting you, though your speech warrants no such hope. If God has willed it, He may put power

in some word of mine which will touch your heart. Mine is but to make the effort. The result is in God's hands.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON'BLE SIR REGINALD MAXWELL

HOME MEMBER

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 58-70; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 17-24

252. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI

May 26, 1943

BHAI KHAN BAHADUR,

I gave you on the 4th a letter addressed to the Central Government and along with it was a letter² to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. Another I gave you on the 15th. With that there was a letter to Lord Samuel. Please be good enough to inquire and let me know whether these two letters have reached the proper quarters, and whether the letters to Qaid-e-Azam and Lord Samuel have been forwarded to them.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6302

¹ In his reply dated June 17, the addressee said: "I see you still maintain the position which you took up in your letters to His Excellency the Viceroy regarding the Congress resolution of the 8th August and responsibility for the disturbances that followed it. As you know, Government have never accepted the construction you sought to put upon those events. So long as this fundamental difference exists, I must regretfully conclude that there is not sufficient common ground for profitable discussion of the other points raised."

² *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 4-5-1943.

253. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
May 27, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I received last evening your letter¹ of the 24th instant refusing my request to forward my letter addressed to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah. I wrote² only yesterday to the Superintendent of this camp asking him kindly to inquire whether my letter to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, and the later one, dated the 15th instant to Right Hon'ble Lord Samuel, had been forwarded to the respective addressees.

I am sorry for the Government's decision. For, my letter to the Qaid-e-Azam was sent in reply to his public invitation to me to write to him, and I was especially encouraged to do so because his language had led me to think that, if I wrote to him, my letter would be forwarded to him. The public too are anxious that the Qaid-e-Azam and I should meet or at least establish contact. I have always been anxious to meet the Qaid-e-Azam, if per chance we could devise some solution of the communal tangle which might be generally acceptable. Therefore the disability in the present instance is much more that of the public than mine. As a satyagrahi I may not regard as disabilities the restrictions which the Government have imposed upon me. As the Government are aware, I have denied myself even the pleasure of writing to my relatives as I am not allowed to perform the service of writing to my co-workers who are in a sense more to me than my relatives.

The advance copy of the contemplated communique³ with which you have considerably favoured me requires emendation in more places than one. For, as it stands, it does not square with facts.

As to the disavowal referred to in the proposed communique, the Government are aware that I regard the non-violent mass movement, for the launching of which the Congress gave me authority on the 8th of August last, as perfectly legitimate and in the interest

¹ This was from E. Conran-Smith; *vide* footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-5-1943.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-5-1943.

both of the Government and the public. As it is, the Government left me no time to start the movement. Therefore how could a movement, which was never started, embarrass "India's" war effort? If then, there was any embarrassment by reason of the popular resentment of the Government's action in resorting to the wholesale arrests of principal Congressmen, the responsibility was solely that of the Government. The mass movement, as the resolution sanctioning it said in so many words, was sanctioned in order to promote India-wide effort on behalf of the Allied cause, including the causes of Russia and China, whose danger was very great in August last and from which, in my opinion, they are by no means free even now. I hope the Government will not feel offended when I say that all the war effort that is being put forth in India is not India's but the alien Government's. I submit that, if the Government had complied with the request of the Congress as embodied in its August resolution, there would have been a mass effort without parallel for winning the battle for human freedom and ridding the world of the menace that Fascism, Nazism, Japanism and imperialism are. I may be wholly wrong; anyway this is my deliberate and honest opinion.

In order to make the communicate accord with facts, I suggest the following alterations in the first paragraph: After "Mr. Jinnah" add "in response to his public invitation to Mr. Gandhi to write to him, stating that he (Mr. Gandhi) would be willing to correspond with or meet him according as he wished".

I hope that the remaining portion of the communicate too will be suitably amended in the light of my submission.¹

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10433. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 73-4, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p p. 15-6

¹ Acknowledging this letter on June 4, Conran-Smith informed Gandhiji: "... the Government of India have considered it but see no reason to modify their communicate already published." *Vide* also the following item.

254. LETTER TO SIR RICHAD TOTTENHAM

May 28, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I handed my reply¹ to your letter² of the 24th instant, at about one o'clock yesterday, to the Superintendent. I hurried the writing and the despatch in the hope of my letter reaching you before the publication of the communique. I was, therefore, astonished and grieved to find the communique in the papers received in the afternoon, and Reuter's report³ of the reactions⁴ upon it in London. Evidently there was no meaning in an advance copy of the communique being sent to me. I regard the communique not only to be inconsistent with the facts but unfair to me. The only way partial redress can be given to me is the publication of the correspondence between us. I, therefore request that it may be published.⁵

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10435. Courtesy: India Office Library. *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 16. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, pp. 74

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 4-5-1943.

³ *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. III pp. 1021-3, records that according to Amery's letter to Lord Linlithgow, the reaction in London was better than what they had expected. Only *The Manchester Guardian* was critical; "others entirely supported the Government of India's action". Jinnah's comments, as reported by Reuter, on Gandhiji's proposal to invite him to visit him, was that "Gandhi's letter could only be construed as a move to embroil the Muslim League with the British Government as a means of helping his release.... if Gandhi was prepared to write a letter and abandon his policy culminating in revolution and was willing to settle on the basis of Pakistan, the Muslim League were prepared to bury the past. He still believed that the British Government would not stop such a letter...."

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ Acknowledging this letter on June 8, Conran-Smith explained: "... the advance copy of the communique ... was sent for your personal information, and the Government regret they see no reason to publish the correspondence."

255. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

May 29, 1943

I asked Bapuji how one could best help races who have an undeveloped idea of God, and suggested that one should not put before them any orthodox religion, but speak only in a very simple way of the Supreme Soul, and for the rest serve them and strive according to the ideals in which one believes. Bapu replied:

You should not even talk of the Supreme Soul. It is my profound conviction that Truth is self-acting. Truth, which is God, is ever present, ever working in all beings. Therefore one should¹ simply live one's own life amongst them and serve them according to their needs. Three R's have a value all their own. Therefore giving that knowledge to the illiterate is a special service obligatory on those who have that knowledge. For the rest, if we have Truth in us, it will go out to them without effort, for it is self-acting. God, i.e., Truth, comes to those who seek Him. If we know Him more than they (of which we can never be sure) the more will doubtless go out to them.

[PS.]

I had it copied for you.²

From a photostat: G.N. 9100

256. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

May 31, 1943

When I looked through what you had written down of our conversation³, I saw that I should express what I had said in a shorter and clearer manner. I have now put it in the form of an aphorism. As a matter of fact it was only yesterday that I fully realized the value of the three R's. In the past, I have often expressed indifference to them. But yesterday it came to me that the three R's have unique place and value, and in serving illiterate peoples it is a vital part of one's duty to give them this knowledge. The man who cannot read, write or add, must remain in many ways an ignoramus. Whereas with this knowledge at his command he can reach out to further and further development. Of course this means that when I impart the three R's, I

¹ What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

² *Vide* also the following item.

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

must try to do it in such a way as to whet the man's appetite for further knowledge. There can be no question for me of just counting heads and passing on. I do not impart the knowledge for all-round advance. If he advances materially all very well and good. Though my concern is with his spiritual development, it is through material service that I have to approach him. His body is all there, his soul is as yet unknown to him. Day by day, as he goes on accepting my material services, he will become more curious about my life. He will begin to notice something more than the physical side of my life: why do I sometimes sit in certain postures, why do I shut my eyes at times, what is it I am murmuring. When his curiosity leads him to ask me what it all means, I can explain it to him. How the information will affect him is not my concern. It is not for me to interfere with the working of the spirit. When I am face to face with a man, in proportion as I have God's spirit in me will it go out to him.¹ My purpose is not to give him my religion. My purpose is to let him see God through me if I have Him and express Him in reality, in my daily doings.

June 10, 1943

From a photostat: G.N. 9101

257. *LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM*

DETENTION CAMP,
June 1, 1943

DEAR SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM,

I have your note² of the 26th ultimo conveying the Government's decision about my letter³ to the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Samuel. I would just like to say that the letter is not political correspondence but it is a complaint to a Member of the House of Lords pointing out misrepresentations into which he has been betrayed, and which do me an injustice. The Government's decision amounts to a ban on the ordinary right belonging even to a convict of correcting damaging misrepresentations made about him. Moreover I

¹ What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

² *Vide* footnote of "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Fgovernment of India", 15-5-1943.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

suggest that the decision about my letter¹ to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah is wholly inapplicable to this letter to the Rt. Hon'ble Lord Samuel. Therefore I request reconsideration of the decision.²

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 82-3; also
Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 31

258. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD MAXWELL

DETENTION CAMP,

June 23, 1943

DEAR SIR REGINALD MAXWELL,

I thank you for your reply³ of 17th instant received on 21st instant to my letter⁴ of 21st May last.

I had not hoped that my reply would remove the fundamental difference between us, but I had hoped and would still like to hope that the difference would be no bar to an admission and correction of discovered errors. I had thought, as I still think, that my letter did point out some errors in your Assembly speech of 15th February last.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 24

¹ *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 4-5-1943.

² Acknowledging this letter on June 7, 1943, Conran-Smith informed Gandhiji that the Government "do not see their way to alter the decision".

³ *Vide* last footnote of "Letter to Sir Reginald Maxwell", 21-5-1943.

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to Sir Reginald Maxwell", 21-5-1943.

**259. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

DETENTION CAMP,
July 15, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI
SIR,

In reply to my request¹ dated 5th March last for a copy of Government of India publication entitled *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, I received a copy on 13th April. It contains several corrections marked in red ink. Some of them are striking.

2. I take it that the Government have based the charges made in the publication against the Congress and myself on the material printed therein and not on the evidence which, as stated in the Preface, is withheld from the public.

3. The Preface is brief and is signed by Sir R. Tottenham, Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department. It is dated 13th February last, i.e., three days after the commencement of my recent fast. The date is ominous. Why was the period of my fast chosen for publishing a document in which I am the target?

4. The Preface commences thus:

In response to demands which have reached Government from several sources, Government have now prepared a review which brings together a number of facts . . . bearing on the responsibility of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress High Command for the disturbances which followed the sanction of a mass movement by the A.I.C.C. on August 8, 1942.

There is an obvious mis-statement here. The disturbances followed not the “sanctioning of the mass movement by the A.I.C.C.” but the arrests made by the Government. As for the “demands”, so far as I am aware, they began soon after the wholesale

¹ The request was actually made by Pyarelal on behalf of Gandhiji; vide “Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham”, 5-3-1943

arrests of principal Congressmen all over India. As the Government are aware, in my letters to His Excellency the Viceroy, the last¹ being dated 7th February, 1943, I had asked for proof in support of my alleged guilt. The evidence now produced might have been given to me when I raised the question. Had my request been complied with, one advantage would certainly have accrued. I would have been heard in answer to the charges brought against me. That very process would have delayed the fast and, who knows, if Government had been patient with me, it might have even prevented it.

5. The Preface contains the following sentence:

Almost all the facts presented in this review are, or should be, already within the knowledge of the public.

Therefore, so far as the public are concerned, there was no such hurry as to require publication of the document during the fast. This train of reasoning has led me to the inference that it was published in expectation of my death which medical opinion must have considered almost a certainty. It was feared even during my previous long fasts. I hope my inference is wholly wrong, and the Government had a just and valid reason for choosing the time that they did for the publication of what is after all an indictment of the Congress and me. I hope to be pardoned for putting on paper an inference which, if true, must discredit the Government. I feel that I am being just to them by unburdening myself of a suspicion instead of harbouring it and allowing it to cloud my judgment about their dealings with me.

6. I now come to the indictment itself. It reads like a presentation of his case by a prosecutor. In the present case the prosecutor happens to be also the policeman and jailor. He first arrests and gags his victims, and then opens his case behind their backs.

7. I have read it again and again. I have gone through the numbers of *Harijan* which my companions happened to have with them, and I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in my writings and doings that could have warranted the inferences and the innuendoes of which the indictment is full. In spite of my desire to see myself in my writings, as the author has seen me, I have completely failed.

8. The indictment opens with a misrepresentation. I am said to have deplored “the introduction of foreign soldiers into India to aid

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 7-2-1943.

in India's defence". In the *Harijan* article¹, on which the charge is based, I have refused to believe that India was to be defended through the introduction of foreign soldiers. If it is India's defence that is aimed at, why should trained Indian soldiers be sent away from India and foreign soldiers brought in instead? Why should the Congress—an organization which was born and lives for the very sake of India's freedom—be suppressed? I am clearer today in my mind than I was when I penned that article on 19th April, that India is not being defended, and that if things continue to shape themselves as they are, India will sink at the end of the war deeper than she is today, so that she might forget the very word freedom. Let me quote the relevant passages from the *Harijan* article referred to by the author.

I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts, in the end, to American influence, if not American rule, added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is a preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary.

9. The second paragraph of the indictment opens with this pregnant sentence:

It will be suggested that during the period of Mr. Gandhi's first advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7, the Congress High Comm-and, and, in the later stages, the Congress organization as a whole, were deliberately setting the stage for a mass movement designed to free India finally from British rule.

Let me italicize the phrase, *It will be suggested*. Why should anything be left to suggestion about a movement which is open and above board? Much ado has been made about the simplest things which nobody has cared to deny and of which Congressmen are even proud. The Congress organization as a whole "deliberately set the stage designed to free India finally from British rule" as early as the year 1920, and not since my "first advocacy of British withdrawal from India" as suggested in the indictment. Ever since that year the effort for a mass movement has never relaxed. This can be proved

¹ Vide "Foreign Soliders in India", 19-4-1942.

from numerous speeches of Congress leaders and from Congress resolutions. Young and impatient Congressmen and even elder men have not hesitated, at times, to press me to hasten the mass movement. But I who knew better always restrained their ardour, and I must gratefully admit that they gladly submitted to the restraint. The contraction of this long period to the interval between my advocacy of British withdrawal from India and the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay on August 7, is wholly wrong and misleading. I know of no special staging since 26th April, 1942.

10. The same paragraph then says that “an essential preliminary” to an examination of the type of movement “is a clear understanding of the real motives underlying the move”. Why should motives be searched when everything is there in black and white? I can say without any hesitation that my motives are always plain. Why I asked for the immediate withdrawal of the British power from India has been discussed by me almost threadbare in public.

11. At page 2 of the indictment¹, a phrase has been taken from my article² entitled “One Thing Needful” dated 10th May, 1942, and I am represented as saying that I would devote the whole of my “energy” to this “supreme act”. By simply detaching the phrase from its context, mystery has been made to surround it. The phrase “supreme act” occurs in an argument addressed to an English friend and, if it is read in its setting, it ceases to be mysterious or objectionable, unless the very idea of withdrawal is held objectionable. Here are the relevant parts from the argument:

I am convinced, therefore, that the time has come during the war, not after it, for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other. That way, and that way alone, lies the safety of both and, shall I say, the world. I see with the naked eye that the estrangement is growing. Every act of the British Government is being interpreted, and I think rightly, as being in its own interest and for its own safety. There is no such thing as joint common interest.... racial superiority is treated not as a vice but a virtue. This is true not only in India; but it is equally true in Africa, it is true in Burma

¹ Which reads: “Although his earlier proposals for British withdrawal all emphasized the importance of this withdrawal being a voluntary act willingly performed, Mr. Gandhi had already by May 10 decided that he must devote the whole of his energy to this ‘supreme act’; and it is clear that very shortly afterwards, he began to think in terms of a struggle to achieve his object” (*The Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. II, p. 177).

² Vide “One Thing Needful”, 4-5-1942.

and Ceylon. These countries could not be held otherwise than by assertion of race superiority.

This is a drastic disease requiring a drastic remedy. I have pointed out the remedy complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India at least, in reality and properly from all non-European possessions. It will be the bravest and the cleanest act of the British people. It will at once put the Allied cause on a completely moral basis and may even lead to a most honourable peace between the warring nations. And the clean end of imperialism is likely to be the end of Fascism and Nazism. The suggested action will certainly blunt the edge of Fascism and Nazism which are an offshoot of imperialism.

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

I feel, therefore, that I must devote the whole of my energy to the realization of the supreme act. The writer of the letter admits the wrong done to India by the British. I suggest to the writer that the first condition of British success is the present undoing of the wrong. It should precede, not follow, victory. The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait. Assume, however, that it does not; free India will be better able to cope with the invasion. Unadulterated non-co-operation will then have a full sway (*Harijan*, 10-5-1942, p. 148).

In this long extract, the phrase "supreme act" takes its legitimate place. It does not refer simply to the British withdrawal. But it sums up all that must precede and succeed it. It is an act worthy of the energy not of one person but of hundreds. This is how I began my answer to the English friend's letter:

I can but repeat what I felt and said in my letter to Lord Linlithgow recording my impressions of the first interview¹ with him after the declaration of war. I have nothing to withdraw, nothing to repent of. I remain the same friend today of the British that I was then. I have not a trace of hatred in me towards them. But I have never been blind to their limitations as I have not

¹ On September 4, 1939; for Gandhiji's statement, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

been to their great virtues (*Harijan*, 10-5-1942, p. 148).

To read and fully understand my writings, it is necessary to understand always this background. The whole of the movement has been conceived for the mutual benefit of India and England. Unfortunately, the author, ignoring this background, has approached my writings with coloured spectacles, and torn sentences and phrases from their context, and dressed them up to suit his preconception. Thus he has put out of joint “their withdrawal removes the bait”, and omitted the sentence that immediately follows and which I have restored in the foregoing extract. As is clear from the above article, unadulterated non-co-operation here refers exclusively to the Japanese.

12. The last paragraph at page 2 begins thus:

In its earlier stages Mr. Gandhi’s “Quit India” move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the *British*¹, and of all Allied and British troops.

I have searched, and so have the friends with me, in vain, for some expression in my writings which would warrant the opinion that “Quit India” move was *meant* as a proposal for the physical withdrawal of the British from India. It is true that colour was lent to such an interpretation by a superficial reading of a sentence² in the article of *Harijan* of April 26, already quoted. As soon as my attention was drawn to it by an English friend, I wrote³ in *Harijan* of 24th May as follows:

There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews’s⁴ friendship was enough to tie me to the British people.

With this clear enunciation of my views before him at the time of penning the indictment, how could he say that I had *meant*; physical withdrawal of the British as distinguished from the British

¹ Italicized by Gandhiji

² Presumably, the one which follows immediately after the last sentence of the passage quoted in paragraph 8 above; *vide* “Foreign Soliders in India”, 19-4-1942.

³ *Vide* “Notes”, 24-5-1942.

⁴ C. F. Andrews

power? And I am not aware that my writing was “widely interpreted as such”. He has quoted nothing in support of this statement.

13. The author proceeds in the same paragraph:

As late as June 14, he makes, for the purpose of his scheme, the assumption that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base.

“For the purpose of his scheme” is a gratuitous interpolation here. The extract is taken from an interview¹ with several journalists. I was answering a series of questions. At one stage I had put a counter-question thus:

Supposing England retires from India for strategic purpose, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?

They replied:

That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that.

I rejoined:

Well, therein comes my non-violence. For, we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon.

It is clear from this quotation that I was not expounding any scheme. I was merely arguing about possibilities based on assumptions agreed between the interviewers and myself.

14 The author proceeds:

Added strength is given to the belief that this is a correct interpretation of Mr. Gandhi's original intentions by the prominence, to which attention has already been drawn, of the theme that the British withdrawal would remove any Japanese motive for invading India; for, with the British and Allied armies still in India, how is the bait removed?

I have just now shown that the physical withdrawal of the British was never contemplated by me, of the Allied and the British troops was certainly contemplated in the first instance. Therefore it is not a

¹ *Vide* “Interview to American Journalists”, 6-6-1942

question of “interpretation”, because it is one of fact. But the sentence has been impressed in order to make what is straight look crooked.

15. Then proceeds the author:

At the same time he made it clear that on the British departure the Indian army would be disbanded.

I made clear no such thing. What I did was to discuss with interviewers the possibilities in the event of British withdrawal. Indian army, being a creation of the British Government, I assumed, would be automatically disbanded when that power withdrew, unless it was taken over by a treaty by the replacing Government. If the withdrawal took place by agreement and with goodwill on both sides, these matters should present no difficulty. I give in the Appendix, the relevant passages from the interview on the subject. *Vide Appendix I (S)*.

16. From the same paragraph I take the following:

Owing to the gathering force of this opposition and also, as will be shown later, with a possible view to reconciling disagreement among members of the Working Committee, Mr. Gandhi discovered the ‘gap’ in his original proposals. In *Harijan* of June 14, he paved the way—by the slightly cryptic assertion that, if he had his way, the Indian national government when formed would tolerate the presence of the United Nations on Indian soil under certain well-defined conditions but would permit no further assistance—for the more definite statement made to an American journalist in the following week’s *Harijan*, when in reply to a question whether he envisaged free India’s allowing Allied troops to operate from India, he said: ‘I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation.’ He continued that he did not contemplate the complete shifting of Allied troops from India and that, provided India became entirely free, he could not insist on their withdrawal.

This is for me the key thought opening the author’s mind. It is built on finding motives other than those that are apparent from my language. Had I been guided by the force of the opposition whether from the foreign or the Indian Press or from Congressmen, I should not have hesitated to say so. It is well known that I am as capable of resisting opposition that makes no appeal to my head or my heart, as I am of readily yielding when it does. But the literal fact is that when I gave the country the withdrawal formula, I was possessed by one idea and one only, that if India was to be saved and also the Allied cause,

and if India was to play not merely an effective but, maybe, a decisive part in the war, India must be absolutely free now. The “gap” was this: although the British Government might be willing to declare India’s independence, they might still wish, for their own and for China’s defence, to retain their troops in India. What would be my position in that case? It is now well known that the difficulty was presented¹ to me by Mr. Louis Fischer. He had come to Sevagram and stayed with me for nearly a week. As a result of the discussions between us, he drew up certain questions for me to answer. My reply to his second question the author describes as a “slightly cryptic assertion” paving the way for a “more definite statement in the following week’s *Harijan*”. I give below the whole of the article² embodying the questions and answers. It was written on 7th June, 1942, and appeared in *Harijan* dated 14th June, p. 188. . . .

What is described as the “more definite statement” is nothing but an impromptu reply given to an American journalist, Mr. Grover, representative of the Associated Press of America. If that interview³ had not chanced to come about, there might have been no statement “more definite” than what appeared in my reply to Mr. Louis Fischer. Hence the writer’s suggestion that I “paved the way” for “the more definite statement in the following week’s *Harijan*” is altogether unwarranted, if I may not call it even mischievous. I do not regard my answers to Mr. Louis Fischer as a “slightly cryptic statement”. They are deliberate answers given to deliberate questions framed after a full discussion lasting a week. My answers show very clearly that I had no scheme beyond the “Quit India” formula, that all else was guess, and that immediately the Allied nations’ difficulty was made clear to me, I capitulated. I saw the “gap” and filled it in the best manner I knew. The “definite statement” fortunately for me, in my opinion, leaves little room, if any, for conjectures and insinuations in which the writer has indulged. Let it speak for itself. Here are the relevant portions⁴:

¹ *Vide* Appendix “Interview to Louis Fischer”, 4-6-1942.

² Not reproduced here; *vide* “Important Questions”, 6-6-1942.

³ *Vide* “Interview to Preston Grover”, 10-6-1942.

⁴ These are not reproduced here. Only the last six paragraphs were omitted by Gandhiji.

17. The rest of the chapter¹ is taken up with a colourful description of the draft resolution I sent to Allahabad and a quotation containing remarks attributed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru² and

¹Chapter I of the six chapters. The passage under reference reads: “Before any attempt is made to assess the motives actuating Mr. Gandhi in his ‘Quit-India’ move, reference must be made to the important evidence as to the working of his mind and the reactions of the members of the Working Committee furnished by the record (Appendix I) of the latter’s Allahabad meeting, which was recovered in a subsequent police search of the All-India Congress Committee’s office. Mr. Gandhi was not present at this meeting, but he sent for the consideration of the Working Committee a draft resolution which was the direct precursor of the resolution of July 14. ‘Japan’s quarrel,’ he states in the draft, ‘is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. . . . If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with [Japan] whereas if the British withdrew, India would be able to defend herself against Japan.’ Britain, Congress was of opinion, was incapable of defending India from the Japanese or any other aggressor. The draft goes on to assure the Japanese Government that India bears no enmity against Japan and desires only freedom from alien domination, which she will attain and retain through her non-violent strength. The hope is expressed that Japan will not have any designs on India; but should she attack India, all Indians who look to the Congress for guidance would be expected to offer non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese” (*The Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 177-8). For Gandhiji’s draft resolution, *vide* “Draft Resolution for A.I.C.C.”, before 24-4-1942.

² The “remarks attributed to” him read: “Withdrawal of troops and the whole apparatus of civil administration will create a vacuum which cannot be filled up immediately. If we said to Japan that her fight was with British imperialism and not with us, she would say: ‘We are glad the British army is withdrawn; we recognize your independence. But we want certain facilities now. We shall defend you against aggression. We want aerodromes, freedom to pass our troops through your country. This is necessary in self-defence.’ They might seize strategic points and proceed to Iraq, etc. The masses won’t be touched if only the strategic points are captured. If Bapu’s (Mr. Gandhi) approach is accepted, we become passive partners of the Axis powers. . . . The whole background of the draft is one which will inevitably make the world think that we are lining up passively with the Axis powers. The British are asked to withdraw. After the withdrawal we are to negotiate with Japan and possibly come to some terms with her. These terms may include a large measure of civil control by us, a certain measure of military control by them, passage of armies through India, etc.... Whether you will like it or not, the exigencies of the war situation will compel them to make India a battle-ground. In sheer self-defence they cannot afford to keep out. They will walk through the country. You can’t stop it by non-violent non-co-operation . . . the whole thought and background of the draft is one of favouring Japan. It may not be conscious. Three factors influence our decisions in the present emergency: (i) Indian freedom (ii) sympathy for certain larger causes (iii) probable outcome of the war—who is going to win. It is Gandhiji’s feeling that Japan and Germany will win. This feeling unconsciously governs his decision” (*The Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. II, p. 178).

Shri Rajagopalachari¹ on that resolution. Immediately after the publication of the extracts from the notes seized by the Government, Panditji issued a statement which I append hereto. *Vide* Appendix V(C). I cannot understand why the author has disregarded that important statement, unless for the reason that he disbelieved Panditji's explanation. As for Shri Rajagopalachari's statement, the author stands on less insecure ground. Rajaji certainly holds the views attributed to him. In the interview with Mr. Grover, the American correspondent, this is what I said² about Rajaji's difference with me:

18. The first chapter concludes with the following commentary on the draft which had been sent by me to the Working Committee at Allahabad:

A draft, to repeat, of which the whole thought and background is one of favouring Japan, a resolution which amounts to running into the arms of Japan.

And this is written in spite of Pandit Jawaharlal's repudiation of the statement attributed to him, and in spite of my explanation about differences with Rajaji—all of which was before the writer.

19. In support of my contention that the author had no warrant for the opinions expressed in the sentences quoted, I would like to draw attention to the following extracts from my Press statement³ reported in *The Bombay chronicle* of 5th August last:

As the language of the draft (the one that was sent to Allahabad) shows, it had many 'i's to be dotted and 't's to be crossed. It was sent through Mirabehn to whom I had explained the implications of the draft, and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I explained the draft, that there was an omission—deliberate—from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.

For, as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

¹ The "remarks attributed to" him read: "I do not agree that if Britain goes away, India will have some scope for organizing itself even if Japan should make some headway. Japan will fill the vacuum created by the British withdrawal. Our reaction to the evils of Britain should not make us lose our sense of perspective. It is no use getting upset on small matters. Do not run into the arms of Japan, which is what the resolution comes to" (ibid.).

² *Vide* "Interview to Preston Grover", 10-6-1942.

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-8-1942

But I may add that I have never even in a most unguarded moment expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that, I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan*, and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied powers, it will be because even at the critical moment—most critical in her history—she had most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she had carried with her for at least a century and a half.

How in the face of this categorical statement the author could say that the actuating motive behind the “Quit India” move was that I was “convinced that Axis would win the war” passes understanding.

20. In support of the same charge the author says:

That this attitude persisted long after the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee is shown by the following remark made by Mr. Gandhi in *Harijan* of July 19, in reply to a question whether it would not be wiser to postpone his movement until Britain had settled with the Germans and the Japanese: “No, because I know you will not settle with Germans without us.”

I quote below from the article¹ in which this opinion is expressed. It is from *Harijan* of July 19, pages 234 and 235, and is entitled “A Two Minutes’ Interview”, the interviewer being a correspondent of *The Daily Express*, London.

But the correspondent of *The Daily Express* (London) who was among the first to arrive, and who was not staying until the end said, he would be content with just a couple of minutes’ interview, and Gandhiji acceded to his request. He had made up his mind that if the demand for withdrawal which seemed to gather strength every day was rejected, there would be some kind of a movement. So he asked:²

It is curious that sentences taken out of a piece breathing concern for the success of the Allied arms are here presented as an indication of my “pro-Axis” mentality!

21. The following passage is then reproduced from my letter³ to His Excellency the Viceroy of 14th August last as “significant”:

I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring-rod. His personal contacts

¹ By Mahadev Desai

² For the text of the interview which followed, vide “Interview to *The Daily Press*”, before 11-7-1942.

³ Vide “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 14-8-1942.

make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can.

“The misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia” has been italicized by the author who thus comments on the passage:

They foresaw a British rear-guard action across India and the devastation that this must entail!

According to his wont, the author has failed to quote the whole of the relevant part of the letter. Nor has he guided the reader by quoting the letter in the appendix. I quote below the relevant part:

One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring-rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can and, may I say, than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism.

He dreads much more than I do the success of Nazism and Fascism. I argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally.

The full letter is given in the appendix (*vide* Appendix IX¹).

I suggest that the full quotation gives a meaning wholly different from that given by the author. The following passages from *Harijan* will further prove the baselessness of the charge of “pro-Axis” or “defeatist” tendency on my part:

Q. Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the Allies are going to be defeated in this war?...

A. I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary, I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated... (*Harijan*, 7-6-1942, p. 177)².

America is too big financially, intellectually and in scientific skill to be subdued by any nation or even combination.... (*Harijan*, 7-6-1942, p. 181)³.

22. A further complete answer to the same charge, if one were

¹ Not reproduced here; *vide* “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 14-8-1942.

² *Vide* “Question Box”, 30-5-1942.

³ *Vide* “Cable to *The Sunday Despatch*”, on or before 29-5-1942.

still needed, is furnished by my letter¹ to Shrimati Mirabehn, dictated on the spur of the moment and never meant for publication. The letter was written to her in answer to her questions which carried to me her belief that the Japanese attack was imminent and that they were likely to have a walkover. My answer leaves no doubt whatever as to my attitude. The letter was written after the Allahabad meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. It was dictated by me to the late Shri Mahadev Desai. The original is in Shrimati Mirabehn's possession. I know that she wrote a letter to Lord Linlithgow from this camp on December 24 last, sending copies of this correspondence and requesting its publication. She never received even an acknowledgement of her communication. I hope it was not pigeonholed without so much as being read. I give it in the appendix for ready reference. *Vide* Appendix II (H).

23. In view of the colourful description of my draft resolution sent to Allahabad, I reproduce apposite passages from the resolution to show that the author has gone to everything connected with the Congress with the deliberate intention, as it seems to me, of seeing nothing but evil. Thus "Britain is incapable of defending India" is followed by these sentences:

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

24. Then there is this sentence taken from the draft: "If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan." This has to be read in conjunction with the following paragraphs from the draft:

This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom, the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and will retain it likewise. Therefore

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 31-5-1942.

the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India, and Britain makes no response to its appeal, the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent non-co-operation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete non-co-operation.

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

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.
2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.
3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields, we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the effort to resist him.
4. If he is attacked by disease or is dying of thirst and seeks our aid, we may not refuse it.
5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting, our non-co-operation will be fruitless and unnecessary.

At present our non-co-operation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete non-co-operation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our non-co-operation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves—a position we can never accept.

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

I contend that from this setting it is impossible to infer pro-Japanese attitude or anti-British attitude on my part or that of the

Working Committee. On the contrary, there is determined opposition to any aggression and meticulous concern for the Allied arms. The demand for immediate freedom itself is born of that concern. If the search be for implacable opposition on my part to British imperialism, that search is superfluous; for, it is patent in all my writings.

25. I would like to close this subject by quoting some passages from my speeches on the 7th and 8th August last:

EXTRACT FROM THE HINDUSTANI SPEECH ON 7TH AUGUST

Then there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. They say, they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British imperialism and the British people. To them the two are one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. This is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour so long as we do not feel that it is our war, so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must, therefore, purge ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are today in distress. My very friendship, therefore, demands that I should try to save them from their mistakes. As I view the situation they are on the brink of an abyss. It, therefore, becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh, nevertheless that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody. The idea of taking advantage of the opponent's difficulty and utilizing it for delivering a blow is entirely repugnant to me.

There is one thing which I would like you always to keep before your mind. Never believe that the British are going to lose the war. I know that they are not a nation of cowards. They will fight to the last rather than accept defeat. But suppose, for strategic reasons, they are forced to leave India as they

had to leave Malaya, Singapore, and Burma, what shall be our position in that event? The Japanese will invade India and we shall be unprepared. Occupation of India by the Japanese will mean, too, the end of China and, perhaps, Russia. I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's and China's defeat. Pandit Nehru was only today describing to me the wretched condition of Russia. He was agitated. The picture he drew still haunts me. I have asked myself the question: "What can I do to help Russia and China?" And the reply has come from within: "You are being weighed in the balance. You have in the alchemy of ahimsa a universal panacea. Why don't you give it a trial? Have you lost faith?" Out of this agony has emerged the proposal for British withdrawal. It may irritate the Britishers today and they may misunderstand me; they may even look upon me as their enemy. But some day they will say that I was their true friend.

FROM THE HINDUSTANI SPEECH ON 8TH AUGUST

After showing concern for China, I said:

I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. It cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifice for attaining freedom will need to be much greater than would otherwise have been the case. The Congress has to win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. The freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for Congressmen alone but for the whole of the Indian people.

FROM THE CONCLUDING SPEECH IN ENGLISH

It will be the greatest mistake on their (United Nations') part to turn a deaf ear to India's non-violent pleading and refuse her fundamental right of freedom. It will deal a mortal blow to Russia and China if they oppose the demand of non-violent India which is today, on bended knee, pleading for the discharge of a debt long overdue. ... I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking in strong language. My non-embarrassment plea, however, was always qualified by the proviso, "consistently with the honour and safety of the nation". If a man holds me by the collar and I am drowning, may I not struggle to free myself from the stranglehold? Therefore there is no inconsistency between our earlier declarations and our present demand.... I have always recognized a fundamental difference between Fascism and the democracies, despite their many limitations, and even between Fascism and British imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get today is from an India which they hold in bondage. Think what a difference it would make, if India were to participate in the war as a free ally.

That freedom, if it is to come, must come today. For, she will utilize that freedom for the success of the Allies, including Russia and China. The Burma Road will once more be opened and the way cleared for rendering really effective help to Russia.

Englishmen did not die to the last man in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. They effected instead what has been described as a “masterly evacuation”. But I cannot afford to do that. Where shall I go, where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this mass of humanity to be set aflame in the cause of world deliverance unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today there is no life left in them. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre has to be restored to their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. Congress must, therefore, pledge itself to do or die.

These quotations show clearly why I advised the Congress to make the demand for the withdrawal of British power. The quotations also show that non-violence, i.e., self-suffering and self-sacrifice without retaliation was the key-stone of the movement.

26. The author has had difficulty in finding an adequate explanation for my agreement to the stationing of Allied troops in India in spite of the withdrawal of British power. If he had an open mind, there should have been no difficulty. My explanation was there. There was no occasion to doubt its sincerity unless there was positive evidence to the contrary. I have never claimed infallibility or a larger share of intellect for myself than the ordinary.

27. The author says that no “satisfactory solution” of the difficulty raised by Rajaji, namely, that the stationing of the Allied forces without civil power being with the British Government, would be “reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form” was “ever made public by Mr. Gandhi”. The author, therefore, suggests that “the solution was one which he (I) preferred should remain a secret”; and he proceeds to say:

Now while the details of Mr. Gandhi’s personal solution of this problem must remain a matter for speculation, an explanation which fulfils the logical requirements of the above situation immediately comes to mind; it is that, as has been shown above to be probable, Mr. Gandhi’s admission of this amendment to his scheme was intended primarily as a bid for American support and secondarily as a sop to his opponents on the Working Committee, but that he envisaged, or planned to create, circumstances in which this permission would be meaningless, that is to say, circumstances in which the troops would either be forced to withdraw, or would, if they remained, be rendered ineffective.

It is difficult to characterize this suggestion. I take it that the secrecy suggested was to be secret even from the members of the Working Committee. If not, they would also become conspirators with me in the fraud to be perpetrated on the Allied powers. Amazing consequences would flow from such a fraud. Assume that the British Government has shed all power in India, that by an agreement between the free India government and the Allied powers, their troops are stationed in India. This assumption carries with it the further assumption that the agreement has been arrived at without any pressure, violent or non-violent, and simply from the British recognition of the necessity of recognizing independence of India. Assume further that the secret has all this time remained buried in my bosom, and that I suddenly divulge it to the free India government and, therefore, to the world and they carry out my plan to frustrate the terms of the agreement, what would be the result? The Allied powers, having all the overwhelming military strength at their disposal, would forfeit my head to themselves—which would be the least—and would further let their righteous rage descend upon the free India government and put an end to independence, which was won, not by military strength, but simply by force of reason and, therefore, make it impossible, so far as they can, for India to regain such lost independence. I must not carry this train of thought much further. The author's suggestion, if it were true, would also conclusively prove that all of us conspirators were thinking, not of the deliverance of India from bondage, or of the good of the masses, but only of our base little selves.

28. The difficulty pointed out by Rajaji, and on which the writer has laid stress in order to infer "secret motive" on my part, was pointed out even more forcibly by another correspondent, and I dealt with it in the issue of *Harijan* dated 19th July, 1942, pages 232 and 233. As the whole of the article¹ consists of questions and answers which have a bearing on the author's insinuations, I reproduce them without apology....

Why has the author ignored the explanation, for instance, in answers 2 and 4 which was before him? Boiled down, my explanation means that I would trust the Allies to carry out faithfully the conditions of the contract to be fulfilled by them, just as I would expect them to trust the government of free India to carry out their

¹ Not reproduced here; vide "Pertinent Questions", 12-7-1942.

part of the contract. British withdrawal, whenever it comes, will carry with it so much honour that everything to be done thereafter by either party will be done with the greatest goodwill and utmost sincerity. I hold that this solution of the difficulty presented is perfectly comprehensible and satisfactory.

29. As to secrecy, this is what I said on the 8th August in my Hindustani speech before the A.I.C.C. meeting:

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom, you will have a C.I.D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle we have to work openly and to receive bullets in our chests, without running away. In a struggle of this character, all secrecy is sin and must be punctiliously avoided. See also Appendix I (C).

It is somewhat hard for a man who has avoided secrecy as a sin to be accused of it, especially when there is no evidence whatsoever for the charge.

30. The author proceeds:

... and it is no coincidence that at the same time as Mr. Gandhi was developing his "Quit India" theme in *Harijan*, he was also inveighing against any form of "scorched earth" policy (Mr. Gandhi's solicitude for the property, largely industrial property, be it noted, which it might have been necessary to deny to the enemy, contrasts strangely with his readiness to sacrifice countless numbers of Indians in non-violent resistance to the Japanese. The property must be saved; it is perhaps legitimate to ask—for whom?).

"No coincidence" is a gratuitous suggestion for which there is no proof. The suggestion behind the parenthetical gloss is evidently that I was more solicitous about the property of moneyed men than of the lives and property of the masses. This appears to me to be a wilful distortion of truth. I give the following quotations which show the contrary:

As a war-resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is, out of humanitarian motive.

But in India's case there is, too, a practical consideration. Unlike Russia's, India's masses have no national instinct developed in the sense that

Russia's have. India is not fighting. Her conquerors are (*Harijan*, 22-3-1942, p. 88).

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

My questioner has missed the conditional expression "If I must". I have imagined a state of things in which I am not prepared just now to die and, therefore, I want to retreat in an orderly manner in the hope of resisting under other and better auspices. The thing to consider here is not resistance but non-destruction of food crops and the like. Resistance, violent or non-violent, has to be well thought out. Thoughtless resistance will be regarded as bravado in military parlance, and violence or folly in the language of non-violence. Retreat itself is often a plan of resistance and may be a precursor of great bravery and sacrifice. Every retreat is not cowardice which implies fear to die. Of course, a brave man would more often die in violently or non-violently resisting the aggressor in the latter's attempt to oust him from his property. But he will be no less brave if wisdom dictates present retreat (*Harijan*, 12-4-1942, p. 109).

So far there is solicitude only for the poor man's property. There is no mention of industrial property. I have also given my reasons, which I still hold to be perfectly sound, for non-destruction of such property. I have found only one note in the issues of *Harijan* in my possession which refers to industrial property. It is as follows:

Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oilseed, I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; . . . Textile factories I would not destroy, and I would resist all such destruction (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942, p. 167).

The reason is obvious. Here too the solicitude is not for the owners, but for the masses who use food products and cloth produced in factories. It should also be remembered that I have all along written and even acted against both kinds of factories, in normal times, in the interests of village industries, my creed being to prefer the products of

hand-labour in which millions can be engaged, to those of factories in which only a few thousands or at best a few lakhs can be employed.

31. Mark, too, the last sentence in the penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution sent to Allahabad:

But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses.

It is incomprehensible how the author could, in the face of the foregoing, distort truth as he has done.

32. In the same paragraph from which I have quoted the parenthetical remark of the author, I find the following:

We have, however, his own admission that he would not guarantee that non-violent action would keep the Japanese at bay; he refers indeed to any such hope as an “unwarranted supposition”.

And this is cited to support the conclusion that in order to prevent India from becoming a battle-field between the Allied nations and Japan I was prepared “to concede to their (Japanese) demands”. Let me quote where the phrase is taken from. In an article entitled “A Fallacy” in *Harijan* dated 5th July, 1942, I have dealt with the following question¹ addressed to me by a correspondent:

My reply² to this runs as follows:

The supposition referred to here is my correspondent's, namely, that the non-violent force created by my action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw, will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also and, therefore, I should not have resiled from my original proposition that the British power should withdraw their troops from India. I have shown the absurdity of such a supposition made for the sake of preventing the retention of British troops. My belief in the power of non-violence is unchangeable, but I cannot put it before the British in order to prevent their use of India as a base, if they consider it necessary, for dealing with the Japanese menace.

33. The author has further sought to strengthen his inference by quoting the following from my appeal to the Japanese:

And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours (the Japanese) and Nazism.

The author has conveniently omitted the sentences which follow

¹ Not reproduced here; Vide “Question Box”, 28-6-1942.

² *ibid*

and which instead of strengthening his inference would negative it altogether. These are the sentences:

Our resistance to it (British imperialism) does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against the British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly—but friendly—quarrel with the foreign rulers.

But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago. Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact, if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned, if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it, their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to nought. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing *now* the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced co-operation into free India's voluntary co-operation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies, some other powers will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win, you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds, however skillfully achieved.

Even if you win, it will not prove that you were in the right, it will

only prove that your power of destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies, too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest, and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that, if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Anyway I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you. (*Harijan*, 26-7-1942, p. 240, *et seq.*)

I have given this long quotation because I see that it is a complete answer to the author's insinuations, as it is also an open gate to the whole of my mind regarding the movement contemplated in the resolution of 8th August last. But the author has many arrows in his quiver. For, in defence of his inference that I was prepared to "concede to their (Japanese) demands", he proceeds:

Only in the grip of some dominant emotion would he (I) have contemplated such a capitulation. This emotion was, there seems little doubt, his desire to preserve India from the horrors of war.

In other words, I would exchange Japanese rule for British. My non-violence is made of sterner stuff. Only a jaundiced eye can read such an emotion in the face of the clearest possible writings of *Harijan* that I would face all the horrors of war in order to end the horror of horrors which British domination is. I am impatient of it because I am impatient of all domination. I am in "the grip" of only one "dominant emotion" and no other, that is, INDIA'S FREEDOM. The

author has admitted this in the same breath that he has charged me with an unworthy emotion. He has thus condemned himself out of his own mouth.

34. At page 14 of the indictment the author says:

In conclusion, there are the famous words uttered by Mr. Gandhi at a Press conference¹ at Wardha, after the Working Committee had passed the resolution of July 14, which show clearly how even at that early stage he was fully determined on a final struggle:

“There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion*.”

There also lies the answer to those who have since accused Government of precipitating the crisis by the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders, and have suggested that the period of grace referred to by Mr. Gandhi in his Bombay speech should have been utilized for negotiation: “There is no room left for withdrawal or negotiation,” Mr. Gandhi had said a month earlier. Moreover the Wardha resolution merely threatened a mass movement, if the demands of Congress were not accepted. The Bombay resolution went further.

It no longer *threatened* a movement with the delay that that might entail. It *sanctioned* the movement and if any further delay was intended, are there not at least good grounds for believing in the light of all that had been said, that it was to be used not for the purpose of negotiation but for putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution?

I shall presently show that the “famous words” attributed to me are partly a distortion and partly an interpolation not to be found in the authentic report of the Wardha interview as published in *Harijan* of 19th July, 1942. Let me quote in full the portion of the Wardha interview in which that part of the quotation which I claim is distorted appears in its correct form:

“Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?”

“They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For, it is not a question of placating one party or other. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British power without reference to the wishes of any party, that is our demand. The demand is, therefore, based on its justice. Of course, it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognizing the independence of India, without

¹ Vide “Interview to the Press”, 14-7-1942.

reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this, viz., that THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL. (Capitals mine.) Either they recognize independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For, by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war" (*Harijan*, 19-7-1942, p. 233).

The corresponding quotation in the indictment I reproduce below in the capital letters:

THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT IN THE PROPOSAL FOR WITHDRAWAL OR NEGOTIATION.

I suggest that in the context from which this is torn and distorted, it is entirely out of place. I was answering the question: "Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?" As an answer to the question, the sentence, as it appears in *Harijan*, "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal", is perfectly intelligible and harmonizes with the sentences preceding and succeeding.

35. The distorted sentence in the indictment has two others tacked on to it. They are:

There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion*.

The italicizing is the author's. The two sentences are not to be found anywhere in the report of the interview as it appears in *Harijan*. "There is no question of one more chance" can have no place in the paragraph about negotiations with my approach to them as revealed in my answer. As to "open rebellion", I have even at the Second Indian Round Table Conference used that expression coupled with the adjective non-violent. But it has no place anywhere in the interview.

36. I have taxed myself to know how the two sentences could have crept into the author's quotation. Fortunately, on 26th June, while this reply was being typed, there came *The Hindustan Times* file for which Shri Pyarelal had asked. In its issue of 15th July, 1942, there appears the following message:

WARDHAGANJ, *July 14*

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation; either they recognize India's independence or they don't," said Mahatma Gandhi answering questions at a Press interview at Sevagram on the Congress

resolution. He emphasized that what he wanted was not the recognition of Indian independence on paper, but in action.

Asked if his movement would not hamper war efforts of the United Nations, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The movement is intended not only to help China but also to make common cause with the Allies."

On his attention being drawn to Mr. Amery's latest statement in the House of Commons, Mahatma Gandhi said: "I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms, but that cannot possibly delay the pace of the people or the group that is determined to go its way."

Mahatma Gandhi added: "There is no question of one more chance. After all, it is an open rebellion."

Asked what form his movement would take, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The conception is that of a mass movement on the widest possible scale. It will include what is possible to include in a mass movement or what people are capable of doing. This will be a mass movement of a purely non-violent character."

Asked if he would court imprisonment this time, Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is too soft a thing. There is no such thing as courting imprisonment this time. My intention is to make it as short and swift as possible."—A.P.I.

37. This message is an eye-opener for me. I have often suffered from misreporting or coloured epitomes of my writings and speeches even to the point of being lynched¹. This one, though not quite as bad, is bad enough. The above A.P. summary gives, if it does, the clue to the author's source for the misquotation and the additional sentences. If he used that source, the question arises why he went out of his way to use that doubtful and unauthorized source, when he had before him the authentic text of the full interview in *Harijan* of 19th July last. He has made a most liberal, though disjointed and biased use of the columns of *Harijan* for building up his case against me. At page 13 of the indictment he thus begins the charge culminating in the misquotation at page 14.

From this point onwards Mr. Gandhi's conception of the struggle developed rapidly. His writings on the subject are too lengthy to quote in full, but the following excerpts from *Harijan* illustrate the direction in which his mind was moving.

On the same page he has quoted passages from page 233 of *Harijan* from the report of the interview in question. I am, therefore,

¹ Vide "An Autobiography—Part II", Chapter XXV and "—Part II", Chapter III and IV.

entitled to conclude that the quotation under examination was taken from *Harijan*. It is manifest now that it was not. Why not? If he took the three sentences from the aforementioned A.P. report, why has he quoted them without asterisks between the sentences that appear apart in the A.P. report? I may not pursue the inquiry any further. It has pained me deeply. How the two sentences not found in the authentic text of the interview found place in the A.P. summary, I do not know. It is for the Government to inquire, if they will.

38. The author's quotation having been found wanting, the whole of his conclusions and inferences based upon it must fall to the ground. In my opinion, therefore, the Government does stand accused not only of "having precipitated" but of having invited a crisis by their premeditated coup. The elaborate preparations they made for all-India arrests were not made over-night. It is wrong to draw a distinction between the Wardha resolution and the Bombay one in the sense that the first only *threatened* and the second *sanctioned* the mass civil disobedience. The first only required ratification by the All-India Congress Committee but the effect of either was the same, i.e., both authorized me to lead and guide the movement, if negotiations failed. But the movement was not started by the resolution of 8th August last. Before I could function, they arrested not only me but principal Congressmen all over India. Thus it was not I but the Government who started the movement and gave it a shape which I could not have dreamt of giving, and which it never would have taken while I was conducting it. No doubt, it would have been "short and swift", not in the violent sense, as the author has insinuated, but in the non-violent sense, as I know it. The Government made it very short and very swift by their very violent action. Had they given me breathing-time, I would have sought an interview with the Viceroy and strained every nerve to show the reasonableness of the Congress demand. Thus there were no "grounds", good or bad for believing, as the author would have one believe, that the "period of grace" was to be used for "putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution". In order to sustain such a belief it has become necessary for the author to dismiss from consideration the whole of the proceedings of the Bombay meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and seven vital parts of its resolution—save the clause referring to the mass movement—and the very awkward word "non-violence" to which I shall come presently.

39. I give below extracts from my speeches and writings to show how eager and earnest I was to avoid conflict and achieve the purpose by negotiation and to show that the Congress aim never was to thwart the Allies in any way:

... It would be churlish on our part if we said: 'We don't want to talk to anybody, and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing Press representatives (*Harijan*, 26-7-1942, p. 243)¹.

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

A. No, not on the question of independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding question of independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question.... But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for, if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side—it can be done only if India's independence is recognized (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942, p. 168)².

AN ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT: ... Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem?...

A. Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration... (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942, p. 168).

The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the mean while? I will tell you. There is the spinning-wheel.

I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteen-fold constructive programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom, before it comes physically. The chains of the slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: "I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For, henceforth instead of depending upon you I shall depend

¹ Vide "Interview to Foreign Correspondents", 15-7-1942.

² Vide "Interview to the Press", 16-5-1942.

upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge of freedom and therefore I deem myself a free man.”

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. Maybe, he will propose the abolition of the salt tax, the drink evil, etc., but I will say, “Nothing less than freedom”.

Here is a *mantra*—a short one—that I will give you. You may imprint it on your hearts, and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantra* is this: “We shall do or die. We shall either free India, or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery.” Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your badge. Dismiss jails out of your consideration. If the Government leaves me free, I will spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved, and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life shall gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it.¹ Freedom is not for the faint-hearted (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August before the A.I.C.C.).

Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial, as I always do, and this time more than ever because the burden is so heavy. I have yet to continue to reason with those with whom I seem to have lost all credit for the time being (From the concluding speech in English on 8th August before the A.I.C.C.).

In the same connection, I give extracts from the utterances Maulana Saheb and others in the Appendix. *Vide* Appendices VI, VII and VIII.

40. At page 11 of the indictment the author says:

To summarize briefly, Mr. Gandhi did not believe that non-violence alone was capable of defending India against Japan. Nor had he any faith in the ability of the Allies to do so: “Britain,” he stated in his draft Allahabad resolution, “is incapable of defending India.” His “Quit India” move was intended to result in the withdrawal of the British Government to be succeeded

¹ *St. Matthew*, XVI. 25; the verse reads: “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it,”

by a problematical provisional government or, as Mr. Gandhi admitted to be possible, by anarchy; the Indian army was to be disbanded and Allied troops were to be allowed to operate only under the terms imposed by this provisional government, assisted by India's non-violent non-co-operation to Japan for which, as Mr. Gandhi had already admitted, there could be little scope with Allied troops operating in India. Finally, even if, in the face of the above arguments, it could be supposed that Mr. Gandhi and the Congress proposed to pin their faith on the ability of Allied troops to defend India, it should be noted that the former himself admitted that the ability of Allied troops to operate effectively would depend upon the formation of a suitable provisional government. Now, since this government was to be representative of all sections of Indian opinion, it is clear that neither Mr. Gandhi nor the Congress could legitimately commit it in advance to any particular course of action; they could not, that is to say, undertake that it would support the Allies in defending India against Japan. They could not in fact make any promise on behalf of this provisional government unless they intended that it should be dominated by Congress; the whole trend of Congress policy, however, coupled with the extravagant promises made in the Bombay A.I.C.C. resolution on behalf of this provisional government, leave little doubt that this *was* their intention—a view held, significantly, by the Muslim League and Muslims in general. You have then a situation in which the Allied troops would be dependent for support on a government dominated by a clique which has already been shown to be thoroughly defeatist in outlook, and whose leader had already expressed the intention of negotiating with Japan.

It is not the intention here to examine the third aim, the establishment of communal unity followed by the formation of a provisional government, at all closely. It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this government to be under their domination and a note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India. It will suffice here to show, from Mr. Gandhi's own writings, the doubts that he entertained as to the feasibility of establishing any such government.

This brief summary is a perfect caricature of all I have said or written, and the Congress has stood for and expressed in the resolution of 8th August last. I hope I have shown in the foregoing pages how cruelly I have been misrepresented. If my argument has failed to carry conviction, I should be quite content to be judged on the strength of the quotations interspersed in the argument and those in the appendices hereto attached. As against the foregoing caricature, let

me give a summary of my views on the quotations referred to above.

I. I believe that non-violence alone is capable of defending India, not only against Japan but the whole world.

II. I do hold that Britain is incapable of defending India. She is not defending India today; she is defending herself and her interests in India and elsewhere. These are often contrary to India's.

III. "Quit India" move was intended to result in the withdrawal of British power, if possible, with simultaneous formation of a provisional government, consisting of members representing all the principal parties, if the withdrawal took place by the willing consent of the British Government. If, however, the withdrawal took place willy-nilly, there might be a period of anarchy.

IV. The Indian army would naturally be disbanded, being British creation—unless it forms part of Allied troops, or it transfers its allegiance to the free India government.

V. The Allied troops would remain under terms agreed to between the Allied powers and the free India government.

VI. If India became free, the free India government would tender co-operation by rendering such military aid as it could. But in the largest part of India where no military effort was possible, non-violent action will be taken by the masses of the people with the utmost enthusiasm.

41. Then the summary comes to the provisional government. As to this, let the Congress resolution itself speak. I give the relevant parts below:

The A.I.C.C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as non-violent forces at its command, together with its allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the government of

India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it. . . .

Lastly, whilst the A.I.C.C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A.I.C.C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on a mass struggle, it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.

I claim that there is nothing in this clause of the resolution that is "extravagant" or impracticable. The concluding sentence proves, in my opinion, the sincerity and non-party character of the Congress. And as there is no party in the country which is not wholly anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi and anti-Japan, it follows that a government formed by these parties is bound to become an enthusiastic champion of the Allied cause which by the recognition of India as a free State will truly become the cause of democracy.

42. As to communal unity, it has been a fundamental plank with the Congress from its commencement. Its president is a Muslim divine of world-wide repute, especially in the Muslim world. It has besides him three Muslims on the Working Committee. It is surprising that the author has summoned to his assistance the Muslim League opinion. The League can afford to doubt the sincerity of Congress professions and accuse the Congress of the desire of establishing a "Congress-Hindu domination". It ill becomes the all-powerful Government of India to take shelter under the Muslim League wing. This has a strong flavour of the old imperial *mantra*—divide and rule. League-Congress differences are a purely domestic question. They are bound to be adjusted when foreign domination ends, if they are not dissolved sooner.

43. The author winds up the second chapter as follows:

Whether the authors of the resolution genuinely believed that the Congress demand would, if accepted, help rather than hinder the cause of the United Nations, and intended that it should have that effect, depends on the answer to two questions: In the first place, could any body of men who

honestly desired that result have deliberately called the country, if their way of achieving it was not accepted, to take part in a mass movement the declared object of which was to have precisely the opposite effect by paralysing the whole administration and the whole war effort? In the second place, bearing in mind that less than a year previously it had been proclaimed under Mr. Gandhi's order to be a 'sin' to help the war with men or money, can it be denied that these men saw their opportunity in Britain's danger and believed that the psychological moment for the enforcement of their political demands must be seized while the fate of the United Nations hung in the balance and before the tide of war turned—if it was ever going to turn—in their favour? The answer to these two questions is left to the reader.

I have to answer these two questions both as reader and accused. As to the first question, there is no necessary inconsistency between the genuine belief that an acceptance of the Congress demand would help the cause of the United Nations, i.e., of democracy all the world over and a mass movement (which moreover was merely contemplated) to paralyse the administration on non-acceptance of the Congress demand. It is submitted that the attempt "to paralyse the administration" on non-acceptance proves the genuineness of the demand. It sets the seal on its genuineness by Congressmen preparing to die in the attempt to paralyse an administration that thwarts their will to fight the combine against democracy. Thus it is the administration's dead set against the Congress which proves the hollowness of its claim that it is engaged in a fight for democracy. My firm belief is that the administration is daily proving its inefficiency for handling the war in the right manner. China is slowly pining away while the administration is playing at war-handling. In the attempt to suppress the Congress it has cut off the greatest source of help to the millions of China who are being ground down under the Japanese heel.

44. The second question hardly demands a separate answer. Congressmen who proclaimed a year ago under my "orders" that it is a "sin" to help the war with "men or money" need not be considered here, if I give different "orders". For me, I am as much opposed to all war today as I was before a year or more. I am but an individual. All Congressmen are not of that mind. The Congress will give up the policy of non-violence today, if it can achieve India's freedom by so doing. And I would have no compunction about inviting those who seek my advice to throw themselves heart and soul

into the effort to help themselves and thus deliver from bondage those nations that are wedded to democracy. If that effort involves military training, the people will be free to take it, leaving me and those who think with me to our own non-violence. I did this very thing during the Boer War and during the last war. I was a “good boy” then, because my action harmonized with the British Government’s wishes. Today I am the arch enemy, not because I have changed but because the British Government which is being tried in the balance is being found wanting. I helped before, because I believed in British good faith. I appear to be hindering today because the British Government will not act up to the faith that was reposed in them. My answer to the two questions propounded by the author may sound harsh, but it is truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as God lets me see it.

45. The gravamen, however, of the charges¹ against me is that “every reference to non-violence in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take, made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples, and in the post-arrest programmes and instructions is nothing more than a pious hope or at best a mild warning which was known to have no practical value.” It is also described as mere “lip service”.

46. The author gives no proof to show that it (the warning) “was known to have no practical value”. If the references to non-violence are removed from my writings and my utterances in order to condemn me and my “Congress disciples”, the removal would be on a par with the omission of ‘not’s from the commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing, etc. The author in robbing me of the one thing I live by and live for robs me of all I possess. The evidence given in support of dismissing references to non-violence as “valueless” mostly consists of innuendoes. “It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish in which foreign domination was to be ended, cost what it may.”² In a non-violent struggle the cost has always to be paid by the fighters in their own blood. “It was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift.”

¹ Given in the concluding chapter; *vide* Appendix “Concluding Chapter of *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*”, after March 1943.

² The passage under reference appears in Chapter III. It reads: “The general character of the movement contemplated by Mr. Gandhi emerges clearly from the foregoing extracts. It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish, in which foreign domination must be ended, cost what it may; it was to be an unarmed revolt, short and

The prefix 'un' in "unarmed", unless it be regarded as "valueless", gives "short" and "swift" an ennobling meaning. For, to make the struggle "short and swift" prisons have to be avoided as too soft a thing and death to be hugged as a true friend enabling the fighters to affect opponents' heart much quicker than mere jail-going can. Mention by me of "conflagration" meant *giving* of lives in thousands or more, if need be. The author has called it a "grimly accurate forecast". This has a *post-facto* meaning unintended by the author in that a heavy toll of lives was taken by way of reprisals by the authorities, and an orgy of unmentionable excesses let loose upon the people by the soldiery and the police, if the Press reports and statements by responsible public men are to be believed. "Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots." It is true that I was prepared to take such a risk. Any big movement whether violent or non-violent involves certain risks. But non-violent running of risks means a special method, a special handling. I would have strained every nerve to avoid riots. Moreover my first act would have been to woo the Viceroy. Till then no question of running any risks could arise. As it was, the Government would not let me run the risk. They put me in prison instead! What the mass movement was to include and how the risk was to be taken, if at all, the author could not know, for the movement was never started. Nor had any instructions been issued by me.

47. The author complains of my "making full use of existing grievances". The use began even before the birth of the Congress. It has never ceased. How could it, so long as the foreign domination, of which they were a part, lasted?

domination must be ended, cost what it may; it was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift, sure to plunge the country into a conflagration a grimly accurate forecast!—in which Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots, in which he was prepared to go to the extremest limit, including, if necessary, the calling of a general strike; the struggle was to include everything that a "non-violent" mass movement could do, including strikes and the stoppage of railways, and possibly interference with British troop movements; and full use was to be made of existing grievances against the British; former Congress methods such as courting imprisonment were to be eschewed as too soft for the present occasion; finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself. These last words, or at least their sense, find a place in the resolution itself and any body of men that makes such an appeal to its followers can hardly disclaim responsibility for anything that may follow" (*The Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 184 5).

48. “Finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself. These last words or at least their sense finds a place in the resolution itself.” This last sentence is a specimen of *suppressio veri*. Here is the relevant extract from the Congress resolution:

They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide, urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

There is nothing new or startling in this. It is practical wisdom. Men and women must become their own leaders when their trusted guides are removed from them, or when their organization is declared illegal or otherwise ceases to function. True there were formerly nominal “dictators” appointed. This was more to court arrest than to guide followers by being in touch with them. For, touch was not possible except secretly. This time not prison but death was to be sought in the prosecution of the movement. Therefore everyone was to become his own leader to act within the four corners of the square foundation—non-violence. The omission of the two conditions for everyone becoming his or her own guide was an unpardonable suppression of relevant truth.

49. The author then proceeds to consider whether the movement contemplated by me could, by its very nature, be non-violent and further whether “Mr. Gandhi (I) intended that it should be so or hoped that it would remain so”. I have already shown that the movement never having been started, nobody could say what I had contemplated or hoped unless my intention or my hope could be justly deduced from my writings. Let me, however, observe how the author has arrived at this conclusion. His first proof is that I have employed military terms in connection with a movement claimed to be wholly non-violent. I have employed such language from the commencement of my experiment in South Africa. I could more easily show the contrast between my move and the ordinary ones by using identical phraseology, so far as possible, and coupling it with non-violence. Throughout my experience of satyagraha since 1908, I cannot recall an instance in which people were misled by me by my

use of military phraseology. And, indeed, satyagraha being a “moral equivalent of war”, the use of such terminology is but natural. Probably all of us have used at some time or another or are at least familiar with, expressions such as “sword of the spirit”, “dynamite of truth”, “shield and buckler of patience”, “assaulting the citadel of truth”, or “wrestling with God”. Yet no one has ever seen anything strange or wrong in such use. Who can be ignorant of the use of military phraseology by the Salvation Army? That body has taken it over in its entirety, and yet I have not known anyone having mistaken the Salvation Army with its colonels and captains for a military organization trained to the use of deadly weapons of destruction.

50. I must deny that “it has been shown that Mr. Gandhi had little faith in the effectiveness of non-violence to resist Japanese aggression”. What I have said is that the maximum effectiveness cannot be shown when it has to work side by side with violence. It is true that Maulana Saheb and Pandit Nehru have doubts about the efficacy of non-violence to withstand aggression but they have ample faith in non-violent action for fighting against British domination. I do believe that both British and Japanese imperialisms are equally to be avoided. But I have already shown by quoting from *Harijan* that it is easier to cope with the evil that is, than the one that may come. *Vide* Appendix II (D)¹.

51. I admit at once that there is “a doubtful proportion of full believers” in my “theory of non-violence”.² But it should not be forgotten that I have also said that for my movement I do not at all need believers in the theory of non-violence; full or imperfect. It is

¹ Not reproduced here. *Vide* “Question Box”, 12-6-1942.

² The passage under reference reads: “Again he had, as shown above, no illusions as to the very doubtful proportion of Indians who were full believers in his theory of non-violence. Yet he proposed embarking on a movement in which he expressed the hope that all classes and communities would join, and in which he directed every man and woman to consider themselves free and to think and act for themselves. Contrast this with his previous movement, the ‘satyagraha campaign’ of 1940-41, in which, in order to maintain the desired standard of non-violence, he had been forced to limit participation to specially selected satyagrahis, who were even then only allowed to commit a special formal offence; remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence. The certainty that his movement could not remain non-violent is plain enough and, if further indication were wanted, it is supplied in the extracts, from Mr Gandhi’s own writings quoted in the preceding paragraphs, which make it clear that even if violence and rioting occurred during the movement, this would not deter him, that he was prepared to go to the extremest limit” (*The Indian Annual Register*, 1942, Vol. II, p. 185).

enough if people carry out the rules of non-violent action. *Vide* Appendix IV (A).

52. Now comes the author's most glaring lapse of memory or misrepresentation in the paragraph under discussion. He says:

. . . remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence.

I have before me a list of 20 civil resistance movements beginning with the very first in South Africa. I do recall instances in which popular frenzy had broken out resulting in regrettable murders. These instances of mob violence, though bad enough, were but a flea-bite in proportion to the vast size of this country—as big as Europe less Russia territorially and bigger numerically. Had violence been the Congress policy, secretly or openly, or had the Congress discipline been less strict, it is simple enough to realize that the violence, instead of being a flea-bite, would have been more like a volcanic eruption. But every time such outbreaks took place, the most energetic measures were taken by the whole Congress organization to deal with them. On several occasions I had myself resorted to fasting. All this produced a salutary effect on the popular mind. And there were also movements which were singularly free from violence. Thus the South African satyagraha, which was a mass movement, and similar movements in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad—not to mention others in which collective civil disobedience on a wide scale was offered were wholly free from any outburst of violence. In all these the people had conformed to the rules laid down for their observance. The author has thus gone against history in making the sweeping statement that I had before me the “example of previous movements each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence”. My own experience being quite to the contrary, I have not the shadow of a doubt that if the Government had not by their summary action unnecessarily provoked the people beyond endurance, there never would have been any violence. The members of the Working Committee were anxious that violence on the part of the people should be avoided, not from any philanthropic motive, but from the conviction borne in upon them from the experience of hard facts, that violence by the people could not usher in independence. The education that the people had received through the Congress was wholly non-violent, before 1920,

because of the leaders' belief in constitutional agitation and faith in British promises and declarations, and since 1920, because of the belief, in the first instance induced by me and then enforced by experience, that mere constitutional agitation, though it had served up to a point, could never bring in independence, and that regard being had to the condition of India, non-violent action was the only sanction through which independence could be attained in the quickest manner possible. The accumulated experience of the past thirty years, the first eight of which were in South Africa, fills me with the greatest hope that in the adoption of non-violence lies the future of India and the world. It is the most harmless and yet equally effective way of dealing with the political and economic wrongs of the downtrodden portion of humanity. I have known from early youth that non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for his peace and final salvation, but it is a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace for which it has been yearning for ages past. It is, therefore, sad to think that a Government, the most powerful in the world, should have belittled the doctrine and put its votaries, however imperfect they may be, out of action. It is my firm opinion that thereby they have injured the cause of universal peace and the Allied nations.

53. For the author "the certainty" was "that his (my) movement could not remain non-violent". For me "the certainty" was quite the contrary, if the movement had remained in the hands of those who could guide the people.

54. It is also now "clear" what I meant when I said I was prepared to go to the extremest limit, that is, that I would continue the non-violent movement even though the Government might succeed in provoking violence. Hitherto I have stayed my hand when people have been so provoked. This time I ran the risk because the risk of remaining supine in the face of the greatest world conflagration known to history was infinitely greater. If non-violence be the greatest force in the world, it must prove itself during the crisis.

55. The final proof given by the author of my non-violence being "mere lip service" consists of the following caricature of my writing in defence of the Polish bravery:

In other words in any fight the weaker of the two combatants may employ as violent measures as he likes or is able, and may still be considered to be fighting non-violently; or to put it in another way, violence when employed

against superior odds automatically becomes non-violence. Surely a very convenient theory for the rebels in an “unarmed revolt”.

I claim the writing quoted by the author does not warrant the misleading deduction. How can I possibly lay down a proposition against everyday experience? There is rarely a fight among absolute equals. One party is always weaker than the other. The illustrations I have given¹, taken together, can lead to one conclusion only, namely, that the weaker party does not make any preparation for offering violence, for the simple reason that the intention is absent, but when he is suddenly attacked ‘he uses unconsciously, even without wishing to do so, any weapon that comes his way. The first illustration chosen by me is that of a man who having a sword uses it single-handed against a horde of dacoits. The second is that of a woman using her nails and teeth or even a dagger in defence of her honour. She acts spontaneously. And the third is that of a mouse fighting a cat with its sharp teeth. These three illustrations were specially chosen by me in order to avoid any illegitimate deduction being drawn in defence of offering studied violence. One infallible test is that such a person is never successful in the sense of overpowering the aggressor. He or she dies and saves his or her honour rather than surrender to the demands of the aggressor. I was so guarded in the use of my language that I described² the defence of the Poles against overwhelming numbers as “almost non-violence”. In further elucidation of this, see discussion with a Polish friend. *Vide* Appendix IV (N).

56. Here it will be apposite to give extracts from my speeches bearing on non-violence on the 7th and 8th August last before the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay:

Let me, however, hasten to assure you that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I did then. If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances. . . . occasions like the present do not occur in everybody’s and but rarely in anybody’s life. I want you to know and I feel that there is nothing but purest ahimsa in all that I am saying and doing today. The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on ahimsa, the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in ahimsa. If, therefore, there is any among you who has lost faith in ahimsa or is wearied of it, let him not

¹ In a paragraph preceding the one quoted in the text above

² *Vide* “Notes”, 18-9-1939.

vote for this resolution. . . .

Let me explain my position clearly. God has vouchsafed to me a priceless gift in the weapon of ahimsa. I and my ahimsa are on our trial today. If, in the present crisis when the earth is being scorched by the flames of *himsa* and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God-given talent, God will not forgive me and I shall be adjudged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now. I may not hesitate and merely look on when Russia and China are threatened. . . .

Ours is not a drive for power but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle, a successful general has been often known to effect a military coup and set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress scheme of things, essentially non-violent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself, he fights only for the freedom of his country. The Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule when freedom is attained. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it should be entrusted. Maybe, that the reins will be placed in the hands of the Parsis, for instance—as I would love to see happen or they may be handed to some others whose names are not heard in the Congress today. It will not be for you then to object saying: 'This community is microscopic. That party did not play its due part in the freedom's struggle; why should it have all the power?' Ever since its inception the Congress has kept itself meticulously free of the communal taint. It has thought always in terms of the whole nation and acted accordingly. . . .

I know how imperfect our ahimsa is and how far away we are still from the ideal, but in ahimsa there is no final failure or defeat. I have faith, therefore, that if, in spite of our shortcomings, the big thing does happen, it will be because God wanted to help us by crowning with success our silent, unremitting *sadhana* (striving) for the last twenty-two years. . . . I believe that in the history of the world there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. I read Carlyle's *History of the French Revolution* while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian revolution. But it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles were fought with the weapon of violence they failed to realize the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence. (From the Hindustani speech on 7th

August before the All-India Congress Committee)

After describing the personal relations with the Viceroy, the late Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews and the Metropolitan of Calcutta, I proceeded:

With the background of this consciousness, I want to declare to the world that whatever may be said to the contrary and although I may have today forfeited the regard of many friends in the West and even the trust of some—even for their love and friendship—I must not suppress the voice within. . . . That something in me, which has never deceived me, tells me that I shall have to fight on even though the whole world be against me. . . .

I hold that there can be no real freedom without non-violence. This is not the language of a proud or an arrogant man but of an earnest seeker after truth. It is this fundamental truth with which the Congress has been experimenting for the last twenty-two years. Unconsciously, from its very inception, the Congress has based its policy on non-violence known in those early days as the constitutional method. Dadabhoy and Pherozeshah Mehta carried Congress India with them. They were lovers of Congress. They were, therefore, also its masters. But above all they were true servants of the nation. They became rebels but they never countenanced murder, secrecy and the like. Subsequent generations have added to this heritage and expanded their political philosophy into the principle and policy of non-violent non-co-operation which the Congress has adopted. It is not my claim that every Congressman conforms to the highest tenet of non-violence even as a policy. I know that there are several black sheep, but I am taking all on trust without subjecting them to cross-examination. I trust, because I have faith in the innate goodness of human nature which enables people instinctively to perceive the truth and carries them through crisis. It is this fundamental trust which rules my life and enables me to hope that India as a whole will vindicate the principle of non-violence during the coming struggle. But even if my trust is found to be misplaced I shall not flinch. I shall not abandon my faith. I shall only say: "The lesson is not yet fully learnt. I must try again." (From the English speech on 8th August)

The Congress has no sanction but the moral for enforcing its decisions. I believe that true democracy can only be an outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally given up in world affairs. Solution of the Hindu-Muslim question, too, cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If Hindus tyrannize over Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that the Congress has agreed to submit all differences to an impartial tribunal and to abide by its decisions.

In satyagraha there is no place for fraud or falsehood. Fraud and falsehood are today stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness of such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to the extent it was possible for a human being to do so. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire which is built on and upheld by untruth and violence. However tight the Empire's control of us, we must get out of it. I know how imperfect an instrument I am for this great task, and how imperfect is the material with which I have to work. But how can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under a bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive in the midst of this conflagration which is enveloping the whole world, God will take me to task for not making use of the treasure He has given me. But for this conflagration I should have asked you to wait a little longer, as I have done all these years. The situation has now become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it. (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August)

57. Having given proof against me to show that my professions about non-violence were "valueless", the author turns to my colleagues in the Congress High Command to observe how they interpreted my "views to their Congress followers and to the masses". The author sees objection in Pandit Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankerrao Deo having singled out the student community for attention. Attention paid to the student community and peasantry was no new thing introduced for the first time, for the sake of the struggle, in the history of the Congress. As early as 1920, students were specially invited to join the non-co-operation movement and several thousand had responded to the call by suspending their studies. I do not know what happened after the August arrests, in the Banaras Hindu University. But, assuming that some students belonging to it went astray, that is no ground for associating Pandit Nehru with their acts. Positive proof would be necessary to establish such connection. Overwhelming proof can be produced in support of the contention that his faith in non-violence, for the purpose of achieving swaraj, is inferior to nobody's. The same thing can be said about his exhortation to the *kisans*¹ of the United Provinces. There is, too, nothing in favour of violence in the other leaders' speeches so far as one can judge from the extracts given in the indictment.

¹ Farmers

58. Having dealt with the leaders' speeches, the author comes to "detailed instructions regarding the conduct of the movement in existence before the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay". The "first example" has been "chosen" from *Harijan* of August 9. The article is entitled "Ways of Non-violent Non-co-operation". As it happens, it is a discussion in connection with the threatened invasion from Japan. Thus the article opens:

Ever since 1920 we are familiar with some of the ways of offering non-violent non-co-operation. These included boycott of all Government institutions and services, and extended to the non-payment of taxes. They were directed against a foreign Government in occupation of the country for years. The ways of non-co-operation to adopt against a new foreign invader would naturally differ in details. It would as Gandhiji has said extend to the refusal of food or water. All non-co-operation calculated to make the functioning of the enemy impossible has to be resorted to within the limits of non-violence.

Then the writer of the article (Mahadev Desai) has given samples of non-violent non-co-operation offered elsewhere than in India. They are not examples of non-violence consciously exercised. That the whole article was written to show what could be non-violently done to repel the invader, is clear from the final paragraph:

What one has to remember is that in war repression would be ten times as severe as was resorted to in France, but if there is the will to suffer, the resourcefulness to devise ways and means on the lines indicated in these different instances of passive resistance, and above all the determination to drive out the invader, cost what it may, victory is certain. The vastness of our country, far from being a disadvantage, may be an advantage, as the invader would find it difficult to cope with resistance on a thousand and one fronts.

The theme of the article is not racial but anti-invader.

59. The other example given by the author is an extract from an article by Shri K. G. Mashruwala in *Harijan* of 23rd August, 1942. Shri Mashruwala is a valued co-worker. He carries non-violence to an extreme which baffles those who know him intimately. Nevertheless I do not propose to defend the paragraph quoted. He has guarded himself by saying that it represents his personal opinion only. He must have heard me debating the question whether interference with bridges, rails and the like could be classified as non-violent. I had always questioned the practicability of the interference being non-violent. Even if such interference could conceivably be

non-violent, as I hold it can be, it is dangerous to put it before the masses who cannot be expected to do such things non-violently. Nor would I expect the classification of the British power in the same category as the Japanese for the purposes of the movement.

60. Having allowed myself to criticize the opinion of a respected colleague, I wish to say that Shri Mashruwala's opinion is no evidence of violent intention. At best it is an error of judgment which is much more likely in a novel subject like the applicability of ahimsa practised in all walks of life by masses of mankind. Great generals and statesmen have been known before now to have committed errors of judgment without losing caste or being accused of evil intentions.

61. Then comes the Andhra circular. I must regard it as forbidden ground for me inasmuch as I knew nothing about it before my arrest. Therefore I can only comment on it with reserve. Subject to that caution I consider the document to be harmless on the whole. This is its governing clause:

The whole movement is based on non-violence. No act which contravenes these instructions should ever be undertaken. All acts of disobedience committed should be overt never covert (open but not under cover).

The parenthesis is in the original, The following warning is also embodied in the circular:

Ninety-nine chances out of hundred are for the inauguration of this movement by Mahatmaji at an early date, possibly a few hours after the next All-India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay. The District Congress Committees should be alert and begin to act immediately, but please also take note that no movement should be launched or any overt act done till Mahatmaji decides. After all he may decide otherwise and you will be responsible for a great unwarranted mistake. Be ready, organize at once, be alert, but by no means act.

As to the body of the circular, I could not make myself responsible for some of the items. But I must refuse to judge a thing which I cannot correct, especially in the absence of what the Committee has to say on them, assuming, of course, that the circular is an authentic document. I miss in the indictment the text of the alleged "written amendment" "raising" the ban on the removal of rails.

62. Attention is then drawn to the fifth appendix showing how my mind was working in the direction of violence under the "valueless" cover of non-violence, as the author would say. The appendix gives what purport to be All-India Congress Committee

instructions with extracts from my writings in parallel columns. I have tried to study that appendix. I have nothing to withdraw from my writings. And I contend that there is not a trace of violence in the instructions alleged to be from the All-India Congress Committee.

63. Independently of the argument in the indictment, I must now say something about non-violence as I know it. Its spread in all walks of life has been my mission from early youth. This covers a period of very nearly sixty years. It was adopted at my instance as a policy by the Congress in 1920. In its very nature it was not meant to be paraded before the world, but it was accepted as a means indispensable for the attainment of swaraj. Congressmen saw at an early date that its mere adoption on paper had no value. It was of use only in so far as it was put into practice individually and collectively. It was of no more use as a badge than a rifle in the hands of a person who did not know how to use it effectively on due occasion. Therefore if non-violence has raised the Congress prestige and popularity since its adoption, it has done so in exact proportion to its use, even as the power which the rifle gives to its possessor is in exact proportion to its effective use. The comparison cannot be carried very far. Thus while violence is directed towards the injury, including the destruction of the aggressor and is successful only when it is stronger than that of the opponent, non-violent action can be taken in respect of an opponent, however powerfully organized for violence. Violence *per se* of the weak has never been known to succeed against the stronger in violence. Success of non-violent action of the very weak is a daily occurrence. I make bold to say that I have applied to the present struggle the principles of non-violence as enunciated here. Nothing could be farther from my thought than injury to the person or property of those who are manning and regulating the machinery of British imperialism as it operates in India. My non-violence draws a fundamental distinction between the man and his machine. I would destroy a harmful machine without compunction, never the man. And this rule I have enforced in my dealings with my nearest relatives as also friends and associates, not without considerable success.

64. After disposing of non-violence the author has summarized what he calls the “ostensible aims” of the Wardha resolution¹ of July 14 and the Bombay resolution² of August 8 as follows:

¹ *Vide* “Resolutions passed by Congress working Committee”, 14-7-1942.

² *ibid*

Three main *ostensible* aims are common to both the Wardha resolution of July 14 (Appendix III-1) and the Bombay resolution of August 8 (Appendix III-2). These are:

1. To remove foreign domination over India.
2. To check the growing ill-will against Britain, with its danger of passive acceptance by the masses of aggression against India; to build up a spirit of resistance to aggression among Indians; and by granting India's millions immediate freedom to release that energy and enthusiasm which alone can enable India to play an effective part in her own defence and in the war as a whole.
3. To achieve unity, by the removal of the foreign power with its policy of divide and rule, which will be followed by the formation of a provisional government representative of all sections of the Indian people.

Three further aims appeared for the first time in the Bombay resolution:

4. To bring all subject and oppressed humanity to the side of the United Nations, thus giving these Nations the moral and spiritual leadership of the world.
5. To assist Asiatic nations under foreign domination to regain their freedom and to ensure that they are not again placed under the rule of any colonial power.
6. To bring about world federation, which would ensure the disbanding of national armies, navies and air forces, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all.

He says that "the genuineness of the first of these aims is undeniable. The freedom of India, in whatever terms it may have been expressed, has long been the main goal of the Congress and it has been shown above how this aim coincides with one of the main motives underlying the 'Quit India' move." Strange as it appears to me, notwithstanding this admission of the genuineness of the first aim, he ridicules the others in some shape or form. I contend that all the others follow from the first. Thus if the foreign domination goes by agreement, ill-will against Britain is automatically turned into goodwill, and the energy of millions is set free on behalf of the Allied cause. Similarly communal unity must follow as day follows night when the night of foreign domination is gone. If nearly four hundred million people become free, other portions of oppressed humanity must also become free and naturally the Allied nations being privy to this freedom, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world comes to them without seeking. The fifth aim is included in the fourth, and the sixth is but a repetition of the aim of the whole of humanity which it

must attain or perish without. It is true that the three last aims were added in Bombay. That surely is not a matter to cavil at. Even if they were a result of criticism, what is there wrong about it? No democratic organization can afford to defy criticism, for it has to live upon the fresh air of criticism. As a matter of fact, however, world federation and rights of non-white people are no new ideas for Congressmen. They have been mentioned in Congress resolutions on other occasions. The paragraph about world federation found place in the August resolution at the instance of a European friend, and about non-white people at mine.

65. As to the disturbances that took place after the arrests of 9th August, I have carefully read Chapters IV and V of the indictment detailing them as also the appendices purporting to be instructions from various bodies. I must refuse to judge these one-sided statements or unverified documents. As to the so-called instructions, I can say that, so far as they are contrary to non-violence, they can never have my approval.

66. One searches in vain in the indictment for a detailed account of the measures taken by the Government by way of reprisals. And if one is to believe what has been allowed to appear in the Press about these measures, the so-called misdeeds of exasperated people, whether they can be described as Congressmen or not, pale into insignificance.

67. Now for the responsibility for the happenings after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last. The most natural way to look at the disturbances is that they broke out after the arrests which were, therefore, the cause. The indictment has been framed for the sole purpose, as the title shows, of fastening the responsibility on the Congress. The argument seems to me to be this. First I and then the Congress had been setting the stage for a mass movement since April 1942 when I first bruited the idea of British withdrawal popularly known as "Quit India". Mass movement was bound to result in the outbreak of violence. I and the Congressmen who had accepted my guidance had intended that violence should take place. Leaders had been preaching it. Hence the disturbances were to take place in any case. The arrest, therefore, merely anticipated the violent movement and nipped it in the bud. This sums up the reasoning in the indictment.

68. I have endeavoured to show that no special stage for a mass movement was set or contemplated because of my proposal for British

withdrawal, that violence was never contemplated by me or any Congress leader, that I had declared that, if Congressmen indulged in an orgy of violence, they might not find me alive in their midst, that the mass movement was never started by me, the sole charge for starting it was vested in me, that I had contemplated negotiations with the Government, that I was to start the movement only on failure of negotiations and that I had envisaged an interval of "two or three weeks" for the negotiations. It is, therefore, clear that but for the arrests no such disturbances would have taken place as happened on 9th August last and after. I would have strained every nerve first to make the negotiations successful and secondly, if I had failed, to avoid disturbances. The Government would have been no less able to suppress them than they were in August last. Only they would have had some case against me and the Congress. It was the duty of the Government, before taking action, to study the speeches of the Congress leaders and myself at the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

69. The Congress leaders were desirous that the movement should remain non-violent, if only because they knew that no violent movement in the existing circumstances could possibly succeed when matched against a most powerfully equipped Government. Whatever violence was committed by people, whether Congressmen or others, was, therefore, committed in spite of the leaders' wishes. If it is held otherwise by the Government, it should be proved beyond doubt before an impartial tribunal. But why seek to shift the responsibility when the cause is patent? The Government action in enforcing India-wide arrests was so violent that the populace which was in sympathy with the Congress lost self-control. The loss of self-control cannot imply Congress complicity but it does imply that the power of endurance of human nature has limitations. If Government action was in excess of the endurance of human nature, it and, therefore, its authors were responsible for the explosions that followed. But the Government may assert that the arrests were necessary. If so, why should the Government fight shy of taking the responsibility for the consequences of their action? The wonder to me is that the Government at all need to justify their action when they know their will is law.

70. Let me analyse the system of Government in vogue here. A population numbering nearly four hundred millions of people,

belonging to an ancient civilization, are being ruled by a British representative called Viceroy and Governor-General aided by 250 officials called Collectors and supported by a strong British garrison with a large number of Indian soldiers, trained by British officers, and carefully isolated from the populace. The Viceroy enjoys within his own sphere powers much larger than the King of England. Such powers, as far as I know, are not enjoyed by any other person in the world. The Collectors are miniature Viceroys in their own spheres. They are first and foremost, as their name implies, collectors of revenue in their own districts and have magisterial powers. They can requisition the military to their aid when they think necessary. They are also political agents for the small chieftains within their jurisdiction, and they are in the place of overlords to them.

71. Contrast this with the Congress, the most truly democratic organization in the world—not because of its numerical strength, but because its only sanction deliberately adopted is non-violence. From its inception the Congress has been a democratic body, seeking to represent all India. However feeble and imperfect the attempt may have been, the Congress has never in its history of now nearly sixty years shifted its gaze from the Pole Star of India's freedom. It has progressed from stage to stage in its march towards democracy in the truest term. If it is said, as it has been, that the Congress learnt the spirit of democracy from Great Britain, no Congressman would care to deny the statement, though it must be added that the roots were to be found in the old panchayat system. It can never brook Nazi, Fascist or Japanese domination. An organization whose very breath is freedom, and which pits itself against the most powerfully organized imperialism, will perish to a man in the attempt to resist all domination. So long as it clings to non-violence it will be uncrushable and unconquerable.

72. What can be the cause of the extraordinary resentment against the Congress into which the Government have betrayed themselves? I have never known them before to exhibit so much irritation. Does the cause lie in the "Quit India" formula? Disturbances cannot be the cause, because the resentment began to show itself soon after the publication of my proposal for British withdrawal. It crystallized into the wholesale arrests of 9th August last which were prearranged and merely awaited the passing of the resolution of 8th August. Yet there was nothing novel in the resolution

save the “Quit India” formula. Mass movements have been known to be on the Congress programme ever since 1920. But freedom seemed elusive. Now the Hindu-Muslim disunity, now the pledges to the Princes, now the interests of the scheduled classes, now the vested interests of Europeans barred the gateway to freedom. Divide and rule was an inexhaustible well. The sands of time were running out. Rivers of blood were flowing fast among the warring nations, and politically-minded India was looking on helplessly—the masses were inert. Hence the cry of “Quit India”. It gave body to the freedom movement. The cry was unanswerable. Those who were anxious to play their part in the world crisis found vent in that cry of anguish. Its root is in the will to save democracy from Nazism as well as imperialism. For, satisfaction of the Congress demand meant assurance of victory of democracy over any combination of reactionary forces and deliverance of China and Russia from the menace of Japan and Germany respectively. But the demand irritated the Government. They distrusted those who were associated with the demand and thereby they themselves became the greatest impediment to the war effort. It is wrong, therefore, to accuse the Congress of hindering war effort. Congress activity up to the night of 8th August was confined to resolutions only. The dawn of the 9th saw the Congress imprisoned. What followed was a direct result of the Government action.

73. The resentment over what I hold to be a just and honourable desire confirms the popular suspicion about the *bonafides* of the Government professions about democracy and freedom after the war. If the Government were sincere, they would have welcomed the offer of help made by the Congress. Congressmen who have been fighting for India’s liberty for over half a century would have flocked to the Allied banner as one man for the defence of India’s freedom newly won. But the Government did not wish to treat India as an equal partner and ally. They put out of action those who made this demand. Some of them are even being hounded as if they were dangerous criminals. I have in mind Shri Jayaprakash Narayan and others like him. A reward of Rs. 5,000, now doubled, has been promised to the informant who would show his hiding place. I have taken Shri Jayaprakash Narayan purposely as my illustration because, as he very rightly says, he differs from me on several fundamentals. But my differences, great as they are, do not blind me to his indomitable courage and his sacrifice of all that a man holds dear for the love of

his country. I have read his manifesto which is given as an appendix to the indictment. Though I cannot subscribe to some of the views expressed therein, it breathes nothing but burning patriotism and his impatience of foreign domination. It is a virtue of which any country would be proud.

74. So much for politically-minded Congressmen. In the constructive department of the Congress also the Government have deprived themselves of the best talent in the country for the organization of hand-industries which are so vital a need in war time. The All-India Spinners' Association, which is responsible for having distributed without fuss over three crores of rupees as wages among the poor villagers whom no one had reached and whose labour was being wasted, has come in for a heavy hand. Its President Shri Jajuji¹ and many of his co-workers have been imprisoned without trial and without any known reason. Khadi centres which are trust property have been confiscated to the Government. I do not know the law under which such property can be confiscated. And the tragedy is that the confiscators are themselves unable to run these centres which were producing and distributing cloth. Khadi and charkhas have been reported to have been burnt by the authorities. The All-India Village Industries' Association worked by Kumarappa brothers² has also received much the same treatment. Shri Vinoba Bhave is an institution by himself. Many workers were incessantly doing creative labour under his guidance. Most men and women of constructive organization are not political workers. They are devoted to constructive work of the highest merit. And if some of them have found it necessary to appear at all on the political field, it is a matter for the Government to reflect upon. To put such organizations and their supervisors under duress is, in my opinion, an unpardonable interference with war effort. The self-satisfaction with which the highest officials proclaim that limitless men and material are being had from this unhappy land is truly amazing while the inhabitants of India are suffering from shortage of food, clothing and many other necessities of life. I make bold to say that this scarcity would have been largely minimized, if not altogether obviated, if, instead of imprisoning Congress workers throughout India, the Government had utilized their services. The Government had two striking illustrations of the efficient working by the Congress agency—I mean the handling of the disastrous Bihar earthquake³ by Congressmen under

¹ Shrikrishnadas Jaju

² J. C. Kumarappa and Bharatan Kumarappa

³ In 1934

Dr. Rajendra Prasad and of the equally disastrous flood¹ in Gujarat under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

75. This brings me to the end of my reply to the indictment. It has become much longer than I had wanted to make it. It has cost me and my co-workers in the camp no end of labour. Although I must ask, in fairness to myself and the cause I represent, for the publication of this reply, my chief purpose is to carry conviction to the Government that the indictment contains no proof of the allegations against the Congress and me. The Government know that the public in India seem to have distrusted the indictment and regarded it as designed for foreign propaganda. Men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Rt. Hon. Shri M. R. Jayakar have given their opinion that the “evidence” produced in the indictment is of no judicial value. Therefore the Government should withdraw the indictment. I see from the preface to the indictment that the Government have in their possession “valuable evidence”, presumably incriminating the detenus. I submit that if the Government cannot safely divulge the evidence, they should discharge the detenus and bring to book those who, after discharge, may be caught in the act of committing or promoting crimes. With limitless power at their back, they need not resort to unsustainable accusations.

76. It will be noticed that although the indictment is a Government publication, I have only criticized its unknown author in the fond hope that the individual members composing the Government of India have not read the originals on which it is based. For, I am of opinion that no one having a knowledge of the originals could possibly endorse the inferences and innuendoes with which it is replete.

77. Lastly I wish to state that if I have anywhere erred in analysing the indictment, and if my error is pointed out to me, I shall gladly correct myself. I have simply written as I have felt.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]¹

It is requested that the appendices should be regarded as an integral part of the reply.

M. K.G.

¹ In 1927

APPENDIX I

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

In its earlier stage, Mr. Gandhi's "Quit India" move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the British, and of all British and Allied troops (Indictment p. 2).

(A) CONFUSION¹

(B) OUT OF TOUCH²

(C) FREE INDIA CAN HELP BEST

Answering to the question of a Press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said:

"My answer is an emphatic 'No'. I remain the passionate friend of China that I have always claimed to be. I know what the loss of freedom means. Therefore I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But, because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But, being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation, and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity.

¹ This postscript is reproduced from *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, p. 91, where it precedes the letter. According to *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, "the cover of Mr. Gandhi's original reply contained the request". The postscript and appendices are not available in the photostat source. Gandhiji's articles, speeches or statements, reproduced *in toto* as appendices, are not included here as they appear in their appropriate chronological order in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*.

² For the text under these titles, *vide* "Notes", 18-5-1942 and "Question Box", 23-5-1942.

I AM NOT PRO-JAPANESE

“Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion for, if I am sincere in my passion for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul, the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion, which, even from the military standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of the Empire—because she would have renounced *in toto* all her imperial designs—but in a defence, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings, and I shall continue to do so, so long as I am allowed by the British power.”

NO SECRECY

“Now what about your plan; you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?” was the next question. Gandhiji replied:

“Well, I have never believed in secrecy nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do, before I enforce it. Remember, I have yet to see the Maulana Saheb. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me, if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For, my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation.”

TO RESIST SLAVE-DRIVERS

“How are we to help in driving away the British from here?” was the first question that was asked.

“We don’t want to drive away the British people from here. It is the British rulers whom we are asking quietly to withdraw. It is the British domination that we want to vanish from our land. We have no quarrel with the Englishmen, many of whom are my friends, but we want the rule to end altogether, for that is the poison that corrupts all it touches, that is the obstacle that stops all progress.

“And what is needed for this are two things the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil we can think of, and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost. The knowledge is so necessary because the British exercise their power and domination in all kinds of subtle and insidious ways that it is sometimes difficult to know that we are bound hand and foot. Next is the will to throw off the chains. We have simply to cultivate the will not to do the rulers’ biddings. Is it very difficult? How can one be compelled to accept slavery? I simply refuse to do the master’s bidding. He may torture me, break my bones to atoms and even kill me. He will then have my dead body, not my obedience. Ultimately, therefore, it is I who am the victor and not he, for he has failed in getting me to do what he wanted done.

“That is what I am trying to impress both on those whom I want to retire and those who are bound in their chains. I am going to use all my powers to do so, but not violence—simply because I have no faith in it....

“But I am going to be patient, I am not going to hurry or hustle you. I am busy preparing the atmosphere and whatever I will do I shall do having in view the limitations of our people. I know that neither the rulers nor the public opinion understand the implications of my proposal.”

“But,” asked a friend, “have we not to see that the remedy may not be worse than the disease? There will be, in the course of resistance, in spite of all our will to prevent them, clashes and resultant anarchy. May not that anarchy be worse than the present anarchy which you have called ordered anarchy?”

“That is a very proper question. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these 22 years. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait, I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed for and worked for may never come, and in the mean time I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. That is why I have decided that,

even at certain risks which are obviously involved, I must ask the people to resist the slavery. But even that readiness, let me assure you, depends on the non-violent man's unflinching faith. All I am conscious of is that there is not a trace of violence in the remotest corner of my being, and my conscious pursuit of ahimsa for the last 50 years cannot possibly fail me at this crisis. The people have not my ahimsa; but mine should help them. There is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us, and our decision to defy their authority, will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence. But to be passive witness of the terrible violence that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression is a thing I cannot stand. It is a thing that would make me ashamed of my ahimsa. It is made of sterner stuff" (*Harijan*, 7-6-1942, pp. 183-4).

(D) WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

"Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?"

"That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that."

"Well, therein comes my non-violence. For, we have no weapons, mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter."

"Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent non-co-operation help the Japanese?" asked Mr. Chaplin reverting to the first question he had asked.

"If you mean non-co-operation with the British, you would be right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to *any* foreign power. But, when the British are offering violent battle, our non-violent battle—our non-violent

activity—would be neutralized. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British military are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organization representing the millions of the poor of India has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say “so-called” voluntary subscriptions. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it, that the British do not want it, they don’t set any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India’s non-violence can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese.”

“But not helping the British?”

“Don’t you see non-violence cannot give any other aid?”

“But the railways, I hope, you won’t stop; the service, too, will be, I hope, allowed to function.”

“They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today.”

“Aren’t you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?” asked Mr. Belldon

“We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy.”

A BAD JOB

“Don’t you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process (process of withdrawal)?”

“You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the sacrifice of the inviters. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently.”

“Is the possibility of strikes precluded?” wondered Mr. Belldon.

“No,” said Gandhiji, “strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measures, I must endeavour to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain’s defeat in Indian waters may mean *only the loss of India* but if Japan wins, India loses *everything*.”

THE CRUCIAL TEST

“If you regard the American troops as an imposition, would you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?” was the next question.

“A tree is judged by its fruit,” said Gandhiji succinctly. “I have met Dr. Grady, we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but goodwill for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks. Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India’s defence—and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: ‘For Heaven’s sake leave India alone. Let us breathe the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation. But I want the present sham to end.’ “

“But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?”

“It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible.”

“Is there any hope of Britain listening?”

“I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long lease of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so whole-heartedly, Britain does not deserve to win” (*Harijan*, 14-6-1942, pp. 185-7).

(E) IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL¹

(F) ITS MEANING

(G) ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW

(H) DELIBERATE DISTORTION

(K) A POSER

There was obviously a gap (about Allied troops) in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers.

Non-violence demands the strictest honesty cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness, if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of

¹ For the text under these titles, *vide* “Interview to *The News Chronicle*”, 14-5-1942, “Question Box”, 12-6-1942, “Interview to *The Hindu*”, 11-6-1942 and “Interview to Reuter”, before 21-6-1942. The items under ‘E’ and ‘H’ appear as interviews. Titles under (I) and (J) are not given in the source.

asking the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee fool-proof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India, and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal (*Harijan*, 28-6-1942, pp. 204-5).

(L) A FALLACY¹

(M) OH ! THE TROOPS

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all....

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstances the reverse of the existing....

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning-point in the war, if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean....

As I have said already in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops....

It (non-violence) will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized and successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has (*Harijan*, 5-7-1942, p. 212).

(N) FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT IN INDIA

"We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India,

¹ For the text under this title, *vide* "Question Box", 28-6-1942.

when you were asking the British to withdraw,” said Prof. Alexander with a kindly smile. “Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party.”

“My first writing,” said Gandhiji, “did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made it clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognized as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever. And so when I said ‘withdraw’ I meant ‘withdraw as masters’. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

“There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

“ . . . And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you.”

That put both the friends at ease and prompted them to try to understand the whole of the background of Gandhiji’s mind. And in this connection I may mention a curious but very significant fact. When Sir Stafford Cripps’s mission was announced, Prof. Horace Alexander and Miss Agatha Harrison had sent Gandhiji a cable reminding him of the phrase Gandhiji himself had used, viz., “Andrews’s legacy” meaning thereby that in memory of Andrews the best Englishmen and the best Indians should come together to bring about a permanent understanding between England and India. ‘Here,’ their cable seemed to say in effect, ‘is one of the best Englishmen coming to India. You had better settle with him, as there is a great opportunity.’

It was in reply to this cable that Gandhiji wrote a long letter¹ to Prof. Horace Alexander soon after the failure of the Cripps mission—a letter in which he gave

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Horace Alexander”, 22-4-1942.

expression for the first time to the demand for British withdrawal. He had not discussed it with any soul on earth, but as he was writing the letter the thing that was, so to say, cooking in his mind ever since his return from Delhi came to his pen. “Sir Stafford,” he said in that letter, “has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission. How could the British Government at this critical hour have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all, the proposals pleased none. I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else, for Andrews’s sake, I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews’s spirit as my witness. I made suggestions, but all to no avail. As usual they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say, being ‘anti-all wars’. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the Working Committee. I came away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth.”

And now comes the key paragraph: “My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore, Malaya and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations, and right-doing by India.”

Gandhiji’s talk was almost a commentary on the parts of the letter I have quoted: “You will see that I have used the words ‘orderly withdrawal’. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malaya neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. ‘Here,’ I say, ‘don’t repeat that story here. Don’t leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner,’ ” said he, concluding the talk. The whole talk, even as the letter I have reproduced, was inspired by the spirit of C.F.A., and the idea of asking the British to withdraw was conceived in the friendliest spirit, as it was done with a remembrance of C.F.A. and all his noble work. As Gandhiji said, “So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced, be my messenger.” Prof. Alexander felt overwhelmed and said: “We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try” (Harijan, 5-7-1942, pp. 214-5).

(O) IF HARIJAN IS SUPPRESSED¹

(P) THE WARDHA INTERVIEW

A MASS MOVEMENT

“Is it possible,” asked the A.P. (America) representative, “for you to tell us the

¹ For the text under this title, *vide* “If *Harijan* is Suppressed”, 12-7-1942.

things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W.C. Resolution?”

“Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the All-India Congress Committee vetoes the resolution, the whole thing wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include.”

“Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign-cloth shops?”

“It will depend on the circumstances. I don’t want rioting as a direct result. If, in spite of all precautions, rioting does take place, it cannot be helped.”

IF IMPRISONED?

“Will you court imprisonment?”

“I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not involve courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible.”

Quick came another question: “Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?”

“It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I can fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible”.

NEGOTIATIONS?

“After the recognition of free India it starts to function at once?”

“Yes, from the very next moment. For, independence will not be on paper but in action. But your next legitimate question would be—‘How will free India function?’ And because there was that knot, I said: ‘Leave India to God or anarchy.’ But in practice what will happen is this—if withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a provisional government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory.”

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

“Can you visualize the composition of the provisional government?”

“I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won’t be a party government. All parties—including the Congress—will automatically dissolve. They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. Then, as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don’t know how, though we witness the

phenomenon every day.”

“But,” asked two of the Indian correspondents rather impatiently, “looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?”

“Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature’s upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence.” . . .

“May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?”

“No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies, it should not hamper the Allied effort.”

“But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?”

“You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill-will may be changed into goodwill if the British people respond. But even if they don’t respond, when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today.”...

FREE INDIA’S CONTRIBUTION

“You desire to have India’s freedom in order to help the Allies?” was Mr. Edgar Snow’s question, and the last question: “Will free India carry out total mobilization and adopt the methods of total war?”

“That question is legitimate,” said Gandhiji, “but it is beyond me; I can only say free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that, if I can turn India to non-violence, I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation”.

“But you won’t oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?” Mr. Snow pertinently asked.

“I have no such desire. I cannot oppose free India’s will with civil disobedience, it would be wrong” (*Harijan*, 19-7-1942, pp. 233-4).

(Q) AMERICAN OPINION MAY BE ANTAGONIZED

. . . “Speaking as an American,” said Mr. Steele, “I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment, for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejudicial to the

efficient prosecution of the war.”

“This belief is born of ignorance,” replied Gandhiji. “What possible internal complication can take place, if the British Government declare today that India is absolutely independent? It would be, in my opinion, the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction, if anybody could convince me that, in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardizing the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one.”

OPEN TO CONVICTION

“If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?”

“Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk *at* me, swear *at* me, but never condescend to talk *to* me. . . .”

. . . “If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis,” interrupted Mr. Steele.

“Here,” said Gandhiji, “we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attack. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April-6, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them.”

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

“Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a provisional government—you, Congress or the Muslim League?”

“The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No *one* party would take the lead.”

“Would it be within the present constitutional structure?”

“The constitution will be dead,” said Gandhiji. “The Government of India Act of 1935 is dead. The I.C.S. would have to go and it might be anarchy; but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. *Free India government* would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside. . . . The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom, and I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us.”

“Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such? “

“We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people.”

WHY NOT TODAY?

“Why can’t all this be done today, without the British withdrawal?” said Mr. Emeny returning to the charge.

“The answer is simple. Why can’t a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice, who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan” . . . (*Harijan*, 26-7-1942, pp. 242-3).

(R) TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

. . . I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim “Truth is God” instead of the usual one “God is Truth”. That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel Him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for British boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the un murmuring world conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing ill-will into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonder-working engineers and financial resources can produce.

. . . We say: ‘This is the psychological moment for that recognition.’ For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause, if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India’s independence as a war measure of first-class magnitude (*Harijan*, 9-8-1942, p. 264).

(S) A PLEA FOR REASON

The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and

Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted....

JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND

The justice of the demand for the ending of British power has never been questioned; the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution, why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it: India is not playing any effective part in the war. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the world war which has yet to reach its climax. We know, that if India does not become free now, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration is to court disaster.

AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED

But the critics say: 'To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal?' It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, has said: "The Congress always stands, firstly, for sympathy towards democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join." The Congress President added that he "had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party, provided it was real independence. The party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the co-operation of other parties."

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that, during the war period, the Allied troops will operate to stem the Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

NOTHING TO CAVIL AT

Surely there is nothing here to cavil at for anyone. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy's numerous Indian Councillors are dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties operate without mutual support?

In a free India, even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For, in a free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be a raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will serve the national government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms.

On the contrary, they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all Indians by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there today and tomorrow and till the end of the war whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this representation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' Press or the Allies themselves, Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organized with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-8-1942, being extract from article in *Harijan*, 2-8-1942, p. 252).

(T) AN IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

. . . "But to *whom* are the British to say—'India is free'?" asked the friends with a certain degree of exasperation.

"To the world," said Gandhiji without a moment's hesitation. "Automatically the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare, they would pack up only after the war is over, but that they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits—beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India afterwards. Today it is all a hypocrisy, unreality. I want that to end. The new order will come only when that falsity ends."

"It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making," said Gandhiji concluding the talk, "the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim, when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage."

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the Allied cause, she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no

right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth (*Harijan*, 14-6-1942, p. 187).

(U) FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA¹

APPENDIX II

NOT PRO-JAPANESE

We can only infer that in the admittedly possible event of Japanese aggression on India after the departure of the British, he (I) was prepared to concede to their (Japanese) demands (Indictment p. 8).

(A) IF THEY REALLY MEAN?²

(B) FRIENDLY ADVICE

“... You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time, is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimize the risks as far as possible? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it is possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire, as so many do, Japanese help....”

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me. I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea and that too at this juncture has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of being called mad, I had to tell the truth, if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the war and to India's deliverance from the peril that is threatening. It is, too, my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualize what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically-minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst, therefore, I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice, before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred must cease

Of course, the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That was a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle, every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the

¹ For the text under these titles, *vide* “Foreign Soliders in India”, 19-4-1942 and “Question Box”, 19-4-1942.

² *ibid*

biggest disease—a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance (*Harijan*, 31-5-1942, p. 172).

(C) IF THEY COME¹

(D) WHAT ABOUT RADIO MESSAGES?

(E) IF JAPANESE COME?

(F) QUESTION BOX

(G) UNFAIR TO AMERICA?²

(H) MIRABEHN'S LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

DETENTION CAMP,
AGA KHAN'S PALACE, POONA,
Christmas Eve, 1942

DEAR LORD LLNLITHGOW,

My only excuse for writing you this letter is the deep pain I feel, as one born of English parents, over the falsehoods regarding Gandhiji and the Indian National Congress which seem to have appeared in certain English papers without being officially contradicted.

Within the limits of the newspapers that reach me here, I have been watching the ever-growing volume of anti-Congress propaganda in the British Press. Of the various untruths that are being circulated, I want, in this letter, to deal with only one, namely, the assertion that Gandhiji and the Congress are pro-Japanese. For samples of such propaganda that has come to my notice, I would refer to *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly* of November 29, 1942, page 22, and to *The Hindu*, (Dak Edition) of December 19, 1942, page 4, column 3.

Amongst the quotations and facsimiles given in *The Bombay Chronicle Weekly*, is a photograph of the first page of the London *Daily Sketch* of August 5, 1942, showing a full page headline "Gandhi's India-Jap Peace Plan Exposed", and lower down, on the same page, a photograph of myself with the sub-heading "English Woman Gandhi's Jap-Peace Envoy". The *Punch* cartoons of which facsimiles are also given, are, if possible, even more disgraceful. In *The Hindu*, there is a protest by Shri K. M. Munshi from which it would appear that this libellous propaganda has spread even to the London *Daily Herald*.

¹ For the text under these titles, vide "Question Box", 3-6-1942; 12-6-1942; 30-5-1942; "Answers to Questions", on or before 21-7-1942 and "Cable to *The Sunday Despatch*", on or before 29-5-1942.

² *ibid*

Now the reason for my bringing this matter before you is that I have in my possession correspondence that passed between Gandhiji and myself while I was in Orissa, *after* the April meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad, which proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that Gandhiji is cent per cent anti-Japanese.

The correspondence of which I enclose copies, consists of a confidential report, with questionnaire regarding the then anticipated Japanese invasion, which I sent to Gandhiji by special messenger from Orissa, where he had deputed me for helping the Congress workers generally, especially as a Japanese attack on the East Coast was hourly expected.

The report which I have with me is the original draft, written in my own hand. It is not dated or signed, as these things I affixed to the typewritten copy which was sent; but it must be just about 3 to 4 days previous to Gandhiji's reply dated 31st May, 1942, which he dictated to the late Shri Mahadev Desai, and forwarded to me at once by the returning special messenger. Of this I have the original in Shri Mahadev Desai's own handwriting, and signed "Bapu" by Gandiji. The interview referred to in the first paragraph of the letter was the one I had on 25th May, 1942, with Mr. Wood, then Chief Secretary to the Government of Orissa, at which Mr. Mansfield was also present.

Seeing that no godfearing ruler could, with any peace of mind, allow the above-mentioned slanderous propaganda on the part of his own people, against those whom he had rendered unable to reply, to continue unchecked once he had had unchallengeable proof of its falsehood, I put trust in the belief that you will publish the enclosed correspondence together with this covering letter, and refute the assertions of these British journals.

I may add that since I am personally acquainted with the members of the Working Committee and have freely discussed these matters with them, I can say with confidence that their feelings have been unequivocally anti-Japanese and anti-Fascist throughout.

Believe me
Yours sincerely,
MIRABEHN

[I] MIRABEHN'S QUESTION ON THE FEARED INVASION AND
OCCUPATION BY THE JAPANESE

We may take it that the Japanese will land somewhere along the Orissa coast. Probably there will be no bombing or firing at the time of landing, as there are no

defence measures on the coast. From the coast they will advance rapidly across the flat, dry rice fields, where the only obstructions are rivers and ditches, now mostly dry and nowhere unfordable. As far as we are able to make out, there will be no serious attempts to hold the Japanese advance until the hilly and wooded regions of the Orissa State are reached. The army of defence, whatever it is, is reported to be hidden in the jungles of those parts. It is likely to make a desperate attempt to defend the Jamshedpur road, but the chances of its being successful must be very small. That means we may expect a battle to be fought in the north-west of Orissa, after which the Japanese army will pass on into Bihar. At that time the Japanese are not likely to be broadly distributed over the country, but concentrated on their lines of communication between the sea and their advancing army. The British administration will have previously disappeared from the scene.

The problem before us is, in the event of these things happening how are we to act?

The Japanese armies will rush over the fields and through the villages not as avowed enemies of the population, but as chasers and destroyers of the British and American war effort. The population in its turn is vague in its feeling. The strongest feeling is fear and distrust of the British, which is growing day by day, on account of the treatment they are receiving. Anything that is not British is therefore something welcome. Here is a funny example. The villagers in some parts say: "Oh, the aeroplanes that make a great noise are British, but there are silent planes also, and they are Mahatma planes." I think the only thing possible for these simple innocent people to learn is the attitude of neutrality, for, it is, in reality, the only position that can be made logical to them. The British not only leave them to their fate without even instructing them in self-protection from bombing, etc., but they issue such orders as will, if obeyed, kill them before the day of battle comes. How then can they be ready enthusiastically to obstruct the Japanese who are chasing this detested raj, especially when the Japanese are saying: "It is not you we have come to fight." But I have found the villagers ready to take up the position of neutrality. That is to say, they would leave the Japanese to pass over their fields and villages and try as far as possible not to come in contact with them. They would hide their food-stuffs and money, and decline to serve the Japanese. But even that much resistance would be difficult to obtain in some parts, the dislike of the British raj being so great that anything anti-British will be welcomed with open arms. I feel we have got to try and gauge the maximum resistance which the average inhabitants may be expected to put up, and *maintain*, and make that our definite stand. A steady, long-sustained stand, though not cent per cent resistance, will be more effective in the long run than a stiff stand which quickly breaks.

This maximum sustainable stand which we may expect from the average people is probably:

1. To resist firmly, mostly non-violently, the commandeering by the Japanese of any land, houses, or movable property.

2. To render no forced labour to the Japanese.

3. Not to take up any sort of administrative service under the Japanese. (This may be hard to control in connection with some type of city people, Government opportunists and Indians brought in from other parts.)

4. To buy nothing from the Japanese.

5. To refuse their currency and any efforts on their part at setting up a raj. (Lack of workers and lack of time make it very hard, we have to strive to stem the tide.)

Now as to certain difficulties and questions which arise:

1. The Japanese may offer to pay for labour, food and materials in British currency notes. Should the people refuse to sell for good prices or work for a good wage? For long-sustained resistance over many months it may be difficult to prevent this. So long as they refuse to buy or take "service", the exploitation danger is kept off.

2. What should be done about the rebuilding of bridges, canals, etc., which the British will have blown up? We shall also need the bridges and canals. Should we, therefore, set our hands to their rebuilding, even if it means working side by side with the Japanese, or should we retire on the approach of Japanese bridge-builders?

3. If Indian soldiers, who were taken prisoners in Singapore and Burma, land with the Japanese invading army, what should be our attitude towards them? Should we treat them with the same aloofness as we are to show the Japanese, or should we try to win them over to our way of thinking?

4. After the exodus (before the approaching Japanese) of the British raj what shall we do about currency?

5. After the battles have been fought and the Japanese armies will have advanced, the battle-fields will be left strewn with dead and wounded. *I think we must unhesitatingly work side by side with the Japanese in burning and burying the dead and picking up and serving the wounded.* The Japanese are likely to attend to the lightly wounded of their own men and take prisoners the lightly wounded of their enemy, but the rest would probably be left, and it will be our sacred duty to attend to them. For this we are from now planning the training of volunteers under the guidance of local doctors. Their services can also be used in case of internal disturbances, epidemics, etc.

6. Besides dead and wounded on the battle-field, a certain amount of rifles, revolvers and other small arms are likely to be left lying about unpicked up by the Japanese. If we do not make a point of collecting these things, they are likely to fall into the hands of robbers, thieves and other bad characters, who always come down like hawks to loot a battle-field. In an unarmed country like India this would lead to

much trouble. In the event of our collecting such arms and ammunition, what should we do with them? My instinct is to take them out to sea and drop them in the ocean. Please tell us what you advise.

[J] MY REPLY TO THE ABOVE

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,

May 31, 1942

I have your very complete and illuminating letter. The report of the interview is perfect, your answers were straight, unequivocal and courageous. I have no criticism to make. I can only say: 'Go on as you are doing.' I can quite clearly see that you have gone to the right place at the right time. I, therefore, need do nothing more than come straight to your questions which are all good and relevant.

1. I think we must tell the people what they should do. They will act according to their capacity. If we begin to judge their capacity and give directions accordingly, our directions will be halting and even compromising which we should never do. You will, therefore, read my instruction in that light. Remember that our attitude is that of complete non-cooperation with the Japanese army. Therefore we may not help them in any way, nor may we profit by any dealings with them. Therefore we cannot sell anything to them. If people are not able to face the Japanese army, they will do as armed soldiers do, i.e., retire when they are overwhelmed. And if they do so, the question of having any dealings with the Japanese does not and should not arise. If, however, the people have not the courage to resist the Japanese unto death and not the courage and capacity to evacuate the portion invaded by the Japanese, they will do the best they can in the light of instructions. One thing they should never do to yield willing submission to the Japanese. That will be a cowardly act, and unworthy of a freedom-loving people. They must not escape from one fire only to fall into another and probably more terrible. Their attitude, therefore, must always be of resistance to the Japanese. No question, therefore, arises of accepting British currency notes or Japanese coins. They will handle nothing from Japanese hands. So far as dealings with our own people are concerned, they will either resort to barter or make use of such British currency that they have in the hope that the national government that may take the place of British Government will take up from the people all the British currency in accordance with its capacity.

2. Question about co-operation in bridge-building is covered by the above. There can be no question of this co-operation.

3. If Indian soldiers come in contact with our people, we must fraternize with them if they are well-disposed, and invite them, if they can, to join the nation. Probably they have been brought under promise that they will deliver the country from foreign yoke. There will be no foreign yoke and they will be expected to befriend people and obey national government that might have been set up in place

of British Government. If the British have retired in an orderly manner leaving things in Indian hands, the whole thing can work splendidly, and it might even be made difficult for Japanese to settle down in India or any part of it in peace, because they will have to deal with a population which will be sullen and resistant. It is difficult to say what can happen. It is enough if people are trained to cultivate the power of resistance, no matter which power is operating—the Japanese or the British.

4. Covered by 1 above.

5. The occasion may not come, but if it does, co-operation will be permissible and even necessary.

6. Your answer about the arms found on the wayside is most tempting and perfectly logical. It may be followed but I would not rule out the idea of worthy people finding them and storing them in a safe place, if they can. If it is impossible to store them and keep them from mischievous people, yours is an ideal plan.

(K) "FIRE RAGING IN ME"

A journalist was on a visit here the other day. . . . He was full of the happenings in his province. . . .

He talked of the public feeling in his province. "It is more anti-British than pro-Japanese," he said. "There is a vague notion that we have had enough of this rule, and almost anything would be better than the existing state of things. People are happy when Subhas Babu says on the radio that there are no differences between him and you and when he says you are now out to fight for liberty at any cost."

"But I suppose you know that there he is wrong," said Gandhiji, "and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. 'Liberty at any cost' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. 'At any cost' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not, for instance, include bringing in foreigners to help us in our liberty. I have no doubt, it means exchanging one form of slavery for another, possibly much worse. But, of course, we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired Press of Britain and America, I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India, they did not mean it. So far as I am concerned, I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't, they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get rid of it. 'Convert the deepening ill-will into goodwill,' is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it

may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world; we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is *our* record? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us, Heaven help our country....

“I do not feel flattered when Subhas Babu says, I am right. I am not right in the sense he means. For there he is attributing pro-Japanese feeling to me. If I were to discover that by some strange miscalculation I had not realized the fact that I was helping the entry of the Japanese in this country, I should not hesitate to retrace my steps. As regards the Japanese, I am certain that we should lay down our lives in order to resist them as we would resist the British.

“But it won't be the work of human hands. It will be the work of a Force—incalculable and invisible—which works often upsetting all our calculations. I rely implicitly on It. Otherwise I should go mad in face of all this torrent of what I must call irritating criticism. They do not know my agony. I cannot express it except perhaps by dying.”

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled and their power in India may be destroyed? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such notion:

“Destruction of the British power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. But what matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if someone comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength, I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way.

“I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralize the Congress ranks. It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige, no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration” (*Harijan*, 2-8-1942, pp. 257-8).

(L) LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK¹

Further reference to the same subject will be found in Appendix I:

¹ For the text under this title, *vide* “Letter to Chiang Kai-Shek”, 14-6-1942.

B. OUT OF TOUCH

C. "I AM NOT PRO-JAPANESE"

E. IMPLICATIONS OF THE WITHDRAWAL

K. A POSER

L. A FALLACY

Q. AMERICAN OPINION MAY BE ANTAGONIZED

R. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

S. "JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND"

" "AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED"

" "NOTHING TO CAVIL AT"

APPENDIX III

CONGRESS NOT FOR POWER

It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this Government to be under their domination and note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India (Indictment p. 12).

(A) NOT RIGHT

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

A. You are not right. I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organization or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique, it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical State, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos will spend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it (*Harijan*, 31-5-1942, p. 173).

(B) WHAT ABOUT MUSLIMS ?

Q. But what does a free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?

A. I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God or, in modern parlance, to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos (*Harijan*, 14-6-1942, p. 187).

(C) TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

. . . I think that even a large number, if not all of us, prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe, too, that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight, not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may. . . .

The Congress and the League being best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly-elected constituent assembly (*Harijan*, 12-7-1942, p. 220).

(D) AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION¹

(E) UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

. . . Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore it belongs to Parsis, Beni-Israelis, to Indian Christians, Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans.

The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of "driving out" the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims, if they do not remain in subjection, may have been all right in bygone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word "intelligent" because I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent (*Harijan*, 9-8-1942, p. 261).

Further reference to the same subject will be found in Appendix I:

F. ITS MEANING

¹ For the text under this title, *vide* "An Appropriate Question", 2-8-1942.

- G. ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW
- P. "NEGOTIATIONS?"
- " "SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME"
- S. "AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED"
- " "NOTHING TO CAVIL AT"

APPENDIX IV

ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE

Mr. Gandhi knew that any mass movement started in India would be a violent movement (Indictment p. 39).

(A) EXPEDIENCE¹

(B) NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

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

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

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

A. I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-co-operation, unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face

¹ For the text under this title. *vide* "Question Box", 7-4-1942

of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-co-operation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-co-operation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded. Therefore it will not succeed against the Japanese. That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence and, seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-co-operation. But, if India does not respond to that call, then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organization wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed (*Harijan* 24-5-1942, p. 167).

(C) SCORCHED EARTH POLICY

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

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

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

A. Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oilseeds, I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for, I would not tolerate munitions factories in a free India, if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy, and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence.

I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there, of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly

act, I am moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw.

I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore this ordered, disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe, that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore if I find that all the best effort fails I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942, p. 167).

(D) WHAT WOULD FREE INDIA DO?

Gandhiji had over and over again said that an orderly withdrawal would result in a sullen India becoming a friend and ally. These American friends now explored the implications of that possible friendship: "Would a free India declare war against Japan?"

"Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however, overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt."

"How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?"

"It is a good question. The whole of India is not non-violent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or, perhaps, by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there, too, the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree, but they may act when the supreme test comes, and they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand" (*Harijan*, 14-6-1942, p. 187).

(E) A CHALLENGE

The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who

is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the Unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

‘How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient satyagrahis who can cope with external and internal menaces?’ My answer then would be that 22 years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent (*Harijan*, 28-6-1942, p. 201).

(F) [A.I.S.A. AND KINDRED INSTITUTIONS]

... Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe... (*Harijan*, 12-7-1942, p. 217).

(A) GURU GOBIND SINGH

... But for me as a believer in non-violence out and out, they (Guru Govind Singh, Lenin, Kemal Pasha, etc.) cannot be guides in life so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the universe, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualification for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good, wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experience as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kemal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country’s life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck (*Harijan*, 12-7-1942, p. 219).

(H) THE CONFLAGRATION¹

(K) IN CASE OF ILLNESS

... But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God —the Unseen, even unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas! I am far from the perfection I am aiming at (*Harijan*, 19-7-1942, p. 229).

(L) FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION²

(M) WHEAT ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE³

(N) ANOTHER DISCOURSE

Bharatanandji⁴, whose acquaintance the reader will make in another column, demurred to the compliment given to his countrymen, the Poles, by Gandhiji: “You say that the Poles were ‘almost non-violent’. I do not think so. There was black hatred in the breast of Poland, and I do not think the compliment is deserved.”

“You must not take what I say, so terribly literally. If ten soldiers resist a force of a thousand soldiers armed cap-a-pie, the former are almost non-violent, because there is no capacity for anything like proportionate violence in them. But the instance I have taken of the girl is more appropriate. A girl who attacks her assailant with her nails if she has grown them, or with her teeth if she has them, is almost non-violent, because there is no premeditated violence in her. Her violence is the violence of the mouse against the cat.”

“Well then, Bapuji, I will give you an instance. A young Russian girl was attacked by a soldier. She used her nails and teeth against him and tore him, so to say, to pieces. Was she almost non-violent?”

“How can it cease to be non-violence, if offered on the spur of the moment, simply because it was successful?” I⁵ interposed.

“No,” said Gandhiji almost inadvertently.

“Then I am really puzzled,” said Bharatanandji. “You say, there should be no premeditated violence and no capacity to offer proportionate violence. Here in this case she by her success proved that she had the capacity.”

“I am sorry,” said Gandhiji, “that I inadvertently said ‘No’ to Mahadev. There

¹ For the text under this title, *vide* “Question Box”, 5-7-1942. Titles under (I) and (J) are not given in the source.

² *Vide* “Fasting in Non-Violent Action”, 20-7-1942 and “Question Box”, 12-6-1942.

³ *ibid*

⁴ Maurice Frydman, a Polish Engineer

⁵ Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji’s Private Secretary

was violence there. It was equally matched.”

“But then, is not intention ultimately the test? A surgeon uses his knife non-violently. Or a keeper of the peace uses force against miscreants in order to protect society. That too he does non-violently,” said Bharatanandji.

“Who is to judge the intention? Not we. And for us the deed in most cases is the test. We normally look at the action and not at the intention.”

“Then God alone knows what is *himsa* and what is *ahimsa*.”

“Yes, God alone is the final judge. It is likely that what we believe to be an act of *ahimsa* is an act of *himsa* in the eyes of God. But for us the path is chalked out. And then you must know that a true practice of *ahimsa* means also, in one who practises it, the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience. It is difficult for him to err. When I used those words for Poland, and when I suggested to a girl believing herself to be helpless that she might use her nails and teeth without guilty of violence, you must understand the meaning at the back of my mind. There is the refusal to bend before overwhelming might in the full knowledge that it means certain death. The Poles knew that they would be crushed to atoms, and yet they resisted the German hordes. That was why I called it almost non-violence” (*Harijan*, 8-9-1940, p. 274).

Further reference to the same subject will be found in Appendix I:

C. “NO SECRECY”

” “TO RESIST SLAVE-DRIVERS”

D. WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION

K. A POSER

L. A FALLACY

M. OH ! THE TROOPS

Q.¹ “OPEN TO CONVICTION”

APPENDIX V

(A) EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU’S ADDRESS TO THE JOURNALISTS’ ASSOCIATION AT ALLAHABAD

“We do not wish to take advantage of the peril to Britain, Russia or China, nor do we want the Axis powers to win. We mean to stop the Japanese and to help China and the wider cause of democracy and freedom, but the nature of the peril is such now not only to us but through us to China also that we want to meet it by converting the war into a people’s war as China has done. The preparation of the Government of India is entirely inadequate. We want to build up the national will to resistance.

¹ The source, however, has ‘P’.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTION

“We want to take up the present situation, even if we have to take risk in doing so. We want to save ourselves from immediate peril, and not to take advantage of any situation in order to gain independence. If we remain passive, we allow the popular will against the British Government to be broken gradually, and that will break the popular will to resistance. We want to gamble with fate, if one chooses to call it so—and we will do it bravely.”

Pandit Nehru said that it was not going to be a long-drawn-out affair but it would be short and swift. How short and swift he did not know because that depended on psychological factors. “Ours is not armed force. Our struggle depends upon the psychological reaction of a few million.”

In reply to a question by an American journalist, Pandit Nehru said “The movement can gain by what we do, and can be accelerated by what the Government does.”

Gandhiji in his *Harijan* has indicated the steps, and the first step may be within a fortnight after the All-India Congress Committee meeting. That might be a preparatory step unless the Government takes such action as might accelerate it.

The present decision, the Pandit said, was not taken in a huff, but they came to the conclusion, following a close analysis of the current world politics and the method of the British Government in fighting the war. He emphasized that when the Congress talked of independence, it was thought that it was in the nature of bargaining. Therefore the demand for the withdrawal of British power from India had irritated the British. He explained that this demand was inherent in the nationalist movement. They were told that the “Quit India” demand was in the nature of blackmail, and India should wait till the situation was clear after the war.

Continuing, Pandit Nehru said that they waited these years and the Congress was on the point of starting satyagraha in 1940, but at the fall of France they desisted from starting the movement, because they did not want to embarrass England during her moment of great peril. They wanted to face peril as far as possible. They wanted to prevent the Japanese aggression upon India and help China. He said that he could not have thrown in his weight with the British Government because the British policy was so deep-rooted that they could do nothing. There was no loophole to function effectively. The Congress wanted India not to be a passive onlooker.

In conclusion, Pandit Nehru said that the average man in India looked to the Congress for a lead, and if the Congress failed, the result would be so much spiritual disillusionment that it might break their spirit. So the alternative left to them was to take the risk to shake this spirit and change the whole of Europe and America into the conception of the war of freedom (United Press of India, *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-8-1942).

(B) EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SPEECH,

TILAK DAY CELEBRATIONS, ALLAHABAD

"My mind is quite clear that our decision is correct. I can say this with all the authority and dignity of a member of the Working Committee. My mind is at rest. I can clearly see the path before us. We can tread it fearlessly and bravely."

NO TRUCK WITH AXIS

Pandit Nehru said that he wanted to make it clear that there was no intention to help Japan or to injure China. He said:

"If we succeed, that will release tremendous spiritual forces for the cause of freedom and democracy, and will greatly increase the resistance against Japan and Germany. If, on the other hand, we fail, Britain would be left to fight against Japan as best she can."

"CORRECT SLOGAN"

"Gandhiji's 'Quit India' slogan correctly represents our thoughts and sentiments. Passivity on our part at this moment and hour of peril would be suicidal. It will break down all our will to resistance. It would destroy and emasculate us. Our step is not merely for the love of independence. We want to take it to protect ourselves, to strengthen our will to resistance, to give a fresh orientation to the war, to fight and to help China and Russia: it is an immediate and pressing necessity with us."

PEOPLE'S WAR

Answering the question "How would you fight against Japan?", Pandit Nehru said:

"We would fight in every way possible with non-violence and with arms, by making it a people's war, by raising people's army, by increasing production and industrialization. By making it our primary consuming passion, by fighting like Russia and China and no price would be too big to pay to achieve our success against the aggressor." . . .

"Struggle—eternal struggle! That is my reply to Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps," said Pandit Nehru spiritedly criticizing the latest statements of Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps.

"India's national self-respect cannot be a matter of bargaining," he added, "I am galled with sorrow and anger to note that I for years wanted some settlement because I felt that Britain was in trouble. They have had their suffering and sorrow. I wanted my country to move forward step in step with them as a free country. But what is one to make of such statements!" (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-8-1942).

(C) PANDIT NEHRU'S STATEMENT ON THE SEIZED DOCUMENTS

I have just seen for the first time the Government's communique issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the All-India Congress Committee office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes, or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions, Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

IMPORTANT OMISSION

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the war really became one for freedom for all people, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

MAHATMA'S WAY

The references to negotiations with Japan were also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, etc. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression (Associated Press of India —*The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-8-1942).

(D) EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S SPEECH AT
THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 7, 1942

If the British Government were to accept the proposal, it would lead to an improvement of the position both internal and international from every point of view. The position of China would be improved. He was convinced that whatever change might come about in India would be for the better. The All-India Congress Committee knew that Mahatma Gandhi had agreed to retain and allow the British and armed forces stationed in India. This he agreed so as not to facilitate Japanese action on the Indian frontier. Those who wanted to bring about a change should agree to this.

Referring to criticisms from America that Congress was blackmailing, Pandit Nehru said that it was a curious and amazing charge. It was curious that people who talked in terms of their own freedom should level this charge against those who were fighting for their freedom. It was a curious charge to be made against a people who had been suffering for the last 200 years. If that was blackmail, then "our understanding of the British language has been wrong".

Concluding, he said, he could not take any more risks and that they should go forward although such step might involve perils and risks.

The attitude of the Government was one of defeatism. He could not tolerate it. His only object was to remove the defeatists and put in their place valiant fighters (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942).

APPENDIX VI

EXTRACTS FROM MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD'S SPEECH
AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 7, 1942

The extraordinary danger which India was facing was such that they could not face it, unless they had in their hands the reins of power. Danger was knocking at India's doors and it was necessary that they should make all preparations to check the enemy as soon as he jumped into our courtyard. That could be done only when they used every power in their possession. At Allahabad it had been decided that if Japan stepped into the land, they would resist aggression with all their non-violent strength; but during the last three months the world had not stood still. It had moved

fast. The sound of war drums was coming nearer, while the world was flowing in blood, and nations were fighting and pouring out their life-blood to preserve their precious possession of freedom.

The Congress had made repeated proposals to Britain to give the people of India that freedom which would enable them to fight the aggressor. They had not asked for the keys of power so that they could sit back and make merry. That was not the way of the world today. The whole world was straining at its leash, was rushing towards freedom. In those circumstances, if they felt that conditions in India required a change, if they felt that their only salvation lay in making and bringing about drastic changes, then they should take such steps as would bring about those changes. At the same time they had to consider the possible consequences of their step on the entire world. They had to weigh the consequences of their action and inaction carefully in the balance.

WHEN INDIANS WILL FIGHT

Therefore the Working Committee had passed a resolution three weeks ago, after fully considering their responsibilities, their duties, the consequences of their action and how best they could achieve their object. Their view was that unless some change was brought about at once, the same fate which overtook Burma, Malaya and Singapore would overtake this country also. If they wanted to fight for the safety, freedom and honour of India, it was necessary that they should cast off the shackles that were holding them down, to shake off that lethargy and go to work in an entirely new spirit. It was only when they felt that they were fighting for something which they held sacred that the people of this country could fight, pour out their energy and blood and lay down their lives. They had made repeated appeals and entreaties to bring about this change and as they had failed, it had become their duty to take a positive step. That step was certainly fraught with hardships; but they could do nothing unless they were prepared to suffer hardships and make sacrifices. It was only by suffering and strife that they could achieve anything at all. That was the meaning of the resolution of July 14. During these three weeks the message had spread throughout the land. The resolution only reiterated the position which they had always taken. As long as three years ago, the Congress had made its position clear and had cast its lot in favour of democracy and against Fascism. Nothing that they had done since then was inconsistent with this fundamental position. They had always said that they would whole-heartedly aid the cause of freedom and democracy, if they were free. For freedom itself they could wait. But the present question was not merely of freedom, but of their very existence. If they survived and lived, they could have freedom. But the position now was that they could not live and survive without freedom.

TWICE TESTED

Continuing, the Congress President said that the demand they were putting forward before Britain and the United Nations was to be judged by the one and the only test, and that test was whether for the sake of the defence of India, for her very survival, freedom was necessary. India had become a vital field of battle. If India were free, she could have kindled a new light throughout the land and the cry of victory would ring from every corner. No army could wage a relentless war unless it had behind it an administration which had the fullest popular support. If anybody could show them that what they were doing would contribute to the defeat of freedom powers, they would be prepared to change their course. But, if the argument was merely a threat holding out the prospect of civil war and chaos, he for one would tell them: 'It is our right to wage a civil war; it is our responsibility to face chaos.'

Proceeding, the Congress President observed that having thus once tested the gold of their demand they took the bright gold and applied to it yet another test and that test was: 'Are we contributing to others' defeat, to others' misfortune?'

If their demand was such that it would not contribute to the strength of the freedom powers, would not promote the cause of those powers fighting with valour for their freedom, they would never have put it forward. They had considered this question for full nine days. And the Congress President said: "Our demand is twice-tested pure gold." He challenged: "Is the British Government prepared to allow its actions and policies to be subjected to these same tests?"

Answering critics of the Congress, he said that there was no right thinking man who would not accept the tests he had propounded as valid. It was the duty of the critics to understand their position correctly and not merely to give it a bad name.

In this connection he referred to the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps that if the Congress demand was accepted, the whole Government from the Viceroy to the sepoy would have to leave. This was misrepresentation with a vengeance. Their resolution had said in clear terms that as soon as Britain or the Allied nations declared India's independence, India would enter into a treaty with Britain for the carrying out of the administration and the conduct of the war to victory. They had not asked that all the Government officials should go home bag and baggage, and after reaching England, return to India for negotiations. Gandhiji had repeatedly made it clear that "Quit India" demand meant only the removal of the British power and not the physical removal of British officers, administrators and army personnel. All of them, including the armies of Britain and the Allies, would continue to stay here—only under an agreement with us and not against our will as at present. Not to see this clear point was suicidal blindness.

SIMULTANEOUS DECISION ON BOTH ISSUES

The Maulana stated: "There was a time for mere promises. But the resolution of July 14 makes one thing clear, namely, the condition of India and of the world has reached a stage when it was absolutely necessary that everything should be done at once. What we ask for from Britain and the Allied powers should be done here and now. We do not rely on mere promises about the future. We have had bitter experiences of promises having been broken. They also suspect our promise to fight with them against the Axis. Let us come together today, and simultaneously decide both the issues —the freedom of India and India's complete participation in the war efforts. Let there be simultaneous declaration of India's independence and the signing of a treaty between India and the United Nations. If you do not trust us in this, we cannot trust you either."

Concluding, Maulana Azad observed that even in this grave hour when every minute counted, we had decided to make one last minute appeal to the United Nations to demonstrate to them that the object of India and the Allied powers was the same, that their interests were the same, that the satisfaction of India's demand would promote the welfare of the Allies. But if the Allies were obdurate and deaf to all appeals, it was their clear duty to do what they could to achieve freedom (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942).

APPENDIX VII

EXTRACTS FROM SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S PUBLIC SPEECHES

August 2, 1942

(A) AT CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY

The war was coming nearer India, and the fall of Malaya, Singapore and Burma which were lost led India to consider all possible steps to prevent a similar fate.

Gandhiji and the Congress thought that such a situation could be avoided, if only the British left the country. Public sympathy and co-operation was necessary to keep the enemy away. If the British left the country, the people could be galvanized and could be made to fight in the same manner as the Russians and the Chinese.

It was also Gandhiji's belief that as long as an imperialist power remained, it could also act as a temptation to another imperialist power to covet this land, and in this vortex of imperialist ambitions, war would extend and continue. The only way to stop this was to end the imperialist regime. . . .

The Congress did not desire anarchy or the defeat of the British power. But they found themselves helpless. The curtain had to be rung down before further harm could be done. If the independence of the country was secured, then the Congress

would have achieved its goal. It was prepared to give a pledge now that the Congress organization would be disbanded, if that purpose was fulfilled . . . (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3 8-1942).

(B) AT SURAT

Let Britain only transfer power to Indian hands, whether it is to the Muslim League or any other party, and the Congress is prepared to dissolve itself, declared Sardar Patel, addressing a public meeting here. The Sardar added that the Congress was started with independence of India as its main and only goal and once that was achieved, the body would willingly cease to function (Associated Press of India—*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-8-1942).

(C) AT THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

August 7, 1942

NO SECRET PLANS

Referring to the charge levelled against the Congress Working Committee that it had secret plans, the speaker said that there was nothing secret about the Congress plans. There were no differences of opinion among the members of the Working Committee regarding the means of achieving India's independence.

Japan professed love for India and promised her freedom. But India was not going to be fooled by the Axis broadcasts. If Japan genuinely wished to secure freedom for India, why did the Japanese Government still continue the war against China? It would be Japan's duty to set China free before talking of India's freedom.

FOLLOW MAHATMA'S LEAD

Referring to the struggle ahead, Sardar Vallabhbhai said that it would be strictly non-violent. Many people were anxious to know the details of the programme. Gandhiji was going to place the details before the nation when the time came. The nation would be called upon to follow him. In case of arrest of the leaders, it would be the duty of every Indian to be his own guide. It was necessary to bear in mind that no nation had won independence without sacrifices (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-8-1942).

APPENDIX VIII

EXTRACTS FROM DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD'S SPEECH AT THE BIHAR PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

July 31, 1942

Explaining the implications of the present Wardha resolution, Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasized that it was not going to be mere jail-going this time. It was going

to be more drastic, calling for the worst repression—shooting, bombing, confiscation of property, all were possible. Congressmen, therefore, had to join the movement fully conscious that they might be exposed to all these. The new plan of action included all forms of satyagraha based on pure non-violence and this was going to be the last struggle for the independence of India. They could face all the armed might of the world with non-violence, the greatest weapon in the armoury of satyagraha, he declared.

But the Congress had now come to the conclusion that there could be no unity until British power disappeared. The foreign element in the body politic of the country created such new problems that they proved difficult of solution. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, was now of the definite opinion that there could be no unity in India without swaraj, though formerly he held the opposite view. This opinion was the result of bitter experience and the outcome of the Cripps mission.

Concluding, Dr. Rajendra Prasad affirmed that the Congress had no quarrel with anyone. The Congress only hoped to convert its opposition by its suffering and sacrifice. He was confident that the opposition would also join them in the great cause of India's freedom (*The Bombay Chronicle, Weekly, 2-8-1942*)¹

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, pp. 76-213, and *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 34-111. Also from a photostat: C.W. 10385. Courtesy: India Office Library

260. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

July 16, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

SIR,

I observe from the daily papers that there is a persistent rumour going round that I have written to His Excellency the Viceroy withdrawing the A.I.C.C resolution of the 8th August last. I observe, too, that much speculation is being built upon the rumour. I suggest that the Government should issue a contradiction of the rumour. For, I

¹ For Appendix IX, the concluding one, which contained Gandhiji's letter dated August 14, 1942, to the Viceroy, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 14-8-1942. For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Resolutions Passed by Congress Working Committee", 14-7-1942.

have neither the authority nor the wish to withdraw the resolution. My personal opinion is that the resolution was the only one the A.I.C.C. could have passed, if the Congress was to make any effective contribution to the cause of human freedom which is involved in the immediate independence of India.¹

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, p. 32. Also from a photostat: C.W. 10379
a. Courtesy: India Office Library

**261. LETTERTOADDITIONALSECRETARY,HOME
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

September 10, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

On 15th July last I handed to the Superintendent of this camp for despatch to you my reply² to the Government of India publication entitled *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. As yet I have no acknowledgment of the receipt of my reply, let alone answer to what I hold to be complete refutation of the charges set forth against me in that publication.³

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 111-2

¹ The addressee, in his reply dated July 29, said that the Government of India did not "think it necessary to issue a contradiction of the rumour". According to *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. IV, p. 97, in the course of a cable

to the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy reported that, the Government had, however, informed the Press in reply to enquiries that there was no foundation for the rumour.

² *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

³ The addressee, in his reply dated September 20, said that it was "still under consideration".

262. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI¹

September 16, 1943

RESPECTED KATELI SAHEB,

You have informed me that the Central Provinces Government desires to release me, since I was detained by that Government, but that if I want to stay here, I can do so under the present restrictions. In reply to this, I have to say that I have come here only to serve Smt. Kasturba Gandhi and, so long as she wants me here, I shall stay with her under the present restrictions.

Truly speaking, I should ascertain the wishes of my father, but I think that he will certainly want me to stay here to look after her. I understand that if I wish to, I can obtain my release; hence there is no need to ascertain the wishes of my father. However, when I write to my father, I shall let him know my desire to stay here for the present.

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

263. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Personal

DETENTION CAMP,
September 27, 1943

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

On the eve of your departure from India, I would like to send you a word.

Of all the high functionaries I have had the honour of knowing, none has been the cause of such deep sorrow to me as you have been. It has cut me to the quick to have to think of you as having countenanced untruth, and that regarding one whom, at one time, you considered as your friend. I hope and pray that God will some day put it into your heart to realize that you, a representative of a great nation, had been led into a grievous error.

With good wishes,²

*I still remain,
Your friend,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10394. Courtesy: British High Commission, New Delhi

¹ This was drafted by Gandhiji for Manu Gandhi, daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi.

² The addressee, in his reply dated October 7 said: "I am indeed sorry that your feelings about any deeds or words of mine should be as you describe. But I must be allowed, as gently as I may, to make plain to you that I am quite unable to accept your interpretation of the events in question. As per the corrective virtues of time and reflection, evidently these are ubiquitous in their operation and wisely to be rejected by no man."

264. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI¹

October 2, 1943

SHRI KHAN BAHADUR SAHEB,

You have sent me a copy of the reply given by the Government of Bombay to my letter. Pyarelalji has translated it to me. I understood the first letter of the Bombay Government according to my lights. But now I understand that, once I convey my intention to stay here, I cannot subsequently change my mind. This does not fully conform to the complete idea of 'one's free will'. But I have come here and am staying here for the sake of service. That is why I accept the condition laid in the reply to my letter, and it suits me well. Why should a *sevika* even entertain any wishes of her own? So long as revered Kasturba is here, I shall also be here.²

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

265. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

DETENTION CAMP,
October 26, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY

HOME DEPARTMENT

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter³ of 14th instant received on 18th instant.

2. Your letter makes it clear that my reply⁴ to the charges brought against me in the Government publication *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, has failed in its purpose, namely, to convince the Government of my innocence of those charges. Even my good faith is impugned.

¹ This was drafted by Gandhiji for Manu Gandhi.

² *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Ardeshir E. Kateli", 16-9-1943.

³ *Vide* Appendix "Letter to Sir Richard Tottenham", 14-10-1943.

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1942.

3. I observe, too, that the Government did not desire “comments” upon the charges. Previous pronouncements of the Government on such matters had led me to think otherwise. Be that as it may, your current letter seems to invite an answer.

4. In my opinion, I have, in my letter of 15th July last, unequivocally answered all charges referred to in your letter under reply. I have no regret for what I have done or said in the course of the struggle for India’s freedom.

5. As to the Congress resolution of 8th August, 1942, apart from my belief that it is not only harmless but good all round, I have no legal power to alter it in any way. That can only be done by the body that passed that resolution, i.e., the All-India Congress Committee which is no doubt guided by its Working Committee. As the Government are aware, I offered¹ to meet the members of the Working Committee in order to discuss the situation and to know their mind. But my offer was rejected. I have thought and still think that my talk with them might have some value from the Government standpoint. Hence I repeat my offer.² But it may have no such value so long as the Government doubt my *bona fides*. As a satyagrahi, however, in spite of the handicap, I must reiterate what I hold to be good and of immediate importance in terms of war effort. But if my offer has no chance of being accepted so long as I retain my present views, and if the Government think that it is only my evil influence that corrupts people, I submit that the members of the Working Committee and other detenus should be discharged. It is unthinkable that when India’s millions are suffering from preventable starvation and thousands are dying of it, thousands of men and women should be kept in detention on mere suspicion, when their energy and the expense incurred in keeping them under duress could, at this critical time, be usefully employed in relieving distress. As I have said in my letter of 15th July last, Congressmen abundantly proved their administrative, creative and humanitarian worth at the time of the last

¹ Vide “Letter to Lord Linlithgow”, 19-1-1943.

² The offer was again rejected. In his letter dated November 18, the addressee said: “I am directed to say that since there is no change in your attitude towards the Congress resolution of August 8, 1942, and Government have received no indication that the views of any of the Members of the Working Committee differ from your own, a meeting between you would appear to serve no useful purpose. Both you and they are all aware of the conditions on which such a proposal could be entertained. I am to add that the other points in your letter have been noted.”

terrible flood in Gujarat, and equally terrible earthquake in Bihar. The huge place in which I am being detained with a large guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

6. As to “satisfactory assurances” about my “good conduct”, I can only say that I am unaware of any unworthy conduct at any time. I presume that the impression Government have of my conduct is referable to the charges mentioned in the indictment, as I have succinctly called, *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. And since I have not only denied the charges *in toto* but, on the contrary, have ventured to bring counter-charges against the Government, I think that they should agree to refer both to an impartial tribunal. Seeing that a big political organization and not a mere individual is involved in the charges, I hold that it should be a vital part of the war effort to have the issue decided by a tribunal, if mutual discussion and effort are considered by the Government to be undesirable and/or futile.

7. Whilst your letter rejects my request that my letter of 15th July last should, in fairness to me, be published¹, you inform me that their decision in this matter, however, “is without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them”. I can only hope that this does not mean that as in the case of the *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, garbled extracts will be published. My request is that my letter should be published in full, if and when the Government think fit to make public use of it.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 114-5. Also from a photostat: C.W. 10380. Courtesy: India Office Library

¹ It was published by the Government of India on June 21, 1944.

*266. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA*

DETENTION CAMP,
November 16, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (HOME DEPARTMENT)
NEW DELHI
SIR,

Dr. Nayyar¹, whom the Government of India, or maybe the Government of Bombay have placed with me, received on the 12th instant a wire addressed to her by her brother² who is a railway employee in New Delhi, to the effect that his wife had a Caesarian operation and had lost so much blood, that he had applied for Dr. Nayyar's temporary discharge. This wire was received in Yeravda, as appears from the date marked on it, on the morning of the 5th. The second wire, which was sent from New Delhi on the 9th instant and received at Yeravda on the same afternoon, was delivered to her on the 15th instant. The wire reports the patient's death. Dr. Nayyar has already complained about the delay in the delivery of the first wire. She is naturally prostrate with grief which has been aggravated by the delay in the delivery of the wires. I do not know that, if she were a condemned criminal, the news of the death of a dear one would be withheld from her as this has been, without any cause that I can guess. It seems to me that those who are lodged with me have to suffer extra hardship by reason of their being so lodged. For, it is not only Dr. Nayyar who has to suffer, others do likewise. Thus Dr Gilder is debarred from receiving visits even from his ailing wife or his daughter. Little Manu Gandhi can receive neither her father nor her sisters, nor can my wife receive visits from her sons or grandchildren. I discount the fact that the former could have gone out if she resented the restrictions. I know too, that my son Ramdas was permitted to visit his mother when she was very ill. I do not understand this denial of ordinary rights of prisoners. I can understand the restrictions against me by reason of the Government's

¹ Dr. Sushila Nayyar

² Mohanlal Nayyar; *vide* "Talk with Nirmala and Devdas Gandhi", 7-12-1943.

special displeasure against me. But the restrictions on the others it is difficult to understand, unless it be that the Government do not trust those who are put in charge of us. On any other basis it is difficult to understand why the Superintendent of the camp, or even the Inspector-General, cannot deal with the wires of the nature I have referred to, and with the visitors who may be permitted to visit the co-detenus.

I request early relief.¹

I am,
Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3922. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 46, p. 5

**267. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY**

DETENTION CAMP,
November 16, 1943

THE SECRETARY,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (H.D.)
BOMBAY

SIR,

I enclose herewith for dispatch a letter² addressed to the Government of India, but it need not be dispatched, if the Government

¹ The Bombay Government's reply dated November 23 read: "Government most regrets that there has been so much delay in the transmission to Miss Nayyar of the two telegrams addressed to her. Arrangements have now been made by which telegrams will be handled more expeditiously. . . . On the subject of Dr. Gilder's interviews with members of his family, a letter was recently received from his daughter, and it has been referred to the Government of India. A copy of your letter under reference has now been forwarded to the Government of India in continuation. . . ." A letter dated November 30, addressed to Gandhiji from the Government of India, read: "Government of India have agreed to allow Dr. Gilder to have an interview with his wife and daughter under certain conditions, and they will be prepared to consider requests for similar interviews under suitable conditions for other members of the party who are detained with you, if any special need for them arises."

² *Vide* the preceding item.

of Bombay can *suo moto* deal with the matters referred to therein. My object is to secure as prompt a relief as possible.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3923. Also from Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 46, p. 17

268. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

November 18, 1943

When I asked Bapuji as to how we should deal with dangerous wild animals such as tigers, bears, panthers, etc., and also snakes and scorpions, he said:

It is a difficult question. If I am to give a definite answer for acting upon, I must debate it in my mind for a while.

I suggested to Bapuji that it was a question which we would have to settle on a nation-wide scale before long, and I would ask him again after he had thought it over for two or three days. When I again asked Bapuji he replied:

If I were faced with the option of killing a tiger or a snake, or otherwise being killed by it, I would rather be killed by it than take its life. But that is a personal position, not to be put forward for adoption by others. If I had the fearless power to tame these dangerous creatures by the force of my love and my will, and could show others how to do likewise, then I should have the right to advise other people to follow my example.

But I have not that power. I must, therefore, advise others to kill all creatures, dangerous to human life, such as tigers, bears, snakes, scorpions, etc., and also vermin such as fleas, flies and mosquitoes as well as rats and other crop-destroying vermin. It should be done in the most human way possible, and with regard to vermin, which is often the outcome of carelessness and dirt, we should try to live in such a way as not to give rise to its occurrence.

"Then," I replied, "this means that you are no longer satisfied with the catching of snakes, rats, etc., and the turning of them loose elsewhere, as is done in Sevagram and other places."

That is so. If one is not prepared to live in the company of these creatures oneself, one has no right to turn them loose on other people's lands. For that is what it comes to. One may remove them

from the Ashram and let them go in a jungly place, but that jungly place also belongs to someone, and women and children will, as likely as not, be going there to gather cow-dung and wood, or if it is rats one is letting loose, they will be sure to find their way to the nearest fields. One has either got to live with these creatures or destroy them. And to turn one's own place into a vermin sanctuary is not fair on one's neighbours either. Therefore live cleanly and carefully, and if even then these creatures appear, they must be destroyed.

Then I said to Bapuji: "Seeing that tigers, bears, etc., have got to be killed, and that in the most human way possible, should not some suitable person in each village be provided with a rifle?"

That is a difficult question. If one man may have a rifle, why not all people who are capable of handling arms. But be that as it may, if rifles are to be used and one man is to be chosen for the job, I think he should be elected by the villagers.¹

This is correct but I am not satisfied as it appears in cold writing.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9103

*269. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY*

DETENTION CAMP,
December 1, 1943

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (HOME DEPARTMENT)
BOMBAY

SIR,

I write this in continuation of my letter² of November 16, 1943. As the Government are aware, Dr. Nayyar's brother's wife who had an abdominal operation for delivery, died leaving behind a week-old infant. The only female member of the family is Dr. Nayyar's mother, a widowed old lady, who is a chronic invalid. Dr. Nayyar received from her brother in New Delhi the following wire on November 16, 1943:

¹ What follows is in Gandhiji's hand with the signature in Devanagari.

² *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 16-11-1943

Proposing sending you baby with Prakash, Government permitting. Wire approval applying Government you yourself too.

To this she sent the following reply on November 17, 1943:

Just received wire. Permission improbable. Hence advise Prakash, Satya alternatively staying with mother till baby out of danger.

She has had no reply yet from her brother. But she has now heard from her uncle's daughter, Dr. Prakash Nayyar, who is Assistant Superintendent at the Bettiah Raj Hospital (Bihar). She went to Delhi specially for the purpose of helping the bereaved family. She says, she cannot stay any length of time in Delhi, and is strongly of opinion that the best place for the motherless baby is near Dr. Nayyar. Dr. Satyavati Malhotra (Satya) is also a cousin and is serving in the Lady Dufferin Hospital, Quetta. A postcard was received from her on 29th ultimo saying that she cannot get leave to go to Delhi till January next. Dr. Nayyar tells me, she would gladly take charge of the baby, if the Government can see their way to grant the necessary permission. Naturally the responsibility regarding the baby would be solely hers. It would be the best way out of the difficulty. If, however, Government cannot grant the permission, the next best thing would be to grant Dr. Nayyar a brief parole (say, two months') to enable her to look after the baby during the initial period and make arrangements for its future care. Dr. Nayyar has been placed here, according to the Government communique of 30th August, 1942, for my sake. She has been medical attendant to my wife and me for several years. She and her brother are like our children. Therefore, even her temporary absence will be for us a deprivation. Dr. Gilder was brought here during my fast. His aid is, of course, inestimable both on account of his great knowledge and experience. But for obvious reasons he cannot replace Dr. Nayyar. Moreover she is effectively dividing the secretarial work with her brother. I know it is open to the Government to take away both the doctors from us. I simply mention the facts as they are, to help the Government to a correct decision. Whatever the inconvenience to my wife and to me, we would rather that Dr. Nayyar got the parole if she cannot have the baby here.

As the suspense is great, and as the life of the baby hangs in the balance, may I request an early decision? If the Bombay Government have not the power of decision in their hands, this letter

may be kindly treated as addressed to the Government of India and the decision obtained through the phone.¹

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 1110(108), p. 13. Courtesy:
Government of Maharashtra

270. TALK WITH NIRMALA AND DEVDAS GANDHI²

December 7, 1943

3.30 to 4.35 p.m.

Talk about domestic affairs and enquiry about the health of relations, friends and some people of Sevagram Ashram.

Mrs. Ramdas asked about the health of other inmates of the palace.

Mrs. Ramdas said that Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, with whom she is now staying, had sent word that he was willing to offer his services for Mrs. Gandhi, if permitted by the Government. . . .

Mr. Gandhi told her to inform Mr. Ramdas that there was no need for him to come from Nagpur for the present.

4.45 to 6.45 p.m.

After making mutual enquiries about the family members, Mr. Devdas mentioned about the talk which took place between him and Sir Richard Tottenham, before he left Delhi for Poona, regarding (1) Nayyar's family, (2) the newly-born baby of her [brother] Mohanlal Nayyar, and (3) whether he would discuss with his father about some political affairs. Mr. Devdas said that he was not permitted by Sir Richard to discuss about the political affairs.

Then they talked and discussed lengthily about the baby's care and where and how to arrange for it and also about the release on parole of Dr. Nayyar. During the parole discussion Mr. Gandhi said that it was the duty of every satyagrahi to court jail again, if released. He also said that he was in correspondence with the Government about the baby and regular monthly interviews for other inmates of this camp.³ Some

¹ In his letter dated December 11, the addressee "regretted that neither request could be granted".

² This and the following item are extracted from enclosures to a secret letter dated March 9, 1943, addressed to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay, by the officer-in-charge, Aga Khan Palace, who described these as "notes taken at the time of interviews".

³ *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 16-11-1943, and the preceding item.

talk took place about the Bengal famine, and Mr. Devdas said that latterly some good arrangements were being made and the funds raised were used through public hands and not through Government.

Mr. Devdas asked his father how he passed his time. Mr. Gandhi replied that he taught Sanskrit to Dr. Nayyar and Miss Manu, and the major part of his time was passed in preparing an index in all subjects from the various newspapers and filing the cuttings from the papers.¹

Mr. Gandhi said that there was some correspondence between him and Government of India on *Congress Responsibility*, and he had asked² the Government to release the correspondence but Government had refused.

From the replies received from Government, I understand that I will be kept in custody for five years more. . . .

Enquiry about health of: Prithvi Singh, Jayaprakash, Pandit Govind Malaviya, Vallabhbhai and Meherali.

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 76-1, Secret, Home Department, Special Branch (6), 1943-44. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

271. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI³

December 9, 1943

4.15 to 5.20 p.m.

Mr. Devdas informed his father about the telegram he had sent to Sir Richard Tottenham regarding the condition of his mother.

He asked his father whether he received the following newspapers: *Free Press*, *Social Reformer* and *Indian Express*.

Mr. Gandhi replied that these papers were not supplied to him, though a copy of *Reformer* came during the week.

Enquiry about the health of: Prabhudas Gandhi, Narahari Parikh, Kishorelal Mashruwala and Rajaji.

Mr. Gandhi said about the ill-health of Mirabehn that she was getting acute pain in her back and arm for the last six months. Doctors, civil surgeons and specialists examined and treated her but there was no visible relief. . . .

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 76-1, Secret, Home Department, Special Branch (6), 1943-44. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

¹ For a detailed report of Gandhiji's daily routine, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Officer-in-Charge, Aga Khan Palace to Inspector-General of Prisons, Poona", 15-12-1943.

² *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 26-10-1943.

³ *Vide* 1st footnote of "Talk with Nirmala and Devdas Gandhi", 7-12-1943.

**272. LETTER TO ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, HOME
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

DETENTION CAMP,
December 14, 1943

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

HOME DEPARTMENT

NEW DELHI

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter about Dr. Nayyar of 6th instant in reply to mine¹ of the 1st instant. It was received yesterday afternoon together with that of the Government of Bombay after 12 days of suspense and anxiety. I am sorry that the Government could not recognize the humanity underlying my alternative request. In the absence of reasons for the unexpected decision, my conclusion, that the punishment inflicted by the decision on the Nayyar family is due to Dr. Nayyar being housed with me, receives additional strength. The sorrow caused by the decision is somewhat balanced by the fact that the baby, as far as can be judged, is still living.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 1110 (108), p. 27. Courtesy:
Government of Maharashtra

273. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
December 22, 1943

SIR,

This letter is to approach the Government about Shri Mirabehn who, forsaking the easy life of her English home came to me 19 years ago in search of things of the spirit for which her heart had been yearning. I feel, therefore, a special responsibility for her welfare.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 1-12-1943.

Now, she has been suffering for the last seven months from pains in the region of the left shoulder blade, which often extend from the neck to the tips of her fingers. She wrote to the Inspector-General of Prisons describing her condition, and I understand her letter is before the Government.

Lt. Col. Shah consulted the Civil Surgeon of Poona and the treatment he advised was carried out but without substantial benefit. The Civil Surgeon then very kindly consulted Captain Simcox, R. A. M. C. of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, who had made a special study of this condition. He immediately diagnosed her case as adhesions, for which he said four or five manipulations together with daily exercises would be necessary. He gave her the first manipulation then and there. Unfortunately he had to leave the same day for Karachi and is not likely to return to Poona. Shri Mirabehn has done her best with the exercises and the arm has considerably improved, but pains persist, and whenever she is a little run down, has a slight temperature or a sore throat, the pains return in full force and disable her for any work for some days. She has become anxious lest the trouble may become chronic, and permanently incapacitate her for an active life.

I would suggest that she be either transferred to wherever Captain Simcox may be at present for completion of the manipulations started by him, or that she be released on parole for getting available treatment. I am sure the Government would not wish her to be permanently damaged.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : India Office Library and Records. Courtesy : The British Library, London

274. TALK WITH MIRABEHN

December 24, 1943

The fundamental essential in non-violence is right thinking.

It may be asked — 'What is right thinking?' Right thinking is not right contemplation or right planning; it is right conception of fundamentals, for example, 'God is' is right thinking, and 'God is not' is wrong thinking. 'I must be honest' is right thinking, 'I may be

dishonest', is wrong thinking.

When the mind is habituated to right thinking, right action follows spontaneously, but when the mind turns to wrong thinking, wrong action will follow. And, even if circumstances lead one¹ to right action, if the mind is given to wrong thinking, the right action will be lacking in convincing force, and it will also not bring to the doer all the fruits² of right action.

Non-violence without right thinking will never carry within itself the vital power of faith—or, if you prefer, conviction. Nor will the man who is not a habitual right thinker be able to depend on himself to act rightly (even if he wants to) at a given moment.

The foregoing is the cream of a conversation I had with Bapuji during the morning walk on December 24, 1943.

After discussing the meaning of right thinking, Bapuji applied it to the present situation in the country. He pointed out how lack of right thinking led people to seek advancement of India through co-operation with evil (in the form of the British system). They pursue false hopes and empty promises. And again it is wrong thinking which fills them with fear of the growing consolidation of the Muslims. All these things are illusions after which and from which they run because they lack the right conception of fundamentals.

During the talk Bapuji said in parenthesis one very striking thing. When he gave, as an illustration of wrong thinking, 'I may be dishonest', he added:

Of course there is no such thing as 'I must be dishonest.'³

Correct, December 29, 1943.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 9104

¹ Gandhiji had substituted the word for Mirabehn's expression: "the reason".

² Mirabehn's note has: "doer the true fruits".

³ What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

275. *LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON*¹

DETENTION CAMP,
December 29, 1943

DEAR AGATHA,

It was a perfect pleasure to receive your unexpected letter yesterday afternoon. Dr. Gilder and Mira and Pyarelal and Sushila have shared it with me. I gave Ba its gist. She is oscillating between life and death. The complications are many and great. She is receiving all the attention possible in a detention camp.

As for the subject matter of your letter, I am the same man you have known me. The spirit of Andrews is ever with me. But suspicion about my motives and utter distrust of my word in high places has hitherto rendered every move made by me nugatory. However, I am watching, waiting and praying. Truth and non-violence remain my sheet-anchor as never before. They sustain me. I do not give up the hope that light will shine through the surrounding darkness.

Much love to you and all our friends,

Yours,
BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON S.W.11

From a photostat: G.N. 1524; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I, p. 13

¹ The addressee was Secretary of India Conciliation Group formed in 1931 by members of the Society of Friends and others. According to the G.N. source, she said: "In past years it had been possible to write to Gandhiji in prison. Now this was not possible. So I asked the India Office to let me send a few letters through them, *via* the Viceroy. In the one to which this is in answer, I wrote at length giving him an interpretation, as I saw it, of the situation here after the resolution, etc." For excerpts from the letter, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Agatha Harrison", 2-12-1943.

*276. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY*

DETENTION CAMP,
December 29, 1943

THE SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (H.D.)
BOMBAY

SIR,

The Superintendent of this camp gave me yesterday afternoon a letter from Miss Agatha Harrison. According to her letter, she wrote to me by permission of the Rt. Hon. Secretary of State for India. I enclose herewith for dispatch to Miss Agatha Harrison my reply¹ to her letter.

I am,

Yours, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3924; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 13-I, p. 11

277. LETTER TO ARDESHIR E. KATELI

DETENTION CAMP,
January 6, 1944

BHAI KHAN BAHADUR,

After the talk I had with my son Devdas today, I have ascertained Kasturba's wishes which are as follows:

1. In case Kanu Gandhi² cannot stay here during patient's illness, he should be allowed to visit her for about an hour daily so that he can sing her some *bhajans* and also do some little nursing. As you are aware, the patient is insistent upon having Kanu as a whole-time nurse.

2. The son and daughters of Jayabehn, whose names I have already given, and Dhirendra Gandhi should be permitted to come and sing and play to her, whenever they can come.

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² Also called 'Kanaio'; younger son of Narandas Gandhi

3. Including my father they were six brothers. Their descendants and sons-in-law would, according to the common practice, be regarded as near relations. Such of them whose names may be sent up by Devdas, Shamaldas or Jamnadas Gandhi, should be permitted to come and see her. The idea underlying this is that if some of the relations can see the patient once a week, it would give her some mental peace. In case they are given the permission, it is necessary that those who can come should be able to see her all together. The patient does not mind their number. On the contrary, the greater the number, the more pleased she would be.

4. I must confess that the patient has got into very low spirits. She despairs of life, and is looking forward to death to deliver her. If she rallies on one day, more often than not, she is worse on the next. Her state is pitiful. The aim behind seeking permission for visits from relations is that they may give her some peace.

5. I regard the experiment of having an ayah as having failed. Shrimati Prabhavati Jayaprakash Narayan has done a lot of nursing for the patient before. She is like a daughter to us. Her father himself sent her to stay in the Ashram when she was quite young. If she is sent here, she will be of great help.

I am,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From the photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3925

278. LETTER TO SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM

DETENTION CAMP,
January 13, 1944

SIR,

I beg to thank the Government for their reply to my letter of 22nd ultimo regarding Shri Mirabehn and for the arrangements made to send Capt. Simcox from time to time for the completion of the treatment begun by him.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

THE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
NEW DELHI

From a photostat : India Office Library and Records. Courtesy : The British Library, London

279. MESSAGE TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

[After January 14, 1944]¹

Mahatma Gandhi conveyed his feelings of grief to Mrs. Pandit on the death of her husband through Mr. Devdas Gandhi when the latter saw him during Mrs. Gandhi's illness. Mahatma Gandhi could not write to her personally as he feels his hands are tied. He has asked Mrs. Pandit to remember that henceforth Mr. Pandit would live in her actions.

The Hindu, 19-2-1944

280. LETTER TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

DETENTION CAMP,
January 24, 1944

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

(HOME DEPARTMENT)

BOMBAY

SIR,

I have been served with a notice² showing the cause of my detention and informing me that I have a right to make representation against the order. In the exercise of the right thus conferred upon me, I beg to say as follows:

I admit that I took a leading part in the passage of the Congress resolution of 8th August, 1942. I must deny emphatically that the mass movement sanctioned by the Congress was "calculated to

¹ From the reference to Ranjit Pandit who died in Lucknow on January 14; *vide* also "Letter to Vijayalakshmi Pandit", 1-2-1944.

² Issued by the addressee under Section 7 of the Restriction and Detention Ordinance, 1944 (III of 1944). It reads "(1) In pursuance of Section 7 of Ordinance No. III of 1944, you, MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI, are informed that the grounds for your detention were that you took a leading part in the passing of the Congress resolution of August 8, 1942, sanctioning a mass movement which was calculated to impede the successful prosecution of the war, and there was reason to suppose that, if not detained, you would take an active part in directing the movement. (2) You are informed that you have a right to make a representation in writing against the order under which you are detained. If you wish to make such a representation, you should address it to the undersigned and forward it through the officer-in-charge of your place of detention as soon as possible" (File No. 3/41/44. Courtesy: National Archives of India).

impede the successful prosecution of the war". Moreover I am in a position to show conclusively from my speeches at the Congress meeting and otherwise that there was no intention on my part, as the person in sole charge of the movement, to start it immediately and that, as publicly announced by me, I was to enter into correspondence with H.E. the Viceroy with a view to avoiding the contemplated movement. Had the correspondence proved abortive, being a firm and tried believer in non-violence, I would have taken every precaution to keep the movement under restraint.

By their hasty and ill-conceived action in arresting me and leading Congressmen, the Government goaded the populace to acts which they would otherwise have never done and thus did disservice to the Allied cause. By their persistence in continuing the unfortunate policy of August 1942, the Government are increasing the existing bitterness between the Government and the people. And this I say in spite of the fact that they are able to procure recruits and money enough for the military.

I have little hope of getting a fair or impartial hearing for my representation. By their pamphlet *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*, Government have condemned unheard Congressmen and me. That pamphlet bristles with inaccuracies and reckless statements.

In view of the foregoing, I ask for an open investigation by an independent tribunal into the charges against the Congress, Congressmen and me, and counter-charges against the Government, or, in the alternative, the discharge of detained Congressmen and myself.¹

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6642

¹ This letter was forwarded, on January 26, to Sir Richard Tottenham who advised the Government of Bombay, on February 17, to send the following reply to Gandhiji: "Government have considered your representation and have decided not to cancel the order under which you are detained. The order will, therefore, remain in force until July 15, 1944, unless sooner revoked or Government decide to extend it under Section 7 of ordinance No. III (File No. 3-41-44. Courtesy: National Archives of India).

281. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI¹

January 26, 1944

Mr. Devdas suggested that some country medicine should be tried for his mother. She has faith in Ayurvedic physician. Mr. Gandhi replied that Devdas should try for this and approach Government for allowing some vaidya to treat her. Further he said that he was going to write to Government for allowing Dinshaw Mehta² and Shiv Sharma of Lahore to give treatment to Mrs. Gandhi.

Mr. Devdas said that Mr. Pyarelal and Miss Nayyar were not applying to the authority for interview with their mother. . . . He applied to the Government of India three times on behalf of their mother for the interview, but the request was turned down. Mr. Gandhi replied that he had once written³ to Government on the subject and would write again.

Bombay Secret Abstracts: Home Department, Special Branch (6), File No. 76-I, 1943-44

¹ This is extracted from a letter dated January 27, 1944, addressed to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay, by the Officer-in-charge, Aga Khan Palace.

² Of the Nature-cure Clinic, Poona

³ Probably the reference is to Gandhiji's suggestion to the Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, for two months' parole to Dr. Sushila Nayyar; *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Home Department, Government of Bombay", 1-12-1943.

APPENDIX I

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE¹

July 14, 1942

The events happening from day to day and the experience that the people of India are passing through confirm the opinion of Congressmen that British rule in India must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination even at its best is an evil in itself and a continuing injury to the subject people, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in defending herself and in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating humanity. The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interest of India, but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Fascism, militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another. Ever since the outbreak of the World War, the Congress has studiously pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment carried to its logical extreme would be duly appreciated and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realization of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's hold on India.

These hopes have, however, been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British Government's attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. In the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Congress representatives tried their utmost to achieve a minimum, consistent with the national demand, but to no avail. This frustration has resulted in a rapid and widespread increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms.

The Working Committee view this development with grave apprehension as this, unless checked, will inevitable lead to a passive acceptance of aggression. The Committee hold that all aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore, and Burma and desires to build up resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the

¹ *Vide* "Draft Resolution for the Congress Working Committee", 9-7-1942.

Japanese or any foreign power. The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into goodwill and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom.

The Congress representatives have tried their utmost to bring about a solution of the communal tangle. But this has been made impossible by the presence of the foreign power and only after the ending of foreign domination and intervention, can the present unreality give place to reality and the people of India, belonging to all groups and parties, face India's problems and solve them on a mutually agreed basis.

The present political parties formed chiefly with a view to attract the attention of and influence the British power, will then probably cease to function. For the first time in India's history, the realization will come home that the Princes, 'jagirdars,' 'zamindars' and propertied and moneyed classes derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially power and authority must belong. On the withdrawal of British rule in India, responsible men and women of the country will come together to form a provisional government, representative of all important sections of the people of India which will later evolve a scheme by which a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a Constitution for the Government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. Representatives of free India and representatives of Great Britain will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the co-operation of the two countries as allies in the common task of meeting aggression.

It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it. In making the proposal for the withdrawal of the British rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increase pressure on China by the Japanese or any other power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the Allied powers.

The Congress is, therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression and to protect and help China. The proposal of withdrawal of the British power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, and certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others. If such a withdrawal takes place with goodwill it would result in the establishing of a stable provisional government in India and co-operation between this government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China. The Congress realizes that there may be

risks involved in such a course. Such risks, however, have to be faced by any country in order to achieve freedom, and more especially at the present critical juncture in order to save the country and the larger cause of freedom the world over from far greater risks and perils. While, therefore, the Congress is impatient to achieve the national purpose it wishes to take no hasty steps and would like to avoid, in so far as is possible any course of action that might embarrass the United Nations. The Congress would be pleased with the British power if it accepts the very reasonable and just proposal herein made not only in the interest of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom, to which the United Nations proclaim their adherence. Should, however, this appeal fail the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and the weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression. The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of the political rights and liberty. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. As issues raised are of the most vital and far-reaching importance to the people of India as well as to the peoples of the United Nations the Working Committee refer them to the All-India Congress Committee for final decision. For this purpose the A.I.C.C. will meet in Bombay on the 7th of August, 1942.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 385-7; also The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 207-9

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI AND OTHERS¹

MADRAS,
July 18, 1942

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

We have carefully read the resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on July 14, which is to be placed before the meeting of the A. I. C. C. next month. In view of the far-reaching consequences of the adoption of this resolution, we feel it our duty, having worked with you since 1920, to place before you our considered views in this matter. While there can be no difference of view over India's demand for complete freedom from foreign domination, the idea of the withdrawal of Government being automatically replaced by another Government is altogether impossible. The State is not a mere superstructure, but is so intimately

¹ *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 20-7-1942.

bound up with the functioning of every activity of the people that the withdrawal of the Government without a simultaneous replacement by another must involve a dissolution of the State and of society itself. It is unnatural for any Government to withdraw without transferring power to a successor by consent or without being forcibly replaced by another. The formation of a provisional government as well as the convening of the Constituents assembly are possible only if the continuity of the State is assured.

We feel, therefore, that, however difficult of achievement the Hindu-Muslim settlement may be, while the British Government is here and functioning, it is essential that, before a demand for withdrawal can be reasonably made, the major political organizations of this country, namely, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, should evolve a joint plan with regard to the provisional government which can take over power and preserve the continuity of the State. Even if we imagine that the British could ever under moral compulsion be made to withdraw unconditionally, we are convinced that the chaos that would follow under existing conditions would not permit within any reasonable time the formation of a provisional government such as you contemplate.

We consider it wrong to formulate a demand which, if complied with, must necessarily lead to anarchy or to frame a programme of widespread self-inflicted suffering based on the refusal of such a demand.

Your proposal that while the civil power may be withdrawn, the British and Allied forces may Continue in India in anticipation of a treaty with a problematic provisional Indian government will only lead to the exercise of all governmental functions by the military forces. This will happen if only for their own safety and effective functioning. They are further likely to be urged towards this step by local chieftains and suffering people. This would be the reinstallation of the British Government in a worse form.

In spite of these objections we might have submitted to your proposal if only because of the fact that the British are not going to withdraw, and in actual operation the movement would amount to a nationwide protest against the existing Government and may be productive of a satisfactory settlement in due course. But the critical international situation in which India is directly involved makes it certain that the party to gain immediately by the movement will be Japan. If the movement could possibly displace the British Government, installing a national government capable of resisting Japanese aggression, it might be worth taking all risks attached to it. But as this result is not even remotely probable, it will only produce more intense and large-scale repression and suffering which will facilitate Japaneses invasion and occupation.

It is hardly likely that the authorities will allow the movement to proceed under central direction in an orderly and direct fashion. Even if we do not mind sporadic violence that may result from lack of proper control, there is another serious danger. When responsible leaders are removed and their guidance is no longer available the movement can easily be taken advantage of by the enemy and be converted into a fifth-column activity on his behalf.

Any movement started by you would have commanded our loyal participation, in spite of differences of opinion, if the movement did not involve such grave consequences as pointed out above. Our conviction is strong enough to make it our duty publicly to oppose the proposal on these grounds. But it may be thought at this stage that your move will operate as a protest with an international appeal and bring about a fresh approach towards a political settlement for India without actually plunging the country in direct action. In order that any step on our part may not lessen this chance we refrain from giving public expression to our opposition but send this letter to entreat you to desist from taking the steps you have adumbrated.

(Sd.) C. Rajagopalachari,
K. Santhanam,
S. Ramanathan,
Dr. T. S. S. Rajan

The Indian Annual Register, 1942. Vol. II, PP. 206-7

APPENDIX III

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI'S FORMULA¹

Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the AII-India Muslim League to which Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve:

(1) Subject to the terms set out below as regards the Constitution for free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim government for the transitional period.

(2) After the termination of the War, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from Hindustan, such decision shall

¹ Vide "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 20-7-1942.

be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State.

(3) It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

(4) In the event of separation, mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes.

(5) Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.

(6) These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India.

Gandhi-Jinnah Talks, p. 36

APPENDIX IV

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

August 5, 1942

I have just seen for the first time the Government's 'communique' issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the A.I.C.C. office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and disjointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-8-1942.

removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the War really became one for freedom for all people, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

The references to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, etc. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1942, and *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government*, 1942-44, pp. 205-6

APPENDIX V

RESOLUTION PASSED BY ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE¹

[August 8, 1942]

The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution, and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity, both for the sake of India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

¹ *Vide* "Interview to the Associated Press", 6-8-1942.

The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and conveys to the Russian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathize with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries, and the continuation of the imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire, instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power, has become a burden and a curse. India, the classic land of modern Imperialism, has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged, and the people of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations, whose ally India would be, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that Imperialism will affect the fortunes of all the United Nations.

The peril of today, therefore, necessitates the independence of India and the ending of British dominations. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

The A. I. C. C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with the Allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields

and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a constituent assembly which will prepare a constitution for the government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to this freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, the Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other colonial power.

While the A. I. C. C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations, and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a world federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

An independent India would gladly join such a world federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

Such a federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the federation must inevitably, to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

The Committee regretfully realizes, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the governments of few countries are yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards world federation. The reactions of the British Government and the misguided criticism of the foreign Press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for India's independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril and to enable India to defend herself and help China and Russia in their hour of

need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia, whose freedom is precious and must be preserved, or to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations, and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression, but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the peoples of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world's need, and sometimes even hostility to India's freedom, which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their cause.

The A. I. C. C. would yet again, at this last moment, in the interest of world freedom, renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian government, which dominates over and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity. The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction, for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilize all the nonviolent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance, and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that nonviolence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress committees can function. When this happens, every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

Lastly, whilst the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when, it comes, will belong to the whole people of India.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 209-11; also Harijan, 9-8-1942 and The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 621-4

APPENDIX VI
LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI¹

48 BAZLULLAH ROAD,
THYAGARAYANAGAR,
MADRAS,
August 8, 1942

MY DEAR BAPU,

I am a great nuisance, but you must bear with me. Your last telegram to the effect that everything is being done in the direction indicated by me, “though not identical” gives me some vague relief. But I urge that the straight approach is better than a suspicious and niggardly one, the very error which we feel the British are guilty of in their dealings with us. This is the psychological moment to give what we must to the Q.A. when he perhaps feels neglected by the British. Do not think he has been forgotten by them or that he has receded into unimportance by reason of the storm raised by you. Others may think so, but you won’t. The British are deliberately refraining from referring to him or to the Muslim question in order to avoid irritation. But the apparent is also....² Going to him now may produce better results than when he. . .³ obviously in the way and therefore important. It may be amusing that I should address a lecture on non-violence to you. But Newton himself may listen to his newest pupil sometimes! And Newton may go wrong if he refuses to do so. Anyway I have your [certifi]cate that did not go to my head at the time you gave that richly. I suppose you will not withdraw them because I have to differ from you now *a la* the nawabs.

You may reiterate and insist as much as you like on non-violence. But there is not a shadow of doubt. The momentum of your present move is wholly —almost wholly—the violence of the Axis powers and the critical state to which the British have been thereby reduced—not the non-violence or love inherent in your proposals and plans. You are scientific enough to see this as plain as the chemist in a laboratory.

What am I driving at? It is this. What you are now doing is not an adventure in non-violence though it may have that delusive appearance. It is generating intense hatred in the British mind as a result of the utilization of the violence of others that they feel you are pitilessly making at a most critical point of time in the war. There

¹ *Vide* “Telegram to C. Rajagopalachari”, 7-8-1942. According to C. R. Narasimhan this was airmailed to Bombay on August 8, and since Gandhiji was arrested early on August 9, he could not have seen it.

² Omissions as in the source

³ *ibid*

is no room in this for fasting and all that. If you undertake it, the great hatred you have generated will prevent the operation of the forces of non-violence. It is politics, pure and simple, and let it be done as politics are done. There is no ahimsa in what you have got the Congress finally to accept or rather what the Congress has got you to accept. Plans suitable only for ahimsa have no place in this.

Love.

RAJA

From a copy: C.W. 10925. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

APPENDIX VII

RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA¹

NEW DELHI,

August 7, 1942

The A. I. C. C. have ratified the resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress on 5th August. That Resolution demands the immediate withdrawal of British power from India, and sanctions “the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale”. The Governor-General in Council has been aware, too, for some days past of dangerous preparations by the Congress Party for unlawful, and in some cases violent activities, directed among other things to the interruption of communications and public utility services, the organization of strikes, tampering with the loyalty of Government servants, and interference with defence measures, including recruitment.

2. The Government of India have waited patiently in the hope that wiser counsels might prevail. They have been disappointed in that hope. To a challenge such as the present there can only be one answer. The Government of India would regard it as wholly incompatible with their responsibilities to the people of India, and their obligations to the Allies, that a demand should be discussed the acceptance of which would plunge India into confusion and anarchy internally, and would paralyze her effort in the common cause of human freedom.

3. For the demand of the Congress leaders there is no warrant. In the view of the Government of India that demand is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with a full sense of responsibility on the part of the leaders of the Congress Party, or a full appreciation by them of the realities of the present situation. The Congress Working Committee admit that “there may be risks involved”. They are right. Acceptance of the resolution must mean the exposure of India to Axis attack from without. Internally the withdrawal of British rule invites civil war, the collapse of law and

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Sir Roger Lumley”, 10-8-1942.

order, the outbreak of communal feud, the dislocation of economic life with its inevitable hardships. Nor can the Government of India accept the claim of the Congress Party to speak for India as a whole. The Congress Party has for long occupied a position of great prominence and great importance in Indian political life. At this day its importance is substantial. But it is the duty of the Government of India to take a balanced view of the interests of all sections of Indian thought and Indian opinion. And looking as they must to the repeated protests even in these last few days by the leaders of great communities and solidly established interests, by so many leaders of liberal thought, by those great sections of the population which are giving unstinted and invaluable support to war against Axis aggression, they are confirmed in their view that that claim has no solid foundation, and that acceptance of the proposals now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the abandonment of all those large and powerful elements in the population which have condemned the course of action proposed by the Congress Party and which resent and resist the widespread dislocation which its acceptance would involve of India's war effort and of the general life of the community.

4. Nor can the Congress leaders claim that only thus can India's future be assured. The Congress Party is not India's mouthpiece, yet, in the interests of securing their own dominance, and in pursuit of their totalitarian policy its leaders have consistently impeded the efforts made to bring India to full nationhood. But for the resistance of the Congress Party to constructive endeavours, India might even now be enjoying self-government. British policy for India's future stands clear. It is that once hostilities cease, India shall devise for herself with full freedom of decision, and on a basis embracing all, and not only a single party, the form of government which she regards as most suited to her conditions: and that in the mean time Indian leaders shall fully participate in the government of their country, and in the counsels of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. The fullest opportunity for the attainment of self-government by the people of India has been guaranteed by His Majesty's Government. It is on the basis fully accepted by His Majesty's Government and by the people of Great Britain, that the fullest opportunity shall be given for the attainment of self-government by the Indian people, that when the day of victory comes the final structure of India's constitution will be erected by Indians themselves. That those guarantees given by the British Parliament and the British people are accepted by the people of India we firmly believe. The suggestion put forward by the Congress Party that the millions of India uncertain as to the future are ready, despite the sad lessons of so many martyr countries, to throw themselves into the arms of the invader is one that the Government of India cannot accept as a true representation of the feeling of the people of this great country.

5. The leaders of the Congress Party have claimed that the withdrawal of British rule "with goodwill" will "result in establishing a stable provisional

government in India, and co-operation between this Government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China". There is no justification for those claims. Nor can the Government of India accept the suggestion that a stable provisional government could be formed in a moment of time within a day or two of the withdrawal of British power. Past experience has shown to their profound regret the existence of the deep differences in this country, the harmonizing of which must be the object of all on whom responsibility falls, the removal of which is the ambition and the hope of the present Government of India. But to deny that those problems confront India today would be to ignore the facts: and the Government of India are satisfied that the interval between the withdrawal of British rule and the establishment of a stable provisional government would provide an open opportunity for the enemies of order and for all dissident elements in the population. In the view of the Government of India it is not too much to say that acceptance of the demand now put forward by the Congress Party must mean the betrayal of the Allies, whether in or outside India, the betrayal in particular of Russia and China, the betrayal of those ideal to which so much support has been given and is given today from the true heart and mind of India, the betrayal of India's fighting men, whose glory is so great, and the betrayal of all those loyal and co-operating elements in India which do not support the Congress Party, but which have played so active and so valuable a part in the prosecution of the War.

6. India has today a government stronger and more representative than ever in the past, a government predominantly Indian and non-official, a government determined to prosecute the War and no less determined to lead India on to her political goal. There is nothing that the Government of India regret more than this challenge at so critical a juncture. But on them there lies the task of defending India, of maintaining India's capacity to wage War, of safeguarding India's interests, of holding the balance between the different sections of her people without fear or favour. That task the Government of India will discharge in face of the challenge now thrown down by the Congress Party with clear determination, but with an anxiety that action shall be preventive of the interruption of war effort and the other dangers to which they have referred rather than punitive, and with a full consciousness of responsibility to India and to the cause of the Allies and of civilization. Their duty is plain, and they have to discharge it, profoundly as they must deplore the situation which they have been called upon to face. They urge the people of India to unite with them in resistance to the present challenge of a party. They appeal to them to lay aside all political differences and for the period of the War to place before all other considerations the defence of their country, and the achievement of those common aims on which depends the future not only of India but of all the freedom-loving peoples of the world.

The Transfer of Power, Vol. II, pp. 600-3

APPENDIX VIII
TALK WITH PYARELAL ON MARXISM

[After August 9, 1942]

. . . After an extensive reading of Marxian literature during his last detention at Poona, he remarked: "I think I could have written Marx better than Marx, provided, of course, I had his scholarship which I do not have. He has the knack of making even simple things appear difficult." . . .

On the fly-leaf of *A Handbook of Marxism* he scribbled: "All for each and each for all." "From each according to his capacity to each according to his need."...

I tried to get him to give his appraisal of some aspects of the Marxist philosophy....

I said, "Marx showed us that our ideologies, institutions, and ethical standards, literature, art, customs, even religion, are a product of our economic environment."

G. I do not agree that our ideologies, ethical *standards* and values are altogether a product of our material environment without any absolute basis outside it. On the contrary as we are so our environment becomes.

Is not the Wardha scheme of Basic Education based upon the assumption that purposive activity of the hand moulds not only our thinking but our whole personality? Does that not come very near the materialistic theory of knowledge as propounded by Marx?

But the Marxist wants to abolish the labouring hand altogether and substitute in its place the machine. He has no use for the hand. Dependence on manual labour, according to Marx, is the symbol and root cause of the destitution and slavery of the worker. It is the function of the machine to emancipate him from this state. I, on the other hand, hold that machine enslaves and only intelligent use of the hand will bring to the worker both freedom and happiness....

The Marxist regards thought, as it were, 'a secretion of the brain' and the mind 'a reflex of the material environment'. I cannot accept that. Above and beyond both matter and mind is He. If I have an awareness of that living principle within me, no one can fetter my mind. The body might be destroyed, the spirit will proclaim its freedom. This to me is not a theory; it is a *fact of experience*.

P. The Marxists concede that an individual may transcend his material environment but class behaviour is essentially determined by it. It cannot change unless the economic environment is altered. To transform the capitalist the capitalistic order must be destroyed.

G. What an individual can do, a whole class of people can be induced to do, it is all a question of discovering the right technique. The whole of our non-violent

non-co-operation movement, which aims at transforming the British ruling class, is based on this hypothesis. Trusteeship is my answer to the issue of class-conflict.

I passed on to the Marxist doctrine of economic motivation of history. The wars were an inevitable consequence of the institution of private property in the capitalistic system. Gandhiji rejected the one and disagreed with the other.

G. No, not the economic factor alone. Ultimately it is the Unseen Power that governs the course of events—even in the minds of men who make those events. Supposing Hitler were to die today, it would alter the whole course of current history. Similarly, supposing all capitalists were wiped out as a result of an earthquake or some other natural cataclysm, the history of class-war would then be changed in a way least dreamt of by the exponents of economic interpretation of history. Would not the history of the present war have been different if instead of Chamberlain a more dynamic figure had been the Prime Minister of England? Or, if Chamberlain had not shown lack of political courage at the last moment?

P. The Marxists say that to abolish war we have but to abolish the institution of private property. You have also taught that property is incompatible with the non-violent way of life.

G. This is only partly true. Was not Helen of Troy the cause of the Trojan War? Were the wars of the Rajputs related to the institution of private property? No, to banish war we have to do more. We have to eradicate possessiveness and greed and lust and egotism from our own hearts. We have to carry war within ourselves to banish it from society.

P. The remedies prescribed by Marx are of course wrong but can we not make use of his diagnosis of the malaise that affects our society for a proper understanding of the problem and devising right remedies for the same? . . . My point is that Marx knew of only one effective sanction, viz., of violence —force. If only he had been aware of the sanction of non-violence or satyagraha and its potency, he might have adopted it in place of violence. Even in our own time industry is being changed over from steam to oil and electricity.

G. I have also heard it said that often it is more economical to dispose of the old plant than to try to adapt it from one kind of motive power to another. In the present case, the difference between violence and non-violence is fundamental. It cuts at the very root of the Marxist theory. If you alter the foundation the whole superstructure will have to be changed.

P. I agree. But you have derived non-violence from the *Gita*. I find a powerful support in the Marxist analysis for your method of non-violent non-co-operation.

G. My interpretation of the *Gita* is rejected by those who do not believe in ahimsa and those who are believers in ahimsa do not need it. Your interpretations will

be dubbed un-Marxist by convinced Marxists. It will not appeal to them....

After some further discussion Gandhiji said:

You can advance this as your own original thesis on Marx. It might provide a rationale for the practice of satyagraha to those who lack the spiritual background. What has made the teaching of Marx dynamic is that he regarded mankind as a whole and transcending class divisions identified himself with the cause of the poor oppressed toilers of the world. But in that he is not alone. Others besides him have done the same.

He would not concede that Marx had founded an absolute science of society or discovered any laws of social dynamics which *a priori* have an objective validity. The Marxian system was just an attempt to forge a tool for the achievement of a certain goal which Marx held to be desirable. Finally he said:

We may criticize Marx but that he was a great man who can deny? His analysis of social ills or the cures he prescribed for them may or may not be correct. I do not accept his economic theories but this much I know that the poor are being ground down. Something has got to be done for it. Marx set about to do that in his own way. He had acumen, scholarship, genius.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, pp. 136-9

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW¹

Personal

January 13, 1943

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you for your personal letter of December 31 which I have just received. I fully accept its personal character, and I welcome its frankness. And my reply will be, as you would wish it to be, as frank and as entirely personal as your letter itself.

2. I was glad to have your letter, for, to be as open with you as our previous relations justify, I have been profoundly depressed during recent months; first, by the policy that was adopted by the Congress in August, secondly, because while that policy gave rise, as it was obvious it must, throughout the country to violence and crime (I say nothing of the risks to India from outside aggression), no word of condemnation for that violence and crime should have come from you, or from the Working Committee. When you were first at Poona, I knew that you were not receiving newspapers, and I accepted that as explaining your silence. When

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 19-1-1943 and "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

arrangements were made that you and the Working Committee should have such newspapers as you desired, I felt certain that the details those newspapers contained of what was happening would shock and distress you as much as it has us all, and that you would be anxious to make your condemnation of it categorical and widely known. But that was not the case; and it has been a real disappointment to me, all the more when I think of these murders, the burning alive of police officials, the wrecking of trains, the destruction of property, the misleading of these young students, which has done so much harm to India's good name, and to the Congress party. You may take it from me that the newspaper accounts you mention are well-founded—I only wish they were not, for the story is a bad one. I well know the immense weight of your great authority in the Congress movement and with the party and those who follow its lead, and I wish I could feel, again speaking very frankly, that a heavy responsibility did not rest on you. (And unhappily, while the initial responsibility rests with the leaders, others have to bear the consequences, whether as lawbreakers, with the results that that involves, or as the victims.)

3. But if I am right in reading your letter to mean that in the light of what has happened you wish now to retrace your steps and dissociate yourself from the policy of last summer, you have only to let me know and I will at once consider the matter further. And, if I have failed to understand your object, you must not hesitate to let me know without delay in what respect I have done so, and tell me what positive suggestion you wish to put to me. You know me well enough after these many years to believe that I shall be only too concerned to read with the same close attention as ever any message which I receive from you, to give it the fullest weight, and to approach it with the deepest anxiety to understand your feeling and your motives.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

Correspondence with Mr. Gandh, pp. 5-6

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW¹

February 5, 1943

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your letter of 29th January which I have just received. I have read it, as always, with great care and with every anxiety to follow your mind and to do full justice to your argument. But I fear that my view of the responsibility of

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 29-1-1943; 7-2-1943 and "Letter to Lord Samuel", 15-5-1943.

Congress and of yourself personally for the lamentable disorders of last autumn remains unchanged.

2. In my last letter I said that my knowledge of the facts left me no choice but to regard the Congress movement, and you as its authorized and fully empowered leader at the time of the decision of last August, as responsible for the campaign of violence and crime that subsequently broke out. In reply, you have reiterated your request that I should attempt to convince you that my opinion is correct. I would readily have responded earlier to that request, were it not that your letters gave no indication such as I should have been entitled to expect, that you sought the information with an open mind. In each of them you have expressed profound distrust of the published reports of the recent happenings, although in your last letter, on the basis of the same information, you have not hesitated to lay the whole blame for them on the Government of India. In the same letter, you have stated that I cannot expect you to accept the accuracy of the official reports on which I rely. It is not, therefore, clear to me how you expect or even desire me to convince you of anything. But, in fact, the Government of India have never made any secret of their reasons for holding the Congress and its leaders responsible for the deplorable acts of violence, sabotage and terrorism that have occurred since the Congress resolution of the 8th August declared a "mass struggle" in support of its demands, appointed you as its leader and authorized all Congressmen to act for themselves in the event of interference with the leadership of the movement. A body which passes a resolution in such terms is hardly entitled to disclaim responsibility for any events that followed it. There is evidence that you and your friends expected this policy to lead to violence; and that you were prepared to condone it, and that the violence that ensued formed part of a concerted plan, conceived long before the arrest of Congress leaders. The general nature of the case against the Congress has been publicly stated by the Home Member in his speech in the Central Legislative Assembly on the 15th September last and, if you need further information, I would refer you to it. I enclose a complete copy in case the Press versions that you must have seen were not sufficient. I need only add that all the mass of evidence that has since come to light has confirmed the conclusions then reached. I have ample information that the campaign of sabotage has been conducted under secret instructions, circulated in the name of the All-India Congress Committee, that well-known Congressmen have organized and freely taken part in acts of violence and murder; and that even now an underground Congress organization exists in which, among others, the wife of a member of the Congress Working Committee plays a prominent part, and which is actively engaged in planning the bomb outrages and other acts of terrorism that have disgusted the whole country. If we do not act on all this information or make it publicly known, it is because the time is not yet ripe, but you may rest assured that the charges against the Congress will have to be met sooner or later and it will then be for you and your

colleagues to clear yourselves before the world, if you can. And if in the mean while you yourself, by any action such as you now appear to be contemplating, attempt to find an easy way out, the judgment will go against you by default.

3. I have read with some surprise your statement that the principle of civil disobedience is implicitly conceded in the Delhi Settlement of the 5th March, 1931, which you refer to as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact". I have again looked at that document. Its basis was that civil disobedience would be "effectively discontinued" and that certain "reciprocal action" would be taken by Government. It was inherent in such a document that it should take notice of the existence of civil disobedience. But I can find nothing in it to suggest that civil disobedience was recognized as being in any circumstances legitimate. And I cannot make it too plain that it is not so regarded by my Government.

4. To accept the point of view which you put forward would be to concede that the authorized Government of the country, on which lies the responsibility for maintaining peace and good order, should allow subversive and revolutionary movements, described by you yourself as open rebellion, to take place unchallenged; that they should allow preparations for violence, for the interruption of communications, for attacks on innocent persons, for the murder of police officers and others to proceed unchecked. My Government and I are open indeed to the charge that we should have taken drastic action at an earlier stage against you and against the Congress leaders. But my anxiety and that of my Government has throughout been to give you, and to give the Congress organization, every possible opportunity to withdraw from the position which you have decided to take up. Your statements of last June and July, the original resolution of the Working Committee of the 14th July and your declaration on the same day that there was no room left for negotiation and that after all it was an open rebellion, are all of them grave and significant, even without your final exhortation to "do or die". But with a patience that was perhaps misplaced, it was decided to wait until the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee made it clear that there could be no further toleration of the Congress attitude, if Government was to discharge its responsibility to the people of India.

5. Let me, in conclusion, say how greatly I regret, having regard to your health and your age, the decision that you tell me that you now have in mind to take. I hope and pray that wiser counsels may yet prevail with you. But the decision whether or not to undertake a fast with its attendant risks is clearly one that must be taken by you alone, and the responsibility for which and for its consequences must rest on you alone. I trust sincerely that in the light of what I have said you may think better of your resolution; and I would welcome a decision on your part to think better of it, not only because of my own natural reluctance to see you wilfully risk your life, but because I regard the use of a fast for political purposes as a form of political blackmail

(*himsa*) for which there can be no moral justification and, understood from your own previous writings, that this was also your view.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 9-11

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM HORACE G. ALEXANDER TO SIR ROGER LUMLEY¹

February 24, 1943

DEAR SIR ROGER LUMLEY,

I am venturing to send you the enclosed note of what Mr. Gandhi said to me yesterday. In view of the message that I received from Col. Bhandari on my return from Bombay on Monday, I did not know quite how it was best to proceed; but, as Mr. Gandhi was expecting me to raise this subject with him, I thought it right to do so, and it was clear that he wished to speak about it. I did not tell him that the proposal had already been put to the Viceroy and, as I understood, rejected. But you will note that he himself was speaking, not in terms of possible calling off of the fast before the end of the 21 days but of possible development later on.

There are two or three further points that I would like to add. First, as to the fast itself, he seems very confident that he will survive it and he even referred playfully to it as a “fraudulent fast”, since he is now, under medical advice, taking rather more orange juice. I do not think he is much interested in the movement for his release. It is a 21-day fast and, he would, I rather think, only welcome release, if he thought it meant that the Government is assured that he, as a free man, will be an asset, not a liability.

The second point is this: he is evidently under the most acute stress of mind at the sense that he, who has devoted his life to the promotion of non-violence, is now suspected—or under accusation—by men whom he respects, as being not merely the unwitting and misguided agent but the deliberate instigator of the violence which is admittedly rampant in some parts of the country today. I believe the main reason why he chose to open up in the way he did (and I believe he wanted to say a good deal more, but we naturally had to end the talk so as to avoid tiring him) to me was that he

¹ *Vide* “Discussion with Horace G. Alexander”, 23-2-1943.

felt he must express this distress of mind to some Englishman who still believes in his good faith.

If, as I rather gathered from the message Col. Bhandari gave me, the Viceroy does not think it appropriate for me to do anything further in this matter, I can only express the hope that someone may be found, as soon as Mr. Gandhi is a little stronger, who could go into the matter further, as he seems so genuinely anxious to find means of restoring goodwill.

In a few days I ought to return to my work in Bengal. Would you feel able, I wonder, to allow me a few minutes of your time before I leave, when I could perhaps give you a rather fuller report?

This house is not on the telephone; but, on receipt of a telegram or other message, I could come to Bombay at any time.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE G. ALEXANDER

PS.

Although it seemed to me proper to address this to you, I realize that, if you think it sufficiently important, it would naturally be forwarded to the Viceroy.¹

The Transfer of Power, Vol. III, pp. 733-4

APPENDIX XII

*DR. B. C. ROY'S IMPRESSIONS ON GANDHIJI'S FAST*²

1. AT THE INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS, POONA

March 4, 1943

Full control of the mind over the body, and strong determination to live, for which he fought every inch of the ground—this was how Gandhiji could tide over the crisis that threatened his life at one stage of the fast.

Gandhiji helped his doctors so far as elimination is concerned. He tried to take as much water as possible—plain water and water mixed with salts or with sweet lime juice which also contains salts. In the world of today physical organs of body get more and more under the control of mind. Many of the physical functions like hunger and thirst and the different types of secretions and excretions are being brought more

¹ According to a communication from the Bombay Government, it was considered that Horace Alexander's assistance as intermediary was not required and he was accordingly informed that a further interview with the Viceroy would be unnecessary.

² *Vide* "Answers to Questions", after 3-3-1943.

and more under the control of higher centres. That is why the modern man is so complex as compared to the village man of older days.

In the case of Gandhiji, partly as a result of the forces operating in all of us and partly as a result of self-discipline by which he has deliberately brought the physical function under the control of his mind, the functions of the different organs of his body are being more and more directed by the central nervous system. Therefore our forecast proved to be erroneous. We could only depend upon the law of averages and could only give our opinion on the basis of what would happen to an average man under similar conditions.

2. AT THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

March 7, 1943

The whole fast was in the nature of a religious ceremony. If you start from the beginning and go on to the end, you will perceive that the whole thing was conceived by him as part and parcel of a religious ceremony. He started by informing the Government that under certain conditions, he was prepared to undertake a fast which he called a 'capacity fast'. I think the expression has not been properly understood by the people. The expression 'capacity fast' was used in contradiction to another expression which he used in 1932, namely, 'fast unto death'. In this instance he mentioned definitely that it was not his desire to die, but that he would fast for 21 days because that was, in his opinion, the period which he had today before himself as a period of *tapasya*.

The Indian Annual Register, 1943, Vol. I, pp. 338-9

APPENDIX XIII

*CONCLUDING CHAPTER OF "CONGRESS RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DISTURBANCES, 1942-43"*¹

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

At the risk of some repetition, it is necessary to emphasize again the fact that Mr. Gandhi knew that any mass movement started in India would be a violent movement. He knew this from his bitter experience of the movements he had led ten and twenty years before. In spite of this knowledge, he was prepared to take the risk of outbreaks of rioting and disorder—a risk which in his writings he tried to minimize but in his mind he must have estimated correctly. Consider again this series of statements:

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

1. Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942).

2. That anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942).

3. This ordered, disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India as a result, I would risk it (*Harijan*, 24-5-1942).

4. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait.... The people have not my ahimsa, but mine should help them. I am sure, there is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us, and our decision to defy their authority, will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence (*Harijan*, 7-6-1942).

5. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If, in spite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped (*Harijan*, 19-7-1942).

Once it is realized, as has been clearly demonstrated, that Mr. Gandhi the fountain-head of non-violence, knew perfectly well that the Indian masses were incapable of non-violence, a new light is shed on the events of the six months which have elapsed since the August arrests. It follows that every reference to non-violence, in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take, made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples and in the post-arrest programmes and instructions, is nothing more than a pious hope, or at best a mild warning, which was known to have no practical value. Since such references have been shown to be valueless, they may be ignored and the pre-arrest forecasts and post-arrest instructions may be examined shorn of their "non-violence" mask. Omitting these valueless references, Mr. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan* of 19th July, 1942, "It would be a mass movement.... It will include all that a mass movement can include"; and again in *Harijan* of 26th July, 1942, "The programme covers every activity included in a mass movement.... I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced over the British Government or the Allied powers.... (It will be) my biggest movement. . . . (With the arrests of leaders) it should gain strength, if it has any vitality." The Working Committee of Congress in the resolution passed at Bombay on August 4 and endorsed by the All-India Congress Committee on August 8 stated: "The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilize all the strength it has gathered during the last 22 years." Again, omitting the lip-service to "non-violence", the 12-point

programme called for “non-co-operation on the widest possible scale” in a “titanic clash between the people and the alien Government”, a struggle in which “victory or death” is to be the motto of every son and daughter of India, a struggle which would “include all activities that a mass struggle can include”, a struggle in which “whatever helps in the attainment of that objective” (of ending foreign rule) “is permissible and legitimate” and in which “people in the provinces have to devise and adopt all ways of paralysing the administration”. As a description of what actually occurred, these instructions present a very accurate picture bearing in mind the limitations imposed by the prompt and firm action taken by the Central and Provincial Governments and the lack of sympathy for the Congress programme in large sections of the population.

In the face of all this evidence—the evidence of the atmosphere produced by Mr. Gandhi’s writings in *Harijan*, the evidence of the speeches of the members of the Working Committee before and at Bombay, the evidence of the programmes involving violent action distributed at the time of the arrests, the evidence of the form of the uprising, the evidence of known Congressmen personally proved guilty of violent action, the evidence of the pamphlets broadcast in the name of the Congress—only one answer can be given to the question as to who must bear the responsibility for the mass uprisings and individual crimes which have disgraced and are still disgracing the fair name of India. That answer is—the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi.

The Indian Annual Register, 1942, Vol. II, pp. 199-200

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM SIR RICHARD TOTTENHAM¹

HOME DEPARTMENT,

October 14, 1943

SIR,

I am directed to reply to your letter of the 15th July in which you have attempted to controvert certain passages appearing in the Government publication *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942-43*. At the outset I am to remind you that the document in question was published for the information of the public and not for the purpose of convincing you or eliciting your defence. It was supplied to you only at your own request and in forwarding it Government neither invited nor desired your comments upon it. Since, however, you have thought fit to address

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India”, 16-7-1943 and 26-10-1943.

Government on the subject, I am to say that Government have given due consideration to your letter.

2. Government regret to observe that, although your letter contains lengthy quotations from your own utterances and writings, it contains no fresh or categorical statement of your own attitude in regard to the material issues or any clear repudiation of the disastrous policy to which you and the Congress party committed yourselves in the series of events leading up to the Congress resolution of the 8th August, 1942. The purpose of your letter appears to be to suggest that you have been misrepresented in some way in *Congress Responsibility* but in what substantial respect is not clear. No attempt was made in the book, as you seem to think, to charge you with pro-Japanese sympathies and the sentence¹ at the end of the first chapter, to which you have taken exception in paragraph 18 of your letter, was merely an echo of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's own words² quoted on the previous page. He has not, as you wrongly allege, repudiated those words in the published statements to which you refer. It was, however, one of the purposes of the book to find an explanation of your actions in your own defeatist outlook towards the threat from Japan and your fear that, unless the Allied forces withdrew in time, India would become a battle-field in which the Japanese would ultimately win. This feeling was attributed to you by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself in the course of his remarks to which reference has been made above and your own draft of the Allahabad resolution makes it plain that, both in the "Quit India" campaign and the Congress resolution which was intended to enforce it, your object was to be left in a position in which you and the Congress would be free to make terms with Japan. The Government of India note that your letter makes no attempt to meet this imputation which they still regard as true. It is the only explanation which is consistent with your own statement that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to the Japanese to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait". Nor have you been able to explain, on any theory other than that suggested in the book, the contradiction between this statement and your subsequent avowal of your willingness to permit the retention of Allied troops on Indian soil.

3. The Government of India are not disposed to follow you into the various verbal points that you have raised. They do not deny that owing to your habit of reinterpreting your own statements to suit the purposes of the moment, it is easy for you to quote passages from your utterances or writings which are in apparent contradiction to any view attributed to you. But the fact that you admit the discovery of important gaps in them, or that you have found it necessary from time to time to

¹ Vide "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

² Vide 1st two footnotes of point 17 of "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943,

put glosses on what you have said, is itself evidence of the incredible levity with which, in a moment of grave crisis, you made pronouncements in regard to matters of the most vital importance to India's defence and her internal peace. Government can only interpret your statements in the plain sense of the words as it would appear to any honest or unbiased reader and they are satisfied that the book *Congress Responsibility* contains no material misrepresentation of the general trend of your utterances during the relevant period.

4. You have devoted considerable space in your letter¹ to an apparent attempt to disown the phrase attributed to you in the A. P. I. report of a Press conference which you held at Wardha on the 14th July, 1942, where you are reported to have said: "There is no question of one more chance. After all, it is an open rebellion." This Press message was reproduced at the time in newspapers throughout India. You now wish the Government of India to believe that you first became aware of it on the 26th June, 1943. They can only regard it as highly improbable that, if it did not correctly represent what you said, it should not have been brought to your notice at the time or that you should have left it uncontradicted during the following weeks while you were still at liberty.

5. The Government of India also note that you still seek to cast on the Government the responsibility for the disturbances for reasons which they can only regard as trivial and which have already been answered in your published correspondence with His Excellency the Viceroy. The point which is clearly established by the book *Congress Responsibility* is that those disturbances were the natural and predictable consequence of your declaration of an "open rebellion" and the propaganda which preceded it. That you yourself could have foreseen those consequences is clear from the statement² which you yourself made in court, in 1922, when you admitted the impossibility of dissociating yourself from the "diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay" and went on to say that you knew that you were playing with fire, but you had taken the risk and would do so again. If you now contend that the consequences were unintended and unforeseen, this fact is itself an admission of your own inability to judge the reactions of your followers. You now seek to excuse, if not to defend, the barbarities committed in your own name and that of the Congress rather than to condemn them. It is clear where your sympathies lie. Your letter does not contain one word of explanation of your own message³ "Do or Die" nor does it throw any light on your message quoted in

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

² *Vide* "The Great Trial", 18-3-1922.

³ The reference is to Gandhiji's speech at Bombay on August 8, after the A.I.C.C. had passed the "Quit India" resolution; *vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 8-8-1942.

Appendix¹ of the book, which, if you cannot disown it, is sufficient to refute your contention that no movement had been launched by you at the time when the disturbances took place.

6. I am finally to refer to your request for the publication of your letter. In the first place, I am to remind you of your own position, which has already been explained to you, viz., that, so long as the grounds for your detention remain unchanged, Government are not prepared to afford you any facilities for communication with the general public, nor are they prepared themselves to act as agents for your propaganda. In the second place, I am to point out that you had ample opportunities during the months preceding the Congress resolution of the 8th August, 1942, to make your meaning unequivocally clear before you were arrested. The fact that your own followers interpreted your intentions in the same way as Government, leaves no scope for further explanations. I am to inform you, therefore, that Government do not propose to publish your letter unless and until they think fit.² This decision is, however, without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use, at any time and in any manner which they think fit, the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them.

7. To the extent that your present letter may be designed to relieve you of responsibility for the Congress rebellion and the connected events that have taken place, Government regret that they cannot accept it as in any way relieving you of that responsibility, or indeed, to their regret, as a serious attempt to justify yourself. They observe again with regret that you have taken no step in your letter to dissociate yourself personally from the Congress resolution of 8th August, 1942; to condemn unequivocally the violent outrages which took place in your name after the passing of that resolution; to declare yourself unequivocally in favour of the use of all the resources of India for the prosecution of the war against the Axis powers and in particular Japan, until victory is won; or to give satisfactory assurances of good conduct in the future. And, in the absence of any sign of any change of mind on your part and of any disclaimer of the policy as the result of which it has been necessary to restrain your movements and those of the Working Committee of the Congress, they are unable to take any further action on your present communication.

I am, etc.,

R. TOTTENHAM

Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, pp. 112-4

¹ Given under the title "Mr. Gandhi's Last Message", it reads: "Every man is free to go to the fullest length under ahimsa by complete deadlock, strikes and all other non-violent means. Satyagrahis should go out to die and not to live. It is only when individuals go out to seek and face death that the nation will survive. '*Karenge Ya Marenge*'. ('We shall do or die')." Reference to the Appendix occurs in Chapter IV of the official publication. Gandhiji had disapproved of it in paragraph 65; *vide* "Letter to Additional Secretary, Home Department, Government of India", 15-7-1943.

² The Government, however, published it on June 21, 1944.

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM OFFICER-IN-CHARGE, AGA KHAN PALACE TO INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS, POONA¹

AGA KHAN PALACE, YERAVDA

December 15, 1943

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS

POONA

SIR,

With reference to your confidential D.O. No. 6247 dated December 14 1943, I have the honour to give below the required information.

1. Mr. Gandhi discusses political questions with other inmates, especially with Mr. Pyarelal and Miss Slade; Miss Nayyar is always there. Very rarely with Dr. Gilder. This takes place generally when they are reading newspapers.

2. The daily routine of life of Mr. Gandhi:

He gets up about 6.30 a.m. and, after finishing morning ablution and breakfast, he reads books or newspapers.

From 8.15 to 9.0 a.m. morning walk in the garden with Pyarelal and Misses Slade, Nayyar and Manu. While walking, they talk on political and other subjects.

Doctors Gilder and Nayyar give him massage for about 45 minutes and then bath upto 11.15.

From 11.15 to 12 noon he takes his food, and Miss Slade talks or reads books to him.

From 12 noon to 1.0 p.m. teaching Sanskrit to Miss Nayyar.

1.0 to 2.0 p.m. rest.

From 2.0 to 3.0 p.m. Mr. Pyarelal reads papers to him and discusses on several points arising from the papers, while he is either spinning or filing cuttings from the papers.

From 3.0 to 4.0 p.m. teaching Miss Manu.

From 4.0 to 5.30 p.m. indexing of newspaper cuttings on various subjects. He is assisted in this work by Pyarelal, Drs. Gilder and Nayyar. They remove the selected and marked portions from the papers, paste them on slips of paper and give them to Mr. Gandhi for indexing and filing.

From 5.30 to 6.30 p.m. Miss Slade reads papers to him and discusses on various political and other subjects.

From 6.30 to 7.15 p.m. evening walk with other inmates in the garden. From 7.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. spinning, while Pyarelal reads to him some books.

From 8.15 to 9.0 p.m. prayer.

From 9.0 to 10.0 p.m. reading and talking with Mr. Pyarelal and Miss Nayyar.

He goes to bed at 10 p.m.

He changes his time according to climatic conditions.

¹ *V de* "Talk with Nirmala and Devdas Gandhi", 7-12-1943.

3. Mr. Pyarelal does the typing work of Mr. Gandhi.

When the big letter was sent to the Government of India regarding the reply to the *Congress Responsibility*, Dr. Gilder typed the major part of the letter.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed)

OFFICER I/C, AGA KHAN'S PALACE

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 46, Secret, Home Department, Special Branch (6), 1943-44. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra

APPENDIX XVI

LETTER FROM AGATHA HARRISON¹

2 CRANBOURNE COURT,
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD,
LONDON S.W. 11

December 2, 1943

DEAR GANDHIJI,

I am writing this letter in the faith that it will reach you. I asked Mr. Amery if he would expedite its delivery to India, and he very kindly said, he would. At the same time, he reminded me of the restrictions² that have been placed on all correspondence.³ . . .

With all this in memory, I write to you now as ten years later India is faced with famine, not earthquake; and it is set, as in the case of the Bihar disaster, in the midst of political deadlock. This time a world war is added and a stifling atmosphere of distrust and suspicion is abroad.

We watch this tragedy. The suffering of India is stirring people here very deeply. (I wish you could see the evidence of this in the letters that accompany money sent to the relief funds.) From the articles you wrote some time ago in *Harijan*, it is clear to see that you foresaw the disaster. Horace Alexander, who is now back amongst us, tells of the brief talk he had with you in February and how the situation was then burdening your mind, and of your wish to help. Those of us who are

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 29-12-1943. only excerpts are reproduced here.

² The source has "strictures".

³ The addressee then recounted her visit to India in 1934.

privileged to call you and your colleagues our friends, realize that there is a reservoir of help and experience, as yet untapped that, if utilized, might change the situation overnight. We press this conviction and cite the precedent of Bihar. But we are met with answers such as these: 'Yes, that happened in 1934; what proof have we that it would happen now? The threat of civil disobedience remains. There is far too much at stake to risk a recurrence of all that happened after August 1942', etc. And the same fears as were expressed at the time of the Bihar disaster (of Congress taking political advantage) are expressed again now.

Reading this, I can hear you say, 'It is for the Government to take the initiative,' and you would refer to the correspondence that passed between Lord Linlithgow and you and what you said about the need for consultation with your colleagues. And so this vicious, hopeless circle goes round. Who will cut it?

I bring this "circle" to you, Gandhiji. In doing so, you will appreciate that this is no one-sided approach. The responsibility for cutting it at this end is ever pressed. But political limits seem to have been reached. When that is the case, then something else has to come in. The close contact I have had with you since the London days, together with the knowledge I gleaned from working with C. F. Andrews of you and your methods, leave me with the belief and conviction that you will find a way to cut the circle. You have done so, many times in the past, for you have an understanding of the limitless possibilities of the forces of the spirit....

As I write this letter, I have on my desk a cartoon by Low that appeared the other day in the *Evening Standard*. The caption reads "Between the unhelpful and the helpless". It depicts an Indian street: the pavements on each side are crowded with dead and starving men, women and children. In the middle of the road is a huge broken-down motor lorry labelled "India-Food Distribution". Two ropes are attached to the front of the lorry, one tightly bound to the straining figure of Lord Wavell. The other rope he is holding out with a beckoning hand to a seated Indian figure in front of him, who is reading a paper entitled "Political Platitudes".

I would have made a very different picture. For, I would have shown *you* coming swiftly to meet Lord Wavell—and with you Mr. Jinnah. One of your hands would be held out for the second rope and the other would be holding a paper with the words "We call a truce on civil disobedience".

My caption for this cartoon would be your own words spoken in Bihar: "This Is No Time for Differences between Government and Congress— Between Hindu and Muslim."

Yours very sincerely,

AGATHA HARRISON

Chief Commissioner's Office, Bombay, File No. 13-I. Courtesy: Government of Maharashtra