

## 1. MYSORE JUSTICE

After I had sent my note<sup>1</sup> on Shri H. C. Dassappa's Case, I received the following from a Bangalore advocate:

You have now material which is sufficient to give an indication of the independence of the Mysore Judiciary. It is undoubtedly under the control and lead of Sir D'Arcy Reilly. The other Judges in the High Court follow in his footsteps, and no single instance can be recalled when any Puisne Judge of the High Court of Mysore has had the strength to demur to even the excesses committed by the chief Justice in the language, form and tone of his judgements, the Government, which professes not to interfere with either the High Court or the Judiciary is evidently well satisfied about the Judges of the High Court of Mysore. For a dozen years important judgements have come from the Judges of the High Court which have clearly shown that they have yielded to the pressure of the bureaucracy while professing fear of God and of no man. Probably it is this practical docility that has made the Government

Order on Political Reforms in the State silent to the point of being sinister as regards recommendations for the reform of the Judiciary in the State. To cap it all comes the pronouncement in Shri H. C. Dasappa's case that in this country truth is so often degraded into a political catch-word.' The reference to the country is wide enough in its mischief and implications so as to embrace all people whether Congressmen or others and whether they reside in the States or in British India. What basis had Sir D'Arcy Reilly for such an assumption? And what evidence had he for such a general charge against a whole country? Is it moral on the part of Sir D'Arcy Reilly to condemn Sri H. C. Dasappa and debar him on the ground that he preferred a charge that he could not prove, and do the same thing under a different guise in a judgment?

My correspondent's complaint is right. But Judges are above all law, at least in Mysore. Like kings they can do no wrong.

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

*Harijan*, 21-7-1940

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Mysore Lawyers"

## 2. KHAN SAHEB'S AHIMSA<sup>1</sup>

In the storm that shook most of the members of the Working Committee Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan stood firm as a rock. He had never any doubt about his position, and his statement which I reproduce below should serve as a beacon light to all of us:

Some recent resolutions of the Congress Working Committee indicate that they are restricting the use of non-violence to the fight for India's freedom against constituted authority. How far and in what manner this will have to be applied in the future I cannot say. The near future will perhaps throw light on this. Meanwhile it is difficult for me to continue in the Congress Working Committee, and I am resigning from it. I should like to make it clear that the non-violence I have believed in and preached to my brethren of the Khudai Khidmatgars is much wider. It affects all our life, and only this has permanent value. Unless we learn this lesson of non-violence fully we shall never do away with the deadly feuds which have been the curse of the people of the Frontier. Since we took to non-violence and the Khudai Khidmatgars pledged themselves to it, we have largely succeeded in ending these feuds. Non-violence has added greatly to the courage of the Pathans. Because they were previously addicted to violence far more than others, they have profited by non-violence much more. We shall never really and effectively defend ourselves except through non-violence. Khudai Khidmatgars must, therefore, be what our name implies - pure servants of God and humanity - by laying down our own lives and never taking any life.

It is worthy of the Khan Saheb [ and all that he has stood for during the past twenty years ]<sup>2</sup>. He is a Pathan, and a Pathan may be said to be born with rifle or sword in his hand. But the Khan Saheb deliberately asked his Khudai Khidmatgars to shed all weapons when he asked them to join the satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act. He saw that this deliberate giving up of the weapons of violence had a magical effect. It was the only remedy for the blood feuds which were handed down from sire to son and which had become part of the normal life of a Pathan.<sup>3</sup> They had decimated numerous families, and non-

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> This is not to be found in the Gujarati.

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati here has: "This marked the limit of violence and showed its bankruptcy."

violence seemed to the Khan Saheb to have come as a longed-for salvation. The violent blood feuds would otherwise have no end and would spell the end of the Pathans. He saw as clear as daylight that, if he could persuade his people not to retaliate, the suicidal feuds would cease and the Pathans would be able to give a better account of their bravery. They took up his message and put into practice what with them became non-violence of the brave.

Being so clear about his own faith and that of the Khudai Khidmatgars, there was for him no escape from resignation of his membership of the Congress Working Committee. His continuing on it would have been anomalous and might have meant an end of his life's work. He could not ask his people to join as recruits in the army and at the same time forget the law of tribal retaliation. The simple Pathan would have argued with him-and the argument would have been irresistible-that the present war was a war of retaliation and revenge, and that there was no difference between it and their blood feuds.

I do not know how far the Khan Saheb has succeeded in carrying his message to his people. This I know that with him non-violence is a matter not of intellectual conviction but of intuitive faith. Nothing can therefore shake it. About his followers he cannot say how far they will adhere to it. But that does not worry him. He has to do his duty which he owes to them. The result he leaves to God. He derives his ahimsa from the Holy Koran. He is a devout Mussalman. During his stay with me for over a year I never saw him miss his *namaz* (prayers) or his Ramzan fast (except when he was ill). But his devotion to Islam does not mean disrespect for other faiths. He has read the *Gita*. His reading is slight but selective, and he immediately assimilates what appeals to him. He loathes long argument and does not take long to make up his mind. If he succeeds in his mission, it would mean the solution of many another problem. But the result no one can predict. 'The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.'

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940  
*Harijan*, 21-7-1940

### 3. *THE ANNUAL SPINNING SACRIFICE*<sup>1</sup>

Shri Narandas Gandhi has issued his usual appeal for intensive spinning during the 71 days before my seventy-first birthday. He began this way of celebrating it six years ago with an appeal for 66 thousand yards. Last year he made an appeal for 70 lakhs of yards, and the response was beyond his expectation-over 4 crores of yards of yarn were spun.

I commend his appeal to all. The response to his appeal should increase with my increasing years. If the annual quota of the National School in Rajkot is any index, the response would seem to be on the increase. But the appetite of Daridranarayana is insatiable, and it demands still greater response. It is a Herculean task to liquidate the unemployment and starvation of crores of people. Let me hope that every lover of the wheel will contribute his or her quota to this task and make the sacrifice a worthy one. Let them approach the task intelligently and with a proper regard for its sacredness. Let them, therefore, devote not only more time to spinning, but also endeavour to do it better by keeping all their spinning tackle in proper trim and thus increasing their speed. If they will watch the revolutions of the spindle and find out the secret of putting up the speed, I am sure that at the end of the sacrifice they will have nearly doubled the speed.

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

*Harijan*, 21-7-1940

### 4. *HOW TO CULTIVATE AHIMSA?*<sup>2</sup>

Q. What is the good of your crying 'ahimsa, ahimsa' in season and out of season? Will it by itself teach people to be non-violent? Would it not be better, instead, to tell people how pure ahimsa or the ahimsa of the strong can be cultivated?

A. Your is a very timely and opportune question. I have attempted before this on more occasions than one to answer it. But my effort has, I confess, been rather desultory. I have not concentrated upon it, or given it the weight I might have. This was all right while I was devoting all my energy to forging means to give battle to Govern-

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This abridged English version is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 20-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan* where it was published under the heading "Question Box".

ment. But it had the result of retarding the growth of pure ahimsa, so that today we are not even within ken of the ahimsa of the strong. If we now want to advance further, we ought, at least for some time, to completely forget the idea of offering non-violent resistance to constituted authority. If non-violence in the domestic field is successfully achieved, we shall surely see the non-violence against constituted authority revived in its purified form, and it will be irresistible.

Now that I am no longer in the Congress, I may not offer civil disobedience even in my own person in its name. But I am certainly free to offer civil disobedience in my individual capacity whenever it may be necessary. No one need suppose that all civil disobedience will necessarily be taboo while the country is still being educated in the ahimsa of the strong. But those who may want to join the non-violent force of my conception would not entertain any immediate prospect of civil disobedience. They should understand that, so long as they have not realized ahimsa in their own person in its pure form, there can be no civil disobedience for them.

Let not the mention of pure ahimsa frighten anybody. If we have a clear conception of it and have a living faith in its matchless efficacy, it will not be found to be so hard to practise as it is sometimes supposed to be, it will be well to remember the immortal *Mahabharata* verse<sup>1</sup> in this connection. The Seer Poet therein loudly proclaims to the whole that dharma includes within itself both legitimate *artha* and *kama*, and asks why men do not follow the royal road of dharma that leads to both earthly and spiritual bliss. Dharma here does not signify mere observance of externals. It signifies the way of truth and non-violence. The scriptures have given us two immortal maxims. One of these is: "Ahimsa is the supreme Law of dharma." The other is: "There is no other Law or dharma than truth." These two maxims provide us the key to all lawful *artha* and *kama*. Why should we then hesitate to act up to them? Strange as it may appear, the fact remains that people find the easiest of things oftentimes to be the most difficult to follow. The reason, to borrow a term from the science of physics, lies in our inertia. Physicists tell us that inertia is an essential and, in its own place a most useful, quality of matter, it is that alone which steadies the universe and prevents it from flying off at a tangent. But for it the latter would be a chaos of

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati has "Bharat Savitri verse". For the text of the verse, vide "A Cry in the Wilderness"?

motion. But inertia becomes an incubus and a vice when it ties the mind down to old ruts. It is this kind of inertia which is responsible for our rooted prejudice that to practise pure ahimsa is difficult. It is up to us to get rid of this incubus. The first step in this direction is firmly to resolve that all untruth and *himsa* shall hereafter be taboo to us, whatever sacrifice it might seem to involve. For, the good these may seem to achieve is in appearance only, but in reality it is deadly poison. If our resolve is firm and our conviction clear, it would mean half the battle won, and the practice of these two qualities would come comparatively easy to us.

Let us confine ourselves to ahimsa. We have all along regarded the spinning-wheel, village crafts, etc., as the pillars of ahimsa, and so indeed they are. They must stand. But we have now to go a step further. A votary of ahimsa will or course base upon non-violence, if he has not already done so, all his relations with his parents, his children, his wife, his servants, his dependants, etc. But the real test will come at the time of political or communal disturbances or under the menace of thieves and dacoits. Mere resolve to lay down one's life under the circumstances is not enough. There must be the necessary qualification for making the sacrifice. If I am a Hindu, I must fraternize with the Mussalmans and the rest. In my dealings with them I may not make any distinction between my co-religionists and those who might belong to a different faith. I would seek opportunities to serve them without any feeling of fear or unnaturalness. The word 'fear' can have no place in the dictionary of ahimsa. Having thus qualified himself by his selfless service, a votary of pure ahimsa will be in a position to make a fit offering of himself in a communal conflagration. Similarly, to meet the menace of thieves and dacoits, he will need to go among, and cultivate friendly relations, with, the communities from which thieves and dacoits generally come.

A brilliant example of this kind of work is provided by Ravishanker Maharaj. His work among the criminal tribes in Gujarat has evoked praise even of the Baroda State authorities. There is an almost unlimited field for this kind of work and it does not call for any other talent in one besides pure love. Ravi shanker Maharaj is an utter stranger to English. Even his knowledge of Gujarati is barely sufficient for everyday use. But God has blessed him with unlimited neighbourly love. His simplicity easily wins all hearts and is the envy

of everybody. Let his example provide a cue and inspiration to all those who may be similarly engaged in other field of satyagraha.<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

*Harijan*, 21-7-1940

## 5. IMPOSSIBLE<sup>2</sup>

Miss Muriel Lester writes:

See how you are misquoted by Sherwood Eddy<sup>3</sup> in his latest book *I Saw God Do it*. I have been asked to send you this cutting from it so that you may reply to it if you want to. Here is the extract.

“We have maintained throughout this chapter that some are called to be conscientious objectors as absolute pacifists to challenge the whole war system, but that the majority will feel it to be their duty forcibly to defend their country when it is attacked or its vital interests are threatened. Gandhi himself, the most effective and the greatest living pacifist, is not an absolutist but a relativist, a realist and, to a large degree, a practical states-man. He is effectively using non-violent resistance to achieve the independence of India, but he recognizes that a modern State cannot be maintained without both a police force and an army. When the writer asked him personally how a divided Indian army could be commanded by a Moslem, a Hindu or a Sikh, he told me they could first ask an American or some foreign neutral to lead their army. But Gandhi pacifists and Indian nationalists would defend their country if attacked by Japan or Soviet Russia or any other foreign power by the full force of their army. So, I believe, should our own country.”

I can only say that I have no recollection of my having ever made such a statement. I know Dr. Sherwood Eddy well. I remember too his visit. The astounding statement put into my mouth belies all I have ever written or said about the defence of India. Even if I believed in armed defence, I should never want a foreign general to lead my army. I may have foreign instructors but not officers. If, therefore, Dr. Eddy sees these lines, and instead of correcting himself persists in his statement, I can only say I must have been absent-

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati here adds: “He should have such awareness that he could give account of every moment.”

<sup>2</sup> This appeared under “Notes”.

<sup>3</sup> American Y. M. C. A. official and writer, author of *India Awakening*, *The New Era in Asia* and other books.

minded when I made the statement imputed to me. I cannot say I must have been drunk, because I do not drink.

SEVAGRAM, July 16, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

## 6. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 16, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is no game of marbles being a wife and mother. If we look upon it as a dharma, we can shape ourselves through it. If we realize that *grihashthashrama*<sup>1</sup> is not for pleasure but is a test for us, it becomes the biggest school for us. I should like both of you to shape your life on this pattern. It is good that Shakaribehn<sup>2</sup> has come. When you come here again, let her also accompany you. Let Shakaribehn stay there till this illness is over.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10029. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

## 7. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,

July 16, 1940

BHAI MUNSHI,

I had your letter. I solved your problem yesterday itself. I have nothing to say now. Two courses are open, and either will be right if it is within your strength. "One's own dharma though devoid of merit is better."<sup>3</sup>

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7654. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

<sup>1</sup> Householder's estate

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's Mother

<sup>3</sup> *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35



## 8. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

*For Surendra*

*July 16, 1940*

You may say this: Ephidrine is a useless thing. The homoeopathic treatment has to be continued. I am looking for other remedies. Be patient.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4354

## 9. UNREPENTANT

By writing that “Appeal to Every Briton”<sup>1</sup> I have invited upon my head an extra load of work which without God’s help I would be ill able to bear. If it is His will that I should shoulder it, He will give me the strength to carry on.

When I decided to confine myself mostly to writing in Gujarati or Hindustani, I had no notion that I would have to write the appeal. It came to me like a flash, and the courage to write it came with it. I had resisted till then all pressure from English and American friends to give guidance. But I could not see my way. Now having addressed that appeal, I must follow up the reactions to it. A large amount of correspondence is pouring in upon me. Save for one angry telegram, I had nothing but friendly criticism from Englishmen and even appreciation from some.

I was grateful to H. E. the Viceroy for forwarding my offer to His Majesty’s Government. The correspondence with regard to it the readers have already seen or will see in this issue. Though no better response to the appeal was to be expected, I cannot help saying that it was the knowledge of the determination to carry the war to a victorious end that had prompted my appeal. No doubt the determination is natural and worthy of the best British tradition. Nevertheless the awful slaughter that the determination involves should induce a search for a better and braver way to achieve the end. For peace has its victories more glorious than those of war. The non-violent method would have meant no abject surrender. It would have confounded all modern tactics of war, indeed rendered them of no use. The new world order which all dream of would surely have been found. I hold a new order to be impossible if the war is fought to a finish or mutual exhaustion leads to a patched-up peace.

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* “To Every Briton”

Let me, therefore examine the argument advanced in a letter received from a friend<sup>1</sup>. Here it is:

Two English friends who admire you, say your appeal to every Briton cannot have any effect *just now*. It is impossible to expect the man in the street to do a complete *volte face* with any degree of understanding - indeed it is impossible for the understanding [*sic*] to do, as you say, without a *heart-belief* in non-violence. The time to mould a new world on your lines will be after the war. They realize your way is the right one, but they say it needs endless preparation and instruction and *big* leadership - none of which they possess. Regarding India they say the attitude of the present authority is deplorable. Long ago India should have been declared as independent as Canada, and her people should be allowed to work out their own constitution. But what they are extremely perplexed about now is that you want absolute independence straightaway, and the next step you will take is 'no further help to Britain in the prosecution of war, surrender to Germany, and opposition to her by non-violent means'. You must explain what you mean in more detail so as to remove this misunderstanding. This is an honest reaction.

The appeal was intended to produce the effect now. It could not come out of a mathematical calculation. If the conviction could have come, action was an easy matter. The mass mind responds under pressure. That the appeal has not produced the intended result shows that either my word has no power or that God has a purpose of which we have no knowledge. The appeal has come from an anguished heart. I could not suppress it. It was not written for the moment. I am quite sure that it enunciates a truth of eternal value.

If the ground is not prepared from now, there may be no time left after a dismal termination of the war for evolving a new order. Whatever the order, it will be in response to a conscious or unconscious effort from now. Indeed the effort began before my appeal. I hope that it has stimulated it. Perhaps given it a definite direction. I suggest to the non-official leaders and moulders of British opinion, if they are convinced of the truth of my position, to work for its adoption. Compared to the big issue raised in my appeal, the question of Indian independence pales into insignificance. But I hold with the two Englishmen that the British Government's attitude is deplorable. The two friends are wholly wrong in the deduction they have drawn from

<sup>1</sup> Amrit Kaur; *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-7-1940.

the assumed recognition of India 's independence. They forget that I am out of the picture. Those who are responsible for the Working Committee's last resolution have meant free India's co-operation with Britain. With them, there is no question of surrender to Germany or non-violent opposition.

But I must not here tarry on Indian independence and its implications, tempting though the subject is.

The cuttings and correspondence before me say that the Congress rejection of my advice to abstain from preparation for military defence of India precludes me from making the appeal to Britain or from expecting a favourable response. The argument is plausible, but only plausible. The critics say that , if I have failed with my people, I have no right to expect Britain whilst she is in the midst of a life-and-death struggle to listen to me. I am a man with a mission. India 's millions have never tasted the bitters of war as the British have. Britain, if she is to fulfil her declared purpose, needs a radical change in her policy. I feel that I know the change that is needed. My inability to persuade the Working Committee is irrelevant to the theme under discussion. There is no analogy between India's case and Britain's. I am, therefore, wholly unrepentant. I maintain that in issuing my appeal I have acted wholly as a lifelong friend of Britain.

A writer, however, retorts: "Address your appeal to Hitler." In the first place, I did write to Herr Hitler.<sup>1</sup> My letter was published in the Press some time after I addressed it. In the second place, there can be no meaning in my appeal to Herr Hitler to adopt non-violence. He is marching from victory to victory. I can only appeal to him to desist. That I have done. But to Britain, which is just now on the defensive, I can present the really effective weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. Let my method be rejected on merits, not by bringing inapt analogies or untenable argument. The issue raised by me, I venture to think, is of universal importance, the usefulness of the non-violent method seems to be granted by all the critics. They gratuitously assume the impossibility of human nature, as it is constituted, responding to the strain involved in non-violent preparation. But that is begging the question. I say, 'You have never tried the method on any scale. In so far as it has been tried, it has shown promising results.'

SEVAGRAM, JULY 17, 1940

*Harijan*, 21-7-1940

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939

## 10. TRAVANCORE

Some Travancoreans have thought I had neglected them. But I had not. It is no pleasure to me to criticize any State. Much of my work is done by negotiation. I criticise when I must. So when I was told by common friends that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar would like to meet me if an opportunity occurred, I stopped all reference to Travancore affairs. But the meeting was not to be. In reply to my inquiry I have the following extraordinary wire from him:

Have just received your telegram.<sup>1</sup> In view developments in India including your recent statement and resolution of Working Committee with similar aims though different programmes, and also having regard to the close though unacknowledged connection existing between many of the leaders of Travancore State Congress and communist activities which have come to light after arrest of K. C. George, and in view of the openly hostile activities of Mr. T. M. Verghese and of Mr. G. Ramachandran who has been chosen by you to give advice as to Travancore, no useful purpose is likely to be served by any meeting. In these circumstances you are of course free to comment on Travancore affairs, but it is hoped that you will not accept versions furnished by persons who are discredited here and who depend for their influence, collection of funds, and their political existence, on possibility of getting periodical statement from you on one-sided data furnished by them. Most of the leading members of State Congress including Messrs V. K. elayudhan, M. N. Parameswaran Pillai and others have openly dissociated themselves from State Congress activities. They number over 60.

I fail to see the connection between the Working Committee's resolution and my recent statement on the one hand and Travancore affairs on the other. The Working Committee have not even interested themselves in Travancore affairs. The idea of our meeting did not originate with me. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar thought of it months ago. Even a date was fixed. But owing to a pressing engagement he had to keep, our meeting was postponed. As late as the 3rd of April he had wired saying he was writing to me about the interview. Have the Working Committee's resolution and my statement so altered the situation that our meeting has become undesirable? The other things the worthy Dewan refers to are the very things which would have made our meeting fruitful. He had but to convince me that the State Congress was involved in communist activities of a dangerous nature,

<sup>1</sup> This is not traceable.

and I would have washed my hands clean of the local Congress and its doings. All communism is not dangerous. I do not know that Shri K. C. George is a communist. I warn the Dewan against being prejudiced by the mere name. I know many friends who delight in calling themselves communists. They are as harmless as a dove. I call myself a communist in their company. The underlying belief of communism is good and as old as the hills. But I have strayed.

If Shri T. M. Verghese and Shri G. Ramachandran are untrustworthy, again our meeting is necessary to convince me of their untrustworthiness. I must confess I have profound admiration for their courage, self-sacrifice ability and integrity. Shri Ramachandran is an old member of Sabarmati who has never given me cause for distrusting him. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar knows me enough to feel sure that I would not hesitate to own my mistake if I discovered it. It was his duty, as it still is, to make an effort to convince me that the sources of my information are tainted. The extraordinary telegram has made me conclude that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has nothing against the Congress or its members except that they are patriots without reproach and without fear. He hates their philosophy and seeks to crush them. All the evidence in my possession points that way, and the telegram confirms my impression.

I have made an offer which I repeat. Let there be an impartial open inquiry into the whole conduct of the State Congress and its treatment by the State. Let the judge or judges be outsiders of known integrity. I shall advise the State Congress to accept the findings of such a court.

If this simple offer is not accepted, I must be pardoned for rejecting the interesting denials by officials of the State Congress allegations and believing them and asking the public to do likewise.

SEVAGARAM, July 17, 1940

*Harijan*, 21-7-1940

## 11. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

WARDHAGANJ,  
July 17, 1940

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR  
LADY HARDINGE COLLEGE  
NEW DELHI

PATIENTS WELL. TAKING REGULAR INJECTIONS.<sup>1</sup> LOVE.

BAPU

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

## 12. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,  
July 17, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

*Harijan* work stops everything else. I see you had a good time in A. You must take rest.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR  
MANORVILLE  
SIMLA W

From the original: C. W. 3984. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7293

## 13. LETTER TO PUSHPA<sup>2</sup>

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 17, 1940

Bravo! May God bless you in your University career. Don't damage your eyes or other parts or your body in the mere pursuit of studies.

<sup>1</sup> A rabid jackal had bitten five persons at the Ashram in their sleep — J. P. Bhansali, Munnalal Shah, Narayan Desai and two policemen.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of V. A. Sundaram

*Do collect for the Andrews Memorial and use this as your authority.* And congratulate the two brothers on their having finished 12 chapters of the Gita.

Love.

BAPU

KUMARI PUSHPA  
C/O SHRI V. A. SUNDARAM  
KRISHNAKUTIR  
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a photostat: G. N. 3193

#### 14. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,  
*July 17, 1940*

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I know Dr. Vaidya very well. If he wants to see me he can certainly come or you may bring him along with you. It is difficult to comfort him but your love can have some effect. It will be good if he occupies himself with some work. Can he not work in the Bhandar under your supervision?<sup>1</sup>

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI KAKUBHAI  
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' S ASSOCIATION  
KHADI BHANDAR  
396 KALBADVI ROAD  
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10846: Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

<sup>1</sup> A line is illegible here.

15. LETTER TO HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 17, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I received the yarn sent by you.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI  
15TH STREET, KHAR  
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C. W. 9936

16. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 17, 1940

CHI. MANJULA<sup>1</sup>,

It is only now that I got your letters written from Rangoon. The second one I got today. I was extremely pleased to read these letters. I cannot contain my joy at your straightforwardness and purity. Your suffering appears insignificant beside them. You have grown up in suffering. I want both of you to come here; I feel you should. I will reason with Magan. Probably he will listen to me. In any case I will try. Whatever happens, your well-being is assured. Write to me frankly from time to time. Do not worry about the money.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1018. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

17. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 17, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

How is it that you do not receive my letters? I take great care in

<sup>1</sup> Wife of Maganlal Mehta, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son



writing to you. I have sent a telegram today regarding the patients. They go for their vaccinations. When I heard about a jackal having bitten them I turned to look for you and realized that you were in Delhi ! Following your advice I have sent one translated article direct to V[iyogi] H[ari]. I have received the second part of your translation today. I can see that you will have to spend considerable time in this work. So I will send it next week. Take suitable matter for the next week from the English articles. It is impossible to take everything in the same week when the writing is repeated.

I do not like your having dreams at night. They should become less frequent and disappear.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

### 18. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 17, 1940

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

The message is at the back. Don't ask for anything in English. You may select from whatever I have written.

Why then have you joined the *Vishal Bharat* ?

You may come whenever you like. I shall spare the time.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2573

### 19. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 18, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have understood your experience of that night. It pained me. I do not like dreams at all. But when some action takes place in a dream it is worse. For instance, it is one thing to dream of eating. But quite another when somebody really eats in a dream; it is definitely a bad

<sup>1</sup> A Hindi monthly

thing. It would be the end result of a particular habit. Such a thing happened in my case. That is why I asked you if you had seen any gesture on my part. How would it have any adverse effect on you? You must really feel pity for me. If you did not see anything wrong in it, it is because of your softness for me. But I must beware of myself. However close you may sleep by my side why should it harm me? I would expect you to see if there was any defect in me. I would be committing a crime if I hide even a single defect of mine from all of you who are living close to me. Hence, you do not have to change anything.

You feel my love only now. But I am not doing any thing new. When Sushila was here I used to get her to do any work I wanted. I used to get details about your diet, etc. I used to see about your bed, etc. Occasionally I used to direct her where and how your bed should be made. When Sushila left, I had already decided to entrust her chores to you. Hence I am not doing anything extra or anything new. You of course see it as something different. Let the feeling persist. If and when Sushila comes she will take charge of them. Is it going to diminish my love for you in any way?

I do not want to force you. I am glad that you have given up fasting on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays Since you have done it for my sake, you are getting the merit of fasting and in addition you are giving satisfaction to me. Had you been fasting, I would not have been able to take from you as much work as I wish. Whatever you may think you would not be able to accomplish as much work as I may desire. Hence I would insist that since you have given up observing fasts, you should leave it at that. Now that I have said this much, you may do whatever brings peace to your mind. Actually, you should find peace in satisfying me. That will cure your blankness of mind and also enable you to avoid the mistakes that tend to get repeated.

You will now have understood my not being afraid of Sushila and being afraid of you. She has experienced everything I have in me. Even though Sushila has entered late in my life, she is more absorbed in me. Hence I would even make her sleep by my side without fear. I believe that she can forestall any mistake I may make. In my view, contact with her has brought greater purity to me. However much I may try, I cannot take with you the same liberty as I may take with Sushila. This has been in my nature right from childhood. Usually, a man can take greater liberty with another man.

The opposite is true in my case. I have felt it is only correct. Whether or not it is really correct can perhaps be known only after my death. I am saying 'perhaps', because who can know It? If I can become pure in this life morning, noon and evening then I can say it for certain. Right now, I can only surmise. In spite of my very intimate contacts with women no woman can say that she has been harmed by contact with me or been prey to lustful thoughts. This has been a matter of great consolation to me.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

## 20. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,  
July 18, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You must have got my letter of yesterday, The jackal bite patients are well. There were seven vaccinations today. Kumarappa<sup>1</sup> has had a little relapse. His vision was blurred and then lost altogether. This lasted for about an hour. He remembers you. He will write to you. You should treat the talk about my going that side as mere gossip.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN  
NEW DELHI

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

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Kumarappa

## 21. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,  
July 19, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two letters today. Your resolution will go in. You will see I have dealt with your report of two Englishmen's complaint.<sup>1</sup> I suppose someone has reported to you about Babla, Mun[n]jalal, Bhansali and two policemen having been bitten by a rabid fox. They are all having the serum treatment. The course is 14 days. B. has fever today, not due to the serum, they say.

Maulana Saheb presses me to go to Poona.<sup>2</sup> I have resisted the pressure. He is coming here on 21st. Let us see what happens. Since taking [to] Gujarati writing I have become indifferent about sending you copies.

The weather is quite cool. But when it is dry, it will be hot of course.

We are fairly full and yet not too full. There is no sickness worth speaking of.

Om<sup>3</sup> was married last Saturday. It was raining heavily at the time.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3985. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7294

## 22. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
[ July ]<sup>4</sup> 19, 1940

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letter. Nanabhai had telegraphed to me at Delhi the news of Sushila's delivery. It is good that everything was over without much suffering. You have found a nice name. Did you find a good

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Unrepentant".

<sup>2</sup> For the A. I. C. C. meeting to be held there on July 27 and 28

<sup>3</sup> Uma Agarwal, Jamnalal Bajaj's youngest daughter

<sup>4</sup> The source has January, obviously a slip.

astrologer or did you consult an almanac for the sign of the Zodiac? Whisper my blessings in Ila's ear and say: "Be a credit to the family."

Your politics there is in a muddle. You seem to be virtually isolated. He had requested a wire from me. I did not send the reply he wanted. God knows what will happen this time. Keep in touch with Marybehn. She is a fine woman. She has done excellent work here.

Do you get the mail regularly there? Here I can't judge I got your letter of the 8th July today, which means it took eleven days. And it came via Akola, so I suppose it must have come by air-mail. We cannot judge all this here.

Here one night a rabid fox bit five persons who were sleeping - Bhansalibhai, Munnalal, Bablo and two policemen. All are being given injections. It is expected that they will get well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4908

### 23. *LETTER TO NANALAL I. MASHRUWALA*

SEVAGRAM,

*July 19, 1940*

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. I had got your wire also. I have written to Phoenix.<sup>1</sup> About violence and non-violence I will write in *Harijan-bandhu*. Hope you are well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6693. Also C. W. 4338. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

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

## 24. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,  
July 20, 1940

CHI. MARY,

I have your two letters. I am glad you are having this new experience, kamala<sup>1</sup> and Chandel were with me for a few days.

Yes, I got your note from Bombay.

I was pained to learn that there was no khadi available in Durban. You should induce people to store some.

Strange you should find scope there for Telugu work.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 6079

## 25. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SEVAGRAM,  
July 20, 1940

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have your long letter<sup>2</sup>-but not long enough for me. You do me less than justice when you say neither R.<sup>3</sup> nor I are too ready to defer to others' judgment. This can never be true of you. But there are some differences between us which our mutual love and regard cannot get love. I have much to say about the letter, but I know you don't want me to argue. Please believe me; no word of yours to me is without its effect. I fancy I am in God's good hands. Mahadev Desai will write.

Love.

*Yours,*  
M. K. GANDHI

*Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 326*

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Jones

<sup>2</sup> Of July 16. In this the addressee had criticized the Working committee's resolution of July 7 and questioned the wisdom of Gandhiji commending it to the public: *Vide Extracts from Srinivasa Sastri's Letter*", 16-7-1940

<sup>3</sup> C. Rajagopalachari

## 26. LETTER TO CHARU PROBHA SENGUPTA

July 20, 1940

DEAR CHARU PROBHA,

I have an idea that I wrote to you in reply to your indictment of man. If not, this is to say you have to be patient.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI CHARU PROBHA SENGUPTA

123/1/1 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a photostat : G. N. 8708

## 27. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 20, 1940

CHI. MANILAL,

I wrote to you only yesterday. And today I got another letter, enclosing letters from Mr. Vogle and Mrs. Paul. The replies to their letters are enclosed. You must have got my letter of yesterday. Maybe you will get both together.

Marybehn writes to say that one cannot get even an inch of khadi in Durban.<sup>1</sup> It seems a little strange. What a state of affairs it is if a person wishes to buy some khadi and can't Keep a little stock of it if no one else will. Can't you persuade somebody to do so?

Sushila and Ila will be well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4915

## 28. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 20, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your two letters. I of course try to send you the matter as early as possible. Satya must have completely recovered. Kuma-

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 20-7-1940.

rappa's blood-pressure has become stable now. It had gone up to 170/120. I am considering what I should do. Write to me if you have any suggestion to make. Bablo is down with a 104° fever. It is the second day today. The fever has not come down. That is why the vaccination was not given yesterday.

I have freed you from bondage. The rest of it is true. What is the point of arguing? You must follow God's guidance. I see from what you write that unless you change your mind you will not come on the 24th or till I change my mind. I mention this because I have to consider the situation here.

If Punjab is given ten rupees, the other three should also be given the same. That is why I have not been insisting. I am considering how the additional two rupees can be given.

You will remember the knife I had. I do not find it in the wooden box. Did you take it out in Delhi? Is it likely that it was left behind in Delhi? How to find it out?

Pyarelal, I would say, is eating quite well. Let us see what God wills. According to my last article, I must pass the test here, is that not so?

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

## 29. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,  
July 20, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

How careless you are! Three mistakes in your letter to Kumarappa? How many times have I corrected "answer"? There should be no 'e' at the end. 'Alltogether' is "altogether". There has to be only one 'l'. One 'c' in "record". You must make full use of the dictionary. I cannot tolerate wrong English spelling and bad handwriting. You can write correct spelling if you are careful. You can improve your handwriting if you are careful.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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



### 30. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 20, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your long-translation is going with this. It has taken me more than two hours to correct it. I had to do it with great care and attention. You must have followed my corrections. Your scrawl shows haste, so it was difficult reading it through. You will realize that in many places you could have written more clearly. It was a difficult translation to do, and the English was so involved that it was not easy to grasp the ideas. Considering this, I think your translation was good. Had you been more careful, you could have made a still better job of it. I have written you two letters today.

Bablo is not having any fever today. Two others, Keshuand Appu, are also down. They themselves are: responsible for it. It is malaria only.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

### 31. DISCUSSION WITH EMILY KINNAIRD<sup>1</sup>

[July 20, 1940 ]<sup>2</sup>

She seemed to doubt the utility of Gandhiji's "Appeal to Every Briton", but she said: "Don't you think Denmark has carried out your ideal of non-violence?"

GANDHIJI: Not a bit. It was surrender, and what I have asked for is not surrender but non-violent resistance.

EMILY KINNAIRD: But Denmark did not resist and did exactly as you have advised Britons today!

G. But I have not asked for unresisting surrender or capitulation. I have appealed to Briton and everyone in their plight to display the highest courage that man is capable of, viz., to refuse to use arms

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Hot Gospeller"

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the following item where Gandhiji says, "Miss Kinnaird . . . was here for an hour yesterday".

and to defy the enemy to walk over their dead bodies. Denmark did nothing of the kind.

E.K. But Denmark had no time. It was all so sudden, and there was nothing for it but for her to offer no resistance.

G. I know, I know. But it is such suddenness that puts non-violence to the test. It was no doubt prudent on her part to offer no resistance. But prudence is not the same thing as non-violence. Non-violent resistance is far more effective than violent resistance, and that is what I have asked for from these nations which are so accustomed to violent resistance.

E.K. Well, well, what's the good of it?

G. What was the good of Jesus Christ laying down His life?

E.K. Oh, that was a different matter. He was the son of God.

G. And so are we !

E.K. No. He was the *only* son of God.

G. It is there, that the mother and son<sup>1</sup> must differ. With you Jesus was the only begotten son of God. With me He was a son of God, no matter how much purer than us all, but every one of us is a son of God and capable of doing what Jesus did, if we but endeavour to express the Divine in us.

E.K. Yes, that is where I think you are wrong. If you accepted Christ in your heart and appealed to your people to do likewise, you could deliver your message with greater ease and far better effect.<sup>2</sup> He is our salvation, and without receiving Him in our hearts we cannot be saved.

G. So those who accept the Christ are all saved. They need do nothing more?

E.K. We are sinners all, and we have but to accept Him to be saved.

G. And then we may continue to be sinners? Is that what you mean? You do not, I hope, belong to the Plymouth Brothers<sup>3</sup>, do you?

E.K. No, I am a Presbyterian.

G. But you talk like some of the Plymouth Brothers I met long ago in South Africa.

<sup>1</sup> Emily Kinnaird and Gandhiji. She was 86 and Gandhiji addressed her as mother.

<sup>2</sup> Mahadev Desai says he is here quoting from memory.

<sup>3</sup> Non-conformist sect founded by J. N. Darby. They recognize no orders of ministers and receive into communion all who acknowledge Christ.

E.K. Yes, I am afraid you were so unfortunate in the Christian contacts you formed in South Africa. You did not meet the right kind of people.

G. Surely you will not say that. I met a number of estimable people. They were all honest and sincere.

E.K. But they were not *true* Christians.

Gandhiji then gave a graphic account of his contact with a number of Christians in those early days, ending up with the intimate contact with F. W. Meyer.<sup>1</sup> He asked Lady Emily:

Do you know F. W. Meyer

E.K. Oh yes.

G. Well, then, let me tell you that it was F. W. Meyer who after a long talk with me asked the other Christian friends to let me alone. He said to them that I was as good as converted, and that I did not need any formal process of conversion. But of course that did not satisfy them. And old A. W. Baker, who must be much over eighty now, is still at me. He writes to remind me time and again that unless I accept Christ in his way I cannot be saved.

E.K. But you *do* think of those Christians, Mr. Gandhi, even at this distance of time!

And she wondered why we were so obtuse as not to see what was so obvious to her—the outstanding superiority of the message of Christianity to any other message. The Bible had been translated into several hundred languages, and the heathen in the remotest parts of the world, who knows not a syllable of English, was agreeably surprised to find God’s message delivered to him in his own dialect.

G. That proves nothing.

E.K. And then, whereas fifty years ago there were so many hundred thousand Christians in India, there are today ten times as many.

G. Again that proves nothing. But why all this quarrel about labels? Cannot a few hundred thousand Indians or Africans live the message of Christ without being called Christians?

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller account of this *vide* “An Autobiography”, sub-title “Christian Contacts” and “An Autobiography”, sub-title “Religious Ferment”

## 32. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

*Unrevised*

SEVAGRAM,  
July 21, 1940

MY DEAR IDOT,

How funny! Some people are never pleased! Why not Chi. Amrit? I give satisfaction. "But I must have 'Idiot' occasionally." What is the poor 'pleaser' to do? Therefore the safest way is to please oneself and let the others do likewise. But I have not followed the safe way. Heaven help me! And then to please idiots! Hard job.

Miss Kinnaird is that the spelling? was here for an hour yesterday.<sup>1</sup> Kept her in roars of laughter and she went away well pleased though without converting me to her Christianity. You must ask me to describe the visit when you find me idle. If you don't, ask P. He was present and so was Nayakam.

Your first article I have accepted. The account of the meeting is unnecessary for *Harijan*. It is well written. Send it to *H. Times*, etc. I return it and three old articles revised. All the translations were good, some portions quite idiomatic. The writing is much improved and firm.

Babla had fever. He is better though has still some.

Pandit Kunzru is here today and Kodand Rao is coming. Maulana is coming on Tuesday. I do not want to go to Poona. But I won't refuse if he insists.<sup>2</sup> as you see I have to write for *Harijan* also. Therefore you will hardly notice any gap. Do give yourself rest.

About khadi you should write to the different Bhandars and correct them. Publication will serve no useful purpose. If you do not get satisfaction I am at your back. There can be no relaxation about cash down. We have suffered a lot by giving credit to notabilities. It was therefore right for the erring sales man to suffer. Hard cases make bad law.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3986. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7295

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

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji in the end, did not go for the A. I. C. C. session.

### 33. FOREWORD<sup>1</sup>

There are two reasons for printing this edition in the Devanagari script. The main reason is that I want to see how far the Gujarati readers can welcome the Devanagari script. My dream that there should be one script for all the languages derived from Sanskrit and that should be Devanagari goes back to my South African days. However it still remains a dream. There is a good deal of talk going on for one script but, as the saying goes, who will bell the cat, who will take the initiative? The Gujaratis say, 'Our script is beautiful and easy. Why should we give it up?' And then there is another party that has emerged. I myself belong to it. According to it Devanagari it itself a difficult and imperfect script, it should be reformed and perfected. But our purpose will be defeated if we do nothing till the script is perfected. This should not be. This edition, therefore, is being brought out on an experimental basis. If it is welcomed by people we shall try to bring out other Navajivan Trust books in the Devanagari script.

The other motive behind this enterprise was to give to the Hindi-speaking people a Gujarati book in the Devanagari script. I am of the opinion that learning Gujarati will become less difficult if Gujarati books are published in the Devanagari script.

In order to make this edition popular we have kept the price low. I hope that the Gujarati and Hindi-speaking people will make this venture a success.

SEVAGRAM, JULY 21, 1940

[From Gujarati]

*Sarvodaya*, October 1940

### 34. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 21, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

Here is the foreword<sup>2</sup>. I have not revised it. If there are no errors, send it as it is. If you want to make any changes, you may do

<sup>1</sup> To *Atmakatha*, Gujarati version in Devanagari script of *An Autobiography*

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

so and return it to me. I shall revise it and send it back. I wrote it out. . . .

The rest we shall see.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10936

### 35. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

SEGAON,  
*July 21, 1940*

CHI. SHARMA,

Why did you neglect the thing till it had developed into a sinus? What has happened to your medical training? Why are you retaining Draupadi and the children there? I do not understand your ways. As for police harassment, I shall do whatever I can.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[From Hindi ]

*Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 287*

### 36. *SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY*

I have avoided mention of the tragedy that has overtaken Gokhale's greatest creation. Through the kindness of Pandit Kunzru I was kept informed of every happening while the Society was going through the agony. It was no small matter for the Society to have to expel members or to lose one of its oldest members by resignation. The trouble had been brewing for many months. But the chief members were putting off what to them was the evil day. They tried to bridge differences. They failed. They tried to evolve discipline out of what had almost become a state of anarchy.

The Society has a high ideal. To serve India so as to purify politics and without a selfish motive or the desire to attain power for the sake of it, is itself a noble ideal. Gokhale created a certain standard of conduct and tradition for the Society. Those who could not carry it out obviously should not seek to enter the Society, or on having changed their viewpoint after entering it, should not remain in

it. Such was the case with Shri Parulekar and Miss Gokhale. They subscribe to a philosophy which includes advocacy of violence for the redress of wrongs economic, political and other. There was no questioning their ability or their sacrifice. Both are inestimable qualities no doubt. But they were irrelevant to a consideration of conformity to certain tradition or discipline the quality of the tradition too would be irrelevant to such consideration. So when the Society could not induce these members to resign, it had to perform the very painful duty of expelling them, if the Society was to function as a properly organized body with one purpose and one policy. I know that the President and the other members left no stone unturned to avoid the crisis. They invited the associates to examine the whole situation. The President put himself at their disposal. And it was on their unanimous recommendation that the Society took the final step.

So far as Shri Joshi<sup>1</sup> is concerned it is wrong to say, as has been said, that he was compelled to resign. For valid reasons the President and the Council thought that he should be transferred from Bombay. Shri Joshi, however, would not move from Bombay. And resigned. And the Society voted a pension and regretfully accepted the resignation. Such is the unvarnished version of the crisis through which the Society has passed. I have felt it a duty to take notice of the incident because there has been unkind criticism and because I consider myself an unofficial and sleeping member of the Society. The reader may not know that immediately after the Chief's death I might have myself become a cause of a grave crisis. My name was suggested for membership. Some members were afraid of my entry as for them, and truly, I was an unknown quantity. As soon as I came to know of differences, I withdrew my name, and everything went off happily. We came closer to one another by this natural restraint. How nice it would have been if Shri Parulekar and Miss Gokhale had followed the example set before them in 1915! If they have the welfare of the Society at heart, they could serve it in a variety of ways in matters in which they have no differences of opinion.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

<sup>1</sup> N. M. Joshi

### 37. QUESTION BOX<sup>1</sup>

Q. What work besides spinning can an active satyagrahi do in cities, especially in Bombay?

A. I shall reply to your question by a cross-question. Why do you want anything else besides spinning? If you have no interest in spinning, you can be no satyagrahi, active or passive. For all satyagraha presupposes the qualification of spinning, and this has been before the country for twenty years. You can, therefore, do no better than give all your spare time to spinning. Do it in a scientific way. If there is no room for a spinning-wheel, you can ply the *takli*. A way has now been devised for easily increasing the speed on the *takli*. It costs a trifle, and it can be plied in any little corner of the house. If you are not doing your own carding, you must do so now. You may have no space for a carding-bow in your room. You should in that case card according to the Andhra method adapted by Vinoba. If you can interest yourself in this, it will add considerably to your useful knowledge. When you come to think of the romance of cotton, you will get out of it an interest the best novel cannot give you, and you will probably discover the solution of the problem of Indian poverty. Therefore, if you want to be a true satyagrahi, if you want to cultivate true ahimsa, I would suggest to you spinning and nothing but spinning, no matter where you may be. Take it from me that without sacrificial spinning non-violent swaraj is impossible.

But if you have enough time on your hands and you are already doing all the spinning that would satisfy me, and if you are longing to do some additional act of service, I can suggest quite a number of things. For instance, there is Harijan service. Try to enter Harijan's life, go and stay in Harijan quarters, teach them, nurse those who are ill, show them the ways and means of improving their economic condition. All this offers a wide field of work. Thakkar Bapa is now going to spend a lot of time in Bombay. Go and seek his guidance.

Then I would ask you to cultivate disinterested friendship of the Mussalmans, it is likely that you do not even know your next-door neighbours. Make their acquaintance and try to render what service

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandu*, 20-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.



you can to them. If you do not know those of other faiths, try to cultivate acquaintance with them. Your contacts will be the test of your broad-mindedness.

Then you can help in the khadi propaganda. Go to Kakubhai of the main Khadi Bhandar in Bombay and ask him if he can utilize your services for khadi-hawking and similar work.

These are but a few samples. The field of service is limitless. In a city like Bombay, especially, the mountain of services is so immense that you can never compass it.

#### DO NOT JUDGE

Q. Many Congressmen in Bombay have joined the Congress for the sake of offices. They never spin. Some have spinning-wheels in their homes just for show. What about this?

A. Do not judge others. Be your own judge and you will be truly happy. If you will try to judge others, you are likely to burn your fingers. If I were secretary of a Congress committee, I should see that those who do not observe discipline are struck off the Congress register.

#### MAY HARIJANS ENLIST AS RECRUITS?

Q. I Am a Harijan sevak. I believe in military training. May I encourage Harijans to enlist as recruits? Those who join the army are rid of fear and untouchability and learn self-respect. What is your advice?

A. You have gone to the wrong man with this question. You know that I do not believe in military training. Nor do I believe with you that Harijans who join the army are so suddenly transformed. But I should not make an attempt to dissuade those Harijans who voluntarily want to enlist as recruits. If sons of the well-to-do go in for military training and if Harijans would like to follow their example, how can I prevent them? It is a difficult thing any day to teach the lesson of ahimsa. How can one inculcate ahimsa in those who are doubly suppressed? The wonder to me is that even among the suppressed there are some Harijans who have truly learnt the lesson to ahimsa.

#### CHIVALRY v. DUTY

Q. You have decided not to launch civil disobedience in order that you may not embarrass the British when they are engaged in a life-and-death struggle. Don't you think this chivalry is misplace, and that you are failing in your duty to carry on the fight for swaraj?

A. I do not think so. If I were to launch civil disobedience, my ahimsa would be at fault, and the disobedience would cease to be civil. I should never think of reaping swaraj out of British defeat. It

would be anything but chivalry. Mine is, therefore, not misplaced, chivalry is a vital part of ahimsa. Ahimsa without it is lame, it cannot work.

#### IMPLICATIONS OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Q. In satyagraha camps there often crops up the question of the implications of untouchability. In Bihar this certainly is the case. If abolition of untouchability consists simply in touching the Harijans, untouchability does not exist in Bihar. But if it includes letting the Harijans use your water-pot and exchange water with non-Harijans, if it includes inter-dining and allowing them to enter your dining-room and kitchen, even Congressmen are not free from this untouchability. What do you say to this?

A. Abolition of untouchability in me will be really achieved only when I behave towards Harijans as I should towards my own kith and kin. There is no untouchability today in Congress kitchens. And so if Congressmen in Bihar observe untouchability as regards eating, I should be disagreeably surprised. Believe me that swaraj will be delayed in proportion to our failure and half-heartedness in carrying out the different items of the constructive programme. It is impossible to attain swaraj non-violently unless there is self-purification. I do not often use this word nowadays, but it is there in an important Congress resolution. It has been a vital part of Congress politics since 1920. Letters of the late Pandit Motilalji and other leaders, written during that period, are worth perusal. Their lives had undergone a conversion. Have we descended from that high pedestal?

#### DONATION OF TAINTED MONEY

Q. Supposing a man has earned million by exploiting millions of his poor brethren and made a gift of them to a Mahatma like you, and supposing you use that money for the benefit of humanity, is the exploiter absolved from sin? Does not some blame attach to you too for having accepted this ill-gotten wealth? How can one remain blameless in this unending vicious circle? How is ahimsa to cope with this immoral exploitation?

A. Let us assume for the purpose of this riddle that I am really a Mahatma, and then try to solve it. The gift of what you assume to be ill-gotten gains cannot lessen the guilt of the exploiter. If he had kept the money for himself, that would have been an additional count against him. If instead he makes a gift of it to me from pure motives, he escapes the additional sin. It is also likely that a good use of his gift may wean the exploiter from immoral means of making money. But no blame attaches to me for having accepted the gift. As the foul waters from drains flowing into the sea partake of its purity, even so does tainted wealth become pure when put to the purest use. There is

one condition, however, that we have assumed, viz., that the gift is made and accepted out of pure motives.

Exploitation of the poor can be extinguished not by effecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-co-operate with their exploiters. That will convert the exploiters also. I have even suggested that ultimately it will lead to both being equal partners. Capital as such is not evil; it is its wrong use that is evil. Capital in some form or other will always be needed.

#### A FLAW IN AHIMSA

Q. You have appealed to Briton to lay down arms and to adopt non-violence. But that raises a moral difficulty. A's ahimsa provokes B to *himsa* and makes him impervious to appeal to his heart. If a non-violent man comes up against an inanimate thing his non-violence will have no effect on it. There is, therefore, some flaw somewhere in your belief. It is likely that ahimsa may have success in a restricted field. If so, what use is it for universal purposes? Your claim, therefore, of its universal use falls to the ground.

A. Ahimsa cannot be dismissed so lightly as you think. Ahimsa is the strongest force known. But if all can use the strongest force with equal ease, it would lose its importance. We have not been able yet to discover the true measure of the innumerable properties of an article of daily use like water. Some of its properties fill us with wonder. Let us not, therefore, make light of a force of the subtlest kind like ahimsa, and let us try to discover its hidden power with patience and faith. Within a brief space of time we have carried to a fairly successful conclusion a great experiment in the use of this force. As you know I have not set much store by it. Indeed I have hesitated even to call it an experiment in ahimsa. But according to the legend, as Rama's name was enough to float stones, even so the movement carried on in the name of ahimsa brought about a great awakening in the country and carried us ahead. It is difficult to forecast the possibilities when men with unflinching faith carry this experiment further forward. To say that those who use violence are all insensible is an exaggeration. Some do seem to lose their senses, but we are bound to be mistaken if we try to base a moral law on those exceptions. The safest course is to lay down laws on the strength of our usual experience, and our usual experience is that in most cases non-violence is the real antidote to violence, and it is safe to infer from it that the highest violence can be met by the highest non-violence.

But let us consider for a moment inanimate objects. He will surely break his head who strikes it against a stone. But supposing a stone comes against us through space, we can escape it by stepping

aside, or if there is nowhere to step aside, we can bravely stay where we are and receive the stone. That will mean minimum injury and, in case it proves fatal, the death will not be as painful as it would be if we made an effort to ward it off.

Extend the thought a little further, and it is easy to see that, if a senseless man is left alone and no one tries to resist him, he is sure to exhaust himself. Indeed it is not quite inconceivable that the loving sacrifice of many may bring an insane man to his senses. Instances are not wanting of absolutely insane people having come back to their senses.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

### 38. TWO JUST COMPLAINTS<sup>1</sup>

#### I RIGHT OF TRANSLATION

A Calcutta telegram protests against the reservation of copyright in translations of my Gujarati articles, saying that my articles are the property of the nation and therefore there could be no copyright in them, and that I myself had taught that Hindustani was the lingua franca of India, and that I should therefore reconsider my decision. This grievance appears on the face of it to be just. But it is forgotten that I have prohibited translation from Gujarati into all other languages. Experience had taught me that English translations of my articles written in any Indian languages were faulty, but it would not have been proper to confine the copyright to translations into English. All important Gujarati articles would be translated simultaneously into English and Hindustani and published almost at the same time. There is, therefore, no hardship involved, for there is no copyright in the translated articles which can be and are being reproduced.<sup>2</sup>

My object was clear and unexceptionable. If I wanted to enter the hearts of the Indian masses, I should write in an Indian language, and that language could be no other than that in which I could write with the greatest ease. If I had the same command over Hindustani as over Gujarati, I should have written only in Hindustani.

#### II ARE GUJARATIS MORE NON-VIOLENT?

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 27-7-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati adds: "So I hope the first complaint is satisfactorily redressed. The grievance would have been just if I had not arranged for the simultaneous publication of translations."

The other complaint is this:

You could not have begun to write in Gujarati out of your partiality for Gujarat, but it would seem as though you believed that you would be able to influence the Gujaratis more quickly than others. That is to say, you have assumed that they are more non-violent than others. I doubt that they are. You may have more workers in Gujarat, but you do not seem to have a greater hold on the Gujarati than on other masses. Belief in non-violence, you have always emphasized, presupposes removal of untouchability and universalization of khadi. Now I suggest that no other province in India has the curse of untouchability to the extent that one finds in your Gujarat, especially your beloved Kathiawar. Indeed we have heard you have expressed this opinion. Again according to you khadi fares no better there. Gujarat is the seat of the textile industry. I admit that the large number of workers in Gujarat are all khadi-lovers and they have all personally shed untouchability. But my complaint is against the masses in Gujarat. Where the masses are not ready, what hope is there of your influencing them more than others? Why not, therefore, address the Indian masses in your imperfect Hindustani than, in your more perfect Gujarati? For the number of Hindustani-knowing masses is much larger than the Gujaratis, and I make bold to say that your influence on them is certainly the same as on the Gujaratis, if not even greater.

This complaint is couched in sweet Hindustani and made in all sincerity. I have summarized it in my own words. The correspondent will, I hope, admit that in doing so I have not only not been unfair to him, but have even put his argument more forcefully. This I have done with a purpose as my reply to him will reveal.

I claim that consciousness on my part of my belonging to Gujarat has never meant any exclusiveness. I have always believed and described myself as in Indian. When I went to South Africa I found that there were divisions among our countrymen into Tamils, Telugus and Gujaratis. Immediately on my landing I abolished the divisions. For myself I knew that all the immigrants from India were Indians, and that provincial or religious divisions between them were improper. It was true that they belonged to different provinces and to different faiths and that they spoke different languages, but all belonged to the same country, all had the same joys and sorrows, and all were under the same alien rule. Besides even the people of the country where they had gone did not know and did not know and did not recognize the distinctions of caste, religion, language or province. To them we were all Indians, all coolies, all *samis*, and all to be governed by the same

law. We have ceased to be called coolies and *samis*, but we have not ceased to be Indians. Thus alike by temperament and from experience I have been against these divisions, as I think everyone should be.

Nevertheless when I begin to think in terms of the talents God has given me and of the use I should make of them for the service of the motherland, I cannot afford to ignore the province of my birth. As Gujarati is my mother tongue and as I know the Gujaratis more intimately, I could serve India best through Gujarat and the Gujarati language. It was this consideration that was at the back of the choice of Gujarat as my place of abode on my return from South Africa. But I deliberately did not choose Porbandar or Rajkot, though I had invitations from and facilities in both the places. For I had ceased to belong to Porbandar and Rajkot, ceased to belong to my caste. My choice has been proved to be cent per cent right. It could not be otherwise, as I believe that my footsteps are guided by God, and all my life is based on this belief.

If the argument presented above appeals to the reader and to the co-worker who has made the complaint in question, I need not labour it any more. But something more I must say for the sake of the work I want from Gujarat and from the other provinces of India.

I do not enjoy elsewhere the same intimacy and extent of contact as I do with the Gujarati worker. And so if I succeed with them, I should have confidence regarding the rest of India. Some of them believe that I should again fix up my abode in Gujarat, but I do not think so. If I stayed in their midst, they would lose initiative, and cease to work independently, they have a tried leader like the Sardar to guide them at every step, and I feel that if I stayed in Gujarat my talents would not be put to the fullest possible use. It is God who has guided my steps to Sevagram. It may be a difficult field or work. If it is, surely I may not shirk it. Stay in Sevagram has taught me, is teaching me, a lot that is new. If I can be one with its six hundred souls, if I can engage them in constructive work and in the necessary work of reform, and if I can easily make a satyagrahi army of them, I should discover the key to do the same work in the whole of India. If I chose a big city, I should get lost, puzzled and perplexed. Much of what has been done and planned in Sevagram has been done from the point of view of India. It is, therefore, but meet that I must deliver my message through Sevagram and in Gujarati.

There is one fact which can upset the plan of burying myself in Sevagram. The Khan Shaheb can summon me to his province whenever he likes for his work, which indeed is also my work. If he succeeds in expressing real ahimsa, I firmly believe that the whole country

can succeed. For the experiment there is out and out that of non-violence of the brave. God alone knows whether it will or will not succeed. This I know that wherever I go I will do His work. I regard the winning of Indian independence by non-violent means as God's own work, and if that is achieved, the whole world would be saved from being drowned in a sea of bloodshed.

The reader will now see that I am prompted by partiality for neither Gujarat nor anything else. If there is any partiality, it is for truth and non-violence. It is through these that I can have some glimpse of God. Truth and non-violence are my God. They are the obverse and reverse of the same coin.

My co-worker's complaint is true that in the abolition of untouchability and in love of khadi Gujarat lags behind other provinces. But that does not mean that I should leave Gujarat alone. If these who items cannot be accomplished in Gujarat, Gujarat will be an obstacle to the independence of India. If I can inspire the Gujaratis to lay down their lives for the abolition of the curses of untouchability and unemployment, what a glorious thing it would be! It would be a sight for all India to see and copy. Hindu-Muslim troubles would automatically come to an end, for the moment we cast out untouchability from our hearts Hindu-Muslims unity will be an accomplished fact and many another good thing would follow as a matter of course.

All this is only a dream today. But it is in order to realize that dream that I have undertaken in my old age this Gujarati enterprise. If it is God's will thus to take work from me, age will be no bar.

SEVAGRAM, July 22, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

### 39. OPEN LETTER

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

. . . I am still hoping and praying daily that Congress may see that its supreme opportunity is not to win a doubtful political victory over a foe but . . . to win the lasting friendship of all who love liberty, in England and in all the world, by revealing the only adequate zeal for India's defence or defence of democracy in the world - *the non-violent war to the finish against the whole structure of man's inhumanity to man*. The combined might of India, building a third-rate military force, can at best but become the support of force. . . But defence committees and those who know no better way should not be discouraged. What I do mean is that, at the same time, those who understand and love peace should build up a non-violent defence force for the precise purpose for which military force is being established. Like the military

forces, these should also be non-political and voluntary. Besides being negatively harmless to the interests of the defence of India, such a force should at the very outset place itself at the disposal of the Government for the purpose either of defence or offence against all the foes of liberty in India or elsewhere, as the non-violent army of India.

. . . I think that this war has already revealed that armed force cannot defend even the institutions of democracy without first nullifying them and second destroying them. Further, the very strongest military defence force in the world has not been able to make its nation secure in this war-mad world. I am convinced that a non-violent war against all aggression, the economic as well as the political, not only will prove more effective than all the armies but can very rapidly be made available, if the non-violent of the world will but put their minds and hearts to the matter. . . .

Traditional democracy theoretically reserved the right of violent rebellion to aggrieved people whose will was no longer represented in their government. But pure democracy must repudiate the violence, while reserving the right of rebellion. This is because violence, however employed, is the antithesis of democracy, . . . I do not think there is a single instance in history where defensive war has ever settled the problems for which the defenders have supposed they fought. But Denmark, on the other hand, is the supreme illustration of a nation setting itself on the road to liberty by the deliberate repudiation of the "glory" of imperial conquest or defence of integrity.

Kristagraha has already taken its unequivocal stand for the non-violence of Christ its Master, in its two manifestos. It will perhaps be reviewing its stand shortly in order to make its present position fully clear in the face of the new turn of events, though that may seem unnecessary. Many missionaries have recently received copies of Memorandum A, under which all non-British missionaries serve in India. It was a surprise to most of them to note that the Government had provided for them to "influence" politics in the interest of assisting in the preservation of the nation's security and well-being. Here then, I believe, is the supreme opportunity for Christian lovers of freedom, missionary and non-missionary, to serve their nation and the world while adhering to their Master's injunction not to take up the sword. I can only say for myself that I am prepared to surrender fully to this great cause, and do hereby pledge to follow your leadership if you decide to launch the Satyagraha Army of the World. I do this because I believe it is the only way that the real aggression can ever be uprooted from its soil in mankind's unbrotherliness and the world established on a basis of justice, quality and peace . . . I can see no hope whatever in the way the United States and England have so far taken. The war of 1940 will never be won. Chaos can win over order, barbarity over civilization, autocracy over democracy,



darkness over light, and violence over goodwill. That has already transpired over a large part of the world and is fast coming in the rest. But generous application of goodwill can still arrest this in every part, especially when men in large numbers are ready to lay down their lives for the Truth that is in them. . .

I pray that God may lead you in His own way. You have countless friends encircling our earth. Through the instrumentality of non-violent resistance to the mountainous lovelessness and stupidity of our ago, the way may yet open into the new day and a peace of full justice prevail among the nations.

With the deepest appreciation of your single-minded devotion to Truth, and with the sincerest affection.

*I am,*

*Yours for the World Satyagraha Army,*

Ralph T. Templin

I gladly publish this letter.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Templin represents a growing number of Western satyagrahis. There are just two reflections arising out of this letter. I wish to say that Denmark's is not an illustration of non-violent action.<sup>2</sup> It was most probably the most prudent course to adopt. When armed resistance is vain, it is folly to spill blood. The second is that I do not expect to lead any satyagraha army of the world. So far as I can see at present, every country will have to work out its own programme. Simultaneous action is possible.

SEVAGRAM, July 23, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

#### 40. TRAVANCORE

In the hope of having a talk with Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar and possibly arriving at some way out of the impasse, I was suppressing the manifestos sent to me by succeeding acting Presidents. The last received was from Shri Achuthan, a Harijan advocate, about the last week of June. From the manifesto I extract only statements of facts, omitting as far as possible all argument and inferences:

Processions and meeting have been violently broken up by the special police and the ordinary police without even the semblance of prohibitory orders. To quote from the speech of Shri. K. Santhanam, M. L. A. (Central) which he delivered at Madras after a brief visit to Travancore, he said: "My impression is there is police raj in Travancore. No one could speak with any

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts have been reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Discussion with Emily Kinnaird", 20-7-1940

sense of security or discuss matters even with friends. The Government appear determined not to allow any discussion on responsible government, and are willing to resort to any methods to prevent it. All normal channels of public expression have been stopped.”

Repression has worked ruthlessly along three main lines: 1. Legal terrorism, 2. Police terrorism, 3. Complete muzzling of the Press.

1. Legal terrorism has taken the shape of ‘the Defence of Travancore Proclamation’. It is not the actual number of those arrested and detained for indefinite periods under this Act, but the threat of it against every man and woman with any active sympathy towards the State Congress that has created a grave situation. Several people have been arrested under this Act and then let off, just to show that the authorities can do anything with anybody. Many important leaders have been imprisoned under this Act without trial and for indefinite periods.

2. Police terrorism has meant more than what will be ordinarily understood by that term. In Travancore it has meant more than the forcible dispersal of processions and meetings. It has meant secret as well as open goondaism by what are called the special police who wear no uniforms and who get only Rs. 5 a month. This body of special police contains in many cases the worst rowdies and drunkards in various localities. Their special business is to quietly mix with the crowds and start sudden goondaism. It has become physically impossible to hold any decent meeting or procession or demonstration in the face of such goondaism. In Neyyattinkara, Alleppey, Palai, Karunagapilly and many other places such goondaism has appeared openly.

3. Muzzling of the Press. No doubt there are several papers in Travancore which appear regularly. Not one of them would publish reports or news of State Congress meetings and demonstrations. Statements issued by Acting Presidents of the State Congress or by State Congress leaders never appear in them. In many cases people in one part of the State never knew anything of what happened in another part except from news appearing in the English papers at Madras. This was proved when police frightfulness occurred in Neyyattinkara and Palai.

But the Travancore Government did not rest content with the above items of repression. Every officer from the highest to the lowest went about the country treating every State Congressman or sympathizer not merely as one belonging to a disturbing political party but as an enemy to be hunted down by every means in their power. Another severe trial for those engaged in the struggle has been police violence in lock-up. Volunteers who are under arrest and awaiting trial are mercilessly beaten and very often discharged after several weeks of detention without trial.

Every time State Congress leaders published allegations against the Travancore police, the Government as often came out with categorical and wholesale denials. But Shri G. Ramachandran's specific allegations regarding police terrorism at Neyyattinkara and Palai published in *The Hindu* of Madras supported by unimpeachable data have at last compelled the Government to order an official enquiry. It is significant that the enquiry has been ordered long after the Government had published categorical and wholesale denials of the allegation! The public are still awaiting the findings of the enquiry.

The most disquieting development in the present situation has yet to be related. This is the direct and open encouragement given to the various communal organizations in Travancore by the authorities including the Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar himself. At one time Sir. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar used to say that it was the presence of various communal organizations in Travancore which prevented him from inaugurating any scheme of responsible government in Travancore. But today his policy clearly appears to be to encourage each and every communal organization to develop along separate lines and thus make political unity impossible. Officers of Government including the Dewan take part in meetings of the various communal organizations. Lovers of Travancore know that, if this process is allowed to continue, Travancore will soon become a battleground for the various communal organizations.

I know that there will be an official contradiction. I have already suggested that such contradictions can have no value unless they are backed by a definite promise of an impartial enquiry. Officials stake nothing when they issue unprovable contradictions, whereas State Congress Presidents stake their liberty and the prestige of their institution when they make rash statements.

The balance of probability therefore, must be in their favour. The quotation given by Shri Achuthan from Shri Santhanam's speech in his support is not to be lightly brushed aside.

I sent a copy of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's wire to Shri Ramachandran. He sends a comment from which I take the following:

I can show that our Working Committee kept 'communist tendencies' clearly and absolutely out of the struggle. Mr. K. C. George who is referred to was one of the severest critics of our Working Committee, and considered our work and programme as thoroughly useless. . . . It is absolutely false to say that we depend on Babu's periodical statements for collecting our funds and for our existence. If this were so, there should be today no State Congress. During the last eight or nine months Babu has not said a word about Travancore. Our cause is so patently just that it does not depend even on Babu. It depends on its own inherent justice. Babu can of course help our cause. But that is different from saying that our movement depends on Babu. . . .

Most of the leading members of the Travancore State Congress including Shri V. K. Velayudhan and M. N. Parameswaran Pillai and others have openly dissociated themselves, says Sir C. P. Yes, these two gentlemen have done so. But neither of them has said that the State Congress is in the wrong. Shri Velayudhan stated that he withdrew in obedience to the Mandali of the Ezahava communal organisation which has now been captured by the friends of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Sir M. N. Parameswaran Pillai has nearly apologized and recovered his *sannad* to practise law. How do these actions touch the demand and the programme and the stand of the State Congress? But besides these two gentlemen no prominent leader of the State Congress has gone back in any sense. The number 60 requires close analysis. . . .<sup>1</sup> Then there is my second statement on the Palai atrocities which *The Hindu* published and a copy of which I am enclosing. It was then stated on behalf of the Travancore Government that there would be an official enquiry and a press communique. It is weeks now since this appeared, and no enquiry or communique has been heard of. It was tight corner into which the Travancore Government was pushed by specific and unchallengeable allegations. They had denied everything in their first communique. Then when I replied, they said there would be an enquiry and a communique. But nothing has happened yet.

I believe every word of what Shri Ramachandran says. The terrible repression may thin the ranks of the State Congress. But even if there is one true representative left to hold aloft the torch of non-violent liberty, he will be quite enough to multiply himself till every Travancorean becomes an apostle of life-giving freedom. A friend sent me the other day a bon mot of an American President: 'One true man of courage represents a majority.' I have quoted from memory. But there is no mistake about the meaning. Let every member of the State Congress take it to heart, and believe that nothing is lost if one true man survives the repression. As it is I know that there are numerous men and women of the State Congress who are seasoned enough to stand the most rigorous repression that the wit of the resourceful Dewan of Travancore and his advisers can devise.

SEVAGRAM, July 23, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

<sup>1</sup> Omission as in the source

## 41. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHAM,  
July 23, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters. Hope you have my long letter<sup>1</sup> and corrected translations, etc.

I never said to K. That M.<sup>2</sup> must or even should become a doctor. I understood that it was her wish. If that was so I had approved of it. But my strong recommendation was for your institution. I thought there she would really grow and enjoy freedom. I had also asked M. To see the institution and then arrange for K. to go. But it did not happen. Therefore you should pursue your project to have her in your college. I shall write to K. S. about this. You have assumed my advice as suggested by K. Never repeat the mistake. Always have confirmation from me of whatever is reported about me, before even accepting it subject to correction. Always reserve judgment. This should apply to all. But for me, it is a peremptory command.

Mira is in New Delhi. Khurshed was good this time. I have heard again from her.

I am not moving from Sevagram. Hope to be here to receive you on 3rd August, unless you alter the date.

It will be said if G.'s eyes are damaged. I do not know whether Mira<sup>3</sup> is here. In any case you shall have a girl of your choice. But meanwhile bring anyone you like for a few days. No question of settling in Gujarat. I am sending you an advance copy of article from which you will know how my mind is working.

I hope not to go to poona. The fate will be decided tonight. The Maulana is coming. Hope you are all right.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3987. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7296

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 299-300.

<sup>2</sup> Mehrtaj, daughter of Abdul Ghaffar Khan

<sup>3</sup> Not Mirabehn

## 42. NOT QUITE SO BAD

A friend quotes from a letter received from an English friend.:

Do you think that Mahatma's appeal<sup>1</sup> to every Briton is going to produce right reactions in the mind or heart of a single Briton? That appeal has probably created more ill-will than anything else recently. We live in astonishing and critical times, and it is frightfully difficult to decide what should be done. At any rate we should try to avoid obvious dangers. So far as I can see, Mahatma's unadulterated policy must inevitably lead to disaster for India. How far he himself intends following it I do not know, for he has a wonderful way of adapting himself to his material.

Well I happen to know that many more than one single heart have been touched by my 'Appeal to Every Briton'. I know that many English friends were anxious for me to take some such step. But I do not want to take comfort from the approbation, however pleasing in it self, of English friends. What is of value for me is to know that at least one Englishman thinks as stated in the extract. Such knowledge should put me on my guard. It should make me more careful, if possible, in the selection of the words I use to express my thought. But no displeasure even of the dearest friends can put me off the duty I see clearly in front of me. And this duty of making the appeal was so peremptory that it was impossible for me to put it off. As certain as I am writing this, the world has to come to the state to which I have invited Britan. Those who will be witnesses of that happy and not-far-off event will recall my Appeal with gladness. I know that the Appeal has hastened its advent.

Why should a single Briton resent an appeal to him to be braver than he is, to be better than is in every respect? He may plead inability, but he cannot be displeased by an appeal to his nobler nature.

Why should the Appeal breed any ill-will at all? There is no cause given for it by the manner or the matter of the Appeal. I have not advised cessation of fight. I have advised lifting it to a plane worthy of human nature, of the divinity man shares with God Himself. If the hidden meaning of the remark is that by making the Appeal I have strengthened Nazi hands, the suggestion does not bear scrutiny. Herr Hitler can only be confounded by the adoption by Britain of the novel method of fighting. At one single stroke he will find that all his tremendous armament has been put out of action. A warrior lives on

<sup>1</sup>Vide "To Every Briton"

his wars whether offensive or defensive. He suffers a collapse if he finds that his warring capacity is unwanted.

My Appeal is not from a coward to brave people to shed their bravery, not is it a mockery from a fair-weather friend to one in distress. I suggest to the writer to re-read my Appeal in the light of my explanation.

One thing Herr Hitler, as every critic, may say: I am a fool without any knowledge of the world or human nature. That would be a harmless certificate which need excite neither ill-will nor anger. It would be harmless because I have earned such certificates before now. This one would be the latest of the many editions, and I hope not the last, for my foolish experiments have not yet ended.

So far as India is concerned, my unadulterated policy can never harm her, if she adopts it. If India as a whole rejects it. There can be no harm accruing except to those who may foolishly pursue it. The correspondent has lighted upon my strong point when he says: "Mahatma has a wonderful way of adapting himself to his material." My instinctive knowledge of my material has given me a faith which cannot be moved. I feel within me that the material is ready. My instinct has not betrayed me once. But I must not build much upon past experience. "One step enough for me."

SEVAGRAM, July 24, 1940

*Harijan*, 28-7-1940

### 43. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEVAGRAM,

Via WARDHA (C. P.),

July 24, 1940

What are you doing in Hyderabad? . . .<sup>1</sup> that Father is quite restored now. He is not working, is he? Do write to me something about the situation. Love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI PREMIBEHN JAIRAMDAS

BHAI MULCHAND LANE

HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat: C. W. 10160. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdass

<sup>1</sup> Indistinct in the source

#### 44. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,  
July 24, 1940

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter only today. I very much like what is happening. Please treat *Harijanbandhu* as my weekly letter. See the corrections I have made in your draft. I have no comments to make about the pledge. If I had time, I might have shortened it. But there is nothing wrong in the present form. If the Sangh is formed and changes become necessary later on we will make them. There is a difference between Shanti Sangh and the Sangh that you have in mind. In any case the Satyagraha Sangh will be open to all. You will have to come here for the final decision.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9119

#### 45. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

July 24, 1940

CHI. JETHALAL,

Am I not doing exactly what you have suggested? I am pouring into this work all the strength and energy I and my co-workers have. I have based all my plans on the success of this. Let us see what happens.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9871. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

#### 46. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 25, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your resolution did not go in this week. Do send Spear's book or bring it with you. Why waste stamps?



I have dealt with the English complaint.<sup>1</sup> My “Appeal to Every Briton” is being translated. It will go to you with the next collection and it will be the last. No use sending you only one.

I see jackal and fox are used interchangeably. All the patients are doing well.

I have inquired and have been told that Mira is available but going through her sixth or seventh month.<sup>2</sup> Not much good for you?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3988. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7297

#### 47. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,  
July 25, 1940

CHI. KAKA.,

Please write to Bhai Saxena and tell him that I have carefully gone through his articles from beginning to end. I did not find in them a clear answer to the question what the mind can do or cannot do. He has not correctly understood my ideas on Hindi and Urdu.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10933

#### 48. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

July 25, 1940

CHI. MAGAN,

Where will you study there? What knowledge will you gain? So many years have passed now. Manjula's letter is worth thinking over. We shall discuss it when you come here.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN MEHTA  
C/O “HINDUSTAN TIMES”  
NEW DELHI

From Gujarati: C. W. 1603. Courtesy: Manjula M. Mehta

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Not Quite So Bad”, 28-7-1940

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* letter to the addressee, “Letter to Amrit Kaur”, 23-7-1940

## 49. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
July 25, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I understand about the patients. I see your point about the dispensary too. Even as your view becomes stronger, mine does too. My mind will never accept that I have let you down. I claim to have actually saved you when you felt you were being let down. I have saved you like a mother saves her child. The child would think with irritation that the mother was stopping its progress. But you are and are not a child. Hence, we shall call it a difference of opinion and pull the curtain down over the affair. Moreover, in spite of my explaining it you refuse to be convinced that none of those staying with me have any certainty of tenure. I can let any of them go whenever I like. If any of them assume any such right, it is a mistake on their part. Even though some of them may have been with me from the beginning, it is not by virtue of any such right. I may have acted as though they had this right, but there has been a reason for it. But why go into that discussion now? I am accepting your decision. Come here when you cannot help it. You do have a place here. I shall welcome you. I do not wish to make you unhappy by dragging you here against your will.

I am not able to send you the English matter early because I have not been able to get it ready. I see from Pyarelal's letter that you wish to have the Tata scholarship (or something) if you can get it. It would be nice if Mahadev could do something. Then why do you not let Mahadev talk straight to you? You take from me whatever money you need. Or I shall arrange to raise the amount. This should be the easiest way for you.

Your health has deteriorated. It is my wish and demand that you should improve it. It can be easily done.

*Blessings form*  
BAPU

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

## 50. SPINNING AND CHARACTER

The Secretary of the A. I. S. A., Karnatak Branch, sends me the following report<sup>1</sup> of the spinning work done on the settlement schools.

There is ample evidence to corroborate the foregoing testimony as to the steadying influence of spinning. I hope Miss Briscoe<sup>2</sup> will continue to send me periodical reports on the progress of her experiment.

SEVAGRAM, July 26, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

## 51. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

July 26, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

This is a purely personal letter. No one shall see it except those in charge of the office.

It is reported to me by persons of status that money is being spent like water in the name of the war. Men who have enjoyed fat salaries in their respective jobs are being taken up for the war at much higher salaries and given ranks to which they have never been used before. The largest number of these are said to be Europeans or Anglo-Indians. If patriotism is the deciding factor, these gentlemen should take, and be given, no more than just enough to keep them and their dependants.

On the one hand money is said to be spent on a most extravagant scale; on the other it is collected in a manner bordering on force. It is being squeezed from rich and poor. I have letters from all parts of India complaining of these exactions giving graphic details which it is difficult to believe.<sup>3</sup> If you would care to have details I could furnish them.

The result of these measures but more especially of the collections is much silent discontent and ill will. I have been advising correspondent that they are in no way obliged to yield to pressure unless they are willing. I very much fear that a fair part of these collections never reaches the treasury. In my opinion they ought to be stopped

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here. The report spoke of the work done to teach carding spinning to the inmates of the Remand Home for boys at Hubli and mentioned the improvement that had resulted in the conduct of the boys.

<sup>2</sup> E. W. Briscoe, Lady Superintendent of the certified school of Hubli Settlement.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* also letter to the addressee, 11-8-1940.

altogether; leaving it to those who wish to send donations of their own accord to do so at stated Banks or Post Offices against proper receipts.

I want to avoid as far as possible publication of such information. But I felt that you would not mind my bringing these complaints to your notice.

I hope you have reassuring news about Lord Hopetoun.

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow papers. Courtesy: national Archives of India

## 52. TELEGRAM TO CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI

[On or before *July 27, 1940*]<sup>1</sup>

CONVEY CONDOLENCES TO MR. PAMNANI'S<sup>2</sup> FAMILY. THE MURDER IS MOST DISCONCERTING. YOU SHOULD ADVISE WISE MEASURES MAKING PEACEFUL LIFE POSSIBLE.

*The Hindu*, 28-7-1940

## 53. IS IT PROPER?

Shri Gopinath Bardoloi, ex-Premier of Assam, sends me a newspaper cutting which contains the full text of the speech of H. E. The Governor of Assam at the inaugural meeting of the Assam War Committee. From it I take the following extract:

Let me say how fortunate we are in Assam to have a Ministry which is not only prepared to work the Constitution, but also in pledged to do its best to further the ends of this righteous war, an attitude indeed which reflects clearly the general attitude which prevails throughout this Province. One of the finest gestures which the Ministry has made was that which was published recently, but I consider did not get half the publicity it deserved, the gift out of public funds of Rs. 100,000 for war purposes, a gesture of which Assam may well be proud, for so far it is unique in India. It symbolizes in a concrete and in a valuable form the sentiments which the Ministry feel as members of the British Commonwealth, a proof of their belief in the righteousness of our cause, of their conviction that the outcome of this war is vital to India, and of their determination to do all in their power to achieve victory. And anyone

<sup>1</sup> The news item carrying the report is dated July 27.

<sup>2</sup> H. S. Pamnani, a Congress M. L. A.

who has the temerity to criticize this gift must inevitably stamp himself as an enemy of India and a friend of Hitler.

In reply to this Shri Gopinath Bardoloi has issued the following statement:

The speech delivered by His Excellency Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam, at the inaugural meeting of the Assam War Committee, will have aroused mixed feelings of surprise and regret amongst all those who hold the democratic rights of fair criticism and free speech dear. It is indeed unfortunate that the speech should lend itself to the interpretation that criticism of the Ministry's gift of a lakh of rupees to the War Fund would be an act of temerity and prove the critic to be an enemy of India and a friend of Hitler.

I do not indeed understand by virtue of what power the Ministry can make such a gift. To me it seems clear that no rules of budgetary and accounts procedure can sanction it. The only authority to do so might probably have been the Assembly, and as it gave no such sanction the gift must be unconstitutional. That is probably the only reason why other provinces have not done anything of the kind.

That we are no friends of Hitler need not, I think, be proclaimed; but when the gift is a ministerial act, I do not see why as Opposition we should not criticize it. The Congress resolution on India's co-operation in general and of Congressmen in particular is before the country, and His Excellency might well know that a fair proportion of the House and the major section of the people in the country are in full agreement with it. In view of this he should not have identified himself with the gift as he has chosen to do.

Shri Gopinath Bardoloi deserves congratulation on his dignified protest. It was certainly unbecoming of a constitutional Governor to identify himself with the act of his Ministers irrespective of the propriety or legality of their act and of the wishes of the Opposition in such a matter as a public gift. Apart from the legality of the transaction it is a serious thing for a Ministry to pay out of public funds any sum without previous provision and without the sanction of the House in whose name they have to act and from whom they derive their authority. I think Shri Bardoloi was quite right in raising the question. And I hope the money will not be paid without a thorough examination of the legality of the transaction. I myself so further and suggest that, even if the gift is held to be within the rights of the Ministry, His Excellency would put himself right if he has the gift sanctioned by the Assam Assembly. One lakh of rupees is insignificant compared to the daily expense of nine million sterling incurred by the

British Treasury. It is, in my opinion, all the more necessary why extra care should be taken to ensure constitutional propriety.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

#### 54. WOMAN'S ROLE<sup>1</sup>

The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference met recently at Abbottabad. This was their first venture in the Frontier Province. The members, I understand, had a very happy experience. There were no caste distinctions, no religious differences. Muslim, Sikh and Hindu women freely mixed together. The Standing Committee passed the following three resolutions:

1. The members of the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference assembled at Abbottabad desire to place on record their immense grief and despair at the continuance of war in Europe and the Far East. They are in deep sympathy with all those countries which have lost their independence and are under the iron heel of Nazi and Fascist domination against which all sections of India have expressed their opinion in no uncertain terms. They appeal again to the women of the world to realize the utter futility of trying to settle disputes and grievances by means of war and to throw their whole weight into the cause of peace.

2. The Standing Committee reaffirm their belief in non-violence as the only effective means of ensuring a lasting peace in the world by the formation of abrotherhood of nations. They realize how difficult of attainment this ideal is, and therefore they appeal to Indians women to try to develop the practice of non-violence in their individual and collective live, for they feel that with their traditional inheritance of service and sacrifice they could give a lead to the women of the world in this respect.

3. The members reiterate the opinion of the A. I. W. C. that the recognition of India's free status would be a first and logical step towards the attainment of the goal for which Britain is at War - namely, the freedom of all nations, and a world democracy.

Evidently the sisters who met at Abbottabad believe like me that in the war against war women of the world will and should lead. It is

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. The English translation has been reproduced from *Harijan*, where it was published under "Notes".

their special vocation and privilege. Therefore the Committee have reaffirmed their belief in non-violence. Let me hope that the women who are under the influence of the Conference share the Committee's belief, and that they will work to that end.

SEVAGRAM, July 27, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

### 55. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 27, 1940

DEAR IDIOT,

I sent you a full batch of corrected translations. Two more and last were ready but overlooked. They go today. Together with them go leaflets from Atulanand. His letter herewith. He must get ill every three months. Remarkable that in spite of such advertisement his books have no sale. It shows the reading public has no use for such literature. Cultural unity can't be brought about by books.

Some of your translations are good; all are not uniformly so. The language is not yet settled. The choice of words is laboured. No wonder. The wonder is that you have made so much progress. You need more practice and fair reading of current Hindi. I have suggested *Pratp*<sup>1</sup>. There are other good papers, too, which may be read with profit and a good grammar.

Babla still has fever though there is nothing to cause anxiety. Ku.<sup>2</sup> comes here. He needs rest from routine work.

A. S. is weak. She is attending to correspondence under P. and doing Urdu translations.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

This will be in your hands on 30th. I suppose there need be no more letters from me.

From the original: C. W. 3989. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7298

<sup>1</sup> A Hindi daily of Kanpur

<sup>2</sup> J. C. Kumarappa.

## 56. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,  
July 27, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

You write that you neither have altercations with anyone there nor have any cause to feel unhappy. I think the reason for this is that while here you were not in your own milieu, there you are. You are in a place which you desired and which you have found with your own enterprise. Here you were brought only by circumstances. Therefore, you are in your natural situation there. The situation being unnatural for you here, there was constant friction, or so you thought. This is true not of you alone but of everyone. As I think on it, I see that those who have not absorbed the atmosphere here are constantly in conflict. The atmosphere here cannot be said to be natural for anyone. It is what it is. Hence, only he who has learnt to master the atmosphere or wants to do so can live here comfortably and grow. There is no particular purpose in my writing this. As a doctor, you must be concerned with such matters and so I have placed before you my view for your consideration.

Kumarappa is coming today to stay here. This change has been made following your letter. It is intended to provide him rest. He could go to Coimbatore, but I felt that if he stayed here, I could see to things myself and when necessary consult you. If he does not maintain good health here, we shall have to think of an alternative. He does miss you. He asked about your coming again yesterday. I informed him that you were tied up there till the middle of September, and the next programme was not definite. He just listened. Others are also asking.

Bablo's fever is still persisting. He is being treated only for malaria. He took 15 grains of quinine yesterday. Kesho and Appu had a severe attack of malaria. Now they are better. They have not resumed work yet. Abha is down.

Three English articles will be sent to you today. I took up *Harijan* work since I have been able to avoid writing letters.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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



## 57. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,  
July 27, 1940

I have seen the Associated Press message in the Press to the effect that I intend to open a class in Bardoli under the guidance of Sardar Prithvi Singh for training a non-violent army and that all preliminary arrangements have been made. There is no foundation whatever for this report. Sardar Prithvi Singh had intended, under Sardar Patel's guidance, to open a vyayam class in Bardoli. As the final decision was to rest with me, with the concurrence of Sardar Prithvi Singh even that has been stopped. I can but repeat my request to the Press not to publish news about persons without reference to them, especially when reference is easy and the public is not likely to suffer any harm by a little delay.

*The Hindu*, 28-7-1940

## 58. THERE IS VIOLENCE IN IT<sup>1</sup>

Shri Surendra, a co-worker from Boriavi, who reads my articles usually in *Harijanbandhu*, the Gujarati edition of *Harijan*, has expressed his painful surprise that in my article on the Working Committee's statement issued from Wardha, I had written to the effect that 'I was unhappy that the privilege of a friendship of many years had now become a thing of yesterday.' 'Is there not violence in these words?' he asks. I was startled to see these words put into my mouth, and wrote to him at once that I could not have said them. For I had no doubt that there was violence in the very thought that a friendship of twenty years had become a thing of yesterday. I could say this of no friendship I have formed, much less of my friendship with the Sardar. Having repeated all these year the precept of loving even one's enemies, how could I break my friendship with a colleague like the Sardar? My differences with Malaviyaji and Sahstriar have not affected in the least my friendship with them. That a friendship should not bear the strain of difference in views is a sure sign of intolerance.

So I turned to *Harijanbandhu* and found that what Surendraji was referring to was translation of the following words: "Unhappy because my word seemed to lose the power to carry with me those whom it was my proud privilege to carry all these many years which seem like yesterday." These words could not possibly bear the

<sup>1</sup> The Gujrati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

meaning that was attributed to me in the translation. Besides it was plainly inconsistent with the words I had written only a few sentences before: "Though it is a break in the common practice of a common ideal or policy, there is no break in the friendship of twenty years' standing." My unhappiness was not over any break of friendship—there was no such break—but over the fact that my word seemed suddenly to have lost the power that it had until yesterday. The friendship endured, but I had to do more self-purification to regain the co-operation that I had lost. That was the burden of the article.

But this accidentally erroneous translation shows that my decision to write in Gujarati was right in more ways than one. Translations made by translators, howsoever competent, are likely sometimes to be faulty. The Bible was translated by some forty able scholars, but it has been found to contain errors, be they ever so few.

The friendship, then, will endure. Time will even make it stronger if possible. But that does not effect the fact that in spite of my best effort I have not been able to prevent differences on a fundamental issue. Yet the more I think about it, the more I feel that in adopting the attitude it has done the Congress has gone off the rails. It has lost the capital built with patient labour.

Perhaps it may be said that the Congress had really no such capital to lose. For the non-violence of the Congress was confined to its struggle against constituted authority. That remains intact. It had not defined its attitude—there was no occasion for it—with regard to other fields. The permission to use force in individual self-defence had been given as early as the Gaya Congress. There is force in these arguments. But I know that a fair number of Congressmen believe that the Congress non-violence applied to all the fields, including internal disorder and external aggression. Non-violence restricted to a struggle against constituted authority is like a corpse lifeless. But no amount of argument for or against can shake convictions that come from the heart.

All honour to the Sardar and others for holding fast by their conviction. The Sardar is no man of words, he is a man of action. He does not look around or about himself, when he has decided upon a course of action. He simply goes ahead. May he always be thus.

My way is clear before me. But what of those who have followed the Sardar and me in the belief that we are always of one mind? They are in a difficult situation. If their ahimsa is not part of their being but only a reflection of mine, it is their duty to follow the Sardar. I have no doubt that the Sardar has gone off the track, or rather that it is beyond his capacity to go my way. He has chosen a

different path with my consent, nay, encouragement. Therefore those who are in doubt should follow the Sardar. I believe the Sardar will see his error and come back to the way he has abandoned, when he discovers in himself the capacity that he feels he has not. When that happy moment arrives, if it does, the rest will also come back to me with the Sardar. That is the safest way for them.

But those who have no doubt about their course, those who have assimilated ahimsa, those for whom ahimsa is the only way out of all difficulties, should quietly retire from the Congress and bury themselves in various non-violent activities. If they are truly non-violent, they will prevent a split in the Congress. Their retirement makes any split out of the question. But even after retiring they will not come in conflict with the Congress. They will give the Sardar any help that he summons for non-violent activities, and they will try to lay down their lives wherever there is an occasion to do so in the event of internal disturbances.

If it is possible to form small bands of satyagrahis after my pattern, it is of course desirable. They should be able not only to keep the flag of ahimsa flying, but should also be able to convert Congressmen by their steadfastness and success. For there are many Congressmen who desire that ahimsa should be the rule of life in all fields, only they doubt its practicability. It is my duty, and that of those who think with me, to dispel this doubt by successful application of ahimsa in the new field.

SEVAGRAM, July 29, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

### 59. FOR KHADI WORKERS<sup>1</sup>

A sister has sent the following complaint:

The A. I. S. A. khadi bhandars not only render no help to, but even slight, the women who desire to spin in the name of Daridranarayana. Some bhandars refuse to give them slivers. Now those who are beginners need to be induced with slivers. Every bhandar should stock slivers. At certain bhandars some sisters purchased khadi hundis but were given no receipts for them, for they had run out of stock. We pay money in advance for fine saris, but there is vexing delay in getting them.

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-7-1940. The English translation has been reproduced from *Harijan*, where it was published under "Notes".

The sister who has written this is known for her care and for the pains she takes over selling khadi. She has mentioned in her letter the names of the bhandars, but I have deliberately deleted them. For if I gave their names, I should not do so without giving them a chance of explanation, and I have no time for writing to them. I therefore simply mention the complaints in the hope that the bhandars concerned will benefit by them and mend their ways if they are in error. I hold strong views regarding slivers. We cannot supply slivers. If we undertook the work, I am afraid khadi work might in the long run come to an end. It is uneconomic. We should never be able to cope with the demand. This much, however, may be done. In the villages where spinning is organized, some may do the carding while the rest do spinning. Even this requires careful handling. Similarly some of the sisters whom the correspondent has in mind should learn carding and then teach it to the others, or one of them may card for her group or club. In no case should slivers be sent by post, or from one centre to another. I know this golden rule is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. I fancy the A. I. S. A. has not laid down a fixed policy in this behalf. I do not, therefore, insist on my opinion being followed for the moment. But as the question has arisen I shall have it considered by the A. I. S. A. and, if possible, have some policy laid down in the matter.

SEVAGRAM, July 29, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

## 60. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,  
*July 29, 1940*

MY DEAR IDIOT,

From the above<sup>1</sup> you see I am advising Mira to go to Adampur instead of coming here. I see you will come on the 6th. Do not strain yourself. Finish your work well and without hurry. Your work here awaits you but does not suffer. You are not tied down to dates even as you would not be in going to your home. This is your second home if not the only home. Whilst therefore you will long to return

<sup>1</sup> At the top of the sheet Gandhiji had written and then scratched out: "Chi. Mira, on the whole I vote for Adampur."

but [sic] will not endanger your health or work to return here. I may write one more letter. I hope nothing radically wrong with your teeth.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3990. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7299

## 61. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

*July 29, 1940*

CHI. KAKA,

Here is Brelvi's letter.<sup>2</sup>The rest tomorrow at 4 o' clock. Never mind if what you have written is too long. How can we help if luck is against us? Tomorrow Rajaji and party are coming, but I shall give you whatever little time I can spare. We will finish the work bit by bit.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10934

## 62. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,

*July 29, 1940*

CHI. SUSHILA,

It is my feeling that if Mahadev comes to know about it, he will certainly want to try and get you the scholarship. But I shall not go into that. In writing to you about it had never been my intention to hurt you. The same was the case about your staying here. I have understood your point. I admit my mistake. The best thing is for you to forget Sevagram and concentrate on your studies. Your peace and your good lie in staying on there and pursuing your studies. Things which you have missed you have missed. It is futile to weep over them. In their place the experience that you have acquired in life I am sure will not go waste. If I had not interfered when you were getting that post, you would have enjoyed financial ease. How can we know what God ordains through your present hardship ?

I am taking the maximum care of Pyarelal. What you are saying is correct. God will protect him. What can I do?

I cannot understand how you received the articles late last week. They were posted from here in time. But in all our calculations we have to remember that this is Sevagram.

I do wish to distribute the translation work for the *Harijan Sevak* when Rajkumari comes. That will solely depend on your convenience and willingness. I will endeavour to send you selected articles. Would you like that? English or Gujarati? I gather from Pyarelal's letter that you have a lot of your own reading to do. Will not the translation work be a hindrance? If it adds to your joy and does not become a burden on your mind, I should like you to continue the work.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall do something about Punjab. What my position is you will see from my articles. I do not harbour anything in my mind.

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

### 63. SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYARS EXTRAVAGANCES

I have seen Dr. Katju's spirited reply to Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's recent statement on the position of Indian States.

In my opinion the latter's thesis is self-condemned. His extravagant claims will make not the slightest difference when the British are ready, or compelled by events, to recognize India's independence. Pyarelal has shown from authentic documents the flimsy nature of the status enjoyed by the States. The guarantee is a convenient excuse for denying India's claim. But it will have no validity when the claim becomes irresistible. Surely Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, as a constitutional lawyer and student of British history, knows all this. I wholly agree with Dr. Katju when he says that the Dewan of Travancore is ill serving his own and the other Princes by inducing in them the belief that the British guarantees will perpetuate their and their successor's autocracy against the just claims of the States' people and the people of India as a whole. I venture to suggest that the best guarantee of their status consists not in the treaties with the British but in the goodwill, contentment and co-operation of their own people and the friendship of the people of non-State India. Time a running in favour of Indian independence and against all interests adverse to the people and their natural aspiration. I was, therefore, pained and surprised to find the Rana Sahab of Dholpur hastily echoing the phrases of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.

SEVAGRAM, July 30, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

## 64. QUESTION BOX<sup>1</sup>

### PAKISTAN AND AHIMSA

A Gujarati Mussalman correspondent writes:

I am believer in ahimsa as well as Pakistan. How can I use the ahimsa principle for the realization of my ideal?

A. It is not possible to attain an iniquitous end by non-violent means. For instance, you cannot commit theft non-violently. As I understand Pakistan I do not regard it as a worthy ideal. But since you consider it to be worthy end, you can certainly carry on a non-violent movement on its behalf. This means that you will always strive to convert your opponents by patient reasoning. You will impress everybody by your selfless devotion to your ideal. You will give a respectful hearing to what your opponents might have to say, and respectfully point out to them their mistake if they are in the wrong. Finally, if you feel that the people do not listen to you out of sheer bigotry and prejudice although your cause is absolutely just, you can non-violently non-co-operate with the obstructionists. But you may not injure or seek to injure anybody and must, on your part, patiently endure any injury that might be done to you. All this you will be able to do if impartial persons endorse the justice of your cause.<sup>2</sup>

### PUNJAB SATYAGRAHA CAMP

Q. (From a letter from the Punjab) Preparations for satyagraha are afoot in the Punjab. There is a lot of untruth going on, and it is best to make this known as early as possible. Some plied the charkha in name. Some signed the satyagraha pledge, but did not so much as touch the charkha. The same is the case with khadi. In our satyagraha camp our satyagrahis were making fun of you and the Congress policy. I am therefore glad that the Congress has absolved you. It would be still better if the Congress were to delete the conditions about non-violence, truth, spinning, etc. All the same I have no doubt that the Working Committee's resolution has done untold harm to the country. What should one like me do in a situation like this?

A. I have had other letters from the Punjab making similar complaints, and the condition of things in many other provinces is very much, if not quite, the same as in the Punjab. It is a tragedy and spells ruin for the Congress if things do not mend. If the Congress loses its influence, it will be due to internal disease, never to external attacks.

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati has: "If objectively your cause can be considered a just one."

I would give people like you the same advice as I have given to the Gujaratis believing in out-and-out non-violence. The articles in Gujarati, though written with reference to the condition of things in Gujarat, are of general applicability, for a more or less similar condition obtains in the other provinces.

#### WHAT CAN A SOLITARY SATYAGRAHI DO?

Q. (From a letter from Orissa) There is one solitary satyagrahi in one of our villages. The rest do not worry about violence or non-violence. What discipline is that single satyagrahi to undergo?

A. Yours is good question. The solitary satyagrahi has to examine himself. If he has universal love and if he fulfils the conditions implied in such a state, it must find its expression in his daily conduct. He would be bound with the poorest in the village by ties of services. He would constitute himself the scavenger, the nurse, the arbitrator of disputes, and the teacher of the children of the village. Everyone, young and old, would know him; though a householder he would be leading a life of restraint he would make no distinction between his and his neighbour's children; he would own nothing but would hold what wealth he has in trust for others, and would therefore spend out of it just sufficient of his barest needs. His needs would, as far as possible, approximate to those of the poor, he would harbour no untouchability, and would therefore inspire people of all castes and creeds to approach him with confidence.

Such is the ideal satyagrahi. Our friend will always endeavour to come up to, wherever he falls short of, the ideal, fill in the gaps in his education; he will not waste a single moment. His house will be a busy hive of useful activities centring round spinning. His will be a well-ordered household.

Such a satyagrahi will not find himself single-handed for long. The village will unconsciously follow him. But whether they do or not, at a time of emergency he will, single-handed, effectively deal with it or die in the attempt. But I firmly hold that he will have converted a number of others. I may add in this connection that I had come to Sevagram as a solitary satyagrahi. Luckily or unluckily, I could not remain alone, several from outside came and settled with me. I do not know whether any inhabitant of the village proper can be counted as a satyagrahi, but I do hope that some of them are unconsciously shaping themselves as such. Let me say that I do not fulfil all the tests I have laid down. But I should not have mentioned them, had I not been striving to put into practice all of them. My present ambition is certainly to make of Sevagram an ideal village. I know that the work is as difficult as to make of India an ideal country. But



while it is possible for one man to fulfil his ambition with respect to a single village some day, one man's lifetime is too short to overtake the whole of India. But if one man can produce one ideal village, he will have provided a pattern not only for the whole country, but perhaps for the whole world. More than this a seeker may not aspire after.

#### NO DEATH FOR YOU

A friend from Agra writes:

According to you a satyagrahi may no longer remain in the Congress. I too think the same. I believe in the Vedas. The Vedic text is quite clear on this point: "O thou, himsa-free man, there is no death for you, there is no death for you. Be not afraid." Why should we not implicitly believe in this hoary saying? My faith in himsa is daily growing. I am a Congressman. What should I do now?

A. If you really have that faith in you, you will unhesitatingly leave the Congress organization and render it greater and truer service by remaining outside. If you have love, patience and bravery, you will convert Congressmen around you to your view.

SEVAGRAM, July 30, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

#### 65. *INDORE STATE AND HARIJANS*<sup>1</sup>

I have before me an Indore State bulletin stating that out of the one lakh of rupees which the Maharaja Saheb had set aside from his privy purse for poor relief, Rs. 79, 445 have been earmarked for building ninety-one tenements for Harijans. The Maharaja Saheb deserves to be congratulated on his action. I do hope that the munificence of the Maharaja will grown till there is not a single unemployed person in the State, nor a single person without milk and ghee in his diet, nor a Harijan without a well-lighted and well-ventilated house. The crushing contrast that one notices between the royal palace and the Harijan hovels must go.

SEVAGRAM, July 30, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-7-1940. The English translation has been reproduced from *Harijan*, where it was published under "Notes".

## 66. A TESTIMONY FROM ENGLAND

I publish the following<sup>1</sup> received by Mahadev as a sample of how some English minds are reacting to the non-violent movement in India.

. . . Again and again I turn to *Harijan* and feed upon the courage and love of truth I find in its pages. I feel comforted when I mourn the devastation of Europe or reflect that the ancient village life of India will survive this storm, and beauty will not have entirely vanished from the earth. . . . The spectacle of naked force is horrible, obscene, but it exists. Continue to oppose all such force with all the spiritual forces of a great nation. This is the greatest service you may do for your own race and for humanity. . . . I am sending you a translation I have attempted of the work of an Indian village poet. It is on Indian handmade paper and bound in khadi. . . .

SEVAGRAM, July 31, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

## 67. 'WHAT ELSE BESIDES SPINNING?'<sup>2</sup>

With reference to my note under the above caption in *Harijan-bandhu* of 27-7-1940, a friend from Bombay writes:<sup>3</sup>

I published the foregoing letter not because of any originality but because of his suggestions springing from practical experience, no case arises for persuasion when a person commits deliberate breaches of rules. His name simply ought to be struck off the register and restored to it only if he comes after full expiation. Indiscipline in a soldier is as dangerous a thing as the breakdown of a vital part in high power machine. To drive in a car which a vital part has given way would simply be to court disaster and even death, unless of course the car mercifully strikes work and refuses to move altogether. What applies in the case of machinery or an ordinary army applies with still greater force to a satyagrahi group. The mode of applying discipline will differ. The penalty for breach of discipline in an army would be jail of flogging or even shooting. In the case of a satyagrahi there is

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-8-1940. This English adaptation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>3</sup> The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested certain organizational rules to be followed by satyagrahis and activities to be taken up by them in addition to spinning. He had also suggested disciplinary action against offenders.

no penalty save that or removing him from the register. His repentance, if he has conviction of guilt, is the only punishment.

The recommendations made by the writer about work over and above spinning are quite sound and deserve to be carefully considered. But before actual work of organization can be taken up, one must watch the developments resulting from the new orientation of the Congress policy, I must also know as to how many people are actually ready to follow out-and-out non-violence. One thing, however, ought to be clear to everybody.<sup>1</sup> There will be no central organization. There will be one law under which innumerable autonomous, self-sustained, non-violent groups will be functioning. [This can only be possible where real non-violence rules men. India has had experience of such village republics as they were called by Mayne. I fancy that they were unconsciously governed by non-violence. These have suffered a rude check at the hands of the present rules. An effort has now to be made to revive them under a deliberate non-violent plan.]<sup>2</sup> My correspondent will, therefore, do well to organize a group from among those living within walking distance. Every city may have such autonomous groups, if there are sufficient workers.

SEVAGRAM, July 31, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati here adds: "There should be numerous groups of satyagrahis. I have already written on the subject. Accordingly the correspondent should organize all the satyagrahis of the area he can cover on foot. This group would be completely independent of the other groups.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati here has: "But each group will be independent of the others. In this way if one group breaks down it will not have an adverse effect on the rest. In ancient India villages were based on this system. There were as many separate administrations as there were villages. The villages used to elect the administrators; that was their Panchayat. The Panchayats framed and administered the laws. The people gladly obeyed them. That was a non-violent organization that lasted till the present day. The British government has shaken it though they have not destroyed it completely. Though I would not call it a perfectly non-violent organization, it nevertheless had seeds of non-violence. Whether that was so or not I have described above my idea of satyagraha groups. Such groups in spite of being independent of each other should work together when time comes because the common bond between all of them will be ahimsa and nothing else. Just as we can build a most beautiful building by arranging similar bricks together we can also produce a mighty satyagrahi army from several similar satyagrahi group."

## 68. OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

It is unfortunate that in answer to Mr. Sorensen's very relevant question the Secretary of State for India was betrayed into giving a reply which shows want of appreciation of the gravity of the situation in India. Who could have known the gravity of the European situation before the declaration of war by the British Government? But the British ministers knew how very grave the situation had become since Munich. They were so appalled by the gravity that they put off the declaration as long as they could. Similarly the layman does not know anything of the gravity of the situation in India. But the Secretary of State is not a layman. What he does not know, nobody else should know. And yet I venture to suggest to him that his questioner gauged the situation more accurately than he himself did, taking his answer at its face value.

In ordinary times such ignorance as Col. Amery's answer shows may be excusable. At this moment it is unpardonable. I do not propose to enlighten him on all I know. I dare not publicly exhibit all the danger signals. It would be an unfriendly act on my part to do so. Even the warning I am giving here might have been privately given. I have slept several nights over the answer. I came to the conclusion that to suppress altogether from the public what I know would also be an unfriendly act. In spite of my isolation from the Congress, I flatter myself with the belief that a large part of the public still seek my guidance and will continue to do so, as long as I am believed to represent the spirit of satyagraha more fully than any other person in India.

Col. Amery has grievously erred in underrating the restraint that the Congress has exercised in postponing civil disobedience in order not to embarrass the British Government at a most critical period in the history of the British. The restraint expects no appreciation. It is inherent in satyagraha. Therefore it is a duty. And the discharge of a duty carries no merit, even as payment of a debt does not. Nevertheless mention of the restraint becomes relevant in order to show that but for that restraint a conflagration may burst forth whose effect no one can foresee.

It is true that civil disobedience remains in suspension also because of the internal defects in the Congress organization. But I have said repeatedly that, if the Congress is goaded to it, the science of satyagraha is not without a mode of application in spite of the internal weaknesses. Therefore the final and deciding motive for suspension is undoubtedly the desire not to embarrass the British Government at the present moment.

But his restraint has its limits. Just a suspicion is growing among Congressmen that the British authority is taking advantage of the restraint to crush the Congress. They point for example to the numerous arrests of Congressmen. The opposition on the part of so many members of the A. I. C. C. to the ratification of the Delhi resolution is, as the Maulana Saheb has said, a sign of their resentment at the feeling that the High Command was letting the British Government to get the better of the Congress. If that suspicion is proved to be well-grounded, nothing on earth can possibly deter me from adopting some form of effective satyagraha. But it is my prayer and corresponding effort to prevent it until the clouds lift from Great Britain. I do not want her humiliation in order to gain India's freedom. Such freedom, if it were attainable, cannot be manfully retained.

I have dealt with the one danger signal on which I can write with special knowledge. There are several others which I can easily mention and which are no less grave. But these I must not mention.

If I have publicly discussed one danger, I have done so because the Congress is connected with it and I have to say what is expected of Congressmen. If I retired from the Congress at Bombay in 1934, I did so to render greater service. Events have justified the retirement. The present isolation too has the same motive behind it. So far as I can judge the immediate future, satyagraha, if it comes, will be confined only to those whom I may select. The rest will be expected not to interfere with the course I may adopt. All will render very substantial help, if they will carry out the instructions that may be issued for them. One permanent instruction is: leave the Congress if you do not believe in the constructive programme, especially spinning and khadi which are visible symbols of adherence to the Congress, and if you do not believe in truth and non-violence—the latter in the restricted sense now given to it by the recent resolution. If this elementary requirement is not fulfilled, any satyagraha that I may lead will be of no avail to the Congress. It will merely satisfy my satyagrahi soul.

SEVAGRAM, July 31, 1940

*Harijan*, 4-8-1940

## 69. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 31, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have been meaning to write to you for these three days, but, being unable to spare any time from Harijan work, couldn't. I had long and frank talks with Kanchan. Now that you do not wish me to talk to her I have stopped it. Kanchan and I are of one opinion. You should set up house with her in Sevagram or in Balkrishna's cottage or wherever you like and as long as you like. This will please Kanchan best. If you are not prepared for this step and wish to be alone for the present, you may certainly do that. Kanchan will then stay here or wherever else you want her to. She will do what you desire. My independent opinion is that you will not be happy anywhere without her. You will not be able to overcome your love, or attachment, or whatever you call it, for Kanchan. You crave pleasures of the flesh. So does she if she can have them. But she is not pining for them as you are. There is nothing morally reprehensible in your love for Kanchan or your desire for sexual pleasure. You wish to soar high but that is beyond your capacity. Maybe your craving will be satisfied in a year or two and you will then be able to take to the path of renunciation as you wish to do. If you go, your present place will be reserved for you whenever you wish to return. If you get. . . .<sup>1</sup> from the spinning that you do at present and can. . . .<sup>2</sup> the science of khadi I will be . . . .<sup>3</sup> satisfied. Only, you should decide about Kanchan.

I do not think anything is left out now.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8531. Also C. W. 7098. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

## 70. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

July 31, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your three letters have come together. I accept your advice that I should not go into what has happened and whether you should come here.

<sup>1</sup>, <sup>2</sup> & <sup>3</sup> Illegible in the source

You have analysed what I wrote to you and asked my opinion about it. What opinion can I give? I see difference of opinion in every sentence. There is no basis for your conclusions because what you only suppose I know and the knowledge is in contradiction to your conclusion. What is the solution when you cannot see at all what is clear to me as daylight? In fact it amounts to this, that your mind does not trust my evidence. Pyarelal's diagnosis I consider wholly wrong. I can hurt colleagues and the entire world for the sake of truth. You yourself say that I changed course when your defences were beginning to weaken. That shows that there were no external causes for that change. I have surely given no importance to what Devdas has said. That is his charge against me. Thus, in everything I see that you and I hold different views. What can be done under the situation? Hence I advise you to calm down. Forget that letter I wrote you. Forget also this letter. Let us leave the whole episode to God.

I understand about the articles. You should get the changes made in the articles corrected there. Consider yourself how it is to be done. We shall not publish the matter relating to the society. It is not necessary. I have sent the next article after correcting it. I had to hurry a little.

Have you written to Ludhiana? If you have not written, there is no need.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

## 71. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

*August 1, 1940*

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are crazy. They have triumphed that are dead. Why then grieve over death<sup>1</sup>? Those who do their duty have nothing to grieve over. I understand why you did not come. Your place is their. Come here for a rest when you can.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7131. Also C. W. 4623. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

<sup>1</sup> Of the addressee's father Naranbhai Patel; *vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 9-7-1940

## 72. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 1, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The accompanying letter is from Nadiad. Please see if anything needs to be done about it.

Your falling ill so often is not good. You should take some rest.

Why do you feel uneasy? I would always regard as correct whatever you do, because ultimately a man functions according to his inspiration or ability. Even if he makes a mistake, he can rectify it only after it is made. I am having talks with Rajaji, not so as to make him change his stand but about what should be done next. At the moment I do not want to try and change his views. Experience will do that. I have no doubt in the least about it. Political wisdom also lies in following my way. But I will not dwell on that at present. Do come here whenever you wish.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL  
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY  
[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro - 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 241*

## 73. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,  
August 1, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

It is very difficult to suggest anything about Father. My advice is that he should give up medical treatment. Let him go on repeating Ramanama. He should live on milk and fruit only. He may give up even milk, and take only fruit juice. He may take milk of course if he can digest it. Let him rest peacefully and wait for the end. You may show him this letter. Do what you think best. Come when you can. Take care of your health.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3546



## 74. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 1, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

It would be better if instead of conveying to me your thoughts after amending them, you expressed them as they are. That way I would be able to understand you better. It is only right that you should come only when all your three conditions can be met. But why should you worry about conditions? You will come only when you cannot help coming. Then there will be no room left for any conditions. At the moment we seem to be going in different directions. So there is no question of your coming. You are required there every moment.

You can live in peace and happiness only where you believe that you are required. You like my company. That is something to be cherished. It cannot be acquired. If we have it, we take it as God's grace. If not, we shall be content with merely desiring it. I always wish to have Manilal's company. But if I call him here, it will be only at the cost of his duty, won't it?

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

## 75. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,  
August 2, 1940

MY DEAR IDIOT,

So you will be delayed again. I have said don't hurry.<sup>1</sup> I shall postpone remaking your mattress till after your return.

The mistakes you point out are there. When you come they will be avoided. I do revise the English translations, can't revise the Hindustani.

Khanderia's letter I shall see. Maulana is just coming.

Ku. is here under my direct treatment and so is A. S. She is on her back. I have put her on a few ounces of milk.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3991. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7300

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-7-1940

76. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*August 2, 1940*

DEAR SATIS BABU,

The village meeting I see is to be on 13th here. Therefore for the Pratishtan [and] A. I. S. A. there I fix 14 to 18th. During those days I ought to know the truth. Hemprabha I expect will come with you. When you come please bring 3 copies of your book on Home medicine.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1637

77. *LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH*

*August 3, 1940*

CHI. NARAHARI,

Draw the amount sanctioned by Thakkar Bapa from the money earmarked for me.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3991

78. *LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA*

[After *August 3, 1940*]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

Please have this immediately investigated and justice done to the poor Chamars, if the facts are true.<sup>2</sup>

You will write to the correspondent. I have not.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

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

<sup>1</sup> The letter has been written on the reverse of another dated August 3, 1940 from one Satyanarayan Saraf.

<sup>2</sup> Satyanarayan Saraf had written to Gandhiji that the Chamars of the village Moth in Hissar had sunk a well for their use which they intended to make *pucca*, but that the caste men of the village had taken away the bricks and the cement and filled up the well. He had sought Gandhiji's help in the matter.

## 79. A CONVINCING ARGUMENT<sup>1</sup>

This is what an Englishwoman who knows what war means says about the Working Committee's decision to insist on non-violence for dealing with internal disturbances while fearing to trust non-violence to defend India:<sup>2</sup>

. . . .To throw non-violence overboard when it comes to facing external aggression seems to me to be throwing it away at the very moment when its efficacy is the most sure and its benefit to mankind the greatest. . . . In internal disorder. . . it is more often than not a case of dealing with unintellectual and lower types of humanity. . . . But in the case of external aggression, the two elements you are dealing with are intellectually developed leaders of nations and masses of innocent soldiers. On both of these non-violence is bound to have its reactions. . . especially men of such intelligence as Hitler would be deeply moved by its grandeur. . .

If the working Committee members ever thought non-violence should be and could be the ideal for internal affairs, then how much more it should be and could be the ideal for external affairs!

SEVAGRAM, August 4, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

## 80. TRAVANCORE

Shri P. J. Sebastian sends me the followings true copy of the Press note of the Travancore Government:<sup>3</sup>

The Government of Travancore have observed with regret that, in the columns of his newspaper *Harijan*, Mr. Gandhi has afforded hospitality to statements emanating from Messrs Achutahn and G. Ramachandran, the former being the latest President and latter the propagandist of the moribund Travancore State Congress. Evidently it is hoped by these statement and the comments of Mr. Gandhi to force an outside enquiry and outside mediation upon the State. . . . In view. . . of the publicity which accompanies state-ments associated with Mr. Gandhi. . . the Travancore Government propose to take appropriate legal proceedings against Messrs Achutahn and G. Ramachandran. . . .

I have published the text without interfering with the spelling or the grammar. In sending the copy Shri Sebastian says:

It has not up to now appeared in any of the Madras papers. The object of the Press note seems to be to warn the Travancore papers not to copy the

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

<sup>2</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

<sup>3</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

article on 'Travancore' in the *Harijan* of the 28th July. It is worthy of note that none of the Travancore papers has published the *Harijan* article of the 28th, though the article of the 21st together with the reply of the Dewan had been published.

I am publishing everything important coming to me about Travancore because I believe it to be true. The threatened proceedings against Shri Ramachandran and Achuthan will not disprove the statements published. They will confirm the impression that the Travancore State authorities are determined by all means at their disposal to crush the movement for liberty. If past experience is any guide, this Travancore repression will fail to crush the movement. Note how the issues are evaded in the Press note. There is no demand for an 'outside enquiry' or 'outside mediation', nor is there any question of force. The Dewan himself and many others in Travancore are outsiders. But they are not forced upon the State when the Maharaja engages them, and the use of the word 'outsider' ceases to have any meaning for the appointer. It is preposterous to use the word 'force' for friendly suggestions by the Press or appeals by State subjects, or to use words 'outsiders' and 'outside mediation' for suggestions to the State to bring impartial judges from outside. Were Justice Hunter, himself a non-Punjabi, and his non-Punjabi colleagues forced upon the Punjab Government when in response to public agitation Government appointed the Hunter Committee ? OR was Justice Ramesam forced upon Sir Mirza Ismail when he appointed that learned outsider to conduct an inquiry into the Viduraswatham shooting? The public is bound to give sinister meaning to this gross misuse of the language by the Travancore authorities. Again, if the Travancore people are hostile to or apathetic to the doings of the State Congress, where is the occasion for the suppression of the State Congress bulletins and newspaper comments? Just causes truthfully and non-violently conducted have always survived repression and drawn sympathy from unexpected quarters. I call such sympathy divine help. God works in mysterious ways. Lets the persecuted State Congress people have faith that God is with them.

SEVAGRAM, , August 4, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

## 81. DEBT BONDAGE OF A HILL TRIBE<sup>1</sup>

Shri Mandeswar Sarma, who is working among the hillmen of Madugole Agency area in the Vizagapatam District, writes:

I am glad to inform you that the debt bondage system prevailing from ages in these areas has been abolished very recently by the Government of Madras as the result of the efforts of the Hill Tribes' Association and the Provincial Zaim Ryots' Association. Debt bondage means that the hill muttahdars and employers advance some money, say Rs. 50 or 60, to tripesmen and exact whole-time services of the meek hillmen for 5, 10 and even 20 years, and at times for generations together. By this new regulation thousands of hillmen have been set free. We are leading the hillmen in all these matters in a non-violent groove. I am helping them to realize non-violent values by themselves. It is our ambition to take you to this area after three thousand persons actively take to the spinning-wheel and the takli. For this we need your blessing. They are about twenty thousand. At present twelve hundred hillmen are spinning. We are also trying to wean them from drink.

Though the Madras Government have taken long to redress the glaring wrong referred to here, they deserve to be thanked on principle that it is better to be late than never. It should now be easier for the workers like Shri Sarma to carry out ameliorative measures among the hillmen. My blessing he has. I do not know that I can hold out any hope of visiting his area even if he succeeds in getting three thousand charkhas going among the hillmen. He should have no difficulty in realizing his modest ambition.

SEVAGRAM, August 4, 1940

*Harijan*, 25-8-1940

## 82. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,  
August 4, 1940

CHI. AMRIT,

Although you say I may post your article to you I think you are in error if you leave on 6th. Hence it is being sent to Lucknow. No corrections. Don't much appreciate this article. The thing requires a lot of work behind it. Discuss it with me when you come.

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

I am handing your note to Babla.  
Rajen Babu is ill. Not very.  
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3992. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7301

### 83. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,  
August 4, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a long letter and what a test! Had you been here, I would have caught you by the ears and even given you a couple of slaps. But you being far away, I shall only reply to you at leisure. I have already replied to your letter. If I had my way, I would drag you here by the ears. But because I had wanted you to come only when you wished to come and when I accepted your conditions, I wrote that you should forget Sevagram. On my conditions you can come even today. But you will not follow my conditions and I do not understand your conditions sufficiently to accept them. That is why I say that you should forget Sevagram. There at least you have your work. I have got my work here which you never made your own. That is why I wrote what I did. And when you will not come because of your lack of understanding or imperfect understanding, where is the question of your being separated from me ? Why should you give up the translation work for that reason? "How stupid the mind! It discards the divine stream of devotion to Rama and founds its hopes on dew drops."

You have got to do the translation. Do you not know that I have taken away that work from others because I depended on you? Even if I send the translations from here, the responsibility remains yours. I keep asking people here how your translations read. Balwantsinha says they are crude. Mahadev and Bablo say there are quite a few mistakes. Both father and son are studying Hindi quite well. Hence, you have got to take a lot of trouble. I do not know if you can spare that much time. You must think it over. I have a feeling that Viyogiji<sup>1</sup> is not taking interest in the *Harijan Sevak* now. If that be the case, even you will be in trouble. You should meet him from time to time. You should find out who carries on the work in his absence. I have

<sup>1</sup> Viyogi Hari, editor of *Harijan Sevak*

thus no intention at all of taking away the responsibility of the *Harijan Sevak* from you. Yes, I am certainly thinking about shifting the *Harijan Sevak*.<sup>1</sup> It may be brought here or printed at Poona. If that comes about and if you are determined not to come here, the beautiful relationship we have will certainly come to an end. It is beautiful because there is no opportunity for any friction and you are not too closely connected with my ideas. But if all this comes to an end I shall put the entire blame on you. That is the sum and substance of all my letters. I am trying to absorb you in me but what can I do if you keep running away from me and put the blame on me?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

#### 84. *LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

*August 4, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The reply is good. You may add: 'Instead of inviting me, it would be better if Mother comes here and sees for herself how happily I live. It will give her the satisfaction of meeting her son and I shall get the pleasure of seeing her.'

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4355

#### 85. *HOPEFUL*

One reads the following in the daily Press:

A call for passive resistance by Frenchmen and women was made by General de Gaulle in a broadcast last night. He urged all free Frenchmen in France not to help in the war against Britain.

I know that this is not a case of conversion. The gallant general will deal destruction to the 'enemy' to the best of his ability whenever he is able to. Nor can this passive resistance be called non-violent

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "To the Readers"

by any stretch of meaning . I simply cite General de Gaulle's advice to his countrymen to show that the world is irresistibly and unconsciously being drawn towards non-violent action.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

*Harijan*, 19-8-1940

### 86. IS NON-VIOLENCE IMPOSSIBLE?<sup>1</sup>

The doubt and difficulties raised by this correspondent<sup>2</sup> occur to others also, and I have on various occasions tried to solve them too. But when the Working Committee of the Congress has been instrumental in making of ahimsa a live issue, it seems necessary to deal with these doubts and difficulties at some length.

The correspondent doubts in substance the universal application of ahimsa, and asserts that society has made little progress towards it. Teachers like Buddha arose and made some effort with some little success perhaps in their lifetime, but society is just where it was in spite of them. Ahimsa may be good enough to be the duty of an individual; for society it is good for nothing, and India too will have to take to violence for her freedom.

The argument is, I think, fundamentally wrong. The last statement is incorrect inasmuch as the Congress has adhered to non-violence as the means for the attainment of swaraj. It has indeed gone a step further. The question having been raised as to whether non-violence continues to be the weapon against all internal disturbances, the A. I. C. C. clearly gave the answer in the affirmative. It is only for protection against outside aggression that the Congress has maintained that it would be necessary to have an army. And then even on this matter there was a considerable body of the members of the A. I. C. C. who voted against the resolution. This dissent has got to be reckoned with when the question voted upon is one of principle. The Congress policy must always be decided by a majority vote, but it does not cancel the minority vote, it stands. Where there is no principle involved and there is a programme to be carried out, the minority has got to follow the majority. But where there is a principle involved, the dissent stands, and it is bound to express itself in practice when the

<sup>1</sup> The Gurajati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandu*, 10-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, while admitting the power of non-violence, had argued that it was not possible for common people to attain to it.



occasion arises. That means the ahimsa for all occasions and all purposes has been recognized by a society, however small it may be, and that ahimsa as a remedy to be used by society has made fair strides. Whether it will make further strides or no is a different matter. The Working Committee's resolution, therefore, fails to lend any support to the correspondent's doubts. On the contrary it should in a certain degree dispel them.

Now for the argument that I am but a rare individual, and that what little society has done in the matter of ahimsa is due to my influence, and that it is sure to disappear with me. This is not right. The Congress has a number of leaders who can think for themselves. The Maulana is a great thinker of keen intellect and vast reading. Few can equal him in his Arabic and Persian scholarship. Experience has taught him that ahimsa alone can make India free. It was he who insisted on the resolution accepting ahimsa as a weapon against internal disturbances. Pandit Jawaharlal is not a man to stand in awe of anyone. His study of history and contemporary events is second to none. It is after mature thought that he has accepted ahimsa as a means for the attainment of swaraj. It is true that he has said that he would not hesitate to accept swaraj if non-violence failed and it could be won by means of violence. But that is not relevant to the present issue. There are not a few other big names in the Congress who believe in ahimsa as the only weapon at least for the attainment of swaraj. To think that all of them will give up the way of ahimsa as soon as I am gone, is to insult them and to insult human nature. We must believe that everyone can think for himself. Mutual respect to that extent is essential for progress. By crediting our companions with independent judgment we strengthen them and make it easy for them to be independent-minded even if they are proved to be weak.

I hope neither the correspondent nor anyone else believes that the Congress or many Congress leaders have bidden good-bye to ahimsa. To the limited extent that I have pointed out faith in ahimsa has been reiterated and made clear beyond any doubt by the Congress. I agree that the limit laid down by the Congress considerably narrows down the sphere of ahimsa and dims its splendour. But the limited ahimsa of the Congress is good enough for the purpose of our present argument. For I am trying to make out that the field of ahimsa is widening, and the limited acceptance of ahimsa by the Congress sufficiently supports my position.

If we turn our eyes to the time of which history any record down to our own time, we shall find that man has been steadily progressing towards ahimsa. Our remote ancestors were cannibals. Then came a time when they were fed up with cannibalism and they began

to live on chase. Next came a stage when man was ashamed of leading the life of a wandering hunter. He therefore took to agriculture and depended principally on mother earth for his food. Thus from being a nomad he settled down to civilized stable life, founded villages and towns, and from member of a family he became member of a community and a nation. All these are signs of progressive ahimsa and diminishing himsa. Had it been otherwise, the human species should have been extinct by now, even as many of the lower species have disappeared.

Prophets and avatars have also taught the lesson of ahimsa more or less. Not one of them has professed to teach *himsa*. And how should it be otherwise? *Himsa* does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent, but as spirit is non-violent. The moment he awakes to the spirit within he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards ahimsa or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and avatars have taught the lessons of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice, etc. —all attributes of ahimsa.

And yet violence seems to persist, even to the extent of thinking people like the correspondent regarding it as the final weapon. But as I have shown history and experience are against him.

If we believe that mankind has steadily progressed towards ahimsa, it follows that it has to progress towards it still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progression, then there is inevitable retrogression. No one can remain without the eternal cycle, unless it be God Himself.

The present war is the saturation point in violence. It spells to my mind also its doom. Daily I have testimony of the fact that ahimsa was never before appreciated by mankind as it is today. All the testimony from the West that I continue to receive points in the same direction. The Congress has pledged itself to ahimsa however limited. I invite the correspondent and doubters like him to shed their doubts and plunge confidently into the sacred sacrificial fire of ahimsa. Then I have little doubt that the Congress will retrace its step. "It is always willing." Well has Pritam, our poet, sung:

Happiest are those that plunge in the fire.  
The lookers-on are all but scorched by flames.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

## 87. THE TEST OF NON-VIOLENCE<sup>1</sup>

Those who regard themselves as out-and-out votaries of non-violence and believe the step taken by Rajaji and others to be wrong,<sup>2</sup> have to pass through a severe test. I have expressed my opinion in the clearest possible language. I believe that Rajaji has gone off the track. He believes that I have. The future alone will decide who is right.

But as I have not the slightest doubt the correctness of my position., I have not hesitated to advise those who think with me to leave the Congress. But this does not mean that they have to do so forthwith. It is enough if they are ready to retire when I decide upon the date. Before the actual step is taken, we shall have to make sure of certain things. Their retirement must be such as to cause no shock to fellow Congressmen. If these do not appreciate the step, I have to explain it to them patiently, and to convince them that it is in the interest of the Congress that it should be taken. It is common cause between them and us that it would be an ideal thing if we could protect the country against foreign aggression by non-violence. It is therefore desirable that there should be a group of people pledged to devote their lives to proving the efficacy of non-violence. If the existence of such a group is good for the country, it is apparent that they should remain outside the Congress, and that the Congress should not only tolerate them but welcome them, render them as much help as possible, and regard them as their own. That means that far from there being any estrangement or misunderstanding between the Congress and this group, their relations should, if possible, be sweeter than before.

To bring about this happy consummation, the out-and-out votaries of non-violence should not even mentally find fault with their erstwhile comrades. They may not remind them of their previous statements. It is their duty to revise their statements if they feel that they were erroneous, and it is possible that they may not read in them the same implications as others discover in them. The best thing, therefore, is to bear joyously with one another. This mutual tolerance presupposes their choosing different spheres of action and Working in co-operation wherever possible.

It will be some time before we can create such an atmosphere, but we are sure to succeed if we make a serious endeavour in this direction. In the meanwhile let everyone occupy himself with the

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "The Delhi Resolution"

constructive activities I have suggested and make steady progress therein. One or more leaders in each province should prepare a list of the seceders at the proper time. But I will not take a single step without mature deliberation.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

### 88. SPINNING ANNIVERSARY<sup>1</sup>

Shri Narandas Gandhi writes from Rajkot as follows about the Spinning Anniversary:

The 71 days' Programme for the forthcoming anniversary was commenced on the morning of 20th July with prayers and the song of the 'True Vaishnava'. Spinning is in full swing. Some begin from 4 a.m. Amritlal gets up at 3.30 a.m. and begins spinning from 4 a.m., and by 3.30 p.m. with a break for breakfast and lunch spins nearly 6,000 yards in 11 hours. After this he learns music, has his walk and rest. He has resolved to spin 400,000 yards in 71 days. We have the evening prayer at 6.30. About 75 people attend. The following figures of collections for *Daridranarayan* made on the last five birthdays may be of interest:<sup>2</sup>

Figures are usually uninteresting and I rarely give details of these collections. But I have given these in detail as they are of striking interest. They are an eloquent testimony to the work that can be done by the single-minded devotion and efficiency of a single man. This annual spinning sacrifice goes on without fuss and advertisement. It is worthy of emulation everywhere for it means automatic propagation of khadi.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

### 89. ONE STEP FORWARD<sup>3</sup>

I have before me two neatly bound volumes in English and Hindustani, being a report of the first conference of Basic National Education held at Poona in October 1939. The English volume is

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> The figures are not reproduced here. They showed the amounts collected in the years from 1935 to 1939 and their disbursement for Harijan work, khadi work, education and famine-relief.

<sup>3</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

entitled *One Step Forward*. It covers 292 pages in English and 290 in Hindustani. The price is Rs.  $\frac{1}{4}$  per volume. Besides instructive introductory pages the report is divided into three parts. The first contains general speeches and discussions. The second is devoted to various interpretations of basic education, and the third part is devoted to a description of the exhibition of basic education for which Shri-mati Ashadevi<sup>1</sup> made herself mainly responsible. There is an appendix which contains the names and addresses of delegates and invited guests. In the concluding part of his brief introduction Shri Aryanayakam says:

The conference and the exhibition have finally lifted the scheme of basic national education above the realm of controversy and proved to educational world that as regards the fundamental principles, contents and method, the claims of this new education are justified by a year's experience of work with the teachers and children.

The proceedings of the conference are proof of that claim. I must resist the temptation to quote from the body of the report. Those who are interested in education should not be without a copy. For me it is a matter of comfort that this the latest, though perhaps not the last, effort of mine has met with almost universal approbation. The year's record promises a bright future for the experiment. I must review the annual report in another issue.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

### 90. *THE CASE OF MY FIRST SON*<sup>2</sup>

Q. You have failed to take even your own son with you, and he has gone astray. May it not, therefore, be well for you to rest content with putting your own house in order?

A. This may be taken to be a taunt, but I do not take it so. For the question had occurred to me before it did to anyone else. I am a believer in previous births and rebirths. All our relationships are the result of the samskars we carry from our previous births. God's laws are inscrutable and are the subject of endless search. No one will fathom them.

<sup>1</sup> Ashadevi Aryanayakum

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-8-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*, where it appears under the heading "Question Box".

This is how I regard the case of my son. I regard the birth of a bad son to me as the result of my evil past whether of this life or previous. My first son was born when I was in a state of infatuation. Besides, he grew up whilst I was myself growing and whilst I knew myself very little. I do not claim to know myself fully even today, but I certainly know myself better than I did then. For years he remained away from me, and his upbringing was not entirely in my hands. That is why he has always been at a loose end. His grievance against me has always been that I sacrificed him and his brothers at the altar of what I wrongly believed to be public good. My other sons have laid more or less the same blame at my door, but with a good deal of hesitation, and they have generously forgiven me. My eldest son was the direct victim of my experiments—radical changes in my life—and so he cannot forget what he regards as my blunders. Under the circumstances I believe I am myself the cause of the loss of my son, and have therefore learnt patiently to bear it. And yet it is not quite correct to say that I have lost him. For it is my constant prayer that God may make him see the error of his ways and forgive me my shortcomings, if any, in serving him. It is my firm faith that man is by nature going higher, and so I have not at all lost hope that some day he will wake up from his slumber of ignorance. Thus he is part of my field of experiments in ahimsa. When or whether I shall succeed I have never bothered to know. It is enough for my own satisfaction that I do not slacken my efforts in doing, what I know to be my duty. ‘To work thou hast the right, never to the fruit thereof’ is one of the golden precepts of the *Gita*.

SEVAGRAM, August 5, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

## 91. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

*August 5, 1940*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I agree with you. Would you consider Kanchan touching me undesirable? Should she avoid touching a man even for the sake of serving him? Tell me unhesitatingly what you wish.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8530. Also C. W. 7099. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

## 92. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM,  
August 5, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I shall reply to your long letter when I have some free time. This is merely to tell you that in my opinion you should accept a job if one comes your way. I want you here for the sake of my work. This may include your taking care of my body too. I can see that that is not acceptable to you. I see that you will come only to serve me as a doctor and if I accept you in that capacity and others stop their opposition to this. This is asking for the impossible. According to my condition, you can come whenever you can make it. The cards are in your hands, not mine.

Bablo has corrected one of your translations. I have found the changes he has made very good. There were some outright mistakes. The other translation is better. But it has things one can do without. I have got it corrected with a view to helping you. I am sending whatever is ready today.

Mirabehn said you were looking disturbed. Absent-minded was the word she had used. You are still lean and weak. This fault should be remedied.

*Blessing from*  
BAPU

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

## 93. WHAT OF THE 'WEAK MAJORITY'?

Prof. Timur of Islamia College, Peshawar, writes:<sup>1</sup>

. . . The experiment which you want to make of defending India against foreign aggression without the use of arms would be the boldest moral experiment of all times. There are two possible results of such a course. Either the conscience of the invaders may be awakened by the love of the invaded and they may repent of their sin. Or the proud invaders may take non-violence as a sign of physical weakness and degeneration and may think it right to subjugate, rule over, and exploit, a weak people. This is the doctrine of Nietzsche which is followed in practice by Hitler. A great loss is involved in such conquest of the physically weak by the physically strong. A few strong-

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

willed members of the conquered nation may refuse to owe allegiance to the conquerors, but the large majority always submits. . . It is the weak majority which needs protection. The question is how to protect it by non-violent methods. . .

The weak majority no doubt needs protection. If all were soldiers either of *ahimsa* or *himsa*, no such questions as call for discussion in these columns would arise. There is always a weak majority that would want protection against man's mischief. The orthodox method we know. Nazism is its logical outcome. It is an answer to a definite want. A terrible wrong wantonly perpetrated against a whole nation cried out for redress. And Hitler arose to avenge it. Whatever the ultimate fortune of the war, Germany will not be humiliated again. Humanity will not stand a second outrage. But in seeking to avenge the wrong by the wrong method of violence brought to very near perfection, Hitler has brutalized not only Germans but a large part of humanity. The end of it we have not yet reached. For Britain, so long as she holds to the orthodox method, has to copy the Nazi methods if she is to put up a successful defence. Thus the logical outcome of the violent method seems to be increasingly to brutalize man including "the weak majority". For it has to give its defenders the required measure of co-operation.

Now imagine the same majority defended after the method of non-violence. As it admits of no grossness, no fraud, no malice, it must raise the moral tone of the defenders. Hence there will be a corresponding rise in the moral tone of the "weak majority" to be defended. No doubt there will be difference in degree, but not in kind.

But the snag comes in when we consider the ways and means of working the non-violent method. In working the other, there is no difficulty in getting the human material. Therefore that way seems easy. In getting non-violent defenders, we have to pick and choose. Money cannot buy them. The non-violent process is wholly different from the one commonly known. I can only say that my own experience in organizing non-violent action for half a century fills me with hope for the future. It has succeeded in a marked measure in protecting the 'weak majority'. But half a century is nothing in discovering the hidden possibilities of this force and working them out. Those, therefore like the correspondent who are attracted to non-violence, should, according to their ability and opportunity, join the experiment, it has entered upon a most interesting, though at the same time a most difficult, stage. I am myself sailing on uncharted waters. I



have to take soundings every half hour. The difficulty only braces me for the struggle.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940

*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

#### 94. *THE BISWA AFFAIR*

Though late in the day I must redeem my promise to give my opinion on this unfortunate case. I have letters containing angry protests against the five Congress Ministers in C. P., chiefly the Prime Minister. I have carefully read both the judgments, that of the learned Chief Justice and of the concurring Judge. There is no doubt whatsoever that there has been a gross miscarriage of justice due to the police bungling. I hold pandit Shukla and his fellow-ministers to be wholly free from blame. These are the remarks of the Chief Justice about Pandit Shukla:

In the course of the debate the then Prime Minister himself did not hesitate to use the word 'murder' and to indicate that this was not a case of riot but a carefully planned murder ruthlessly carried out.

I can find nothing objectionable in this statement. He made use of the information then in his possession. He might have used the orthodox prefix 'alleged' in connection with 'murder' and used guarded language. But there is nothing in his statement to justify the wrath poured upon his head. The judges' finding, however, is that there was a murder and that it was worthy of condemnation. Their natural regret was that because of want of reliable evidence the crime had to go unpunished. I have not, therefore, been able to understand, much less to appreciate the rejoicing over what is a manifest failure of justice. So far as the discharge of the prisoners was concerned, it was a matter for common, not communal, rejoicing that no man suffered unless there was conclusive evidence. All must accept the unequivocal judgement of the final court of appeal. But there should have been common regret too that there was failure of justice. It cannot be to the advantage of any community that a murderer should be screened. Panditji has written a long letter to the Maulana Saheb about the affair. I have seen the letter. I do not know what the Maulana Saheb has said on the letter. I hold it to be quite convincing. I take from the letter the following Muslim testimony quoted by him:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here. Shukla in his letter had described how he had visited the place accompanied by Hindu and Muslim M. L. A. s, taken tea at the Muslim High school at Khamgaon and when this was objected to by some, had appealed to both the communities for harmony and goodwill and how Khan saheb Abdul Rahman was pleased by this.

I hope that my opinion will not revive the dying members of an unfortunate controversy which should never have arisen. If the two communities must quarrel, is it not possible to fight fair? Charges without foundation can but add to the existing bitterness.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940

*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

## 95. AUNDH

Who does not know little Aundh? Little it is in size and income, but it has made itself great and famous by its Chief having bestowed, unasked, the boon of full self-government on his people. Its chief minister Appasaheb Pant has brought out an attractive pamphlet of nine pages describing the experiment, from which I reproduce the following:

Village democracy is the basis of the new Constitution. Every village elects by the vote of all of its adults a panchayat of five persons. One of these five is elected by the panchayat unanimously as their president. If this unanimity is not possible, then all the adults of the village elect the president out of the panchayat.

Duty elected presidents of a group of villages constitute the taluka panchayat. The taluka panchayat decides in its meetings the way in which it would spend the money that it receives. It receives as near as possible half the revenue that is collected in the taluka. It receives as near as possible half the revenue that is collected in the taluka. The villages prepare their budgets and present them through their presidents to the taluka panchayat. These are discussed and a budget for the whole taluka is prepared. The villages can spend the money they get as they think fit. As yet education and public works constitute the chief items of expenditure.

The members of the Assembly know not only about the affairs of the Central Government, but they are intimately connected with the everyday work in the villages, and they get acquainted with the work of other villages in their taluka at the meetings of the taluka panchayat. The member of the Legislative Assembly, in the way, is an active worker almost 12 hours of the day. It is not that he stands for election, gets elected on certain issues, and does not worry about these till the next election. He has to face the villagers every day. The Constitution gives the power of recall to the villages. 4/5ths of the voters can ask for a re-election of the panchayat.

The panchayats dispense justice. The villager need not spend money, go out of his village, and spend days at the taluka town to get a hearing. The panchayat decides his case on the spot. The peasant can get witnesses in the village. And in the cases that are difficult and involve intricate points of law,

a sub-judge comes to the village and assists the panchayat with the dispensation of justice. The sub-judge not only gives expert advice to the panchayat, but also acts as a guide to the peasant who many a time is completely ignorant of his legal rights and is therefore liable to be misguided by the vested interests—the *goondas*.

Justice in Aundh is therefore cheap, swift and effective. In the panchayats of two talukas alone 197 criminal and civil suits have been disposed of. In 75 per cent of civil suits and 50 per cent of criminal cases no pleaders were engaged. The witnesses had to be paid nothing, being themselves on the spot. There was thus great saving of time and money. Most cases were decided at a single sitting. The whole village turns out at the hearing of cases. Hence lying is rare, because it can be easily detected. Therefore many cases are compromised out of court. This method of dealing out justice is itself great adult education.

There are 88 village schools for 72 villages. After the introduction of adult franchise, 35 per cent of the adult population received education. Basic education is not neglected, nor is physical. The Rajasaheb himself takes a keen interest in the physical development of his people. It is done through *suryanamaskar*. It is a special style.

If Appasaheb has shown the bright side of the experiment, he has not lost sight of the difficulties and troubles. I omit notice of these. For they are the usual difficulties that attend all such experiments. The leader of the people, if they retain their faith, will surely surmount them. This is how the pamphlet closes:

Little has been done. Much remains to be done. It's an important work we are doing. We want sympathy and advice.

I am sure everybody sympathizes with the Aundh people. Let those who have any to give send Appasaheb their thoughts. Let them be sure that they are sound and relevant.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940  
*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

## 96. NAZISM IN ITS NAKEDNESS

A Dutch friend writes:<sup>1</sup>

You will perhaps be able to remember me having made a drawing of you at Romain Rolland's in 1931. . . I am a Dutchman and lived for many years in Germany, where I had build up a living as an artist. Nazim, which gained hold in Germany seven years ago, caused me many conscientious doubts. . .

It is just one year ago since I left my house in Munich to spend some time in Holland. . . On 10th May, by the use of every possible subtle trick. Holland was overpowered. After four days of the most ruthless bombing we fled to England and are now on our way to Java, the country of my birth, where I hope to find work. . .

Hitler aims at nothing less than the destruction of all moral values, and in the bulk of German youth he has already attained that end.

Your article in *Harijan* about the Jewish problem in Germany particularly interested me since I had many Jewish friends there. You say in it that, if ever a war were justified, it is this one against Germany. In the same article, however, you write that, if you were a Jew, you would attempt to soften the hearts of the Nazis by non-violence.<sup>2</sup> Recently you also advised Britain and the British people to surrender their beautiful island to the German invader, without resistance by force, and to conquer him afterwards by non-violence.<sup>3</sup> There is probably no man in the whole history who has a better knowledge of the practice of non-violence than yourself. Your views have awakened veneration and love for you in millions of hearts not only in India but in the outside world as well. . .

Through Nazism, the German youth has lost all individuality of thought and feeling. The great mass of young people has lost its heart and it degraded to the level of a machine. The German conduct of the war is absolutely mechanical; machines are driven by robot men who have no qualms of consci-ence about crushing under their tanks the bodies of women and children, bombing open towns, killing hundreds of thousands of women and children, and on occasion using them as a screen for their advance, or distributing poisoned food. These are all facts, the truth of which I can vouch for. I have spoken with many of your followers about the possibility of applying non-violence against Germany. A friend of mine, whose work it is to cross-examine German prisoners of war in England, was deeply shocked by

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide*, "The Jews"

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "To Every Briton"

the spiritual narrowness and heartlessness of these young men, and agreed with me that non-violence could not be applied with any success against such robots. . .

The friend has sent his name and address. But I withhold both for fear of harm coming to him through unnecessary publicity. The letter must be valued on its own intrinsic merits.

What, however, concerns me is not so much his characterization of Nazism as his belief that non-violent action may have no effect on Hitler or the Germans whom he has turned into so many robots. Non-violent action, if it is adequate, must influence Hitler and easily the duped Germans. No man can be turned into a permanent machine. Immediately the dead weight of authority is lifted from his head, he begins to function normally. To lay down any such general proposition as my friend has, betrays ignorance of the working of non-violence. The British Government can take no risks, can make no experiments in which they have not even a workable faith. But if ever an opportunity could be given to me, in spite of my physical limitations, I should not hesitate to try what would appear to be impossible. For in ahimsa it is not the votary who acts in his own strength. Strength comes from God. If, therefore, the way is opened for me to go, he will give me the physical endurance and clothe my word with the needed power. Anyway all through my life I have acted in that faith. Never have I attributed any independent strength to myself. This may be considered by men who do not believe in a higher Power than themselves as a drawback and a helpless state. I must admit that limitation of ahimsa, if it be accounted as such.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

### 97. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

*August 6, 1940*

CHI. MANUDI<sup>1</sup>,

It is but natural that you should expect my letters. But where is the time? Yes, I do assume that even if I don't write to you, you will not chide me in your heart. I do get news of you from time to time. Are you not coming here some time? Do not wait for my invitation.

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji's grand-daughter, Harilal Gandhi's daughter

Ba's should be sufficient. Do not come now even if Ba calls you.  
Wait till the weather improves.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI MANUBEHN MASHRUWALA,

“BALKIRAN”

SANTA CRUZ, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 2677. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

### 98. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS<sup>1</sup>

*August 6, 1940*

Q. You say that God has a hand in the creation of the world. Why is then there this frightful war? Why aren't they inspired by God? Millions of men, women and children are being killed. It seems that God loves it. What are the things inspired by God? Can't He prevent bad deeds?

A. If we knew this should we not become God? It is all [beyond] reason.

Q. ‘Rama cares only for love.’ Will you explain what is meant by love here?

A. Those who love Rama's creation, love Rama.

*August 6, 1940*

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

The replies are given above.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

### 99. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE A. I. C. C.<sup>2</sup>

[Before *August 7, 1940*]<sup>3</sup>

A few members of the A. I. C. C. who are out-and-out believers in non-violence visited Sevagram the other day. Some of them had remained neutral on the Delhi resolution, some had opposed it. What was the right attitude? What were they to do

<sup>1</sup> Questions were asked by Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi

<sup>2</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Live Issue", 7-8-1940

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

next? What was the programme before them? Should they not retire forthwith? These and other questions were troubling them, and they did not know what to do. In response Gandhiji began to do some loud thinking. Gandhiji said:

Wait, watch, and pray. You must carefully follow what I am writing from week to week. You must be absolutely sure that you are out-and-out believers in non-violence. Can your ahimsa stand the test? Rehearse to yourselves what you would do in case of riot. Those who have differed from us are no cowards. If they say that they cannot do without an army and police, they deserve a respectful hearing. I myself do not know what I should do in a difficult situation. You know I have capitulated on the question of the desirability of maintaining a police force. But what I can say is that I shall hope to behave non-violently, should the occasion arise. I should not like to die before my death. I do not want to prepare India for military defence from today. We should never forget that we are not the whole of India. The Congress is without doubt a powerful organization, but the Congress is not the whole of India. The Congress may not have an army, but those who do not believe in non-violence will. And if the Congress too surrenders, there is no one to represent the no-army mentality. This was my argument in a nutshell. But I failed to carry conviction. Therefore I must find fault not with my comrades but with myself. There must be some weakness in my argument, and so I must prepare myself to carry conviction to those who differ from me.

But, I have digressed. What you and I have to do is to show our ahimsa when there is rioting or similar disturbance. If every one of us, wherever he is, begins doing so there will come into being a non-violent army. Even the limited non-violence that all are subscribing to would not have come into being if we had seen no successful demonstrations of it. So we have to hold on to our faith, even if when the time comes we may fail. There is no use arguing with the comrades who have differed from us, I hope only temporarily. The question is one of demonstrating the truth in us, and we won't do it, unless we show that we have no malice, no bitterness, no inclination to find faults. We have to prepare ourselves for the terrible ordeal. The testing time may come sooner than we imagine. I am sailing on an uncharted sea. I have no cut and dried programme, and I am brooding from moment to moment. In the meanwhile follow my weekly writings and carry out the constructive programme. The time for resignation is not yet. We must not be misunderstood.

A WORKER: But, you have asked us to retire immediately, and all of us are ready.

GANDHIJI: Your readiness is good, and it is enough for me for the time being. If you conscientiously voted against the Delhi resolution, you did nothing wrong; if you remained neutral, you did nothing wrong. You would have been wrong if you had joined hands with those who sought to defeat the resolution on any but the ground of non-violence. For having given your vote on the Wardha resolution, and having lost, you could not vote against the Delhi resolution which was the natural corollary of the Wardha resolution.

A WORKER: But it was by accident that those who voted against the Delhi resolution, did so.

G. No, it was by design. They are no believers in non-violence to the extent you are, but they wanted to defeat the resolution for the sake of their policy.

Q. But then how long are we to remain in the Congress?

G. I cannot give a definite answer. I shall have a talk with the Maulana. We must not rush the Maulana and the Working Committee. If they find that the out-and-out non-violence people were the sustaining part of the Congress organization, they will retrace their step.

Q. Then how long shall we wait?

G. Until I give you the word.

A WORKER: But, I disliked the Wardha resolution and wanted to resign at once.

G. You might have done so. Then you would have been within your rights. But to do so now might savour of violence and self-righteousness. You must remember that I waited for more than a year before taking the final step and then too I took it with the full approval of the friends of the Working Committee.

*Harijan, 11-8-1940*

### 100. NOT A HARIJAN

Shri Ramchandran draws my attention to the fact that Shri Achuthan should not have been described as a Harijan. Whilst he is too big to resent the description, his fellow Ezhawas are likely to take offence. I ought to have known this. For when I was touring in Travancore I had this delicate matter brought to my notice. All those whose feeling has been hurt by my use of the word will please believe



me when I say that no offence was intended by me. I have never regarded the word as a term of reproach. But I am aware that there are many who do not look at things with my eyes.

SEVAGRAM, August 7, 1940

*Harijan*, 11-8-1940

*101. FOREWORD TO TAMIL TRANSLATION OF TULSIDAS'S  
"RAMACHARITAMANAS"*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*August 7, 1940*

Everyone knows of my close association with Shrimati Ambujammal. She has studied Hindi with great devotion. She has shown the same devotion in the study of the *Ramayana*. Now she has rendered that peerless epic into Tamil. I hope Tamilians will read it with joy. I congratulate Ambujammal.

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C. W. 9613. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

*102. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL*

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,

*August 7, 1940*

MY DEAR AMBUJAM<sup>1</sup>,

I was glad to hear from you after a long silence, if only to remind me that I had not sent you the promised foreword<sup>2</sup>. My memory does betray me nowadays. What I intend to do I often take for granted I have done. Since you have not received the previous letter I am inclined to regard it as another betrayal of memory. I shall not be happy till I receive your letter that you have the foreword. I am sorry for the delay wholly unintended.

It is a good thing you are attending to the parents. I hope both are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C. W. 9614. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar

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

### 103. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,  
August 7, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your figures, etc., have been despatched. They will appear in all the three journals.<sup>1</sup> Why did you not send them earlier?

Enclosed is a letter from Prema as usual.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U. / II. Also C. W. 8577. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

### 104. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,  
August 7, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. If true ahimsa is to be manifested, it will be manifested now. But we must put our own house in order. Our first duty is to show generosity towards those who part company with us. If we succeed in doing that, the next step will be easy. If we fail, we shall not be able to take the next step at all. Is this clear? Read Harijan and Harijanbandhu very carefully.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10410. Also C. W. 6849. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

### 105. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 7, 1940

CHI. MANJULA,

I have your letter. Here you will not get a Gujarati teacher. You should bring one from there. My advice to you is that you should

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Spinning Anniversary"

come here once, stay for a month or so and then decide which place will suit you. If you come I will of course like it. If you come, perhaps Magan also may come. I do not think that letters will have much influence on him. I did expect that he would turn out as you have described him to be. But you are brave and sensible and so I keep patience.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 1604. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

### *106. LETTER TO URMILA M. MEHTA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,  
*August 7, 1940*

CHI. URMIL<sup>1</sup> ,

I was extremely pleased to read your letter. How big have you grown now? I may not even be able to recognize you. I hope that we shall meet soon. Keep on writing to me. You have given a fine description of the monuments in Ahmedabad. Did you see the windows of Bhadra?<sup>2</sup>

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 1605. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

### *107. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

SEVAGRAM,  
*August 7, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There should be no eating in the kitchen. I shall advise the women.

Clothes must be washed, slivers made. Grinding, sweeping and dish-washing should be compulsory. If there is any confusion, I shall see about it.

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Maganlal Mehta

<sup>2</sup> The Bhadra mosque famed for its grillwork windows

Bharatanandji's dog should be sent away. Dhiren's has been. I shall see.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4350

*108. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR*

WARDHAGANJ,  
*August 8, 1940*

RAJKUMARI

MANORVILLE

SUMMER HILL

SIMLA

KHANSAHEB    WANTS    MEHRTAJ    IRWIN    COLLEGE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3993. Courtesy: Amrit kaur. Also G. N. 7302

*109. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*August 8, 1940*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL, ,

Maulana Saheb gave me the Hyderabad preliminary report. It makes fearful reading. There is nothing new in it for me. But one does not want confirmation of worst fears. I have been taxing myself about the remedy. I meet the workers tomorrow. If you have any thoughts pass them on to me.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Will you send me any authentic evidence you may have of the war exactions?<sup>1</sup>

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> For Jawaharlal Nehru's reply, *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-8-1940

## 110. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,  
August 8, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I will see about Kanchan. I will do something about those among them who have real enthusiasm. I will get for you whatever journal you want. If you are ready, I even want your services in that field. I would also like your comments on the language.

I will have a talk with Bharatanandji.

Pyarelal writes his names on whatever is addressed to him. I will manage to get that booklet.

My explanation about what a single village-worker can do was intended for all villages and that included Sevagram too. But not the Ashram. Shouldn't my remarks be applied to me also? Hence I pointed out my shortcomings in that article. If I had only the Sevagram work with me and if I were the only worker, my article would have literally applied to me, too.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8529

## 111. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,  
August 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am enclosing two more articles with this. Two have been posted at Nagpur. Thus, you will be receiving four articles together.

You must be at ease. It is not raining here right now. Every-one is in good health. Shakaribehn<sup>1</sup> did come but is going back today. Anand has again fallen ill. Sharada cannot look after her children alone.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

<sup>1</sup> Shakaribehn C. Shah

## 112. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM WARDHA,  
August 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

1. You did take interest in Sevagram, but you did not consider it your duty like your work there. Your heart was not in Sevagram. It was wherever I was.

2. Conflicts do not arise overnight. Nothing would have happened if you had not regarded it as conflict. You made a mountain out of a molehill without seeing or listening and without paying attention to my letters.

3. What I have said is a cruel, stark truth. Your statement that the old do not let the young have their way is far from true. Had your observation been correct, the Ashram would not have continued to grow at such a pace as it is doing.

4. I have not raised you high. Nor have I pulled you down. But you are so touchy that you did not hesitate even being unfair to me. Bapu has not changed but you saw him changed. It is another matter that you forgave him out of generosity.

5. There was jealousy indeed, but it was not of you. Had you understood this much, there would have been no need for you to suffer as you did.

6. Pyarelal says that you have understood it all wrong. But if Pyarelal really believes what you have told him, then he does not know me at all. Bapu's entire life has been spent in coping with opposition—internal and external, never in submitting to it. I have always preferred losing colleagues rather than wrongly submitting.

7. I changed my attitude, when protests were ceasing. Does it not show that it had not been in any way related to the protests ?

8. But I do not agree that I changed my attitude. I have proved to you that I explained the truth. I claim that my attitude has remained unchanged.

9. This is true.

10. But he who regards me as the centre, must consider himself safe. Instead of taking that view, you followed your own mind and then felt puzzled. This much in reply to your letter of 29-7-1940.

Now for the letter of 2-8-1940.

1. 2. 3. If your experience till the time of my going to Calcutta was sweet, you must accept that if it turned bitter later you

should have put up with it. You could not do so because you never considered Sevagram your field of action and field of duty. Your field of action was only I, which was wrong in itself. I must never become the field of activity for anyone. The cause of envy lay in this fact, not outside it.

4. It is not true that I had raised you high.

5. The reply has been given above.

The rest is nothing new.

I hope you will be able to read this.

How can I expect that my reply will satisfy you? I shall be content if you can only accept that we are considering the same thing from different points of view. But forget all this; start afresh. Not for my sake but for the sake of my work. Come whenever you can decide to come. Right now you are in your field of duty. You are well trained for it. Go on with it. Later on you can come if you think it proper to come. So long as our view-points are different, you will not find peace even if you come. Pyarelal will explain this better.

In your absence I cannot keep the dispensary in its present shape. It is your thing. Now that you have gone, I cannot bear the sight of it. But I cannot bear it either that you should return merely for the sake of the dispensary. I had and have altogether another use for you. It may include the dispensary. But that is a different matter. You need not feel miserable that we had a dispensary and now it may be closed down. I would not hesitate to set up and let go such things for your sake. That is how I am made. I have always incurred such expenses for those I like. All I want is your good, be it anywhere.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### *113. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW*

SEVAGRAM, via WARDHA,  
*August 9, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I received your kind wire on Wednesday and yesterday your letter referred to in the wire. I thank you for both of them.

I have very carefully read your pronouncement<sup>1</sup> and slept over it. It has made me sad. Its implications frighten me. I cannot help feeling that a profound mistake has been made. I recognize that yours is a tremendous responsibility and that you can only do what you think is best. But since you have given me the privilege of sharing my thoughts with you and since I fancy I know more of a vital part of India than you can, I have thought it my duty to let you have my reaction to your pronouncement. I am filled with the greatest misgivings. I hope, however, that events will prove that there was no warrant for them.

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

#### *114. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI*

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,  
*August 9, 1940*

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Please thank Dr. Vaidya on my behalf for his joining you. You will certainly have warmth from him. You have done well in taking over the responsibility of the exhibition.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10847. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

#### *115. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT<sup>2</sup>*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*August 9, 1940*

BAHI NANABHAI,

I do not know where Prithvi Singh is these days. If he is somewhere there and if you feel disposed please to this. Mirabehn looks upon him as her husband. She believes that her love for him is

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940"

<sup>2</sup> Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt, founder of Dakshinamurti, an educational institution in Bhavnagar



the result of her previous life. She has pledged her all to him. Prithvi Singh regards her as a sister. For this I am responsible. The moment he came here I told him that he should regard all the women here as his sisters. As a result he does not look upon her in any other way. Mirabehn is pining for him here. It is not that Prithvi Singh is not going to marry. I feel that if a woman whom one regards as a sister is really not one's sister and if there is no violation of morality, the brotherly sentiment is not binding. It is question of life and death for Mirabehn. Mirabehn is worthy in every way. She can be a great help to Prithvi Singh. Mirabehn does want a child and that too by Prithvi Singh. Under such circumstances it becomes my duty to persuade Prithvi Singh and if he has no religious objection it is his duty to marry her. If Prithvi Singh is likely to come this way or if you have any hesitation about talking to him, you need not involve yourself in this. If his coming is likely to be delayed and you hesitate to speak to him, let me know when he will be coming.<sup>1</sup>

I trust your work is going on well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10861. Courtesy : Prithvi Singh

### *116. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*August 10, 1940*

CHI. PURATAN,

The advice you have given to the Bhangi friends is perfectly sound.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI PURATAN BUCH

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9178

<sup>1</sup> Mirabehn's version of this episode is to be found in *The Spirit's Pilgrimage*, Ch. LI.

## 117. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,  
August 10, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your letter. I see there is a divergence between your views and mine. There is no harm in this. Every individual should have freedom of thought. I perceive flaws in your views. You do in mine. It is possible that I may be mistaken in my views. I have confessed that I have no first-hand knowledge of himsa. Therefore if you have really accepted ahimsa, I shall not be surprised if yours is purer than mine. On the contrary I shall only be pleased. I therefore thank you for so frankly placing your views before me.

What you think about Guru ka Bagh<sup>1</sup> is not correct because those people came to me and I told them that what they had done was wrong. They agreed with me. Your assumption about Khudai Khidmatgars is also wrong. Neither Khan Saheb nor I can say that they have really become non-violent. I do not feel Nathji would agree with your assessment. I shall look into it. But even if it should be so my views remain unaltered. The idea which have gripped me for now fifty years cannot be given up suddenly.

Your saying that I had asked you to run classes in Wardha shows a slip of memory. I had said that you should start your experiment initially in the Ashram and that if I was convinced, you certainly had boys from Wardha to instruct.

Your last statements is significant, you say that the Government notice has left you without an ideal. That falsifies your ideal because no one can stop the preparation for satyagraha. Even though I do not have the time I have written such a long letter just to let you know some of the flaws in your views. Let the three brothers getting training in Baroda, continue to do so. As I have understood it is a three months' course. However if our field of activity is going to be different, I am not responsible for them. All the same I will pay for their 3 months' expenses up to Rs. 180.

We shall further discuss things when you come.

<sup>1</sup> A place near Amritsar from where Akail Sikhs launched satyagraha to take possession of the Gurudwara.

It is good that you stayed on to nurse Nalini<sup>1</sup> and that she has recovered.

I have sent an important letter to Nanabhai.<sup>2</sup> You will perhaps get it when you go there.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5642. C. W. 2953. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

### 118. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

August 11, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

With reference to your kind letter of 31st July, I am now able to send you some papers. I have picked up a letter from one whom I know well and who has never deceived me. That is marked (A)<sup>3</sup>. Another is from Hinganghat (Dist. Wardha, C. P. ). I do not know the writer. But the information he gives can be easily checked. It is marked (B)<sup>4</sup>. (C)<sup>5</sup> is copy of a minatory notice. These are but samples. The complaints are universal.

About the increase in the salaries given to persons appointed to the new posts created I send you a sample list herewith. I cannot have free access to this kind of information. The figures I am sending you are supplied by those who claim to know.

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

<sup>1</sup> Wife of Gopalrao Kulkarni, a worker for Nayee Taleem

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Nrisinhprasad K. Bhatt", 9-8-1940

<sup>3</sup> This was a translation of H. L. Sharma's letter of July 15, addressed to Gandhiji wherein he had described the high-handedness resorted to by officials in extorting contributions for the war fund.

<sup>4</sup> This pertained to deduction of war fund contribution from the millhands' salary itself as the millowner was expected to pay a huge amount towards the war fund.

<sup>5</sup> This was a copy of a Tehsildar's letter to an honorary Magistrate who had failed to attend a war fund meeting. The Tehsildar had threatened to bring his 'indisciplinary attitude' to the notice of the Government.

[PS.]

I was glad to have the good news about Lord Hopetoun.

M. K. G.

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

*119. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

August 11, 1940

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

Your two letters. I am reading your booklet. Do come whenever you like. Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5086

*120. MORAL SUPPORT<sup>1</sup>*

A friend writes as follows:

On the declaration of war you had advised giving moral support to Britain. Many persons never understood the implications of such support. You have never explained them either so far as I know. I am a regular reader of *Harijanbandhu*, but I have not seen a clear explanation there. Everyone puts his own interpretation on the words. At the last sitting of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee the leaders said: 'Bapu was ready to give moral support to Britain. What else has the Congress done in its latest resolution? As a matter of fact the Congress asks for more than it promises to give. Bapu was willing to give all for nothing.' If war is itself a wrong act, how can it deserve moral support or blessings? In the Mahabharata, was the help that Lord Krishna gave to Arjuna moral, or was it more destructive than the deadliest weapons of war?

I did explain in *Harijan* what I meant by moral support. It is possible that the explanation did not appear in *Harijanbandhu*. In my English writings things are often to be understood. The ellipses need, however, to be brought out in translations.

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

Broadly speaking, Britain could have had moral support from the Congress, if only she had acted justly towards India. There was no spirit of bargaining in my proposal because the help was not offered in exchange for anything.

Suppose my friend possesses moral strength which he has acquired through *tapasya*. And suppose I am in need of this strength. I shall not get it from him for the asking. He may always be ready to give it to me, but if I have not the capacity within me to take it from him, how shall I ever obtain it? Moral support cannot really be given in the sense of giving. It automatically comes to him who is qualified to take it. And such a one can take it in abundance.

The Congress has this moral reservoir. The acceptance of the creed of truth and non-violence has been its *tapasya*. It has acquired world prestige through the acceptance of truth and non-violence for the attainment of its goal. If the Congress could have given its blessings to Britain, the world would have adjudged Britain's cause to be just. The masses over whom the Congress holds sway would also have acknowledged justice to be on Britain's side. But in all this the Congress would have had nothing material to give. The British Government would, by its own action, have acquired moral prestige or strength. Though the Congress would not give one man or one piece as material aid, its moral support and blessings would definitely have turned the scales in favour of Britain. This is my belief. That my belief may be groundless and that the Congress never had any moral prestige is quite possible. The determination of this question is unnecessary for my argument.

But the opportunity for rendering moral support now seems almost to have gone. The Congress felt itself unable to adopt my course. It cannot be taken mechanically. It presupposes a living faith in truth and non-violence. The greatest quality in the Congress is this that it has never claimed to have what it really does not possess. And therefore its resolutions are dignified and carry force with them.

The help that the Congress in its latest resolution promises to give is material and for a consideration, eminently just, no doubt, but it is not and cannot be unconditional. I do not suggest that this position is either untenable or morally wrong. The resolution has dignity because it is the considered opinion of the majority. But by passing it the Congress has, in my opinion, surrendered the prestige it had or was supposed to have. Many Congressmen say that while they firmly

believed that they could attain swaraj through non-violence, they had never meant it to be understood that they could retain it also through non-violence. The entire outside world, however, believed that the Congress was showing the golden way to the abolition of war. No one outside India ever dreamed that, if the Congress could wrest independence from a mighty power like Britain purely through non-violence, it would not be able to defend it also by the same means.

In my opinion Lord Krishna's help to Arjuna cannot be said to be moral, because he himself had an army and was an expert in the art of war. Duryodhana acted foolishly in that he asked for Krishna's army, while Arjuna got what he wanted in the person of the expert in the science of war. Therefore, if we interpret the *Mahabharata* literally, Lord Krishna's strength was certainly more destructive than that of his army. Because of his scientific skill Krishna was able with an army of seven divisions to destroy Duryodhana's army of eleven. But it is well known that I have never looked upon the *Mahabharata* as a mere record of earthly warfare. In the garb of an epic the poet has described the eternal warfare within the individual as well as in society, between truth and Untruth, Violence and Non-violence, Right and Wrong. Looking at the epic even superficially one can understand how the great Vyasa has demonstrated that in this war the victor was no better off than the vanquished. Out of that vast concourse of warriors only seven remained to tell the tale. And the poet gives a true picture of the woeful state of mind also of these seven. The author has shown clearly too that in armed warfare the contending parties are certain to stoop to meanness and trickery. When occasion arose even the great Yadhishtira had to report to untruth to save the battle.

One more question of the writer remains to be answered. If war is itself a wrong act, how can it be worthy or moral support or blessings? I believe all war to be wholly wrong. But if we scrutinize the motives of two warring parties, we may find one to be in the right and the other in the wrong. For instance, if A wishes to seize B's country, B is obviously the wronged one. Both fight with arms. I do not believe in violent warfare, but all the same B, whose cause is just, deserves my moral help and blessings.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

## 121. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 12, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

A mistake has been made; but do not grieve over it. I shall be present if Su[shila] permits.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4356

## 122. IMPLICATIONS OF CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent writes:

What are the qualities that you intend to inculcate in people by laying stress on the constructive programme? What are the qualifications necessary for a constructive worker in order to make his work effective?

The constructive programme is a big undertaking including a number of items: (1) Hindu-Muslim or communal unity; (2) Removal of untouchability; (3) Prohibition; (4) Khadi; (5) Other village industries; (6) Village sanitation; (7) New or basic education; (8) Adult education; (9) Uplift of women; (10) Education in hygiene and health; (11) Propagation of Rashtrabhasha; (12) Cultivating love of one's own language; (13) Working for economic equality. This list can be supplemented if necessary, but it is so comprehensive that I think it can be proved to include items appearing to have been omitted.

The reader will see that it is the want of all these things that is responsible for our bondage. He will also see that the constructive programme of the Congress is not supposed to include all the items. That is understood to include only four items, or rather six, now that the Congress has created the All-India Village Industries Association and the Basic Education Board. But we have to go further forward, we have to stabilize and perfect ahimsa, and so we have to make the constructive programme as comprehensive as possible. There should be no room for doubt that, if we can win swaraj purely through non-viole-

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

nce, we can also retain it through the same means. In the fulfilment of the constructive programme lies the non-violent attainment of swaraj.

The items I have mentioned are not in order of importance. I have put them down just as they came to my pen. Generally I talk of khadi only nowadays, because millions of people can take their share in this work, and progress can be arithmetically measured. Communal unity and the removal of untouchability cannot be thus assessed. Once they become part of our daily life, nothing need be done by us as individuals.

Let us now glance at the various items. Without Hindu-Muslim, i.e., communal unity, we shall always remain crippled. And how can a crippled India win swaraj? Communal unity means unity between Hindus, Sikhs, Mussalmans, Christians, parsis, Jews. All these go to make Hindustan. He who neglects any of these communities does not know constructive work.

As long as the curse of untouchability pollutes the mind of the Hindu, so long is he himself an untouchable in the eyes of the world, and an untouchable cannot win non-violent swaraj. The removal of untouchability means treating the so-called untouchables as one's own kith and kin. He who does treat them so must be free from the sense of high and low, in fact free from all wrong class-sense. He will regard the whole world as one family. Under non-violent swaraj it will be impossible to conceive of any country as an enemy country.

Pure swaraj is impossible of attainment by people who have been or who are slaves of intoxicating drinks and drugs. It must never be forgotten that a man in the grip of intoxicants is generally bereft of the moral sense.

Everyone now may be said to believe that without khadi there is no just and immediate solution of the problem of the starvation of our millions. I need not therefore dilate upon it. I would only add that in the resuscitation of khadi lies the resuscitation of the ruined village artisans. Khadi requisites (wheels, looms, etc.,) have to be made by the village carpenter and blacksmith. For unless these requisites are made in the village it cannot be self-contained and prosperous.

The revival of khadi presupposes the revival of all other village industries. Because we have not laid proper stress on this, khadiwearers see nothing wrong in using other articles which are foreign or mill-made. Such people may be said to have failed to grasp the inner meaning of khadi. They forget that by establishing the Village Industries



Association the Congress has placed all other village industries on the same level as khadi. As the solar system will be dark without the sun, even so will the sun be lustreless without the planets. All things in the universe are interdependent. The salvation of India is impossible without the salvation of village.

If rural reconstruction were not to include rural sanitation, our village would remain the muck-heaps that they are today. Village sanitation is a vital part of village life and is as difficult as it is important. It needs a heroic effort to eradicate age-long insanitation. The village worker who is ignorant of the science of village sanitation, who is not a successful scavenger, cannot fit himself for village service.

It seem to be generally admitted that without the new or basic education the education of millions of children in India is well-nigh impossible. The village worker has, therefore, to master it, and become a basic education teacher himself.

Adult education will follow in the wake of basic education as a matter of course. Where this new education has taken root, the children themselves become their parents' teachers. Be that as it may, the village worker has to undertake adult education also.

Woman is described as man's better half. As long as she has not the same rights in law as man, as long as the birth of a girl does not receive the same welcome as that of a boy, so long we should know that India is suffering from partial paralysis. Suppression of woman is a denial of ahimsa. Every village worker will, therefore, regard every woman as his mother, sister or daughter as the case may be, and look upon her with respect. Only such a worker will command the confidence of the village people.

It is impossible for an unhealthy people to win swaraj. Therefore we should no longer be guilty of the neglect of the health of our people. Every village worker must have a knowledge of the general principles of health.

Without a common language no nation can come into being. Instead of worrying himself with the controversy about the Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu, the village worker will acquire a knowledge of the *Rashtrabhasha*, which should be such as can be understood by both Hindus and Muslims.

Our infatuation about English has made us unfaithful to provincial languages. If only as penance for this unfaithfulness the village worker should cultivate in the villagers a love of their own speech. He

will have equal regard for all the other languages of India, and will learn the language of the part where he may be working, and thus be able to inspire the villagers there with a regard for their speech.

The whole of this programme will, however, be a structure on sand if it is not built on the solid foundation of economic equality. Economic equality must never be supposed to mean possession of an equal amount of worldly goods by everyone. It does mean, however, that everyone will have a proper house to live in, sufficient and balanced food to eat, and sufficient khadi with which to cover himself. It also means that the cruel inequality that obtains today will be removed by purely non-violent means. This question, however, requires to be separately dealt with.

SEVAGRAM, August 13, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

### 123. QUESTION BOX<sup>1</sup>

#### CAN HE STAND ALONE ?

Q. You are anxious that there should be believers in complete non-violence in every province. Is there not need then to organize a Sangh of such person? Or are you of opinion that ahimsa is a force that enables individuals to stand alone?

A. Complete non-violence needs neither the aid of speech nor of the pen. And if it does not require the help of these two means, it certainly does not stand in need of organized strength. A man or woman who is saturated with ahimsa has only to will a thing and it happens. I can picture this truth in my imagination. It is stated in the scriptures, too. But my experience can only be reckoned as meagre; so meagre that I cannot ask anyone to build on it. Hence my desire to build an organization pledged to unadulterated non-violence. At the same time I believe that true believers in out-and-out non-violence should have the strength to stand alone. They will thus be soldiers and their own generals at the same time. If the non-violent army of my dreams can be set up, it will put an end to the existing disbelief in the power of non-violence. Indeed the Congress will itself be converted to complete non-violence.

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 17-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

### WHAT SHOULD HE DO?

Q. I am a Congressman and I believe in out-and-out non-violence. I am also a member of Congress Committees. You have advised people like me to leave the Congress. I am in touch with the villagers in my area. Should I continue to bring these into the Congress fold or allow them to remain outside?

A. This is not a good question. So long as you are in the Congress, it is your duty [to persuade others to join its ranks].<sup>1</sup> You should explain the Congress policy to them. Those who join the Congress with an understanding of the real difference between *himsa* and *ahimsa* will do so knowingly. They will join the Congress either with the desire to try to bring the Congress on to the path of complete non-violence or to support it in its present policy. Your duty is to explain the position fully to them and freely admit as many as wish to join. You may resign from the Congress only when the date of leaving it is fixed. Until then you are to carry on as you have been doing heretofore.

### WHAT SHOULD A BRITON DO AND NOT DO?

Q. In your appeal to 'Every Briton' you say: "You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want. . . You will give all your 'earthly possessions' but never your souls or your minds. . . . You will refuse to owe allegiance to them." Please explain clearly what a Briton should or should not do. I ask the question because your answer will have a bearing on the duty of every satyagrahi.

A. Not to yield your soul to the conqueror means that you will refuse to do that which your conscience forbids you to do. Suppose the 'enemy' were to ask you to rub your nose on the ground or to pull your ears or to go through such humiliating performances, you would not submit to any of these humiliations. But if he robs you of your possessions, you will yield them because as a votary of *ahimsa* you have from the beginning decided that earthly possessions have nothing to do with your soul. That which you look upon as your own you may keep only so long as the world allows you to own it.

Not to yield your mind means that you will not give way to any temptation. Man is often-times weak-minded enough to be caught in the snare of greed and honeyed words. We see this happening daily in our social life. A weak-minded man can never be a satyagrahi. The latter's 'no' is invariably a 'no' and his 'yes' an eternal 'yes'. Such

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati has "to admit as many as are willing to join it".

a man alone has the strength to be a devotee of truth and ahimsa. But there one must know that difference between steadfastness and obstinacy. If after having said 'yes' or 'no' one finds out that the decision was wrong and in spite of that knowledge clings to it, that is obstinacy and folly. It is necessary to think things out carefully and thoroughly and before coming to any decision.

The meaning of refusal to owe allegiance is clear. You will not bow to the supremacy of the victor, you will not help him to attain his object. Herr Hitler has never dreamt of possessing Britain. He wants the British to admit defeat. The victor can then demand anything he likes from the vanquished, and the latter has perforce to yield. But if defeat is not admitted, the enemy will fight until he has killed his opponent. A satyagrahi, however, is dead to his body even before the enemy attempts to kill him, i.e., he is free from attachment to his body and only lives in the victory of the soul. Therefore, when he is already thus dead why should he yearn to kill anyone? To die in the act of killing is in essence to die defeated. Because, if the enemy is unable to get what he wants from you alive, he will decide to get it after killing you. If, on the other hand, he realises that you have not the remotest thought in your mind of raising your hand against him even for the sake of your life, he will lack the zest to kill you. Every hunter has had this experience. No one has ever heard of anyone hunting cows.

You may find that I have not answered the question that you had in your mind<sup>1</sup>. I have made humble effort and dealt with your general question by giving you a few homely examples. I hope that from them you will be able to deduce answers to the question left unanswered.

Dignity of the soul and self-respect are interpreted differently by different persons. I am aware that self-respect is often misinterpreted. The over-sensitive man may see disrespect or hurt in almost everything. Such a man does not really understand what self-respect is. That has been my experience in many cases. But no harm accrues even if a non-violent man holds mistaken notions of self-respect. He

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati here adds: "I did not intend to deal with all the questions that might come up."

can die cheerfully for the sake of what he believes to be his dignity and self-respect. Only he has no right to injure or kill the supposed wrongdoer.

SEVAGRAM, August 13, 1940

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

#### 124. CABLE TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM,  
August 13, 1940

HAVING RETIRED FROM PARTICIPATION IN CONGRESS POLITICS, I HAVE REFRAINED FROM EXPRESSING OPINION ON THE RECENT VICEREGAL PRONOUNCEMENT<sup>2</sup>. BUT PRESSURE FROM FRIENDS IN ENGLAND AND FELLOW WORKERS HERE DEMANDS RESPONSE FROM ME. THE VICEREGAL PRONOUNCEMENT IS DEEPLY DISTRESSING. IT WIDENS THE GULF BETWEEN INDIA, AS REPRESENTED BY THE CONGRESS, AND ENGLAND. THINKING INDIA OUTSIDE THE CONGRESS, TOO HAS NOT WELCOMED THE PRONOUNCEMENT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S GLOSS SOOTHES THE EAR, BUT DOES NOT DISPEL SUSPICION. NEITHER DOES THE PRONOUNCEMENT TAKE NOTE OF THE SMOULDERING DISCONTENT. MY OWN FEAR IS THAT DEMOCRACY IS BEING WRECKED. BRITAIN CANNOT CLAIM TO STAND FOR JUSTICE, IF SHE FAILS TO BE JUST TO INDIA. INDIA'S DISEASE TOO DEEP TO YIELD TO ANY MAKE-BELIEVE OF HALF-HEARTED MEASURES.

*Harijan*, 18-8-1940

#### 125. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKWASA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August, 14, 1940

BHAI MANGALDAS<sup>3</sup>,

The letter is merely by way of an apology. I inquired again about your letter today and Pyarelal found it. The letter must have arrived here on the 31st July. It was rather shameful that though the

<sup>1</sup> This was also reproduced in *The Hindustan Times*, 14-8-1940.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940"

<sup>3</sup> President of the Bombay Legislative Council.

letter was an important one it remained unattended to. Lapses like this occur more than once. At that time I do feel pained, but there can be no assurance that such a thing will never happen again. I am returning that telegraph form.

Jayantibhai may come whenever he wishes. You also may come if you wish.

The first step about the income-tax matter was good. I hope the second will be equally good. I know you will do your best.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4685. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakwasa

## *126. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

SEVAGRAM,

*August 14, 1940*

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. What should I write to you? You have ready answers to all questions. If we see the same thing from the same point of view, our perceptions will be similar. But if we see from opposite points of view, our perceptions would never be the same, and each would firmly stand by his own perception. That is the case with us. God is between us. Let us be guided by Him. The wonderful thing is that while I admit only one sentence, you demand the same sentence. You say that I am putting you in the same category as Mahadev, etc. I say that I have not thought about you in any other way. But that is not sufficient for you. You yourself would test me whether I treated you as I would Mahadev, and if I failed in the test you would desert me. It is surprising that you do not laugh at such a demand on your part. But your mind does not let you understand or perceive anything straight. Under such circumstances I would only say that I have no doubt given you what you asked. Come when you realize this. Why should you be concerned whether the dispensary exists or not? If it is not there, it will be set up if you desire it when you come. Surely you would not be coming because of the dispensary or on the condition that it should be in existence? I see that my mind rebels against it. The dispensary without you, the very sight of it pains me. The dispensary was set up for your sake. I believed that you would get some

satisfaction out of it. What could be more tragic than that that very dispensary became the provocation to make you run away from here? And now you tell me that if I close down the dispensary, you hope to pay for the expenses incurred. Patience! May you have a lot of money. I shall not hesitate to accept whatever you send me out of it. I have not written all this to obtain any reply from you. Nothing would be achieved by indulging in arguments. I think it would be appropriate to close this chapter. Time will do its work.

The arrangement about the *Harijan Sevak* is the Pyarelal will send the Hindustani translations of English matter and you will be translating the Gujarati into Hindi. Rajkumari and Mahadev will translate the Gujarati matter into English. This is the present arrangement.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### *127. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*August 15, 1940*

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

It was delight to hear from you after such a long lapse of time. Yes, you are passing through most anxious times. There must come light out of this darkness.

Love.

BAPU

MONS. EDMOND PRIVAT

SAN BLAGIO

LACARNO (TESSIN)

SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G. N. 8801

128. *LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 15, 1940

Yes, your appointment stands.<sup>1</sup>

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is good you are bringing Taralika along. Charu should be sent somewhere early. If you wish to bring him here, do so. You may bring five copies of Satis Babu's book<sup>2</sup> with you.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHA DEVI  
KHADI PRATISHTHAN  
15 COLLEGE SQUARE  
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1638

129. *LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 15, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have framed the rule. Now it is up to you to implement it to the extent possible. Take from me whatever help you need in doing so.

What you say about servants is true. We shall not be able to do anything in the matter. Our progress will depend on our internal purity.

That is why this institution was never a burden. You do not realize this, at least not fully. But as you proceed with faith, others will automatically support you and you will feel no burden. You have to be content with yourself. Everything will then become easy.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4357

<sup>1</sup> This sentence is written at the top of the letter.

<sup>2</sup> On home medicine; *vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 2-8-1940



### 130. DISCUSSION WITH B. G. KHER AND OTHERS<sup>1</sup>

[August 15, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

You see that I am answering every one of your questions straightway without the slightest hesitation. That is because the great question underlying your questions possesses me and I have rehearsed to myself every one of the situations arising out of the various implications of ahimsa.

Q. Should one stop with the human species or extend ahimsa to all creation?

GANDHI: I was not prepared for this question. For the Congress ahimsa is naturally confined to the political field and therefore only to the human species. Hence out-and-out non-violence means for our purpose every variety of non-violence in the political field. In concrete terms it covers family relations, relations with constituted authority, internal disorders and external aggression. Put in another way it covers all human relations.

Q. Then what about meat-eating and egg-eating? Are they consistent with non-violence?

G. They are. Otherwise we should have to exclude Mussalmans and Christians and a vast number of Hindus as possible co-workers in ahimsa. I have known many meat-eaters to be far more non-violent than vegetarians.

Q. But what if we had to give them up for the sake of a principle?

G. Oh yes, we would, if we had to compromise our principle. Our principle is defined as I have shown already.

Q. If, as you have said, Polish resistance to the German invasion was almost non-violent, and you would thus seem to reconcile yourself with it, why do you object to the wardha resolution of the Working Committee?

G. Surely, there is no analogy between the two cases. If a man fights with his sword single-handed against a horde of dacoits armed to the teeth, I should say he is fighting almost non-violently. Haven't I said to our women that, if in defence of their honour they used their nails and teeth and even a dagger, I should regard their conduct non-violent? She does know the distinction between himsa and ahimsa. She acts spontaneously. Supposing a mouse in fighting a cat tried to

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "An Interesting Discourse". B. G. Kher, a former Prime Minister of Bombay had come with a party from Poona "for the sole purpose of clearing their doubts on ahimsa".

<sup>2</sup> The Date is from *Bapu Smaran*, "What the "Masnavi" Says

resist the cat with his sharp teeth, would you call that mouse violent? In the same way, for the Poles to stand valiantly against the German hordes vastly superior in numbers, military equipment and strength, was almost non-violence. I should not mind repeating that statement over and over again. You must give its full value to the word 'almost'. But we are 400 millions here. If we were to organize a big army and prepare ourselves to fight foreign aggression, how could we by any stretch of imagination call ourselves almost non-violent, let alone non-violent? The Poles were unprepared for the way in which the enemy swooped down upon them. When we talk of armed preparation, we contemplate preparation to meet any violent combination with our superior violence. If India ever prepared herself that way, she would constitute the greatest menace to world peace. For if we take that path, we will also have to choose the path of exploitation like the European nations. That is why I still regret the moment when my words lacked the power of convincing the Sardar and Rajaji. By having passed that resolution we proclaimed to the world that the ahimsa we had subscribed to all these years was not really ahimsa but a form of himsa.

Q. How will you run your administration non-violently?

G. If you assume that we would have won independence by non-violent means, it means that the bulk of the country had been organized non-violently. Without the vast majority of people having become non-violent, we could not attain non-violent swaraj. If, therefore, we attain swaraj by purely non-violent means, it should not be difficult for us to carry on the administration without the military. The goondas too will then have come under our control. If, for instance in Sevagram we have five or seven *goondas* in a population of seven hundred who are non-violently organized, the five or seven well wether live under the discipline of the rest or leave the village.

But you will see that I am answering the question with the utmost caution, and my truth makes me admit that we might have to maintain a police force. But the police will be after our pattern, and not the British pattern. As we shall have adult suffrage, the voice of even the youngest of us will count. That is why I have said that the ideally non-violent State will be an ordered anarchy. That State will be the best governed which is governed the least. The pity is that no one trusts me with the reins of government! Otherwise I would show how to govern non-violently. If I maintain a police force, it will be a body of reformers.

Q. But you had the power in the Congress?

G. That was a paper-boat. And then you must not forget that I never spared the Congress ministries. Munshi and Pantji came in for a lot of strictures from me. As I have said in another connection even the dirty water from the gutter. When it mixes with the water of the Ganges, becomes as pure as the Ganges water; even so I had expected even the *goondas* would work under Congress discipline. But evidently our ministers had not attained the purifying potency of the fabled Ganges.

B. G. KHER: But the Congress ministers had no non-violent power with them. Even if 500 *goondas* had run amuck and had been allowed to go unchecked, they would have dealt untold havoc. I do not know how even you would have dealt with them.

G. Surely, surely, I had rehearsed such situations. The ministers could on such occasions have gone out and allowed themselves to be done to death by the *goondas*. But let us face the fact that we had not the requisite ahimsa. We went in with our half-baked ahimsa. I do not mind it, inasmuch as we gave up power the moment we felt we should give it up. I am sure that, if we had adhered to strictest non-violence during these two or three years, the Congress would have made a tremendous advance in the direction of ahimsa and also independence.

B. G. K. But four or five years ago when there was a riot, and I appealed to the leaders to go and throw themselves into the conflagration, no one was ready.

G. So you are supporting my argument. You agree that our loyalty to ahimsa was lip-loyalty and not heart-loyalty. And if even the half-baked ahimsa carried us a long way, does it not follow that ahimsa would have carried us very far indeed, even if it had not already brought us to the goal?

Q. But we cannot visualize how you will stand non-violently against a foreign invasion.

G. I cannot draw the whole picture to you because we have no past experience to fall back upon and there is no reality facing us today. We have got the Government army manned by the Sikhs, Pathans and Gurkhas. What I can conceive is this that with my non-violent army of, say, two thousand people I should put myself between the two contending armies. But this, I know, is no answer. I can only say that we shall be able to reduce the invaders' violence to a minimum. The general of a non-violent army has got to have greater

presence of mind than that of a violent army, and God would bless him with the necessary resourcefulness to meet situations as they arise.

B. G. K. The world is made up of pairs of opposites. Where there is fear, there is courage too. When we walk on the edge of a precipice we walk warily, for we have fear. Fear is not a thing to despise. Will your non-violent army be above these pairs of opposites?

G. No. No, for the simple reason that my army will represent one of the pair—ahimsa—out of the pair of *himsa* and ahimsa. Neither I nor my army is above the pair of opposites. The state of *gunatita*<sup>1</sup>, in the language of the *Gita*, rises above *himsa* and ahimsa both. Fear has its use, but cowardice has none. I may not put my finger into the jaws of a snake, but the very sight of the snake need not strike terror into me. The trouble is that we often die many times before death overtakes us.

But let me explain what my army will be like. They need not and will not have the resourcefulness or understanding of the general, but they will have a perfect sense of discipline to carry out faithfully his order. The general should have the quality which commands the unquestioning obedience of his army, and he will expect of them nothing more than this obedience. The Dandi March was entirely my conception. Pandit Motilalji first laughed at it, he thought it to be a quixotic adventure, and Jamnalalji suggested instead a march on the Viceroy's House! But I could not think of anything but the salt march as I had to think in terms of millions of our countrymen. It was a conception that God gave me. Pandit Motilalji argued for some time, and then he said he must not argue as after all I was the general, and he must have faith in me. Later when he saw me in Jambusar, he was completely converted for he saw with his own eyes the awakening that had come over the masses. And it was an almost magical awakening. Where in history shall we find parallels of the cool courage that our women displayed in such large numbers?

And yet none of the thousands who took part in the movement were above the average. They were erring, sinning mortals. God has a way of making use of the most fragile instruments and remaining Himself untouched by everything. Only He is *gunatita*.

<sup>1</sup> One who has transcended the three constituents of nature—*Bhagavad Gita*, xiv. 25.

And then what after all is the army that wins? You know Rama's reply to Vibhishana when the latter wondered how Rama would be able to conquer a foe like Ravana, when he had no chariot, no amour, nor any shoes to his feet? Rama says:<sup>1</sup>

The chariot, my dear Vibhishana, that wins the victory for Rama is of a different sort from the usual one. Manliness and courage are its wheels unflinching truth and character its banners and standards; strength, discrimination, self-restraint and benevolence its horses, with forgiveness, mercy, equanimity their reins; prayer to God is that conqueror's unerring charioteer, dispassion his shield, contentment his sword, charity his axe, intellect his spear, and perfect science his stout bow. His pure and unwavering mind stands for a quiver, his mental quietude and his practice of *yama* and *niyama* stand for the sheaf of arrows, and the homage he pays to Brahmins and his guru is his impenetrable armour. There is no other equipment for victory comparable to this; and, my dear friend, there is no enemy who can conquer the man who takes his stand on the chariot of dharma. He who has a powerful chariot like this is a warrior who can conquer even that great and invincible enemy - the world. Hearken unto me and fear not.

That is the equipment that can lead us to victory. I have not retired from the world, nor do I mean to. I am no recluse. I am content to do what little work I can in Sevagram and give what guidance I can do those that come to me. What we need is faith. And what is there to be lost in following the right path? The worst that can happen to us is that we shall be crushed. Better to be crushed than to be vanquished.

But if we had to equip ourselves violently, I should be at my wit's end. I cannot even think out an armament plan, much less work it. On the other hand my non-violent plan is incredibly simpler and easier, and with God as our Commander and Infallible Guide where is there cause for any fear?

Q. May a non-violent man possess wealth, and if he may, how can he keep it non-violently?

G. He may not own any wealth, though he may possess millions. Let him hold it in trust. If he lives among dacoits and thieves, he may possess very little, indeed little beyond a loin-cloth. And if he does this, he will convert them.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai says: "Gandhiji only made a reference to these verses from Tulsidas's *Ramayana*. I translate them here fully for the benefit of the reader."

But you must not generalize. In a non-violent State there will be very few dacoits. For the individual the golden rule is that he will own nothing. If I decided to settle and work among the so-called criminal tribes, I should go to them without any belongings and depend on them for my food and shelter. The moment they feel that I am in their midst in order to serve them, they will be my friends. In that attitude is true ahimsa. But I have discussed this question at length in a recent article in *Harijan*.

Q. How is one to protect the honour of women?

G. I am afraid you do not read *Harijan* regularly. I discussed this question years ago, and have discussed it often since. The question may be discussed under two heads: (1) how is a woman to protect her own honour? And (2) how are her male relatives to protect it?

As regards the first question, where there is a non-violent atmosphere, where there is the constant teaching of ahimsa, woman will not regard herself as dependent, weak or helpless. She is no really helpless when she is really pure. Her purity makes her conscious of her strength. I have always held that it is physically impossible to violate a woman against her will. The outrage takes place only when she gives way to fear or does not realize her moral strength. If she cannot meet the assailant's physical might, her purity will give her the strength to die before he succeeds in violating her. Take the case of Sita. Physically she was a weakling before Ravana, but her purity was more than a match even for his giant might. He tried to win her with all kinds of allurements but could not carnally touch her without her consent. On the other hand, if a woman depends on her own physical strength or upon a weapon she possesses, she is sure to be discomfited whenever her strength is exhausted.

The second question is easily answered. The brother or father or friend will stand between his protege and her assailant. He will then either dissuade the assailant from his wicked purpose or allow himself to be killed by him in preventing him. In so laying down his life he will not only have done his duty, but given a new accession of strength to his protege who will now know how to protect her honour.

"But," said one of the sisters from Poona, "there lies the rub. How is a woman to lay down her life? Is it possible for her to do so?"

G. Oh! Any day more possible for her than for man. I know that women are capable of throwing away their lives for a much lesser purpose. Only a few days ago a young girl of twenty burnt herself to

death as she felt she was being persecuted for refusing to go in for ordinary studies. And she perished with such cool courage and determination. She ignited her sari with an ordinary oil-light and did not so much as raise a cry, so that the people in the neighbouring room were unaware of the happening until all was over. I do not give these details to commend her example, but to show how easily a woman can throw away her life. I at any rate am incapable of this courage. But I agree that it is not the external light but the inner light that is needed.

The same sister wondered how one was to avoid anger and violence altogether in dealing with children.

G. You play with him till he is five, hammer him for ten years, treat him as your friend when he is sixteen.<sup>1</sup> But don't you worry. If you have to be angry with your child on occasion, I shall call that anger non-violent anger. I am speaking of wise mothers, not the ignorant ones who do not deserve to be mothers.

Q. Is the central teaching of the *Gita* selfless action or non-violence?

G. I have no doubt that it is *anasakti* - selfless action. Indeed I have called my little translation of the *Gita* "*Anasaktiyoga*". And *anasakti* transcends ahimsa. He who would be *anasakta* (selfless) has necessarily to practise non-violence in order to attain the state of selflessness. Ahimsa is, therefore, a necessary preliminary: it is included in *anasakti*, it does not go beyond it.

Then does the *Gita* teach *himsa* and ahimsa both?

I do not read that meaning in the *Gita*. It is quite likely that the author did not write it to inculcate ahimsa, but as a commentator draws innumerable interpretations from a poetic text, even so I interpret the *Gita* to mean that, if its central theme is *anasakti*, it also teaches ahimsa. Whilst we are in the flesh and tread the solid earth, we have to practise ahimsa. In the life beyond there is no *himsa* or ahimsa.

B. G. K. But Lord Krishna actually counters the doctrine of ahimsa. For Arjuna utters this pacifist resolve:

Better I deem it, if my kinsmen strike,  
To face them weaponless, and bare my breast  
to shaft and spear, than answer blow with blow.  
And Lord Krishna teaches him to answer blow with blow.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> लालयेत पन्चवर्षाणि दश वर्षाणि ताडयेत् ।  
प्राप्ते तु षोडशे वर्षे पुत्रं मित्रवदाचरेत् ॥ २

<sup>2</sup> *Bhagavad Gita*, I. 46

g. There I join issue with you. Those words of Arjuna were words of pretentious wisdom. 'Until yesterday,' says Krishna to him, 'You fought your kinsmen with deadly weapons without the slightest compunction. Even today you would strike if the enemy was a stranger and not your own kith and kin!' The question before him was not of non-violence, but whether he should slay his nearest and dearest.

Again the questioners came down to solid earth, and began to put questions about the Congress and the attitude of those who believed in complete non-violence

Gandhiji explained that they should refrain till he gave the word. He wanted still to plead with the leaders who had passed the Poona resolution. He expected to show them that the Congress would lose all its prestige if they adhered to the new policy. But the question had to be dealt with patiently. On the other hand, it did not matter even if the Congress resolution received no response. The resolution was as good as enforced, when it was deliberately passed, and their duty did not alter with the refusal of the Government to respond.

Besides there is an inherent flaw in the Poona resolution. It should be obvious to the meanest understanding that, if you think that you cannot do without arms in meeting foreign aggression, they would a *fortiori* be needed in dealing with daily disturbances inter-caste feuds, dacoities and riots. For organized unarmed resistance against an organized invasion is any day easier than deliberate ahimsa in face of a dacoit who breaks into your house at night. That calls for ahimsa of the highest type.

Q. Can one work in two capacities—one's own individual capacity and one's representative capacity?

g. Yes, but they should not be in conflict with each other. And how can a leader follow the people? He has to lead them and they have to follow him. A newspaper may both lead and follow the public, but not a leader of the people.

Q. Then, how is it that the Sardar is reported to have said in Ahmedabad that individually he would follow Mahatmaji but otherwise he would act as a representative of his province?

g. I do not believe that he said this. Can one think of the Sardar taking up the sword as a representative of Gujarat, and abandoning it in his individual capacity?



Q. You have told us how to behave in case of riots. May we know how you acted in 1921 when there was rioting on the day the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay?

G. There were two occasions. The first was the Rowlatt Act Satyagraha. Then as I was discharged near Marine Lines I heard that rioting was going on near Pydhunie. I got into a car, drove straight to the scene, and was able to restrain the crowd. The second was at the time of the Prince of Wales's visit when the people were burning motors, tram-cars, etc. I went to the scene and pacified them. But riots broke out at Byculla and spread in other parts. The anger was against Congressmen. I did not go myself, but I sent Congressmen to face the angry crowds and pacify them. That was a most delicate situation. I purposely did not go myself, because I thought an injury to me by the angered crowd would be attended with much bloodshed instead of resulting in pacification.

That, however, is not to say that I am a brave man. I am by nature timid, but God has always come to my rescue and blessed me with the courage needed for the occasion. The one occasion on which my courage was put to the severest test was on 13th January, 1897 when, acting against Mr. Escombe's advice not to disembark until dusk, I went ashore and faced the howling crowd determined on lynching me. I was surrounded by thousands of them, I was pelted with stones and kicked, but my courage did not fail me. I really cannot say how the courage came to me. But it did. God is great.

*Harijan, 25-8-1940 and 1-9-1940*

### *131. LETTER TO TARA SINGH*

SEVAGRAM,  
*August 16, 1940*

DEAR SARDARJI,

I am glad you have sent me a copy of your letter<sup>1</sup> to Maulana Saheb. As I have told you, in my opinion, you have nothing in common with the Congress nor the Congress with you. You believe in the rule of the sword; the Congress does not. You have all the time 'my community' in mind. The Congress has no community but the whole nation. Your civil disobedience is purely a branch of violence. I

<sup>1</sup> In his letter the addressee had argued that the Congress should not prevent recruitment to the army.

am quite clear in my mind that being in the Congress you weaken 'your community' and weaken the Congress. With your mentality, you have to offer your services to the British Government unconditionally and look to it for the protection of the rights of 'your community'. You do not suppose for one moment that the British will take your recruits on your conditions. They would commit suicide if they did. You have to be either fully nationalist or frankly communal and therefore dependent upon the British or other foreign power.

This is the considered opinion of one who loves you and the Sikhs as he loves himself and in reality more. For I have ceased to love myself.

*Yours faithfully,*

M. K. GANDHI

*Harijan, 29-9-1940*

### 132. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*August 17, 1940*

CHI. LILA,

I do write to you regularly. I got the *raksha*. It is not at all good that you do not go for walks. You will regret it. Be regular about going for walks every morning and evening as you are about other things. Your mind will remain fresh and your reading will be more fruitful. There is no book on zoology here. Which do you want? You will get help in science when you come here. Shakribehn has not come. She is not coming in the immediate future. Sushila will not come before September at any rate. Damayanti's son will get well. To bring up children is no easy job. Rajkumari has come. Mirabehn is here at present.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN UDESI

KANJI KHETSI CHHATRALAYA

65 MINT ROAD

FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 9937. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

### 133. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 17, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You are right. You should yourself do whatever you can. But if some difficulty crops up that must be got over, do consult me.

Ba's problem is perennial. It has got to be put up with. Keep on reporting to me. I shall do whatever I can.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4358

### 134. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,

August 17, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I have made full use of your letter.<sup>1</sup> Now I have been asked to supply the names and addresses of persons you have mentioned. I think this is a just demand. You say that those who want to inquire into your complaint may approach you. Now you may send all details to me urgently.

How is your leg? You have been very careless.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

What about your own case<sup>2</sup>? Write to me in detail. Did you meet the collector?

[From Hindi]

*Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, p. 288

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had complained of coercion being used by officials in collecting money for the war fund, furnishing instances. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 11-8-1940

<sup>2</sup> Alleged harassment at the hands of the police

### 135. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,  
August 18, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant.

I gave all the particulars I had from Nagla Nawabad. But I admit that enquiry into the particular cases will be difficult without the details you ask for. I am at once writing to my correspondent.<sup>1</sup> It may be difficult for him to produce the required details. Direct proof of these cases may be impossible save in a case like Hinganghat. But I shall try to get what details I can. You may expect a further letter from me containing information about other cases.

*I am,*

*Your sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

### 136. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA<sup>2</sup>

August 18, 1940

I am glad you wrote. I was wondering why there was no letter from you. Endure the ulcer cheerfully as gift from God.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7561. Also C. W. 5036. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

### 137. EQUAL DISTRIBUTION<sup>3</sup>

In last week's article on the Constructive Programme<sup>4</sup> I mentioned equal distribution of wealth as one of the 13 items.<sup>5</sup>

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

<sup>2</sup> This was a postscript Gandhiji added to a letter Mahadev Desai wrote to the addressee.

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 24-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* "Implications of Constructive Programme"

<sup>5</sup> The Gujarati adds: "Let us consider it here."

The real implication of equal distribution is that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply all his natural needs and no more. For example, if one man has a weak digestion and requires only a quarter of a pound of flour for his bread and another needs a pound, both should be in a position to satisfy their wants. To bring this ideal into being the entire social order has got to be reconstructed. A society based on non-violence cannot nurture any other ideal. We may not perhaps be able to realize the goal, but we must bear it in mind and work unceasingly to near it. To the same extent as we progress towards our goal we shall find contentment and happiness, and to that extent too shall we have contributed towards the bringing into being of a non-violent society.

It is perfectly possible for an individual to adopt this way of life without having to wait for others to do so. And if an individual can observe a certain rule of conduct, it follows that a group of individuals can do likewise. It is necessary for me to emphasize the fact that no one need wait for anyone else in order to adopt a right course. Men generally hesitate to make a beginning if they feel that the objective cannot be had in its entirety. Such an attitude of mind is in reality a bar to progress.

Not let us consider how equal distribution can be brought about through non-violence. The first step towards it is for him who has made this ideal part of his being to bring about the necessary changes in his personal life. He would reduce his wants to a minimum, bearing in mind the poverty of India. His earnings would be free of dishonesty. The desire for speculation would be renounced. His habitation would be in keeping with the new mode of life. There would be self-restraint exercised in every sphere of life. When he has done all that is possible in his own life, then only will he be in a position to preach this ideal among his associates and neighbours.

Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for the superfluous wealth possessed by them. For according to the doctrine they may not possess a rupee more than their neighbours. How is this to be brought about? Non-violently? Or should the wealthy be dispossessed of their possessions? To do this we would naturally have to resort to violence. This violent action cannot benefit society. Society will be the poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth. Therefore the non-violent way is evidently superior. The rich man will

be left in possession of his wealth, of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society. In this argument honesty on the part of the trustee is assumed.

As soon as man looks upon himself as a servant of society, earns for its sake, spends for its benefit, then purity enters into his earnings and there is ahimsa in his venture. Moreover, if men's minds turn towards this way of life, there will come about a peaceful revolution in society, and that without any bitterness.

It may be asked whether history at any time records such a change in human nature. Such changes have certainly taken place in individuals. One may not perhaps be able to point to them in a whole society. But this only means that up till now there has never been an experiment on a large scale in non-violence. Somehow or other the wrong belief has taken possession of us that ahimsa is pre-eminently a weapon for individuals and its use should therefore be limited to that sphere. In fact this is not the case. Ahimsa is definitely an attribute of society. To convince people of this truth is at once my effort and my experiment. In this age of wonders no one will say that a thing or idea is worthless because it is new. To say it is impossible because it is difficult is again not in consonance with the spirit of the age. Things undreamt of are daily being seen, the impossible is ever becoming possible. We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field on non-violence. The history of religion is full of such examples. To try to root out religion itself from society is a wild goose chase. And were such an attempt to succeed, it would mean the destruction of society. Superstition, evil customs and other imperfections creep in from age to age and mar religion for the time being. They come and go.<sup>1</sup> But religion itself remains. Because the existence of the world in a broad sense depends on religion. The ultimate definition of religion may be said to be obedience to the law of God. God and His law are synonymous terms. Therefore God signifies an unchanging and living law. No one has ever really found Him. But

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati version has: "Religion undergoes transformation. The apparent superstitions, evil customs and imperfections can be removed—in fact they are and will be removed."

avatars and prophets have, by means of their tapasya, given to mankind a faint glimpse of the eternal Law.

If, however, in spite of the utmost effort, the rich do not become guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term and the latter are more and more crushed and die of hunger, what is to be done? In trying to find the solution to this riddle I have lighted on non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. Man has been conversant with violence from the beginning, for he has inherited this strength from the animal in his nature. It was only when he rose from the state of a quadruped (animal) to that of a biped (man) that the knowledge of the strength of ahimsa entered into his soul. This knowledge has grown within him slowly but surely. If this knowledge were to penetrate to and spread amongst the poor, they would become strong and would learn how to free themselves by means of non-violence from the crushing inequalities [which have brought them to the verge of starvation]<sup>1</sup>.

I scarcely need to write anything about non-co-operation and civil disobedience, for the readers of *Harijanbandhu* are familiar with these and their working.

SEVAGRAM, August 19, 1940

*Harijan*, 25-8-1940

### 138. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 19, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am returning the letter<sup>2</sup> duly revised.

Blessings from  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3013

<sup>1</sup> This portion is not to be found in the Gujarati.

<sup>2</sup> The letter, addressed to the Viceroy, is not traceable.

### 139. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

August 19, 1940

There is no need for you to feel unhappy because [I have said that] I am your faithful dog. That quadruped brother of ours possesses great nobility. . .<sup>1</sup>

According to the commentators the dog was Dharma personified<sup>2</sup>. But if the Dog has become rabid, you can and should remove him. My advice to you now is that you should set right this mistake made by me. I have exceeded my authority as a general. Either rectify the mistake I made in allowing Raja to have his resolution<sup>3</sup> twisting the meaning of ahimsa or remove me. If you rectify the mistake I have a plan for future action.

[From Gujarati]

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

### 140. LETTER TO SUSHLLA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

August 19, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a girl you are! You are taking the whole blame on yourself. Would I be taking such pains over you if I was dissatisfied with your translations? Would the *Harijan Sevak* be shifted from there because of such dissatisfaction? It would be like killing a buffalo to make a leather thong. If I am dissatisfied, why should I not withdraw the translation work from you and give it to someone else? There are more facilities for printing in Poona and there is the temptation to make *Harijan Sevak* more attractive. Its circulation is only nominal. Hariji himself writes that it can flourish only if it is shifted to Poona. We have none to take charge there. Ultimately if it has to be shifted, on your account I shall really be sad to shift it. But if it becomes a

<sup>1</sup> Omission as in the source.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Mahabharata* Dharma appearing as a dog is said to have accompanied Yudhishtira on his last journey.

<sup>3</sup> The Delhi resolution of July; *vide* "Rajagopalachari's Resolution For Working Committee Meeting, Delhi", 3-7-1940 and "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting At Delhi", 7-7-1940 *Vide* also "The Delhi Resolution"



duty to shift it, I will do it notwithstanding the distress doing so will cause me. We can hope that by the time *Harijan Sevak* is shifted to Poona, you will have arrived here. The people connected with [*Harijan*] *Sevak* came here. I told them that the idea for improvement was yours. There is a letter from Soli saying that he is willing to pay half the expense. I have written to say that you, are not here and the improvements will be carried out if you come back.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### *141. MY IDEA OF A POLICE FORCE<sup>1</sup>*

A friend writes as follows:<sup>2</sup>

The questions asked in this letter are of the utmost importance and deserve notice.<sup>3</sup> If true ahimsa had come into being within us, and if our so-called satyagraha movements had been truly non-violent, these questions would not have arisen because they would have been solved.

For one who has never seen the arctic regions an imaginary description of them, however elaborate, can convey but an inadequate idea of the reality. Even so is it with ahimsa. If all Congressmen had been true to their creed, we would not be vacillating between violence and non-violence as we are today. The fruits of ahimsa would be in evidence everywhere. There would be communal harmony, the demon of untouchability would have been cast out, and, generally speaking, we should have evolved an ordered society. But the reverse is the case just now. There is even definite hostility to the Congress in certain quarters. The word of Congressmen is not always relied on. The

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-8-1940. This translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here. The correspondent, while conceding the effectiveness of non-violence to meet external aggression, had argued that so long as social injustice and poverty existed internal disturbances were bound to continue and hence also the need for a police force. He had asked Gandhiji whether he envisaged such a police force to be maintained for all time.

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati version has: "deserve consideration by all the responsible satyagrahis."

Muslim League and most of the Princes have no faith in the Congress and are in fact inimical to it. If Congressmen had true ahimsa in them, there would be none of this distrust. In fact the Congress would be the beloved of all.

Therefore I can only place an imaginary picture before the votaries of ahimsa.

So long as we are not saturated with pure ahimsa we cannot possibly win swaraj through non-violence. We can come into power only when we are in a majority or, in other words, when the large majority of people are willing to abide by the law of ahimsa. When this happy state prevails, the spirit of violence will have all but vanished and internal disorder will have come under control.

Nevertheless I have conceded that even in a non-violent State a police force may be necessary. This, I admit, is a sign of my imperfect ahimsa. I have not the courage to declare that we can carry on without a police force as I have in respect of an army. Or course I can and do envisage a state where the police will not be necessary; but whether we shall succeed in realizing it, the future alone will show.

The police of my conception will, however, be of a wholly different pattern from the present-day force. Its ranks will be composed of believers in non-violence. They will be servants, not masters, of the people. The people will instinctively render them every help, and through mutual co-operation they will easily deal with the everdecreasing disturbances. The police force will have some kind of arms, but they will be rarely used, if at all. In fact the policemen will be reformers. Their police work will be confined primarily to robbers and dacoits. Quarrels between labour and capital and strikes will be few and far between in a non-violent state, because the influence of the non-violent majority will be so great as to command the respect of the principal elements in society. Similarly there will be no room for communal disturbances. Then we must remember that when such a Congress Government comes into power the large majority of men and women of 21 years and over will have been enfranchised. The rigid and cramped Constitution of today has of course no place in this picture.

SEVAGRAM, August 20, 1940

*Harijan*, 1-9-1940

## 142. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 20, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

As I have not had any acknowledgment—a most unusual thing for you—of my letter of the 9th instant, lest it might have miscarried I send herewith a copy of it in order to make assurance double sure.<sup>1</sup>

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

## 143. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

SEVAGRAM,  
August 20, 1940

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I think I have given you my blessings. But your letter is before me and hence I write again. May you succeed in your endeavours.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[From Hindi]

*Gandhiji aur Rajasthan*, p. 275

## 144. DR. LOHIA AGAIN

By courtesy of Shri Achyut Patwardhan I have a copy of Dr. Lohia's statement before the court and the judgment of the presiding magistrate. The whole of Dr. Lohia's statement is sound, but I resist the temptation to give it in full. Here, however, is its pertinent part:

<sup>1</sup> The Viceroy's note on this letter was: "P. S. V. Perhaps an acknowledgment to an acknowledgment might be held to be superfluous! But we can afford to be magnanimous and to say that I received his letter and was grateful for it. This letter is clearly an invitation to expand and perhaps a sign of distress. But there is nothing doing."

In all our activities we have to be non-violent. Non-violence is dictated not only by the circumstances in our country but by considerations that operate throughout the world. It is not only a practical necessity, it is an ethical desirability. Whatever little confusion there might be on this point due to faulty reporting is set aside by the reporter himself. I am reported to have said: 'When we have recourse to weapons we become weak of hearts. Those who rely on weapons do not rely on their hearts. They turn into slaves of their own weapons. They have no strength left in themselves.

I am an opponent of the old cult of the lathi, and its modern equivalent the cult of the aeroplane. There is an inner contradiction between these cults and the enduring of human life, a contradiction which is daily becoming more fierce. The next twenty years will show which wins, and the dualism cannot last longer. Should human life endure, there can be only one form of organization. Adult democracy must obtain throughout the world, and there will be no place in it for imperialism, nor for capitalism. I have given an indication in my speech of this form of government as it will affect the Indian people. It was with a view to bring into the foreground this principle of adult democracy that I suggested an immediate peace plan to Mahatma Gandhi. I claim no originality for this plan whose items are:

1. All peoples will be free. Those newly acquiring freedom will determine their constitution through a constituent assembly.

2. All races are equal, and there will be no racial privileges in any part of the world. There will be no political bar to anyone settling wherever he likes.

3. All credits and investments owned by the Government and nationals of one country in another will be scrapped or submitted for impartial review to international tribunals. They will then be owned not by individuals but by the state.

When these three principles will have been accepted by the people of the world, a fourth will automatically come into operation.

4. There will be total disarmament.

I am happy in the knowledge that Mahatma Gandhiji has endorsed this peace plan.

Let me in conclusion state that I have no ill will towards any people. I have lived among the German people and liked their thoroughness of enquiry, the scientific bent of their mind and their efficiency in action. I am unhappy that they have today to carry on their shoulders a system which

results in war and conquest. I have no intimate knowledge of the British people. I dare say that they have their virtues. I may be permitted to quote from my speech: 'I do not want the destruction of Britain. The British have done evil to us, but I do not want to do evil to them.' Again, I am unhappy that the British people have to carry on their shoulders today a system which has enslaved the people of the world.

Of Dr. Lohia this is what the court has to say:

The accused is a highly intellectual and cultured gentleman, perhaps with a doctorate degree of some European University, a man of high principles and morals whose honesty of purpose nobody can doubt. He does not mind suffering for his convictions and does not care much for his sentence or its duration. We certainly do not punish him for holding certain political views about the present Government, for the very claim of the Government that it is democratic and run on public opinion entitles the public to criticize it according to his [sic] light by constitutional means, but we must protect such Government from embarrassment in her relations with the masses who are bound to be disaffected by a speech like the one the accused has delivered in Dostpur, and particularly when the British nation and Empire is in grip with the most unscrupulous enemy. I, therefore, consider that his detention in jail for a long duration or until the present cloud is drifted away is very desirable and to that end in view I sentence him to two years R. I. He is recommended for B Class.

Then why has he been rewarded with rigorous imprisonment? The duration of the term I understand. He must be kept from the supposed mischief. I wonder whether the fact of the imprisonment will not aggravate the mischief. Of this, the Government must be the judge. But the people will remember that love of one's country and outspokenness are a crime in a country where the state is irresponsible to the people. Dr. Lohia and other Congressmen's imprisonments are so many hammer-strokes that must weaken the chain that binds India. The Government is inviting the Congress to start civil disobedience and deliver the last blow it would fain have reserved for a better day - better for the British. It is a pity.

SEVAGRAM, August 21, 1940

*Harijan*, 25-8-1940

### 145. IMPROPER USE<sup>1</sup>

There is in Kashmir a firm called Ganju House. I do not know any of its partners or the nature of the business done by the Company. Shri H. Kotak who was for some time in the Ashram at Sabar-mati and later in the A. I. S. A., having ceased connection with the latter, joined the Ganju House and advertised it and his connection with it by using without my permission a private and personal letter written to him by me. My attention was drawn to the improper use. I rebuked Shri Kotak for such use of my letter. He has realized his mistake and sent the following notice to the Lahore *Tribune* for publication:<sup>2</sup>

I am glad that Shri Kotak has repaired the blunder.

SEVAGRAM, August 21, 1940

*Harijan*, 25-8-1940

### 146. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE<sup>3</sup>

WARDHA,

August 21, 1940

The Working Committee have considered the Viceregal pronouncement dated 8th inst.,<sup>4</sup> on the Indian situation and the statement made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons. The W. C. are of opinion that both are highly unsatisfactory and provocative because they ignore patent facts. They constitute one more among the many impositions on an unwilling India. In spite of all repudiations the indisputable fact stands out that the Congress is the only national organization in the country that is non-communal, non-sectional and wholly democratic. It is the one organization that has for fifty-five years growingly represented the dumb millions of India, as has been repeatedly proved during its career. The most convincing proof that can be understood by the world consists in the fact that barring four

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here. Kotak admitted in the notice that his action was highly improper and wholly unauthorized.

<sup>3</sup> The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha from 18th to 22nd August. The resolution was not accepted *in toto*. For the resolution as passed, *vide* "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting at Wardha", 21-8-1940

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* "Statement made by the viceroy on August 8, 1940"

out of the eleven provinces the Congress has a decisive majority given even by the limited electorate provided by the British Government in their Act imposed upon India. If the electorate was not manipulated, as it has been under the said Act, and if representatives were elected under adult suffrage, it is admitted that the Congress would sweep the polls throughout India not excluding State India. This claim has not been put forth by any other organization in India. In the face of this the Secretary of State has misled the British public and world opinion by mentioning as 'separate constituent factors the Muslim League, the Depressed Classes and the Princes. The Muslim League is undoubtedly a powerful organization demanding the greatest consideration. It is the primary concern of the Congress to placate the Muslims of India. What the British Government have done is to play the Muslims against the Hindus and vice versa in order to consolidate their power and to exploit the vast resources of India in their own interest. It is they who finally cut the nation in twain by introducing the virus of separate electorates. The Congress therefore repudiates the British claim specially to represent Muslim interests in so far as they may be in danger from the Hindu majority. The Congress has claimed that the political and economic state of both is identical. The Congress has undertaken to guarantee to the full the protection of the religious and the cultural rights of Muslims. So far as the depressed classes are concerned the indisputable fact is that the British Government is incapable of protecting them. It is admitted that they have suffered and are suffering from wrongs which no other part of the nation has suffered. But their disabilities are social and religious. They are beyond the power of any foreign Government to redress. All that the British Government have done is to sow seeds of dissension among the Hindus themselves of whom the depressed classes are an inseparable part. There is no such thing as a class known as depressed. No single organization specially devoted to their interest can represent the whole of them. They have no class consciousness. If the British Government could have helped it, they would have vivisected the Hindus by creating separate electorates for them as they have for Muslims and destroyed both the caste Hindus and the non-caste Hindus which the depressed classes are. The British Government know very well that the legal status of these classes was improved under Congress ministries as never before. They know that removal of untouchability is a plank in the Congress programme. They know that the Congress has worked ceaselessly for the social amelioration of their lot. It is therefore false

and hypocritical for the British Government to pose as their protectors as against the Congress. Equally false is their claim to protect the Princes against the Congress. The British Government know that the Princes are their creation sustained to secure the British hold on the whole of India. They cannot be played against the Indian claim for independence.

Rejection by the British Government of the Congress resolution<sup>1</sup> is proof of their determination to hold India by the sword against her will. In order to compass this they have been gradually undermining the power of the Congress by picking out some of the best workers of the Congress under and Defence of India Act which has no popular sanction whatsoever.

It was to this Government that the Congress resolution was addressed in the hope that the congress goodwill and the hand of friendship will be recognized, appreciated and reciprocated. Instead it has been rejected on grounds which have been shown to be false and hypocritical.

It is well known that the offer was made against Gandhiji's advice. He had warned the members of the W. C. that the Congress was abdicating its moral position by promising to associate itself actively with the War as against declaration of independence and immediate composition of a national executive responsible to the elected legislature. It would be no answer to this proposition that under the existing Act this could not be done. The desired change could have been made in one hour as a peremptory war measure. But the British Government did not and do not wish to part with their possession of India. Events that have happened compel the W. C. To recognize the soundness of Gandhiji's advice from the purely political platform if not from his ethical standpoint. The Congress which has inculcated non-violence for the past 20 years for ousting the British Power could not be turned into a war machine without losing its fibre and without doing violence to the dumb masses which have hitherto responded to the Congress call. The W. C. therefore consider the British Government's rejection of the Congress resolution as a God-sent escape from a false and untenable position. The W. C. therefore wish it to be known that the effect of the resolution must be regarded as exhausted.

<sup>1</sup> Promising co-operation in the war effort if Britain acknowledged the independence of India and formed a national government at the Center. The resolution was passed at the A. I. C. C. session held at aPoona on 27th and 28th July.



It has not further currency. The W. C. must revert to Gandhiji's position and so far as the congress is concerned it must strive to build up a non-violent society and believe with Gandhiji in the possibility of building up a State able to defend its liberty against the whole world by its own sheer goodwill towards the whole of mankind working under a democratic system which will eschew all violence and which by its simple code will afford no temptation to an invader.

It follows from this that the Congress must now vindicate its position and seek to protect itself against a slow death by the means that the British Government have chosen to adopt for the purpose.

The W. C. cannot but put on record its deep sorrow that the desire of the Congress not to embarrass the British Government has been despised by them and they have thus driven the Congress to defend itself against political extinction. It therefore invites and appoints Gandhiji to devise such measures as he may think necessary for the protection of the congress and national honour and calls upon all Congress organizations and Congressmen to carry out such instructions as he may issue himself and through the W. C. or otherwise.

The W. C. wish it to be known that they have no quarrel with the Muslim League or the Muslims or any other organization or persons. Nor have they anything but goodwill towards the Princes. Their non-violence, if it is worth the name, precludes any ill will towards any part of the nation of which the Congress is proud to be known as servant. Nor has the Congress anything but goodwill towards the British people. In entering upon a life and death struggle, as the Congress must, Congressmen can have no thought but that of the supreme good of the dumb and toiling millions of India and through them of the whole of submerged humanity. In seeking that good, Congress has chosen the most harmless and the most powerful method of unadulterated non-violence.

The W. C. seek the co-operation in their task of all the forces of good throughout the world.

A. I. C. C. File No. 1251, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

#### *147. TO THE HINDI READERS*

Ever since I started writing for *Harijanbandhu* in Gujarati, readers have been complaining—though in sweet words—that I have

been partial to Gujarati. I have already answered this complaint, but the readers are not satisfied. Viyogiji<sup>1</sup>, therefore, says that I must write something exclusively for *Harijan Sevak*. There is no need to persuade me in this connection because I love to write in the national language. I would, therefore, only say that I will try. The Congress has recognized Hindustani as the national language. Hindustani is that language which is spoken in North India by both Hindus and Muslims and is written either in Devanagari or Urdu script. My endeavour will be to write in such Hindustani.

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, August 21, 1940

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1063

#### 148. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C.P.,  
August 21, 1940

BHAI KANHAIYALAL,

Mirabai is going there with a different intention. A special reason which is blameless. She wants to do penance. She does not want to participate in any activity. She would devote her time only to spinning and singing the praise of God for a while. I know you have helped Mirabai a lot. Being aware that you like her pious company, I am sending her there. If this inconveniences you in any manner, let me know.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10051. Also C. W. 6456

#### 149. ADVICE TO MYSORE CONGRESSMEN<sup>2</sup>

[Before August 22, 1940]

Gandhiji is reported to have emphasized that no out-and-out non-violent Congressman, whether belonging to the State Congress or British Indian Province,

<sup>1</sup> Viyogi Hari, editor of *Harijan Sevak*

<sup>2</sup> In view of the different opinions prevailing among Mysore Congressmen K. T. Bhashyam and K. C. Reddi asked Gandhiji whether the Mysore Congress could co-operate in the war efforts if the State promised responsible Government to the subjects.

could extend his material co-operation with his own money to a cause which demands perpetration of inhumanity. Gandhiji is also stated to have added:

It is entirely a matter for the Mysore Congress to decide whether they have the courage of their conviction to go with me. No useful purpose can be served by quoting the 1917 incident. I had no message to deliver then. I now have the courage of conviction that a believer in non-violence could not co-operate in war efforts. It was purely a matter of personal belief then. Recent experiments have given me the courage to extend it further, including Defence.

*The Hindu, 22-8-1940*

### 150. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

*August 24, 1940*

BHAI MAVALANKAR<sup>1</sup>,

Bhai Prabhashankar<sup>2</sup> has come here. He told me his tale of woe. I was glad to hear that this work had been entrusted to you. I know that you will do whatever you can.

Blessings from  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1248

### 151. OUTLINE RESOLUTION FOR A. I. C. C.

*August 25, 1940*

The Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. should pass a resolution in the following terms:

1. In view of the British Govt.'s statements and decision the offer made by the A. I. C. C. in the Poona resolutions<sup>3</sup> is exhausted

<sup>1</sup> A Congress leader, Speaker for the Bombay Legislative Assembly, later Speaker of the Lok Sabha

<sup>2</sup> Prabhashankar D. Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar

<sup>3</sup> At its meeting at Poona on July 27 and 28, the A. I. C. C. had endorsed the Delhi resolution of the Working Committee offering co-operation in the war effort subject to the British Government making "an unequivocal declaration according complete independence to India" an unequivocal declaration according complete independence to India" and constituting a "National Government" at the centre. In another resolution it had said that "while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in the struggle for independence it is unable, in the present circumstances, to declare that the principle should be extended to free India's national defence".

and has no further currency. The British Govt.'s proposals are rejected and the Congress, which took a step in non-co-operation with the British Govt. In November last, must now, in order to defend the honour and liberties of the Indian people, take further steps in this direction and resist the activities of the British Govt. which are injurious to the nation. The A. I. C. C. call upon that people to refuse every kind of participation in the war and in men and money.

2. A reference to the British Govt.'s repressive measures, arrests of Congressmen, etc., functioning of the Defence of India Act and their attempt to suppress the Indian people, rule them by the sword and impose their will upon them promoting divisions.

3. The position thus created is intolerable and if submitted to would mean degradation of the people and their continued enslavement.

4. The Congress, therefore, must now function in terms of the Ramgarh resolution and undertake satyagraha for this purpose. It requests and authorizes Mahatma Gandhi to guide the nation and calls upon the people to follow his directions with a view to making this satyagraha effective and in conformity with the principles of the Congress.

5. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the previous resolutions the A. I. C. C. affirms afresh its firm faith in the policy and practice of non-violence. It believes in the principle not only in the struggle for swaraj but also, in so far as this may be possible of application, in free India. The A. I. C. C. is convinced that world events demonstrate that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment of a new political and economic order, wherein free nations co-operate with each other; if the world is not to revert to barbarism. A free India will therefore throw all its weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself be prepared to give a lead in this to the world. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions. But the State must do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament.<sup>1</sup>

From a photostat : C. W. 10880. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

<sup>1</sup> For the resolution passed by the A. I. C. C. at its sitting in Bombay on September 15/16, 1940; vide "All-India Congress Committee Resolution"

152. CABLE TO CARL HEATH<sup>1</sup>

WARDHAGANJ,  
August 26, 1940

CARL HEATH  
FRIENDS HOUSE  
EUSTON ROAD  
LONDON

SITUATION      SERIOUS      CONGRESSMEN      FEEL      GOVERNMENT  
REPRESSION    AIMED      AT CONGRESS.    THIS      WILL      MAKE  
CIVIL    DISOBEDIENCE    INEVITABLE    THOUGH    TRYING    AVERT  
CRISIS    MYSELF    MAY    BE    INVOLVED.    POLICY    NON-EMBAR-  
RASSMENT    ADOPTED    MY    INITIATIVE.    IT    MAY    NOT  
BE    ALLOWED    TO    BE    USED    TO    CRUSH    CONGRESS.  
WILL    DO    NOTHING    WITHOUT    TRYING    SEE    VICEROY.  
FUNDAMENTAL    DIFFERENCES    BETWEEN    CONGRESS    AND    ME  
BEING    ELIMINATED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1040

<sup>1</sup> On August 13, he and Agatha Harrison had cabled to Gandhiji: "Realize difference between government proposals and Congress demand. But feel much depends on specific interpretations face to face. We recall your words when Andrews died. Would venture to suggest to you and Congress that this is moment to implement Andrews's legacy."

### 153. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

August 26, 1920

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received no letter from you for a week. Pyarelal says that he has not shown me some of your letters. I did not have the time and since there was no letter from you, I did not write. Today I saw your letter to Pyarelal. There is no limit to your foolishness. I shall not press you to come. If you do come in your present state, you will not feel happy here. What you ask is a thing you should not ask and even if it were possible for me to give it I should not give it. So you may take the chapter as closed. When you find that you cannot help coming to me without laying down preconditions, rush to me and become one with me.

You must live there in total detachment. Then only will you be happy. When you go home you should go as an outsider or as a doctor. Do not involve yourself in the cares of the household. It would be best if you could start earning. You can then satisfy Mother's hunger. You have no special needs. Give up the temptation of sending your savings to me. You can be absorbed in many places if you take up a job. By refusing to accept my help, you are not earning merit but incurring sin. Are you ashamed to be known as my daughter? Lilavati introduces herself as my daughter. Your false pride is eating me.

Mohanlal and Shakuntala should live away from Mother. Mother's place is here. Parnerkar's mother had been staying here. She will be coming again. Mahadev's mother comes and goes. She is his step-mother. Why should not Pyarelal's mother live with Pyarelal? I am prepared to provide a separate kitchen for her. Thereby, the question of expenses will be solved. Arguments will come to an end. And the meanness resulting from lack of money will disappear. This is a natural arrangement. Mother will be able to pay occasional visits to Mohanlal as a guest. You will be relieved of a heavy burden. If you become calm, everything will be well soon. If I remain alive, in course of time you are bound to become one with me. I am in no hurry about it. You should not be in a hurry either.

Enclosed is a list of mistakes in *Harijan Sevak* prepared by Munnalal. The first mistake is obvious and it is bad. I have hurriedly

glanced through other errors. Some of them may not be errors. The rest are insignificant.

*Harijan Sevak* will probably be shifted to Poona next week. Chandrashankar<sup>1</sup> will arrive there on Saturday to make arrangements. Rest assured that my decisions are likely to have more knowledge behind them than yours. You will feel calm if you have such confidence. This does not mean that you should rush here. But it means that you should become humble. If you have humility in you, you should never have any doubts concerning my decisions. You are free to ask questions. But you must have trust in my answers. Think over this.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

#### 154. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

August 26, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have really lost your senses in this matter. You ought to trust to my wisdom. You are unnecessarily torturing yourself by imagining things. Who says that you are disqualified? If you were disqualified, how would I say from here that you were qualified? Why does this not satisfy you? You would be living here on the same conditions as Mahadev, Chimanlal, Krishnachandra, etc. It is the height of your stupidity that you are making a distinction between Mahadev and Chimanlal. You should come out of that pit of folly. I would have liked, when I go to Simla, to take with me Rajkumari's black clock which used to be kept on the wall. I had given it either to you or to Pyarelal for safe-keeping. Do you remember anything about it?

I have already written about *Harijan Sevak*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

<sup>1</sup> Chandrashankar Shukla

## 155. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 26, 1940

CHI. PYARELAL,

With regard to Sushila, I know you and I hold different views. I consider the letter I am writing today as brimming with love. Very often love appears harsher than even a thunderbolt. It is not less love for that. For in reality it is as soft as a flower. In my view, Sushila is going completely astray and making herself unnecessarily miserable. But I am willing to abide by your wish. Should I stop writing to her? One thing is certain: that either you should guide her or I should do so. Between the two of us, she will be crushed. It may be as well if you go to Delhi for a couple of days.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

## 156. NON-VIOLENCE OF THE BRAVE<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent writes:

You say non-violence is for the brave, not for cowards. But, in my opinion, in India the brave are conspicuous by their absence. Even if we claim to be brave, how is the world to believe us when it knows that India has no arms and is therefore incapable of defending herself? What then should we do to cultivate non-violence of the brave?

The correspondent is wrong in thinking that in India the brave are conspicuous by their absence. It is a matter for shame that because foreigners once labelled us as cowards we should accept the label. Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning. Again it is wrong to say that the world today believes us to be cowards. It has ceased to

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.



think so since the satyagraha campaign. The Congress prestige has risen very high in the West during the past twenty years. The world is watching with astonished interest the fact that although we have no arms we are hoping to win swaraj, and have indeed come very near it. Moreover, it sees in our non-violent movement rays of hope for peace in the world and its salvation from the hell of carnage. The bulk of mankind has come to believe that, if ever the spirit of revenge is to vanish and bloody wars are to cease, the happy event can happen only through the policy of non-violence adopted by the Congress. The correspondent's fear and suspicion are, therefore, unfounded.

It will now be seen that the fact that India is unarmed is no obstacle in the path of ahimsa. The forcible disarmament of India by the British Government was indeed a grave wrong and a cruel injustice. But we can turn even injustice to our advantage if God be with us, or if you prefer, we have the skill to do so. And such a thing has happened in India.

Arms are surely unnecessary for a training in ahimsa. In fact the arms, if any, have to be thrown away, as the Khan Saheb did in the Frontier Province. Those who hold that it is essential to learn violence before we can learn non-violence, would hold that only sinners can be saints.

Just as one must learn the art to killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for non-violence. Violence does not mean emancipation from fear, but discovering the means of combating the cause of fear. Non-violence, on the other hand, has no cause for fear. The votary of non-violence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. He reckes not if he should lose his land, his wealth, his life. He who has not overcome all fear cannot practise ahimsa to perfection. The votary of ahimsa has only one fear, that is of God. He who seeks refuge in God ought to have a glimpse of the atman that transcends the body; and the moment one has a glimpse of the imperishable atman one sheds the love of the perishable body. Training in non-violence is thus diametrically opposed to training in violence. Violence is needed for the protection of things external, non-violence is needed for the protection of the atman, for the protection of one's honour.

The non-violence cannot be learnt by staying at home. It needs enterprise. In order to test ourselves we should learn to dare danger

and death, mortify the flesh and acquire the capacity to endure all manner of hardships. He who trembles or takes to his heels the moment he sees two people fighting is not non-violent, but a coward. A non-violent person will lay down his life in preventing such quarrels. The bravery of the non-violent is vastly superior to that of the violent. The badge of the violent is his weapon - spear, or sword, or rifle. God is the shield of the non-violent.

This is not a course of training for one intending to learn non-violence. But it is easy to evolve one from the principles I have laid down.

It will be evident from the foregoing that there is no comparison between the two types of bravery. The one is limited, the other is limitless. There is no such thing as out-daring or out-fighting non-violence. Non-violence is invincible. There need be no doubt that this non-violence can be achieved. The history of the past twenty years should be enough to reassure us.

SEVAGRAM, August 27, 1940

*Harijan*, 1-9-1940

## 157. QUESTION BOX<sup>1</sup>

### A. I. S. A. EMPLOYEES

Q. Is there a ban on A. I. S. A. employees as far as signing the satyagraha pledge is concerned? They fulfil all the conditions of the pledge, but they may not offer themselves for jail without the permission of the A. I. S. A., and therefore they cannot sign the form. Is it then permissible for them to retain membership of Congress executive committees, or should they resign from them?

A. Your interpretation of the rule of the A. I. S. A. is correct. No one can work in two spheres at the same time. The work of the A. I. S. A. too is Congress work. None of its employees can be allowed to court imprisonment. His absence must harm khadi. Therefore, granted that the rule is necessary, it is plain that no A. I. S. A. employee may remain a member of a Congress committee. The entire committee may be arrested, or if the Committee so desires, it can order any of its members to court imprisonment.

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji wrote this in Hindi except for the last question. The Hindi was published in *Harijan Sevak*. 31-8-1940 and the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*, 31-8-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

## UNCERTIFIED KHADI

Q. Members of Congress local executive committees sometimes sell uncertified khadi. They give the same wages to spinners and weavers as the A. I. S. A. Only their khadi is not certified. According to Congress rules are they entitled to remain on Congress Committees or should they resign from them?

A. In my opinion they are not entitled to membership of Congress Committee. The official answer must be officially secured. If it is correct that they give the same wages to spinners and weavers, why do they not get the necessary certificate from the A. I. S. A.?

## HOW TO CONVERT ATHEISTS

Q. How can one convert atheists to belief in God and religion?

A. There is only one way. The true servant of God can convert the atheist by means of his own purity and good conduct. It can never be done by argument. Innumerable books have been written to prove the existence of God, and if argument could have prevailed, there would not be a single atheist in the world today. But the opposite is the case. In spite of all the literature on the subject, atheism is on the increase. Often, however, the man who calls himself an atheist is not one in reality; and the converse also is equally true. Atheists sometimes say, "If you are believers, then we are unbelievers." And they have a right to say so, for self-styled believers are often not so in reality. Many worship God because it is the fashion to do so or in order to deceive the world. How can such persons have any influence on atheists? Therefore let the believer realize and have the faith that, if he is true to God, his neighbours will instinctively not be atheists. Do not let him be troubled about the whole world. Let us remember that atheists exist by the sufferance of God. How truly has it been said that those who worship God in name only are not believers but those who do His will!

## LIVING WAGE

Q. You once wrote in Harijan to the effect that villagers are at liberty to buy yarn spun in their own villages without reference to the living wage, and that the A. I. S. A. should let them go their way in this matter. Are those who wear khadi woven from such yarn eligible as Congress delegates? And what is the village worker to do in this regard? He naturally does propaganda in favour of a living wage. There are always a certain number of villagers who buy A. I. S. A. khadi, but at the same time there are many who cannot afford to do so. And even if they pay less than the living

wage, there is no doubt that the spinners get some relief and khadi finds a certain place in village life too. Is the village worker there to encourage such khadi.?

A. If we were always careful enough not to read into a writer's sentences a meaning which defeats his very purpose, such questions would rarely arise. Where no wages are paid and the yarn is self-spun, no ban of any kind can be applied. It is of course assumed that the A. I. S. A. rule is not broken on a false plea of self-sufficiency. The same applies to the village worker.

But there is one important issue raised in your question. The A. I. S. A. worker in a particular village cannot pay a living wage if he is to use the village khadi. Therefore he will buy yarn at a lesser rate and give some work to the spinners who would otherwise get nothing. But he may not become a member of the Congress. He will serve the Congress from without. Sometimes such persons serve the Congress far better, and they are moreover saved from the ambitions that membership often carries with it. It is clear that such khadi cannot be sold outside the village. It should all be absorbed locally. The moment uncertified khadi is put into the market the A. I. S. A. law is broken and real khadi receives a setback. The A. I. S. A. is labouring under great stress in trying to raise the spinners' wages. Never in the world have I heard of wages being increased from one or two pice to 8 or 12 pice per day without the wage-earners having asked for a rise in pay. The A. I. S. A. has done monumental work in this matter.

#### WILL IT FAIL ?

Q. You say that the Congress is not cent per cent non-violent today. If that is so, will not a satyagraha movement launched by it be unsuccessful?

A. It is not possible for a large popular organization like the Congress to be wholly non-violent, for the simple reason that all its members cannot have attained a standard level of non-violence. But it is perfectly possible for some of its members, who truly understand the implications of pure ahimsa and observe its law in their lives, to lead a successful satyagraha movement. This truth has even been demonstrated so far by the Congress.

SEVAGRAM, August 27, 1940

*Harijan*, 1-9-1940

## 158. ANDREWS MEMORIAL

A friend, who is himself trying to collect for the Andrews Memorial, has written a letter from which I take the following relevant paragraphs:

As I read it there are four objects of the appeal<sup>1</sup> (you will kindly correct me, if I am wrong):

(i) Ensuring the permanence of the present established work by an endowment to enable Santiniketan to fulfil Andrew's high hopes for it, unhampered by the constant financial anxiety with which it is now burdened.

This is obviously the first need, for it would be doubtful wisdom to add new developments to an institution which itself is insecure. At the same time the amount required for this purpose is nowhere specified.

If there is a sufficiently generous response to the appeal, providing more than is required for this first need, then it will be possible to go on to the other three parts of the scheme, viz.,

(ii) a small but properly equipped hospital;

(iii) the provision of 'Deenabandhu wells' in the district;

(iv) the provision of the Hall of Christian culture.

Now, if I am right in this, it must surely occur to the reader of the appeal that, if, as seems likely, the institution requires a considerable sum for its endowment fund, the chances that any contributions made now will actually be available for either of the second, third or fourth part of the scheme are somewhat remote. It is not stated whether contributors are allowed to earmark their gifts for any of the special objects in the scheme; and obviously, if a large proportion of contributors did so, the primary object of the appeal—the placing of Santiniketan on a sound basis financially—may be defeated.

My second difficulty was about the statement of the aims, and I had in view particularly those of the proposed hall of Christian culture, in which I am naturally interested.

That is first described as providing for India's thought contact with the Western world, on the analogy of the 'Cheena Bhavan' and China. This suggests a doubtful identification of 'Christian culture' and 'Western culture'.

That statement then goes on to speak of (a) the application of the teaching and character of Christ to international problems, and (b) the task of interpreting in Eastern modes of thought the spirit and mind of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> For the text of the appeal, *vide* "Deenabandhu Memorial"

What we have, therefore, seem to be three rather different aims, all very important and relevant. Perhaps it may be necessary to leave it in this rather wide from; and yet I cannot help thinking that a more careful wording might make clear the relation of the other two aspects of the aim to that which is described as the 'central purpose'.

Thirdly, I raised the question of trustees and a sound basis for confidence in the future running of the scheme. If I understand your letter rightly, the trustees of this special fund are to be the trustees of Santiniketan and Sriniketan, mentioned at the end of the appeal. The appeal itself does not seem to make this clear.

Does this imply that the disposal and allocation of the special fund raised is directly in the hands of these trustees of Santiniketan, so that, in effect, the fund becomes an additional part of the corpus of the 'Trust'?

It seemed to me that for a scheme of the importance and magnitude of that contemplated in the appeal there would be a place for some special committee or body of trustees related a little more definitely both to the special objects and to the wider interests to which the appeal will extend.

The enquiry is pertinent and deserves a proper answer. As I happen to be one of the signatories to the appeal for funds, what I write may be taken as authoritative. The present trustees have made a rough calculation of the expenses in connection with the three definite additions to Santiniketan. After providing for them, a surplus is expected to be available which will go into the general funds. But naturally these three items will have precedence. Nevertheless it is open to donors to earmark their funds for any of the three additions, and the money will be so used. Therefore there need be no apprehension about the additions, whether donations are earmarked or not. If I may let out a secret, I may say that the general appeal was my idea. Gurudev, who first thought of the memorial being identified with Santiniketan, has in mind only two things the hospital and the hall, the latter being the suggestion of a Christian friends. Deenabandhu wells were to be built out of Santiniketan funds. Taking the cue from Gurudev, I felt there should be no hesitation whatsoever in identifying the whole of Santiniketan with Andrews's memory. The Poet is a host in himself. He has an established international fame which will grow with time. Nevertheless Andrews was its best advertiser. Gurudev has no advertising ability. He simply works, wishes, and then leaves his wishes to fate. Not so the practical Englishman. He felt attracted to the Poet and found his peace and permanent abode in

Santiniketan. England was his birth-place; he never tore himself away from her. But his soul found its full expression and home in Santiniketan, and I know, because I was his co-worker, that he went literally from door to door in order to get funds for Santiniketan. And he would often say to me: 'Never mind Santiniketan, but you must get so much money for me. You know what Santiniketan means to me and what the Poet means to the world.' And I succumbed to his advance whenever he made it, even though I could ill afford the time. His love for Santiniketan was greater I say this without any offence to anyone living in Santiniketan than theirs. It was certainly as great as the Poet's, and Santiniketan, as it is at present, is due as much to Andrews as to the Poet. Probably Andrews was the more persistent of the two.

With this knowledge at the back of my mind I had no hesitation in suggesting that the appeal should be general. Hence I would say to would-be donors that they would miss the central fact of the memorial if they detached the three additions from Santiniketan. For the three together would be a poor memorial to Deenabandhu if Santiniketan were no more. And let me say at once that Santiniketan will never owe its permanence to the five lakhs that may be collected. It will be permanent because the Poet has breathed life into it and the spirit of Andrews hovers over it. If it keeps up the character imparted to it by its founders, including Andrews, it will never die.

The second difficulty is easily answered. The interpretation of Christ in the Hall of Christian Culture will bear the imprint of the Poet's all-embracing soul, and therefore Christian culture, as it will flourish in Santiniketan, will never be exclusive. Much will depend upon the Christians who might be attracted to Santiniketan. A more careful wording in defining the scope of the Hall of Christian Culture was not possible, was not intended. I suggest to my correspondent that such matters are better left in a liquid state. Who shall say what the future has in store for any of the big things of the world?

The third difficulty is also easily disposed of. It had occurred even to me, but I felt that it would not be right to create a new trust for the memorial funds. The names of the present trustees are given in the appeal. If they are good enough to be made responsible for the management of the vast international estate, called Santiniketan and Sriniketan, they might well be entrusted with the additional responsibility of dealing with the funds that may be collected for the memorial.

Finally I may mention that the response hitherto made through the memorial appeal has been very poor. I know that the organization of the fund rests principally upon my shoulders. I have done nothing in the hope that Deenabandhu's solid work for submerged humanity would need no organized effort, and that it would evoke spontaneous response. I have not yet lost that hope. I publish the meagre list of donations hitherto received. The reader will notice, as I have noticed, that as yet there is no collection from the student world nor any coppers from the labour world.

SEVAGRAM, August 27, 1940

*Harijan*, 1-9-1940

### 159. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,

*August 27, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

In continuation of my letter of the 11th instant, I send here with a second batch of complaints about the alleged exactions and high salaries. In the latter you will find in places the same names repeated. The reason is that against the names you will notice additional information about them. The note<sup>1</sup> about alleged exactions is supplied by Pandit Nehru. The list about salaries has been supplied principally by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.

*I am,*

*Your sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* "Letter From Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-8-1940



## 160. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
August 27, 1940

MY DEAR C. R,

Here is the draft<sup>1</sup> prepared by the jury. The addition in my hand in the last paragraph was suggested by me and verbally accepted. I have no time to describe to you the background but you will have no difficulty in filling it in. Mahmud, R. Babu, Jamnalal and the night<sup>2</sup> ingale<sup>3</sup> were also present. What will happen on 13th<sup>3</sup>, I do not know. If all goes well I may have to go to Bombay also. I am not too happy over what is happening but I rejoice in my faith in God.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

Can you bring Papa<sup>4</sup> this time?

From a photostat: G. N. 2080

## 161. NOTES

SIND

The position of Congressmen in Sind is by no means enviable. They have a most difficult time before them. Their non-violence, if they have it in them, has not benefited those who live in fear of their lives. It is true that no one else has helped them. I warned them at the very outset that they must learn the art of helping themselves as others do, or by non-violence as Congressmen are supposed or expected to do. In some places they are organizing national guards. Those who do, look up to Congressmen for help and guidance. For the latter have been their helpers and guides hitherto. Some Congressmen feel that without any intention themselves of taking up arms they can put courage into the people, if they train them in the art of self-defence

<sup>1</sup> Not traceable

<sup>2</sup> Sarojini Naidu

<sup>3</sup> On September 13, the Congress Working Committee was to meet at Bombay.

<sup>4</sup> Eldest daughter fo the addressee

whether with or without arms. The question has attained importance and demands immediate answer in view of the unequivocal resolution of the A. I. C. C. recently held at Poona. I am quite clear that no Congressman, so long as he is even a four-anna member of the Congress, can take part in organizing or aiding self-defence groups without committing a breach of the Poona resolution. But I am equally clear that it is the duty of those Congressmen who feel the need for helping self-defence groups and have the capacity for doing so, to go to the rescue of the terror-stricken men. This they can do by resigning their membership of the Congress. By doing so they will enhance the prestige of the Congress and their own usefulness. The fact that they feel the call to help is the decisive factor in determining their course of action.

#### PEACEFUL METHODS ?

A correspondent sends a leaflet published by the Madras Provincial War Committee and printed at the Government Press, which enumerates the seven "great ideals" for which "War is being waged" today by England. The second of the ideals runs thus:

The ideals for which England is fighting are the ideals of India. Our philosophy of life, our traditions of domestic and international policy have had:

Peace for its ideal—as exemplified in the teaching of the Lord Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi.

Peaceful methods and tolerance—as the means of political progress and international relations, as symbolized by the policy of India's ideal king Asoka.

In fighting with England we shall be fighting for what we hold most precious in our own national heritage.

My correspondent says these leaflets are issued in the provincial languages and are widely distributed among the villagers. I suggest to the Madras War Committee that they remove Clause 2 altogether as being untrue. For my ideal as put before the British people is well known. If Lord Buddha was on earth in the body at this moment, such a war would be impossible. It is a travesty of truth to call English methods of peace. Asoka's is perhaps the only instance of a great king having voluntarily abandoned war and adopted peaceful methods.

It is no reflection on the British people that they do not accept my advice or follow Asoka's way. These things cannot be done mechanically. But it is not right to give them the credit they do not deserve or want. Well may the British people who read the leaflet say: 'Save us from our friends.'

SEVAGRAM, August 28, 1940

*Harijan*, 1-9-1940

## 162. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*August 28, 1940*

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have been awake today since 1.00 a.m. I woke up Pyarelal at 3 o'clock and asked him to get me some paper. This is the first letter. You are not the only cause for this sleep-lessness. My other jobs are also the reason. You being the chief reason, I am taking up your letter first.

Pyarelal gave me your letters yesterday. This is in reply to those letters. My programme of action is uncertain. I do not know whether I shall fight or resort to a fast. One of the two courses appears certain. You must be aware of this. You should not make any changes in your programme on that account.

The fact that the dispensary drove you from Sevagram means that had there been no dispensary and had you not been the resident doctor, the question of your walking or not walking with me would not have arisen.

It is not right that you should compare me with Mahadev and Devdas. In the first place, you are doing gross injustice to Mahadev. He has no hatred towards you. Only he is not any more under your spell. For this I hold myself responsible. It has been to the good of you both. I am firmly convinced that Mahadev still wishes you well. If possible, he would serve you and do it whole-heartedly. You do not know him. Your impression about Devdas is correct. But if he has contempt it is not for you but for me. Behind it is his deep knowledge. But my position is not to be equated with that of either. For the change you find in my behaviour is solely for your good, for truth. How stupid and unthinking of you that you should see displeasure in my well-meant behaviour. Get rid of such a thought. It

does not behove you. It is wrong. There is no displeasure at all in the step I have taken. It is possible that I may have been unfair knowingly or unknowingly. I see in it only the purest justice and purest love. I would cease to be a satyagrahi if it were otherwise. I would be disqualified for conducting the struggle.

I shall not force you to come to Sevagram. Your good lies in being away. Your being a doctor is a restraining factor. I often feel it is your duty as a doctor to be at Sevagram. So long as I do not cease to see your usefulness as a doctor for Sevagram, I cannot take you around with me as I do Mahadev. If I do that, it would appear to me against my duty. You hold the contrary view. Hence, so long as we hold opposite views about duty, how can your talents be put to use? How can I allow it that your medical services should not at all be made available to others? I feel your need every moment. Ba yearns for you. She thinks of you when someone falls ill. Hence, whatever I may have said earlier, I clearly see your place is essentially in the Ashram. Unless you see it as clearly as the reflection in a mirror, your coming here will be meaningless. Once this point is clearly understood, it would be another matter if I take you out for my sake or even your sake.

I do hope that you will get a job. Concentrate on your studies. What would be the value of a degree obtained without hard work. You ask me what you should do. This is my reply. You will have peace only when you become a full-fledged doctor. That will be your happiness.

I abide by what I said about Mother. You should forget everything else.

Pyarelal and I have come to an agreement that only I should guide you, not he. He would not give you any independent guidance. He is incapable of doing that. How can he guide you when he himself is in need of guidance? Then, why do you always expect letters from him? What can he write? At least he can write nothing concerning you. Should he always give you the news about the Ashram? I can send that even through somebody else. I advise you to stop altogether writing him confidential letters. Write to me when it is necessary. I consider it your great fault that you preserve the letters. Whatever the nature of letters that might have been written, why should they be preserved? Even Pyarelal has that bad habit. I shall make him give it up. Whatever letters you write to me, I will read and destroy. I will not give them back to Pyarelal. I will not send them back to you. I would

advise you to destroy my letters too. You may preserve the letters in which I may have written something important or valuable. But it would be wrong to preserve the letters which you have not liked or in which you have seen only my faults. We should not be obsessed with the faults of our elders or dear ones. Nor should we preserve their references. Now the prayer bell has gone. May God always protect you.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### *163. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,

*August 29, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of the 23rd instant; my reminder was proof of my anxiety that the letter should not miscarry.

My distress is going deeper. Recent events disconcert me. My complaint about 'exactions' and inflated salaries is already before you. I fear that free expression of public opinion will presently be suppressed with a heavy hand.<sup>1</sup> no discordant note will be allowed. Perhaps wars cannot be carried on otherwise. That is one of the many reasons for making them hateful.

If things go on as they are and if the Congress remains supine, the Congress will die a slow death.<sup>2</sup>

In the domain of politics your words alarm me. I must confess I do not understand some of them.

The profound differences between Congressmen and me are practically bridged.<sup>3</sup> They nearly feel that it was wrong to have decided in advance that a State could not be run without an army. All hope for the world seemed to have been lost so far as the Congress

<sup>1</sup> Here the Viceroy has noted in the margin: "False associatin. This has no place in its context."

<sup>2</sup> Viceroy's note in the margin: "there is the rub"

<sup>3</sup> Viceroy's note in the margin: "Am I to understand this to mean that he comes as the Congress leader?"

was concerned. If you are interested in this part of the inner history of the Congress you shall have it.

If I cannot help the British Government, I do not wish to embarrass them. But this desire must not be carried to the extent of Committee hara-kiri<sup>1</sup>.

Before I take any step, I would like to bare my heart and mind to you and seek light if it is darkness that envelops me. If, therefore, you think that it is worth while our meeting, you will please wire appointment.<sup>2</sup> I am seeking the interview in anticipation of the 13th which is the date of the meeting of the Working Committee.

If our meeting comes off before the 13th so as to enable me to return to Wardha before that date, it will be helpful. If you will feel embarrassed to meet me or would otherwise not meet me, there need be no telegram sent me. I shall take your silence to mean that you cannot see me on the issue raised by me. If you cannot, I shall not misunderstand you. I hope you will find it possible to pardon me for causing you trouble when your attention should not be diverted from the task before you. My object in seeking an appointment is to leave no stone unturned, first to avoid all possibility of an error of judgment and, secondly, to put before you my case before taking any irrevocable step.<sup>3</sup>

I am now able to send you a translation of the reply I had asked from my Khurja correspondent.<sup>4</sup>

*I am,*  
*Your sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Paper. Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> Viceroy's note in the margin: "I did not know that the company of the saints were accustomed to limit their liability! !"

<sup>2</sup> Viceroy's note in the margin: "This is for Mr. G. to judge. I can only discuss matters within the four corners of the Statement. Upon that understanding I shall be glad to grant his request for an interview, and to do my best to help him."

<sup>3</sup> Viceroy's note: "P. S. V. He must of course come. My reply should contain an expression of regret that the Maulana declined my invitation and the public must know that Mr. G. has asked for an invitation."

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to a letter from H. L. Sharma containing allegations of intimidation of the people for exaction of war loans and contributions to the War Fund.

## 164. A NOTE

August 29, 1940

The above does not satisfy me, nor do I like that you should be satisfied with it. We shouldn't be satisfied too easily.

BAPU

About Munnalal's objection, it should be decided where meetings of permanent inmates of the Ashram should be held from time to time, and their recommendations and decisions should be recorded. Do you find anything impracticable in this?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N 10604

## 165. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 30, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Come whenever you like. Do not wait till you are so weak that you have to take to your bed.

Give Bhagawati his letter and explain the matter to him.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajendra Babu has gone to Sikar. He will stay there for a month. Jamnalalji is with him.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3547

## 166. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

[August 30, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Your letter. Your pain is apparent in spite of your very delicate words. But your duty consists in parting with it in its own interest although it is your own handiwork. Ultimately we must abandon the

<sup>1</sup> From the post- mark

desire for captainship or success. You still have it. Let us see how I can manage now. Henceforth you have a greater opportunity to concentrate on service to Harijans. I shall seek one thing from you. Please send me some articles for *Harijan Sevak* every week. Also send your criticism about the language, etc., of the *Harijan Sevak*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI VIYOGI HARI  
HARIJAN NIWAS  
KING'S WAY, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1090

*167. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA*

SEVAGARAM, WARDHA,

*August 31, 1940*

CHI. MAGAN,

See that you pass. Keep your pledge of fulfilling Manjula's wish. She is as gentle as a cow.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL P. MEHTA  
C/O Y. M. C. A.  
NEW DELHI

From Gujarati: C. W. 1607. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

*168. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA*

SEVAGRAM,

*August 31, 1940*

CHI. MANJULA,

I have your letter. I understand. Come when you can. I had a letter from Magan. He is repenting. He is sure to improve, thanks to



your merit.

Keep writing to me.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI MENJULA MEHTA

BRAJ BHUVAN

ELLIS BRIDGE

AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From Gujarati: C. W. 1606. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

### *169. LETTERE TO DR. VARIAVA*

*August 31, 1940*

BHAI VARIAYA,

Chi. Kunvarji is the husband of my grand-daughter, Ramibehn. He was suffering from tuberculosis. Now the T. B. specialist Dr. David says the he is all right. I shall be grateful if you will examine him after a fortnight or so and send me your report.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 221

### *170. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

*August 31, 1940*

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal gave me a letter from you the day before yesterday. What a letter! Why such doubt about me? There was no condemnation in what I said about you. There was only love in it. I have not shown your letters to anyone. No one can read my letters because from my hands they go straight to Pyarelal. In my whole life I do not remember to have taken as much care about anyone's letters as I do about yours and my replies to them. I am not even conscious of having mentioned any conditions. I have not even given you a categorical reply about your coming. The clearest reply I gave to Lilavati Munshi's question yesterday: "She had not come to settle here permanently. The dispensary was only a plaything for her. She is

expecting to get a job. If she gets it, she will not be coming at least for the present. If I know that she is not coming at all then I shall have to consider what to do about the dispensary.” I cannot undertake that Pyarelal will write to you. In my view, he should not write to you at all. You must be content with what I write.

The *Harijan Sevak* will be shifted to Poona. I shall be happy if you can write something original from there for the edition from Poona. There are ample subjects. If you wrote a series of articles on sanitation, etc., in beautiful Hindi you would refresh your knowledge and improve your skill as a writer.

I did not like the doctor’s letter to you. Had there been enough time for consultation, I would have drafted a stern reply and made you withdraw your application. I cannot bear to see that you have become helpless. Where is any prestige in a job obtained in such a manner? But what is done is done.

I may have to go to Simla.

I am sending Lilavati’s letter for you to read.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### *171. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA*

SEVAGRAM,  
*August 31, 1940*

BHAISAHEB,

I was happy to see your handwriting. The very word convocation scares me.<sup>1</sup> Where do I have knowledge worthy of a scholar? How can I face the boys? And certainly the lack of time is an important consideration. Therefore please excuse me. I know it is your love and Radhakrishnan’s that call me, but I am helpless.

Hope you are well.

*Your younger brother.*

From Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

<sup>1</sup> The addressee in his letter of August 28, had invited Gandhiji to deliver the convocation address at the Banaras Hindu University on November 30 or any other day convenient to him.

## 172. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,  
August 31, 1940

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

All the questions that you have raised are important.

Keshav will never steal eatables. It is mere suspicion on the part of you people. It has to be put up with. I do not see anything wrong in using a lock and key. The custody of fruit should be with you only.

Make it clearly known cots are meant only for the sick and for those who sleep in risky corners. I shall write this in the Notebook if you want me to.

Ramanarayanji has come for *sadhana*. It is our duty to look after his health. The problem of servants is knotty. We shall not improve merely by removing servants. It will be enough if we limit the jobs to be entrusted to servants.

If flour is not available we should certainly have porridge.

Things like. . . <sup>1</sup> soap should be eschewed.

A copy to the *Ramayana* has been ordered. Hindi *Bhajanavali* is under print. You should get all the three newspapers. Make the necessary arrangements.

Blessings from  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4359

## 173. TALK TO VILLAGERS<sup>2</sup>

[September 1, 1940]<sup>3</sup>

In ancient India a man's wealth was reckoned according to the number of cows he possessed, not according to the gold and silver he owned. The Cow was worshipped as mother, for she sustained us with milk and her male progeny helped us to carry on agriculture which kept us alive. Cows are there in the West also, and they are kept very

<sup>1</sup> The brand name has been omitted.

<sup>2</sup> & <sup>3</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Sevagram Notes", 9-9-1940. The villagers had invited Gandhiji to go and see their cattle parade on the 1st September which day was observed as their day of annual rest when the bullocks were decorated and garlanded.

well indeed. But their male progeny is not used for agricultural purposes, it is turned into beef. From time immemorial this idea has been repugnant to us, and we have worshipped the cow and her progeny. The bullocks are the means of transport everywhere in our villages and have not ceased to be such even in a place like Simla. The railway train and the motor-car go there, but all along the mountain road I found bullocks trudging up and down dragging heavily-laden carts. It seems as if the means of transport is part of our lives and our civilizations. And the bullock has to endure if our handicraft civilization is to endure.

But we have fallen on evil days. Our idea of wealth has changed, we reckon it in terms of hard cash, and have come to neglect our cattle which have been progressively deteriorating. I am glad that you are celebrating this day, but you must know its implications. A day's celebration would have no meaning if you neglected them the rest of the year. You have to find out whose animals are the best and to discover how he manages to keep them so well. You will find out whose cow gives the largest amount of milk and discover how he keeps her and feeds her. You may fix some prize for the best bullock and the best cow in the village. We are here for your service. Parnerkarji, who is a qualified dairyman, and Balvantsinha, known for his love and care of the animals, are at your disposal. The stud bull is being maintained for the benefit of the village. You must make use of all the facilities we have provided. But you can do so only when you have a genuine love for your animals. Here is a thing of which you and I should be ashamed.<sup>1</sup> Supposing I were to prod one of your children with this stick, would you let me do it? And if you will not, how dare you treat these useful animals so? Nowhere else in the world, to my knowledge, is such an instrument of torture used. You should either give this up or not invite me to these shows. You should treat them so kindly and handle them so gently that they will understand a word or a gesture from you without the use of any stick at all. Address yourselves to the task from today, and see what progress you can make by the time we have the next festival. Our aim is to make of Sevagram a model village. I have on another occasion told you what to do in other matters. Today I am telling you that without model cattle we cannot have a model village. Our service is at your disposal, but our service too cannot be of much use without your co-operation. I hope you will,

<sup>1</sup> Here Gandhiji showed them a goad.

therefore, meet together at once and frame a programme of immediate action.

*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

### 174. DISCUSSION WITH BHARATANAND<sup>1</sup>

[Before *September 2, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

BHARATANAND: 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.

GANDHIJI: 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.

B. Well, then, Bapuji, I will give you an instance. A young Russian girl was attacked by a soldier. She used her nails and teeth and tore him, so to say, to pieces. Was she almost non-violent?

MAHADEV DESAI: How can it cease to be non-violence, if offered on the spur of the moment simply because it was successful?

G. No.

B. Then I am really puzzled. 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.

G. I am sorry that I inadvertently said 'no' to Mahadev. There was violence there. It was equally matched.

B. 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.

G. Who is to judge the intention? No we. And for us the deed in most cases is the test. We normally look at the action and not at the intention. God alone knows the intention.

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Ahimsa in Daily Life", 2-9-1940.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

B. Then God alone knows what is himsa and what is ahimsa.

G. 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 being 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.

B. But, Bapuji, I cannot somehow forget that it is God who is the Judge, and God permits violence. There is a *puranic* story I should like to tell you. God Shiva once suddenly disappeared as he and Parvati were in the midst of a conversation. But soon he appeared again. On being asked where he had been, he said he had gone to the rescue of a bhakta who had been attacked, but he had come back on finding that the *bhakta* had helped himself by striking his assailant with a stone.

G. Well, well, no amount of argument can teach us ahimsa. And you must not forget that one cannot be sure of the purity of one's intention until one has gone through the whole course of spiritual training laid down by masters of yoga like Patanjali. Perfect *chitta-shuddhi*<sup>1</sup> cannot be achieved in any other way.

B. Ahimsa, brahmacharya, spinning are all sadhanas, and whereas one may suit one, it may not suit another. Why have you made of ahimsa a universal precept?

G. When a means has been tried by a scientist and he has found it of infallible effect he puts it before all. You know the maxim what is true of the individual is true of the universe.

B. But you lay down the same law for a saint and a robber!

G. The law is the same; the way may be more difficult for the robber than for the saint. The law is the ideal, no matter how much individuals may fall short of the ideal.

B. But you forget the reality before the ideal.

G. No. The really is always present before me, but my striving is always to reach the ideal. Euclid's straight line exists only in our con-

<sup>1</sup> Purification of mind.

ception, but we have always to postulate it. We have always to strive to draw a true line corresponding to Euclid's imaginary line.

*Harijan*, 8-9-1940

### 175. QUESTION BOX<sup>1</sup>

#### A RIDDLE

Q. You have said that a non-violent person should at all times be ready to renounce everything, for the things of this world pertain to the body and not to the spirit. If we were all thus prepared, the question of violent or non-violent warfare would not arise. Wars are fought in order to protect life and property, should these be endangered. You also say that, so long so the desire to protect life and property remains within us, out ahimsa cannot be said to be pure. How can we reconcile the two?

A. Yours is a good question. I wrote with reference to the satyagraha army. Take our own country for instance. Its entire population will not enlist in the army. But those who are willing to protect the millions by means of non-violence will have to renounce all worldly attachment.

#### KHADI AND PURITY

Q. Can one whose heart is not pure wear khadi?

A. It appears you do not read the papers. I have said and written times without number that khadi, as cloth, is there for everyone to use, the drunkard, the immoral, the thief and the dacoit included. But inasmuch as khadi has been accepted as the symbol of our freedom, it is obligatory for all those who wish to gain and protect that freedom to wear it. And what you say is, therefore, applicable to such persons. Because a satyagrahi must be pure in heart, he must shun drink and immorality, and for him the wearing of khadi is a duty.

#### A QUANDARY

Q. I was walking along the railway line some distance from the station when I saw a young man standing on the line with the obvious intent of committing suicide. I tried to dissuade him from carrying out his intention, but he was adamant. Thereupon I dragged him away and held him until the train had passed, but inflicted some bodily injury on him by so doing. I acted spontaneously. Was my action violent or non-violent? I cannot decide for myself.

<sup>1</sup> The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan sevak*, 7-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

A. It is good that you acted spontaneously. [We act truly only when we act spontaneously.]<sup>1</sup> I have no doubt that your action was non-violent and brave. You are to be congratulated on saving the young man's life. You acted as a true friend, just as a surgeon does when for the sake of the good of the patient he does not hesitate to operate even though the operation inflicts temporary pain. [Congratulations.]<sup>2</sup>

SEVAGRAM, September 2, 1940

*Harijan*, 8-9-1940

### 176. HOW TO QUENCH IT?<sup>3</sup>

Elsewhere in these columns the reader will see "A Seeker's" letter in which he has asked a question which must have occurred to everyone. The beauty lies in the way in which he has introduced the question. He has depicted the present conflagration in such lurid colours that violence cannot but stink in our nostrils. The reader is sure instinctively to exclaim: "Even if it were possible to win the kingdom of the world by means of such violence, I would not have it."

But this exclamation will be of no avail to quench the conflagration. No doubt it will some day quench itself, but it means mutual fratricidal slaughter like that of the Yadavas of old who destroyed themselves and relieved the earth of so much burden. And such a consummation would any day be preferable to a perpetual conflagration. But no one would wish for this. What one would devoutly wish for is some brave step to stop the conflagration before there is total destruction. This can only be a non-violent step. How and when it can be taken has to be discovered. The "Seeker" will be satisfied when the discovery is made. In my opinion the discovery has already been made. If India can win swaraj non-violently even while this conflagration is going on, the latter is bound to be extinguished by that one event. That being my firm faith I fought the Wardha resolution tooth the nail, and secured my freedom not indeed to tickle

<sup>1</sup> The Hindi version has: "The world does not act in that manner. We form a habit by constant practice and we act from that habit when the time comes. You have done the same."

<sup>2</sup> From the Hindi version

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-9-1940. The English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.



my vanity but for the success of the experiment. And if I have to forgo this freedom as is quite likely it will be for the same purpose.

We read in our religious books that whenever, in the days of old, all ordinary means failed to secure release from an ordeal or a calamity, people resorted to *tapasya* (penance), i.e., actually burnt themselves. I do not regard these stories as legendary. *Tapasya* is of various kinds. Misguided men can resort to it, as we find them doing today. The wise also can do it. It is worth while understanding the implications of *tapasya*. It was by dint of *tapasya* that Western scientists made their discoveries. *Tapasya* does not simply consist in betaking oneself to the forest and sitting down there surrounded by blazing fires. That *tapasya* may even be the height of folly. We have therefore to discriminate.

The question asked by "A Seeker" does not arise out of despair. It is intended to quicken the conscience of those who believe in ahimsa. I have already shown the way. It is the fulfilment of the thirteenfold constructive programme described in a recent article. Those who will carry it out in faith, in full knowledge, and without the slightest fuss will have done their share in the *tapasya* to quench the conflagration. They will achieve two ends at the same time. They will make India free and will also quench the conflagration. It is likely that the number of such people is limited, so limited that it can have no effect. I have maintained that, even if there is one individual who is almost completely non-violent, he can put out the conflagration. But I have suggested a *tapasya* which can easily be performed by the average individual. In the age of democracy it is essential that desired results are achieved by the collective effort of the people. It will no doubt be good to achieve an objective through the effort of a supremely powerful individual, but it can never make the community conscious of its corporate strength. An individual's success will be like a millionaire doling free food to millions of starving people. We should, therefore, bend our energies to a fulfilment of the thirteenfold constructive programme. It may or may not bring swaraj, but we shall surely have the satisfaction of having done our best.

There is a warning in the "Seeker's" letter to which I should like to draw the reader's attention. He says papers and broadcasts describe with devilish pleasure the amount of injury each is able to inflict upon the other, and suggests that such news should sicken people instead of providing pleasure, if they are to take part in the

propagation of peace. I agree. Such people will not be able to carry out even the constructive programme, for they will have no faith in it.

However that may be, it is as clear as daylight that, if this conflagration is to be put out through non-violent effort, it will be done only by India.

SEVAGRAM, September 2, 1940

*Harijan*, 8-9-1940

### 177. TO THE READERS

When it was decided that I should also write for *Harijan Sevak*, I thought it would be convenient for me if all the three, i.e., *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* were published from the same place. Shri Viyogi Hari also liked the suggestion. There had been talk over the past many months of lightening his burden of *Harijan Sevak* work. His chief task, in fact only task, is to make the *Harijan Nivas* an ideal school for Harijans. In this he has also met with a degree of success. *Harijan Sevak* was pretty heavy burden for him. Efforts were being made to lighten that burden and we had succeeded to some extent. Now shifting the publication of *Harijan Sevak* will reduce the burden even further. He cannot of course be wholly relieved of *Harijan Sevak* work. Though staying away he will still be the editor. I tried to relieve him even of this, but it is good that I did not succeed. *Harijan Sevak* is Viyogiji's creation. It was kept going because of his enthusiasm. He also enrolled the subscribers. Therefore it is proper that his link with *Harijan Sevak* is maintained in some way or other. His articles of course will continue to appear in *Harijan Sevak*.

The language of *Harijan Sevak* will certainly change. My knowledge of Hindustani is very imperfect. I have not studied it. I picked it up while talking and listening to people. So my language will have grammatical and other mistakes. Other coworkers who make similar mistakes will also write. I hope the readers will be generous enough to tolerate such mistakes. This means that no one should buy *Harijan Sevak* for its language. Those who buy and read it, will do so to know the views it contains. Yielding to the persistent requests from the readers I have decided to write for *Harijan Sevak* also. I had assumed that Hindi-Hindustani speaking readers will be satisfied with the translations of my articles from Gujarati. But this did not satisfy them. There is of course this. I had no control over the translation

when it was done in Delhi. But now it has been decided that the translation also will be done under my supervision. Therefore there will be no misinterpretations, or very few, such as one saw often in *Harijan Sevak*.

SEVAGRAM, September 2, 1940

[From Hindi]

*Harijan Sevak*, 7-9-1940

### 178. LETTER TO PYARELAL

*September 2, 1940*

CHI. PYARELAL,

You are caught up in your own verbiage. This is no time to bathe me in your tears. And what do your tears avail, save that at the time of my need you will be of no use to me. Is that a sign of your desire to be moulded by me? All your ideas are true, but where is your acuity? Why could you not understand that if I entrusted the matter to A. S. and to Munnalal there must have been some purpose behind it? If you wanted to make a copy you should at least have told me. The copy that you made was useless. You made a better one only when you took it up as a challenge. What you could do as a challenge, you were not prepared to do for my sake. You refused point blank. I thought you would act as I directed. You first agreed and then wriggled out of it. Is that what you call faith? You have read that faith gains in strength. But you did not let your faith advance even one step. And now I have absolutely no idea what you intend to do.

Now I come to what you write about Sushila. Your defence has no basis. Why do you not understand that the reason that Sushila has for staying with me is that she is a doctor. But her medical knowledge could be my undoing, because, if I acknowledged it I would pass from God's hands into Sushila's. As for her affection, what shall I say? She would probably work on my conditions for 359 days, but if on one day her own conditions are not met, she would not serve me, she would not work for me. What does she care how much I have to involve myself with the patients while she is away? But what is the use of bemoaning my lot before my own sons and daughters? I shall endure what comes. I see that she even resents my guiding her. I wish you would yourself guide her. She has infinite faith in you. Her good

lies in being guided by you because, should you stray in guiding her, her faith will correct you. My guidance, even if it is a hundred per cent sound, will not benefit her.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### 179. *BISWA MISCARRIAGE AGAIN*

Moulvi Saheb Fazlul Haq, the Premier of the largest Province in all India has done me the honour of addressing an open letter holding the National Congress, of which he was at one time an ardent follower and admirer, to public ridicule. In his opinion the Congress has done everything to wound Muslim feeling. Says the Moulvi Saheb:

On several occasions I have published instances of the manner in which the Congress chariot wheels of democracy have ridden roughshod over the feelings and sentiments of countless Muslims and other minorities, and in many cases with our connivance, approbation and consent.

I must plead not guilty so far as the indictment concerns me. I have claimed to have inquired into every case of alleged injustice brought to my notice. I have never hesitated to condemn Congress acts when facts have demanded condemnation.

Let us, however, examine the latest illustration quoted by the Bengal Premier in support of his charge. He deals at length with the notorious Biswa miscarriage of justice. I am invited to give my opinion on it. The Moulvi Saheb evidently had not my opinion before him when he penned the open letter. I refer him to Harijan dated 11th ultimo (p. 244) wherein he will find my opinion. I adhere to every word of that opinion.

If the cases of injustice quoted by him are on a par with the Biswa case, his indictment singularly fails. The Congress Ministry had as much to do with the miscarriage of justice as the Moulvi Saheb. No judge has suggested that the police were under the influence of the Congress Ministry and that the latter used it to procure the miscarriage. The fact is that the ministers were in no way responsible for the conduct of the police or the prosecution. Miscarriages, like the one under examinations, have occurred before now in India. But in every

case the police were held blameworthy, not the Government, except when a clear case of Government complicity was made out. The Moulvi Saheb has produced no evidence whatsoever in support of his statement that the ministers had in any way interfered with the conduct of the prosecution.

He has produced certain remarks of the court on Pandit Shukla's speech in the C. P. Assembly. It amounts to no more than a reflection on the political unwisdom of making a speech which would seem to prejudge the case. The court's stricture in no way connects Pandit Shukla with the police or the prosecution. Moreover it is an *obiter dictum* which has no judicial value. I doubt if the court was wise in making the stricture without having called upon Pandit Shukla to explain his speech. This explanation, however, Pandit Shukla has given in his letter to the President of the Congress.

The Moulvi Saheb has omitted to notice the outstanding fact that the appellate court has found as a matter of fact that Jagdervao was killed and that many person were seriously injured. Their regret is that the guilty ones got off scot-free. Surely the ministers cannot be blamed for this untoward result by the Muslims. If a complaint can be legitimately made by anybody, it is the Hindus who can make it. So far as I am aware there were no Hindus tried, and there were no serious injuries sustained by the Muslims. The Sessions Judge may have erred in weighing evidence. But the fact that he condemned six Muslims to the gallows is a matter that demands serious thinking by all right-minded men. For if the ones condemned were not guilty, some other Muslims were.

I miss in the Moulvi Saheb's open letter any regret for the murder of a Hindu leader and for serious injury to other Hindus, and the fact that the culprits who were responsible for the murder and injuries had gone unpunished. Pandit Shukla was a fellow Premier in a neighbouring Province. I suggest to the Bengal Premier that courtesy required him to ask for Pandit Shukla's explanation before condemning him.

SEVAGRAM, September 3, 1940

*Harijan*, 8-9-1940

*180. LETTER OT KULSUM SAYANI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,  
*September 4, 1940*

MY DEAR KULSUM,

I was delighted to hear from you. I shall see what I can do with your report.<sup>1</sup> but you have my blessings in your work and also for your dear ones, here and in England.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: K. Sayani Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

*181. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*

*September 4, 1940*

CHI. AMRITLAL,

When Kakasaheb comes, put this letter<sup>2</sup> before him. Ask him to discuss the last paragraph, too, with me.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10800

*182. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI*

*September 4, 1940*

CHI. VIJAYA,

You seem to have become very busy. There is no letter at all from you. Spend three pice every week. Haven't you fully recovered yet? How is anabhai? Does Manubhai take enough ghee? Here things are fairly well. Sushila is still in Delhi. There is some new company. I

<sup>1</sup> The addressee was conducting classes in Bombay for spreading Literacy among women.

<sup>2</sup> This was Sunderlal's letter to Gandhiji which is not traceable.

will expect you at Diwali time. But I do not wish that you should neglect your work there and come.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7132. Also C. W. 4624. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

### *183. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH*

SEVAGRAM,

*September 4, 1940*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your letter becomes your ahimsa. I did not wish to examine the entire case but only wanted to reply to the grave allegations of the Bangal Premier<sup>1</sup>. It is one thing for the C. P. representative to take interest and another altogether that he should bring forward false witness. The fact that the Hindus in Biswa had suffered greatly was relevant, and the ill-treatment of the prisoners subsequently, though a fact, was irrelevant.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8528. Also C. W. 7101. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

### *184. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

SEVAGRAM,

*September 4, 1940*

CHI. SUSHILA,

These corrections are for your amusement. And another thing for your amusement: nobody saw the translations of what Mahadevbhai wrote about Poona published in *Harijan Sevak*. Rajkumari and Bablo laboriously completed it and despatched it yesterday. Now it is seen that the translation had already been printed.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Biswa Miscarriage Again"

Surely it is your translation. It does not mention Gujarati as the source.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

*185. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

SEVAGRAM,

*September 4, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

All of them do not take the same interest in collecting my articles as you do. Therefore I do not find anything wrong in your taking *Harijan Sevak*.

I understand the rest.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4360

*186. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

*September 4, 1940*

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. You should get well quick. There have been heavy rains this side and some damage. There has been no development of note here.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Hindi]

*Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 289*



## 187. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
September 4, 1940

BHAI. HARIBHAU,

I shall write about the members of the Prajamandal, etc., in the next issue of *Harijan Sevak*.<sup>1</sup>

We have to see how the language of *Harijan Sevak* shapes up now. Pyarelal has been charged with the responsibility. All the articles will pass through him. Pyarelal will write to you. If you can send some factual articles, not just essays, do so. And of course your comment on the language.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

## 188. CABLE TO CARL HEATH

WARDHAGANJ ,  
September 6, 1940

CARL HEATH  
FRIENDS HOUSE  
EUSTON ROAD  
LONDON

YOUR WIRE.<sup>2</sup> TRYING BEST AVOID CLASH WHICH  
SEEMS INEVITABLE. AM IN COMMUNICATION WITH  
VICEROY. CORRESPONDENCE SHOWS POLICY ENUNCIATED  
BY AMERY UNCHANGEABLE. ARRESTS PROMINENT CONG-  
RESSMEN CONTINUE. AMERY'S ASSURANCE GIVEN YOU

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Question Box"

<sup>2</sup> In his cable of August 30, the addressee had said that he had been assured by Amery that no advantage was being taken of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and that orders were not specially directed against the Congress but were of a general nature. He had urged that Gandhiji seek an interview with the Viceroy.

UNSUPPORTED BY PATENT FACTS. CONGRESS RESTRAINT  
CANNOT BE USED FOR SELF-DESTRUCTION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1042

*189. LETTER TO SAILENDRANATH CHATTERJEE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*September 6, 1940*

DEAR SAILENDRA<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter. I have had a chat with Father. For a man with Father's ideals it would be wrong to tempt you. God must be trusted to look after everyone. Father may talk of death. You should not. For you, he lives for ever. My advice to you is to hold on to what you have.<sup>2</sup> By sheer merit, you should be able to earn more in the Sangh. You should know that there are men who earn more than Rs. 20 in the Sangh. You need not worry about the sisters. For when they marry there will be no expense. Dhiren<sup>3</sup> is qualifying himself for earning a fair wage. Mother is being provided for by Father. Hence you need worry for nobody at least for the time being.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10161. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

*190. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*September 6, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 29th ultimo. I had your wire too. I appreciate your hesitation to send me an appointment straight away.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Son of Amrita Lal Chatterjee, an inmate of the Ashram

<sup>2</sup> He was working in the A. I. S. A., Calcutta.

<sup>3</sup> The addressee's younger brother, who was being trained for work at the Ashram.

<sup>4</sup> The viceroy in his letter of September 2 had said: "I shall of course be happy to see you . . . though I must in fairness to you make it clear that my statement . . . represents the decided policy of H. M. G. Nor, I am sure, will you misunderstand if I

whenever I come, if I do, as a result of this correspondence, of course the announcement will be that I had sought an appointment. As I can see things now, it is likely that after the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee I shall renew my request for an appointment. For I wish to take no step without first discussing things with you and making myself sure that there is no room left for any misunderstanding.

I was well aware that your statement and the Secretary of State's speech represented the decided policy of H. M. G. Had we met, I would have sought a clearance of my doubts about the manner in which the policy is being enforced and put before you more fully my grounds for dissatisfaction which, I must say, daily events are deepening. I do not at all mind the Congress wandering in the wilderness. Nor should I at present engage in a fight with the Government over their policy if it were based on grounds which could be understood by the plain man. But I must not be a helpless witness to the extinction of a great organization which I have held under curb on the ground of refusal to embarrass H. M. G. at the present critical juncture. I must not have it said of me that for a false morality I allowed the Congress to be crushed without a struggle. It is this thought that is gnawing at me.

As to the Maulana Saheb's disinclination to see you I had clearly understood that you would give him the option either to see you, if he felt like it, or to send you a written reply. You did, as a matter of fact, give him the option. But instead of sending a written reply he first wanted to ascertain whether he was free to discuss the announcement itself, and when he was told that he was not, naturally he chose not to take up your time over discussing details of enforcing a plan of which he thoroughly disapproved.<sup>1</sup> Don't you think, taking

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say that . . . I should have to make it clear . . . that . . . the initiative did not come from me."

<sup>1</sup> The Viceroy in his letter of August 4 to Abul Kalam Azad had said: ". . . I have been authorized to invite a number of representative Indians to join my Executive Council . . . I trust sincerely that the Indian National Congress will feel able to join with me in the Central Government and in the War Advisory Council . . . I readily conceive that it might be convenient for you to discuss this matter further with me before you send me a formal reply . . . I shall be very glad to see you . . . at any time convenient to you . . ." Azad declined the invitation since in the terms of the Viceregal declaration he found no meeting ground.

the position in the light I have understood it, that he was quite correct in not visiting you?

I must deal with my complaints about the allegations as to pressed contributions and higher salaries in another letter if it becomes necessary to do so. Meanwhile I thank you for the pains you are taking over my complaints.

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely*

From a copy: C. W. 7848. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### *191. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI*

*September 6, 1940*

CHI. VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. Bhai Lakshmidas's<sup>1</sup> plan is good but it cannot be implemented just now. We shall never make enough profit from khadi to repay the money borrowed or increase the capital. For khadi still subsists purely on faith, and cannot therefore be considered as a commercial proposition. As long as power has not come into the hands of the people or as long as the State has not adopted it, khadi will have to depend on voluntary contributions. Khadi cannot be propagated in any other way. I understand that even in Bhai Lakshmidas's plan, there is no intention of returning the capital, only a little interest on the investment will be paid. No trader would invest his money on that rate of interest. We can give no guarantee that they can sell khadi stocks in the share market. So even if we get loans, it will be only from philanthropically inclined khadi-lovers. I am, therefore, trying at present to get voluntary contributions. The statement sent to Bhai Shantikumar<sup>2</sup> contains some signatures also. Let us see now what happens. If we get our present requirements, we can make much greater progress.

If you have any further suggestions to make, please do so.

I hope Vaidya is getting along with his work.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9796

<sup>1</sup> Lakshmidas Asar

<sup>2</sup> Shantikumar N. Morarjee

## 192. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

*Unrevised*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,  
*September 7, 1940*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your long letter. It enables me to follow the struggle that is going on within you. You have not yet acquired the art of looking within for everything. Carding should soothe just as much as spinning once you connect the process with God. Farhad saw his God through breaking a mountain. He is represented as one incessantly delivering heavy blows with God-given strength. He broke the mountain and found his God who is represented as a fair bride. It will be an indulgence if you spin with slivers supplied from Sabarmati or elsewhere. But your arms may be too weak to card heavily. The body may be too weak to respond to the routine involved in all the processes involved in attaining speed and quantity. But, for you neither of these two things is essential. What is essential is the spirit of dedications to God. Whatever your outward activity it must be all for God. In order to avoid self-deception we have devised spinning including all the anterior processes. If this much is clear to you, you should have a small quantity of unginned cotton. This you will gin with the hand - roller. You know the process. You can devise these there. Instead of an iron rod you can have a wooden roller. You will gin enough for your purpose. To card this cotton would be child's play. You will employ the Andhra method. The slivers thus made will be flawless - no sound, no exertion, no untidiness, no dust. You will draw the finest thread and every draw will bring you nearer to God. It may be difficult for me to find unginned cotton at this time of the year. But as soon as I know your mind I shall find out what can be done. Till I hear from you I shall be doing nothing.

I shall have to go to Bombay for the Congress meeting for a few days from 12th.

The weather here is dry. Presently we shall want some showers, if the crops are to be saved.

God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6458. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10053

*193. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI*

SEVAGRAM,  
*September 7, 1940*

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

Your submitting the resignation is perfectly all right.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10848. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

*194. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

SEVAGRAM,  
*September 7, 1940*

CHI. NARANDAS,

You are also growing in years as the days go by and will soon be counted among the old. I wish you to complete a century and to remain ever young.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI NARANDAS GANDHI

RASHTRIYA SHALA

NAVU PARU

RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U. / II. Also C. W. 8578. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

*195. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

SEVAGRAM. WARDHAM, C. P.,  
*September 7, 1940*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

What does the enclosed letter say? You may do whatever you consider proper.

I hope Rajendra Babu is well. How is your health? Haribhau has written to me. I shall write about it in Harijan Sevak.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3014

## 196. TO THE READERS

The first issue of *Harijan Sevak* published from Poona has many printer's errors. Readers will excuse me for that. There are very few people knowing Hindustani in Poona. For that matter, those knowing Gujarati are also few in number. Readers know under what conditions *Harijan* was started. It did not prove so difficult to bring out *Harijanbandhu* from Poona because I had with me workers who knew Gujarati while those who know Hindustani are scattered everywhere. I hope the printing of *Harijan Sevak* will improve soon and the mistakes will gradually become fewer. If those who take interest in the language of *Harijan Sevak* send me their criticism I shall be grateful.

Although Viyogiji had wired his willingness to continue as editor he writes to say that he would be happy if he was relieved. He believes that it is morally wrong to continue as editor without any responsibility. He also says that he will hardly get any time to write. I understand his viewpoint and I appreciate it. I have therefore relieved him. Pyarelal consented to my proposal and has agreed to become the editor. Knowing his temperament, I wanted to keep him free. But he is the only person among my associates who is fit to be editor. He is well versed in Urdu and he has also a knowledge of Hindi. He can therefore carry the responsibility of editing a Hindustani paper. He was at once time editor of *young India*. Notwithstanding all this I would need the generosity of the readers and their help by way of comment and criticism.

The main thing is the realization of the purpose. The purpose of publishing *Harijan Sevak* is to lay before the Hindustani knowing people all aspects of satyagraha. Satyagraha does not mean only civil disobedience. Of much greater importance are the various constructive activities. Without these civil disobedience is nothing. *Harijan Sevak* will strive to explain to the people what this thirteen-point programme is, how it can be conducted and what progress it has made. The work was the same even before, but it was not done under my direct supervision. Now I will look after it to the extent I can. We shall never forget the aim of *Harijan Sevak*, which is the service of the Harijan. For so long as the incubus of untouchability remains our efforts to win swaraj will be like looking for flowers in the sky.

Now the readers will understand why I have given a secondary place to the language. The language is not an end in itself. It is neither jugglery of words nor bombast. It is certainly an important means of

expressing thought. However poor the language of the writer may be, if his ideas have any force, if he has something worth saying or some information useful to the reader, it is sure to find its way to his heart.

THE THIRTEEN-POINT PROGRAMME

The above programme is as follows:

1. Hindi-Muslim or communal unity
2. Removal of untouchability
3. Prohibition
4. Charkha and khadi
5. Other village industries
6. Village sanitation
7. Nayee Taleem or Basic Education
8. Adult education
9. Uplift of women
10. Education in health and hygiene
11. Propagation of the national language (Hindustani)
12. Cultivating love for mother tongue
13. Working for economic equality.

SEVAGRAM, September 8, 1940

*Harijan Sevak*, 14-9-1940

*197. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

*September 8, 1940*

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Yesterday Pyarelal showed me your letter to him.

What a conclusion you draw from my innocent remark! That I show your letters to others and have my letters to you read by them: is this what you think of your godfather? In that case you should abandon him altogether. Why even write to him? How can you trust him? So, that is that.

The people from Sevagram came and said they wanted Dr. Sushilabehn. I said I too needed you, but that it was not in my hands, I would write to you. What reply could I give them? I have the reply but



how can I tell them that? Write to me so that I can let these people and others know.

Now for the reply to your question. You want me to take you round with me my physician, even as I take Mahadev. That occasionally, when you are so inclined, you may stay in the Ashram for the sake of the patients is another matter. I have told you that I cannot do as you say every time. Doing so would be my downfall, because I do not wish to be dependent on a doctor to that extent. That knowing this about me you still ask such a thing of me does you no credit. It is not a thing you should ask. But if I feel that I have made a mistake in not conceding your demand, I will ask your forgiveness and correct the mistake. If I have said anything contrary to this, you must take it as a mistake on my part. It amazes me that you are not able to understand such a simple thing. That is way I have entrusted everything to God. He will do what He wishes.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

## 198. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 8, 1940

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal gave me your letter only yesterday. You did we to write it. What you say is all in your hands today. Only one thing which is behind it all is absolutely wrong. Even though unconsciously, you believe that strength is your right. Doing one's duty is not a right, it is an obligation. You must be content to do whatever it is given to you to do. If I were on my death-bed, would you say that you would take up my case only if I accepted your conditions and not otherwise? If that be not so and if, as you have said, I should not be without a doctor even for a moment, because one can never say what may happen to me at what time, however much I may refuse you should never leave my side. But this is only an argument. I put forward this argument because you have advanced an argument. But what really counts is God. We must let ourselves be guided by Him. In my eyes, you are always with me. I never left you and I do not want to leave you. Your absense irks me, but I would not bargain even for your presence at the cost of duty.

You have committed a grave blunder by writing about the fast to your superior. Such naivete in you is a new thing for me. I informed you about it to convince you that I have concealed nothing from you. But you should not have mentioned it even to Mother or Mohan. It should have remained buried in your heart. I have not written about it even to Devdas. I hope this does not lead to any trouble. You do not have to do anything. You do not even have to feel sorry. There is no doubt that it has been a grave mistake. But now there is nothing to be done about it. You must face the consequences. This is no rebuke, only a warning to you.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

## 199. ADVICE TO PRABHAKAR<sup>1</sup>

[Before September 9, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

I am prepared to go one better than you. Mother cow is in many ways better than the mother who gave us birth. Our mother gives us milk for a couple of years and then expects us to serve for when we grow up. Mother cow expects from us nothing but grass and grain. Our mother often falls ill and expects service from us. Mother cow rarely falls ill. Hers is an unbroken record of service which does not end with her death. Our mother when she dies means expenses of burial or cremation. Mother cow is as useful dead as when she is alive. We can make use of every part of her body her flesh, her bones, her intestines, her horns and her skin. Well, I say this not to disparage the mother who gives us birth but in order to show you the substantial reasons for my worshipping the cow. Although I am such a cow-worshipper, I ask you to take milk. I don't take cow's milk as I took a vow about it. But yours is not a vow. You see what I am doing to expand the dairy here. If you feel so much for the cow, you can dedicate yourself to her service.

*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

## 200. QUESTION BOX<sup>3</sup>

### INDIANS STATES AND CONGRESS ACTIVITY

Q. Should Congress members be enrolled in Indian States?

A. This question has been frequently put and answered by me. I have always held that it would be inadvisable to enrol Congress members in the States. There is danger of friction and clash with authority, and the latter interfering with this work of organization. Indian States subjects who may be anxious to become Congress members can enrol themselves on the register of the nearest Congress office of their Province in British India. But it would be better for them not to bother about membership and to confine themselves to such activity

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Sevagram Notes", 9-9-1940. Prabha-kar, a Harijan worker from Andhra, had given up cow's milk in expiation for the sin he had committed against here in eating carrion.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

as is possible within their own States. This can be largely only constructive work. It will arouse self-consciousness and solidarity among the masses. In fact it may on the whole be better to make people Congress-minded in the true sense of the term than to enrol them as Congress members.

#### A. I. S. A. WORKERS

Q. Supposing members are enrolled in the State for the Congress, should not workers of the Charkha Sangh or the Praja Mandals participate or co-operate in Congress political work?

A. Neither of these organizations may go outside its allotted field. The Charkha Sangh workers are already precluded from doing so by the existing rules. Although it is a creation of the Congress, it has no connection with Congress politics. It is purely an economic and philanthropic organization and cannot be made to subserve a dual purpose. The Praja Mandals should be ruled by their peculiar position. They are functioning under heavy odds. [It would not be fair or proper]<sup>1</sup> to burden them with Congress work. It follows from this they cannot be asked to lend co-operation to the Congress organization, unless it be in the sense of [silent homage expressed in the constructive work.]<sup>2</sup> All these organizations can help one another by each rendering true service within its well-defined ambit. Thus if the Congress is successful in the political field, the Charkha Sangh and the Praja Mandals would profit thereby. Similarly the success of the Charkha Sangh equally serves the Congress. Any single Praja Mandal that achieves success in its mission strengthens the Congress to that extent. By straying from our allotted fields we are likely to do more harm than good.

SEVAGRAM, September 9, 1940

*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

#### 201. KHADI PATRIKAS<sup>3</sup>

Several Khadi Patrikas are being published these day by the various branches of the All-India Spinners' Association. I have not seen all of them. But of those that I have seen the Maharashtra Khadi

<sup>1</sup> The Hindi version has: "It would be dangerous."

<sup>2</sup> The Hindi version has "moral support".

<sup>3</sup> The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

*Patrika* alone has captured my attention. The rest, so far as I have seen them, are not up to much. If all the provinces will send me their respective khadi patrikas, I will gladly have them examined and send them the result. Besides these there is too the *Gram Seva Patrika* published on behalf of the Nalwadi (Wardha) Karyalaya which is always well worth reading. It is published in Marathi. Shri Vinoba is the inspiration behind it. As a rule, it contains at least one article by him. In my opinion no *patrika* should be brought out for its own sake. They should be self-supporting, notwithstanding the fact that their readers are likely to be mostly workers of the publishing organization. The latter will and must pay for the publications if they are really needed, since they will be getting back many times the worth of money spent on them in the form of useful knowledge.

The August issue of the *Maharashtra Khadi Patrika* is lying before me. One item out of it, viz., "One Aspect of Khadi", has already been reproduced in these columns. The *patrika* is mostly in Hindi, partly in Marathi. Each issue is priced as. 2; the subscription for the year being Rs.1/4/-. it is printed on handmade paper. It is published from *chanda* and can be had from the Khadi Karyalaya, Wardha.

The *patrika* is filled with useful knowledge about khadi. The issue under review contains the following articles: "The thickness of yarn and width of cloth", "The Care of Slivers", "Some Experiments of Gandhi Ashram, Raniwa", "The Curriculum of the Vastra Vidyalaya, Mool", "The Village Service Scheme of the Gandhi Seva Sanga", "For Spinners on the Yeravda and the Kisan Charkhas", "Dhanush Takli", "The Arithmetic of Spinning", "Organizational Notes". No student of khadi can afford to go without this patrika.

SEVAGRAM, September 9, 1940

*Harijan*, 22-9-1940

## 202. NOTES<sup>1</sup>

### CONGRESS AHIMSA

I am being inundated with letters<sup>2</sup> complaining that by giving my definition of ahimsa before the Poona Congressmen, who saw me

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati adds: "Some sent by registered post".

recently at Wardha,<sup>1</sup> I have seriously circumscribed the scope of ahimsa. These friends forget that my remarks were confined to Congress ahimsa only. Personally I would not kill insects, scorpions or even snakes. Nor would I under any circumstance take meat. But I may not impose the creed of such ahimsa on the Congress. The Congress is not a religious institution, it is a political organization. Its non-violence is limited to human beings. If it were to be further extended, only Hindus, and among even them only Vaishnavas and Jains, would be left to participate in it. Millions of Hindus who eat fish and meat would be excluded. My proposition, to my mind, is so simple and straight that I never thought that anybody could object to it.

My critics should further understand that many Mussalmans have not accepted even the limited ahimsa of the Congress as their creed, and that the Congress, itself has by its Wardha and Poona resolutions, so cramped its scope as to render it almost meaningless. It follows, therefore, that any attempt to widen its scope to include the sub-human species will defeat its purpose. Unlimited ahimsa will take time to be universalized.<sup>2</sup> we will have ample cause to congratulate ourselves if we learn to substitute the law of love in society for that of the jungle, and if instead of harbouring ill will and enmity in our bosoms against those whom we regard as our enemies we learn to love them as actual and potential friends. It should be remembered too that mere *jivadaya* (kindness to animals) does not enable us to overcome the 'six deadly enemies' within us, namely, lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and falsehood.<sup>3</sup> Give me the man who has completely conquered self and is full of goodwill and love towards all, and is ruled by the law of love in all his actions, and I for one will offer him my respectful homage even though he be a meat-eater. On the other hand the *jivadaya* of a person who is steeped in anger and lust but daily feeds the ants and insects and refrains from killing has hardly anything in it to recommend itself. It is a mechanical performance without any spiritual value. It may even be worse—a hypocritical screen for hiding the corruption within.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Discussion with B. G. Kher and Others", 15-8-1940

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati adds here: "It certainly has its uses for the devotees."

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati has here: "Only non-violent behaviour towards other human beings will help us to overcome these six enemies."

## NON-VIOLENCE DURING RIOTS

A friend writes:

How can non-violence be efficacious during riots? By self-immolation we can influence only those with whom we have already established living contacts. But the hooligans who perpetrate violence during riots are, as a rule, hirelings imported from outside. How can they have any scruples about hurting those whom they have never known before and for whom they can have no regard or consideration?

The question deserves careful consideration. The friend who has put it is a valiant worker who nearly lost his life in trying to do his duty during a riot.

I have often written on this question before. The pity of it is that Congressmen have never seriously thought over the question of finding a non-violent way of quelling riots. Their non-violence was restricted to the sole purpose of offering civil resistance to the authorities. In my opinion the non-violence that goes so far and no further scarcely deserves the name 'ahimsa'. You may, if you like, call it unarmed resistance. So far as it is a device for embarrassing the Government it is a species of himsa. To quell riots non-violently, there must be true ahimsa in one's heart, an ahimsa that takes even the erring hooligan in its warm embrace. Such an attitude has to be cultivated. It can only come as a prolonged and patient effort which must be made during peaceful times. There would be members of a peace brigade should come into close touch and cultivate acquaintance with the so-called goonda element in his vicinity. He should know all and be known to all and win the hearts of all by his living and selfless service. No section should be regarded as too contemptible or mean to mix with. Goondas do not drop from the sky, nor do they spring from the earth like evil spirits. They are the product of social disorganization, and society is therefore responsible for their existence. In other words, they should be looked upon as a symptom of corruption in our body politic. To remove the disease we must first discover the underlying cause. To find the remedy will then be a comparatively easy task. So far we have not even attempted a proper beginning. But it is never too late to mend. It is enough that we are at last alive to the necessity of it. We have now to follow it up with prompt action. Let everyone who is interested make a prompt beginning in his own neighbourhood. The difficulty mentioned by my correspondent will automatically resolve itself if we proceed with our effort in the right spirit.

## HOW TO UNIVERSALIZE KHADI

A correspondent<sup>1</sup> writes:

1. The spinning propaganda is going on in every part of India; but I wish the A. I. S. A. would simultaneously open khadi production centres where people could send or take their yarn, without much expense, for weaying, and where they could sell their yarn if they wished.
2. The A. I. S. A. should allow every spinner to have his or her yarn woven locally and also to sell it locally.
3. Khadi bhandars in big towns and cities mean heavy overhead charges due to house-rent, electric lighting, management, and other office expenses, and that makes khadi too dear. It ought to be possible for people to purchase cheap khadi in villages or taluka centres.

All the three suggestions are good. But the great difficulty in carrying them out is that we have not enough workers. There is no doubt that all the yarn should be woven where it is spun, and that the khadi should be disposed of there and then. Therein lies the beauty of khadi. The economics of khadi are to a great extent contrary to those of mill cloth. Cloth manufactured in Manchester is meant for use not in Manchester or England or Europe, but to be exported to Asia or Africa for the use of the people there. On the contrary khadi is meant to be made for the millions by the millions living in villages. Mills use cotton imported from all parts of the world. Cotton for khadi should be produced where it is turned into khadi. We have not yet attained the ideal of the science of khadi, and to that extent the foundation of khadi must be regarded as weak. There was no science of khadi when we began to use khadi. It has evolved with the progress of khadi, and even now it is far from being perfect. But ever-watchful khadi servants are constantly thinking about it and going on perfecting it in the light of experience. I am afraid it will be some time before we can reach the ideal pictured by the correspondent. The A. I. S. A. is not slack in its effort, but it is faced with difficulties at every step. The main thing needed for the universalization of khadi is the co-operation of the people. Machine manufacture can be planned in an office and can be carried out according to plan. Where people have to be converted to an idea it does take time. We have therefore, for the time being, to put with khadi bhandars in towns and cities. Most of these are self-supporting. But for them there would not be the demand for khadi

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati version has "from Dabhoi".



that there is today. While, therefore, we should make every attempt to teach the ideal, we cannot jump to it at one bound.<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM, September 9, 1940

*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

### 203. QUESTION BOX<sup>2</sup>

#### STUDENT AND SATYAGRAHA

Q. Why do you object to students participating in the satyagraha campaign, if it is launched? And why must they leave school or college for good, in case they are permitted? Surely students in England are not silently looking on when their country is engaged in a war.

A. To withdraw students from schools and colleges is to encourage them in a programme of non-co-operation.

It is not on our programme today. If I were in charge of the satyagraha campaign, I should neither invite nor encourage the students to leave their schools and colleges. We have seen by experience that the students have not yet got over their passion for Government schools and colleges. That these institutions have lost their glamour is a gain, but I do not set much store by it. And if the institutions are to continue, withdrawal of students for satyagraha will do them no good and will be of little help to the cause. Such withdrawal will not be non-violent. I have said that those who intend to join the campaign should leave their schools or colleges for good and resolve to devote themselves to the nation's service even after the struggle is over. There is no comparison between the students here and those in England. There the whole nation is involved in the war. The institutions have been closed down by the managers. Here, on the contrary, students leaving their schools and colleges would do so in spite of the heads of those institutions.

#### ARE NOT ALL FASTS VIOLENT?

Q. Are not all fasts violent? Do I not coerce a friend when I try to prevent him, by means of my fast, from doing a wrong act?

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati version has: "and as long as we do not reach the ideal we should not underestimate the existing arrangement."

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-9-1940. This English translation is reproduced from *Harijan*.

A. Fasts undertaken according to the rules governing them are truly non-violent. There is no room there for coercion. If a friend of mine is going astray, and if I impose suffering on myself by fasting in order to awaken his better instincts, it can be only out of love. If the friend for whom I fast has no love in him, he will not respond. If he has it and responds, it is all to the good. This is how I would analyse his act: He valued his love for me more than his bad ways. There is a possible risk, I admit, namely that as soon as the effect of the fast is over he would be tempted to go back to his old ways. But then I can fast again. Ultimately the increasing influence of my love will either convert the friend to the extent of weaning him completely from his evil ways, or repeated fasts may lose their novelty, blunt his mind, and make it impervious to my fasting. It is my conviction that a fast undertaken out of genuine love cannot have such an untoward result. But because such a result is not impossible we cannot afford to disregard this pure instrument of moral reform. The risk, however, makes it clear that he who fasts should be properly qualified, and that it should not be lightly undertaken.

#### PENANCE

Q. Is not the realization of one error and the resolve never to repeat it a penance in itself? Is any further penance necessary?

A. Realization of an error, which amounts to a fixed resolve never to repeat it, is enough penance. One casts away one's evil habits as a snake casts off its skin, and thus purifies oneself. Such self-purification is itself complete penance. But he who gets into the habit of committing errors cannot easily shed it. For all such penance in its accepted sense, if undertaken with discrimination, is likely to be a great help.

SEVAGRAM, September 10, 1940  
*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

## 204. *LETTER TO SHAKRIBEHN C. SHAH*

*September 10, 1940*

CHI. SHAKRIBEHN,

Why do you feel worried? Happiness and misery, health and disease, youth and old age are always with the body. Who knows which is the fruit of sin and which of good deeds? There is nothing wrong in your staying on there. Come here whenever you wish. You may start as soon as you get this letter so that you may be free from worry. You have to bring Sharda with you. Everything will be all right.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. G. 31

## 205. *NOT QUITE NEW*<sup>1</sup>

Apropos of my suggestion that a successful non-violent defence against aggression from without is not so fantastic as is supposed, a correspondent sends me the following extract from a writing in *Visvabharati* of 1927:

Of course, we must not think that killing one another is the only form of war. Man is pre-eminently a moral being. His war instinct should be shifted to the moral plane and his weapons should be moral weapons. The Hindu inhabitants of Baili, while giving up their lives before the invaders, fought with their moral weapons against physical power. A day will come when men's history will admit their victory. It was a war. Nevertheless it was in harmony with peace, and therefore glorious.

SEVAGRAM, September 11, 1940

*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

## 206. *ECONOMIC RUIN IN SINDH*

The following printed letter has been circulated by Shri Tarachand D. Gajra and Shri C. T. Valecha:

We trust you received our previous communication, 'A note on the present state of lawlessness in Sindh'. Herewith follows another one, 'Eco-

<sup>1</sup> This was published under "Notes".

conomic ruin due to the lawlessness in Sindh'. It is a sad story of silent misery that has befallen those who are migrating without any financial aid from the public or the authorities. Elsewhere such a thing would evoke wide international public support and sympathy. We hope your interest in our province will grow.

I take the following from the statement referred to in the letter:

Great havoc has been wrought in the economic life of the province by the present lawlessness in Sindh. The village life is almost at the brink of total ruin. The peasantry, whose only property and means of sustenance are the bulls and the milch cattle, find themselves without both on account of depredations by thieves, as thefts of cattle have risen to abnormal proportions. The lot of the cultivators has come to this that he passes the day of toil followed by a night of vigil.

The Hindus in the villages do not feel themselves strong enough to face thieves and dacoits. Hence they have taken to migrating from smaller villages to bigger villages, and those who are in bigger villages are leaving for urban areas.

With a view to having some idea of this migratory movement, herein below are given figures about one of the sixty-one tahsils in Sindh, namely, Hyderabad taluka. These have been collected by Prof. Ghanshyam, M. L. A. (Congress- Hyderabad Rural Constituency). From several villages almost all Hindu families have left, and from most of the remaining ones nearly fifty per cent of the Hindus have migrated.

Then follow the figures about the migration from 42 villages in the single tahsil of Hyderabad. Of these all the Hindu families in 17 villages have migrated. Of the rest some villages had only one family left. More than 50 per cent of the families had left all the other villages.

The framers of the statement thus comment on the figures:

To fully grasp the significance of the above figures it should be borne in mind that Hyderabad tahsil is in one of the best situated parts of the province. It is immediately round the district headquarters, while the Hyderabad district itself is the entral district of the province - both the eastern desert boundary and the hilly western border of the province lying far away. Even the Sukkur district, which witnessed the recent abominable atrocities, is far distant from Hyderabad. If that is the state of affairs in the safest part of the province, the extent of migration from villages in the tahsils in other districts such as Dadu, Jacobabad, Larkana and Sukkur can easily be imagined.

I need not reproduce the other paragraphs of the statements. The whole of it is a dignified and dispassionate narrative of the calamity that has overtaken the Hindus. The narrative shows that it has begun to affect the Muslims also. The Hindus of Sindh are enterprising. They supply the felt wants of the Muslim agriculturists. The two are closely intertwined. Communalism of the virulent type is a recent growth. The lawlessness is a monster with many faces. It hurts all in the end including those who are primarily responsible for it.

The writers of the covering letter are right in saying that the Sindh calamity is an all-India concern. It is as much the duty of the Congress as of the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha to deal with the situation in the right spirit. The Government of Sindh will be judged by the manner in which they handle the situation. Nor can the Central Government look on indifferently while a province of India, which is watered by the mighty Indus and which contains the remains of our proud and ancient past, is being devastated by lawlessness which, if not checked in time, may travel beyond the imaginary boundary of Sindh. For what happens in India, whether good or bad, in one part, must ultimately affect the whole of India.

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, September 11, 1940

*Harijan*, 15-9-1940

### 207. *LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI*

[ Before *September 12, 1940* ]<sup>1</sup>

In the course of a letter written to Sir Akbar Hydari, Gandhiji says that satyagraha has been suspended by the State Congress under his advice. However, he thinks that the time is come for some action to be taken and he has picked up only four satyagrahis<sup>2</sup> out of a long list to offer satyagraha at Aurangabad tomorrow. After they are arrested, none else will offer satyagraha, but if they are released, they will again offer satyagraha.

Those four satyagrahis left Wardha last night for Aurangabad.

*The Hindu*, 12-9-1940

<sup>1</sup> The news item in the source is dated September 12.

<sup>2</sup> These were Achyuthrao Deshpande, Motilal Manthiri, Devram Nanji Chohan and Hiralal Kotecha.

## 208. ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

[September 15, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

The All-India Congress Committee has given its careful attention to the events that have taken place since its last meeting held in Poona on July 27, 1940, and to the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at Wardha in August last.<sup>2</sup> The Committee approves of and endorses these resolutions.

In order to end the deadlock in India and to promote the national cause, in co-operation with the British people, the Working Committee, even at the sacrifice of Mahatma Gandhi's co-operation, made a proposal to the British Government in their Delhi resolution of July 7, which was subsequently approved by the A. I. C. C.<sup>3</sup> at Poona. This proposal was rejected by the British Government in a manner which left no doubt that they had no intention to recognize India's independence, and would, if they could, continue to hold this country indefinitely in bondage for British exploitation. This decision of the British Government shows that they will impose their will upon India, and their recent policy has further shown that they will not even tolerate free expression of public opinion in condemnation of their

<sup>1</sup> The resolution, drafted by Gandhiji (*vide* "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay) and moved by Jawaharlal Nehru on this date, was passed on September 16.

<sup>2</sup> On August 21, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution (*vide* "Resolution Passed at Congress Working Committee Meeting at Wardha", 21-8-1940) on the Viceroy's declaration (*vide* "Statement made by the Viceroy on August 8, 1940") of August 8, suggesting expansion of Governor's Executive Council and establishment of a War Advisory Council. The Viceroy also stated that soon after the war they would set up "a body of representatives of principal elements in India's national life" to frame the new Constitution. He added that "they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life." The Working Committee resolved that the Viceroy's offer not only did not fulfil the Congress demand but also blocked the way of achieving freedom.

<sup>3</sup> The A.I.C.C., which met at Poona from July 25 to 28, ratified the Working Committee resolution demanding independence and a national ministry at the Centre and explained, "how, while the Congress must continue to adhere strictly to the principle of non-violence in the struggle for independence, it was unable, in the present circumstances, to declare that the principle should be extended to India's national defence". For the text of the Delhi resolution and Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide* "The Delhi Resolution"

associating India in the war against Germany, against the will of a vast body of the people of India, and of exploiting her national resources and manpower for this purpose.

The All-India Congress Committee cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of public opinion and which could lead to the degradation of her people and their continued enslavement. By following this policy the British Government have created an intolerable situation, and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people. The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom. At this grave crisis in the movement for national freedom, the All-India Congress Committee, therefore, requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. The Delhi resolution, confirmed by the A.I.C.C. at Poona, which prevented him from so doing, no longer applies. It has lapsed.

The A.I.C.C. sympathizes with the British people as well as the peoples of all other countries involved in the war. Congressmen cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no ill will against them, and the spirit of satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them. But this self-imposed restraint cannot be taken to the extent of self-extinction. The Congress must insist on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy based on non-violence. The Congress has, however, no desire at the present moment to extend non-violent resistance, should this become necessary, beyond what is required for the preservation of the liberties of the people.

In view of certain misapprehensions that have arisen in regard to the Congress policy of non-violence, the A.I.C.C. desires to state this afresh and to make it clear that this policy continues, notwithstanding anything contained in previous resolutions which may have led to these misapprehensions. This Committee firmly believes in the policy and practice of non-violence not only in the struggle for swaraj but also in so far as this may be possible of application in free India. The Committee is convinced, and recent world events have demonstrated, that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment

of a new and juster political and economic order, if the world is not to destroy itself and revert to barbarism. A free India will, therefore, throw all her weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself be prepared to give a lead in this to the world. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions, but the State would do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament. Effective disarmament and the establishment of world peace by the ending of national wars, depend ultimately on the removal of the causes of wars and national conflicts. These causes must be rooted out by the ending of the domination of one country over another and the exploitation of one people or group by another. To that end India will peacefully labour, and it is with this objective in view that the people of India desire to attain the status of a free and independent nation. Such freedom will be the prelude to the close association with other countries within a comity of free nations for the peace and progress of the world.

*Harijan, 22-9-1940*

### 209. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,  
*September 15, 1940*

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I am writing this in the A.I.C.C. meeting. My heart is there, though the body is here. Your being there eases my mind. Your reports are good and business-like. I hope the typhoid case is progressing as it should. I have talked exhaustively to Dinshaw<sup>1</sup> about Sarala Devi<sup>2</sup>. He is firmly of opinion that, if she is to be cured by nature treatment, she should put herself under his care. He is ready to take charge of her whenever she can go to Poona. If she will not go, he is of opinion that she will not be cured except by quinine taken under observation. The spleen must be reduced. She ought not to trifle with her body. Please read this to her. If she decides to go to Dinshaw she should do so at once. Let her not think of his bill. If she will not, she should go to the Civil Hospital and get definitely cured. No false modesty should deter her from taking the course which

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Dinshaw K. Mehta of Nature-cure Clinic, Poona

<sup>2</sup> Sarala Devi Chowdhurani



commends itself to her.

I am afraid I cannot leave before Tuesday. You may expect us therefore on Wednesday.

Of the political situation, you will learn from Mahadev and the papers.

Though the work is heavy, I am bearing the strain well. God be thanked. I am glad Shummy's<sup>1</sup> condition has not meant your going to Simla.

I hope you are not feeling the want of a Simla servant's presence for your minimum comfort.

I take it Sharda<sup>2</sup> and her mother<sup>3</sup> have arrived there and that she and the baby<sup>4</sup> are well.

I am glad Parachure Shastri<sup>5</sup> is doing well and so is Akbar<sup>6</sup>.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3994. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7303

## 210. MESSAGE TO MILL-HANDS

*September 15, 1940*

What need I tell the workers by way of recommending khadi to them? If they have still not understood that for them khadi is the strength of the weak, a source of sustenance during strikes and the best means of preserving their self-respect, what more is there for me to say? Then it is a sad thing.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

<sup>1</sup> Lt. Col. Shumshere Singh, the addressee's brother, a retired surgeon

<sup>2</sup> Sharda G. Chokhawala

<sup>3</sup> Shakaribehn C. Shah

<sup>4</sup> Anand G. Chokhawala

<sup>5</sup> A leprosy patient who came to Sevagram in November 1939 and stayed there till his death on September 5, 1945

<sup>6</sup> Akbarbhai Chawda

## 211. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY-I

September 15, 1940

I told Maulana Saheb<sup>1</sup> that the resolution<sup>2</sup> before you was of such a nature that he would have to let me speak on it right away, so that before anyone else spoke on it I could explain in my own words how I interpreted it, why at death's door as I was I had taken upon myself this responsibility and what I expected of you. A general discussion could come afterwards. Maulana Saheb and the other members of the Working Committee acceded to my request. I have had to bear many heavy responsibilities in my life but I feel that the responsibility I am today called upon to bear is the heaviest. I have assumed this responsibility with due deliberation. But I must confess that I am besieged by a doubt, I cannot say why, as to how far I shall be able to carry you with me. As to what the upshot will be is quite beyond my telling. Still it is good. It is a lesson I have learnt during fifty years and more that a man should not worry about the end but should address himself only to the means. Herein lies the key to success. Truly we can think only of the means, which is the only thing in our hands. Nothing can interpose itself between us and our means. But who knows about the result? Who can tell whether I shall be able to go where I intend to go. So many obstructions in the way can frustrate me. There are hidden enemies inside myself, too. I shudder even when I think of all this. But it is enough for me that I know where I want to go and by which way. So I set out in the faith that if the path I have chosen is right, straight and true, my quest will lead me to the end I desire and no other. Behind this belief of mine is not only faith but also the accumulated experience of fifty years. Therefore, in assuming this responsibility, I am neither hampered by my hesitation nor subdued by my fear. Before getting into a boat there is scope for a thousand hesitations, fears and reflection. There is none after one is in the boat and the boat is in the stream.

Why then this fear in me ? Why this hesitation ? I have not the least bit of doubt as to the rightness of the way. What I am not so sure about is whether I shall be able to carry you with me, heart and soul. In the past I used to tour all over the country. Today I am no longer able to do that. Even if I wanted I would not be able to get around the

<sup>1</sup> Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

way I used to. I must accept my limitations. I am not so much out of my mind as to forget that I am past seventy and go about thinking that I am fifty. So I confine myself to Sevagram and try to do what service I can from there. Even coming here to Bombay was a strain. But since there was this responsibility to shoulder there was no alternative. What I fear is that the relations that bound me to you at one time no longer obtain. Things change, they are changing today. The people that were in the Congress twenty years ago are not there today. Those who were old then are gone. Those who were young are no longer young.

As you know at Wardha, at my request, the Working Committee had exempted me. I had said that since I was no longer able to keep your hearts and minds with me it was better for me to keep away from you for even after that I would be serving the Congress. They also felt that if I wanted to create something new I would not be able to do so by keeping them with me. We parted. But since then neither they have known any peace nor I. As to who was at fault no one quite seemed to know. Of course, as I have been saying again and again, man is an erring creature. We went on arguing. In the meanwhile came the Delhi resolution. The Congress made a simple and straightforward proposal to the Government. The Government refused to countenance it. I must confess that this rather pleased me. For I trembled at the very thought that the Congress which had been swearing by ahimsa for the last twenty years, the Congress which had given the call of ahimsa from thousands of platforms to the millions in the country, could take it upon itself to make the people give up ahimsa and cultivate war-mindedness. Has not the Congress, ever since the days of Khilafat and the Ali Brothers, repeated in season and out of season, with the beat of drums, that we seek to solve all questions—whether of the Khilafat or swaraj, whether national or international—only through non-violence and that if we have to resort to civil disobedience it will be purely non-violent? And notwithstanding the fact that our opponent is a Government that spends ten crores of rupees a-day on arms and ammunition, we chose the path of peace and Muslims as well as Hindus all resorted only to non-violent action. You must remember that in the special session of the Congress at Calcutta the main resolution<sup>1</sup> was moved by me and it mentioned only the Khilafat and the Punjab murders and brutalities. “Where is swaraj in this?” asked

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “The Non-Co-Operation Resolution”, 5-9-1920

Pandit Motilalji. In my view, swaraj was inherent in the two demands. If we had been successful in having them accepted, we would have automatically secured swaraj. Even so I accepted his suggestion. Ever since we have been saying that we shall destroy the empire through non-violence, free ourselves from its evils through non-violence. How could we, I thought, ask the Congress now to become war-minded? In Delhi we had declared that if the freedom of India was acknowledged, we would co-operate fully in the war effort. This meant that to secure freedom we were prepared to sacrifice non-violence. How terrible it is that we should be ready to go before the millions, in whose name we speak and to whom we have been preaching non-violence all these years, and tell them something quite opposite!

The strength of the Congress does not reside in the members enrolled in its register. The strength of the Congress is derived from the millions that stand by these members. The Congress does not belong to the Hindus alone. It belongs to all—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians. It may well have a majority of Hindus but belongs as much to Muslims, Parsis and Christians as it does to Hindus. No one is precluded from joining the Congress because he is a Muslim. An example is there before us. Maulana Saheb has not become our President because he represents a large group of Muslims. And yet he makes you and me and the Congress and its Working Committee dance to his tune. He did not have to become a Hindu for that. Where will you find a Muslim academic as great as he? Then there are the Khan Brothers sitting amongst us. They wield so much influence over me that they can make me do what no one else can. Dr. Khan Saheb told me that plying the charkha was beyond him. I told him that if he found the charkha difficult he could take up the pickaxe. Similarly, is not the Congress of the Parsis? They are numerically a much smaller community than Muslims. But Dadabhai Naoroji became our first President. Then Pherozeshah Mehta, the uncrowned king of Bombay, was our President, who in fact made the Congress. He knew no distinctions. It was all the same to him whether one was a Parsi, a Muslim or a Christian. Since childhood the lesson I have learnt from their example is that anyone who seeks the freedom of the country and serves it can acquire control of the Congress. Who can stop Muslims from acquiring control of the Congress? Who can prevent them from dominating the Congress in the Punjab, in Bengal, in Sind and even in Bombay where they are in a minority? If there are any Hindus who in their pride think that since they are in a majority the

Congress is their monopoly, I should ask them to leave the Congress. It is true that the Congress guides itself by majority opinion. But that is because, and only to the extent that, right is on the side of the majority. Many people accuse the Congress of wanting to bring about Fascism. But even such people will concede that the Congress has no weapon except that of non-violence. All its work is conducted wholly through peaceful means. Such being the case the charge of Fascism becomes meaningless. For Fascism cannot carry on without the cudgel and the sword, nor can imperialism, nor can Nazism. But since we want to do everything peacefully we have to carry with us even a minority of a handful of people. If we do not do that, they can obstruct our functioning. The magic of satyagraha, which I have explained to the country, is for all. With its help even eighty thousand people can block the way of eighty million. And, to say nothing of eighty million, we can stop even 210 million from riding on the backs of the whole population. There is a section in the Congress that says that Gandhi's way is not the right way. They want a campaign of widespread labour strikes, mass defiance of laws and such other things. They do not accept the policy of non-violence. It certainly is one way. But it is not the Congress way. Those who accept the policy of non-violence will have to accept that the Congress does not belong to any one community. And if it goes by the principle of majority it is not so as to rule over the minority or brow-beat it but to serve. If the majority remembers this and acts accordingly it will easily be able to win the minority over to its side. The history of the Congress shows this. Records in the Congress office will show that its membership has been steadily increasing. It has also been steadily gaining in prestige. The reason for this is that the strength that the majority represents is moral strength and not the strength of the brute. This is the strength of its right and truth. If in addition it gains also the strength of non-violence, nothing can be more desirable.

It is possible that this will be my last opportunity to speak to you. And I have to take work from you. So I wish to talk to you to my heart's content. I have explained to you what sort of thing the Congress is. If you cannot swallow what I have said, you may throw out the resolution. If your hearts and minds do not accept it, you and I shall be deceiving one another and the purpose we seek to attain will not be attained. If the captain of a ship does not have the co-operation of the crew heart and soul, the ship must sink. You have accepted me as your captain—and I am your captain. So you must—all of you,

from the first officer down to the lowest hand—give me your co-operation with one heart and one mind. If not, not only will you be shipwrecked yourself but history will record that we betrayed the millions in whose name we claimed to speak, that we consigned ourselves to the sea and ruined the country.

Therefore the first important thing is that with full deliberation you should follow me heart and mind. Of course, I shall be keeping you informed every week. I do not wish to go to jail. The Government may no doubt put me in jail but I will not deliberately court imprisonment. I will not myself offer civil disobedience. If they seek to gag me I will not keep quiet. But the Government knows me to some extent. If I do not wish to go to jail it will not put me in jail. I shall be keeping those of you who are outside posted with instructions from time to time and expect you to act accordingly. If you do not do so and then say, 'How is it you could not see that we would be of no use to you as instruments in your hands?', you will be betraying me. Rather than that you should bid me good-bye now and throw out this resolution. If you do this the Working Committee and I will not be hurt. After all the resolution has been put up to you for your approval. If you do not like it you have every right to reject it.

Now I come to the resolution. It is a short one. One part of it says what we believe in. We believe in peace. We want to take peace as far as it can go. Not only do we want to secure swaraj through non-violence, but we also want to run our affairs after swaraj is secured in a non-violent way. But the government under swaraj will not be wholly in the hands of Congressmen. Other parties—including those opposed to the Congress—will be represented. There will be adult franchise. That is to say, adult Hindus, Muslims and those whom we today consider untouchables will elect their representatives for the parliament. Who knows what this mixed parliament will do? But I hope that those representing the Congress will vote for non-violence and if they are in a majority they will conduct the affairs of State through non-violence. The Congress, as Congress, has no other way. We have been saying all along that we shall secure swaraj through non-violence, through peace. How then can we, in order to secure swaraj, assist the empire in its war today? There are other reasons besides for not giving such assistance. Supposing the Government accepted all our demands and said, 'You may do what you like later, but you must mobilize an army today.' Even then in the present

circumstances I feel we have to tell them, 'No, we cannot go along with you. We do not wish you to lose the war. It is in the hands of God whether you win or lose. But we can under no condition help you with money or men. No matter what rewards you promise, the Congress will never agree to the step.'

There is another thing in this resolution. At a time when the British people are fighting for their very existence and are risking their lives and their all, no satyagrahi will ask, 'Are you going to give us swaraj now or not?' He will remain quiet. He will say, 'Why fight against an opponent in trouble?' We cannot start the battle of swaraj now on the assumption that they will give us nothing after they have won the war. It is not the way of satyagrahis to take advantage of the opponent's weak position to wrest political power from him. We have to wrest power with our own strength. We, therefore, tell them: 'At this hour of your trial we do not wish to harass you.'

The question then may be asked: Why bring the resolution at all? For, whatever we may do in pursuance of the resolution is bound to create difficulties for them. The answer is that the position today is such that if we do nothing, our very existence will be imperilled. Even if they do not seek to destroy us the result will be the same. The answer of those who are opposed to the war is that ever since Ramgarh<sup>1</sup> we have been shouting from the house-tops that it is our right to persuade others not to assist in the war. We shall tell them that India cannot be forced into supporting them, that we do not wish to gain even our independence by supporting them in the war. We must have the freedom to say this. Right of free speech is included among civic rights and so far as it has not been gained, swaraj cannot become a reality. So long as we adhere to non-violence and can do what we like, we can have no quarrel with the Government. And if vast masses of our people give expression to this feeling how can the Government claim that India is with it in the war? We have a right to tell them without mincing words that they made a serious mistake in declaring India at war. They themselves enacted legislation and gave us provincial autonomy. It used to be believed that the provinces enjoyed the status of virtual 'Dominion Status'<sup>2</sup>. 'Safeguards'<sup>3</sup> were certainly there. But that was merely to provide against the possibility that owing

<sup>1</sup> In Bihar, where the Congress met in March 1940

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji has used the English expression.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Linlithgow.

to inexperience we might not know how to manage Governmental affairs. These safeguards never had to be invoked in practice. Notwithstanding all this the central authority abused its powers and proclaimed that India was at war. The Government may very well count the Princes on their side but who can claim that the people of the princely States are also with the Government in the war? Was it not necessary even to consult the provinces which were supposed to be autonomous? Leaving aside other provinces did they consult even Bengal or the Punjab? Did they ask N.W.F.P., where ninety per cent of the population is Muslim? All this has showed that what is called provincial autonomy is a farce, a mere toy. So we cast it away. Even after casting it away we patiently waited for a year. I do not regret it. We gained in strength thereby—at least I did. For without it we could not have spoken up as we are speaking up today.

After this we made a proposal which was hurtful to us but that too was not accepted by the British Government. Nor did they care. They have made the Viceroy the supreme ruler over 300 million people. The Viceroy<sup>4</sup> is my friend and I hope he will continue to be my friend. But what is the meaning in entrusting one individual with so much power? This is what pinches me. With whose consent does he declare today that India is with Britain in the war? If nothing else, he could have at least kept the Congress out of it when he made the declaration. But nothing of the sort happened. Under the circumstances if we do not make our opposition known we shall cease to exist. At a time when our very existence hangs in the balance what can we say or do? We can at least say this: ‘Send us to jail if you want, but we will make our feelings known. We will not let ourselves go out of existence.’

Still we are observing this restraint: the fight will not be on a mass scale. As I have said, this is not going to be a fight for swaraj. Today they tell us: ‘Come aboard our ship. Save yourselves and save us too.’ We say: ‘No.’ For we do not depend on them for our existence. We do not depend on anyone for our existence. I fear neither Japan nor Germany nor anyone else. I do not seek the defeat of the British. I want them to win. They are a brave nation. But I cannot bear that their rule over my country should be perpetuated and we for ever remain under their protection. So I shall not board their ship. If I do, we shall be faced with what Germany and Britain are faced with today. I shall not be party to the barbarous business they



are engaged in today. I shall keep on addressing them from a distance: 'Why are you cutting each other's throats? Throw away your weapons. Become brothers. You belong to the same Europe and are therefore brothers. Are you fighting for the possession of India? Then you should understand that India will not be possessed either by Germany or Japan. It belongs and will continue to belong to the Indians.' So long as there is a single Congressman alive no foreigner shall occupy it. What may happen after he falls is another matter. A satyagrahi has faith that whatever God does, He does for good, so he will die smiling. And even while dying he will bear no enmity towards his assailant. He will say that the assailant is steeped in ignorance and has lost his senses.

Let me now say something about how the resolution was drafted. Up to now I have been drafting Congress resolutions. However we now have a very able man to do the drafting. So the wording of the resolution is mine but it has been touched up by Jawaharlal. I am not such a master of English as Jawaharlal is. So I asked him to improve my draft. I must say that the exposition of non-violence in the resolution is Jawaharlal's. I had wanted to omit it. Jawaharlal had also agreed. But Maulana Saheb did not permit it. In saying all this I wish to emphasize that the resolution is wholly mine. The resolution says: 'We have no ill will against the British. We want friendship of all.' I am profoundly hurt even if a single English child dies. The thought of St. Paul's Cathedral being damaged hurts me as much as it would hurt me to see the temple of Kashi Vishwanath or the Jama Masjid damaged.

I was therefore shocked to hear that bombs had fallen on St. Paul's. What harm had this Cathedral caused to anyone? But what is the use of merely expressing sorrow? I am a disciple of the British in this regard. Today when bombs are raining over London, the Londoners are going on with their everyday business without showing any panic. They dance, they make merry, they jest. An eleven-year-old boy writes to his father from school that he will not leave England and go to Canada. In this kind of bravery the British people deserve to be our gurus. How then can I forget this thing that I have learnt from them? While I sympathize with them, how can I forget my dharma? They are today in a very delicate plight. But even if they should lose London, even if they should lose England they will not accept defeat. They will go to Canada, they will go to New Zealand,

they will go to Australia and continue the war from there. While sympathizing with them we cannot forget our duty. That is why I have said that though our fight this time will not be for swaraj how can we forget the foundation of swaraj which is in danger? We have to resort to satyagraha to defend it.

But even here we have accepted restraints. The Working Committee says: 'We have placed everything in Gandhi's hands. We have learnt the art of civil disobedience from him. We shall let him make one more throw. So long as he is alive let him do the fighting.' So they have made me the sole leader. That includes civil disobedience, non-violence, non-co-operation and everything. I do not know what step I shall ask you to take today. Right now there is darkness in front of me. You must understand that in passing this resolution you are appointing a man who finds himself in the dark as arbiter of your destiny.

Those who do not want compromises and negotiations should know that this resolution gives scope for both. I have always believed in *via media*. I shall go to the Viceroy with the resolution and ask him why he has taken away our liberty. If he says, 'No, that is not so; keeping within the bounds of non-violence you may say what you like', then I shall not fight. Nor shall I advise you to fight. Thus the resolution spells out the limitation of the objective of the fight. We cannot save one who chooses the path of violence. We do not wish to embarrass the Government. At the same time we do not wish to carry the policy of non-embarrassment to the point of suicide.

In the end the resolution expresses the conviction that if we accept non-violence within our hearts and minds and act according to it, a day will come when the world will come to us and ask us how it can extricate itself from the war. Today England is spending anything from ten to twelve crores of rupees every day on the war. Why can't 300 million of India's people tell them not to indulge in this senseless expenditure? With that amount millions here can be saved from starvation. I commend the bravery of the British but I cannot compliment them for good sense. What they are doing today is foolish in the extreme. If we can tell them plainly what we feel and peacefully secure our independence we can show to the world how a peaceful social order can be established. Today it is merely a dream, tall talk of small men.

But if we can do this, freedom is in our pocket. And not only

this. We can also set a magnificent example to the world. Hitler's astuteness baffles me. But this astuteness is of no worth to me. The thing I have placed before India today is such that even if Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and Churchill all put together oppose it they cannot defeat it.

Just one word more in the end. I do not know what I shall ask you to do. But I know what is not on the cards. Even if we have to resort to civil disobedience it will not be mass civil disobedience. What I have in mind is individual civil disobedience and also some other things. I hope to give you a full account of the responsibility I have today assumed. But should a time come when I find myself bankrupt and cannot do anything, I shall ask Maulana Saheb or whoever else from amongst you is outside jail to try your resources. I pray to God to give you and me the sense and courage and ability to keep on the right path.

If you do not care for the things I have said, I must ask you to throw out this resolution. If you approve of what I have said, I shall hope that you will become the bearers of my message. To those who have violence at heart, those who believe in cutting wires, derailing trains and creating disorder, my request is: There is a great experiment going on; please do not put obstacles in the way, otherwise the lead I can give will become ineffective. If I give up the leadership or the Congress gives up non-violence they may do as they like.

[From Hindi]

*Harijan Sevak*, 21-9-1940

## 212. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY—II<sup>1</sup>

*September 15, 1940*

I know that you have listened to me with the greatest patience.<sup>2</sup> I am specially grateful to you today for the simple reason that I have said many things which may have displeased you. But it was never my intention to displease those whom I want to harness for the great work that lies before you and before me. I have to speak to you at length because I have to shoulder this burden. I have not come with a

<sup>1</sup> In the source, Mahadev Desai explains that this is an “authorized version” of the English speech as “revised by Gandhiji”.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji first spoke in Hindi; *vide* the preceding item.

prepared speech at all. The thoughts will come as I proceed.

Let me begin with a thought which has been weighing with me for a considerable time. When the war broke out and I went to Simla to see the Viceroy I issued a statement<sup>1</sup> the next day, not in a representative but in my individual capacity. A friend<sup>2</sup> has now reminded me how good it would have been if I had simply hung on to that statement although I could not take the Congress with me; and on the eve of my shouldering this responsibility, he prayed that I should be guided by God to take up that original position and retire. I have very great regard for him. I have not forgotten that statement, nor have I any regret or apology to offer. If such a thing occurs—and history often repeats itself—and I happen to go to another Viceroy, I should make the same statement.

Although I spoke only for myself, deep down in me there was the Congressman speaking. The Viceroy also did not send for me because I was M. K. Gandhi. M. K. Gandhi has absolutely no place in his books. The man who wields the sceptre can have no room for individuals. He sent for me because he thought I would represent the Congress view and I would be able to carry conviction to Congressmen.

I withdrew from that position, not as an individual but as a Congressman, and because I failed to carry conviction even to a single Congressman. Happily you have got on the Working Committee men with sterling honesty who had the courage to tell me that, although it was my statement, they did not feel like accepting it. They added that they had had bitter experience behind them, and that therefore they would not be able to take that position. Thus you had the resolution<sup>3</sup> that was passed by the Congress immediately after the war. And I agreed with the resolution as a representative, although I said to them that if I could carry conviction, my original position was the best possible one to take up. If I had pressed the members of the Working Committee to accept my position, they would have done so, but it would have been only mechanical. The statement was not made to deceive the Viceroy or, for the matter of that, a single soul. It came straight from the heart. It was not a theatrical display. It was the

<sup>1</sup> On September 5, 1939; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri; *vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 20-7-1940

<sup>3</sup> Of October 10, 1939; *vide* "A. I. C. C. Resolution"

opening up of the secret recesses of the heart before the world, the Viceroy and the Congress. If these words of mine could not find an echo in their hearts, they would have been of no use whatsoever to the Viceroy, to the great English nation or to India. That still remains my sentiment. If I could not convince the Congress of my attitude, it would not carry us further. It would have been a wrong step to take, and hence it was not taken. With that background I approach this resolution.

I have made repeated statements that I would not be guilty of embarrassing the British people or the British Government when their very existence hung in the balance, that I would not be true to my satyagraha, would not be true to non-violence, would not be true to the truth which I hold dear if I did so, and therefore could not do so. That very man now stands before you to shoulder the burden of satyagraha. Why? There comes a time when a man in his weakness mistakes vice for virtue; and virtue itself, when taken away from its context and from the purpose for which it was dedicated, becomes vice. I felt that, if I did not go to the assistance of the Congress and take the helm even if it be in fear and trembling, I would be untrue to myself.

I feel that in taking the step that we are doing we are rendering a great service not only to the Congress but to the whole of India. And we are rendering a service not only to the whole of India. History will record—and Englishmen will be able to grasp this statement some day—that we rendered help to the English nation, and they will find that we were true to our salt and had the same bravery and fearlessness of which the Englishman is proud and for which he is renowned. I, who claim to be fast friend of the British people, will be guilty of unfriendly conduct if, under a false sense of modesty, or because people may think otherwise about me, or because Englishmen themselves will be angry with me, I do not issue a warning that the virtue of self restraint now becomes vice, because it will kill the Congress organization, and it will kill the very spirit which is exercising this restraint.

When I say this, I am speaking not only for the Congress, but for all who stand for national freedom—Muslims, Parsis, Christians and even those who are against the Congress, so long as they represent the aspiration of India, namely, unadulterated independence. I should be untrue to all of them if, at this time, I said, ‘No embarrassment to

the British.' I must not repeat parrot-like 'no embarrassment'. Then that repetition would be just as useful for my salvation or for the guarding of my virtue as the repetition by a parrot of God's name which cannot bring him salvation, because it is only a mechanical and vocal effort without any intelligence behind it. Therefore, if I exercise that suppression at this critical moment in the history of the nation it would be useless. I should be perfectly untrue to myself if I hid myself in Sevagram and said, 'No, I have told you, no embarrassment.'

The language of this resolution is in the main mine. It appealed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I used to be the Congress draftsman. Now he has taken my place. He saw it was inevitable, if we were to be true to non-violent resistance to the extent to which we wanted to go. The Working Committee has accepted this phraseology deliberately, well knowing its implications. The result is this: If we can get the declaration from the British Government that the Congress can carry on anti-war propaganda, and preach non-co-operation with the Government in their war effort, we will not have civil disobedience.

I do not want England to be defeated or humiliated. It hurts me to find St. Paul's Cathedral damaged. It hurts me as much as I would be hurt if I heard that the Kashi Vishvanath Temple or the Jama Masjid was damaged. I would like to defend both the Kashi Vishvanath Temple and the Jama Masjid and even St. Paul's with my life, but would not take a single life for their defence. That is my fundamental difference with the British people. My sympathy is there with them nevertheless. Let there be no mistake on the part of Englishmen, Congressmen, or others whom my voice reaches, as to where my sympathy lies. It is not because I love the British nation and hate the German. I do not think that the Germans as a nation are any worse than the English or the Italians are any worse. We are all tarred with the same brush; we are all members of the vast human family. I decline to draw any distinctions. I cannot claim any superiority for Indians. We have the same virtues and the same vices. Humanity is not divided into watertight compartments so that we cannot go from one to another. They may occupy one thousand rooms, but they are all related to one another. I would not say, 'India should be all in all, let the whole world perish.' That is not my message. India should be all in all, consistently with the well-being of other nations of the world. I can keep India intact and its freedom also intact only if I have goodwill towards the whole of the human family and not merely for

the human family which inhabits this little spot of the earth called India. It is big enough compared to other smaller nations, but what is India in the wide world or in the universe?

Let there be no mistake as to what I am about. I want my individuality to remain unimpaired. If I lose it, I would be of no service to India, much less to the British people, still less to humanity. My individual liberty is the same as the nation's, convertible with national liberty. I do not claim any greater liberty for myself. Hence my liberty is equal to the liberty of all of you and no greater. I feel that, if my liberty is at stake, yours is also at stake. I claim the liberty of going through the streets of Bombay and say that I shall have nothing to do with this war, because I do not believe in this war, and in this fratricide that is going on in Europe. I admire the bravery. But what is the use of this bravery? I deplore the foolishness and the crass ignorance. These people do not know what they are fighting for. That is how I look at this war that is going on across the seas. I cannot possibly take part in it. Nor do I want the Congress to do so.

The part that I would like to take is the part of a peacemaker. If the British people in their wisdom had recognized the independence not of the Congress but of all India, and if other parties in India had also co-operated with us, we would have taken the honourable place of peacemakers between these nations. Such is my ambition. But today I know that it is a day-dream. But sometimes a man lives in his day-dreams. I live in mine, and picture the world as full of good human beings—not goody-goody human beings. In the Socialist's language, there will be a new structure of society, a new order of things. I am also aspiring after a new order of things that will astonish the world. If you try to dream these day-dreams, you will also feel exalted as I do.

And now I come to our 'tin-pot' Congress—tin-pot in the estimation of others, not my own. If we do not take care, the Congress will disappear, and if the Congress disappears, the national spirit disappears. One after another Congressmen are being selected and jailed. It is not satyagraha to watch people being taken away. It is much better for all of us to rush into the jaws of the opponent. After all, as the Maulana Saheb once said, India is a vast prison. Let us get out of this slave-prison by breaking the prison bars. He said to the

Sikhs at the time of the Nankana Saheb tragedy<sup>1</sup>: ‘You may protect one gurdwara; but what about the vast gurdwara that is India? We have to deliver it from bondage.’ Those words ring true even today in my ears. If this liberty of the nation or the movement for freedom is likely to be choked, then I say that the virtue of self-restraint is going to become a vice. That virtue of restraint cannot be carried to the extent of the extinction of the national spirit wherever it may reside, whether among Congressmen or non-Congressmen.

I do not want to hurl civil disobedience or anything in the face of the Government without making my meaning clear, the meaning I attach to the sum total of Government actions— actions beginning with the declaration of the Viceroy, the statement<sup>2</sup> of the Secretary of State for India, and the series of actions and the policy that the Government have pursued since. The sum total of all these has left an indelible impression on my mind that there is something wrong, some injustice being perpetrated against the whole nation, and that the voice of freedom is about to be stifled. This is implied in the resolution, not in the exact language which I am using now, but you will see the meaning clear as daylight.

In order completely to clarify our position, I propose to approach the Viceroy with a request that he will be good enough to see me, and I have no doubt that he will. I will place my difficulties before him; I will place the Congress difficulties before him. I will approach him in your name, I will tell him that this is the position to which we have been reduced: ‘We do not want to embarrass you and deflect you from your purpose in regard to war effort. We go our way, and you go yours, undeterred, the common ground being non-violence. If we carry the people with us, there will be no war effort on the part of our people. If, on the other hand, without your using any but moral pressure, you find that the people help the war effort, we can have no cause for grumbling. If you get assistance from the Princes, from the zamindars, from anybody high or low, you can have it; but let our voice also be heard. If you accept my proposal, it will be eminently honourable, it will certainly be a feather in your cap. It will be honourable of you, although you are engaged in a

<sup>1</sup> In the Punjab, where on February 20, 1921, many Sikhs were killed on entering the gurdwara;

<sup>2</sup> Of L. S. Amery, who opened on August 14, a debate on India in the House of Commons



life-and-death struggle, that you have given us this liberty. It will be honourable of you that you take this great step, although you have limitless powers to choke our voice, and that you give us the fullest possible freedom, consistently with the observance of non-violence, to tell the people of India not to join the war effort.'

Let the people use any reasoning they like for refusal to help the war effort. My reasoning is the only one which will sit well on Congressmen's lips. But I do not expect all to restrict themselves to that reasoning. Those who have conscientious objection, as I have, will adopt my reasoning. Those who are tired of British imperialism will use that argument. There may be others who will have other arguments. All these should be covered under this freedom of speech, provided, however, that they all accept non-violence, provided also that what they say is said openly and not secretly. These are the implications of my generalship. If these do not satisfy you, you must reject this resolution summarily. So long as you can preach non-co-operation with war effort in men and money; there should be no civil disobedience. But if you have not that liberty, there is no swaraj but perpetual bondage. I would like the British people and the Viceroy to be able to tell the world that they have given the leaders of the Indian people liberty to preach to their people what they like. The British can then say to the world: 'Judge us by our conduct. Here in India we are playing the game.'

I do not mind the British not responding to the Delhi resolution. They may say, 'At the present moment you cannot interfere with the management of affairs as they stand. Deliverance will come to you in its own time. At this critical juncture do not worry us.' I will understand that argument. I will sympathize with it. I will hold my hand so long as there is no fraud or falsity in what they say. It is impossible for them to give us freedom. If freedom has got to come, it must be obtained by our own internal strength, by our closing our ranks, by unity between all sections of the community. It cannot descend from heaven, nor can it be given as a gift from one nation to another. I do not know whether I am representing the feelings of the members of the Working Committee, because I have not discussed these things with them. But you have to take me with all my limitations, with the workings of my mind.

The Viceroy may say, 'You are a visionary.' I may fail in my mission, but we will not quarrel. If he says he is helpless, I will not feel

helpless. I will make good my position. I cannot sit still when I see Ram Manohar Lohia and Jayaprakash Narayan in jail, than whom I do not know braver or straighter men. They have not preached violence, but simply carried out the behests of the Ramgarh resolution<sup>1</sup>. It was a point of honour with them.

I have restrained myself, and will restrain myself. I will not seek imprisonment. I do not want to offer civil disobedience. I will not place myself in peril. In this battle I will not expose myself to imprisonment. But if the Government chooses, it will not be difficult to take me away. I will not be able to seal my lips or restrain my pen. It will be difficult for them to keep me in prison, not because India will rise in rebellion. India will be wrong if it does so. My own instinct is that they will not be able to keep me in jail.

I will place my argument before the Viceroy. I may fail in my mission. But I have never approached a mission in despair. I may have approached it with the consciousness that I may be faced with a blind wall. But I have often penetrated blind walls. I shall approach the Viceroy in the confidence and hope that he will understand the great reasonableness of the request of the Congress for full liberty to preach 'no war' in India. Everyone should have perfect liberty to preach by pen and tongue: 'We cannot aid imperialism, we cannot help spoliation.'

I shall strain every nerve to avoid satyagraha in your name. What shape it will take, when it comes, I do not know. But I know that there will be no mass civil disobedience, because mass civil disobedience is not required for this occasion. I have impenetrable darkness before me regarding the future course of action. I have no mysteries. I do not know how I shall lead you, what action I shall put before you. I hope that any action that we may take will be worthy of the Congress traditions and of the occasion.

I have often said that I do not know the Congress mind as I have buried myself in Sevagram. It is because of the Congress difficulty that I have dragged myself to Bombay, and immediately I am released from this duty you will find me in Sevagram. But I have got strength and resourcefulness enough to lead this battle although I am buried in Sevagram. I shall do better and clearer thinking in Sevagram than anywhere else, simply because I have built up there an atmosphere for

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "A Resolution"

my growth. With the march of time my body must decay but, I hope, not my wisdom. I seem to see things more clearly with the advance of age. It may be self-deception, but there is no hypocrisy. Self-deception is good sometimes in that it helps one to remain cheerful and not to give way to despair. It will be, therefore, wrong of you to drag me from Sevagram; and I promise that I shall give a good account of my stewardship.

There are many parties in the Congress. We are not all of the same opinion. There is indiscipline in the Congress. I know it is inevitable in a mass organization which is growing from day to day. If it is all indiscipline and no discipline, the organization is on the downward path. Let it not be said of you that you come to the Congress although you do not believe in non-violence. How can you possibly sign the Congress pledge with violence in your breasts? I want complete obedience to the policy of non-violence. While the policy lasts, it is the same as though it was a creed, for so long as it holds good it is as good as a creed. My creed holds me for life; yours so long as you hold it. Resign from the Congress, and you are free from it. Let us be clear regarding the language we use and the thoughts we nurture. For, what is language but the expression of thought? Let your thought be accurate and truthful, and you will hasten the advent of swaraj even if the whole world is against you. You will have won swaraj without having to spend nine million pounds a day or without burning a single home. If you are true to your policy, I am sure that without doing any of these things you will build up the majestic edifice of freedom.

Now for the violence party. Do not mix up the methods if you can help it. You have restrained yourselves for some years. Restrain yourselves for some more years. Ours is not a small battle. If you restrain yourselves, you will lose nothing.

Freedom of speech and pen is the foundation of swaraj. If the foundation-stone is in danger, you have to exert the whole of your might in order to defend that single stone. May God help you.

*Harijan, 29-9-1940*

### 213. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, BOMBAY-III

September 16, 1940

I am not yet your captain. I shall be, when you have passed this resolution<sup>1</sup>. Today I am not even a four-anna member of the Congress. I am here only on your sufferance and that of the Working Committee. I wish to speak to you today on a couple of important matters.

Maulana Saheb had exempted me from attending today's session. It was I who insisted that before the Committee adopted the resolution I should know how they thought and spoke. In that way I might get some inspiration. And indeed I have learnt a lot here. One thing I learnt is that, notwithstanding so many years of training in ahimsa, many members used intemperate language. I was surprised to find that you did not even realize that everything you wanted was included in the resolution. I observe that an important matter which I explained to you yesterday has not been accurately reported in the newspapers. I wish to clarify it today. The Working Committee have laid the foundation of swaraj in framing this resolution.

If you ask for a definition of 'swaraj' I cannot give it; nor can Jawaharlalji. It is possible that someone else can fully define the swaraj of my conception. I am prepared to become a pupil of anyone of you who can send me a comprehensive definition of swaraj. The truth is that swaraj is something undefinable. I shall be able to include in my definition only a fraction of all that fills me. But the beauty of this resolution is that if you fully abide by it all your aspirations can be realized. Freedom of speech and civil liberty are the very roots of swaraj. Without these the foundations of swaraj will remain weak.

If you can understand this simple fact, you will realize all your arguments are meaningless. If we are able to secure the right of free speech, whether through persuasion or force, everyone including Sardar Sardul Singh of the Forward Bloc and Dr. Ashraf of the Communist Party will be able to do their work. If I look upon war-resistance as a religious matter, then freedom of conscience can also be said to be the objective of this resolution. You want complete independence. It is beyond its power to confer it. And we cannot

<sup>1</sup>Vide "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

become really free by merely declaring our freedom. We can be free only when the British go out bag and baggage and we can hold our own in the face of aggression by Japan, Germany, Russia or Afghanistan. It is useless today even to talk of civil disobedience for securing complete independence. What use is fighting for freedom against a country whose own independence is in danger? Even if one people could give independence to another people, the British people are not in a position today to do so. They are themselves in the midst of war. They have therefore gagged us all. They think we are their vassals. I am not. I can say what I like and also do what I like. This resolution authorizes you even to embark on a struggle to secure this right. They have the power to grant us this right. If even then they do not grant it, and if in consequence they are placed in a sorry plight we shall not be to blame.

I have placed before you a clear objective for the struggle. It is the basis of independence. If we do not hold fast to it, we shall be deprived of our principal weapon in the struggle for independence. I, therefore, want you to obtain this precious jewel and guard it. It is not a paltry matter. It has a vital importance. It is not a brain-wave of mine. When I was in great distress and prayed to God to show me the way, He inspired me with this thought.

Rajaji said to me that my demand was greater than his. It is partly true. They can make an announcement regarding independence even during the war. But they will not give us control over the Central Government. The reason is obvious, for then the war will have to be conducted through us. Rajaji may be the Prime Minister one day, Jawaharlal the next day and someone else the day after. Knowing the history and psychology of the Congress, how can they take the risk of relying on such an uncertain thing as our co-operation? If I were the Viceroy, I too would be afraid to do that. But there is no risk in giving what I ask. Where is the harm even if India as a whole does not volunteer to help the war effort with men and money?

If you have understood all this you should withdraw all the amendments you have given notices of. But not as a favour to me. I want you to make me your captain not as a favour to me but only if you feel I deserve it. Otherwise you should go your ways and allow me to retire to Sevagram and do my own work. I have neither a chart nor a compass to guide the ship which I have to captain today. My plight is like that of Columbus, or even worse. He knew his

destination. He had wanted to sail to India but he discovered a land much bigger than India. I am in a much worse plight. In spite of this you are appointing me your captain. You will have therefore to fill all posts from a rating to an officer. I do not seek any favour from you nor am I conferring any favour on you. If you accept this condition, you will have to obey every order from the captain. The captain of a ship has the authority to lighten the load of the ship by throwing overboard a disobedient rating or officer.

The swaraj that we demand has only one limitation. We cannot preach violence. This limitation has been imposed because the Government that is based on violence will not be able to tolerate violence by others. If even those who believe in violence lend me their ear, they too will ultimately find that they have no ground for disappointment. Because they will have the right to preach and even practise violence after we secure swaraj through non-violence. We are not going to have an army. But if a Sikh or a Khaksar wants to carry one or more swords, he will certainly be able to do so. When all others believe in non-violence, what can the violent do? If a majority of citizens are restrained in their speech and actions, they cannot but influence the others. If I become the head of the state in swaraj, I shall give such permission to anyone who seeks it. On the other hand, you must know that you will not have this freedom if you secure swaraj through violence.

Those who wish to resort to mass civil disobedience, general strike, etc., forget that the 1920 resolution contains all these methods. I have been endeavouring to prepare the country for these things for the last twenty years. If you had been prepared, we could have undertaken many of these things and created a new structure of society. Whose fault was it that you were not prepared ?

Even so those who wish to resort to mass civil disobedience may do so. But it will be considered a breach of discipline. Of course, as I said to Subhas Babu, I shall congratulate them if they succeed. But those who rebel will not have my blessings. The right course would be for you to leave the Congress and then do what you like.

But the truth is we cannot resort to civil disobedience today within the limits of non-violence and it is for this reason that I do not today permit students to leave their schools and colleges. If they want to leave them for good they well may. As for strikes, it will be enough to tell you that Shri Suresh Banerji, a labour leader who had once

been my friend, then chose a different way, and who is again coming closer to me, told me that I alone possessed the key to a successful strike. It is true. But I am not inclined to use it for any of the activities today. Even if I wished to do so, would I have your help? If I order all of you to ply the charkha faithfully, will you do it? If I ask you to wield a pickaxe, will you do so without argument? I have my doubts.

If today you do what I ask you to do, I shall succeed with the Viceroy. I am not going to be silenced by his saying, 'No'. You are free to say whatever you like even today. It is not as if you will be able to open your mouth only after my visit to the Viceroy. But the proper thing would be for you to exercise restraint till I have been to see the Viceroy and reported the results. I can promise you this: I shall not come back with a compromise which will gag our mouths.

Pandit Jawaharlal and Dr. Ashrof have referred to the Hindu Muslim problem. If strife is destined to be our lot who can avoid it? We should also be prepared to risk anarchy and disorder. We should have the faith that non-violence will not lead to violence and even if this happens, we shall have the strength to control it. And that will be our real test. It is in the nature of ahimsa that it grows in strength as violence increases. I hope you will acquire such strength before my death. We can establish non-violent swaraj only when we acquire non-violent strength and through such strength we can spread peace and goodwill throughout the world.

I wish to give a message to the Muslim brethren. If eight crore Muslims oppose India's independence, India will never win independence. But I shall admit such opposition only when all adult voters from among the eight crore declare their opposition to independence. But I consider this almost impossible. They may, of course, declare that they want independence without Hindu domination. It is worse than anarchy to partition a poor country like India whose every corner is populated by Hindus and Muslims living side by side. It is like cutting up a living body into pieces. No one will be able to tolerate this plain murder. I do not say this as a Hindu. I say this as a representative of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all. I would say to Muslim brethren, 'Cut me to pieces first and then divide India. You are trying to do something which was not attempted even during the Muslim rule of two hundred years. We shall not allow you to do it.' Whatever I have said about the Muslims also applies to the Sikhs. If the 30 lakh Sikhs wish to obstruct India's independence, they are in a

position to do so. We shall deal with them also in the non-violent way. Non-violent swaraj cannot be secured without non-violence. I shall work for communal unity. Islam means peace. It does not mean peace to the Muslims only; it means peace to all communities and to the entire world.

[From Hindi]

*Harijan Sevak*, 12-10-1940

#### 214. INTERVIEW TO STIMSON<sup>1</sup>

[September 17, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

STIMSON: How do you desire not to embarrass Britain with your demand to preach anti-war propaganda in a non-violent way?

GANDHIJI: Because non-violence is the Congress creed which involved Congress hostility to all war. Hence it is a vital necessity for the Congress to dissociate itself from identifying itself with any war. Hence my desire not to embarrass Britain was necessarily limited and conditioned by the counter-necessity of preserving the Congress existence, and therefore civil disobedience is definitely restricted to freedom of speech and action, provided they are absolutely non-violent. Therefore I have claimed in my speech that, if the full import of Congress action is understood, it must in the end help Britain and the world.

Why?

Because in the midst of the conflagration all round there is one powerful body pinning its faith to uttermost non-violence. If it succeeds, then the groaning world can heave a sigh of relief and find a way out of these monstrous armaments.

How do you visualize the future of India in the event of a Nazi victory?

All I can say is I am not dismayed by the prospect, if my country remains true to the cult of non-violence. But that does not mean that I should be in any way pleased with the prospect of a Nazi victory. What terrifies me is that as things are going on at defeat of

<sup>1</sup> The interview is extracted from "Seven Days in Bombay" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that "the representative of the Associated Press of America saw Gandhiji within twenty-four hours of the termination of the A.I.C.C." The A.I.C.C. session came to a close on September 16.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*



Nazism will be bought at a terrific price, viz., superior Nazism, call it by any name you like.

In view of what has happened in Malabar,<sup>1</sup> is there any hope of mass civil disobedience being carried on non-violently?

Not at present, and therefore, as you must have noticed, in my speech<sup>2</sup> I made an emphatic declaration that so far as I was concerned there was no prospect of my embarking on mass civil disobedience. But if you ask me whether it is possible to conduct mass civil disobedience without its resulting in violence, I would emphatically say 'Yes'. But my country is not at present ready for mass action, and in a way I am thankful that the unfortunate events in Malabar have come as a warning to the country and a pointer for me also.

Does your policy mean disapproval of America's help to Britain in the shape of planes and munitions?

Not in the slightest. For the simple reason that America does not believe with the Indian National Congress in non-violent action. I wish it did. Then America's contribution to peace and help to Britain would be infinitely more substantial than any number of planes and any amount of material that America can supply to Britain. And if the weekly correspondence I receive from America and visits from Americans who come to see me is any index to American opinion, I expect America to take a leaf out of the Congress book and outrun the Congress in the race for the establishment of peace on earth through universal disarmament.

*Harijan, 22-9-1940*

### 215. INTERVIEW TO FRANCIS G. HICKMAN<sup>3</sup>

BOMBAY,  
[September 17, 1940]<sup>4</sup>

HICKMAN: What is India's contribution towards making the world safe from Hitlerism?

GANDHIJI: If the Congress succeeds in its non-violent effort,

<sup>1</sup> At various places people held, 'protest day' meetings against magisterial orders, when several policemen and demonstrators were wounded or killed.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay" 15-9-1940 and "Speech At A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 16-9-1940

<sup>3</sup> This is extracted from "An American's Questions" by Mahadev Desai. According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-1-1941, the interview "took place in Bombay at the time of the session of the A.I.C.C. which Hickman attended".

<sup>4</sup> From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's diary

Hitlerism and all such 'isms' will go as a matter of course.

Don't you think India should do something to make facts better known in America and thus promote the interchange of goods and ideas? What do you think should be done in this connection?

First let us take up goods. America has had her bit, irrespective of Indian conditions and India's wishes. So far as ideas are concerned, my unhappy experience is that anti-Indian propaganda carried on in America has held undisputed sway, so much so that even the visit of an outstanding personality like Tagore produced little impression on the American mind.

But why does not India endeavour to make herself better known in America ?

If America really wanted to know what Indian opinion is at a given time, there is ample literature which is growing from day to day to which they have access. If you have in mind an Indian agency which should do propagandist work on behalf of India, again our bitter experience has been that imperialist propaganda that is carried on with much ability and perseverance and at a lavish expenditure is such that we can never overtake it, and the work of any such agency has up to now proved fruitless.

Why not have Indian people use Indian hand-spun cloth and keep her mills busy for the export of manufactured cloth and yarn? Don't you think that this would help the cotton-grower?

I would not mind such a thing but it must be in order to supply the felt needs of the country which received our cloth. I have no idea of exploiting other countries for the benefit of India. We are suffering from the poisonous disease of exploitation ourselves, and I would not like my country to be guilty of any such thing. If Japan, say, as a free country wanted India's help, and said we could produce certain goods cheaper, and we might export them to Japan, we would gladly do so. But under my scheme of things all dumping of goods by one country on another, supported by her army and her navy, has to cease.

Apart from export of merchandise what has India to give America, and turn what does India expect from America?

I must correct your question for you. India sends no merchandise to America; she sends only raw material, and that is a matter of serious consideration for every nationalist. For we cannot suffer our country remaining an exporter of raw produce, for it means (as it has meant) extinction of handicrafts and art itself. I would expect America to treat India not as though India was a country for American exploitation but as if India was a free country, although unarmed, and deserving, therefore, the same treatment that America

would wish at the hands of India.

You are repeating, Sir, the message of Jesus.

I agree. We are poor in technical skill, but as soon as you accept and consent to follow Jesus's teaching, I would not have to complain of all the skill being monopolized by America. You will then say, 'Here is a sister country poor in technical skill, let us offer our skilled assistance not for exploitation, not for a terrific price, but for its benefit, and so for nothing.' And here let me say a word about your missionaries. You send them here for nothing, but that also is part of imperialist exploitation. For they would like to make us like you, better buyers of your goods, and unable to do without your cars and luxuries. So the Christianity that you send us is adulterated. If you established your schools, colleges and hospitals without the object of adding to the number of the so-called Christian population, your philanthropy would be untainted.

As regards technical skill, I cannot afford to do what the Tatas are doing. They can afford to bring an American expert manager at Rs. 20,000 a month. But whilst they represent the spirit of adventure, they do not represent poor India. India has seven lakhs of villages which take in 90 per cent of her population. America has to think of these. America ought, if she will be of real help, to exercise her resourcefulness in this direction. And for that purpose America will have to cease to be the premier exporting country that she is. My views on national planning differ from the prevailing ones. I do not want it along industrial lines. I want to prevent our villages from catching the infection of industrialization. American exploitation has added neither to the moral height of the exploited countries nor of the exploiting country. On the contrary it has impeded their march towards spiritual progress, and deadened America's real spirit of philanthropy. A phenomenon like the one that America witnessed cannot happen in India. I mean the destruction of tons of sugar and other agricultural products. You might have supplied other countries the sugar and the wheat or fed America's own unemployed.

But you could not have taken our pigs!

I know. But all do not think like me. Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialized, it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that evils are inherent in industrialism, and no amount of socialization can eradicate them.

We have seen what Germany has done to Belgium and to the other countries. You would still say 'non-violence'? And yet you ask the Congress to fight because it is in danger of extinction. England also is in such danger and therefore fights.

Don't you see the obvious difference? England would have to out-Hitler Hitler in defeating him. We do not want to use any of the weapons used by those who would crush us. I would say to an

aggressor: 'You may destroy my churches, my hearths and my homes, everything but my soul. I won't come to your country to destroy your churches, hearths and homes. I will not defend my country with your weapons. I will simply refuse to co-operate with you, refuse to owe any allegiance to you, in a word I will say "No" to you.' He may take possession of India, but if I have my way, he will not impress a single Indian in his service.

Then you must see another distinction. If we were fighting Government with Government's weapons, it would be the best chance for us to surprise the enemy and make their difficulty our opportunity. But we have been for over a year laying the utmost stress on non-embarrassment. It ought not to be turned against us. But we shall not use Britain's weapons, and that is how we shall help Britain against her will. I can understand the Viceroy's reluctance to surrender the reins of Government to us while he has to fight Germany; but I cannot understand the Government's desire to suppress the non-violent spirit of the nation.

But you again speak like Christ on earth, and they cannot understand that language.

I must persist at the peril of my life. In my opinion non-violence is not an individual virtue, but a course of spiritual and political conduct both for the individual and the community.

*Harijan, 29-9-1940*

## 216. I WAS UNJUST BECAUSE WEAK

I know Rajaji enough to understand that he is too brave to need any support from anybody, he is too philosophic to harbour an injury for many hours, if not minutes. I know also that his fine sense of humour enables him to enjoy a joke at his expense. Therefore this confession must be taken as one for my own satisfaction only.

I have told<sup>1</sup> the public that, had, I not egged him on, Rajaji would never have brought forward his resolution at New Delhi. Having great regard for his judgment and his honesty, when he asserted with amazing assurance that I was wrong and he was right in the implications and application of non-violence, I allowed myself to doubt the correctness of my interpretation to the point of allowing and encouraging him to act on his. I showed weakness and became unjust to him. A weak man is just by accident. A strong but non-violent man is unjust by accident. I was unjust to Rajaji because I exposed him to ridicule and unkind attacks. Though no ultimate harm has come to the Congress because what I still consider was an error has been rectified, it is not a good thing for a great leader to have his work undone all of a sudden, for I know that Rajaji still feels that he was right. If his view had prevailed, the resolution that now holds sway would not have taken the shape it has. I would still have been out of the Congress. For I was out of it at Wardha before the Delhi resolution was taken as the natural outcome of Wardha.

If I was unjust to Rajaji, I was also unjust to the Working Committee. For, had I remained firm, the Wardha resolution too would not have been passed. I hold that, so long as I am accepted as the sole authority on satyagraha and its implications, they must not be a matter of vote. My colleagues may debate the pros and cons with me and try to convince me that their interpretation is right. If I cannot accept it, my judgment should prevail because I am both the author of satyagraha and general in satyagraha action. The only way the colleagues can avoid my judgment is by absolving me from guidance. They did in so many words at Wardha. But it is plain that the absolution was not what the word means. They were most unwilling to give me absolution. It was given because I wrung it from them. My

<sup>1</sup> Presumably, the reference is to the article, "The Delhi Resolution"; *vide* "The Delhi Resolution"

weakness began at Wardha. When a serious crisis arose, I should have raised the issue of jurisdiction. It was outside the Working Committee's jurisdiction to decide upon the meaning and application of a matter which belonged to their expert who was their interpreter and executive officer.

I am aware that all the members of the Working Committee do not accept my opinion as to jurisdiction. The matter has not come up for decision. But before the Committee and I came to the resolution now before the country I had made the confession I have now published for the sake of an esteemed co-worker.

It is my conviction that, owing to a series of fortunate combination of acts of the members at the last Wardha meeting, the present resolution was conceived and we have been saved from a national disaster. We have come to a decision which, if Congressmen react to it as they should, must raise India to a position which it has never yet occupied, and brings it nearer to her goal as nothing else could have done.

Whether my estimate is right or wrong time alone can show. But this is merely by the way. Nor is the purpose of this confession to invite the reader to accept my judgment as to the jurisdiction of the Working Committee. The mention of it was relevant to show the nature of my error. It is unpardonable for a general to surrender his judgment to a fellow officer unless the conviction goes home to him that the latter *is* right—not *may be* right.

I hope I have given the public enough material to show that in all that Rajaji did he was throughout brave and correct. The incorrectness was due to me.

And I wish to say the same thing about his 'sporting offer'. It is no part of this confession to defend it. But so far as I can see, the offer was truly sporting, if the correctness of the Poona resolution be accepted. It should be remembered that the Muslim League is a great organization wielding influence upon the Muslims of India. The Congress has dealt with it before, and I have no doubt it will deal with it in future. However mistaken Qaid-e-Azam<sup>1</sup> may be in our estimation, let us give him the same credit for honesty of purpose as we claim for ourselves. When the war cloud is lifted and when India

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'great leader'; honorific title given to the Muslim League leader, Mahomed Ali Jinnah

comes to her own, surely Congressmen would just as much welcome a Muslim, a Sikh, a Christian, or a Parsi as Premier, as they would a Hindu, and even a non-Congressman, no matter of what faith he may be. I am sure that Rajaji's 'sporting offer' meant no more and no less than this. When passions have died, critics will read his offer in its proper light. It is wrong to misjudge a public worker, and doubly so, when he happens to be of Rajaji's calibre. He has lost nothing by the misjudgment. But a nation may easily harm itself by misjudging its true servants and denying itself their services. Above all, when the Congress may have to embark upon a great non-violent struggle for fundamental liberty, it behoves Congressmen to guard against harsh, hasty and uncharitable judgments.<sup>1</sup>

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, September 18, 1940

*Harijan*, 22-9-1940

### 217. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

*September 18, 1940*

You must have seen the resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at its session on 16th instant. But, for ready reference, I send a copy of it, as also a newspaper cutting containing a fairly accurate summary of my speech in Hindustani and English.

I now request an interview at your early convenience. I seek it both as guide of the Congress and your friend which you have allowed me to call myself.<sup>2</sup>

From a photostat: C.W. 10163. Courtesy: India Office

<sup>1</sup> For C. Rajagopalachari's rejoinder, *vide* "Rajaji's Postscript", 25-9-1940.

<sup>2</sup> The Viceroy, who cabled this letter on September 22 to the Secretary of State for India, *inter alia*, said: "I have replied that I shall be glad to see him on Friday, September 27."

## 218. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEWS CHRONICLE"<sup>1</sup>

BOMBAY,  
*September 18, 1940*

CORRESPONDENT: While expressing your sympathy with the British people in their plight, don't you think there is an inconsistency between your earlier decisions and your latest decision?

GANDHIJI: I thought that I had clearly and sufficiently explained my position in my speech<sup>2</sup>, in anticipation of the charge of inconsistency. If there is any inconsistency, it is due in this particular instance to changed circumstances. My sympathy is not only the same as it had been expressed<sup>3</sup> in Simla on the declaration of war; it has become deeper because what was imaginary has become vividly real. In Simla almost a year ago I had expressed my grief over what might befall Britain. Today the dreaded thing has happened and is still going on. By nature I am so framed that every calamity moves me irrespective of the people whom it may overtake. But my sympathy, even though it is deeper today than a year ago, has undoubtedly changed in form. I was unprepared for the recent Government declarations, and I claim that it is the genuineness of my sympathy which has made me single out the one fact which Britain can easily recognize and yield without any hitch in her prosecution of war. I readily grant that there might be some reason for not dividing the responsibility for the conduct of the war with those who are the determined opponents of British imperialism and all it implies, and therefore I felt that, if the Congress continued to abide by its policy of non-embarrassment which is inherent in its non-violence, the Congress should for the moment abate agitation by way of direct action for independence. But freedom of speech and corresponding action is the breath of democratic life. Freedom of propagating non-violence as substitute for war is the most relevant when indecent savagery is being perpetrated by the warring nations of Europe. The Congress will forfeit all its right to be considered a non-violent organization if out of false sympathy or—what would be worse—fear of consequences, it

<sup>1</sup>Extracted from "Seven Days in Bombay". Mahadev Desai explains: "The correspondent . . . saw Gandhiji when he had already had a heavy day on top of a night of insufficient sleep, and when he had heavy engagements yet to fulfil."

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Speech At A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 15-9-1940

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.



ceased to agitate against the inhumanity that is being perpetrated in Europe and which, if not checked by somebody or some organization, may overtake the whole world. I hope this statement of Congress policy as I interpret it, as its sole guide, will not only satisfy the British public opinion, but will make it range itself on the side of the Congress, so as to enable the Viceroy to recognize the justice of the Congress claim which is a claim not for itself but which is a claim for freedom of speech no matter by whom exercised so long as it does not promote violence in any shape or form.

*Harijan, 22-9-1940*

219. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO  
ABDUL GHAFAR KHAN<sup>1</sup>

[After *September 18, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

I hope that all the conversation we had in Bombay has soaked into you. If it has, every problem could be solved by reference to those fundamentals which I tried to put before you. Our non-violence has to begin at home with our children, elders, neighbours and friends. We have to overlook the so-called blemishes of our friends and neighbours and never forgive our own. Then only shall we be able to right ourselves, and as we ascend higher, our non-violence has to be practised among our political associates. We have to see and approach the viewpoints of those who differ from us. We have to be patient with them and convince them of their errors and be convinced of our own. Then proceeding further we have to deal patiently and gently with political parties that have different policies and different principles. We have to look at their criticism from their own standpoint, always remembering that the greater the distance between ourselves and others, the greater the scope for the play of our non-violence; and it is only when we have passed our examination or test in these fields that we can deal with those against whom we are fighting and who have grievously wronged us.

This was one thing we talked about. The other thing I said was that a non-violent man has to keep himself engaged usefully during all waking hours and, therefore, *constructive work is for him what arms are for the violent men.*

*Harijan, 18-1-1942*

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "On the Path of Ahimsa"

<sup>2</sup> From the reference to the conversation between Gandhiji and the addressee in Bombay, where Abdul Ghaffar Khan was invited to the Congress Working Committee meeting from September 13 to 18, 1940.

## 220. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 20, 1940

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter, as also the wire. You did well in writing to Sardar<sup>1</sup>. You should never get upset by such criticism. You should realize that your method of work is quite different from everybody else's; such persons are always targets of criticism. You have created your own environment. Go on doing whatever you can within it. I will give whatever help I can. I have realized that your path is difficult. I will send Ba to you. I have already written that Mavalankar<sup>2</sup> or someone like him should come if possible. Ba will stay in Ahmedabad for a month.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8579. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

## 221. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 20, 1940

CHI. KAKA,

You may certainly publish the matter about the Kanpur-report.

I have read the portion relating to Dr. Mahmud<sup>3</sup>. There is nothing in it worth including. I am returning it. I will send Bal's<sup>4</sup> letter.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

<sup>1</sup> Vallabhbhai Patel

<sup>2</sup> G. V. Mavalankar; also called Dada; Speaker Bombay Legislative Assembly

<sup>3</sup> Syed Mahmud, ex-Minister of Education, Development and Employment in

Bihar

<sup>4</sup> Addressee's son

[PS.]

I am going through the thing about Begum Sita.

Many live in (अनन्तकी इमारत) why does not the word इमारत (see verse 34) fit here? [sic]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10937

## 222. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,

September 20, 1940

I see from Press comments that the main purpose of my contemplated visit to H.E. the Viceroy is being missed. It is well that I should not be misunderstood as to the purpose of my visit.

Assuming that the interview is granted, I do not go to hold a pistol at the Viceroy's head if the contemplated civil disobedience is to be taken as such. But I go, as I explained<sup>1</sup> in my speech before the All-India Congress Committee, in order to make sure I am right in the inferences I have drawn from the acts of the Government, commencing from the declaration of His Excellency the Viceroy. If the premises on which the Congress case is built are wrong, there is no case for civil disobedience. I would not be able to approach my task with confidence and firmness unless I made myself sure of my facts and the conclusions to be deduced therefrom.

*The Hindu*, 20-9-1940

## 223. LETTER TO A SIND WORKER

[Before September 21, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

Do not think I am unconcerned about Sind. But I feel helpless. The people have not the capacity to adopt my remedy, and I have no other. They must, therefore, go to another physician.<sup>3</sup>

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-9-1940

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Speech At A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay", 15-9-1940.

<sup>2</sup> The letter was reported under the date-line "Sukkur, September 21".

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* also "Sind Hindus"

224. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,  
September 21, 1940

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
CARE LUCKY  
CALCUTTA

FULSINGHI<sup>1</sup> FASTING REGARDING WELL FOR HARIJANS  
IN VILLAGE MOTH YOUR ESTATE HISSAR. AM TOLD  
YOUR INTERFERENCE ALONE CAN SAVE LIFE PRE-  
CIOUS WORKER. MUSLIM AND HINDU JATS OPPOSING  
ANY WELL FOR HARIJANS. THIS WELL ALMOST BUILT  
FROM PUBLIC DONATIONS AND WOULD HAVE BEEN  
FINISHED BUT FOR SAID OPPOSITION.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7849. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

225. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,  
September 21, 1940

NARANDAS GANDHI  
RAJKOT

BA AHMEDABAD. ADVISING ACCORDING YOUR SUGGESTION.

BAPU

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

226. LETTER TO S. K. RAY CHAUDHURY

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
September 21, 1940

DEAR SARAT KUMAR BABU,

I have yours of the 17th instant. The cases you quote are certainly bad but without knowing full facts I cannot deal with them in *Harijan*. This is the special function of the Hindu Mahasabha. You

<sup>1</sup> Bhagat Fulsingh, a Patwari of Rohtak District, came under the influence of Swami Shradhdhanand, took a vow of refraining from bribes, and subsequently resigned his post. He was on fast for over a fortnight from September 2, 1940, and gave it up only after the obstructionists had agreed to the completion of the well.

have many able lawyers in your organization. I would suggest your collecting unimpeachable cases, bringing them to the notice of the Government and, failing relief, circulating such cases for formulating public opinion on them. For I notice much irresponsible and heated discussion in the papers on the sins of the Muslim majority Governments and the Congress Governments. The result is increasing bitterness without truth appearing before the public. You can do much to set the right tone. This letter must not be taken to mean any reflection upon your organization. I must confess that I have not followed its career. Probably you are doing exactly what I have suggested. If you have been, you may pass on the literature to me. I do not promise to work upon it. I may not get the time. But I should like to be kept informed of the happenings in your province which demand public attention. As I do not wish to enter into a public discussion with the Sabha, I would like you not to send this letter to the Press. Mine is a purely friendly approach in the interest of peace between the two communities.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

## 227. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

*September 21, 1940*

CHI. MIRA,<sup>1</sup>

I have kept you without a letter now for some days. But Bombay gave me neither time nor peace. I returned on Thursday but am able to write to you only today (Saturday).

Kanaiyalal<sup>2</sup> has sent a sweet reply. He understands and appreciates the position. You will, therefore, have no difficulty.

I see your point<sup>3</sup> about slivers. I have now asked Laxmidas<sup>4</sup> to send you best slivers so as to enable you to spin fine counts. You will

<sup>1</sup> The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari.

<sup>2</sup> In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Lala Kanaiyalal Butail, my host, who had the hut prepared for me in his pine forest." For Gandhiji's letter to Kanaiyalal, *vide* "Letter to Kanhaiyalal", 21-8-1940

<sup>3</sup> Mirabehn says: "I had explained to Bapu that as I was combining *japa* with spinning, the turn of the wheel taking the place of the bead, I was most anxious not to have to interrupt spinning for carding and sliver-making in which no *japa* could be easily combined."

<sup>4</sup> Lakshmidas Asar

tell me when you receive them and warn me in good time when you are likely to run out of stock.

The descriptive parts of your letter are just as fresh and delightful as ever. From that I infer that you are enjoying inner peace. Your *sadhana* there will be vain if it does not give you ever-growing peace. Your affinity for bird, beast, tree and stone is your greatest support. They are never-failing friends and companions.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I expect, you do not want me to give you political news or even Ashram news<sup>1</sup>.

From the original: C.W. 6459. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10054

## 228. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

[September 22, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY

SIMLA

MANY THANKS WIRE. HOPE REACH FRIDAY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

## 229. MESSAGE TO COW-PROTECTION MEETING

[September, 22, 1940]<sup>3</sup>

What message need I send to a meeting which will be presided over by Sardar ? However, since I have been asked, I am sending one. I look upon myself as a good servant of the cow. So their donation will be put to good use. But they should ask themselves whom the 71 cows received in donation will feed if they themselves do not drink

<sup>1</sup> Mirabehn explains: "I had stopped seeing all newspapers including *Harijan* and all letters except Bapu's."

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 18-9-1940

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

cow's milk and eat cow's ghee.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar, Vallabhbhaine, p. 242*

### 230. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,  
September 22, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I suppose you would hardly be coming here now. I did expect you yesterday. I shall now be leaving this place on Wednesday.

The grocers will be donating 71 cows.<sup>1</sup> I have sent a message<sup>2</sup> since Shamaldas<sup>3</sup> asked for one. Explain to the donors what I have said in it. If they make the donation conditional, do not accept it. I will utilize the amount for cow-protection work wherever I like. Of course the condition that we must purchase cows is acceptable. But I must be free to decide to whom the cows should be given.

You will have entirely got rid of the fever by now. The others also will have recovered. I know that you will look after Radha<sup>4</sup> well and do what is necessary. When I heard of her illness, Maganlal's<sup>5</sup> image came vividly before my eyes.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL  
68 MARINE DRIVE  
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 242-3*

<sup>1</sup> On Gandhiji's 71st birthday

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

<sup>3</sup> Shamaldas Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew

<sup>4</sup> Radha Gandhi and her father, Maganlal Gandhi

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

### 231. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
September 22, 1940

CHI. BABUDI,

So you did not come. I wanted to talk to you in person. Why do you lose heart ? I will resolve your doubts when you come. Come soon. I am going to Simla. I will return in October.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10030. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

### 232. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

SEGAON, WARDHA,  
September 22, 1940

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have received your letter just now. I can never agree to a meeting of the Standing Committee being called. The better thing would be for those who wish to withdraw from the Prachar Samiti to do so. But I am agreeable to a meeting of the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti being called, and I shall work in that direction.

I am entirely with you when you say that the Sammelan cannot swallow the pill of Hindi or Hindustani. It will be a bitter pill In any case, the controversy should not be carried on in newspapers.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10996

### 233. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After September 22, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

What is the sense in my sending messages every now and then? Even if I enumerate nine hundred ninety-nine virtues of khadi, those

<sup>1</sup> The letter was in reply to the addressee's of September 22, requesting Gandhiji for a message on *Rentia Baras*, the non-stop sacrificial spinning initiated by the addressee, from *Bhadarva Vad* 12 (Gandhiji's date' of birth according to Vikram Calendar, usually falling in the second half of September) to October 2; *vide* also "Notes", sub-title", A Repudiation"



who lack faith in it will not acquire any. It can come only through effort and God's grace.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8681. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

### 234. ANSWER TO A QUESTION<sup>1</sup>

[Before *September 23, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

I agree. The resolution is the result of several days' full fledged debate among the members of the Working Committee. I may confess that many of the members have no independent faith in non-violence but they are trying to imbibe it. But you must know that the Congress is not merely the Working Committee, nor the A.I.C.C., nor the members on the Congress registers, but the dumb millions. They are all peace-loving, and we have to represent them truly. These millions, before the Congress identified itself with them in 1919, had taken no part in any violent or non-violent or even a so-called constitutional fight. But they rose like one man on the 6th of April 1919<sup>3</sup>. They took up peaceful rebellion as their *mantra*, and without any organization, without any country-wide tour—for I had not then toured in the interior—they instinctively took up the call, and the Congress organization became a peaceful rebel organization. The Bombay resolution had these masses in mind.

*Harijan*, 29-9-1940

### 235. TALK WITH AN ASHRAM YOUNGSTER.

[Before *September 23, 1940*]

ASHRAM YOUNGSTER: If the Congress demand is complete, it means that we do not need swaraj, and that we shall be content with the liberty of speech and the Press.

<sup>1</sup> This and the following item are extracted from Mahadev Desai's "More about the Resolution", published under the date-line "Sevagram, September 23, 1940". Mahadev Desai explains: "A visitor recently asked Gandhiji if his re-entry meant that the Congress had become again non-violent at heart. 'So far as I can say from things in the Punjab,' said the visitor, 'I think that, though there is a good deal of self-restraint, there is little non-violence.'

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the preceding item. Mahadev Desai explains: "While some have regarded the Congress demand as too difficult to be accepted, some have regarded it as too trifling. A talk that Gandhiji had with an Ashram youngster may be summarized for the benefit of both."

<sup>3</sup> Total hartal in protest against Rowlatt Act (Bill No. 29, 1919)

GANDHIJI: Our objective is complete independence, as you know. But do you know the means to attain it?

Carrying out the constructive programme.

That is one of the principal branches of the tree. But what is the root?

Truth and non-violence.

Well, then, we want the right to preach truth and non-violence.

But will newspaper articles and speeches be enough for the propagation of truth and non-violence?

No, we have to do much more. But the right to preach truth and non-violence is threatened. The law seems to say that we may not tell people that they have every right not to co-operate in the war effort and that it is their duty as a non-violent people not to co-operate thus.

But you have yourself said that we can get swaraj if we fulfil the constructive programme. Why then this trivial issue?

It is not a trivial issue; it is a concrete and all-important issue. If we surrender it, a time will come when we may have to surrender all, when we may have to forget even the name of truth and non-violence. To preach these is our birthright, and to forfeit it is to forfeit our existence.

But what I am troubled about is the emphasis on mere speech and writing.

It is the liberty we claim. How and when to use it and whether to use it or no is our concern. If we cannot stand a strong breeze, we shut the windows and even the doors. But how should we feel if someone were to shut us up?

I see. But may it not be imaginary? If you ask a little child not to eat earth, it will eat it. It is the inhibition that is galling. Do you want to remove the inhibitions?

The analogy is wrong, for the little child has no right to eat earth, whereas no one has a right to prevent us from enjoying free air. But let me take another example for you as you are a child. Prahlad was ordered by his father not to take the name of Rama. He might have argued with himself, 'I lose nothing by not repeating the name of Rama, for Rama is in my heart.' But if he had resorted to this argument, he would have deceived himself. He did not do so, and he defied his father to do his worst; he was not going to give up repeating Ramanama. And because he braved the most fearful hardships and dared even death for that sacred right, we have today a living faith in Ramanama. If he had yielded, that faith would have vanished from the earth. Even so, if we give up our right to preach truth and

non-violence, we give it up for ever.

But abstract truth and non-violence no one prevents us from preaching.

No principle exists in the abstract. Without its concrete application it has no meaning. And when I want to preach non-violence I want to preach it as an effective substitute for war, and thereby to be able to wean Britain and other warring countries from violence and barbarism.

But why do you claim that right for all? In your speech<sup>1</sup> you said that you would speak as a conscientious objector, but that others might use any reasoning they liked, e.g., the financial or the imperialistic argument.<sup>2</sup>

I have no business to claim the right only for myself and for those who are conscientious objectors. For, some other grounds may be as important as, if not more than, conscientious grounds; and if I may not be smothered, how can I suffer those others to be smothered? If, moreover, the freedom was restricted to conscientious objectors, we should compel a number of our people to be hypocrites, for they would take shelter under the conscientious argument. All that is necessary is the acceptance by all of the condition of non-violence. That cannot be relaxed.

*Harijan, 29-9-1940*

### 236. KHADI WEEK

It is a happy thing that the khadi week coincides with my pending visit to H. E. the Viceroy. I want the prayers of all who believe in the efficacy of prayer that the result of my visit may prove fruitful to India, the British people, and ultimately conduce to peace between the warring nations. I feel that though the issue raised by the A.I.C.C. resolution seems small, it has in it great potency for the good of mankind.

‘Khadi Week’ is the name given by me to my birthday celebration. Birth and death are twins. I should be sorry if the annual celebration was forgotten with my death. Therefore, I have popularized the birthday celebration as Khadi Week. It enables me to deal with the event impersonally.

I shall strain every nerve to avoid a civil disobedience struggle. But it would be wrong for Congressmen to go to sleep while an effort for peace is being made. I hope no Congressman thinks that because I have undertaken command of the struggle, if it comes, the spinning

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay”, 15-9-1940

<sup>2</sup> According to Mahadev Desai “someone” asked this question.

and khadi conditions are waived. Those who do not strictly confirm to these and other conditions will find themselves left out if civil disobedience faces us. Moreover what will the millions do who will never have to court any kind of suffering ? The constructive programme is as much for them as for the civil resisters. Indeed if it was confined to the latter only, the imprisonment of a few could never deserve to be called a national struggle. But voluntary suffering of even one person in the name of an organization or the nation, if backed by their unreserved co-operation in all manner prescribed by the commander, must ensure success. Khadi and spinning are the visible symbols that all can show. I would, therefore, expect a phenomenal rise in khadi sales, spinning and village handicrafts during the celebration week. I may also mention that the A.I.S.A.<sup>1</sup> having given up the policy of taking loans, it has become necessary to receive donations, if the work is not to be curtailed. The unexampled and unexpected rise in the wages of spinners has meant an increase of spinners. These cannot be provided for without more capital. Fortunately workers have come forward to collect funds for the A.I.S.A. I hope that there will be an automatic response to the appeal. All, whether Congressmen or others, should liberally support the appeal. The A.I.S.A. is a purely humanitarian economic institution. As such it has no politics, even though it has received its charter from the Congress. It is a purely autonomous body. All can, therefore, help it without any scruples. Khadi has no doubt a political, as it has an economic and humanitarian, significance. And viewed as a symbol of non-violence, even its political significance in no way detracts from its moral appeal. For genuine and unadulterated non-violence can have no colour of party politics. And the Congress will cease to be a party label but will be universally acknowledged as national institution having no quarrel with any party or nation.

SEVAGRAM, September 23, 1940

*Harijan*, 29-9-1940

### 237. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

*September 23, 1940*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Balvantsinha is unhappy. I did not send your letter. It has hurt him very much. It was bound to do so. To say about a co-worker that he would never listen to anyone is rather strong language. It cannot be

<sup>1</sup> All-India Spinners' Association

proved either. He has always accepted the *Panch's*<sup>1</sup> decision. Do not have any fear on his account. Give your decision. How is he to blame? If, therefore, you agree with me, withdraw your unnecessary remarks about Balvantsinha.<sup>2</sup>

Kanchan<sup>3</sup> is progressing. She will get well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8485. Also C.W. 7102. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

### 238. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

*September 23, 1940*

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

It was good that Munnalal Shah's letter came to me. Its language is no doubt harsh but why feel hurt by it? A votary of ahimsa should feel hurt when he himself is guilty of violence. Why should I be hurt merely because someone abuses me? I have explained to Munnalal his error. I hope he will improve. That is his duty; but it is not your duty to improve him. What would happen if he does not improve? Can we compel anyone to observe his dharma?

The message which I had sent to you was like this: Chimanlal<sup>4</sup> and Munnalal say that they gave the verdict in your favour because they were afraid of you. So I told them to rectify their error and give the correct verdict. How could you know how they had given the verdict? You were not guilty for you had accepted the verdict. If anyone had to atone, the judges should have done it for their own weakness.

Now about the five rupees. In my view, we are the trustees and so we have no right to bid. We do not get donations for this purpose. You have no money, that is, you should have no money. Thus your bidding had both these blemishes. You had no right to bid with the Ashram money and bidding itself is an evil, indicating pride. What value can be attached to the labourers saying that they will give the five rupees? You did not bid with their consent. And such consultation

<sup>1</sup> A mediator

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

<sup>3</sup> Addressee's wife

<sup>4</sup> Chimanlal N. Shah

and consent would also be improper.

All these things should teach us not to lament over anything.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1936

*239. TELEGRAM TO ORISSA PROVINCIAL  
CONGRESS COMMITTEE<sup>1</sup>*

[On or before *September 25, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

AWAIT MY RETURN FROM SIMLA.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 26-9-1940*

*240. I WONDER*

For some time you seem to have made it a point to strengthen your arguments in favour of non-violence by frequent but invariably vague references to the Holy Koran and the teachings of Islam. It is quite obvious that you only seek to impress the Muslims thereby. . . . Similarly, it is quite understandable that you should pat the fifth columnist Mussalmans like Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Abul Kalam Azad on the back. But can't you realize that nothing can offend the religious susceptibilities of a Mussalman more than to see a non-Muslim citing the scripture for his own purpose? . . . The fact stands out that you are a non-Muslim. Hence the Koran cannot be the source of your ideas or ideals. . . . It is my friendly advice to you to stop forthwith all reference to the Koran. . . .

This letter<sup>3</sup> is from an M.A. (Aligarh). He is a research scholar in the Muslim University. The letter was received some time ago. I kept it in my file so long, for I was debating whether it would serve the cause of unity to publish it. But having received another from the same friend more unbalanced than this one, I decided to publish the

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to a telegram from the addressee, alleging "seizure of pamphlets by the police from Congress offices in Koraput District". The report also said that "pamphlets in Oriya which were issued by the Provincial Congress Committee related to the Congress Working Committee's resolution regarding 'compulsory subscription to the war fund'."

<sup>2</sup> The telegram was reported under the date-line "Cuttack, September 25".

<sup>3</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

foregoing in order to enable me to expostulate with those who in Aligarh or outside hold views similar to the writer's.

I have sweet memories of Aligarh. I have more than once visited the great university. I have still associations with it. I think I am an honorary member of their club. I received<sup>1</sup> the honour at the hands of the late Dr. Sir Ross Masood when he was Vice-Chancellor of the university. As for the Holy Koran, it was my Muslim clients and friends in South Africa who invited me to read it. They furnished me with Islamic literature. On my return to India, Muslim friends sent me copies of translations of the holy book. Among the senders was Dr. Mahomed Ali, himself a translator, and the late Mr. Pickthall, also a translator of the book. I was presented by the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan with Maulana Shibli's translation. Have I changed or have the times so changed that it has become a crime for a non-Muslim like me to read and even dare to put his own interpretation upon the Koran? Many pious Muslims have remarked that I am a better Muslim than most Muslims in that I act in the spirit of the Koran and know more of the life of the Prophet than most Muslims. Whose testimony am I to accept—these Muslim friends' or the research scholar's and of those who think like him—I wonder.

The research scholar is right in imputing to me the desire to read my meaning into the Koran. Surely there is no harm in it so long as I remain absolutely faithful to the text and approach my task with a prayerful and open mind. My correspondent should know as a scholar that an interpretation of a life or a book is not necessarily correct because it has been handed down for generations. An error does not cease to be one after a given number of repetitions by a given number of men for a given number of years. The Biblical texts are still being corrected. And many good Christians believe that the Christianity of the West is a negation of Christ's central teaching. It is just possible that the research scholar's views about the qualifications required for reading and interpreting the Koran and his own interpretation are wrong, and that my being a non-Muslim is no bar to my reading the Koran or interpreting it. And it is not at all impossible that my interpretation may be found to be right. It will be an evil day if the reading and interpreting of religious books are to be confined only to those who wear particular religious labels. I ask my correspondent and his companions, as their friend, to shed what in my opinion is their gross intolerance and give the same credit to others

<sup>1</sup> On November 3, 1929; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability"

for seeing truth as they claim for themselves. No one has a monopoly of truth. All truth represented by imperfect humans that we are is relative. We can each act according to our lights. God alone knows the reality. That being so, it behoves research scholars at least to be humble and tolerant. Fanaticism and intolerance can neither conduce to research work nor advance the cause they represent.

SEVAGRAM, September 25, 1940

*Harijan*, 29-9-1940

### 241. SOME CRITICISM ANSWERED

The recent resolution of the A.I.C.C. and my speeches before the meeting have come in for much criticism, if they have earned some praise. Of the criticism there are two items which I must attempt to answer. For they are of permanent interest. *The Times of India* of the 17th instant in its temperate criticism<sup>1</sup> takes me to task for my statement<sup>2</sup> that ‘the peoples of Europe do not know what they are fighting for’. It was bound to be resented. But truth, though seemingly harsh, has to be uttered when utterance becomes relevant, indeed imperative. I believe that the utterance had become overdue. I must say why I think that the warring nations do not know what they are fighting for. I had used the expression ‘warring nations’, not ‘peoples of Europe’. This is not a distinction without a difference. I have distinguished between the nations and their leaders. The leaders of course know what they are fighting for. I make no admission that they are right. But neither the English nor the Germans nor the Italians know what they are fighting for except that they trust their leaders and therefore follow them. I submit that this is not enough when the stake is so bloody and staggering as during the present war. It is perhaps common cause that Germans and Italians do not know why English children should be slaughtered in cold blood and beautiful English homes should be destroyed. But *The Time*’s claim probably is that the British people know what they are fighting for. When I asked the British soldiers in South Africa during the Boer War they could not tell me what they were fighting for. ‘Theirs was’ surely ‘not to reason why’. They did not even know where they were being marched to. The British people would not be able to give me a more

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “A Strange Plan”

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* “Speech at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Bombay-II”, 15-9-1940



satisfying answer, if I happened to be in London and asked them why their soldiers were working havoc in Berlin. If the Press accounts are to be relied upon, British skill and valour have wrought more havoc in Berlin than have the Germans in London. What wrong have the German people done to the British people? Their leaders have. Hang them by all means, but why destroy German homes and German civilian life? What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty or democracy? I assert in all humility, but with all the strength at my command, that liberty and democracy become unholy when their hands are dyed red with innocent blood. I hear the living Christ saying: 'These so-called children of mine know not what they are doing. They take my Father's name in vain, for they disobey the central command of my Father!'<sup>1</sup> If my ears do not deceive, I have erred in good company, if I have erred at all.

And why have I uttered the truth? Because I am confident that God has made me the instrument of showing the better way. If Britain seeks justice, she must appear before the imperial court of God with clean hands. She will not defend liberty and democracy by following totalitarian methods so far as war is concerned. She will not be able to retrace her steps after out Hitlering Hitler in war. The last war is a resounding lesson. Her victory, if attained, will be a snare and a delusion. I know mine is a voice in the wilderness. But it will some day ring true. If liberty and democracy are to be truly saved, they will only be by non-violent resistance no less brave, no less glorious, than violent resistance. And it will be infinitely braver, and more glorious because it will give life without taking any.

Now I come to *The Statesman's* article<sup>2</sup> of 17th<sup>3</sup> September. I am sorry to say, it is intemperate and written in anger. It is full of palpable mistakes (to use a mild word), no doubt unconscious. But I am not concerned with the intemperance of language. In the fierce heat of battle unknown before, the wonder is that the intemperance one sees sometimes is not much greater than it is.

<sup>1</sup> *St. Luke*, "Notes", sub-title "Inciting To Assault", and *St. Matthew*, VII.21, 22

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Danger of Extinction"

<sup>3</sup> The source, however, has "18".

Here is the cream of the heavy indictment:

We have often expressed our view about the fundamental immorality and contradictory character of the doctrine. Non-co-operation is a method of war and not of peace. . . . It carries with it a pretentious claim to spiritual value which involved sanctimonious insincerities and mass hypocrisy masking intensified hatreds . . . A nation which accepted this doctrine would doom itself to slavery.

This is all contrary to the history of our own times in India. I claim that there is nothing immoral in non-violent non-co-operation. Violent resistance is itself non-co-operation, and it is immoral because of its violence. It becomes moral when it is non-violent. Non-co-operation with evil is a sacred duty. It is essentially spiritual because of its non-violent character. The adjectives used by the writer would be deserved if it was non-violent in name only. For the present argument I must take the genuine article. Now for the facts. Non-violent non-co-operation, however imperfect it was, has redeemed India at least somewhat from the slavery under which she was groaning. It has raised India from the slough of despond, and has brought her prestige which nothing else could have. I make bold to say that, if the non-violence offered had been not adulterated, its effect would have been still more visible. My greatest claim, however, is that it is this despised non-violent resistance which hitherto saved India from anarchy and red ruin. It is not yet entirely saved. If it is to be saved, it will only be by the non-violent method. I invite the *Statesman* writer to test the truth of my statement. He will have many infallible proofs in its support. A dispassionate study will enable him to serve both Britain and India.

ON THE WAY TO SIMLA, September 25, 1940

*Harijan*, 29-9-1940

## 242. SIKHS AND THE SWORD

The reader will find in another column copies of correspondence between Master Tara Singh and myself. My letter<sup>1</sup> was addressed to him as a friend. I had no wish to see it published as it certainly compromised him, as did also his letter to the Maulana Saheb. Master Tara Singh has turned to me for advice on several occasions, my relations with the Sikhs being of the friendliest nature. I flatter myself with the belief that on occasions I have saved the community against itself.

But Master Tara Singh asked me for permission to publish the correspondence which I readily gave. I would still have refrained from entering into a public discussion of it but for the fact that my advice is being grossly distorted, and that I have received a pressing letter from nationalist Sikhs who do not share Master Tara Singh's views and who accept the Congress non-violence and its discipline. In their letter they say:

Your letter to Master Tara Singh is grossly misinterpreted in the Punjab Press and especially in the Akali circles. They say that you wrote to Master Tara Singh that the whole Sikh *panth* is a believer in violence, hence useless and unsuitable to remain in the Congress. We think that your letter was a personal one and referred to Master Tara Singh or his party only. But the Akali party has raised a storm of agitation on this account.

My letter is absolutely clear. It applies only to Master Tara Singh and those whom he represents. It can apply to the whole of the Sikh community only if they accept Master Tara Singh as their undisputed leader. I knew when I answered the letter that at best he represented only a portion of the great community. I knew then that there were many nationalist Sikhs who are as much nationalist as I. My letter to Master Tara Singh lays down general propositions of universal application, though stated in connection with a concrete case which was put before me for advice. Shorn of its concreteness it simply means that (1) the Congress is pledged to a non-violent policy; (2) therefore no one who does not believe in that policy can belong to the Congress; (3) the Congress is a purely nationalist, non-communal organization; (4) therefore no one with a communal bias should belong to it; (5) the Congress being a non-violent organization and being a determined opponent of imperialism, anyone belonging to it

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Tara Singh", 16-8-1940

will have little hearing from imperialist Britain so long as the Congress retains its policy and is 'at war with' imperialism.

Those, therefore, who misrepresent my letter in the way they are reported to have done, cannot harm me, but deprive themselves of the services and advice of one who has been their faithful servant for practically twenty years.

Master Tara Singh has sent me an angry letter in reply to mine. As it contains no new argument, I refrain from publishing it in these columns. But it is necessary to correct one error. In my attempt to solve the Hindu-Muslim tangle I have been represented as having abandoned the Congress position as stated in its famous Lahore resolution<sup>1</sup> on the communal question. That resolution is a sacred trust, and so far as I am concerned, when and if the time arrives for a solution of the communal problems, full effect will be given to the Lahore resolution. No non-violent solution is possible without the association of all parties concerned. I, therefore, urge Sikh friends not to come to hasty conclusions but to judge everything dispassionately. Anger is short madness, and it hurts those that are consciously or unconsciously betrayed into it.

ON THE WAY TO SIMLA, September 25, 1940

*Harijan*, 29-9-1940

### 243. RAJAJI'S POSTSCRIPT

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

I had the advantage of reading the leading article<sup>2</sup> of September 22 in manuscript at Poona through the courtesy of Shri Chandrashanker<sup>3</sup>. I quite understand why you wrote the article, but I wished I could stop its publication or add my remarks to it. Reading the article in print now I think I had better explain my position.

I do not feel that you exposed me to any ridicule. I was not worried over the attacks made at Bombay on the Poona resolution. I am not the least bit sorry for the Poona resolution. It expressed what we felt was the right thing to do under the circumstances. The British Government did not agree, and in consequence the proposal has failed. That, however, does not make any difference as to the validity of the reasons that led to it. Almost the entire body of intelligent public opinion in India welcomed the Poona resolution. You, of course, considered it wrong because it involved participation in war,

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Diary, 1932" and "Appeal to Santanists", 4-1-1933

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "I Was Unjust Because Weak"

<sup>3</sup> Chandrashanker Shukla

be it even for the defence of India. There were some who feared that the resolution might be accepted by the British Government and involve us in co-operation with Britain which was distasteful to them. There are some people for whom the deciding consideration is success. They feel it a disgrace to make a proposal which is turned down. There are again some who desire the maturing of chaos in which alone they see hope for the future of our country, and they would oppose anything that would retard the progress of this fermentation of chaos. Barring these groups the vast body of enlightened opinion in the country enthusiastically approved of the proposal made at Poona, namely, that if Britain acknowledged the right of India to the status of an independent nation and set up a truly national government composed of leaders of the various groups among the present elected legislators in the Central Assembly, the deadlock should stand resolved. You hold the view that the Congress should as from now work for the abolition of war. The fulfilment of our national goal is inextricably connected, according to you, with that mission. You are, therefore, of opinion that it is a grievous error to participate in the present war effort under any conditions. I believe also that the world should reach peace and abolish wars as soon as possible. But the pathway to it lies, in my opinion, in education in the highest sense in international co-operation and not in finding alternative weapons to defeat one another's ambitions and aims. Unlike you, I do not feel glad that the British rejected our offer on the ground that it has saved us our pacifism.

I do not support the Bombay resolution<sup>1</sup> because the Poona resolution was wrong. My support is based on the following grounds.

It is wrong for the British to declare that the Indian people were in a state of war against any other nation without asking them about it. War does not mean only payment of some money and manufacturing munitions. It can easily lead up to all that is happening in London, and should be dealt with on that footing. Four hundred millions of human beings cannot be thrown into such a condition against their own will or without asking them. It is possible for us to recognize the justice of Britain's case against Germany without having to join in it and extend the tragedy beyond the necessary limits. America refuses to enter the war though it may give judgment in favour of Britain. We have not entered the Sino-Japanese war in spite of the justice of China's cause.

The Poona proposal sought to make participation consistent with self-respect and fruitful. But the proposal was rejected by the British Government. India is, therefore, entitled to refuse to participate in the war. But she is forced to contribute and participate on the basis that India is an imperial possession without any independent status or the right to choose between war and neutrality. The case for Britain is that the help taken from India is

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

voluntary. This claim can be justified, or at least the objection can be reduced to the minimum, if those who preach non-participation are not suppressed by imprisonment. It could then be claimed that such Indian co-operation that comes in spite of such appeals against participation is truly voluntary. This much should be conceded to mitigate the offence of dragging the Indian people into the horrors of modern war without their consent.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

MADRAS, September 23, 1940

Rajaji would not be Rajaji, if he took notice of ridicule. From his own standpoint his position is unassailable. But it therefore does not cease to be a denial of the last twenty years' past of the Congress. If the Poona gesture had received the response it deserved, from being peace-minded the Congress would suddenly have become war-minded—a feat which even Rajaji would have failed to perform. But all this is past. Nor is it relevant to my confession and Rajaji's postscript.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1940

*Harijan*, 29-9-1940

#### 244. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

ON THE TRAIN,  
September 25, 1940

DEAR BALU KAKA,

I had your *Gita* for which many thanks. I don't write because there is nothing to write about.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 969. Courtesy: Gajanan N. Kanitkar

#### 245. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ON THE TRAIN,  
September 25, 1940

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I read your account of the Jaipur incident only today. I sat down to write about the matter in *Harijan*, but then decided not to write just now. I felt that if I wrote, you would attract all the more attention, and so gave up the idea. But if you think that my writing

will do any good, I am prepared to write. How is your health and that of Rajendra Babu? I am going to Simla. I will return to Sevagram on Sunday or Monday.

I hope the work there is progressing to your satisfaction.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3015

### 246. LETTER TO M. M. MALAVIYA

ON THE TRAIN,

*September 25, 1940*

REVERED BHAI SAHEB,

I received your letter. I shall certainly strive to prevent a clash and if a clash does occur, it will be in spite of myself. What should I write about fasting?<sup>1</sup> The matter is not really in my hands. I hope you are well.

*Yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Padmakant Malaviya Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had appealed to Gandhiji to avoid at all cost the reported fast; *Vide* also "Fasting in satyagraha", 8-10-1940.

## 247. MESSAGE TO MIRAJ KHADI EXHIBITION

[On or before *September 28, 1940*]<sup>1</sup>

There are many aspects of khadi; amongst them the spiritual one I hold uppermost and the economic one next. For their fulfilment, all can extend their help; nay, they ought to. In fact, it is the Princes who ought to come forward first of all. It is to their good that Princes are also partaking in the Miraj Exhibition.<sup>2</sup> I hope the exhibition will be a success.

*The Hindu, 29-9-1940*

## 248. SIND HINDUS

Shri Shamlal Gidwani writes a letter on the situation in Sind from which I quote the following:<sup>3</sup>

At the same time that I received this letter, I saw in the papers that five Hindus were shot dead openly while they were pursuing their normal business. As usual the murderers have not been traced. Is this a plan of terrorism to drive the Hindus out of Sind, or is it something else? Someone in Sind ought to be able to answer the question.

Shri Gidwani does not subscribe to non-violence. He thinks that my advice is contrary to the teachings of Lord Krishna. He thinks, for (to himself) very good reasons, that the Hindus cannot act non-violently. For equally good reasons he thinks they cannot migrate. But he would like me to advise them to defend themselves by arms. This is like asking a nature-cure physician to prescribe allopathic drugs. Can he be trusted to prescribe the right drugs? And what will my advice be worth when my own hands are incapable of wielding arms? Shri Gidwani should go to a physician who knows the business and will, on due occasion, run to the rescue and always be ready to give the necessary training. I have said that for those who do not believe in non-violence armed defence is the only remedy. But if I am asked to advise how it can be done, I can only say, 'I do not know.'

But Shri Gidwani is trifling with the crisis when he lazily looks

<sup>1</sup> The message was reported under the date-line "Miraj, September 28".

<sup>2</sup> According to the source, the exhibition was to be opened on September 29 by the Raja Saheb of Aundh.

<sup>3</sup> The letter is not reproduced here.



up to me to guide Sind Hindus on impossible terms. If he sincerely believes in the solution he has proposed, he must himself take the training at once and lead the terrified Hindus of Sind along the path of armed defence. It is wrong for the leaders of Sind to look for outside help. They should cease to write. They should seriously think out a plan of action, violent or non-violent, and follow it up firmly and bravely.

I venture also to suggest to the responsible Muslims of Sind that their reputation is at stake. If they cannot stop those senseless murders of innocent people, history will find them guilty. They will never persuade anybody that they are helpless to deal with the mischief. Such acts are impossible without the silent sympathy of the society to which the perpetrators of murders belong.

SIMLA, September 28, 1940

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

#### 249. INTERESTING PARALLEL

Shri A. Choudhary, who has come to non-violence after much travail, sends the following interesting letter:

Looking through some Press articles about Trotsky<sup>1</sup> after his recent murder, I came across the following remarkable fact: When the Bolsheviks captured power after the October revolution in 1917, the Soviet Government negotiated for peace with Germany. The German Government offered very severe terms. Trotsky thought that the moral effect of the revolution was so great that the German Government would find it impossible to move their armies against Russia. So, rather than submit to those terms, he declared that the Soviet Government considered war to be at an end and so would demobilize their armies, and actually proceeded to do so. The Germans continued to advance and later on they concluded a severer treaty.

Do you not think this to be an unconscious and partial realization by the revolutionary leader of the possibility of resisting foreign aggression without an army? The cause of the failure is obvious. They had never

<sup>1</sup> Lev Davidovich Trotsky (1879-1940), Russian politician, whose real name was Bronstein, escaped to England in 1902 under the name Trotsky. Opposed to war, he played important part in organizing the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. In 1936, he was accused of joining a plot to murder Stalin but repudiated the charge. On August 20, 1940, Trotsky was attacked by a 'friend', described as a Stalinist agent. He died the next day.

consciously accepted non-violence or prepared for it. Trotsky's action amounted to non-resistance, not active non-violent appeal.

There are instances in the history of the Russian Revolution of unarmed masses or workers facing the military forces in face of rifle fire in the hope of winning them over and actually doing so. These I hold to be an unorganized and unconscious adoption of the non-violent technique, by the masses in the streets. But Trotsky's instance shows that a responsible revolutionary statesman, having nothing to do with non-violence, could, in the light of revolutionary experience, think the 'silly' course now advocated by you to be a possible one, and actually experiment with it.

Why should not we, with twenty years' tradition of non-violent action, not only experiment with it, but hope for certain success? I for myself have begun to believe that of all forms of non-violent action, resistance to foreign aggression is the easiest one, and the first one likely to be completely successful.

SIMLA, September 28, 1940

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

### 250. TELEGRAM TO A.K. CHANDA<sup>1</sup>

[September 28, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

YOUR TELEGRAM.<sup>3</sup> MAY GOD PULL GURUDEV THROUGH ANDKEEP  
HIM A WHILE FOR HUMANITY AS HE HAS DONE  
BEFORE.

GANDHI

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940. Also from a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

<sup>1</sup> Which read: "I am grateful to you for giving me so much of your time this afternoon. I suggest that we should resume our conversation on Tuesday at 2.45 p.m., if that would be convenient for you. I had already planned to be away from Simla tomorrow and on Sunday and, as I know that Monday is your Day of Silence, I do not wish to suggest anything to you on that day.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Pyarelal Papers, however, has: "Yours received." The addressee's telegram read: "Gurudev dangerously ill. Being removed Calcutta tonight accompanied by Calcutta doctors."

## 251. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

MANORVILLE, SIMLA W.,  
*September 28, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have just received your letter<sup>1</sup> of yesterday's date.

According to your wont you thank *me* for taking up so much of your time yesterday. I fear I must not accept the thanks. For they are all due to you for allowing me to make my long statement without showing impatience or irritation. Please accept them.

I thank you for so promptly sending me an appointment for Tuesday. If it is the same thing to you, I would like the appointment for Monday at 2.45 p.m. I can take my silence early tomorrow so as to finish in time for the appointment on Monday.

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

## 252. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

*September 28, 1940*

CHI. A. SALAAM,

You also should learn to read Gujarati. I hope everything is going on well, and you are happy. I will have to be in Simla a little longer. Work should be over by Monday at the latest. Recover your health fully. Remember what I have told you. Master Hindi spelling.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 434

<sup>1</sup> Secretary to Rabindranath Tagore. The telegram is quoted by Mahadev Desai in a postscript to his article "Come Thou in a Shower of Compassion", bearing the date-line "Simla, September 28, 1940". Mahadev Desai says that the telegram was sent "immediately" on receipt of the addressee's, which arrived after the article was "sent to the post".

### 253. DISGRACEFUL IF TRUE

A correspondent sends me a bitter letter which I reproduce after removing some choice adjectives which he has used:<sup>1</sup>

I have several letters in confirmation of the general charge of indecent behaviour of these 'soldiers'. One letter says that a philanthropic lady had invited these and Indian soldiers to tea. The Indians responded. Of over 250 Australians invited about eight responded. The poor lady, it is said, was frantic with grief, and phoned to know why her Australian guests had not turned up. 'They have gone out, they are not ready,' was the answer.

When I was in Bombay I had heard of this wild behaviour. I was inclined to discount the stories that came to me of their alleged misbehaviour. Some of them were at the station when I took the train for Wardha. I mentioned to them the complaints that were brought to my notice. They promised to set things right. Evidently they had no influence over their companions. They did say to me, they had not been in touch with one another before their enlistment.

Be that as it may, the menace should be sternly dealt with. I did mention the matter to H.E. the Viceroy. He promised to investigate. He admitted that the thing was serious if it was true. I suppose colour prejudice is as strong in Australia as in South Africa. The coloured man is dirt. There shall be no equality between the whites and the coloured races. Thus runs the South African constitution. The white man thinks that a nation containing forty crores of people and ruled by one hundred thousand white men can only be treated as the Australian soldiers are reported to have regarded our girls, the victoriawallas and even the Indian police. The war has made no difference in the behaviour of the white man.

Two questions emerge from the incidents, assuming them to have happened as reported. All the letters received by me cannot be inventions of fertile brains. What notice have the immediate authorities taken of the allegations? The Viceroy is but one man. If every ugly incident has to go up to him for redress, the system under which this has to happen is bad. There is gross indiscipline among the subordinates in so far as justice to the people is concerned. It is plain sailing when the power of the bayonet is to be exhibited. Then the Viceroy and the subordinate service can act as one man. The sinister

<sup>1</sup> The letter, not reproduced here, gave an account of the rowdy and indecent behaviour of Australian soldiers in Bombay.

inference from this phenomenon is that the subordinate service is the supreme authority and the Viceroy a mere figure-head. The most striking though painful illustration of the truth was furnished by the subordinate authority combining to break to pieces the Gandhi-Irwin pact<sup>1</sup>. Had it not been wantonly disregarded by the subordinate service, history would certainly have been written differently. But there was no Irwin spirit behind the service. The question, therefore, is, in the present instance, what has the G.O.C. Of the Australian contingent done with his men? Had he issued instructions to them as to their behaviour in the midst of a mild population? What did the Commissioner of Police do? What did the Collector do? And what did H.E. the Governor do?

The second question is equally important—what have the people done to protect girls from the barbarity to which they were exposed? What has the Mayor<sup>2</sup> done to vindicate the honour of the women living within his jurisdiction? True, he has no executive authority. But he is not the mere chairman of the Corporation. His status carries with it a dignity and prestige which should enable him to move the authorities concerned in the right direction. What has the Bombay Congress Committee done? What has the man in the street done? If the facts are correctly represented, they constitute a serious blot on everyone concerned. If there was public spirit, violent or non-violent, no one, white or brown, would dare to touch a girl against her will.

The matter demands thorough investigation.

SIMLA, September 29, 1940

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

## 254. NOTES

### ILLEGAL LEVY?

This is a typical letter<sup>3</sup>. In some shape or other things go on like this. I call it an illegal levy. Any passenger who will take the trouble can decline to pay the levy and tender the scheduled fare and demand a seat in the bus. If he is rejected, he has a cause of action. So far as I know, it is not the Government policy to compel people to give

<sup>1</sup> Of March 5, 1931; *vide* "Provisional Settlement"

<sup>2</sup> Mathuradas Trikumji; *vide* also "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 7-10-1940.

<sup>3</sup> The letter, not reproduced here, described how the police forced bus owners at Alibag, Kolaba, to contribute half anna on every ticket sold as war gift and how they were charging it to the passengers.

donations. There is legal compulsion enough for the purposes of the war. Even that is being carried too far and is causing resentment. But it becomes intense when to this legal levy is added the illegal one miscalled donations. It is indecent to legalize arbitrary exactions. It is doubly indecent to connive at illegalities. I can only hope that these will be stopped altogether. There should be no engineering of war contributions. If they are to be spontaneous, let the people send what they like to the appointed depots. This will be a true test of the strength of voluntary effort.

#### A CHRISTIAN STUDENT'S COMPLAINT

An Indian Christian student from a missionary college in Bengal writes:<sup>1</sup>

Of late I have written a great deal against strikes by students. I do not know the name of the college. Had I known it, I would have sought verification from the authorities. Therefore I base my opinion on the assumption that the facts are correctly stated by my correspondent. If they are, I am happy to be able to say that this strike was thoroughly justified. And I hope that it was wholly spontaneous and successful. Whether the song is in fact national or not is not for the missionaries concerned to determine. For them it is surely enough to know that their students recognize the song as national. Professors and teachers, if they are to be popular with their pupils, have to identify themselves with their activities and aspirations so long as they are not unhealthy or immoral.

SIMLA, September 29, 1940

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

#### 255. *PHYSICAL TRAINING AND AHIMSA*<sup>2</sup>

Part of the course in physical training schools and gymnasia is a training in the use of the sword, the spear and similar weapons. The Congress volunteers are taught various kinds of drill, and in many places are given also the training I have mentioned. I have received a

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent said that the students of the college had called a strike in protest against the Principal objecting to the singing of *Vandemataram* in a programme.

<sup>2</sup> This appeared as "translated from Gujarati" originally published in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-10-1940.

number of letters asking for my views on the subject from the point of view of ahimsa.

Before I proceed to state my views, it is necessary to mention an important fact, viz., that physical fitness is the only thing examined in case of candidates intending to be recruited for a violent army. Old men, women, and raw youth are not regarded as eligible. Nor are those suffering from disease fit to be chosen. And it is necessary to insist on this rule in selecting these recruits.

But the standard is quite the contrary for selecting recruits for a non-violent body. The chief thing to test is the candidate's mental fitness. And so such a body may have old men, women, raw youth, the blind and the lame, and even lepers, and it would bid fare to win. The ability to kill requires training. The ability to die is there in him who has the will for it. One can conceive of a child of ten or twelve being a perfect satyagrahi; indeed we come across such in daily life. But for such a child to be recruited for a violent army is out of the question. In spite of the best will in the world he cannot have the physical fitness.

But to say that lepers and children are eligible for a non-violent army is not to say that a non-violent person need have no regard for physical fitness. Ahimsa requires certain duties which can be done only by those with a trained physique. It is therefore most necessary to consider what kind of physical training a non-violent person should receive.

Very few of the rules applying to a violent army will apply to a non-violent body. A violent army will not have its arms for show but definitely for destructive purposes. A non-violent body will have no use for such weapons and will therefore beat its swords into plough-shares and spears into pruning hooks, and will shrink from the thought of using them as lethal weapons. The violent soldier will be trained in the use of violence by being taught to shoot. The non-violent soldier will have no time for this pastime. He will get all his training through nursing the sick, saving those in danger at the risk of his own life, patrolling places which may be in fear of thieves and dacoits, and in laying down his life, if necessary, in dissuading them from their purpose. Even the uniforms of the two will differ. The violent man will wear a coat of mail for his protection, and his uniform will be such as can dazzle people. The uniform of the non-violent man will be simple, in conformity with the dress of the poor, and betokening humility. Its purpose will be just to keep him

from heat and cold and rain. A violent soldier's protection will be his arms, no matter how much he takes God's name. He will not shrink from spending millions on armaments. The first and last shield and buckler of the non-violent person will be his unwavering faith in God. And the minds of the two will be as poles asunder. The violent man will always be casting about for plans to work the destruction of his enemy and will pray to God to fulfil his purpose. The national anthem of the British people is worth considering in this connection. It prays to God to save the King, to frustrate the enemy's knavish tricks, and to destroy him. Millions of Englishmen sing this anthem aloud with one voice standing respectfully. If God is the Incarnation of Mercy, He is not likely to listen to such prayer, but it cannot but affect the minds of those who sing it, and in times of war it simply kindles their hatred and anger to white heat. The one condition of winning a violent war is to keep the indignation against the enemy burning fiercely. In the dictionary of the non-violent there is no such word as an external enemy. But even for the supposed enemy he will have nothing but compassion in his heart. He will believe that no man is intentionally wicked, that there is no man but is gifted with the faculty to discriminate between right and wrong, and that if that faculty were to be fully developed, it would surely mature into non-violence. He will therefore pray to God that He may give the supposed enemy a sense of right and bless him. His prayer for himself will always be that the spring of compassion in him may ever be flowing and that he may ever grow in moral strength so that he may face death fearlessly.

Thus since the minds of both will differ as the poles, their physical training will also differ in the same degree.

We all know more or less what military training is like. But we have hardly ever thought that non-violent training must be of a different kind. Nor have we ever cared to discover whether in the past such training was given anywhere in the world. I am of opinion that it used to be given in the past and is even now being given in a haphazard way. The various exercises of Hatha Yoga are in this direction. The physical training given by means of these imparts among other things physical health, strength, agility, and the capacity to bear heat and cold. Shri Kunalayanandji is making scientific researches in the technique and benefits of these exercises. I have no knowledge of the progress he has made, nor do I know whether he is making his experiments with ahimsa as his goal. My reference to Hatha Yoga is meant only with a view to showing that this ancient type of non-violent training still exists, though I know that there is room in it for improvement. I do not know either that the author of this science had any idea of mass non-violence. The exercises had at their



back the desire for individual salvation. The object of the various exercises was to strengthen and purify the body in order to secure control of the mind. The mass non-violence we are now thinking of applies to people of all religions, and therefore the rules that may be framed must be such as can be accepted by all believers in ahimsa. And then as we are thinking of a non-violent army, that is to say of bringing into being a Satyagraha Sangh, we can but build anew accepting the old as our foundation. Let us then think of the physical training required by a satyagrahi. If the satyagrahi is not healthy in mind and body, he may perhaps fail in mustering complete fearlessness. He should have the capacity to stand guard at a single spot day and night; he must not fall ill even if he has to bear cold and heat and rain; he must have the strength to go to places of peril, to rush to scenes of fire, and the courage to wander about alone in desolate jungles and haunts of death; he will bear, without a grumble, severe beatings, starvation and worse, and will keep to his post of duty without flinching; he will have the resourcefulness and capacity to plunge into a seemingly impenetrable scene of rioting; he will have the longing and capacity to run with the name of God on his lips to the rescue of men living on the top storeys of buildings enveloped in flames; he will have the fearlessness to plunge into a flood in order to rescue people being carried off by it or to jump down a well to save a drowning person.

This list can be extended *ad libitum*. The substance of it all is that we should cultivate the capacity to run to the rescue of people in danger and distress, and to suffer cheerfully any amount of hardship that may be inflicted upon us. He who accepts this fundamental principle will easily be able to frame rules of physical training for satyagrahis. I have a firm conviction that the very foundation of this training is faith in God. If that is absent, all the training one may have received is likely to fail at the critical moment.

Let no one pooh-pooh my statement by saying that the Congress has many people who are ashamed to take the name of God. I am simply trying to state the view in terms of the science of satyagraha as I have known and developed it. The only weapon of the satyagrahi is God, by whatsoever name one knows Him. Without Him the satyagrahi is devoid of strength before an opponent armed with monstrous weapons. Most people lie prostrate before physical might. But he who accepts God as his only Protector will remain unbent before the mightiest earthly power. As faith in God is essential in a satyagrahi, even so is *brahmacharya*. Without *brahmacharya* the

satyagrahi will have no lustre, no inner strength to stand unarmed against the whole world. *Brahmacharya* may have here the restricted meaning of conservation of the vital energy brought about by sexual restraint, and not the comprehensive definition I have given of it. He who intends to live on spare diet, and without any external remedies, and still wants to have physical strength, has need to conserve his vital energy. It is the richest capital man can ever possess. He who can preserve it ever gains renewed strength out of it. He who uses it up, consciously or unconsciously, will ultimately be impotent. His strength will fail him at the right moment. I have often written about the ways and means of conserving this energy. Let the reader turn to my writings and carry out the instructions. He who lusts with the eye or the touch can never conserve his vital energy, nor the man who lusts after flesh-pots. Those who hope to conserve this energy without strict observance of the rules will no more succeed than those who hope to swim against the current without being exhausted. He who restrains himself physically and sins with his thoughts will fare worse than he who, without professing to observe *brahmacharya*, lives the life of a restrained householder. For he who lusts with the thought will ever remain unsated and will end his life a moral wreck and burden on the earth. Such a one can never be a full satyagrahi. Nor can one who hankers after wealth and fame.

This is the foundation of the physical training for a satyagrahi. The detailed structure of the course can easily be built in consonance with this foundation.

It should now be clear that in the physical training of a satyagrahi there is no room for lethal weapons like the sword or the spear. For far more terrible weapons than we have seen are in existence today, and newer ones are being invented every day. Of what fear will a sword rid him who has to cultivate the capacity to overcome all fear—real or imaginary? I have not yet heard of a man having shed all fear by learning sword-play. Mahavir and others who imbibed ahimsa did not do so because they knew the use of weapons, but because in spite of the knowledge of their use they shed all fear.

A slight introspection will show that he who has always depended on the sword will find it difficult to throw it away. But having deliberately discarded it he is likely to find his ahimsa more lasting than that of him who, not knowing its use, fancies he will not fear it. But that does not mean that in order to be truly non-violent

one must beforehand possess and know the use of arms. By parity of reasoning, one might say that only a thief can be honest, only a diseased person can be healthy, and only a dissolute person can be a *brahmachari*. The fact is that we have formed the habit of thinking along traditional grooves and will not get out of them. And as we cannot take a detached view, we cannot draw the right conclusions, and get caught in delusive snares.

If I have the time, I hope to present the reader with a model course of training.

SIMLA, September 29, 1940

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

### 256. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS<sup>1</sup>

[On or before *September 30, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

I know that khaddar is not very much in vogue in Simla. I hope that people will realize their duty towards the poor and will consequently take to khadi. It has pained me to learn that in Simla there is going on the sale and purchase of such khadi as is not duly certified by the All-India Spinners' Association. My pain is the greater because this is being done even by office-bearers of the Congress. I hope that anyone who is anywhere dealing in or purchasing uncertified khadi will stop doing so.

*The Hindu*, 18-10-1940

### 257. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

*September 30, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have your letter<sup>3</sup> of even date. It fairly sets forth the Congress position as I placed it before you. It is a matter of deep regret to me that the Government have not been able to appreciate the Congress position, meant just to satisfy the bare requirements of the people,

<sup>1</sup> For the text of the Viceroy's letter, *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> The statement was reported as issued by Gandhiji "during his recent visit to Simla". Gandhiji left Simla on September 30, 1940.

whether Congressmen or others, who felt a conscientious objection to helping a war to which they were never invited and which they regard, so far as they are concerned, as one for saving imperialism, of which India is the greatest victim. Their objection is just as conscientious as mine as a war resister. I cannot claim greater freedom for my conscience than for that of those I have named.

As I made it plain in the course of our talks, the Congress is as much opposed to victory for Nazism as any Britisher can be. But their objection cannot be carried to the extent of their participation in the war. And since you and the Secretary of State for India have declared that the whole of India is voluntarily helping the war effort, it becomes necessary to make clear that the vast majority of the people of India are not interested in it. They make no distinction between Nazism and the double autocracy that rules India. Had His Majesty's Government recognized the freedom required in the special condition of India, they would have justified the claim that they were receiving from India only such effort as they could voluntarily. The war party and the no-war party would have been placed on an equal footing so far as each worked fully non-violently.

As to the last paragraph of your letter, I wish to remind you that it was never contemplated to carry non-embarrassment to the point of self-extinction or, in other words, stopping all national activities which were designed to make India peace-minded and show that India's participation could not benefit anyone, not excluding Great Britain. Indeed I hold that, if India were left free to make her choice which freedom of speech implied, India would probably have turned the scales in favour of Britain and true liberty by the moral prestige which Britain would have then gained.

I must, therefore, repeat that the Congress does still want to refrain from embarrassing the British Government in their war effort. But it is impossible for the Congress to make of the policy a fetish by denying its creed at this critical period in the history of mankind. If the Congress has to die, it should do so in the act of proclaiming its faith. It is unfortunate that we have not been able to arrive at an agreement on the single issue of freedom of speech. But I shall hug the hope that it will be possible for the Government to work out their policy in the spirit of the Congress position.

I should like to touch upon the other points I raised in our talks. But for fear of burdening this reply, I refrain. I shall hope to make a

public statement<sup>1</sup> on them as early as I can.

In conclusion, let me thank you publicly for the great courtesy and patience with which you listened to my very long statement and argument. And though our ways seem to diverge for the moment, our personal friendship will, as you have kindly said at the time of saying farewell, bear the strain of divergence.

As arranged I am handing our correspondence to the Press for publication.

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

258. *LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE*<sup>2</sup>

DELHI,  
*October 1, 1940*

DEAR GURUDEV,

You *must* stay yet awhile. Humanity needs you. I was pleased beyond measure to find that you were better.

With love.

*Yours,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4653

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 5-10-1940

<sup>2</sup> The letter was carried by Mahadev Desai to the addressee in Calcutta. *Vide* also "Telegram to A. K. Chanda", 28-9-1940

## 259. TO SATYAGRAHIS<sup>1</sup>

Satyagrahis will not be impatient with me and argue with me or with themselves and say, 'When will you give the word? You have had your interview with the Viceroy. You have got what many of us had told you would get'. Your telling me this or that mattered little. The attempt was worth making. I had told you that even if I did not get what I wanted from the Viceroy, I would bring from Simla added strength for myself. Who knows that to have added strength is not better than weak success. But my wisdom will be tested by the manner in which I use the strength. Maulana Saheb has called the Working Committee for the 11th instant. I hope, I shall be ready then with my plan of action. But whatever it is, it will be good only if it carries with it the united will of all Congressmen, if not the whole nation. Then the visible action even of one man will be enough for the purpose intended. Meanwhile please remember there is to be no civil disobedience, direct or indirect. Any breach of this will weaken the cause because it will unnerve your general who is susceptible to the slightest indiscipline. A general in action has no strength but what is given to him by his people.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, October 2, 1940

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

## 260. SPEECH AT WARDHA<sup>2</sup>

*October 2, 1940*

In this Kali Yuga, you get more fruit for less work. It is an easy dharma to spin and weave, whereby you can achieve your objective and reach the goal. You are celebrating my birthday not because of my satyagraha but because of my inseparable connection with khadi. I desire that all villagers whether young or old should produce it and wear it

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

<sup>2</sup> The report said: "Gandhiji was speaking at a meeting organized to celebrate his 72nd birthday. He distributed prizes to winners in spinning, carding and weaving competitions."

Asked about his recent interview with the Viceroy, Mahatma Gandhi said:

As the Viceroy refused my demand for liberty of speech, there is no way out now.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-10-1940

### 261. *THE BREACH*<sup>1</sup>

It is my firm conviction that British statesmen have failed to do the right thing when it was easy to do it. If India is wholly in favour of participation in the war, they could have easily disregarded any hostile propaganda. But the determination to gag free expression of opinion, provided it was not in the least tainted with violence, shatters Britain's claim that India's participation is voluntary. Had the Congress proposal been accepted, such aid as Britain would have got from India would have been an asset of inestimable value. The non-violent party would have played an effective part for honourable peace when the proper time for it was in sight, as it must be some day. I have been shown *The Times* comment on the breach. I accept the compliment about my resourcefulness. But great as I believe it to be, I own that it has its limitations. There must be willingness on the other side. I regret to have to say, I wholly missed it at the interview. The Viceroy was all courtesy, but he was unbending, and believed in the correctness of his judgment, and as usual had no faith in that of nationalist India. The Britisher is showing extraordinary bravery on the battle-field in a marvellous manner. But he lacks bravery to take risks in the moral domain. I often wonder whether the latter has any place in British politics.

SEVAGRAM, October 3, 1940

*Harijan*, 6-10-1940

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

## 262. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

October 3, 1940

CHI. KUNVARJI<sup>1</sup>,

I do not recollect getting Variava's<sup>2</sup> report. It is surprising that you cannot keep up your weight there. Do go to Mysore [for treatment]. I see nothing wrong in that. I have received Rs. 300 from Bombay. Will any more be coming?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9742. Also C.W. 722. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

## 263. CABLE TO CARL HEATH<sup>3</sup>

WARDHAGANJ,

October 4, 1940

CARL HEATH  
FRIENDS HOUSE  
EUSTON ROAD  
LONDON

MOST EARNEST PLEADING FAILED. EVIDENTLY SUCH WAS  
GOD'S WILL. ACTING WITH GREATEST CARE. SOME FORM  
OF CIVIL RESISTANCE INEVITABLE FOR MERE EXISTENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1044. Also Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> Husband of Gandhiji's grand-daughter, Rami

<sup>2</sup> A Parsi doctor who attended on Gandhiji in 1939, during the Rajkot fast. He was asked to send a report on the addressee who was suffering from tuberculosis; *vide* "Letter to Dr. Variava", 31-8-1940.

<sup>3</sup> This was in reply to a cable dated September 11, 1940, from the addressee, a Quaker. Chairman of the India Conciliation Group, he had said: "Your cable [*vide* "Cable to Carl Heath", 26-8-1940] received. Hold belief clash can be averted by persistent human contact till acceptable formula found".



## 264. CABLE TO JAMES MAXTON<sup>1</sup>

October 4, 1940

I SEE NO CHANCE OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. BRITISH MATCHLESS ON BATTLE-FIELD BUT BRITISH STATESMEN NOT BRAVE ENOUGH TO TAKE RISKS IN DOING THE RIGHT THING AT THE RIGHT MOMENT AND IN ORDER TO COVER THEIR WEAKNESS RESORT TO FALSE ARGUMENT UNSUPPORTED BY FACTS.

From a photostat: C.W. 10165 a. Also Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40 Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

## 265. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

October 4, 1940

CHI. ANAND,

Got Vidya's<sup>2</sup> letter only yesterday. Therefore neither the telegram nor the letter was of any use. You have always my blessings in whatever you do. Pyarelal wrote to you a few lines, so why do you feel hurt? I am busy over so many activities that I am unable to cope with them. So even if you get a few lines you should be glad. I am sorry to learn about your ears. Accept God's will. As for the book<sup>3</sup>, do as you think proper. It is good that you have good relations with Father. Come whenever you want. Be happy. Serve according to [your] capacity.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

<sup>1</sup> The addressee was a British Labour leader and Member of Parliament.

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's wife

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to "Gandhi Series", edited and published by the addressee; *vide* "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 14-2-1941.

## 266. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM,  
October 5, 1940

In the correspondence between H.E. the Viceroy and myself announcing the breakdown in the talks, I have said in my letter<sup>2</sup> that I would make a public statement covering matters not referred to in my letter.

Before I do so, I think it is necessary for my purpose to say a few words regarding Lord Linlithgow. He is straight in his talk, always deliberate, and economical in his language. He is never equivocal, never leaves you in doubt as to his meaning. He conveys the most unpalatable decisions with a calmness and courtesy which, for the moment, make you think that you have heard no harsh or hard decision. He listens to your argument with a patience and attention I have never known any other Viceroy or high functionary to show in an equal measure. He is never ruffled and never discourteous. With all this, however, he is not to be easily moved from his position. He meets you with his decision on the matter under discussion already made. He takes care not to let you think that it is so, but there is no doubt about it that his decision is unchangeable. He is not receptive. He has amazing confidence in the correctness of his judgment. He does not believe in a gentleman's or any other agreement. I have always felt that after the Gandhi-Irwin pact, British satraps decided that there should be no more such pacts. Whatever they wanted to do, they should do independently. It shows either a high sense of justice or boundless self-assurance. I think it is the latter. He and I have become friends never to be parted, be the differences between us as great as they can be.

Holding such an opinion about the Viceroy, it pains me to have to relate what I must of my impression of the talks which have ended in a divergence which, in my opinion, was wholly avoidable. Acceptance of my proposal would have been no less beneficial to England than to India.

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under the title "More about Simla Visit".

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

I went to Simla in the capacity of a representative and as a friend. As a friend I presented him with my doubts as to certain acts of the British Government. To have them dissolved was necessary to enable me to determine my mental attitude which to me is more than any visible act. I felt that the putting up by the Viceroy, and then the Secretary of State, of want of agreement by the Congress with the Princes, the Muslim League and even the Scheduled Classes as a barrier to the British recognition of India's right to freedom was more than unjust to the Congress and the Indian people. I told the Viceroy that these three represented class or communal interests, whereas the Congress represented no particular class. It was a purely national organization striving to represent India as a whole; and therefore the Congress had always maintained that it would abide by the verdict of a national assembly elected on the basis of the broadest franchise. It had further declared its intention to abide by the vote of the separate Muslim electorate, so far as special Muslim rights were concerned. Therefore it was wrong to speak as if Muslim rights needed special safeguards as against the Congress. The same thing applied to the Sikhs.

The Princes of the present day were a creation of the British Government to subserve British interest. As against the plea that the British were bound by special treaty obligations, I contended that the Congress did not ask the British Government to disregard them. Only they could not be used to bar Indian progress, and it was wholly wrong to expect the Congress to produce an agreement with them. The Princes were not like other parties free to conclude any agreement with the Congress even if they wished. Moreover, the treaties, if they oblige the British Government to protect the Princes, equally compel them to protect the rights of the people. But it has been abundantly proved that the British had rarely interfered with the Princes purely on behalf of the people. If they had been as careful of the people's right as they were bound by the treaties to be, the people's condition would not have been as miserable as it is today. Had they been true to the treaties of their own making, the people of States India should be more advanced than those of British India. I cited some telling illustrations of this neglect of duty.

The introduction of the Scheduled Classes in the controversy has made the unreality of the case of the British Government doubly unreal. They know that these are the special care of the Congress, and

that the Congress is infinitely more capable of guarding their interests than the British Government. Moreover, the Scheduled Classes are divided into as many castes as the caste Hindu society. No single Scheduled Class member could possibly and truthfully represent the innumerable castes.

I had sought the interview with the Viceroy to see if my interpretation of the British argument had any flaw. I failed to get any satisfaction on the points raised. The Viceroy would not be drawn into a discussion. I can have no grievance about his disinclination to enter into any argument. He had every right to rely upon the fact that that was a matter of high policy not admitting of argument. There is a certain cold reserve about the British official world which gives them their strength and isolation from surroundings and facts. They do not want to be too frank. They politely refuse to enter into embarrassing argument. They leave you to draw what inferences you like while they continue to maintain their inflexible attitude. I suppose that is what is meant by the steel frame. For me, this side of British policy has been the least attractive. I had hoped, against the warning of friends, that I might be able to break through this steel wall of reserve and get at the naked truth. But the imperialist Britisher is firmly fixed in his saddle.

Nevertheless, I will not accept defeat. I must strive to have the truth admitted by the British people that the bar to India's freedom lies not in the Congress or any other party's inability to produce an agreement which is in its nature impossible, but that it undoubtedly lies in the British disinclination to do the obviously right thing.

The unreality of the British reasons for refusal to treat India as a free country was not my only grouse. I drew the Viceroy's attention to certain irregularities in the prosecution of the war policy. There was agreement between us that there should be no compulsion as to war contributions. He has promised to examine all cases of hardship and all other difficulties. My purpose was to leave no ground for misunderstanding and to fight, if there was to be a fight, only on well-defined issues and without bitterness. I want to enter upon the fight with the hope that its very fairness will compel the recognition that India deserves better treatment, not merely from the British but from all the nations of the earth.

Lest it might be said that the Congress fights because it has failed to get power, I told His Excellency in the plainest words possible that the Congress had no desire to mount to power at the

expense of a single national interest. It seeks no power save for the whole nation. Therefore he will have no opposition from the Congress if he forms a Cabinet composed of representatives of different parties. The Congress would be content to be in opposition so far as the war effort is concerned and so long as the machinery of Government has to subserve imperialist ends. The immediate issue is not independence. The immediate issue is the right of existence, i.e., the right of self-expression which, broadly put, means free speech. This the Congress wants not merely for itself, but for all, the only restraint being complete observance of non-violence. I hold that that condition answers all the difficulties by whomsoever raised.

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

### 267. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*October 6, 1940*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your two letters<sup>1</sup>. You will tell me more about Rajni Patel when we meet. Your letter<sup>2</sup> about Napier<sup>3</sup>, with enclosure, I am sending to the Viceroy. It is a pathetic case.

I am over head and ears in work. Hence no more.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 268. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*October 6, 1940*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. I have made arrangements with the Harijan Colony. They will send you slivers when you need them. If you will give notice in time I shall see to their being sent. I hope what

<sup>1</sup> One of these, dated September 21, was concerning the case of Rajni Patel, a barrister in Bombay, who had been arrested on his return after years of sojourn abroad.

<sup>2</sup> Dated October 2, 1940; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-10-1940

<sup>3</sup> Great grandson of Sir Charles Napier

you have are quite good. Yes, I have been to Simla. It has been a good experience. I hope you will get the solitude you want.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI  
PALAMPUR  
KANGRA DISTRICT  
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6460. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10055

*269. LETTER TO SAILENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 6, 1940*

DEAR SAILENDRA,

Your letter. You should certainly earn more. Are you worth more? Can you leave Calcutta? I quite see that you must all have proper food. I shall discuss with Father<sup>1</sup> what can be done.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10164. courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

*270. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 6, 1940*

DEAR BALUKAKA,

I thank you for your good wishes. I have read the portions marked by you. It is difficult to speculate today what will happen if this country of ours was left undefended. I can only say that satyagrahis will have no fear. If they are worth their salt they will not be found bending the knee to any conqueror. But on this as on many matters we must agree to differ.

*Yours,*  
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BALUKAKA KANITKAR  
HINDMATA SEVA MANDIR  
POONA

From a photostat: C.W. 970. Courtesy: Gajanan N. Kanitkar

<sup>1</sup> Amrita Lal Chatterjee

271. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 6, 1940

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I duly got your loving gift. You are progressing day by day. You have to progress a great deal more still. I got Harshadabehn's gift too. She has given an incomplete address. Please thank her yourself on my behalf.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI DILKHUSH DIWANJI  
GANDHI KUTIR  
KARADI, *via* NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2647

272. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 6, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter and your book<sup>1</sup>. I read the dedication. I wore the dhoti<sup>2</sup> and I still wear it along with the others. I have kept the book with me. I do wish to go through it.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI PREMABEHN KANTAK  
ASHRAM, SASWAD  
POONA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10411. Also C.W. 6850. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

<sup>1</sup> *Satyagrahi Maharashtra*, which the addressee had dedicated to Gandhiji

<sup>2</sup> Which the addressee had got made from yarn spun by her and sent to Gandhiji as a birthday present

## 273. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 6, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter. I want to call you to the battle. At least now improve your health.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[From Hindi]

*Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, p. 290

## 274. TWO THOUGHT-PROVOKING LETTERS<sup>1</sup>

A friend writes thus:

When you asked for the names of out-and-out believers in non-violence I wanted very much to send in mine, but something within compelled me to refrain. First because I felt there was lack of ahimsa in my personal conduct, and secondly because there was the opposite of love for the English in my heart. I rejoice when I read in the papers of the destruction wrought on London and Britain, and I inwardly want the British to be defeated in the war. I am impelled to confess this, for I could not deceive you.

The second letter is from South Africa. I take a few sentences from it:

I am puzzled as to what should be the attitude of Indians at the present juncture. The 'White' races are so utterly callous in regard to 'Coloured' people, and in spite of the war colour prejudice continues unabated. Why then should we give our lives for them ? Quite recently an Indian student who returned here from Europe was telling us that in spite of the fact that the steamer was not crowded the British company hesitated to give accommodation to Indians. Such treatment leads us and also the African people to believe that there is no difference between the Nazis, the Boers and the British, so far as we are concerned. If there were Nazi rule in South Africa, we could not be treated worse than we are today. Many of us think that the British

<sup>1</sup> This appeared as "translated from Gujarati", originally published in *Harijanbandhu*, 12-10-1940.



are sweet-tongued but they pursue their own ruthless policy in spite of honeyed words, whereas Hitler would be more frank. He at any rate says exactly what he feels. Is there not truth in this? Anyhow we ought to know where we stand. Please tell us.

Though differently worded the two letters betray the same thought. It is difficult for those who suffer at British hands to shed either their dislike of or a disinclination to help them. But the present is a real testing time for ahimsa which alone can throw light on our path.

First of all we must distinguish between the British people and their policy. We must have full liberty thoughtfully and with reason to criticize the latter, but we may not dislike them. To err is human. All have their good as well as bad points. It is in human nature, even if we are in the wrong, to resent bitter, often unjust, criticism. But if we were lovingly shown our faults, we would perhaps be willing to listen. We must behave thus towards the British. Let us tell them where they are in the wrong, but let us not wish them any harm. We may demand a mental and heart change in their outlook, but we may not pray for their downfall.

Such an attitude is indispensable in satyagraha which demands that, while we may neither speak evil of wrongdoers nor wish them ill, we must at the same time show them the error of their ways and non-co-operate with them in their wrongdoing. The Congress has been trying to follow this great principle for the last twenty years. I believe that we have benefited greatly therefrom. Moreover there is no reason why we should wish the British to be defeated in this war. The writer from South Africa rightly says that there is not much to choose between the British and the Nazis. This is as clear as daylight in South Africa, in particular, where Coloured races are treated as definitely inferior in every way. What more than this could the Nazis say or do? The defeat of the British would connote the victory of the Nazis, which, again, we do not and must not desire. Therefore, we should be impartial. We are desirous of our own independence. For that there is no reason why we should want the destruction of Germany. We have to achieve as well as maintain our freedom through our own strength. We do not need British or any outside help for it. Those of us who have full faith in ahimsa believe that we can win it through non-violence and keep it thereby also.

There is, however, a section amongst us who believe in winning and maintaining our independence through force of arms. Their position is a difficult one. As a matter of fact we have still to gain our freedom. If we win it through violence, we will not do so by helping Britain in the war. For if we help the war effort, we really come more under their sway than we are today. And if in spite of our help they lose, we would then come under the rule of another foreign power. So that, if Britain and India were jointly defeated, we would, so to speak, be jumping from the frying pan into the fire. Moreover India has no enmity towards any nation. Hitler and others have no illusions. They know full well that India is not a willing partner in the war, that we are a slave country and that our wishes do not count. It was really the Congress who raised this question because the Congress has adopted non-violence as its weapon. At the same time we have no quarrel with those who do not believe in non-violence. Each of us must go his own way. By doing so we shall know where India stands. If the Congress had not spoken out its mind, it would have committed suicide, that is to say, it would have given up its right to follow out its policy of non-violence. It is its duty to keep itself alive. Therefore the Congress has to take some action. What that action will be will shortly become known. I suggest to the two writers that they should try to rid their hearts of all anger and hatred. These are in reality signs of weakness. Non-violence is an active force. If they were to follow it, they would be active and they would be spreading the leaven of ahimsa. The Congress demand is not for itself only. It extends far beyond even India and embraces the world. Let us therefore wish well from the bottom of our hearts to all the warring nations.

SEVAGRAM, October 7, 1940

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

### 275. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*October 7, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I enclose herewith Pandit Nehru's letter<sup>1</sup> and its enclosure. Though it relates to an individual British officer who has risen against

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter From Jawaharlal Nehru", 2-10-1940

the tradition, I think the case merits sympathetic treatment. The Pandit's letter I send in order that you may know the inner working of the mind of one who will be the future leader of all India. You will please tell me if I have overstepped the limit in sending you these papers.<sup>1</sup>

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. courtesy: National Archives of India

### 276. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,  
October 7, 1940

My criticism<sup>2</sup> was intended to support you and the Congress. I of course knew that you were doing something. I wrote to help you and strengthen your hands. It will also not have escaped your attention that such criticism can be made. The correspondent who wrote to me meant well. I felt that if I wrote openly, all of you would understand and take further steps accordingly. Do you see now? May I publish the correspondence with you?<sup>3</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, p. 176

### 277. HYDERABAD

What do you say to the right of Hyderabad to the territories that have been taken away by the English under some pretext or other, e.g., Berar, Ceded Districts, Karnataka, etc.?

This question demands an answer. So far as they have been taken away by the English the right accrues against the English. If I

<sup>1</sup> In his reply dated October 11, the Viceroy, *inter alia*, remarked: "These are difficult cases, as the Pandit dearly recognized and I think, if I may say so, that the advice which he gave was eminently sensible and in the best interests of the officer concerned. I fully appreciate your own feelings."

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* pp. 63-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* also "Notes," sub-title "Australian Soldiers"

am asked as a matter of equity, I can only say that the people of the respective parts should be asked to make their choice. That is the only equity I know.

But I suggest that all such discussion is academic. If India, the geographical unit, gets independence, as it must some day, it means that every component part has its independence. If independence is won non-violently, all the component parts will be voluntarily interdependent, working in perfect harmony under a representative central authority which will derive its sanction from the confidence reposed in it by the component parts. If independence is taken by force of arms, then the strongest power will hold sway over all India. And this may be Hyderabad for ought I know. All the big and the petty States will be free willy-nilly from the British yoke. They will each fight for their existence and succumb to the strongest who will be the emperor of India. This presupposes unarmed millions lying prostrate at the feet of the combination of armed States. Many other things are, however, conceivable. The Indian part of the British army will probably have consciousness of strength and an independent existence. There may be Muslim arms, Sikh arms, Gurkha arms, Rajput arms and what not. They may fight among themselves or, having allied themselves to some nationalist party, may present a united front to the Princes. There may also be the descent upon India of the warring tribes from the Frontier to share the spoils or the sovereignty itself.

The Congress, if it still has anything of its non-violence left in it, will die in the attempt to establish universal peace in India. It is not impossible that all the warring elements will find it profitable in more ways than one voluntarily to surrender themselves to the moral authority of a central power. This means universal suffrage exercised by a disciplined and politically intelligent electorate. It also means a decent and permanent burial to communal and other discord.

But this may not happen. The existing state of things does not warrant an optimistic outlook. But I am a man of faith. And to faith all things are possible. But supposing the worst happens and there is anarchy in the land, if there is God upon earth as He is in heaven, then you may depend upon it that, I shall not live to make any choice. I shall die in the anarchic flame whilst I am vainly attempting to still it with my tiny, shaky hands. But if you ask me in advance whether I would face anarchy in preference to foreign orderly rule, either

British or any other, I would unhesitatingly plump for anarchy, say, the rule of the Nizam supported by Chiefs become feudatory to him or supported by the border Muslim tribes. In my estimation it will be cent per cent domestic. It will be home rule though far, far from self-rule or *swa-raj* (स्व-राज). But you must let me repeat that, while I can write thus academically, if the reality faces me, my choice will be death or the rule of the people by the people for the people. This means the rule of unadulterated non-violence. So you see my non-violence is made not of cotton wool but of a metal much harder than steel and yet softer than cotton wool. You can compare it only with itself.

You will naturally then ask what place have the Princes in my scheme of things. Such a question should not arise if you had fully realized the implications of non-violence. For the Princes obeying the moral authority of a central body not sustained by arms will find an honourable place as servants of the people. No one will have any rights but what are inherent in a willing performance of one's duties. Thus H. E. H. the Nizam will then be the chosen servant of people. Only then his people will not be merely those confined willy-nilly within his present borders but may be all India. You must not dismiss this as a utopian scheme. I claim to be a practical man. If the Congress proves true to its policy, what may seem today to be an airy nothing may tomorrow become an agreeable reality. In my scheme there is no waste of either human talent or creative effort. Let me quote here my cable to H. G. Wells in reply to his on the rights of man:

Received your cable. Have carefully read your five articles. You will permit me to say, you are on the wrong track. I feel sure that I can draw up a better charter of rights than you have drawn up. But what good will it be? Who will become its guardian? If you mean propaganda or popular education, you have begun at the wrong end. I suggest the right way. Begin with a charter of duties of man, and I promise the rights will follow as spring follows winter. I write from experience. As a young man I began life by seeking to assert my rights, and I soon discovered I had none—not even over my wife. So I began by discovering and performing my duty by my wife, my children, friends, companions and society, and I find today that I have greater rights, perhaps, than any living man I know. If this is too tall a claim, then I say I do not know anyone who possesses greater rights than I.

SEVAGRAM, October 8, 1940

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

## 278. THANKS<sup>1</sup>

I am grateful to the numerous senders of birthday greetings from India as well as remote parts of the earth. Many have this time also sent me strands of yarn some of which is of great fineness, strength and evenness. Needless to say I shall make the wisest use of all these (to me) precious gifts for they betoken a labour of love for *Daridranarayana*. Some have sent monetary gifts either for Harijans or for the A.I.S.A. All these have been sent to the proper quarters.

SEVAGRAM, October 8, 1940

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

## 279. FASTING IN SATYAGRAHA<sup>2</sup>

I note that in connection with the imminent satyagraha the possibility of my fasting has been hinted at in the papers. Pandit Malaviyaji has a soft corner for me. He is always deeply concerned about my health, my politics, and my morals. We have differences of opinion, but our love cheerfully stands the strain. The day before I left Sevagram for Simla I received a letter from him, urging me to avoid at all cost the reported fast.<sup>3</sup>

I have to admit that there is a certain measure of truth in the report. I have told my friends of the Working Committee of my premonition that I may have to undertake one more fast during my life, and that this may even take place sooner than I had thought. But the fact is that so far as I can remember I have never undertaken a single one of my public fasts with any premeditation on my part. All my fasts have come to me on the spur of the moment, gifts from God as I have called them. Their results have been invariably good. And in any event I have no regrets regarding them. I hope, therefore, that readers will entertain no anxiety on reading these lines. If God has a fast in store for me, it will surely come and it will bring good in its wake. In all things His will be done.

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under "Notes".

<sup>2</sup> This appeared as "translated from Hindustani", originally published in *Harijan Sevak*, 12-10-1940.

<sup>3</sup> For Gandhiji's reply to M. M. Malaviya, *vide* "Letter to M. M. Malaviya", 25-9-1940

Now what is the place of fasting in satyagraha ? Nowadays quite a number of fasts are undertaken in the name of satyagraha. Many of the known fasts have been meaningless, many may be said to have been impure. Fasting is a fiery weapon. It has its own science. No one, as far as I am aware, has a perfect knowledge of it. Unscientific experimentation with it is bound to be harmful to the one who fasts, and it may even harm the cause espoused.<sup>1</sup> No one who has not earned the right to do so should, therefore, use this weapon. A fast may only be undertaken by him who is associated with the person against whom he fasts. The latter must be directly connected with the purpose for which the fast is being undertaken. Bhagat Fulsinghji's recent fast was such a one. He was closely connected with the people of Moth village; he had served the Harijans of the place, too. The wrong that was being enacted was done by the villagers to the Harijans. When every means of obtaining justice had failed, there was no option left for a man like Fulsinghji except to resort to fasting. He did and succeeded.<sup>2</sup> Success or failure depends entirely on the will of God and is not relevant to the issue under discussion.

All my public fasts have been of this category. Out of all of them perhaps there is most to be learnt from the Rajkot one. It has been roundly condemned by many people. Originally it was pure and necessary. The blemish crept in when I asked the Viceroy to intervene. Had I not done so, I am convinced that its result would have been brilliant. Even as it was, the result was a victory for the cause. Because God wanted to open my eyes, he took the bread out of my mouth, so to speak. The Rajkot fast is thus a useful study for the satyagrahi. In regard to its necessity there is no doubt, assuming that the principles for fasting which I have laid down are accepted. The important thing to note about it is how a pure undertaking can become tainted owing to lack of watchfulness on the part of the doer. There can be no room for selfishness, anger, lack of faith, or impatience in a pure fast. It is no exaggeration to admit that all these defects crept into my Rajkot fast. My selfishness lay in the fact that, inasmuch as its being given up depended on certain conditions being fulfilled by the late Thakore Saheb, I had in me the selfish desire for the realization of the fruits of my labour. If there had been no anger in me, I would not have looked to the Viceroy for assistance. My love should have deterred me from

<sup>1</sup> The Hindi version has: “. . . and it may harm even other people.”

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also “Telegram to G. D. Birla”, 21-9-1940

doing so. For if he was really as a son to me, why should I have complained about him to his overlord? I betrayed want of faith in that I thought the Thakore Saheb would not be melted by my love and I was impatient to break the fast. All these shortcomings were bound to make my fast impure. It would be irrelevant here to ponder over the many results of the Rajkot fast, and I therefore refrain from doing so. But we have learnt how infinitely watchful and prayerful he who fasts has to be and how even a little carelessness can damage a good cause. It is now apparent that in addition to truth and non-violence a satyagrahi should have the confidence that, God will grant him the necessary strength and that, if there is the slightest impurity in the fast, he will not hesitate to renounce it at once. Infinite patience, firm resolve, single-mindedness of purpose, perfect calm, and no anger must of necessity be there. But since it is impossible for a person to develop all these qualities all at once, no one who has not devoted himself to following the laws of ahimsa<sup>1</sup> should undertake a satyagrahi fast.

I should like readers to note that I have not here dealt with fasts undertaken for bodily or spiritual purification. Nature-cure doctors should be consulted for the former. The greatest of sinners can undertake the latter. And for this type of fast we possess a veritable mine of literature. Fasts for spiritual purification have really been forgotten in our day. If they are ever undertaken, they are either purely imitative or merely for the sake of tradition, and we cannot, therefore, derive the benefit from them that we should. Those who want to go in for a satyagrahi fast should certainly possess some personal experience of fasts for spiritual purification. Fasts for ridding the body of impurities are also beneficial. In the end, of course, there is only one basis of the whole ideal of fasting, and that is purification.

SEVAGRAM, October 8, 1940

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

<sup>1</sup> The Hindi version has: “. . . no one who has not purified himself by observing *yama-niyamas* . . . .”



## 280. PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING<sup>1</sup>

An ideal society is that in which every individual will be able to live a life of progressively increasing wants with a minimum output of labour.

Thus writes a friend from Ahmedabad. The proposition is pleasing and is backed by plausible argument which many may accept. The writer forecast that the Viceroy was bound to refuse the Congress proposal.<sup>2</sup> He does not believe in the freedom of the individual, and is therefore of opinion that it was only meet that the Viceroy should turn down the proposal. Because his forecast turned out correct he may even hold his argument to be sound and say, "I told you so." It is therefore necessary for me to take note of the letter.

The writer may not derive any satisfaction from the Viceroy's refusal.<sup>3</sup> All my colleagues had foretold the result. But I wanted to go not so much in the expectation of getting acceptance as, in the event of failure, to return with added strength. Nor does the rejection of the proposal mean in any sense that the Viceroy does not believe in individual freedom. Britain has not gone that length. Europe has no doubt entered upon a new phase in denying individual liberty. If this goes, then surely all is lost, for, if the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail, so he will not become an animal with no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own. Modern editions of Chenghiz Khan retain their own.

Just as the writer's ideas on individual liberty are impossible, so also is his other theory. That everyone in this world should be able to maintain as high a standard of life as possible with the least possible

<sup>1</sup>This appeared as "translated from Gujarati", originally published in *Harijanbandhu*, 12-10-1940.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati version has: ". . . my proposal."

<sup>3</sup> The Gujarati version adds: "It is never assumed that such demands will be acceded to."

output of labour is just as fantastic as to expect a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The writer's high living would appear to mean luxurious living which is an impossible proposition for any society as a whole. And when there is no limit to luxury where shall we stop ? All the scriptures of the world have taught the exact opposite. Plain living and high thinking is the ideal that has been placed before us. The vast majority recognize its truth but are unable to get there because of human frailty. It is, however, perfectly possible to envisage such an existence. That the crores in India should be guaranteed a certain income is only right, and to achieve this ideal large-scale machinery is not only not necessary but wholly destructive.<sup>1</sup>

Man falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plain living and high thinking the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. History gives ample proof of this. Man's happiness really lies in contentment. He who is discontented, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. And there is really no slavery equal to that of his desires. All the sages have declared from the house-tops that man can be his own worst enemy as well as his best friend. To be free or to be a slave lies in his own hands. And what is true for the individual is true for society.<sup>2</sup>

SEVAGRAM, October 9<sup>3</sup>, 1940

*Harijan*, 1-2-1942

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati version does not have the last three words.

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati version adds: "And that emancipation can be achieved only by living a pure and simple life."

<sup>3</sup> From *Harijanbandhu*. The source, however, has "7".

## 281. NOTES

### 'A STAB IN THE BACK'?

I have read Sir Sikandar Hyat's reported speech<sup>1</sup> on the correspondence between H.E. the Viceroy and myself. I was sorry for it. Where is the stab in the back when everything is done openly after full discussion and with the utmost consideration for the party affected? He is a bad advocate who overproves his case, and I promise that Sir Sikandar will be proved as such. Sir Sikandar says that ninety-nine per cent of the Punjab is for participation in the war. No doubt he is a popularly elected member of the Punjab Assembly, and he is the undisputed Premier of the Punjab. Nevertheless it is a big claim that he puts forth for the Punjab. Sir Sikandar's cause will lose nothing by being true to facts. And the facts are that the Punjab has been one of the best recruiting grounds for the British rulers. This does not necessarily prove that the Punjab is the most patriotic of the provinces. In this vast country of ours there are many professions. Soldiering is one of them. These professionals will lend their services to whomsoever will pay them good wages and enough practice for their profession. Therefore, in my opinion, Sir Sikandar can prove no more than that the Punjab has the pride of place so far as the recruiting ground for the British is concerned. But the Punjabi soldier is as much interested in the issue as the black soldiers trained by General Franco were interested in his politics or in his ambition. They served him because of the pay and the practice in the use of arms which he offered them. But politically speaking, if Sir Sikandar can claim that ninety-nine per cent of the Punjab is for participation in the war, it can be claimed with much greater force perhaps that ninety-

<sup>1</sup> According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1940, Vol. II, pp. 31-2 and 40, Sikandar Hyat Khan, "addressing a gathering of ryots at Nuh (Gurgaon District) on October 1, said that Mahatma Gandhi was among the first Indians to denounce Hitler's acts of aggression and to declare that his sympathy lay entirely on the side of Britain in this war. Since that declaration was made the Congress had been changing its position from time to time until at last Mahatma had formulated his demand for freedom to carry on propaganda against participation in the war." Addressing another meeting at Lahore on November 1, in connection with the "Muslim Countries Day", Sikandar, "took the opportunity to elaborate his charges against Mahatma Gandhi". He said: "Mahatma's campaign amounted not only to stabbing Britain in the back but also a betrayal of the best interests of India and the Islamic world."

nine per cent of the seven provinces where the Congress has an overwhelming majority are against such participation. Only I do not want to advance any such argument. I suggest that those who want and those who do not want to participate in the war may follow their respective courses without being acclaimed as patriots. It may well be left to the historian of the future to pronounce judgment.

#### AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS

The Mayor of Bombay has sent me a letter complaining of my reference<sup>1</sup> to him as if he had neglected his duty as the first citizen of Bombay. He tells me too that he acted in the promptest manner possible and entered into correspondence with the Government. As a responsible citizen he could not rush to the Press or inform the public what he was doing. All this is creditable to the Mayor. I know him to be business-like and anxious to render service without fuss. But it is strange that he has read a meaning into my writing which the context shows I could not have meant. I have put to him the same question that I have put to all the other parties concerned. Surely I must not be taken to have cast any reflection on any single one of them. For aught I know they might have taken effective steps without my warning. When a series of complaints came to me from various sources, I was found to draw attention to them and show how, from a private citizen to the Governor, the various units in a society would be expected to act in emergencies of the character described by me. The latter might, if not handled effectively and in time, give rise to a first-class crisis ending in an exhibition of racial passions of a most undesirable type.

I am happy, therefore, to note that almost all parties seem to have acted as they should have. A college girl, who was among the first to complain to me, tells me that, whilst there is no doubt about the general truth of the complaints, the improper behaviour stopped after a few days. She tells me that it had stopped altogether before my writing appeared in the Press. Whilst, therefore, I am not sorry for what I wrote, as I should have in the public interest, it gives me as much pleasure to note that the mischief was nipped in the bud, as it had caused me pain to give publicity to it. I am no believer in a hush-hush policy. Such incidents, if they are not to be repeated, demand publicity and an effective and immediate remedy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Mathuradas Trikumji", 7-10-1940

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also "Two Points of View"

JAIPUR

Seth Jamnalalji is trying to cut his way through a thick forest of difficulties in Jaipur. He had thought that after a settlement, to which he had contributed not a little and which had brought much credit to the State and freedom from embarrassment, he would have fair weather and smooth sailing. But such was not to be the case. In Raja Gyan Nath he has to face a Prime Minister who, according to Sethji, is thoroughly unreliable and reactionary. He has failed to give any satisfaction to the long-suffering ryots of Jaipur. He has put back the hands of the clock of progress, and there is an agitation for his removal and the appointment of a Minister who would be responsive to public opinion. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to see to it that when it imposes a Minister on a Prince, it gives one who would be sympathetic to public demands. It is time to remove him when he is more autocratic than the Prince in whose name he is supposed to administer the State.

SEVAGRAM, October 9, 1940

*Harijan*, 13-10-1940

282. LETTER TO ABDULLA HAROON RASHEED

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

October 12, 1940

DEAR HAJI SAHEB,

Though it is only an official letter<sup>1</sup>, your signature revives memories of the old happy days when I used to enjoy your confidence in full measure. But as the saying goes all days are never the same. I must be content with what God gives me from time to time.

You will not expect me to enter into a discussion with you on your resolution. I did not write the note<sup>2</sup> in *Harijan* to provoke

<sup>1</sup>*The Hitavada*, 23-10-1940, reported that the addressee, President of Sind Muslim League, had forwarded to Gandhiji "the Sind Provincial Muslim League resolution on lawlessness in the province". According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1940, Vol. II, p. 34, the resolution "expressed the hope that the Hindu organizations in Sind would co-operate with the President of the Sind Provincial Muslim League in easing the communal situation".

<sup>2</sup>*Vide* "Sind Hinds"

controversy. If you are satisfied that so far as the Muslims are concerned they have nothing to answer for, I have nothing to say. I wrote as a friend, not as an opponent. Hence you will excuse me for not printing the resolution. If I do, I must answer it. This I want to avoid. But you can expect me to help in the production of a friendly atmosphere in Sind through personal correspondence. I, therefore, like the last paragraph of your first resolution—that inviting the co-operation of Hindus.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

### 283. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*October 12, 1940*

BHAI SATIS BABU<sup>1</sup>,

Annada's<sup>2</sup> letter is enclosed. When he writes that whatever happened that day was due to panic, we should reopen the case so far as necessary. What shall I do about the auditors? First send reply to all the issues raised by Annada. How are the prices of khadi brought down? How and how much capital is invested in khadi work?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2732

### 284. *LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND*

SEVAGRAM,

*October 12, 1940*

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

I have in view only Hindi or Hindustani. But that does not imply boycott of Urdu. The root of all the three languages is the same and when we establish unity among us we would laugh at our own stupidity, and wonder why we ever quarrelled over the language

<sup>1</sup> Founder-President of Bengal Khadi Pratishthan

<sup>2</sup> Annada Chowdhury, a constructive worker from Bengal

problem. You should read the article<sup>1</sup> in the *Harijan Sevak* from this point of view.

I praised Pyarelal's Urdu for the simple reason that I have no other person who knows Urdu, and a knowledge of Urdu is essential for evolving the Hindustani language. I have made a distinction between Pyarelal's Urdu and Hindi merely in order to explain the situation. I never thought of the interpretation you have given to it. We who belong to the Congress can use no other name but Hindustani. For the Congress Hindustani is the national language. In fact there is no language called Hindustani which is different from Hindi and Urdu. That language has still to evolve itself. People will understand the meaning when we use Urdu words as well as Hindi words. But which language is to be known as Hindustani? Has it not to be a fusion of Hindi and Urdu? My endeavour is to create such a fusion. Let it be your endeavour too.

*Yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

### 285. TESTIMONIAL TO UMA DEVI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*October 13, 1940*

I have known Shri Uma Devi (Wanda Dynowska) of Poland for over four years. She has adopted India as her second home. She is simple in habits, extremely self-sacrificing and brave. I believe her also to be thoroughly honest.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1203 and 8057. Also C.W. 5098. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* "To the Reader"

286. *LETTER TO CHANDEL*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 13, 1940*

CHI. CHANDEL,

I have your beautiful letter. You are doing good work there.<sup>1</sup> I am looking forward to seeing you both<sup>2</sup> if you will come here after Dewali.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

*Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 189*

287. *LETTER TO V. N. BARWE*<sup>3</sup>

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 13, 1940*

DEAR BARWE,

I do not want to deal publicly with your question. As a matter of ethics, however, I do maintain that to do Red Cross work is an indirect encouragement to war effort. But I know that is a very delicate question and admits of two conflicting opinions.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

<sup>1</sup> The addressee was in charge of the spinning centre in Khedi.

<sup>2</sup> The addressee and Kamala (Margaret Jones), who were doing village uplift work in Khedi.

<sup>3</sup> This was in reply to a letter dated October 11 from the addressee, who wanted to know if Congressmen could contribute to Red Cross funds, and whether such contribution could be said to be an indirect help to the war.



288. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 14, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad you are in you new abode<sup>1</sup>. There is a ring of sadness about the few lines you have sent me. I want you to feel inner joy and strength. God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your khadi has now come. If you gave me instructions about it, I have forgotten. Shall I keep it for you?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6461. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10056

289. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 14, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

Retain them<sup>2</sup> as long as they allow you. It is not necessary to return them immediately.

It will be good to send Devi Prasad<sup>3</sup>. But ask the school first.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 290 and 291

<sup>1</sup> Mirabehn explains: "A solitary little hut in a pinewood on the mountain side"; *vide* also "Letter to Miraben", 21-9-1940

<sup>2</sup> Tents borrowed for the addressee's camp hospital

<sup>3</sup> Addressee's son; the question had been raised whether he should be sent to school.

## 290. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

I have had three days' discussion<sup>1</sup> with the Working Committee. During it I unfolded my plan of civil disobedience in so far as I was able to envisage it. Although I have sole charge of the campaign, I could not think of taking the first step without consultation with the members of the Working Committee. In non-violent action one has to carry the co-workers with one through the mind and the heart. There is no other way to enforce discipline or obedience to instructions. I must admit that it was not plain sailing for me. There was stubborn dissent from two members. I tried hard to carry conviction to them but I fear I failed. They will, however, yield obedience so far as it is possible for them for the sake of discipline. The difference of opinion solely centred round the quantity of civil disobedience and the restrictions with which it was hedged.

I disclose this part of the discussion to show that my plan will fall short of the expectations of those whom the dissenters represent. I would simply say to them, 'Wait patiently and see what happens. Carry out instructions to the best of your ability. Do nothing to thwart the plan. If your reason rebels against it, you will serve the cause by seceding and educating the people along your own lines. That would be straight, brave and stimulating, in that the people will learn to appraise the value of different methods. You will cause confusion by preaching from the Congress platform anything contrary to the official programme, especially when the whole organization becomes like an army. It matters little whether one person offers civil disobedience or many. The rest have to render such support as they may be called upon to do.'

The plan is simply this. Direct action will be commenced by Shri Vinoba Bhave and for the time being confined to him only. And since it is to be confined to individual civil disobedience and that too of him only, it will be so conducted by him as to exclude others directly or indirectly. But since it is concerned with freedom of speech, the public will be involved to an extent. It is open to them either to listen to him or not.

But much will depend upon what the Government wish to do. In spite of all attempt to confine civil disobedience to individuals and for the moment to one only, they can precipitate a crisis by making it a

<sup>1</sup> From October 11 to 13

crime to listen to him or read anything written by him. But I think and believe that they do not want to invite any trouble, though they hold themselves in readiness to cope with every trouble that may face them.

I have discussed with Shri Vinoba various plans so as to avoid all unnecessary friction or risks. The idea is to make all action as strictly non-violent as is humanly possible. One man's violence, veiled or open, cannot go beyond a certain limit, but within that limit it would be effective. One man's non-violent action would be despised and ridiculed by the non-believer in it. In truth, while the effect of a given violent action can be reduced to mathematical terms, that of non-violent action defies all calculation and has been known to falsify many that have been hazarded. How far I shall be able to present an example of unadulterated non-violence remains to be seen.

Who is Vinoba Bhave and why has he been selected? He is an undergraduate having left college after my return to India in 1915<sup>1</sup>. He is a Sanskrit scholar. He joined the Ashram<sup>2</sup> almost at its inception. He was among the first members. In order to better qualify himself he took one year's leave to prosecute further studies in Sanskrit. And, practically at the same hour at which he had left the Ashram a year before, he walked into it without notice. I had forgotten that he was due to arrive that day. He has taken part in every menial activity of the Ashram from scavenging to cooking. Though he has a marvellous memory and is a student by nature, he has devoted the largest part of his time to spinning in which he has specialized as very few have. He believes in universal spinning being the central activity which will remove the poverty in the villages and put life into their deadness. Being a born teacher he has been of the utmost assistance to Ashadevi<sup>3</sup> in her development of the scheme of education through handicrafts. Shri Vinoba has produced a text-book taking spinning as the handicraft. It is original in conception. He has made scoffers realize that spinning is the handicraft *par excellence* which lends itself to being effectively used for basic education. He has revolutionized *takli*-spinning and drawn out its hitherto unknown possibilities. For perfect spinning probably he has no rival in all India.

He has abolished every trace of untouchability from his heart. He believes in communal unity with the same passion that I have. In

<sup>1</sup> The source, however, has "1916".

<sup>2</sup> On June 7, 1916

<sup>3</sup> Ashadevi Aryanayakam

order to know the best mind of Islam he gave one year to the study of the Koran in the original. He therefore learnt Arabic. He found this study necessary for cultivating a living contact with the Muslims living in his neighbourhood.

He has an army of disciples and workers who would rise to any sacrifice at his bidding. He is responsible for producing a young man<sup>1</sup> who has dedicated himself to the service of lepers. Though an utter stranger to medicine this worker has by singular devotion mastered the method of treatment of lepers and is now running several clinics for their care. Hundreds owe their cure to his labours. He has now published a handbook in Marathi for the treatment of lepers. Vinoba was for years Director of the Mahila Ashram in Wardha. His devotion to the cause of *Daridranarayana* took him first to a village near Wardha, and now he has gone still further and lives in Paunar, five miles from Wardha, from where he has established contact with villages through the disciples he has trained.

He believes in the necessity of the political independence of India. He is an accurate student of history. But he believes that real independence of the villagers is impossible without the constructive programme of which khadi is the centre. He believes that the charkha is the most suitable outward symbol of non-violence which has become an integral part of his life. He has taken an active part in the previous satyagraha campaigns. He has never been in the limelight on the political platform. With many co-workers he believes that silent constructive work with civil disobedience in the background is far more effective than the already heavily crowded political platform. And he thoroughly believes that non-violent resistance is impossible without a heart-belief in and practice of constructive work.

Vinoba is an out-and-out war resister. But he respects equally with his own the conscience of those who, whilst not being out-and-out war resisters, have yet strong conscientious objection to participation in the present war. Though Vinoba represents both the types, I may want to select another who will represent only one type, namely, conscientious objection to participation in the present war.

It was necessary to introduce Vinoba at length to the public in order to justify my choice. This will perhaps be the last civil disobedience struggle which I shall have conducted. Naturally I would

<sup>1</sup> Manohar Divan

want it to be as flawless as it can be. Moreover the Congress has declared that it will avoid all avoidable embarrassment to the Government consistently with its own existence. For that reason too I had to strive to produce the highest quality irrespective of quantity.

But Vinoba must fail, as I must, if we do not represent the Congress, let alone the whole nation. And we shall certainly not represent either if they do not give us full-hearted co-operation which is ceaseless prosecution of the constructive programme. It is not vocal co-operation that is required. It is co-operation in work that is needed. The signs of such co-operation will be phenomenal progress in spinning, complete disappearance of untouchability, an increasing friendliness between communities, and an increasing sense of justice in every walk of life. Unless rock-bottom justice and equality pervade society, surely there is no non-violent atmosphere. Above all there should be no civil disobedience but what is sanctioned by me. This is peremptory obligation binding on every Congressman. If it is disregarded, there is no co-operation. The representative character belonging to Vinoba and me is then challenged. And I can say with confidence that, if the full-hearted co-operation I want is forthcoming, not only will the issue of freedom of speech be decided in our favour but we shall have gone very near independence. Let those who will, take me at my word. They will have lost nothing and will find that they had contributed greatly to the movement of freedom through truthful and non-violent means.

Let me repeat the issue. On the surface it is incredibly narrow—the right to preach against war as war or participation in the present war. Both are matters of conscience for those who hold either view. Both are substantial rights. Their exercise can do no harm to the British if their pretension that to all intents and purposes India is an independent country is at all true. If India is very much a dependency in fact as it is in law, whatever the British get from India can never be regarded as voluntary, it must be regarded as impressed. This battle of life and death cannot be won by impressed levies, however large. They may win if they have the moral backing of an India truly regarded as free. Non-violent Congress cannot wish ill to Britain. Nor can it help her through arms since it seeks to gain her own freedom not through arms but through unadulterated non-violence. And the Congress vanishes if, at the crucial moment, it suppresses itself for fear of consequences or otherwise by ceasing to preach non-violence through

non-violent means. So when we probe the issue deep enough we discover that it is a matter of life and death for us. If we vindicate that right, all is well with us. If we do not, all is lost. We cannot then win swaraj through non-violent means.

I know that India has not one mind. There is a part of India that is war-minded and will learn the art of war through helping the British. The Congress has no desire, therefore, to surround ammunition factories or barracks and prevent people from doing what they like. We want to tell the people of India that, if they will win swaraj through non-violent means, they may not co-operate militarily with Britain in the prosecution of the war.

This right of preaching against participation in the war is being denied to us, and we have to fight against the denial. Therefore, while that right will be exercised only by those whom I may select for the purpose, all the other activities of the Congress will continue as before unless the Government interfere with them.

A question has been asked why, if I attach so much importance to quality, I do not offer civil resistance myself. I have already said that unlike as on previous occasions I do not wish to do so for the very good reason that my imprisonment is likely to cause greater embarrassment to the authorities than anything else the Congress can do. I want also to remain outside to cope with any contingency that may arise. My going to jail may be interpreted as a general invitation to all Congressmen to follow suit. They will not easily distinguish between my act and speech. Lastly, I do not know how things will shape. I myself do not know the next step. I do not know the Government plan. I am a man of faith. My reliance is solely on God. One step is enough for me. The next He will make clear to me when the time for it comes. And who knows that I shall not be an instrument for bringing about peace not only between Britain and India but also between the warring nations of the earth. This last wish will not be taken for vanity by those who believe that my faith is not a sham but a reality greater than the fact that I am penning these lines.

SEVAGRAM, October 15, 1940

*Harijan*, 20-10-1940

## 291. A BRITISH ENDORSEMENT

Mr. Stephen J. Thorne, Secretary to the Society of Friends, sends me the following letter:

We, a group of friends, want to send you our deep gratitude for your impressive appeal<sup>1</sup> to every Briton to adopt the way of non-violence and bring about a cessation of hostilities. We drew together immediately on receiving the short version of your statement, and were later able to obtain a fuller text.

You have received through the Viceroy the response of the British Government to your proffer of help, a response that from your knowledge of the situation you will easily understand. To most Britons the call to throw down their arms in a moment of supreme national peril and in face of imminent aggression is indistinguishable from cowardice and treason<sup>2</sup>; it is an invitation to save their lives by the surrender of principles of liberty and justice that are dearer than life itself. But to those of us who in the peace movement share your faith in non-violence, you present a tremendous challenge. Few of us are fully prepared to stand up to it; and we are conscious of our own failure to convince our fellow countrymen of the value and practicability of this "more excellent way". The technique of non-violent resistance as you have practised it is little understood in the West, especially in its positive and reconciling sense; and for that reason apart from any other, your appeal has not yet met with any wide response.

Though the British Government's reply must have been disappointing, we are anxious to make full use of your offered help. Your appeal gave expression to a spirit that is moving, we are certain, in the hearts of men all over the world. We believe that it would be a step forward if you were willing to address a further message to certain of the spiritual leaders of the world, urging them to act together in taking hold of the situation before the winter brings fresh disaster.

We hope you will maintain the closest contact with us, sending direct the full text of anything you may say in the days ahead.

*Your friends sincerely,*

HORACE G. ALEXANDER

ANNA BIDDER

ROBERT DAVIS

CARL HEATH

JAMES H. HUDSON

J. CUTHBERT WIGHAM

PERCY W. BARTLETT

W. MAUDE BRAYSHAW

A. RUTH FRY

ELIZABETH FOX HOWARD

FRANCIS E. POLLARD

ALEXANDER C. WILSON

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "To Every Briton"

<sup>2</sup> The source has "reason", evidently a misprint.

PS.

The Council of Christian Pacifist Groups associates itself with this letter, and looks forward to all early opportunity of discussing the deep issues involved.

I am thankful to the signatories for their support of my appeal. I can assure them that immediately I see the psychological moment, I shall act up to the signatories' expectation that I should address the spiritual leaders of the world. It is quite evident that the very thoroughness of the Nazi method makes them think that nothing but counter-violence can check the terror. I have suggested that counter-violence can only result in further brutalization of human nature. Drastic diseases require drastic remedies. In this instance nothing but non-violence can cure Nazi violence.

SEVAGRAM, October 16, 1940

*Harijan*, 20-10-1940

## 292. TWO POINTS OF VIEW

The publication of the correspondence between the Mayor of Bombay and H. E. the Governor, on the behaviour of the troops from Australia and New Zealand is proof of the fact that the Mayor lost no time in writing to H. E. the Governor, nor did the latter in responding to the Mayor's warning.<sup>1</sup> It is also a striking illustration of the same thing appearing contrariwise when looked at from different angles of vision. The English mind excuses in soldiers many things which would be inexcusable in an ordinary citizen. In India the soldier is regarded as a nuisance to be tolerated. His pranks are hardly appreciated. It is, therefore, a matter of pity that the paragraph defending the behaviour complained of should have found place in a letter which is otherwise admirable as showing prompt attention to the Mayor's studiously courteous and temperate letter. The sheaf of correspondence received by me does not show that my correspondents took the behaviour lightly. The girls who came in for the attention of the troops were too pure not to resent the molestation which fell to their lot. I have never been able to understand why the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "Disgraceful if True", 87 and 96-7.



art of killing should receive indulgence which men going through harder trails than soldiers never claim nor receive.

SEVAGRAM, October 16, 1940

*Harijan*, 20-10-1940

### 293. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

*October 16, 1940*

In answer to the question, how the present movement would differ from the Salt Satyagraha<sup>1</sup> and, particularly, whether his anxiety not to embarrass the British Government would be the major or even the governing factor in his calculations, Gandhiji replied:

It will be the prime factor in every one of my calculations.

Gandhiji was next asked if he had at the back of his mind the sense of contrast between India and the Dominions, where General Hertzog<sup>2</sup> and Mr. De Valera<sup>3</sup> could preach neutrality or opposition to participation in war but were still free, Gandhiji said:

Of course the contrast is painful, so much so that every time British declarations are tested, they prove valueless.

In reply to a question whether there was any significance in the fact that he had waited until after the Viceroy had rejected the Poona offer and whether he was leading both types of Congressmen, those who agreed with Gandhiji that all wars were violations of the principle of non-violence, and those who thought that the rejection of the idea of a National Government compelled them to oppose participation in this war, Gandhiji observed:

There is no significance in it so far as I am concerned, but I am representing both types.

While civil disobedience will proceed on the lines laid down by him, Gandhiji said that the rank and file of Congressmen would concentrate on the constructive programme and absolutely no relaxation in this work was contemplated by him. Referring to his premonition about another fast, Gandhiji said:

Under what circumstances and on what occasion I shall resort to it I do not know. In saying this, I have no mental reservations. I want

<sup>1</sup> Of March 12, 1930

<sup>2</sup> James B. M. Hertzog, Prime Minister of South Africa, 1924-1939

<sup>3</sup> Eamon De Valera, Prime Minister of Ireland, who later became the President

to avoid fast.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the charge of inconsistency between his attitude at the commencement of the war and now, he stated that he had already made<sup>2</sup> this point clear. He said:

It is a different position which faces me now and it would be illogical to ask that the Congress must perform *hara-kiri*.

Freedom would be used to give moral support to Britain, India would want Britain to succeed—a Britain which has played the game by India.

Never, he emphasized, would there be the slightest interference with those who want to give Britain active support.

*The Hindu*, 17-10-1940

## 294. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

October 17, 1940

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

VICEROY'S CAMP

I OBSERVE THAT CENSORS HAVE BEGUN TO REMOVE FROM MY PRESS STATEMENTS SENTENCES WHICH THEY CONSIDER OBJECTIONABLE. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS IS PART OF POLICY LAID DOWN FROM CENTRE OR MERE LOCAL ACTION. I CANNOT ISSUE ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT BE MUTILATED WITHOUT MY CONSENT. DANGER IS OBVIOUS. REMOVAL OF KEY WORDS OR SENTENCES MAY ALTER WHOLE MEANING. IF MUTILATION OF STATEMENTS IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY IN DUE COURSE PERHAPS IT WILL BE EXTENDED TO "HARIJAN" WRITINGS. IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO KNOW GOVERNMENT POLICY DEFINITELY I CAN SHAPE MY COURSE ACCORDINGLY. I CAN CONTINUE MY WRITINGS ONLY IF I AM UNHAMPERED.

<sup>1</sup> The report said that Gandhiji added this sentence "after a moment's reflection".

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Interview to "The News Chronicle", 18-9-1940

SHALL ESTEEM EARLY REPLY.<sup>1</sup>

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7851. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

*295. TELEGRAM TO RUIKER AND OTHERS<sup>2</sup>*

*October 17, 1940*

ARE YOU QUALIFIED? DO YOU BELIEVE IN CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMMES ?

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

*296. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL*

*October 17, 1940*

CHI. AMALA,

I got a letter from you after a long time. Why do you keep indifferent health? The asthma must be cured. Do you take any treatment?

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

MARGARETE SPIEGEL  
COLABA  
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> In his reply dated October 19, the addressee said: "Thank you for your telegram of October 17. I postponed reply until reaching Delhi today. I have confirmed from departments here that no orders have been issued regarding censorship of your Press statements."

<sup>2</sup> According to Mahadev Desai, this was sent in reply to telegram from R. S. Ruiker, President, All-India Forward Bloc, Patwardhan and Khandekar, who had sought Gandhiji's permission to launch individual satyagraha.

297. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

October 17, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. You will be fully restored to health in a few days. Write to me regularly. Tell Sushilabehn<sup>1</sup> everything about yourself. Tell her also about all your worries.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8280. Also C.W. 7104. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

298. LETTER TO SAIENDRA NATH CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

October 18, 1940

DEAR SAIENDRA,

If you can without any harm to the A.I.S.A. be relieved, you should come here and I shall see what can be done for you. There is a commercial college, too, in Wardha where you can qualify if necessary. You should be in a position to earn decently. But you should rise on the strength of your own merits.

*Yours,*

BAPU

SHRI SAIENDRA CHATTERJEE

E 76 COLLEGE STREET

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 10166. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sushila Nayyar

### 299. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,  
October 18, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Women certainly do have a place.<sup>1</sup> But I do not know where this struggle will take me and the country. Everything is in God's hands.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10412. Also C.W. 6851. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

### 300. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 18, 1940

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am glad you wrote. I continue to get news about Kanchan. She is being looked after well. Half of her food is sent by Sushila from home and half she gets from the hospital. There is no cause at all for worry. If you want to write to her brother, you may. He will stay somewhere and visit her whenever he wishes. I personally do not think that anyone need go. But if you wish, you may go. Sushilabehn is a member of the family and a responsible person. About the Punjab there is nothing to worry about. I forgot completely about Kunvarji. I had said that on the basis of what you yourself had told me. You had a suspicion at one time that his company might do harm.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8527. Also C.W. 7103. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had asked whether women had a place in the individual satyagraha.

### 301. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 19, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

There is a vast difference between the present civil disobedience and the earlier ones. It may hardly be necessary to call any other volunteer<sup>1</sup>. Your name is already with me. But you need not make any special preparation. You may carry on as if no one was to be called. Everyone should engage himself in constructive work.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 290 and 291

### 302. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 20, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your telegram<sup>2</sup>.

I had hoped that the instructions issued were merely local. Since sending you my telegram I have had further news that News Agencies had been informed that they were not to distribute my messages directly as they have done hitherto, but that all such messages were to be sent to headquarters at Delhi for censorship before they were distributed.

I also send you herewith a copy of notices received by registered publications. I should like to keep the public informed of the development of individual civil disobedience which is being carried on under my strict supervision. In view of the notice, I dread to send anything for printing to the local printing Press, for if I did

<sup>1</sup> After Vinoba Bhave, who began the individual civil disobedience on October 17, 1940

<sup>2</sup> This was from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy; *vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Ruiker and Others", 17-10-1940

send anything and the order were accepted, the local printing Press, which is purely a commercial concern, may come in for penalty. For the same reason I have hesitated to send any public statement. My chief motive in sending such statements would be to regularize the movement so as to ensure unadulterated non-violence. Up to now the response has been fully up to expectation. I was not certain about the Trade Union Congress. But its President who came to see me has assured me that no strike of a political nature will be resorted to without my consent.

Shri Vinoba Bhave's addresses are from the highest plane.<sup>1</sup> I have been sending Mahadev Desai to follow him and give me a full report of what he says. He is a strict disciplinarian and therefore will carry out most difficult instructions. His first extempore speech was not as I would have delivered it. Living in seclusion he had not followed closely the correspondence between us. He had, therefore, put the worst construction on it. I immediately sent him instructions that our code was to put the most favourable construction on the opponent's language. He accepted the correction and made the earliest amends by making a public admission. And his address of yesterday was unexceptionable. His main work, whilst he is free, will be to emphasize the necessity of the constructive programme and not to bother about civil disobedience (which will, for the moment, be confined to himself) being offered by others. All this development I would like Congressmen and the public at large to know. It is an education in courteous and non-violent conduct. And although we are 'at war' with each other we might observe the law which I claim specially belongs to the human species. But I know that the decision rests with you. I can only plead.<sup>2</sup>

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7582. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940*, "Note on the grievances of the British Indians in South Africa", 22-9-1896, on October 17, 1940, Vinoba Bhave, in his address to about 300 persons in Panam, said: "The Congress would not on ethical grounds help Great Britain in her war effort. He wondered why Great Britain claimed to fight democracy, which she denied to India."

<sup>2</sup> For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 24-10-1940

303. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 20, 1940*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your big and good letter. Yes, I have started civil disobedience. It is confined only to Vinoba at present I do not court imprisonment. Vinoba still remains free. If you will like me to give you news, I will. I won't tempt you nor disturb you. It is all well with you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN  
PALAMPUR  
KANGRA DISTRICT  
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6462. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10057

304. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 20, 1940*

BHAI AMRITLAL,

Why need I ask Soni Ramji now? You yourself may discuss the matter with him and do what you can.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6317

305. *LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH*

*October 19/21, 1940*

CHI. KANCHAN,

Do you worry there, too? You are in your home there. You must return from there only after you are cured. Write to me, not to Munnalal, about whatever is weighing on your mind. Ultimately Munnalal has to get everything done through me. I am sending you



Munnalal's letter as it is. About Jagadishlal it is as I told you. You must shed all suspicion and fear. Keep cheerful. Stop worrying. Do not think about the future. Have faith that everything will be all right. Write to me regularly.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

*October 21, 1940*

I got your letter today. You are bound to get well. Even if you have to stay there a little longer, isn't it your home? Vinoba has been sentenced to three months imprisonment.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8279. Also C.W. 7105. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

### *306. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW*

WARDHA,

*October 21, 1940*

*Express*

"HARIJAN" HAS RECEIVED NOTICE<sup>1</sup> DATED 18TH  
THAT NOTHING CONNECTED WITH VINOBA'S SATYA-  
GRAHA MAY BE PUBLISHED WITHOUT PREVIOUS REFER-  
ENCE CHIEF PRESS ADVISER DELHI. THIS I VEN-  
TURE SAY IS SERIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH LIBERTY  
OF PRESS. I HOPE THIS DOES NOT REPRESENT  
CONSIDERED POLICY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA. I BASE  
MY HOPE ON YOUR KIND WIRE OF 19TH TO  
WHICH I HAVE REPLIED BY LETTER<sup>2</sup>.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7853. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> For the text, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 20-10-1940. The Viceroy's reply to the telegram read: "Your telegram of 21st. I have ascertained from Home Department that instructions issued to *Harijan* and to all other papers were not mandatory but advisory as indicated in a letter received with your letter of 20th October to which I am replying separately, object in view being interest of editors as publication of prejudicial reports will render them liable to prosecution under Defence Rule 38."

### 307. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,  
October 21, 1940

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

FYZABAD

VINOBA      ARRESTED      EARLY      MORNING.      TRIAL      TODAY.  
THINKING      NEXT      STEP.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 308. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 21, 1940

Mr. Vinoba Bhave was arrested after three this morning. This was to be expected. I have not advised hartal but have not discouraged spontaneous closing of shops. I could not for instance disregard the wishes of managers of the numerous institutions of Wardha which bear Mr. Vinoba's indelible impress. No suspension of work would take place without the willing consent of employers. Congressmen should not be impatient about the next step. Every imprisonment in individual civil disobedience is a complete step in itself. The plan this time is not to have a continuous stream of resisters. I am making note of names that are sent to me. But senders should not suspend their normal activities. There is little chance of my calling them. I am not going to invite anyone who does not believe in spinning and khaddar as visible emblems of non-violence and removal of the last trace of untouchability and establishment of communal unity as obvious symbols of non-violence. Nor will all such who are so equipped be necessarily invited. The question before me is not whom to send next but to know how the millions react to his imprisonment. How many does he represent? Those who hug untouchability and regard communal unity as impossible or who believe neither in the charkha nor in the other village industries and, therefore, in the regeneration of the six hundred thousand villages—for such Mr. Vinoba is of no use. In their estimation he must be a hindrance to the political, economic and social advance of India. And yet without the Congress vindicating its elementary right of preaching non-violence at this crucial hour there will be no independence for India. Britain's claim to fight for

democracy is being shattered at every step. There is no democracy in India. Indians remain, in the words of an Englishman, what they have always been—helots of empire. But success in the non-violent Congress fight for freedom must mean success for real democracy throughout the world. It must mean freedom for the Europeans in Europe and for all the non-white races of the earth. Such success must not be a camouflage. It must be the clearest possible demonstration of non-violence. The result aimed at is extraordinary. The remedy, too, must, therefore, be equally extraordinary. It is for Congressmen to show now by their action whether they believe in the non-violent method as I have placed it before them and whether they will act up to their belief.

*The Hitavada*, 23-10-1940

### 309. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,  
October 21, 1940

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So Vinoba has been fixed up. His four days' ministry has been quite successful from my point of view.

I am issuing a note<sup>1</sup> which you will see. Professor<sup>2</sup> telephoned saying you were ready. I have seen your statement too. I would still like to ask you whether you can see anything to commend itself to you in all I am writing and doing. I would not like you to go in merely as a disciplinarian. My present conception requires those who believe in the plan—not in every detail but in the main. *Verb. sap.*

Drop me a wire<sup>3</sup> if you can.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.  
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 443

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

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary of the Congress

<sup>3</sup> In his telegram dated October 24, Jawaharlal Nehru said: "Your letter. Agree generally."

### 310. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,  
October 21, 1940

This is why I have written<sup>1</sup> to Sailen. If he comes here I can do something for him, and the family in Calcutta may be well provided for. You may send Rs. 20 now. But the rest will depend upon Sailen's decision.

From a photostat: C.W. 1451. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

### 311. LETTER SO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 21, 1940

CHI. BRIJKISAN,

I got your letter. I am not planning the sort of satyagraha that you imagine. If I undertake a fast, then you can come although your duty will be to remain engrossed in constructive work. When, if at all, there will be a fast, I have not the least idea.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2479

### 312. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 22, 1940

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Herewith I send you a copy of a wire received from Alwar.

Najim Thanedar publicly injured me seriously forcibly realizing war funds. Paid 251 mortgaging grand-daughter's ornaments. Population terrorized. Pray intervene. Jaharia Mahajan Padmara, Mundawar, Alwar State.

I take it that it makes no difference in the charge of 'under

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Letter to Sailendra Nath Chatterjee", 18-10-1940

pressure' whether it is exercised in the British part of India or the States part.<sup>1</sup>

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

### 313. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*October 22, 1940*

DEAR CHARU BABU,

I have read your scheme. You should confine yourself to Dhanush *takli*. The money you should raise locally. This you will get as your work advances. If I began to find funds for all enterprises—very worthy—I should be overwhelmed. And it would be a mushroom growth. Never mind if you have to wait a bit but rely upon your own ability to command credit or come directly under the Charkha Sangh.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

SHRI CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI  
DIRECTOR, KHADI MANDIR  
DIAMOND HARBOUR  
24 PARGANAS, BENGAL

From a photostat: G.N. 8697. Also C.W. 1467

### 314. NOTE TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM,  
*October 22, 1940*

Let him have it all if he wants it. Ask him how he felt after the large quantity he had in the morning.

<sup>1</sup> The Private Secretary to the Viceroy replied on receipt of another letter of the kind from Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow" 4-11-1940.

Let him write under this or better still take someone who can hear S[ailendra] and t[ake] down what he says.

From a photostat: C.W. 1452. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

### 315. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 22, 1940

CHI. MAGAN,

I have your letter. If you fail now, resign yourself to your fate giving up your craze for examination; get absorbed in work. The knowledge you have gained will not go waste.

It is not good that Manjula<sup>1</sup> should repeatedly get fever. Come after she is well. After the 15th November, it will be quite cool here. Tell Urmila<sup>2</sup> to write to me. She must be fine. How is Ratilal<sup>3</sup>? Do something for him. There was a letter from him saying that he wanted to come here and clear up the matter with Prabhashankar<sup>4</sup>. I have written to him advising him to have patience. On the other hand Champa<sup>5</sup> writes to say that he borrows money on interest from the Pathans.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI MAGANLAL PRANJIVANDAS MEHTA  
BRAJ BHAVAN, BRIDGE ELLIS  
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1608. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

### 316. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

October 22, 1940

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter and the roll of cloth. I have gone through the

<sup>1</sup> Ratilal's wife

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Addressee's wife, daughter and brother

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

figures. They are promising. Hard work always pays. Give my congratulations to all those who have contributed to the work. Gangabehn<sup>1</sup> has explained everything to me in detail. Use whatever yarn and money you have collected for me for the khadi work there. Suryachandra<sup>2</sup> found everything strange here for a day or two. Now he is happy.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

VALLABH VIDYALAYA

BOCHASAN

BORSAD TALUKA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9519. Also C.W. 436. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

### 317. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

*October 22, 1940*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Once the money that you have is spent, both of you will be free from worries. At present consciously or unconsciously you depend on it. The contentment and happiness you can enjoy when you have no money, you will know only from experience. Then also Kanchan will get the same treatment she is getting today. Need I say anything about you? Have no worry, therefore.

The *Harijan* file is of course round my neck. But you are not in a hurry. Whatever is received has to be read.

You yourself have to find your work here. Pyarelal certainly needs you.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8526. Also C.W. 7106. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

<sup>1</sup> Gangabehn Vaidya

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's son

318. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

WARDHA,  
October 23, 1940

GURUDEV  
DWARKANATH TAGORE LANE  
CALCUTTA

THANK GOD YOU ARE OUT OF DANGER.<sup>1</sup> IF IT  
WOULD ADD TO YOUR RAPID CONVALESCENCE I GIVE  
YOU NEWS THAT NEVER A DAY HAS PASSED BUT  
I HAVE THOUGHT OF ANDREWS MEMORIAL. I WON'T  
REST TILL COLLECTIONS COME IN AS THEY OUGHT.  
AM BIDDING MY TIME. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10288

319. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS<sup>2</sup>

WARDHA,  
October 24, 1940

On the 18th instant the Editor of *Harijan* received the following notice from the District Magistrate's Office, Poona:

I am directed by Government to advise you that no account of incidents leading up to satyagraha by Vinoba Bhave and no report of his speeches or any subsequent developments should be published without previous reference to the Chief Press Adviser, Delhi.

I would like to bring to your notice that this is in your own interest to avoid prosecution under Rule 38 of the Defence of India Rules.

Thereupon I entered into correspondence<sup>3</sup> with H. E. the Viceroy. Correspondence is still going on. But it is necessary for me to take a decision today for, if I did not, there may be waste of public money. In view of the reply hitherto received, I have no course left

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "To Satyagrahis"

<sup>2</sup> This appeared under the title "Why Suspension."

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy", 17-10-1940 and "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 20-10-1940



open but to suspend publication of *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak*. I cannot function freely if I have to send to the Press Adviser at New Delhi every line I write about satyagraha. It is true that the notice is only advisory, and that therefore I am not bound to act up to it. But the consequence of disregard of advice is also stated in the notice. I have no desire to risk a prosecution against the Editors. The three weeklies have been conducted in the interest of truth and therefore of all parties concerned. But I cannot serve that interest if the editing has to be done under threat of prosecution. Liberty of the Press is a dear privilege, apart from the advisability or otherwise of civil disobedience. The Government have shown their intention clearly by the prosecution of Shri Vinoba Bhave. I have no complaint to make against the prosecution. It was an inevitable result of the Defence of India Rules. But the liberty of the Press stands on a different footing. I am unable to reconcile myself to the notice which although in the nature of advice, is in reality an order whose infringement will carry its own consequence.

I am sorry to have to disappoint the numerous readers of the three weeklies. Next week I shall be able to let the public know whether it is to be merely a suspension or an indefinite stopping of the three weeklies. I shall still hope that it will be merely a suspension and that my fear will prove to be groundless. But should it prove otherwise, I may inform the public that satyagraha is independent of Press advertisement. If it is real, it carries with it its own momentum; and I believe the present satyagraha to be very real. It will go on. I will not be provoked into any hasty action. I am still not ready with the next move. But as I have said in my previous statement<sup>1</sup>, every act of civil disobedience is complete in itself. This Press notice shows how effective it has been. Every act of repression adds strength to the reality. Satyagraha thrives on repression till at last the repressor is tired of it and the object of satyagraha is gained. Whether, therefore, I take the next step or not and when I take it, is a matter of no consequence to the public. Let those who sympathize with it follow implicitly the instructions I have issued. I believe, and my belief has been tested repeatedly, that thought deliberately thought and controlled is a power greater than speech or writing and any day greater than steam which is husbanded and controlled. We see the latter every day carrying incredible weights even across steep precipices. Thought-power

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 21-10-1940

overcomes much greater obstacles and easily carries greater weights. But let me give a practical hint to the non-believer in the power of thought husbanded and controlled. Let everyone become his own walking newspaper and carry the good news from mouth to mouth. This does not mean what boys used to do in the past, viz., trumpeting about bits of news. The idea here is of my telling my neighbour what I have authentically heard. This no Government can overtake or suppress. It is the cheapest newspaper yet devised and it defies the wit of Government, however clever it may be. Let these walking newspapers be sure of the news they give. They should not indulge in any idle gossip. They should make sure of the source of information, and they will find that the public gets all the information that they need without opening their morning newspaper which, they should know, will contain garbled, one-sided information and therefore not worth the trouble of reading. For it may be that even the public statements such as I am now issuing may also be stopped. It is the condition of life under an autocratic Government, whether foreign or indigenus.

*Harijan*, 10-11-1940

### 320. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,  
October 24, 1940

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was glad to have your wire<sup>1</sup>. If my statement<sup>2</sup> has been allowed, you will have seen it before this.

If you are ready, you may now ceremonially declare your civil disobedience. I would suggest your choosing a village for your audience. I do not suppose they will allow you to repeat your speech. They were not ready with their plans so far as Vinoba was concerned. But should they let you free I suggest your following the plan<sup>3</sup> laid down for Vinoba. But if you feel otherwise, you will follow your own course. Only I would like you to give me your programme. You will fix your own date so as to leave me time for announcing the date and

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* footnote 3, "Leter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-10-1940

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

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Civil Disobedience"

place. It may be that they won't let you even fulfil your very first programme. I am prepared for every such step on the part of the Government. Whilst I would make use of every legitimate method seeking publicity for our programme, my reliance is on regulated thought producing its own effect. If this is hard for you to believe, I would ask you to suspend judgment and watch results. I know you will yourself be patient and ask our people on your side to do likewise. I know what strain you are bearing in giving me your loyalty. I prize it beyond measure. I hope it will be found to have been well-placed, for it is 'do or die'. There is no turning back. Our case is invulnerable. There is no giving in. Only I must be allowed to go my way in demonstrating the power of non-violence when it is unadulterated.

Maulana Saheb telephoned saying I should choose another man for the second satyagraha. I told him I could not do so if you consented to come in.

I would like your reaction to the step I have taken regarding *Harijan*.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.  
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 443-4

### 321. LETTER TO KISANSINH CHAVDA

*October 24, 1940*

BHAI KISANSINH,

I have your letter. When did you become free? Please write to me.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI KISANSINH CHAVDA

PARDESI MOHOLLO

MADAN JHANPA ROAD

BARODA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9939. Courtesy: Kisansinh Chavda

### 322. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 24, 1940

BAPA,

Your hastily written and unrevised letter is nonetheless perfect. Your handwriting, even when you write in haste, is as clear as Mahadev's. Your descriptions also are pleasing.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1185

### 323. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS<sup>1</sup>

[After October 24, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

Q. Will Government's ban on reports of anti-war meeting lead to any revision in the plan of individual civil disobedience?

A. There is likely to be some revision but it will be all in the direction of stiffening non-violence.

You have said<sup>3</sup> that each Indian should be "his own walking paper". Don't you feel that the ban may only give currency to exaggerated rumours? How do you propose obviating this?

If the people do not catch the spirit of my advice, there will undoubtedly be exaggerated rumours and I confess that I have no control over all without exception, and exceptions, however few they may be, can easily upset the apple-cart. I have no method for obviating the exaggeration. The Government should be held solely responsible for mishaps that may arise out of their complete black-out by their Press-gagging ordinance. It seems to me they are outdoing Nazism.

Do you propose obeying the ban?

I have no intention of defying the ban. Have I not, anticipated it by suspending the publication of the three weeklies controlled by me? Civil disobedience as conceived this time is of an extraordinary nature designed to meet an extraordinary situation.

<sup>1</sup> D. G. Tendulkar explains that the questions were received from "Frank Moraes on behalf of *The News Chronicle*, London".

<sup>2</sup> From the reference to the suspension of "the three weeklies" by Gandhiji; vide "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-10-1940

What is your reaction to this ban? It is said, the language of the ban is taken from similar restrictive orders in Great Britain. Is that any justification ?

My reaction to the ban is that the Government have over-reached themselves. Language of the ban may be borrowed from Great Britain but how can they borrow the conditions operating in Great Britain? In Great Britain it is people's rule, the Constitution is in full working order. In India it is one man's rule who is responsible to nobody in India. The contrast between the two is staggering. It is defiance of all propriety to copy the language which may be quite proper for Britain but which is quite improper for India. It is like imposing on India in mid-summer the British fur-coat of mid-winter.

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. 6, between pp. 8 and 9

### 324. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

WARDHA,  
October 25, 1940

H. E. VICEROY

NEW DELHI

THANKS FOR WIRE<sup>1</sup> OF 24TH. IT HAS COME AS PAINFUL  
SURPRISE. ADVICE WHOSE REJECTION MAY INVOLVE  
PENALTY IS VERY LIKE MANDATE. AS MERE  
ADVICE NOTICE WAS SUPERFLUOUS. EVERY EDITOR IS  
PRESUMED TO KNOW LAW UNDER WHICH HE EDITS  
HIS PAPER. IN CIRCUMSTANCES I HAVE BEEN RELUC-  
TANTLY OBLIGED TO SUSPEND PUBLICATION OF THREE  
PAPERS FOR WHICH I AM RESPONSIBLE. I HAVE  
ISSUED PRESS STATEMENT<sup>2</sup> WHICH IF NOT  
CENSORED YOU WILL HAVE SEEN. SUSPENSION WILL  
BE WITHDRAWN IF I AM LEFT SCOPE FOR RE-  
SUMING PUBLICATION. HAVE NO DESIRE PUBLISH  
WEEKLIES UNLESS YOUR GOVERNMENT APPRECIATE THAT

<sup>1</sup>Vide footnote 2, "Telegram to Lord Linlithgow", 21-10-1940

<sup>2</sup>Vide "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

THEY ARE FRIENDLY NOTWITHSTANDING THEIR  
FEARLESS CRITICISM AND EVEN ADVOCACY CIVIL DIS-  
OBEDIENCE.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7854 a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### 325. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,  
October 25, 1940

J. NEHRU  
ANAND BHAWAN  
ALLAHABAD  
LETTER<sup>1</sup> POSTED TODAY.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 326. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

October 25, 1940

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter about the Meerut Ashram. I am trying to stabilize the Ashram. I hope I shall succeed. Tell Vaid not to give up his trade entirely. Let him master the science of spinning and desist from unnecessary suppression of the body. His body should be vigorous.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI VITALDAS JERAJANI  
A.I.S.A. KHADI BHANDAR  
396 KALBADEVI  
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9797

<sup>1</sup> Dated October 24; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-10-1940

327. *LETTER TO SYED ABDUL LATIF*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 26, 1940

DEAR DR. LATIF,

I have read with attention your outline<sup>1</sup> which you kindly sent me. I can offer no useful criticism as my objection holds good the same way as when I raised it to your first scheme. The underlying idea is repugnant to me. For me India is one indivisible. I believe in a blending of cultures, not in their being kept in water-tight compartments. It should be enough for you to know that I am open to conviction and that you are free to convert me to your view.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

328. *LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH*

October 26, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I am glad that you are on the rails again. I am quite certain that you will get well soon.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8278. Also C.W. 7107. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

329. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 26, 1940

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I liked your article very much. I gave it to Krishnadas. His reply is not as good. You may, however, read it and reply to it when you

<sup>1</sup> According to *The Indian Annual Register*, 1940, Vol. I, p. 117, the addressee, ex-professor of English in the Osmania University, had in his pamphlet "The Cultural Future of India" elaborated the theme that "Islam and Hinduism stand asunder", and on this finding built up his scheme of "Hindu Zones" and "Muslim Zones" in India. His draft scheme was placed before the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League on March 25, 1939.

have the time. *Harijan Sevak* is now closed. But what do I care? I am seeking truth. I had not imagined that *Harijan Sevak* and other journals would have to be closed down so soon. But are not the ways of governments also inscrutable?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I am also enclosing your article by separate book-post. Please return it.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8039. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### 330. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[October 26, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

Some of it seems to be true, but the suggested cure seems to be wrong. Some of it is purely imaginary. The only remedy for you is not to let your mind dwell on these thoughts. Keep your mind occupied with thoughts about work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8335

### 331. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

October 27, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You are strong and a lion<sup>2</sup>, hence now and again the fangs show.

I read the letter sent through Rajkumari. I liked it and I had started to act according to it. Today's letter shows the fangs as well as two sharp claws. It is good that I keep getting glimpses of that side of you. I shall be cautious.

I don't know this Sambhaji. Whoever he is, what does he know of my affairs? I shall take what land I want. There is no fear that I may not be able to get it. I have not the least doubt about Jamnalalji. He is one of those who stand firm on their pledged word. The Trust will remain just as it is. I have complete faith in Rajkumari also. The land which belongs to the Trust cannot be misappropriated by a trustee.

<sup>1</sup> The note is written on the page of a diary covering October 24 to 26.

<sup>2</sup> The addressee's name, literally, means 'strong lion'.



I agree with your contention that you cannot become a member of any committee. Do whatever you can by remaining out of it. I shall be content with it.

I shall call both when the occasion arises. You forgot the torch; why should I remember it? Now I shall send it.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1937

### 332. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
October 27, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your beautiful letter. Since I wish to demonstrate on this occasion total ahimsa as I have visualized it, I do not intend to send more than two or three persons. It is likely that I may not send any.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 292 and 293

### 333. CABLE TO CARL HEATH<sup>1</sup>

WARDHAGANJ,  
October 28, 1940

CARL HEATH  
FRIENDS HOUSE  
EUSTON ROAD  
LONDON

ALL EFFORT FAILED. INDIAN CONDITION WHOLLY DIF-  
FERENT AND UNIQUE. PRESS<sup>2</sup> GAGGED<sup>3</sup>. HAVE STOPPED

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to the addressee's cable (G.N. 1045) dated October 17, which read: "Deeply regretted issue conversations. Agree personally your peace principle yet feel no *de facto* government in present fierce struggle can admit organized opposition. Recognizing new formula essential. Group renewing effort here for solution of fundamental constitutional problem. Urge you Congress co-operate in this and suspend irrevocable action." *Vide* also "Cable to Carl Heath", 4-10-1940 and "A British Endorsement"

<sup>2</sup> These two words were scored out by the Censor.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

“HARIJAN” WEEKLIES. RESTRICTING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE  
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF NON-VIOLENCE,

GANDHI

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll.(I). Courtesy: National Archives of  
India. Also G.N. 1046

*334. LETTER TO ABDULLA HAROON RASHEED*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

*October 28, 1940*

DEAR HAJEE SAHEB,

I see you have published only an extract from my letter<sup>1</sup>. It gives rise to a misunderstanding. Will it not be better for you to publish the full text of my letter?

HAJI ABDULLA HAROON

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*335. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK*

SEVAGRAM,

*October 28, 1940*

CHI. PREMA,

What a woman you are! You seem to be fated to fast. Of course, for a satyagrahi occasion must come some day or other when he has to resort to fasting. But if you cannot live without me, you can gladly accompany me. But not by starving yourself. Light the fire of yoga and consume yourself in it. Your fasting would certainly mean your starving yourself. One must acquire the right to fast. One who understands this will dance when someone like me undertakes a fast. He will consider it an occasion for rejoicing. He would go on doing the work for which the fast was undertaken. Fasting, after all, has

<sup>1</sup> Of this, only the last two sentences were reported in *The Hitavada*, 23-10-1940. For the full text, *vide* “Letter to Abdulla Haroon Rasheed”, 12-10-1940

certain conditions attached to it and when these conditions are fulfilled, the fast ends. Do not lose your reason.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10413. Also C.W. 6852. Courtesy: Premabehn Katak

### 336. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

*October 29, 1940*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Both the things can be done. Learn what you can in three months at Maganwadi and make use of that knowledge here. Do this after a month. Here our ultimate aim in everything is to realize God. There will be no harm, therefore, if you join us here. And if the villagers want you and if you are sure that you can control your temper, you may join in that work too. If your mind is calm, you will be able to do a lot. Just now the circumstances are such that the best work can be done only here.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8525. Also C.W. 7108. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

### 337. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*October 30, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank you about your letter<sup>1</sup> of the 24th instant.

As to the first paragraph of your letter, I have already given<sup>2</sup> you my reaction to the notices referred to by you.

The second paragraph is astounding. Reducing your language to simple terms you tell me that I must be punished if I do not behave myself. I hardly needed to be given the warning. But I do not mind it.

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 24-10-1940

<sup>2</sup>Vide "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 25-10-1940

The language used by you shows the pains you have taken to conceal your meaning in as gentle words as the English language and your exalted office will let you.

But I was wholly unprepared for your assumptions. I have nowhere said that I desire freedom to conduct a civil disobedience movement in a way that commends itself to me and that for that purpose I wish to enjoy unrestricted access to the public through the ordinary channels of publicity. You will see from my statement<sup>1</sup>—copy of which is hereto attached—that I have claimed that civil disobedience can be conducted without publicity through newspapers. This statement was published before your letter reached me. Indeed, if civil disobedience depended for its conduct upon the mercy of the Government against which it was directed, it must be poor stuff, utterly worthless for the purpose intended. It seeks through self-suffering to convert the opponent.

You then say:

Although, however, you evidently wish me to believe that this movement which you have initiated will be more dangerous if you do not enjoy these facilities, I must credit you personally with the desire that it should succeed in its avowed object, that of persuading the public to withhold all support from India's war effort.

There is no warrant in my letter for the belief entertained by you. The whole purpose of my letter<sup>2</sup> has been missed. It was to commend to your sympathetic attention the fact that I was taking extraordinary precautions to ensure non-violence, and the further fact that to that end I was restricting the movement to the fewest possible typical individuals. I had hugged the belief that you would, as a friend, be pleased with the information and, recognizing the fact, you would not put yourself in the wrong by passing the wholly unnecessary drastic gagging ordinance you have passed. You have by that ordinance demonstrated to the world that you could not conduct the war through India except by stifling public opinion. I had hoped that you would be satisfied with such aid as the Princes, moneyed men and professional warlike classes could give you. They could not come under my or the Congress influence.

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

<sup>2</sup>*Vide* "Statement to the Press"

I am sure you will not compare India with Britain. In Britain you have the Houses of Parliament through which the nation acts. Here you have powers derived not from India but from Great Britain that no single individual in the wide world enjoys over so many people. I had hoped that you would use them with restraint. It was for that purpose that I had sought the last interview and stayed beyond my time so that I might not be said to have rushed you. For the moment the hope has been dashed to pieces. I ask you to believe me when I tell you that, in every single step I have taken, I have thought of you and your people as your and their true friend. One day you will feel the truth of this remark if you do not today.

But I accept your verdict for the moment. I do not want to conduct the movement secretly. Nor can I allow non-violence to perish by default. I might, therefore, give the only thing I have in me to give—my life. I told you about the possibility of a fast, prolonged or unto death. I was waiting on God to find what is to be the case. I am trying hard to avoid it but I may not be able to do so. You will have another letter from me when I have come to the final conclusion.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been with me. I had invited him to be the next resister. He had consented. Your ordinance came after. And the fast idea possessed me. He has an open mind on the fast. But he thinks, and I have agreed with him, that the contemplated resistance by him should be completed before entertaining the idea of the fast. Therefore the very next step is to be his civil resistance. As soon as the date and place are finally decided, I shall let you have them for your information.

I hope you will not resent this letter. I have written as a friend to a friend and not as a member of the public to you as the Viceroy. I have not written to seek publicity or to make a point against you. I will not publish this letter or any part of the recent correspondence between us without your consent.

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7855. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### 338. TO THE READER

You must have seen through my Press notice<sup>1</sup> that the publication of *Harijan* and the other two weeklies had been suspended. In it I had expressed the hope that the suspension might be only for a week. But I see that the hope had no real foundation. I shall miss my weekly talks with you, as I expect you too will miss them. The value of those talks consisted in their being a faithful record of my deepest thoughts. Such expression is impossible in a cramped atmosphere. As I have no desire to offer civil disobedience, I cannot write freely. As the author of satyagraha I cannot, consistently with my professions, suppress the vital part of myself for the sake of being able to write on permissible subjects such as the constructive programme. It would be like dealing with the trunk without the head. The whole of the constructive programme is to me an expression of non-violence. I would be denying myself if I could not preach non-violence. For that would be the meaning of submission to the latest ordinance. The suspension must, therefore, continue while the gagging lasts. It constitutes a satyagrahi's respectful protest against the gag. Is not satyagraha giving an ell when an inch is asked for by the wrongdoer? Is it not giving the cloak also when only the coat is demanded? It may be asked why this reversal of the ordinary process? The ordinary process is based on violence. If my life were regulated by violence, in the last resort I would refuse to give an inch lest an ell might be asked for. I would be a fool if I did otherwise. But if my life is regulated by non-violence, I should be prepared to and actually give an ell when an inch is asked for. By so doing I produce on the usurper a strange and even pleasurable sensation. He would also be confounded and would not know what to do with me. So much for the 'enemy'. I, having made up my mind to surrender every non-essential, gain greater strength than ever before to die for the defence and preservation of what I hold to be essential. I was, therefore, wrongly accused by my critics of having advised<sup>2</sup> cowardly surrender to Nazism by Englishmen when I suggested that they should lay down external arms, let the Nazis overrun Britain if they dare, but develop internal strength to refuse to sell themselves to the Nazis. Full surrender of non-essentials is a condition precedent to accession of internal strength to defend the essential by dying.

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

<sup>2</sup>Vide "To Every Briton"

But I am not writing this to convert the English to my view. I am writing this to suggest to you that my surrender to the framers of the gagging ordinance is an object-lesson to you, the reader, in satyagraha. If you will quietly work out in your own life the implications of the lesson, you will then not need the weekly aid from the written word in *Harijan*. Even without your weekly *Harijan* you will know how I shall myself work out the full implications of giving an ell when an inch is wanted. A correspondent pleads with me that on no account should I suspend *Harijan*, for, he says, his non-violence is sustained by the weekly food he gets therefrom. If he has really done so, then this self-imposed restraint should teach him more than a vapid continuation of weekly *Harijan*.

One word as to the practical question. You are a subscriber to one of the weeklies. I do not know, when, if ever, they will be resumed. You are entitled to the return of the unused balance of your subscription. On receipt a postcard from you to the Manager, *Harijan*, Poona, for a refund, a money order for it will be sent to you. Those who do not ask for a refund will have their paper sent to them if it is resumed. If it is not, the unused balance will be spent in covering any loss that may be caused in winding up. And then the balance, if any, will be sent to the Harijan Sevak Sangh for use in the service of Harijans. If *Harijan* is not resumed within six months, it will be deemed to have been finally wound up. Meanwhile goodbye.

SEVAGRAM, October 31, 1940

*Harijan*, 10-11-1940

### 339. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 31, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. It is not good your being ill. What work can you do there if you are ill? Get well soon and go away.

Jawaharlal left yesterday. He will now court imprisonment.

There was nothing special in Jayaprakash's letter. I have replied to him.

Here someone or the other is always ill. There is always one

sick-bed. At the moment it is Lilavati's brother, Lakshmidas. It seems he has typhoid. He will get well.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3549

### 340. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

*October 31, 1940*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It is good that you wrote. I don't give a long reply.

My experiment is certainly new. If I undertake the fast, it will certainly be tainted with attachment for the fruit. But all beginnings are tainted. We have to balance the pros and cons. If the pros exceed, we may embark on the attempt. This seems to be such a case.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8523. Also C.W. 7109. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

### 341. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

*November 1, 1940*

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your postcard. May you all be happy in this New Year<sup>1</sup>. When are you coming? I am not very eager to call you. There is illness here at present—it is typhoid. There are a lot of people also. But if you wish to come, you may. "I will certainly like it. Ba of course wishes it. Illness will come and go, but that does not mean that a person may not go home. But do as the two<sup>2</sup> of you wish.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

CHI. MANUBEHN  
BALKIRAN  
SOUTH AVENUE  
SANTA CRUZ  
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2678. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

<sup>1</sup> According to Vikram calendar, New Year begins on the day following Dewali. In 1940, it was on November 1.

<sup>2</sup> The addressee and her husband, Surendra B. Mashruwala



### 342. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 1, 1940

CHI. NARAHARI,

Vasumatibehn<sup>1</sup> says that as I am contemplating a fast, she is not inclined to go there. I tell her that she ought not to neglect her duty and stay on here, to which she replies that she does not have there any such responsible work to attend to. I told her that you would decide about that. She has agreed to that. You have to decide only from the point of view of dharma. If she stays here, it won't be to serve me. There are many others who will do that.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH/VASUMATIBEHN

HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9120

### 343. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

November 1, 1940

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

Chi. Vijaya<sup>2</sup> is leaving today with Manubhai<sup>3</sup>. She is very weak. She does not put on weight though she is not suffering from any disease. Previously she was suffering from dysentery, but now there is no symptom of it. I have asked her to go there. If she comes, please see if something can be done. I heard about everything from Ba. It is not good that you are not taking proper care of your health. You have a lot of work yet to do.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI MITHUBEHN PETIT

KHADI KARYALAYA

MAROLI, *via* NAVSARI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2719

<sup>1</sup> Vasumati Pandit

<sup>2</sup> Vijayabehn and Manubhai Pancholi

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

### 344. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM  
November 1, 1940

CHI. SUMI,

Your letters are fine. You have made good progress. When shall I be able to see you all? When will you let me hear your music? Motiba<sup>1</sup> told me about the thing. You may go in for an operation if the doctor advises. But you should do so only if the doctor assures you of its success.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

### 345. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 1, 1940

CHI. NIMU,

I have your long letter. Understand well what you write. For years, there has been no such thing as Diwali for me. You will of course read the letter to Ramdas. What should I arrange for you? How much time can you spare? I would advise you to see either Maganbhai or Mridula. One of them will fix you up. Have you made any progress in music? Have you kept up study of Hindi? We do not wish to ask for more than what we are worthy of. No matter if we get a rupee less. We cannot accept more than our worth.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

<sup>1</sup> Literally, the elder Ba, that is, grandmother Kasturba

### 346. LETTER TO UMA AGRAWAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 1, 1940

CHI. OM<sup>1</sup> ALIAS SLEEPING BEAUTY,

Did you do me a great favour by writing? You should bow to Nanda Devi, etc., on my behalf also. Now at last you are a resident of the mountains. It is no small thing that you remember us. Be happy, all of you.

Blessings from  
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, p. 344

### 347. TO THE READERS

I had hoped, when I made public my intention<sup>2</sup> of suspending *Harijanbandhu*, that the suspension might be only for a week and as a result of my correspondence with H.E. the Viceroy it might be possible to publish it again soon. But the outcome was just the opposite. My hope was without any basis. There is no reason to regard this as a bad omen. Satyagraha tests the satyagrahi as also the opponent. There is certainly a difference between the two tests. A satyagrahi's shortcomings are eliminated as satyagraha progresses, while those of the opponent's come to light, as a result of which he is transformed.

But at the moment I do not wish to focus attention on the faults of my opponents. I wish to explain briefly to the readers why *Harijanbandhu* is to be suspended for an indefinite period. I had two alternatives before me. Either to accept the restrictions imposed by the Government and continue publishing *Harijanbandhu* under limitations or to reject the restrictions and suspend its publication. The second alternative alone would bring credit to a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi should offer a hand where a finger is demanded, while practical wisdom would be to drive him away, so that he will never have the courage to ask for the hand. However this policy is for those

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Jannalal Bajaj

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940

who rely on *himsa*. A non-violent person depends on the opposite policy. A violent person engages himself in safeguarding material and mortal things and either forgets or undermines the inner and the immortal self. A non-violent person is ever ready to forsake the material things and serves and protects the inner self. So it becomes his dharma to offer a hand to one who asks for a finger. This dharma ultimately leads to all-round happiness.

Let us examine its result. An opponent who gets a hand on asking for a finger is surprised and thereby will possibly be confounded. When he has such surprising experiences from time to time, he is likely to give up opposition of the non-violent. A non-violent person, while adhering to his dharma, adds to his strength, his capacity to sacrifice grows, he understands better the value of inner strength, and his strength to face the calamity of any kind increases.

As a votary of non-violence, that is, a satyagrahi, I am left with only the second alternative. I experienced a sense of relief when I chose to suspend publication of *Harijanbandhu* and I repeat the immortal lines of Narsinh Mehta:

Better it is that the worldly bonds are broken,  
Easier it will be to attain the Lord.

Mahadev says that the correct version is: "I shall worship the Lord in peace." I don't know how, but I have always remembered the wrong version and have derived solace from it. I, therefore, retain that. My faith is daily growing that I will attain God only through such sacrifices, not otherwise. Here God means the freedom of India.

But, Readers, what about you? I loved my weekly talks with you as I expect you, too, loved them. I tried to explain to you the meaning of satyagraha in various ways. But now? If you have followed properly my writings in *Harijanbandhu*, then I am sure you will follow satyagraha better by my sacrifice and my conduct hereafter. How long shall I explain it to you by writing and talking to you? What you do not get from my conduct, you will never get from my words. An ounce of my conduct, that is, what I am doing, is several times more valuable than a ton of philosophizing.

I have to tell you only this much: wear khadi, spin with perseverance every day, make Harijans your own, treat the followers of other religions with equality and achieve unity. Your body may fall, your house and belongings may go, but do not do anything which

your conscience does not allow. Examine the thirteen-point programme and what I have not mentioned above, you may add to it. If you act accordingly, you will not feel the need of a newspaper and be sure that the Ganga in the form of swaraj will come to your doorsteps without any effort.

Now one thing very practical. Your yearly subscription is not over yet. You will have some balance due to you in the books of *Harijanbandhu*. You are entitled to ask for the refund of the balance. I hope *Harijanbandhu* will come out again some day. If it does, you will get the journal as long as your balance lasts. But if you do not want to wait, write a postcard to the Manager, *Harijanbandhu*, Poona-4. He will send you the balance. If the restriction on *Harijanbandhu* is not lifted within six months, it will be deemed to have been finally wound up, and the balance will be spent in covering any loss that may be caused in winding up. The balances of subscriptions will be sent to those subscribers who ask for it and the share of those who do not ask for it will be sent to the Harijan Sevak Sangh for the welfare of Harijans.

For the present *Vandemataram*.<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM, November 2, 1940

[From Gujarati]

*Harijanbandhu*, 9-11-1940

### 348. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 2, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

I have your good letter. I am preserving it, for some time at any rate. You must keep your body in good order. The things you want are being got ready and will be sent soon, including your khadi.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN  
PALAMPUR  
KANGRA DISTRICT, PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6463. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10058

<sup>1</sup> A similar article in Hindi appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-11-1940. *Vide* also "To the Reader"

### 349. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI<sup>1</sup>

November 2, 1940

DAUGHTER AMINA,

Is what Sultana<sup>2</sup> says about you true? Why do you suffer from piles? They should be removed. There is no after-effect if they are removed. Removal may not be necessary. You must consult a doctor. Why should you be so obstinate? Write to me immediately that you will take medical treatment.

Id *mubarak*<sup>3</sup> to all.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10777. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

### 350. LETTER TO SULTANA QURESHI

November 2, 1940

DAUGHTER SULTANA,

I have your letter. I am glad you wrote to me. Keep writing. You must have grown quite big now. What are you studying these days? What are the others doing? I am also writing to Amina. Pass the letter on to her.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Today is Id-ul-Fitr. Id *mubarak* to all of you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10761. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

<sup>1</sup> Also spelt 'Koreishi'

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's daughter

<sup>3</sup> Greetings

*351. LETTER TO SAHASRABUDDHE*

*November 2, 1940*

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your letter. I have sent a copy to Bhai Patwardhan. I don't understand why the resolutions passed have not been implemented.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

*352. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI*

SEVAGRAM,

*November 3, 1940*

CHI. KANTI<sup>1</sup>,

I thought you did not write to me out of shyness. Now I see that you do not write out of anger. If that is true, it does not befit you. Have you forgotten what nice letters you used to write? Harilal's letter is enclosed. Write to him. He had a fall but now he is all right.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gajarati: C.W. 7361. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

*353. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 3, 1940*

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your letter. My relations with Mysore are strained and, therefore, I do not wish to write to the doctor there. We can get someone not connected with the court, but I do not know any of them at all. Why do you need a doctor, however? Your body itself will tell you. It will be enough if you observe the rules.

<sup>1</sup> Son of Harilal Gandhi

Kanti himself will know some doctor there. You can go to him if necessary. There are bound to be facilities there for taking weight, etc.

*Blessings to both of you from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9743. Also C.W. 723. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

### 354. *LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 3, 1940*

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. May you have a prosperous New Year. Do as much service as you can. It is not worthwhile coming here. There is nothing new. Moreover the Ashram is completely full.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL

CONGRESS OFFICE

DHOLKA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2712. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

### 355. *LETTER TO BHOLANATH*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 3, 1940*

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I got your letter. I am aware of the difficulties<sup>1</sup> there. I don't know what may happen. Although I am making some arrangements, the results may be meagre. If the people have the strength to resist, they must do so. No one should think that I can counsel compromise

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the forcible extortions for the war funds; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-10-1940 and "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 4-11-1940



with such injustice. Men may break, but they should not bend before brute force.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1311. Also *Gandhi Shatabdi Smarak Granth-Yug Purush*, p. 184

### 356. LETTER TO SARASVATI GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

November 3, 1940

CHI. SURU<sup>1</sup>,

What a girl you are! Having joined Kanti you write neither to me nor to Ba. This is not proper. I hope all of you are well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6180. Also C.W. 3454. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

### 357. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 3, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter after many days. Thakkar Bapa had given me a description of your Sind tour. He has already arrived at Sevagram.

The problems of Sind are difficult. Maulana will go there. I am not very hopeful of his being able to do much. Muslims of Sind are in the hands of *pirs*<sup>2</sup>. Many of them are fanatics; even some zamindars are marauders. In such circumstances, nationalist Muslims will not be able to do anything. The fact is, Hindus are rank cowards. They also lack the spirit of sacrifice. Let us see how things can be shaped.

I am contemplating a fast. I cannot say whether I shall undertake it or not. Everything is left to God. But the idea has gripped me. You do not have to worry. It can start only if God wills it. If it does commence, you should consider it a matter for rejoicing. Fasting is the final penance prescribed by our dharma. It has

<sup>1</sup> Kantilal Gandhi's wife

<sup>2</sup> Leaders of religious factions

been considered to be an ultimate weapon in a difficult situation.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7991. Also C.W. 3088. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

### 358. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 4, 1940*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I do not know whether I am now in order in still carrying my complaints to you. But until you tell me to stop, I propose to send them as before.

This is in continuation of my letter<sup>1</sup> of 22nd October, 1940, regarding the alleged war extortions in Alwar. Here is another wire, dated 28th October, 1940:

Sepoys beat me unconsciousness. Kept in sun realize war fund Rs. 22 forcibly under Najim order. Pray intervene. Chhajjoram, Baldeogarh, Nizamat Thanaghazi, Alwar State.

I understand that there the Minister and his Secretary are British, lent by the Political Department. The whole administration is said to be under the Political Department. If so, the argument I have advanced in my said letter of 22nd October, 1940, applies with double force. I have a letter telling me that force has been used in several cases for exacting contributions.<sup>2</sup>

*I am,*

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-10-1940

<sup>2</sup> Replying to this on November 8, J. G. Laithwaite, Private Secretary to the Viceroy said: "His Excellency . . . on receiving your letter of 22nd October . . . at once caused enquiries to be made but he has not yet had the result. He is also sending a copy of your present letter to the Political authorities."

*359. LETTER TO CHARU CHANDRA BHANDARI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*November 4, 1940*

DEAR CHARU BABU,

Your faith will be rewarded. Never falter.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours,*  
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8698. Also C.W. 1468. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

*360. LETTER TO C. A. AIYAMUTHU*

SEVAGRAM,  
*November 4, 1940*

DEAR AIYAMUTHU,

I have your letter<sup>2</sup>. It is enigmatic. Open out the enigma and I shall understand better. In any case I expect you to prove true and all will be well.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*361. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

*November 4, 1940*

The paper quilt may be tried. It fully serves the purpose. But a blanket may be taken if necessary. In no case should time be wasted. He should take it when it becomes available. Why is he going, if it can easily be had from Barabadi<sup>3</sup>?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4361

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Charu Chandra Bhandri", 22-10-1940

<sup>2</sup> Dated October 29, in which the addressee, Secretary of the Tamil Nadu branch of the All-India Spinners' Association, had complained about lack of faith in khadi among the khadi workers

<sup>3</sup> A village near Sevagram

### 362. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 4, 1940

CHI. SHARMA,

I understand you. Everything is in the hands of God. We, too, are all in His hands. He will make me do what He likes. You have to concentrate on your work.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 290 and 291

### 363. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

November 4, 1940

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your beautiful letter. Of course your name is included in the list [for individual satyagraha]. But at present the situation is quite different. Remain engrossed in your duty.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11691

### 364. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM GIDWANI<sup>1</sup>

[Before November 6, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

The sole concern of Congressmen in Sind should be to rid the province of the terror that is raging there. If the Congressmen of Sind cannot do that, they had better retire from public life.

*The Hindu*, 9-11-1940

<sup>1</sup> The addressee was President, Sind Provincial Congress Committee. The letter was reported under the date-line "Sukkur, November 6".

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

### 365. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

*November 6, 1940*

MY DEAR ANAND,

Amtul Salaambehni is proceeding to Sind to give her life in preventing the murders that are taking place in Sind. She is to go to some Muslim friend and will appeal to Haji Sir Abdulla Haroon to help her in the attempt.<sup>1</sup> You will help her in every way. Take her to Kikibehn<sup>2</sup> also and do everything you can for her.

*Yours,*

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 681

### 366. LETTER TO ABDULLA HAROON RASHEED

SEVAGRAM,

*November 6, 1940*

SETH SHRI HAJI ABDULLA HAROON,

Behn Amtul Salaam has been with me for the last ten days. She came to me of her own free will. She is thirty-six. She is the daughter of the late Col. Abdul Majid Khan Saheb, Mir Munshi of Patiala. From her childhood she has been devoted to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. The murders that are taking place in Sind are worrying me no doubt, but Amtul Salaam also is worried. I am, therefore, sending her to you on the strength of our relations during the Khilafat movement. I think you can play a big role in stopping these murders. I am not thinking at the moment of the political aspect. It is a question of humanity. Behn Amtul Salaam does not know anything of politics and is not interested in it. She is a staunch Muslim. She is never irregular in reading the Koran. When she is not ill she observes the Ramadan strictly. She has been silently serving a good many Muslims. She is brave. She intends to lay down her life if these murders are not stopped, and I have fully encouraged her to do so. I hope that you will not misunderstand her or me in this

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the following item; also "Letter to Abdulla Haroon Rasheed", 12-10-1940

<sup>2</sup> Kikibehn Lalwani, J. B. Kripalani's sister

connection. I do not have with me a stauncher or nobler man or woman than she. And when she wishes to sacrifice her life to save the honour of Islam and serve the Hindus, I consider it my duty to give her my blessings.

*Yours,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1219. Also from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

### *367. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI*

WARDHA,

*November 7, 1940*

ANAND HINGORANI  
UPPER SIND COLONY  
KARACHI SADAR

AMTUSSALAAM      ARRIVING      THERE      NINTH      AFTERNOON.  
RECEIVE.<sup>1</sup>

BAPU

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

### *368. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*

WARDHA,

*November 7, 1940*

I have been receiving numerous telegrams asking me not to undertake the contemplated fast. Almost all of the telegrams are from friends who are concerned about my health and who think that if I am alive I can still render useful service to the country. There are one or two bitterly criticizing me and telling me that fasting has no place in the politics of the country and that it disturbs the political atmosphere and impairs the efficiency of opposition to the Government in the fight for freedom. I wish to thank both the friends and the critics. The members of the Working Committee and I also had a long discussion

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* also letter to the addressee "Letter to Avdulla Haroon Rasheed", 6-11-1940, and the preceding item.

over the contemplated fast.

In view of the extension of individual civil disobedience, the idea of the fast naturally remains in abeyance. But I must say nothing that I have heard has dislodged me from the position I have consistently held about the relevancy and propriety of fast in all walks of life including the political. I admit that it is a new weapon. I admit also that the use of that weapon is not open to any but specialists, even as the use of the weapon of civil disobedience is not open to everybody. But if the use of civil disobedience is open only to those who are qualified for it, the use of fasting requires infinitely larger qualifications. I hold that I possess these qualifications. I have had God-given opportunities of training myself in this direction consciously since 1906<sup>1</sup>, that means 34 years. But it cannot be taken mechanically. It can only be taken in obedience to the promptings of an unseen power, call it the inner voice, God or whatever other name you like to give to that power. I have mentioned the possibility of fasting because something within me is prompting me to it. I am myself fighting against it. I know that however willing the spirit may be, the flesh is weak. I know that being unable to drink an adequate quantity of water during a fast, it becomes almost unbearable, specially in the initial stages. But however weak the flesh may be, I know that the weakness can be conquered when that unseen power dominates me to the exclusion of every other force. That feeling has not yet come to me and until it does naturally there will be no fast. If it does come, I shall myself feel powerless to listen to the kindly intervention of friends or the anger of fierce critics. Therefore I will beseech all to hold themselves in patience and watch the developments. Of course, it is open to everybody to help me in the crisis through which the country is passing. I have shown the numerous ways in which everybody, friend and critic, can help. I have no desire to make any elaborate statement indicating the ways in which people can help. Having stopped the publication of *Harijan* weeklies I have lost all desire for making public statements. This I am compelled to make in order to thank numerous inquirers, and to allay public anxiety.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Here the newspaper source has “1906 or 1907”; *vide* “An Autobiography”, sub-title “Brahmacharya”

<sup>2</sup> What follows is reproduced from *The Hitavada*, according to Gandhiji was interviewed by the Associated Press of India.

Asked about the future of the *Harijan* weeklies, Gandhiji said:

You will presently see the valedictory issue<sup>1</sup> of *Harijan* announcing their stoppage altogether.

*Congress Bulletin*, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *The Hitavada*, 10-11-1940

### 369. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS

1. Under the extraordinary situation created by the Government, I have, after consultation with the Working Committee, extended the scope of civil disobedience and I propose to select, for the time being, resisters from among the members of the Working Committee, the Congress members in the Central and Provincial Legislatures and the members of the A.I.C.C.

2. Those only will be selected who conform to the conditions I have laid down, who are themselves willing to offer resistance and who are otherwise free to do so.

3. The method of selection is as follows. The members of the Working Committee will send me lists of such members in the first instance and no one will offer civil disobedience whose name I have not passed. No list should contain names of those who are physically unfit to undergo prison life. I may supplement the lists by making selection out of the names I have already received or may receive hereafter.

4. The names should be sent through messenger to ensure delivery.

5. No one will offer civil disobedience without first informing the District Magistrate of his district, of the time when and the place where and the manner in which it is to be offered.

6. It is advisable not to hold public meetings for the purpose in cities. Meetings may be held in villages. The best and the easiest way is to repeat the following slogan to passers-by as the resister walks on in a particular direction until he is arrested. My preference is for this last method. It is harmless, economical and effective. No argument is necessary. It rivets attention on the single issue of war. The idea is to prevent the movement from lapsing into mass civil disobedience. This

<sup>1</sup> Dated November 10, two articles; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-10-1940 and "To the Reader"



is the slogan: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance." The slogan should be translated into the language of the province in which civil disobedience is to be offered.

7. Civil disobedience is to be offered singly. It need not be simultaneous. The whole of this programme should, if possible, be finished in one month.

8. All demonstrations should be avoided when civil disobedience is offered.

9. The ordinary channels of publicity being closed, we must rely upon everybody becoming his own newspaper. Satyagraha is and must be independent of the ordinary channels. We must not feel helpless when these are closed, and they are for the most part even now closed against us. It should be realized too that the repetition of the slogan while walking in one direction reduces the movement to its simplest terms.

10. Secrecy should be avoided. Therefore cyclostyles and the like should be used only when the owners are prepared to lose them. The cheapest multiplying method is to use composition trays. The formula for making them may be got locally. (The A.I.C.C. Office shall try to send it later.) But the infallible way is to multiply the manuscript by many hands copying. This method was extensively used during the last satyagraha.

11. Congress funds need not be kept secretly. If the Government choose to confiscate them, they may do so. In this life-and-death struggle, we must be prepared to lose all funds and other property. We must learn to depend upon the nation financing the movement from day to day. Our wants must, therefore, be reduced to the minimum. No one need expect monetary assistance from the Congress.

12. Our policy should be to avoid classification of prisoners. In no case should any attempt be made to ask either for a higher or a lower class. An A-class prisoner is not bound to take advantage of the special facilities offered to him. Nor need he be ashamed of availing himself of them if thereby he retains his health.

13. Jail rules and discipline should be strictly observed so long as they are not inconsistent with human dignity. No labour should be avoided because it is labour. We should know its dignity.

14. Hartals should be rare. They lose their force if resorted to too often. They are likely to be prohibited. It is better to anticipate the prohibition. Our civil resistance is strictly limited. It is not general.

15. Should the Congress be declared an illegal organization, it should make no difference. I shall conduct the movement so long as I am left free. In the event of my being arrested, it will become self-acting if the people have imbibed non-violence. Congressmen should remain calm and unperturbed. Each one will act on his or her own initiative. If he or she feels like offering civil disobedience, the way is clear. If he or she is unable, they will devote themselves wholly to one or more items of the thirteenfold constructive programme. I do not propose to appoint a successor whether I am in or out. Those who belong to the Congress constructive organizations may not offer civil disobedience.

16. While the Congress functions as a legal organization, the Provincial Committees, will elect their President if the present one is arrested. The person elected should seek confirmation from me. I shall be unable to work through him if he does not fulfil my conditions.

17. In the provinces where there is no Working Committee Member, the provincial president will put himself in touch with me and send me his recommendations.

18. If I am impelled to fast, I expect Congressmen not to feel paralysed but to be stimulated to more intensive effort in the direction of constructive work. The fast, if it comes, must result in khadi and village manufactures generally becoming universal, untouchability being a thing of the past, and communal unity a settled fact.

19. Congressmen should make it clear in their speech and their action that they are neither pro-Fascists nor pro-Nazis, but that they are opposed either to all war or at least to the war conducted on behalf of British imperialism. They sympathize with the British in their effort to live, but they want also to live themselves as members of a fully free nation. They must not, therefore, be expected to help Britain at the cost of their own liberty. They bear ill will to no nation. They want to play their part in establishing lasting peace in the world.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, November 8, 1940

*Congress Bulletin*, No. 6, 1942, File No. 3/42/41-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

370. TELEGRAM TO M. M. MALAVIYA<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM,

[On or before *November 9, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI  
HINDU UNIVERSITY  
BENARES

KNOW YOUR LOVE. UNDERSTAND YOUR ANXIETY. AM  
IN GOD'S HANDS. WILL AVOID IF POSSIBLE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*,  
10-11-1940

371. TELEGRAM TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHAGANJ,  
*November 9, 1940*

ANAND HINGORANI  
UPPER SIND COLONY  
KARACHI SADAR

AMTUSSALAAM REACHING SATURDAY BY AHMEDABAD  
MAIL. MEET STATION. ACCOMMODATE.

BAPU

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

372. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*November 9, 1940*

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. I have sent copies of the correspondence. You

<sup>1</sup> The telegram, reported under the date-line "Benares, November 9", was in reply to the addressee's which according to *The Hindu*, 8-11-1940, read: "The policy pursued by the Government is lamentable. The provocation is great. The country is in a sad plight and the worst time is ahead. Your presence is needed among the people for service which you alone can render. A fast at your age in this crisis will be running away from duty. Please avoid it."

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

carried my blessings, when you left. Devdas had asked for a message for the meeting, but I could not send it. These days I do not like to send any messages and so in this case also I did not send any.

I believe I will be arrested and that too soon. I am ready of course.

I understand about Brahmadrutt<sup>1</sup>. He is at the right place. I see, however, that the experiment cannot be repeated.

I finished Charkha Sangh work today.

Brijkrishna will show you the instructions<sup>2</sup>. Go through them. If you wish to suggest any changes, let me know. I could not write the letter to the Viceroy. Now I will write it<sup>3</sup> tomorrow. I do not wish to keep awake all night.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

### 373. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 9, 1940

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. Maulana Saheb has been consulted. The fact is, you don't have to carry my letter. And you have gone there<sup>4</sup> in my name, for my work and in the capacity of my daughter; what more do you want? You must stay with them if you can. I am happy. The rest from Pyarelal.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 435

<sup>1</sup> He was the third individual satyagrahi who was arrested on November 7 at Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis"

<sup>3</sup> This was addressed to the Private Secretary to Viceroy; *vide* "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 11-11-1940

<sup>4</sup> To Karachi; *vide* "Telegram to Anand T. Hingorani", 7-11-1940

374. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 10, 1940

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I am holding a meeting. You were informed on the telephone. I hope things are proceeding smoothly.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 436

375. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 11, 1940

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 2nd instant.

I must not offer any apology for this letter. For, in answer to the Government measures regarding the Press, I have given up making public statements on the struggle between the Government and the Congress, and I want to avoid secrecy regarding my plans. I shall, therefore, continue to send you periodical letters unless His Excellency desires otherwise.

I had hoped to be able to confine civil disobedience to two or three typical cases and supplement them, if necessary and if the call came, with a fast, limited or unlimited. But the members of the Working Committee were very much perturbed over the contemplated fast. Wires also pressed in upon me from all sorts of men and associations prevailing upon me not to fast. I felt that if I was not to fast, I must in some way answer the action of the Government in regard to Pandit Jawaharlal<sup>1</sup>. My restraint depended upon a measure of reciprocity from the Government as I had hoped in my letter<sup>2</sup> of the 30th September in the following words:

I shall hug the hope that it will be possible for the Government to work

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on October 31, under the Defence of India Rules, and was sentenced on November 5 to an aggregate term of four years' rigorous imprisonment.

<sup>2</sup> To Lord Linlithgow, *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

out their policy in the spirit of the Congress position.

But I do not complain. I must not. Only I feel I should explain my change of plan. The changed plan consists in extending civil disobedience to qualified persons selected from particular groups. The groups touched at present are the members of the Working Committee, the Legislators, the members of the A.I.C.C. and a few others. I felt that with the Pandit dealt with in the manner he was, and the almost simultaneous arrest of Shri Achyut Patwardhan, who has proclaimed his faith in non-violence, I should not restrain members of these groups and the like if they satisfied my test as to non-violence and the constructive programme.

I send you herewith a copy also of the instructions<sup>1</sup> I have issued to Congressmen which you will please show to H.E.

There is one other matter to which I wish to draw his attention. My son, Devdas, has sent me notes of the recent interview with certain editors by the Hon. the Home Member. In it the Hon. the Home Member is represented as having said: "Mr. Gandhi's object is to paralyse India's war effort and thus to help Hitler." If Sir Reginald<sup>2</sup> said these words, I can only say that he is wholly wrong. I claim that nothing that I have said can warrant Sir Reginald's extraordinary statement. Indeed I have said repeatedly and so have Pandit Jawaharlal and almost all the numerous Congressmen who have been jailed, that we do not want to help Hitler. I have never said, I wished to paralyse Government's war efforts. But I have said that those of us who do not believe in war as war or in the war on behalf of British imperialism, which they hold the present British effort to be, should be free to propagate their views in a non-violent manner. What will, however, help Hitler and the enemies of Britain is the present utterly irresponsible and repressive policy of the Government including the wholly unwarranted arrests and imprisonments. I had expected that those in high places would observe fairness and not go to the extent of putting into the mouths of humble workers like me words which they have never uttered.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7856. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Instructions to Satyagrahis"

<sup>2</sup> Sir Reginald Maxwell

376. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 11, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

Your good letter has just come in. Your *tapasya* is real and, therefore, the zest must come.<sup>1</sup> And with the zest must come bodily strength. The slivers will be sent when you ask for them. You are right. I may be taken any moment. What does it matter? The Ashram is full to overflowing.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN  
PALAMPUR  
KANGRA DISTRICT  
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6464. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10059

377. *LETTER TO BARI KHAN*

November 11, 1940

MY DEAR BARI<sup>2</sup>,

There are times when the last step becomes obligatory. Amtul Salaam is in God's hands.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 639

378. *LETTER TO VASUKAKA JOSHI*

November 11, 1940

DEAR VASUKAKA,

Of course, I feel honoured to have your name on my list. I know your energy is superior to mine and your love of the country

<sup>1</sup>Vide also "Letter to Mirabehn", 21-9-1940

<sup>2</sup> Brother of Amtussalaam

as great. Will you give me the exact details of your diet? How do you take the lemon juice—not undiluted?<sup>1</sup>

*Yours,*  
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7915

### 379. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

*November 11, 1940*

CHI. LILA,

I got your two notes. Today Lakshmidas's temperature is 97°. I see him more often. He was taken to the Civil Surgeon, who says, he is progressing saitsfactorily. There is intermittent fever but that need not worry us. His teeth are bad, so the improvement is slow. I will get them extracted as soon as he regains strength. Do not worry in the least.

Please go on studying patiently. Whatever knowledge you acquire will be useful. If I die in the meanwhile, do as your conscience tells you. Since you are getting trained for the Ashram, you should feel fully satisfied.

Mahadev will not come before the day after tomorrow. I am writing this with your pen-holder. If you practise complete self-control and propagates khadi amongst the girls, you may rest assured it will be no mean service.

I will continue to write to you.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9594. Also C.W. 6566. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

<sup>1</sup>Vide also "Letter to Vasukaka Joshi", 18-11-1940.



*380. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK*

*November 11, 1940*

CHI. PREMA,

Do as Shankarrao advises you.<sup>1</sup> But he will do nothing without consulting me.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI PREMABEHN KANTAK

ASHRAM

SASVAD

POONA DISTRICT

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 10414. Also C.W. 6853. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

*381. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI*

*November 11, 1940*

BHAI MUNSHI,

I am aware of the love you both<sup>2</sup> have for me. If there is a fast, it will only be at the prompting of the inner voice. If you believe this, you will rejoice instead of being pained.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7655. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

*382. LETTER TO MANUBHAI PANCHOLI*

SEVAGRAM,

*November 11, 1940*

CHI. MANUBHAI,

I got your beautiful letter. I had got Vijaya's letter also. I can understand your pain. This should be sufficient to calm both of you:

<sup>1</sup> Shankarrao Deo had asked the addressee to be prepared for courting imprisonment as an individual satyagrahi.

<sup>2</sup> The addressee and his wife, Lilavati Munshi

if I go on a fast, it won't be on my own but as prompted by the inner voice. Like Mirabai, I too, am pierced with the dagger of love.

Show this to Nanabhai<sup>1</sup>.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7133. Also C.W. 4625. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

### 383. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

*November 11, 1940*

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. May every New Year, as it comes round, increase your spirit of service. Shankerlal<sup>2</sup> should recover completely. I am getting ready for a severe test. God knows what will be the outcome.

Sarladevi<sup>3</sup> must be getting better day by day.

*Blessings to all from*

BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

C/O VEDANT COLLEGE

XI MAIN ROAD

MALLESWARAM, BANGALORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11563

### 384. LETTER TO PYARELAL

*Diwali, 8.30 p. m. [November 11, 1940]<sup>4</sup>*

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am able to reply to your letter only now. About the man-woman question I shall only say this. I had talked of the ideal I had indicated that I would prefer. But any decision can be given only after

<sup>1</sup> Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

<sup>2</sup> Shankerlal Banker

<sup>3</sup> Sarladevi Sarabhai

<sup>4</sup> From the contents, it appears that this letter belongs to 1940, in which year Diwali fell on this date.

considering all the attendant circumstances. Risk is no doubt involved in a man taking service from a woman. Hence the principle I mentioned can be followed in practice only to a very limited extent. Applying it in my own case, I certainly cannot take service from just anyone. I too have to be on my guard. Considering all this, I have come to the conclusion that if I must take service from a woman, it should only be from Sushila. Till such time as she is not here, I should take whatever service I can have from you. It is altogether another matter what should be done if Sushila finally does not come.

Under no circumstances can I have A. S. do the massage, etc. For it would not do any good neither to her or to me. I cannot bear the thought that I am like God to her. I do not possess those attributes. You should take it that I merely suffer her. So you must dissuade her. I certainly can dissuade her myself but I should not like to shoulder the responsibility.

It is true that I rarely sleep facing you. The reason is this; I have let her get into a certain habit. I cannot suddenly break away. Here it is not a question of a person being of the same sex or the opposite sex but of a person as person. It would have been the same if I had allowed a man to get into the habit. There is one thing about her though. She is not able to cling to me. I had the desire but with some difficulty I have freed myself from it.

As for you, I could sleep with you all the time and still it would not be enough for you. To satisfy that desire of yours I would have to give up sleeping. I could do even that. But I have not found it necessary. That is why I have been putting up with it as far as possible. I have told you that I find it difficult to sleep with somebody in bodily contact with me. I would put up with that only if you came to sleep early and left after a little physical contact. But I would not be very eager for it because when I am really asleep, I cannot do even that. I would like you to be satisfied with whatever physical contact you have while serving me. To give you that satisfaction I would be willing not to take service from any other person and have yours. I would not test you. I would regard it sinful to do so. For testing you I would not sleep with you even for a moment. My faith is backed by knowledge. I had to ask you about the Koran, and the knowledge that I gained thereby was sufficient for me. I have no doubt about it at all.

Now I think I have replied to most of the points. In short

(1) I only want to take from you whatever service you can give.

(2) When Sushila comes, you may discontinue your services for her sake, but I would have no objection if you continued. I would like it as much as I do service from Sushila. A. S. means a lot to me. But because of her mistaken belief, I only put up with such service as she gives. I would be happy if she left me today. I would be happy if she gave up serving me today. That is my sincere attempt. It is the opposite in your case. I would like to accept as much service from you as you would give. I have taken that service. I have known its worth.

(3) Hence, you have got to free me soon from massage by A. S.

I forgot to mention one thing. I do not like it the least bit that you lie on a mat all through the night. I know I could have pampered you. I purposely hardened my heart. It is your duty to sleep on a proper bed covering yourself. It is wrong and sinful not to do so. It is certainly upsetting for me. So, it is not right that, even if unwittingly, you are testing me by sleeping on a mat.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### 385. LETTER TO SEVAGRAM WORKERS

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*Monday, November 11, 1940*

I had suspected Amtul Salaambehn's hand in the disappearance of Radhabehn's letter. Hence it is necessary to say that I would not have chosen her for a very sacred mission like fasting, if the suspicion had been substantiated. The suspicion was not very well-founded. But why should I hide my slightest suspicion from one whom I look upon as my own child? My suspicion had no meaning but this. That too is no more. It will always remain a mystery as to who took that letter. I still do not know about it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 639 and 6366

### 386. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 11, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I hope you are getting letters every day. Your news has appeared in the Press. Akbar is well. I have not been able to do anything about Niyamat's daughter. I shall do something. The rest from Pyarelal. I think of you very often. Bari's letter has been received.<sup>1</sup>

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 437

### 387. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEVAGRAM,  
November 11, 1940

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter is good. I have made proper arrangements about land, etc. I shall do more if I remain free. Yourself, Parnerkar<sup>2</sup>, Chimanlal, Sukhabhai<sup>3</sup>, etc., are, of course, remaining out.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1938

### 388. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

*Silence Day, November 11, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Settle the account of Pratapchandrajai at the rate of forty. He is leaving today.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4362

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji's letter to Bari Khan, *vide* "Letter to Bari Khan", 11-11-1940

<sup>2</sup> Jashwant Mahadev Parnerkar

<sup>3</sup> Sukhabhau Chowdhary

### 389. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before November 12, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

DAUGHTER,

I am waiting for your long letter. Jamshedji<sup>2</sup> has written that he is anxious. Pyarelal keeps on writing. Everything is going on well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 440

### 390. LETTER TO NIRMALANANDA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 12, 1940*

DEAR NIRMALANANDA<sup>3</sup>,

There is no fasting just now. If it comes, no one will be allowed to join me. But what you suggest may be adopted after I am gone. If I survive, I shall issue instructions about the future. You should, therefore, qualify yourself by further discipline and hold yourself in patience.

*Yours,*

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1393

### 391. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 12, 1940*

DAUGHTER,

Now I get your news from newspapers. May God be your friend.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 438

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Gandhiji's "waiting for" news from Amtussalaam; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 12-11-1940

<sup>2</sup> Mayor, Karachi Corporation

<sup>3</sup> Earlier known as G. V. Gurjale

### 392. LETTER TO MADALASA AGRAWAL

November 13, 1940

CHI. MADALASA<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter.

I shall reply to Sardar.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, p. 320

### 393. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 13, 1940

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Your letter to Mahadev too has been received. You must have got the news from Mahadev. It does not seem proper that all of you should start courting imprisonment just when he is going round meeting everybody. You may go after Mahadev has visited you. If you think it necessary to consult me too, come over here. Otherwise I will definitely send Mahadev. If he goes there directly<sup>2</sup>, he will not be able to carry my final decision. Please, therefore, change the dates a little if necessary. Excellent preparations are being made in Berar too. There is a letter from Patil<sup>3</sup> of Bombay and I am replying to him. I take it that you will read it.

Mahadev will arrive on Friday night. It seems best that Mangaldas<sup>4</sup> and Dada should write<sup>5</sup> to the Governor. That is the proper course. There is no question of their resigning, but courtesy demands that they should explain their reasons in the letters. I see that you expect me to send a draft. I cannot send it today, as I have other

<sup>1</sup> Second daughter of Jannalal Bajaj and wife of Shriman Narayan

<sup>2</sup> From Delhi

<sup>3</sup> S. K. Patil, General Secretary of Bombay Provincial Congress Committee for 17 years; became its President in 1946; Central Minister, 1957-63 and 1964-67

<sup>4</sup> Mangaldas Pakvasa, President, Bombay Legislative Council, 1937-47; Solicitor for 30 years

<sup>5</sup> About their intention of participating in individual civil disobedience

work to attend to. Will it be all right if I send it with Mahadev? I will send it today if possible. Those who are not in the priority list can also go to prison, but I am inclined to send them in after you all have gone. If, however, after studying the local situation you think it necessary that they should go, you may ask them to do so. I insist that Narahari should not be dragged just now. If anyone is upset by his not joining, it would be a matter of pain for me.

Rafi<sup>1</sup> was with me only for half an hour. He only wanted to know the trend of my thinking. Jawaharlal had told all of them that they should quietly carry out my instructions.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL  
DR. KANUGA'S BUNGALOW  
ELLIS BRIDGE  
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 244-6*

### 394. ADVICE TO URMILA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,  
November 13, 1940

Be a good girl. You are good, but be better still and grow bigger everyday.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1609. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

<sup>1</sup> Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Minister in U. P., 1936-39; later Central Minister for Communication and Food



### 395. LETTER TO MANJULABEHN M. MEHTA

[November 13, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

Urmila is enjoying herself. Today she brought her autograph book and got everyone to write something in it. I asked her if she was getting everyone to write in it, to which she replied that she approached only those whom she thought to be good people.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1612. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

### 396. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 13, 1940

DAUGHTER,

Received your telegram. Also the letter. Yes, your brothers are certainly good. I hope you are keeping good health. You have asked for a telegram. It is not quite necessary now. I had written to Kafi<sup>2</sup> and also to Bari. You will, of course, do good work there. Listen to everyone and talk little. I am well. Lakshmidas is also doing well. Everything about Islam Bi has been done. Lakshmidas has no fever. I do feel your absence.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 439

### 397. DISCUSSION WITH KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA<sup>3</sup>

[November 13, 1940]<sup>4</sup>

As I have mentioned in my writings, I have been feeling for a long time that a prolonged fast is yet to be my lot. The war that is raging, the country's slavery and the importance for the whole world

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Urmila; *vide* the preceding item.

<sup>2</sup> Addressee's brother

<sup>3</sup> Reporting a summary of the discussion in his circular letter dated November 14, 1940, to Provincial Committees of Gandhi Seva Sangh, Kishorelal Mashruwala said that it took place on the "previous day"

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

of India attaining its independence through non-violence are the considerations that make this supreme sacrifice on my part inevitable. At the same time I am a little nervous at the prospect. I wish I could see my way. I am not trying to move towards the fast. I am being drawn towards it.

In a way it is good. For, the time I am taking to prepare myself inwardly for the step is also preparing the masses and all of you for it. Maybe people will after a time so much come to expect it that they may begin to ask why I do not start the fast.

I cannot yet tell under what conditions the fast will come. If it comes while I am still out of jail, I shall tell you what you ought to do and, so long as I keep the strength, I shall continue to give you instructions. It may be that before starting the fast I shall issue a statement. But it is also possible that the Government may arrest me and the fast may come while I am in jail. In that eventuality I shall neither be able to issue a statement nor give you instructions. And I have already said that I am not going to appoint a successor. So you will all have to act as you think best. And, if someone then emerges as a guide, he will do so on his own merits.

I may have to fast in jail. But from this you should not conclude that I have already decided on it. Even if I should be in jail, I would gladly serve my term if the situation outside should be promising of a solution.

So far as I can see, the contemplated fast can only be conditional. It will not be a fast unto death. It will be for the accomplishment of a purpose. Spiritually it cannot be considered of the highest order. Still the purpose sought to be accomplished is sufficiently pure to deserve sacrifice of life. If the purpose is accomplished, the fast can be terminated. So this will be striving—a sort of *tapasya*—in the form of a fast, to attain a specific goal.

But although the fast will be a conditional one, seeing the present situation and the present attitude of the British, it is not likely that the Government will change their policy to save my life. Saving their own lives has become so important to them that they will not hesitate to sacrifice fifty Gandhis for it. At the same time they will also not have the wisdom to take to non-violence and self-purification for the solution of the problem. So they will let me make the sacrifice, not from anger but because they will be helpless.

I have also received a suggestion that before I undertake the fast

or while I am on fast, I should let a few other co-workers share in the sacrifice. So long as I am alive it will not be a wise proceeding. The purpose of this fast is not of merely local importance. It has significance not only for the whole of India, but for the whole world. The sacrifice here of fifty humble persons cannot carry as much weight as the sacrifice of one world-famous figure. And if the problem gets solved through such a sacrifice, the sole sacrifice, namely, of myself will be enough. What you should do during my fast or after it, if it should end in my death, is a matter to be considered.

The constructive programme to be sure comprises thirteen different activities. It can be further enlarged. But there are three items in it that are the most important. They are pregnant with revolutionary possibilities. They are: khadi, eradication of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity. The MacDonald Award and 'Pakistan' are nothing but projections of our mental attitude of treating the Harijans and Muslims as separate from us. Remember that the separation is not of their asking. It is what we have chosen to give them, what we forced them to ask for. Thus the unity between the caste Hindus and outcaste Hindus, and that between Hindus and Muslims and khadi represent a revolution in our own lives. And in order to bring about this revolution you should devote all your energies and if necessary you should be prepared to lay down your lives in the manner of Fulsingh Bhagat and Amtul Salaam.

At the time when civil disobedience is going on, those who are engaged in constructive work, and do not, therefore, want to go to jail, will continue with the work in hand. But, when other workers are insisting on a programme of jail-going, it will not be right for you to initiate a vigorous programme of constructive work. The mood among the people today is for jail-going. We should, therefore, concentrate on this.

If nevertheless a situation arises when all the people who want to go to jail have been arrested or I happen to be fasting or some local issue comes up, such as the one that has come up in Sind, then you will have to look after your work and your place. Then you should launch an agitation and die if need be and do as your inner voice prompts you. If after I am no more, your inner voice prompts you to initiate the tradition of fasting, you may do so. But I do not say that it will be necessary.

You may be called upon to lay down your lives in yet another

set of conditions. It is possible that the British or if they are defeated the occupation forces, may resort to repression to cow down people. Even State machinery can be destroyed. Such destruction to some extent may make things easier for them. But the masses by and large will not be so treated. They will be subjected to repression. For example, if the countryside does not capitulate to the occupation forces on their terms, villages may be surrounded, armed guards could be placed at public wells to keep the public away from them, crops may be destroyed and people may thus be exposed to hunger and thirst. The people must not submit. We shall have to give them courage; we shall have to undergo hunger and thirst to generate in the people the strength to bear these hardships and die rather than to collaborate with the occupation forces.

If occasion can be found for me to confer with the co-workers who have the same mission, I shall be happy. But today I do not wish to plan for any such contingency.<sup>1</sup>

From Hindi: C.W. 10745. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

### 398. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

WARDHA,

*November 14, 1940*

I have received several letters from students in Madras and the United Provinces regarding their demonstration over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest and imprisonment, and the threatened reprisals by the Governments concerned. The students now desire to have a strike of protest and ask for my advice. When the whole world hangs its head in shame over the imprisonment of one of India's noblest and bravest sons, it is no wonder that the student world in India is shaken to its roots. Whilst, therefore, my sympathy is wholly with them, I must adhere to the view that the students were wrong in their walk-out as a mark of their resentment over Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's imprisonment. The Governments of the provinces are more than wrong in their threats of reprisals. The students will, however, do well not to resort to the contemplated strike of protest. If they desire my advice, they

<sup>1</sup> At the end of the circular Mashruwala suggested that a list of all the workers who held similar views should be made and sent to the Provincial Committees of the Gandhi Seva Sangh.

should send an authorized representative who is in full possession of the facts, of which I have but a very superficial knowledge. I shall gladly give my guidance for what it may be worth. They know how much I would value their whole-hearted co-operation in the struggle I am endeavouring to lead. In any case they will spoil their own and damage the national cause by ill-conceived and hasty action.<sup>1</sup>

*The Hindustan Times*, 15-11-1940

### 399. TELEGRAM TO BALRAM SINGH SRIVASTAVA<sup>2</sup>

SEVAGRAM  
November 14, 1940

BALRAM SINGH SRIVASTAVA  
STUDENTS' FEDERATION  
LUCKNOW

JUST READ LETTER. HAD ADVISED<sup>3</sup> AGAINST STUDENTS'  
STRIKES. MATTER DELICATE. NO HASTY STRIKE FOR  
EVEN DEMONSTRATION. IF YOU HAVE STUDENTS' SPECIFIC  
AUTHORITY YOU SHOULD COME. AM PREPARED ADVISE  
AND GUIDE.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

### 400. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM  
November 14, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I had your letter. I hope you are making progress as expected. Has the itching stopped? Write to me in detail.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8277. Also C.W. 7110. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also the following item.

<sup>2</sup> In reply to the addressee's letter which sought Gandhiji's advice on the U.P. Governor's threat to rusticate the students who had associated themselves with the U.P. Provincial Students' Association, which staged a strike in protest against Jawaharlal Nehru's arrest.

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

*401. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*November 14, 1940*

DAUGHTER,

I now get reports about you from newspapers. Your letters reach me afterwards. You have gone there at the right hour.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 441

*402. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN*

*November 14, 1940*

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I couldn't reply earlier. At present I cannot positively say that the money belongs to the school. More clarification is required before giving an opinion. That is why I am constantly keeping in touch through letters. My main worry is that the money should be safe and used only for a good purpose. My other worry is that all of you should be what you were before. Both these things need help from all of you.

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

*403. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*November 15, 1940*

MY DEAR AMRITLAL,

I had a chat with Sailendra. He says, it is no use bringing Vinapani<sup>1</sup> here. A suitable match is easily available there. It may be well to consider the question. What does she say herself? Don't you think that I have anyone ready? I hope your wife is doing well. If you

<sup>1</sup> Addressee's daughter, now Vinabehn K. Patel.

decide on bringing Vina, you should borrow Rs. 15 from Satis Babu.  
I shall repay it.

BAPU

AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE  
17 JHAMA POOKER LANE  
CALCUTTA  
(BENGAL)

From a photostat: C.W. 1453. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

#### *404. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

*November 15, 1940*

DAUGHTER,

Your article in the *Sind Observer* is beside me. I will read it when I have time. God is with you.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 442

#### *405. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL*

*November 15, 1940*

CHI. AMALA,

I got your letter. I can understand your anger. You can call yourself my enemy, but you cannot be one. If Hitlerism is to be destroyed, it will be destroyed only through non-violence, and in no other way. Yes, one of the letters addressed to you came back because of a mistake.<sup>1</sup>

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL  
3 WODEHOUSE ROAD  
FORT, BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> Presumably, the reference is to the letter dated October 17; *vide* "Letter to Margarete Spiegel", 17-10-1940

406. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,  
November 16, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM  
C/O ANAND HINGORANI  
UPPER SIND COLONY  
KARACHI SADAR

AM STOPPING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE SIND. YOUR LETTER  
QUITE GOOD. WRITING REPLY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a Photostat: G.N. 443

407. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 16, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. Also the telegram. I have replied to the telegram. I read every word of all your letters. Is not the situation different now? Your letter is beautiful. Your appeal, too, is very good. You are handling the situation well. We shall think later about the timing and length of the fast. There is no hurry. Persist with your mission as long as that is possible. When nothing else can be done, you will certainly undertake a fast. What you say about the Hindus is correct. Let us see. You have grasped the problem aright and are acting courageously.

You alone will write to Pir Saheb<sup>1</sup>. If a rejoinder has to be issued subsequently, I shall do it. You can send for Gulzar Khan<sup>2</sup> or Qureshi<sup>3</sup>, if you need any help.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 444

<sup>1</sup> Pir of Bharchundi

<sup>2</sup> A Congress worker of Ahmedabad

<sup>3</sup> Ghulam Rasul Qureshi



408. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 16, 1940

CHI. ANAND,

Do work, taking care of your health. Amtussalaam gets full help from both of you. Really, God is the sole protector for her and all of us.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

409. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
[Before November 17, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of keeping Rajkumari here is that when all, including myself, have gone to jail, she will remain outside and look after routine matters. She has the capacity for it. She will remain here. If the Government starts shooting, she should face it and be prepared to die. I believe that she has the courage. Even if she does not, there is nothing to lose.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, p. 243

410. NOTE FOR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[After November 17, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

Please tell Vallabhbhai that I am becoming more and more firm in my opposition to the Government. For the present only those whom I have chosen may go to jail. If they do not arrest me, I will send all the rest, as many of them as the Government wants. If they arrest me, the whole thing will be in God's hands.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, p. 243

<sup>1</sup> The addressee was arrested on November 17, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

411. LETTER TO VASUKAKA JOSHI

November 18, 1940

DEAR VASUKAKA,

Your letter is interesting. How long have you been on this diet? What is the quantity of lemon-juice, the variety of vegetables and their weight and the weight of baked sweet potato? Sweet potatoes vary in size.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7916

412. LETTER TO DR. S. K. VAIDYA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA ,  
November 18, 1940

BHAI VAIDYA,

Though I wanted to write to you, I could not manage it. Kakubhai<sup>2</sup> has written a long letter about you. If you can devote yourself to khadi work and get absorbed in it, I would not ask you to join the civil disobedience just now. If you wish to come over and stay here for some time, you may do so. Whether the food, climate, etc., will suit you remains to be seen. Do as you wish.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5741

413. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM,  
November 18, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have your letter. Accordingly I have written to Bhai Vaidya. Pass it on to him if you think fit.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10849. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "Letter to Vasukaka Joshi", 11-11-1940

<sup>2</sup> Purushottam K. Jerajani

#### 414. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

November 18, 1940

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your beautiful letter. Who knows what Islam says? It has nowhere advocated suicide. Amtul Salaam will do as God ordains. I understand about the Muslim League. It is our job to win them over also. Many may have to die before we achieve our non-violent victory. If you cultivate sincere love, there will be work here itself [without going to jail]. Get Amina operated upon. You or Gulzar Khan may have to help Amtul Salaam, if she needs help. Of course I have written<sup>1</sup> [to her] to get help from Karachi.

BHAI GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10766. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

#### 415. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,

November 18, 1940

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter after a long time. You write nothing about your health. How are you? We can think of satyagraha only after you are fully restored. There is no hurry. The struggle is a long one. Keep writing to me. The place remains as crowded as before. I think it will be less after three days.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8276. Also C.W. 7111. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 16-11-1940

#### 416. LETTER TO MANEKLAL GANDHI

November 18, 1940

CHI. MANEKLAL,

I got your letter. I had got the telegram, too. I was glad. Kalabhai has been released from suffering.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

MANEKLAL AMRITLAL GANDHI  
PORBANDAR  
KATHIAWAD

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33135

#### 417. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 18, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. Everything will be sent afterwards to Anand. I have heard some fulminations from the Press. Whatever we do, will be done in the name of God alone. We are not doing anything to please anyone else. If the Hindus go berserk, we shall think again. Whatever you do, you should do only after consulting Maulana Saheb. When he leaves the place, then it will be a different thing. It was good that you went to Hatim's<sup>1</sup> place. You shall, of course, keep silent. You should not be afraid of abuses. I shall certainly go to the telephone, but I do not know whether I shall be able to hear. Qureshi's letter is enclosed.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 447

#### 418. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 18, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. The fast should cause no anxiety. If I undertake it, God alone will make me do so. Hence the fruit is bound to be wholesome. At present the question does not arise.

<sup>1</sup> Hatim Alvi, a nationalist Muslim

We shall think about your courting imprisonment. The conference<sup>1</sup> work has got to be done. The struggle is likely to be a long one. Hence it would be better if you join late.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7992. Also C.W. 3089. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

#### *419. LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 20, 1940*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Yes, all the Puranas are worth reading. They are real history of all time. I am glad you are having more and more peace.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN

PALAMPUR

KANGRA DISTRICT

PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 6465. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10060

#### *420. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*November 20, 1940*

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. There is certainly anger in your letter. There is pain in it, too. You go from one extreme to another. There was a time when I was your all-in-all. How is it possible that I have changed so much, as you think I have? When you were angry with Devdas and did not write to him, I used to plead with you against such anger. Once

<sup>1</sup> Presumably, the reference is to the All-India Women's Conference which was to be held at Bangalore from December 27 under the presidency of the addressee.

you have formed an opinion, you altogether lose the power to see the other side. But what is the use of arguing with you about such matters? Suffice it to say that I am the same as I have ever been to you. You yourself will grant it one day.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7362. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

#### 421. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

*November 21, 1940*

CHI. BAPA,

I have your two letters.

Write to Dr. Subbarayan's wife<sup>1</sup>. She will join [individual civil disobedience]. Consider the changes suggested by me in the rules, and incorporate such of them as you think proper. There is no need to specify Hindu Harijans. Harijans are Hindus. We need an institution for the backward classes. Our purpose will be served if the manager of the institution is an efficient man. It does not seem possible to resume *Harijan* in the near future.

Vinoba has trained a man for leprosy work. He is like a *rishi*. We had Rajabali's money. Out of it we have kept aside Rs. 25,000. This is the first project of this kind undertaken by Indians. Phooke[n] had started one, but it was meant for show. This one is filled with great *tapascharya*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1186

#### 422. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *November 21, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I do not approve of your *roza*<sup>3</sup>. But I shall not interfere from this distance. You will not undertake a fast without my permission. You must be guided by Maulana Saheb as long as he is

<sup>1</sup> Radha Subbarayan

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

<sup>3</sup> Dawn-to-dusk fast during Ramzan month observed by devout Muslims

there. While you are still busy meeting people, there is no occasion for undertaking a fast. The fact that you suffer from asthma indicates that God does not approve of your *rozās*.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 445

#### 423. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 21, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. Also the telegram. I am still considering the matter of *rozās*. As long as there is work to do, one should preserve one's health. But I shall not instruct you from here. Now you are able to speak something and the Muslims listen to you. Hindus will, of course, listen. Hence devote yourself to propaganda work for the present. When all the work is over, we shall think what should be done next. Do not let your health get worse.

Baqui<sup>1</sup> has written that there was some important news about you in the papers. He may have sent the cutting to you also. I sent him a long reply.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 450

#### 424. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 22, 1940

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

Your letter. Don't think of civil disobedience. The first thing is to get well. You must have a radical cure. Shaukat showed me a scheme which bore your name. But your denial is quite enough for me. He showed me also copy of the draft I gave you. Brelvi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Addressee's brother

<sup>2</sup> S. A. Brelvi, Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*

mentioned the fast and so your name was connected with it as you were with him. But why worry about these things?

Love.

BAPU

DR. SYED MAHMUD, M.L.A.

CHHAPRA

BIHAR

From a photostat: G.N. 5081

#### 425. DISCUSSION WITH TAI CHI-TAO<sup>1</sup>

[November 22/23, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

TAI CHI-TAO: We are passing through difficult times. I want to know how we can get through our difficulty successfully. Victory is not enough; future peaceful relations between nations must also be established.

The President, who is of a deeply religious temperament and had evinced a great interest in the constructive activities here and in Sethji's temple at Wardha, had a rosary of beads in his hand.

Gandhiji, after making inquiries about his health begged to introduce him to the spinning-wheel which, he said, was among the latest inventions, and plied the wheel as he answered the President's question.

GANDHIJI: Just as you are engaged in a terrific life-and-death struggle, so are we. Yours is an ancient country and so is ours and although yours is a much bigger country than ours, ours is not by any means a small country and there is much in common between you and us. Speaking personally, I may inform you that I was in touch with the Chinese colony in Johannesburg and gave them legal advice. They were a colony of 1,200 and I came in closest I touch with everyone of them and so the Chinese are not strangers to me by any means. Although you are engaged in a life-and-death struggle and so

<sup>1</sup> The discussion is extracted from a statement by Mahadev Desai who explained that the goodwill mission of Tai Chi-Tao, President of Examination of Yuan of Chinese Government, was in return for Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to China in 1939. The statement said that the visiting President had brought special message for Gandhiji from Chiang Kai-Shek and the Kuomintang. *Vide* also "Letter to Chiang Kai-Shek", 26-11-1940.

<sup>2</sup> Mahadev Desai says that Tai Chi-Tao, his Secretary and others were in Wardha on November 22 and 23 as guests of Jamnalal Bajaj, who had come from Bombay specially for the occasion.



are we, the means we employ for regaining our freedom are different from the means you employ for retaining your freedom. This does not mean that I want to criticize the means you have adopted. The remedy you employ in self-defence is an age-old one. I am employing a remedy which is unknown to the world on the political field. But since you have come all the way from China merely to reciprocate the good wishes that Pandit Jawaharlal carried there, the only service I can render in my humble way is to put forward before you and, through you, the Generalissimo, the new remedy I am applying. I found it in South Africa in 1906, when all my resources were exhausted, in order to combat difficulties which might have meant the death of the Indian community in the Transvaal if we had not found this remedy. And since 1920, we have applied this remedy more or less successfully, perhaps with more success than otherwise, till at last the Congress has become a powerful body, and in a nutshell, it is this, viz., to be prepared to die as bravely as the bravest Chinese soldier, but without trying to kill your opponent or do the slightest harm to him, whether in offence or self-defence. If we succeed here in instilling into the mass mind bravery to die without killing, I think that not only shall we have regained our liberty without violence but we shall have presented to the world a remedy to do away with all wars. If I have succeeded in giving you the kernel of the movement, I would ask you to watch this movement with interest and bless it on behalf of China. More I cannot say until we have regained our liberty with these absolutely peaceful means.

You will see that it is not without a purpose that I have taken up the wheel at the present moment when, ordinarily speaking, it would be discourtesy to a guest to keep spinning when he comes. But I have taken it up both to demonstrate the process and to show you how, externally speaking, I derive all the power of peace from the spinning-wheel. You will have noticed that the spinning-wheel finds a central place in our national flag, and it is the one thing which establishes a living relation and identification with the masses of India.

President Tai Chi-Tao said that he was greatly inspired by the message. He had heard a great deal from newspapers about Gandhiji's peaceful method and all it had accomplished, but he was grateful to hear it from his lips...

TAI CHI-TAO: We had no alternative. We had to resist violent aggression after a long waiting. But now we have a movement to make our country self-sufficient; in our villages, the spinning-wheel has returned. Nearly ninety per cent of our houses have their wheels, not so modern as yours, but old-fashioned. We have been thus

compelled by necessity to revive our national village industry. All the big factories have been destroyed and bombed and some have moved to the interior and so we have to depend more or less on the spinning-wheel which cannot be bombed. Your spinning-wheel gives me new inspiration.

Gandhiji now gave a demonstration on the latest model, the Dhanush *Takli*, and offered both the wheels as presents to President Tai Chi-Tao. But he had already purchased the wheels in the morning. As he rose to take leave, His Excellency said:

I pray that, for the welfare of India and China and for the whole of humanity, you may have a long life, and I pray, on behalf of all members of the Kuomintang Party, for your welfare and for the welfare of your family.

G(Laughing). My family is a family of 350 millions.

T. All mankind.

G. Yes, if I can make good my claim for 350 millions I will advance the other claim. Please carry my good wishes to the Generalissimo, to the Madame, his staff and all who are putting up a brave fight in self-defence and I wish you early peace.

As Gandhiji went out of the hut to bid the President farewell, the latter, having a full view of him standing in broad daylight remarked:

T. Your health is extraordinarily good.

G(Smiling) . Yes, the charkha keeps me healthy and then I do not carry any cares on my head. I have cast them on the broad shoulders of God.

*The Hindu*, 26-11-1940

#### 426. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[Before *November 23, 1940*]<sup>1</sup>

Those who are sickly and those who cherish the hope of a speedy compromise should not go to jail.

*The Hindustan Times*, 24-11-1940

<sup>1</sup> The letter was reported under the date-line "Ahmedabad, November 23".

427. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,  
[Before November 23, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. You are ruining your health. You will not do justice to Prithvi Singh either, if you do not make the needed changes in your diet. Stay here under Dr. Das's supervision or under that of the doctor at Poona. Do anything you like, but resolve to get well. It will do you no good to try anything after your health has completely broken down.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7531. Also C.W. 5007. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

428. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,  
November 23, 1940

BIBI AMTUSSALAAM  
CARE HATIM ALVI SAHEB  
GARDEN ROAD  
KARACHI

RECEIVED TWO LETTERS TELEGRAM. MOVE CAUTIOUSLY.  
NO HURRY ABOUT FASTING.<sup>2</sup> YOUR PRESENCE IS  
HAVING EFFECT. WHILE MAULANA THERE BE GUIDED  
BY HIM. WHY WANT QURESHI AND ZOHRA? HOPE  
KEEPING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 451

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to the addressee's health in this and the letter dated November 23, *vide* "Letter to Tarabehn N. Mashruwala", 23-11-1940

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also letters to the addressee, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 16-11-1940, "Letter to Antussalaam", 21-11-1940 and "Letter to Amtussalaam", 24-11-1940

## 429. LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA

SEVAGRAM,  
November 23, 1940

CHI. TARA<sup>1</sup>,

I vote for Sevagram. I have not accepted defeat. You know my attachment. I have good facilities here to cure you. I will send for you when you are ready. I am ready and all the arrangements made.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7530. Also C.W. 5006. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

## 430. INTERVIEW TO M. L. SHAH<sup>2</sup>

[Before November 24, 1940]<sup>3</sup>

Gandhiji agreed with me that students should have freedom to arrange meetings and take out processions in a peaceful and orderly manner to express their resentment against repressive measures.

Regarding political strikes, such as those on the arrest of national leaders, Gandhiji advised that students should create an atmosphere which may win the sympathies of the educational authorities, who might themselves close the institutions.

Gandhiji felt sorry when he heard about forced war contributions from students, and advised the students to resist all such actions. He appreciated the potentialities of the students, and if he succeeded in getting their support to his constructive programme, he was confident that the students would form the vanguard of the struggle.<sup>4</sup>

*The Hindustan Times, 25-11-1940*

<sup>1</sup> Also called Tari, sister of Sushila Gandhi

<sup>2</sup> The interview appeared as “stated by Mr. M. L. Shah, General Secretary of the All-India Students’ Federation, who recently met Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha and explained to him the attitude of the authorities towards the student movements’.

<sup>3</sup> Reported under the date-line “Lucknow, November 24”

<sup>4</sup> The report concluded with M. L. Shah’s appeal to the students “to co-operate with him to fulfil the assurance which he has given ‘to the noblest and greatest friend of the student community’ by being peaceful in all that they did and said”.

431. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 24, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I was busy with so many things yesterday that I could not write to you.

I have read your thirty-page letter from beginning to end. All letters are preserved. During the telephone talk today I gave answers according to my lights. I said that Qureshi and Zohra might not be sent now. The fast should not be undertaken in a hurry. Everything has to be done in consultation with the Maulana. I shall send Qureshi and Zohra when the need arises. Have you done anything about funds? I shall send money when needed. Write to me how much you want and what for. You have not to interfere in other matters. Your job is to clear the atmosphere and, if bloodshed cannot be stopped, to undertake a fast. Whether the prisoners are released or not is a separate issue. But your plain duty is to observe everything and do my bidding. Your mission is to bring peace to all people there. Close your ears to all political talk.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 452

432. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,  
November 25, 1940

DEAR ANAND,

Your letters are helpful. Continue. How is Jairamdas? How about your ears? How about Vidya?

BAPU

SHRI ANAND T. HINGORANI  
UPPER SIND COLONY  
KARACHI SADAR

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

433. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEVAGRAM,  
November 25, 1940

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter and also saw your name in the list<sup>1</sup>. God will protect you.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10415. Also C.W. 6854. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

434. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

November 25, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

You kept me waiting for a long time. Only today I got your letter. All that I want is that you should take care of your health. Then you may stay anywhere you like. Flood and ebb alternate here. Amtul Salaam is in Sind. She is doing good work there. Pyarelal has gone to Delhi to see his mother. Then he will go on a tour. Annapurna is here. As Bachu<sup>2</sup> is to be operated upon for tonsils in Delhi, Manojna<sup>3</sup> has gone there today.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN  
DAKSHINAMURTI GRAMSHALA  
AMBLA, *via* SONAGADH  
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7134. Also C.W. 4626. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

<sup>1</sup> Of persons for offering individual civil disobedience

<sup>2</sup> Nirmala Desai, step-sister of Mahadev Desai

<sup>3</sup> Wife of Krishnadas Gandhi, Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

435. *LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI*

November 25, 1940

CHI. QURESHI,

I am glad your letter is quite frank. I will not send either you or Gulzar Khan. You cannot go leaving the work there unfinished. I shall explain things to Amtul Salaam.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10767. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

436. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

November 25, 1940

DAUGHTER,

I got your letter. You are in too great a hurry. I shall send both Akbar and Hanif<sup>1</sup>, if they are of any use to you. You have not gone there for doing khadi work. It is good if it appeals to the poor Muslims. But first you should look with your eyes open and find out who the poor are and how they live. You have only one mission: to stop the bloodshed. If you get involved in the political controversies between Hindus and Muslims, rest assured that your mission will fail. You have seen Anand's letters, also those of Jamshedji. Have differences cropped up between you and these people? I shall get nervous if you develop disagreements with such people. What does Hatim say? In any case, try and understand Maulana Saheb's view. He will come here. We are not going to do anything against his wishes.

Pyarelal will now come on Thursday.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 453

<sup>1</sup> A khadi worker of Punjab

437. MESSAGE TO BENGAL CONGRESSMEN<sup>1</sup>

[Before November 26, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

I expect great things from Bengal.<sup>3</sup> My expectations can only be realized if all parties sink their differences and work for the common cause.

*The Hitavada*, 29-11-1940

438. LETTER TO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

November 26, 1940

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I am deeply grateful to you for your affectionate letter received through the goodwill mission<sup>4</sup> you have so thoughtfully sent. Shri Tai Chi-Tao has given me, too, your verbal message. My only regret is that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru will not be able to receive the members of the mission when they reach Allahabad.

I have no doubt that the mission has drawn our countries close together.

May your deliverance take place sooner than expected.

With revered good wishes for you, your good wife and your nation.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10410. Courtesy: Pyarelal

439. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,

November 27, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM

CARE JAI RAMDAS DOULATRAM

HYDERABAD (SIND)

TELEGRAM NOT YET RECEIVED. YOU MUST NOT DO  
THINGS PROHIBITED BY MAULANA. AM CONFERRING

<sup>1</sup> & <sup>2</sup> The message, "brought by Surendra Mohan Ghosh, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, who lately went to Wardha to see Mahatma Gandhi", was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, November 26".

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* footnote 2, "Discussion with Tai Chi-Tao", 22/23-11-1940

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the launching of satyagraha in Bengal.



WITH HIM. AWAIT INSTRUCTIONS. REMAIN SILENT  
QUIET WITHOUT WORRY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 454

*440. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM*

WARDHAGANJ,  
*November 27, 1940*

AMTUSSALAAM  
CARE JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM  
HYDERABAD (SIND)

RECEIVED MAULANA'S MESSAGE PEREMPTORILY ADVISING  
ME RECALL YOU. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES COME IMMEDIATELY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 455

*441. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*November 27, 1940*

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

I would like you to place this before His Excellency and the contents to be telegraphed, if possible, to the Secretary of State for India or to be brought to his notice in such manner as His Excellency may wish.

The Secretary of State is reported by the Press as follows:<sup>1</sup>

The Congress under Mr. Gandhi's leadership has decided to express its dissatisfaction by a campaign of defiance of law by instalments. What they (my colleagues) have demanded is the right to urge Indians not to recruit, not to work in munition factories or to contribute voluntary contributions to the War Committee.

While it is not possible in theory to deny the truth of the statement, Mr. Amery should have known that he was giving his

<sup>1</sup> He was speaking in the House of Commons on November 20.

uninformed audience a view which was not warranted by the following from my Press statement of October 15<sup>1</sup>, 1940:

I know that India has not one mind. There is a part of India that is war-minded and will learn the art of war through helping the British. The Congress has no desire, therefore, to surround ammunition factories or barracks and prevent people from doing what they like.

And add to the above the following slogan which I have standardized, and on the strength of which civil resisters are being imprisoned: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with either men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war by non-violent resistance."

It is wholly wrong to say that we have demanded the right to urge voluntary contributors not to pay voluntary contributions. The truth is that undue pressure and even force is being used on behalf of the British Government to extract money from unwilling parties who in several cases are even too poor to pay.

Then I take the following from the Secretary of State's speech about Pandit Nehru:

Vinoba Bhave was to have been followed by Pandit Nehru who, however, outstripped Mr. Gandhi both in time and I believe in the character of the speeches he made. The speeches were violent and deliberately provocative and were deliberately aimed at hampering the war effort and did so in effect as well as in intention. In any case Pandit Nehru's sentence was a matter not for the executive but for the law. If the sentence is judged by him to be excessive, he has the right to appeal.

I regard this as a cruel libel uttered against a man who has been put behind prison bars. There is nothing in his speeches having the slightest odour of violence. I must deny that Pandit Nehru outstripped me. Indeed the Provincial Government outstripped me. They knew that he had come to me to fix up when, where and how he was to offer civil disobedience. In my letter<sup>2</sup> of October 30, 1940, I had informed His Excellency that the Pandit was the next to offer civil disobedience and that, as soon as the date and place were finally fixed, I would inform him. And yet before he could arrange affairs, his journey was interrupted and he was taken to Gorakhpur for trial. It is worse than a cruel mockery to suggest against the charge of a vindictive sentence that Pandit Nehru could have appealed against the sentence, if he had so chosen. The Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State surely knew that Pandit Nehru would not appeal against the sentence.

<sup>1</sup> The source, however, has "14"; *Vide* "Civil Disobedience"

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "To the Reader"

I write this because I feel grieved that one who has the charge of the affairs of a sub-continent should have dealt with friendly opponents in a manner ill befitting his charge. British statesmen seem to go out of their way to court the doubtful friendship of powers who have no friendly feeling for Britain and to lose no opportunity of estranging those who would gladly befriend them.

I have written all this in sorrow, not in anger, certainly not for publication.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7857. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

#### 442. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,  
November 27, 1940

CHI. LILI,

There is no need to go right up to the Dean for permission to have a mosquito-net. You should quietly submit to the rules unless violation of a moral principle is involved.

You did well in reporting the conversation with the Dean. This shows that it is your duty to pass all your examinations diligently.

Forget Sevagram and get engrossed in your studies. Think about the fast only when it starts. Now your path is straight and that itself is your guideline. You must not look this way or that.

You sign your letters as 'obediently'. You have already got my orders.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9598. Also C.W. 6570. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

<sup>1</sup> The addressee's reply dated November 30, read: "His excellency asks me to acknowledge with many thanks your letter of 27th November, and to say that he is at once communicating it to the Secretary of State."

443. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD<sup>1</sup>

[After November 27, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

BIHAR ACCOUNTS ARE DISTURBING. WHY DOES A  
PROVINCE THAT WAS THE BEST CAUSE ANXIETY?  
THERE SHOULD BE NO DEMONSTRATION. AUTHORITIES  
SHOULD BE INFORMED AND NOT THE PUBLIC OF  
IMPENDING RESISTANCE.

*The Hindu*, 4-12-1940

444. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,  
November 28, 1940

AMTUSSALAAM  
CARE JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM  
HYDERABAD (SIND)

RECEIVED NOW LONG TELEGRAM. IMPOSSIBLE MY  
GOING. RETURN IMMEDIATELY SO AS BE HERE WHEN  
MAULANA COMES. AM WELL NOW.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 456

<sup>1</sup> The telegram was quoted by the addressee, in the course of a statement, along with his reply which read: "Babu Sri Krishna Sinha's resistance was marred by an accident on the 27th." In his *Autobiography*, the addressee recalls: "In Bihar, as I had been advised against joining the movement because of my ill-health, the onus of inaugurating the satyagraha fell on Dr. Sri Krishna Sinha. It was decided that, on the first day, Dr. Sinha would offer satyagraha at the Bankipore maidan. . . when Dr. Sinha came to the maidan . . . there . . . was a noisy demonstration which did not cease till he had been arrested and taken to jail."

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

#### 445. LETTER TO ABDUL WADUD SARHADI<sup>1</sup>

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 28, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Opinions differ in your province itself. Everyone is left to his own free choice whether to offer civil disobedience or not. But if he does, he has to conform to conditions laid down, one of which is belief in Hindu-Muslim unity. In the circumstances no one should have anything to say against civil disobedience.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

#### 446. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,  
November 29, 1940

My attention has been drawn to some paragraphs appearing in the Press, purporting to give my opinion about the questions agitating the students. I have not read all that has appeared in the Press, if only because I want to conserve my energy, on which of late I have been obliged to put an unduly heavy strain.

My opinion is firm.<sup>2</sup> No provocation should be allowed to justify political strikes by students unless they have made up their mind once for all to abandon their college or school studies. Unlike as in free countries, our educational institutions are controlled by the rulers from whom the nation is struggling to free itself. Self-suppression is, therefore, the price the students must pay for receiving the education evolved and controlled by the rulers. They cannot have the cake and eat it, too. If they want the education which the schools and colleges impart, and evidently they do, they have to conform to

<sup>1</sup> The addressee, President, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Sarhad, in his letter dated November 23 to Gandhiji, had disapproved of the Civil Disobedience Movement and suggested unity between Congress and Muslim League as a worthy effort.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also "Message to Students", 14-11-1940

the rules and regulations laid down for these institutions. Therefore, unless the heads of the institutions consent, there should be no political strikes.

But I have suggested a way out. Students have ample time, after school and college hours, of which they are their own masters. They can hold meetings, express their sympathy with the national cause in an orderly manner and they can have processions, too, if they like. Those who wish to take part in civil disobedience and accept my leadership can do so after suspending their studies for the time being, by conforming to the conditions laid down for offering individual civil disobedience and after receiving my permission.

Letters being received by me from individual students show that they have little faith in my leadership, for they have no faith in the constructive programme, of which the centre and the most visible part is khadi. They do not believe in spinning and if my correspondents are to be accepted as reliable witnesses, their belief in non-violence is also a doubtful quantity. Students can play an effective part in the national struggle, if they will whole-heartedly come under the discipline. But if they will act on their own and fritter away their energy in making ineffective demonstrations, they will hinder the national cause.

I am glad to be able to testify that Congressmen are showing a measure of discipline, which is an agreeable surprise to me for I was unprepared for it. Let it not be said of the student world that, at the eleventh hour, they were found wanting. Let them remember that I am asking for greater steadfastness, greater courage and greater self-sacrifice than can be denoted by undisciplined and thoughtless demonstrations.

The students should also realize that the number of civil resisters will always be confined to a few, compared with the 350 million forming the nation. There is no limit to the number who should take part in working the constructive programme. I regard this as the most useful and effective part of the movement for independence, without which civil resistance will cease to be civil and, therefore, be utterly valueless.

*The Hindu*, 30-11-1940

#### 447. LETTER TO VISHVAMBHAR NATH BHARGAVA

SEVAGRAM,  
November 29, 1940

BHAI VISHVAMBHAR NATHJI<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter<sup>2</sup>. Individual advice can be only subject to the Congress Committee's. If I unknowingly give an opposite advice it should not be followed.

Ramnarayan had asked me about Durgaprasad. I had told him that he could prefer an appeal. And if the lawyers also approve, an appeal should be preferred. Durgaprasad's case dates from before the war. But even if it arose after the war but was not concerned with the war, an appeal would lie. And on occasion it may be one's duty to file such an appeal.

I found nothing improper in what Ramnarayan told me about khadi, etc. He is very reserved with me. Except that he asked my opinion about Durgaprasad, he said nothing about Ajmer. Moreover I get very little time for talking.

But you have done well to convey your reactions to me.

The date indicated to me is all right. I think none of your questions remains unanswered now.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

#### 448. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 30, 1940

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your letter. If the persons whose names have been

<sup>1</sup> Secretary, Ajmer Provincial Congress Committee

<sup>2</sup> In which the addressee said that there was a talk in Ajmer that Gandhiji had permitted Durgaprasad to file an appeal which was contrary to what Gandhiji had told him. He also expressed a doubt whether, for those connected directly or indirectly with Gandhiji, Congress opinion carried more weight while they were in Congress or was it necessary to take orders from Gandhiji for matters other than satyagraha.

submitted are willing to fulfil the conditions, they may offer civil disobedience.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Raghunandanji<sup>1</sup> that he may well stay out for a few days.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2477

#### 449. LETTER TO SATYAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
November 30, 1940

CHI. SATYAVATI,

You can go whenever you wish.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2478

#### 450. LETTER TO PATWARDHAN

November 30, 1940

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I have your letter. I got the earlier one also. I could not reply promptly as I was busy with other things. I am still very weak. I have not been able to ask Dada Dharmadhikari. I shall do so now. Clarification is necessary because Sahasrabuddhe's doubts should be cleared. The money will be put to good use only when the school runs smoothly and the money is easily available. I will not be useful as a *Panch* but if I can convince you and Sahasrabuddhe, let me know the correct position on 1st December. When I can deal with the whole thing and if I feel the need of sending for all of you, I shall do so.

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

<sup>1</sup> Raghunandan Saran, President, Delhi Provincial Satyagraha Committee



#### 451. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO MUKUNDLAL SIRCAR<sup>1</sup>

[Before December 2, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

The issue on which individual civil disobedience has been started is undoubtedly that of free speech and free pen. But at the end of every issue is independent India. The movement was limited, in its original conception, to two or three persons, and then extended to members selected by me belonging to the Working Committee, the A.I.C.C. and the Central and Provincial Legislatures. And, according to the occasion and the reaction on me after each move, it is capable of infinite expansion. I have called for classified lists of members of Provincial Congress Committee Executives and similarly of District Congress Committees, Firka or Taluk Congress Committees, and lastly of village Congress Committees. But whatever the expansion may be, it will never be a mass movement. It will always remain, so far as I can see, individual disobedience and will be confined to those who believe in and fulfil my conditions.

*The Hindu*, 5-12-1940

#### 452. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD MAXWELL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 2, 1940

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

Mahadev Desai gave me your kind message which he has embodied in the full notes he prepared for me of his doings in Delhi. The portion of the notes containing the message reads as follows:

Well, well, I should have thought that the correct position for a man like Mr. Gandhi to take would have been to address a manifesto to the people of India stating his own position as he did in his appeal<sup>3</sup> to every Briton and then be quiet. Give this message from me to Mr. Gandhi.

I have been fagged out and for some days cutting down the daily work to the minimum. Hence the delay in reply. Even so, I enter

<sup>1</sup> The addressee, Acting General Secretary of All-India Forward Bloc, had, in a letter, asked Gandhiji about "Individual Satyagraha Movement and whether it would lead to mass civil disobedience". The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, December 2".

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "To Every Briton"

into a discussion of your message for the sake of elucidating truth. I know how busy you are and care-worn. But the only way satyagraha works is by a continuous discovery of truth and action based on it. In the progress towards full discovery the satyagrahi has to show that he is ever ready and even eager to learn and appreciate the opponent's side. It is in that spirit that I approach your message.

You would be wholly right in the advice you have sent me if I was a preacher. But I have never adopted that role. I am essentially a man of action and a reformer carrying on an experiment never before tried in the political field. Hence at the risk of making mistakes even big I must continue to tread the chosen path so long as I have no sense of mistake or distrust of my action. My desire is to cause the least embarrassment to the Government consistently with the prosecution of my mission. If it is successful, it cannot fail to benefit the British side by side with India and ultimately the world. If it fails, the Government cannot be hurt. I cannot carry the argument any further. Perhaps what I have said is no argument but a bare recital of the motive behind my action and its interpretation in the light of the motive. The rest must be left to time.

Mahadev Desai told me about your dear ones being in the thick of the fight. I am conscious of the fact that what applies to you applies to almost all the known British families. How I wish I could have stood side by side with them. But duty has enjoined upon me a seemingly opposite course. I take comfort in the fact that though seeming to be in the opposite camp, I work for the same end as is declared by the British Government, only with the certain conviction that their method can never defeat Hitlerism and mine alone can, if any at all.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7858. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledging this letter on December 7, the addressee said: "I am glad to know that you are only seemingly in the opposite camp and that your end is the same as ours. Although I regret that there should be differences about the method of attaining it, I see that I must leave you to work things out in your own way."

### 453. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 2, 1940

CHI. MIRA,

Your nice, long letter<sup>1</sup> has just arrived. I understand all you write. May He be your sole guide. I am not unwell. I need rest which I am taking. Yes, I have been pestered with mice. I can't sleep if they disturb me. Their nibbling may be even poisonous. Have you a bedstead? Your net should have a strong flat roof. You must have undisturbed nights. I purposely refrain from giving you any other news or messages. I want to leave your meditation undisturbed. If you speak to Lalji<sup>2</sup>, tell him I have him in mind.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6466. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10061

### 454. MESSAGE TO AHMEDABAD MILL-HANDS<sup>3</sup>

[Before December 4, 1940]<sup>4</sup>

Ever since I came in contact with you, I have tried to impress upon you that your liberation lies in your own hands. The value of labour is far greater than its price in money. You can enhance or reduce your price as you desire. But if you are satisfied with its cash value, you put your own limitation upon your worth.

*The Hindu*, 5-12-1940

<sup>1</sup> Mirabehn explains: "I had explained to Bapu how several little mice had started coming into the hut from the forest, specially at night. They found their way into my bed, sometimes nibbling my feet, sometimes running up and down my side and sometimes getting mixed up in my hair. My chief anxiety was not to squash them. And what with this anxiety and the fidgeting of the mice, sleep became a difficult problem, until I hit on the device of using a mosquito net. This proved wholly successful."

<sup>2</sup> Kanaiyalal Butail

<sup>3</sup> According to the source, the message was sent for "the Ahmedabad Labour Day celebrations held on December 4, in connection with the founding of the Textile Labour Association in 1917". All local mills remained closed and meetings were held in labour areas to explain the significance of the Day.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

455. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 4, 1940*

CHI. MIRA,

This is being written immediately after reading your letter. I am referring the water difficulty to three doctors who happen to be here. One of them is Sushila. Our contract is that you will stay in the mountains provided you keep your health. Sound body is a condition of every effort material, moral or spiritual. It is good you have left off bread. The slivers went with the parcel. You should inquire about it. I hope you have not sent back the cover containing parcel receipt.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Put alum six gr. to a gallon of water. Let the water stand overnight. In the morning take out the water. Add half a teaspoonful of lime to a gallon of this water and boil and use. But you should get distilled water in Palampur. If you can, use that only.

From the original: C.W. 6467. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10062

456. *LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI*

*December 4, 1940*

CHI. QURESHI,

I have your letter. You should not be upset or unhappy over Amtul Salaam's anger, nor be happy about her happiness. She will be here tomorrow afternoon. What about Amina's piles?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10768. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

## 457. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 4, 1940

CHI. PRABHUDAS

I received your letter. You are unnecessarily crying your heart out. The success or otherwise of one's life is measured not by the result but by the motive. The world will always see the result. To God, result is nothing because He himself is its master. It is sufficient that you have tried and are still trying. I am not writing separately to Kashi. That Amba had a safe delivery is a welcome news. Indira's progress appears to be good. I will not write separately to them either. Manojna's Bachu also was operated upon at the same time. The operation was wholly successful. I had a letter saying that he keeps quite cheerful. Take care of your health. You need not be in a hurry to court imprisonment.<sup>1</sup> There is no special merit in it, though I do not rule out the idea altogether. Explain to me further why you wish to court imprisonment. If Kashi keeps good health, she may certainly go. If you wish that she does so from there, let it be so.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI  
GANDHI SEVA SADAN  
ASAFPUR  
DISTT. BADAUN  
U.P.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33017

## 458. LETTER TO S. C. CHATTERJEE<sup>2</sup>

SEVAGRAM,  
December 5, 1940

DEAR SIR,

The contents of the enclosed speak for themselves. I send you a copy in order that you might correct the bare statement of facts

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the Individual Civil Disobedience Movement which Gandhiji had launched in October 1940.

<sup>2</sup> The addressee was the Principal, Christ Church College, Kanpur.

regarding your circular referred to in the letter. You will now understand why I have prevented publication of my letter until I have heard from you. I am anxious not to be instrumental in doing an unconscious injustice to you.<sup>1</sup>

From a photostat: C.W. 10504. Courtesy: India Office Library

#### 459. TELEGRAM TO BARADA PRASANNA PAIN<sup>2</sup>

[On or before *December 6, 1940*]<sup>3</sup>

REGRET INABILITY EVEN UNWILLINGNESS TO INTERFERE.  
NOTWITHSTANDING MY REGARD AND FRIENDSHIP FOR  
THE BROTHERS FEEL BAN CANNOT BE LIFTED WITH-  
OUT THEIR APOLOGIZING FOR INDISCIPLINE.

*The Hindu*, 7-12-1940

#### 460. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,  
*December 6, 1940*

I have just read Sardar Sampuran Singh's astounding statement before the Court.<sup>3</sup> I do not know who passed his name. In my instructions, I had explicitly prohibited the inclusion of names such as his. But I compliment Sardar Sampuran Singh on his courage in telling the truth at the cost of his political reputation. Let his example be a warning to others that I attach no value to empty and meaningless discipline in whose name Sardar Sampuran Singh offered civil disobedience.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 9-12-1940

<sup>2</sup> The addressee, "a prominent member of the Bengal Congress Parliamentary Party", had, in a telegram, requested Gandhiji "to direct the immediate withdrawal of the Congress High Command's ban on Sarat Chandra Bose and Subhas Chandra Bose in order to put an end to the wrangle in Bengal Congress politics". The telegram was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, December 6".

<sup>3</sup> Sampuran Singh, Leader of the Congress Party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, was expelled from the Party for his conduct in the court. According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940*, "Speech at Public Meeting", Bombay", 26-9-1896, Abul Kalam Azad in his letter to Sampuran Singh said: "There is nothing in the explanation you have sent me. Your replies in the court clearly demonstrate that you do not agree with the decision of the Congress about war. In spite of this you offered yourself as a satyagrahi and made both yourself and the Party of which you had the honour of being a leader, ludicrous." *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 20-12-1940.

I have also read a report of the boisterous demonstration students are alleged to have made over the arrest of Sardar Sampuran Singh in whom they saw a hero. The students should know that they have done a great disservice to the national cause. Let this unruly demonstration, assuming the correctness of the report, be a warning to Congressmen that they are not to court demonstrations.

There has been about this unfortunate case of Sardar Sampuran Singh some bungling on the part of those who were in charge of the Congress organizations. They have departed from the strict instruction that civil disobedience should be offered from villages. This is no movement to overawe or to deliberately embarrass the Government, whatever may be said to the contrary. It is a movement to express the stern determination of the Congress to pay the highest price required in the shape of self-sacrifice and suffering for vindicating national honour.

*The Hindu*, 7-12-1940

#### 461. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,  
December 7, 1940

I have just been made aware of the movement to withdraw from the match<sup>1</sup>, I understand, as a mark of grief over the arrests and imprisonment of satyagrahis, more especially recent arrests of leaders. I must confess ignorance of these matches and the etiquette governing them. My opinion must, therefore, be taken as of a layman knowing nothing of such sports and special rules governing them. But I must confess my sympathies wholly with those who would like to see these matches stopped. I express this opinion not merely as a satyagrahi desirous of getting public support in some way or other for the movement. I must say at once that the present movement is wholly independent of such demonstrations or adventitious support. But I would discountenance such amusements at a time when the thinking world should be mourning over the war that is threatening the stable life of Europe and its civilization and which bids fare to overwhelm Asia.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the pentangular cricket match to be played in Bombay on December 12; *vide* also "Telegram to Bhalerao", 12-10-1940

I would like the public of Bombay to revise their sporting code and erase from it communal matches. I can understand matches between colleges and institutions but I never understood reasons for having Hindu, Parsi, Muslim and other communal elevens. Can you not have some field of life which cannot be touched by the communal spirit? I should like, therefore, those who have anything to do with this movement to stop the match, broaden the issue and take the opportunity of considering it from the highest standpoint and decide once for all upon banishing communal taints from sporting world and also deciding upon banishing these sports from our life whilst blood-bath is going on.

*The Hitavada*, 8-12-1940

#### 462. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*December 8, 1940*

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

Certainly those who are engaged in public work are free. They need not give their names, and having given them can withdraw them without any slur being cast upon them. Therefore Ramakant can be absolved for the asking.

Many thanks for the convocation address<sup>2</sup>. I shall make it a point of going through it at the earliest opportunity.<sup>3</sup>

I think Mr. Jinnah will accept nothing unless Pakistan is granted. He has said this in clear terms.

Why do you 'hate the whole idea of satyagraha by the representatives of the people'?

Yours *sincerely*,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. 6, between pages 8 and 9

<sup>1</sup> Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University

<sup>2</sup> Delivered at the University of Patna on November 29

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji gave his view in letter dated December 28, to the addressee.



463. *LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 8, 1940*

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I had your long letter. You will not overstrain yourself. Do conserve your energy.

Amtul Salaam<sup>1</sup> has told me your love towards her and how you all rained torrents on her.

Your letter on the situation I understand. She is now under treatment. I won't send her back till she is quite fit. But neither she nor I will be happy till Sind is free from senseless murders. Her heart is in Sind.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9266. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

464. *LETTER TO S. C. MUKHERJEE*

*December 8, 1940*

With regard to the renewal of the deposit in the Bank of Nagpur Ltd. on behalf of the Jallianwala Bagh Trust Fund<sup>2</sup>, I am of opinion that the deposit should be renewed for a period of three years from the date of renewal, bearing interest at the rate of 4 per cent per annum provided that in the event of the Trust requiring the funds or part thereof at an earlier period, the withdrawal should be subject to reduction of interest at the rate for the shorter period and provided further that in the event of the Bank rate suffering increase the Trust should have the benefit of such increase.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

M. K. GANDHI

<sup>1</sup> She was called back from Sind; *vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 27-11-1940 and "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 28-11-1940

<sup>2</sup> Of which Gandhiji was President, and the addressee Secretary

465. LETTER TO DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, WARDHA<sup>1</sup>

[December 9, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

DEAR SIR,

Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, my co-worker for past twenty-five years and co-secretary with Shri Mahadev Desai, will offer civil disobedience tomorrow at 9 a.m. from the railway gate leading to Wardha from Sevagram. He will walk on in the direction of Ahjee and continue until arrested or except for rest and food. On the way he will recite the following slogan<sup>3</sup> in Hindustani or Marathi as occasion demands.

In order to show that this movement is wholly non-violent and independent of boisterous demonstrations and in order to warn the public against a repetition of the recent unfortunate exhibition of indiscipline in Patna and Lahore, I am avoiding the usual notice to the public of the proposed civil disobedience tomorrow. I have only informed Sheth Jamnalal and Shri Gopalrao, the President of the Provincial Congress Committee, with strict instructions not to advertise the function in any way.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

466. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 9, 1940

MY DEAR BRELVI,

Your fairly full letter is very helpful to me in understanding the

<sup>1</sup>*The Hindu*, 14-12-1940, published the letter as given in Mahadev Desai's statement to the Press, which began as follows: "Considerable interest attaches to Mr. Pyarelal's satyagraha in the villages of Wardha District. Mahatma Gandhi had taken extra precautions to preserve non-violence of the movement in letter and spirit, as would appear from his letter to the Deputy Commissioner".

<sup>2</sup> From the reference to Pyarelal's satyagraha which was on December 10; *vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 9-12-1940, also "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 10-12-1940

<sup>3</sup> Standardized by Gandhiji (*vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 27-11-1940) for the civil resisters, it read: "It is wrong to help the British war effort with either men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war by non-violent resistance".

situation.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

SYED ABDULLAH BRELVI SAHEB  
ZAMIAH MANZIL  
CHURCHGATE RECLAMATION  
BOMBAY

From the original: S. A. Brelvi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

*467. LETTER TO UMA DEVI*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 9, 1940*

MY DEAR UMA,

I like your letter. Believe me you are wholly wrong. Can evil be repelled by greater evil? When you have cooled down, you will own that you were carried away by your excess of passion which had blurred your vision. But go on. You are too good not to see the grave error into which you have been betrayed.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8058 and 1204. Also C.W. 5099. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

*468. LETTER TO S. C. CHATTERJEE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 9, 1940*

DEAR PRINCIPAL CHATTERJEE,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I congratulate you on your securing the undertaking from 243 out of 246 students.<sup>1</sup> For me it is a

<sup>1</sup> In his letter dated December 7 to Gandhiji, the addressee had explained that in August he had warned all students of his college that if they organized any strike by coercive measures, "they would be required to leave the college or promise never to join such a strike".

painful proof of the unworthiness of the students to understand the value either of self-restraint or contents of self-respect.

No amount of violence on the part of students can justify the narrow communalism you have been betrayed into showing.<sup>1</sup> I am sorry you think you belong to a minority community. Will you believe me that if Rudra and Andrews were alive they would utterly repudiate your narrow outlook?<sup>2</sup> I wish you could realize the gravity of the injury you have done to the nation of which you are a member, and to the profession in which you have mounted to a high rank, even to the religion which bears the sacred name of the Christ anointed and crucified. I wish you could see that by your action you have crucified Him afresh.

This letter is too sacred for publication. It is for you alone and in the name of the two sons of mankind whom you have mentioned.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

#### 469. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*December 9, 1940*

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

Yes, Dharam Yash Dev<sup>3</sup> was with me for three days. He went this morning to see his wife. He has promised to return. I hope to fix him

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had written: "As regards my letter to the Muslim Students' Federation, I would beg of you to bear in mind that it was written in reply to a letter I had received from them. . . . I would be guilty of irreverence, if I tried to enter into an argument with you. I shall only say that, unless I have failed to understand and appreciate your ideals, character and outlook, I am sure that if you had been Principal of this college, you would not have acted otherwise than I have." *Vide* also "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 11-12-1940

<sup>2</sup> In his letter, the addressee had introduced himself as "an old pupil of Principal S. K. Rudra and C. F. Andrews". Sushil Kumar Rudra of St. Stephen's College, Delhi, died in Delhi on June 29, 1925. C. F. Andrews died in Calcutta on April 4, 1940.

<sup>3</sup> Secretary in charge of overseas Indian branch in the A.I.C.C. office. The addressee, in his letter dated December 6, had strongly recommended him for offering individual civil disobedience.

up in due course.

Hope you are keeping well.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*470. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*December 9, 1940*

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Thank you for your long letter which I shared with Bapu. We both had a few minutes' relaxation because of it. Such relaxation is a welcome thing when one is hard pressed for time as one is these days.

Bapu said, he was glad to know that you had been able to write such a long letter in your own hand; it shows your health must be better. I said, the handwriting was not yours and the letter was dictated. We had a dispute! You may enlighten me as to which is right!

Kindest regards and hoping your health will gradually improve,

*Yours sincerely,*

AMRIT KAUR

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 5113

471. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

December 9, 1940

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. When I don't write anything, you may take it that my health is all right. Do not believe newspaper reports. Yes, I do feel exhausted and so I am taking a little rest. Amtul Salaam is here. She will go to Sind again. Manu<sup>1</sup> has arrived. There are many others. The Ashram is full. Pyarelal will court imprisonment tomorrow.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7135. Also C.W. 4627. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

472. LETTER SULTANA QURESHI

December 9, 1940

CHI. SULTANA,

Improve your handwriting. What is wrong with your health? Get well soon. When it is your turn to go to the jail, do so. At present card, spin and learn all the processes of cotton. Serve the poor and be more simple. Do you recite the Koran? Do you write in Urdu?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Amtul Salaambehn is here.

DAUGHTER SULTANA QURESHI

SHRI VITTHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA

NADIAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10762. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

<sup>1</sup> Manubehn S. Mashruwala; also called Manudi

### 473. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 9, 1940

DAUGHTER,

The more I think of your letter the more highly I think of you. And I feel happy. You should do your work on your own responsibility. It is true that you came over here on your mission; you went to Sind and will go there again in pursuit of your own mission. You will certainly get my counsel; but whatever you do should be your own responsibility. You will, of course, consult Jairamdas and others whom you wish to. You can go whenever you like. It was good that I sent for you here. For the present be guided by Dr. Das. Do not call on anyone here. Give up the temptation of rendering even the least little service to me. If you cannot desist, you may well do it. But the less you serve me, the less friction there will be. You will be with Madam Wadia<sup>1</sup> as long as she is here. Seek her advice. That will keep you busy for quite some time.

Now about your work in Sind. You have to give up all interest in the [problems of] prisoners and [dispute about] Manzilgah.<sup>2</sup> You may listen to everyone; but this is a matter for the courts to decide. You have to explain to the Muslims of Sind that in political matters and the like, justice cannot be secured through murder, force or untruth. Your going to Sind and even sacrificing your life should be for stopping the bloodshed, whether or no the Muslims get justice or injustice. That was my object in sending you, and remains so even now.

Despite these views of mine, I do not wish to explain things to you or advise you elaborately. I shall not be in a position to advise you in political matters since I shall have to listen to and abide by the words of Maulana. In respect of bloodshed, it is not necessary to consult him. I do think that you should not do anything against the wishes of Maulana. It is your duty to meet Muslim Leaguers, to listen to them and to love them. I believe that there can be no Hindu-Muslim unity without them.

May God clear the path for you. He alone is the Compassionate

<sup>1</sup> Sophia Wadia

<sup>2</sup> On October 1, 1939, Muslims at Sukkur launched satyagraha with a view to securing possession of Manzilgah. To arrest the communal riots which had broken out, Sind Government had to open fire on November 20; *vide* "Sind Riots" Also footnote to "Letter to Abdul Qaiyum", 3-3-1941.

One and you and I are all His slaves; everything else is unreal.

*Millions of blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 459

#### 474. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

*December 9, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter is clean. Yoga consists in doing your work skilfully. But skill must include *bhakti*. The devotee chants the name of Rama while eating and while sleeping. You should daily come and see the figures of the three monkeys, which I keep by my side. Where have you the time to see other things? Forget whatever you have seen [before].

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4364

#### 475. DISCUSSION WITH T. R. DEOGIRIKAR<sup>1</sup>

[Before *December 10, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

Mahatmaji was asked whether after the commencement of his fast the satyagraha would stop. He became at once serious and said, why should satyagraha stop if he started his fast; there was no connection between the two. Satyagraha would and must go on in spite of the fast. I showed him the list. He asked me whether I have got full information of those whose names I had suggested. I said, "Yes, I have brought that."

GANDHIJI: Do you know the ages of those satyagrahis?

DEOGIRIKAR: Sorry, I have not [noted] that; but all of them are above eighteen.

G. That is not sufficient. Do you know how many persons are dependent on each of the satyagrahis? Take for instance Mr. Mahajan.

<sup>1</sup> President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee

<sup>2</sup> The discussion appears to have taken place after the commencement of the satyagraha on October 17, 1940. However, the date-line is inferred from the reference to "sending Pyarelal to Jail", which happened on December 10; *vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 9-12-1940 and "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite"



How many persons are dependent on him?

I could not reply. He said:

Some persons come to me and say that they have thirteen persons to support. Wherefrom can I or the Congress Committee give them money? They must not depend on the Congress Committees for the support of their families.

D. In the pledges they have agreed that they would not ask for help. Is it not sufficient?

G. Yes, I want to know under what pressing conditions they are offering satyagraha. Do you know in the military for instance John's details are given in full. The commander must know every detail about the persons whom he asks to fight. When I went to Round Table Conference, the Government had full information about us. I want to prepare a Who's who. I want to publish a book giving details about the satyagrahis. I want to show to the Britishers, nay, to the whole world, what the calibre of our satyagrahis is. Do you know Mr. Young of *The Pioneer*? When he came here, he was a pauper, a beggar. He got a job in *The Pioneer*. He became Editor of the paper, but as soon as war commenced, he was taken on Rs. 5,000 by the Government. He took all the Englishmen working in that paper with him, and gave them high posts, and high salaries. They are exploiting India as much as they can even now. This is the sacrifice of the English people at the time of the war. I want to show by contrast that whereas the Englishmen are fattening themselves on India's money, the sons of India having big families to support are courting jail for their country. I am going to lay before the world that the satyagrahis who had thirteen men to support made supreme sacrifices for the country. Would it not be glorious?

"Yes", I said. I told him I would supply him all the details as soon as I go to Poona.

G. Yes, do that. The Andhra people have given me full details. You must give me details about your province. You know this is not a mass satyagraha. I do not want a large number of people going to jail. I want the choicest and the best men to offer satyagraha, they must not only be the representatives but must be men of high standard. I want to have such men. They may be few, but must be the best. I am sending Pyarelal to jail. Do you know what hardships I would be put to? He is my hand, my foot, nay, my brain. Without him I cannot work. But I am sending him on the 15th. I want to send Mahadev also,

but I would be crippled if I send him now. But his turn is to come soon. In making selection keep this point in view.

D. Mahatmaji, what should be the form of the notice to be given to the Magistrates?

G. Why, don't you know it?

D. Yes, I know, we were saying that we were selected by Mahatmaji.

G. Yes, that should be the form. You must write in the notice that you are selected by me for offering satyagraha; there should be one form in the whole country. We must have a uniform notice. In the Civil Procedure Code, the Government has one settled form of summons. Go to any distant part of the country and you will have the same language of the summons. We must have one uniform language in satyagraha, be particular about it.

D. Some persons whom we don't select will also be giving notices to the District Magistrate and will be going to jail. How can we prevent it?

G. That will be a calamity. They should not do that. They should not embarrass us.

D. Mahatmaji, may I suggest one way to distinguish between the genuine satyagrahis and non-genuine satyagrahis?

G. Yes, yes.

D. How do you like the idea of submitting the whole list approved by you to the District Magistrate of the Government?

G. That is splendid, you do it. The Government must know who are our men and who are coming in our way to foil our attempt.

D. What about the Provincial and District Congress Committees? What work should they do and where are the men to do that?

G. What normal activities can you do? You won't get good men to carry on the work. Let the whole Constitution be suspended. Only one man should be at the head of the organization.

D. You have given, I am told, option to the Provinces to determine their policy with regard to the Local Bodies. We have asked the Local Body members to resign.

G. No, no, you must not ask them to resign. Why should they resign? You did not take them on the Congress ticket on the condition that they should either go to jail or should resign, if the political situation develops in the way in which it has done now. Manu Subhedar has resigned. He wrote to me today that he was not taken on Congress ticket on the condition of his going to jail. He says that he is

not afraid of going to jail. He is right. I have just written to him not to resign. Let the seats remain vacant if the members go to jail, the Local Bodies' work must go on. Undesirable persons would capture the seats if you resign.

D. Should the communists be included in the list?

G. No.

D. Should we open volunteer camps?

G. No.

D. What about meetings?

G. No meetings should be held for satyagraha, that is creating violent atmosphere. Look at the Ghatkopar incident. I don't want to give the slightest opportunity for violence. Only slogans should be pronounced. Notice to the District Magistrate is sufficient. People should not be informed of your satyagraha. Maybe the three slogans, viz., (i) not to give money (ii) not to give men for army (iii) to oppose war measures by non-violent means—this should be on everybody's mouth just as Ramanama has become universal. Does it require notification to the people?

Every man, child and woman should repeat that. Let the whole atmosphere be surcharged with this *mantra*. You can have meetings no doubt but they should not be for the purpose of satyagraha.

I told him that persons arrested under Section 129 would be served with restraint orders after they are kept in jail for two months. "Should they break the orders immediately?"

G. Yes, if their names are approved by me, they must disobey the orders.

D. What about those who come out after their term of sentence is over?

I have selected them and I want them to go to jail again and again. They require no further permission from me to offer satyagraha. This is the last fight, we must sacrifice all for it. You don't offer satyagraha soon.

D. How will it be possible? I am doing this work and any day I am likely to be arrested.

G. Yes, yes, I am sitting on the mouth of death, anything may happen to you and to me. But instruct your successor to mind my order. The second list must not begin before January.

Gandhiji appeared full of hopes and sure of success. I took his leave and departed.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40.-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

476. TELEGRAM TO MYSORE CONGRESSMEN<sup>1</sup>

[On or before *December 10, 1940*]

DELIGHTED OVER THE SIGNAL SUCCESS. YOU MUST NOW BUILD UP CONSTRUCTIVELY.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-12-1940

477. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

WARDHAGANJ,  
*December 10, 1940*

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON  
SAMMELAN  
ALLAHABAD

HEAR YOU CONSIDER THAT DISCIPLINE DEMANDS YOUR  
ABANDONING PRESENT DUTY AND GOING. BUT DISCI-  
PLINE DEMANDS FULFILMENT OF DUTY UNDERTAKEN  
AND THEN GOING. THEREFORE UNLESS YOUR OWN  
CONSCIENCE DEMANDS OTHERWISE MY FIRM OPINION  
IS YOU SHOULD ATTEND POONA SAMMELAN<sup>2</sup> AND  
THEN GO.

GANDHI

From the original: Gandhi-Tandon Correspondence No. XIV/51. Courtesy:  
National Archives of India

478. TELEGRAM TO CHAMANLAL<sup>3</sup>

SEVAGRAM,  
*December 10, 1940*

DEWAN CHAMANLAL  
LAHORE

HAVE NEVER KNOWN YOU BELIEVE IN KHADI OR

<sup>1</sup> The telegram was sent by Mahadev Desai on the success of Mysore Congressmen in securing all the seats in Mysore Municipal elections. The message was reported under the date-line "Bombay, December 10".

<sup>2</sup> Annual session of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

<sup>3</sup> Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly

NON-VIOLENT      TECHNIQUE.      DO      YOU      SPIN      AND      WEAR  
KHADI      HABITUALLY?      PLEASE      ENLIGHTEN      ME      BEFORE  
I CAN SEND YOU PERMISSION AND BLESSINGS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*479. LETTER TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*December 10, 1940*

DEAR MR. LAITHWAITE,

The time has arrived for informing His Excellency of the development that is going on within and the outward expression it is to find.

In every step I am taking I bear in mind the difficulties through which the brave people of the British Isles are passing. Hence I am moving slowly and with the greatest deliberation. It is my deep conviction that in all I am doing I am serving the British, in spite of themselves, equally, with my own people. This I can do only if I keep the movement completely non-violent or as much as is possible for a popular movement to be. I know that notwithstanding great care, I am sometimes deceived. But I know too that in the aggregate the balance is in favour of honesty. To ensure this and to set the tone, I began with my best representative who cannot be called a politician in the accepted sense. I refer to Shri Vinoba Bhave. Then I took up politicians, pure and simple. But I cannot be sure of the probity of large numbers of people with whom I have no personal contact. I have perforce to rely upon certificates of political associates. I believe that in the majority of cases the selections have been well made. But since I am myself not offering civil disobedience, I feel that I must send more men like Shri Vinoba Bhave for I am anxious to show that the movement is not purely political. It is much more. And so Pyarelal Nayyar has gone today. He and Mahadev have been my constant companions all these many years. Satyagraha is a movement of self-purification and self-sacrifice. I must continue to part with the best I have. And so Mahadev will follow Pyarelal in due course. There are many who have no political ambition and yet who have a passionate love for freedom and still greater for the famishing millions. Many of these have still to be sent. They and the elected

members in the Congress organization who fulfil my conditions as to the charkha, untouchability and communal harmony will be offered. I propose to offer them from the beginning of the New Year.

I must continue to offer such sacrifice until I carry conviction to the ruling power that the satyagrahis represent a definite opinion in the country and that they represent millions. Theirs is a mission of peace to vindicate which they are prepared to sacrifice their all. It is no less to them a matter of principle of the life and death than to the British power against whom they are seemingly at war. They are as much opposed to Hitlerism and Fascism as the latter. Only they fight with the weapons of non-violence whereas the latter vainly expect to kill Hitlerism by excelling Hitler and Mussolini in the manufacture and use of weapons that these two dictators use. I hope this argument will not jar on His Excellency. I bring it forward to claim for our movement the same reality and strength that are claimed on behalf of the British. They are none the less because they do not apply to the whole of India. It was therefore wrong for Mr. Amery to characterize the movement as artificial. Do the hundreds who have gone to jail love prison life? Oh, for an ounce of imagination to realize that a human being wearing a brown or black skin can have equal susceptibility with the wearers of the white skin!

The notes that Mahadev prepared for me put these words in your mouth:

I have to reply to your question about *Harijan*. Well, Mr. Gandhi has to make up his own mind. Only let him or you not preach any breach of the law.

If Mahadev has correctly reported you, may I say that the warning was unnecessary. How can an unlawful movement be conducted lawfully by a newspaper guided by the author of the movement? But many things remain lawful so long as the Government wish them to remain so. I am quite sure that you can prosecute me or Mahadev for many things we have written. *Harijan*, therefore, can be restarted during the pendency of the movement, only if the Government desire it and believe that it was an organ which was serving both the nations, indeed the whole of humanity.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

From a copy: C.W. 7859. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledging this letter on December 14, Laithwaite informed Gandhiji: "It has been laid before His Excellency who has asked me to thank you for putting him in possession of your mind and intentions."

480. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 10, 1940

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

You are greedy. You were not satisfied with the elegant message that I sent with Bhai Vaidya. Here is my signature. I like the issue of your *Khadi Patrika* very much. If the three things that are mentioned there are carried on well, the Bombay [bhandar] will not remain a mere khadi bhandar but will become a beautiful production centre also.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10850. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

481. LETTER TO S. C. CHATTERJEE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 11, 1940

DEAR PRINCIPAL CHATTERJEE,

I have gone through your long letter<sup>1</sup>. It leaves me wholly unconvinced. I have based my opinion on your letter to the Muslim Students' Federation. This you have not denied.<sup>2</sup> I wrote to you for the simple reason that if there was anything that you could say in justification of that letter or if the letter was a fabrication, you should have the opportunity of saying so to me. Unfortunately there is no extenuating circumstance to justify your letter. Your intellectual gifts, your impartial philanthropy and many other virtues that you may

<sup>1</sup> Dated December 8, it was in continuation of what he wrote on December 7; *vide* footnotes 1 and 2, "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 9-12-1940, and footnote 1, "Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 9-12-1940

<sup>2</sup> The addressee had said: "You have condemned me as a rank communalist, merely because I encouraged Muslim students through their Federation not to be cowards and allow themselves to be treated as slaves in the matter of the exercise of their elementary rights of attending college. I understand, you are opposed to Mr. Jinnah's scheme for the partition of India; so am I. But, may I ask you if your conception of India is really different to the one that I have suggested to the Muslim Students' Federation?"

summon to your assistance are wholly irrelevant as is also my conduct<sup>1</sup> in connection with the British Government. Of course you are free to publish the correspondence between you and me.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

*482. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 11, 1940*

DEAR HARDIKAR,

I have your touching letter. You shall go after 5th January. Meanwhile do take care of your health and wind up your paper.

I would like to have you treated here for your cough. I have just now a qualified doctor<sup>2</sup> who for the last ten years has been curing patients by dietetic changes. Come, if you can.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*483. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM<sup>3</sup>*

[Before *December 12, 1940*]<sup>4</sup>

DAUGHTER,

Your letter is very bad. I have never entertained any suspicion. If that is your sin, call it a sin. You do not understand your guilt. I tell

<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of his letter, the addressee had remarked: "I have long lost faith in your political wisdom. More recently I have found your attitude to India's participation in the war to be altogether incomprehensible."

<sup>2</sup> Presumably, the reference is to Dr. Das; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam" 9-12-1940; also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 11-1-1941.

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji did not allow the addressee to go to Sind; thereupon she asked him what suspicions he had and what sins she had committed.

<sup>4</sup> From the reference to the letter to Jairamdas Doulatram; *vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 12-12-1940



you, you will not succeed so long as you are not cleansed. This is bare truth. It is futile to go to Maulana. Whether you approve or not, I shall write to Jairamdas. If you permit, I am prepared to talk to Sophia and Kafi. If you want to fast, you cannot do it here. Fasting is not the remedy for cleansing yourself.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 712

#### 484. TELEGRAM TO SHRIRAM<sup>1</sup>

[On or before *December 12, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

IF YOUR STANDARD IS THAT OF SARDAR SAMPURAN  
SINGH<sup>3</sup> YOU MAY NOT GO. IF YOUR STANDARD  
IS THAT OF PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU YOU  
MAY GO. PLEASE CIRCULATE THIS AMONG YOUR  
CO-LEGISLATORS.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-12-1940

#### 485. TELEGRAM TO BHALERAO<sup>4</sup>

*December 12, 1940*

ALL WHO HOLD MY OPINION MUST REFRAIN WHETHER  
FEW OR MANY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

<sup>1</sup> The addressee, a Congress M.L.A. from the Punjab, had asked Gandhiji “for instructions relating to satyagraha in the Punjab”. The telegram was reported under the date-line “Rohtak, December 12”.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* “Statement to the Press”, 6-12-1940

<sup>4</sup> The addressee, Secretary, Bombay Hindu Cricket Club, in his telegram dated December 11, had asked Gandhiji whether he wanted only Hindus to boycott the pentangular cricket matches; *vide* “Statement to the Press”. 7-12-1940

486. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 12, 1940

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I had sent a minor<sup>1</sup> to Sind and I thought she had returned a major. That was the impression created on my mind by a letter she wrote and to which I had replied. She has sent you a copy of my reply. But her action belied my interpretation as she herself perceived. She saw that mine was an over-liberal interpretation to which she could in [no] way live up. Hence she remains what she went as—a minor requiring delicate care and attention. She will be sent back when her health is fully restored and when you and Maulana Saheb think she can come. Her life is dedicated to the cause of peace in Sind to the extent of stopping terrorism of which wanton murders are but a symptom.

You will not endanger your health in thinking of Amtul Salaam. She is in God's hands.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9256. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

487. LETTER TO BHANUSHANKER PANDYA

SEVAGRAM,  
WARDHA, C.P.,  
December 12, 1940

BHAI BHANUSHANKER,

Herewith the letter for you friend.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SHRI BHANUSHANKER PANDYA  
ANJANIA WADI  
GHATKOPAR  
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33154

<sup>1</sup> Amtussalaam, *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 8-12-1940

488. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

[After December 12, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

I am not able to make out anything from what was narrated to me. As for money, I had already issued an appeal. Let us be content with whatever we have received. Now you have to deal directly with Maulana and Jairamdas. You should write to them everything. I have put in my letter to him everything that I could. The Sindis received it direct from here.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 688

489. *LETTER TO ACHREKAR*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 13, 1940

DEAR ACHREKAR,

I am sorry for your troubles<sup>2</sup>. You may certainly postpone offering civil disobedience till you are out of the wood. I hope, however, that you are doing regular spinning and taking in constructive work. I hope you know also that spinning includes carding.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. *LETTER TO J. M. DATTA*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 13, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

Nothing that I can do will alter the situation<sup>3</sup> but I think there

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to letter to Jairamdas Doulatram; *vide* the preceding item.

<sup>2</sup> Financial

<sup>3</sup> The addressee had requested Gandhiji to give his blessings to the Bengal Census Board and to ask the Hindus to get themselves enumerated.

will be no difficulty as there is no boycott declared on behalf of the Congress.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

JATINDRA MOHAN DATTA  
45 BARRACKPORE TRUNK ROAD  
COSSIPORE P. O.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*491. LETTER TO PREMNATH BAJAJ*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 13, 1940*

DEAR PREMNATH,

I have your letter. On the face of it the order<sup>1</sup> about Hindi and Urdu seems quite harmless. But I can give no final opinion without knowing all sides of the question. And if at all possible you will spare me the trouble of studying it.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*492. TESTIMONIAL TO PRITHVI SINGH*

SEVAGRAM,  
*December 14, 1940*

I have gone through “The Scheme of Physical Training” which Sardar Prithvi Singh has given me. It was placed before the public many years ago but it does not seem to have been implemented anywhere. I liked the Scheme. It takes into account the condition of the country, is simple and inexpensive and can be readily implemented. I have always been of the opinion that for true education, strength of the body, mind and heart should be equally and simultaneously developed. But in practice attention is paid to one aspect only and that too without any reference to the condition of the

<sup>1</sup> Issued by the Kashmir Government, allowing the use of both Devanagari and Persian scripts in Government schools

country. Sardar Prithvi Singh's suggestion regarding development of physique is worth pondering over. I hope that the experts in that field will study the Scheme and, if they approve of it, implement it.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5643. Also C.W. 2954. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

#### 493. LETTER TO GURUMUKH SINGH MUSAFIR

*December 15, 1940*

DEAR GIANJI<sup>1</sup>,

You have asked me for my interpretation of the teachings of the Ten Gurus<sup>2</sup>. Here it is:

I regard Guru Granth Saheb as one of the scriptures of the world. I consider myself an humble follower of their teachings as of the teachings of Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Hinduism. The essence of the teachings (so far as non-violence is concerned and that is what you want to know from me) is, that they all enjoin non-violence as a duty, but they tolerate violence when the choice before the votary is between cowardly surrender and the use of the sword.

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

#### 494. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

*December 15, 1940*

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have heard the roar of the lion and the wail of the cow.<sup>3</sup> The cow will remain where she is. I have talked to Aryanayakamji<sup>4</sup> and Ashadevi.

Is that all right?

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1939

<sup>1</sup> Member, Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

<sup>2</sup> Of the Sikhs

<sup>3</sup> The addressee had written a harsh letter to Gandhiji when he came to know that the plot used as *goshala* was to be given to the Talimi Sangh. He wrote on behalf of the dumb cow.

<sup>4</sup> E. W. Aryanayakam

495. *LETTER TO PATWARDHAN*

SEVAGRAM,  
*December 15, 1940*

BHAI PATWARDHAN,

I laughed heartily after reading your letter. It is only when I can satisfy you that you will have faith in my judgment. It is good that I have never had the desire to give the verdict. I do what I can as a friend. I have sent a copy of Dada's<sup>1</sup> letter to Sahasrabuddhe. There has been no reply from him.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

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

496. *LETTER TO HANSRAJ RADHAR*<sup>2</sup>

[*Before December 16, 1940*]<sup>3</sup>

There is to be no civil disobedience, individual or mass in the States.

*The Hitavada*, 18-12-1940

497. *SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR*

*Early Morning, December 16, 1940*

I was in the midst of mad . . .<sup>3</sup> They had besieged me. With difficulty they had carried me to the door of my abode. But one admirer had possession of me and won't leave me. So I howled for help.

From the original: C.W. 4220. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7856

<sup>1</sup> Dharmadhikari

<sup>2</sup> According to the source, the addressee, a political worker in Jind, had requested Gandhiji "to permit the State Congress to launch satyagraha in the State". The letter was reported under the date-line "Lahore, December 16".

<sup>3</sup> One word is illegible in the source. Gandhiji was describing a dream.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

498. LETTER TO MOHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH KHAN

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 16, 1940

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

Here is a pathetic letter from Zakir<sup>4</sup>. You will not mind my approaching you for the assistance. From a tiny thing Jamia<sup>5</sup> has become a big institution. You know that it was the joint creation of the Ali Brothers, Hakim Saheb and Dr. Ansari. Dr. Zakir was Mahomed Ali's choice. And he has, so far as I know, come up to the highest expectation. He has able and self-sacrificing assistants. I know you have heavy calls on your purse. But this should not be a strain on your purse. I leave the case in your hands.

I hope you are doing well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. OF BHOPAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

499. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR

December 16, 1940

CHI. PARIKSHITLAL,

I have read your report. What is the cause of the failure in Kheda and Ahmedabad? Are you making an all-out effort to win over the opponents? Why not start a model school in such places and induce other pupils to join it? Of course, that would involve expenditure. Perhaps Ambalal<sup>1</sup> may agree to meet it. Is it the Patidars who oppose or some other communities or all the communities? If the Government grant has been delayed, why doesn't Gulzarilal<sup>2</sup> meet the officer concerned?

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

PARIKSHITLAL MAJMUDAR  
HARIJAN ASHRAM  
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3992. Also C.W. 150. Courtesy: Parikshitlal Majmudar

<sup>1</sup> Ambalal Sarabhai

<sup>2</sup> Gulzarilal Nanda, Secretary, Ahmedabad Textile Workers' Union

## 500. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 16, 1940

CHI. PRABHA,

There has been no letter from you recently. I hope your health is all right.

My purpose in writing this is to tell you that I am eagerly hoping that Jayaprakash will come and see me. I wonder why there is no letter from him and why he has not met me till now. I will know from you.

Sushila will come here about the 22nd or the 23rd. Manu is here. There are others, too. The Ashram is full.

I am keeping well.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3549

## 501. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

December 16, 1940

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have your letter. At the instance of Sardar Prithvi Singh I had requested Vaishampayanji to come to Sevagram. He had come here. He mentioned the matter of money to me also. I do not know what Shri Deo may have thought about it, but I personally do not like the idea of the Samiti having to bear the expense of the Reception [Committee]. There is a difference of opinion between Vaishampayanji and Deo. In such a situation it is difficult to get money for them from the Samiti. I think the expense of the reception should be borne by the Reception Committees. I told the same thing to Vaishampayanji. We talked about other things too. I hope everything will work out well.

Rajendra Babu, being ill, will not be able to attend. Jamnalalji's date has been fixed. It should not be changed. What applies to you cannot be applied to others. You are the founder and the life of the Sammelan, and I have full faith that it will be sufficient if you are



present there. Kakaji<sup>1</sup> and Shriman<sup>2</sup> will be going, of course. Rajendra Babu should also go if his health permits. I shall write [to him].

I hope you are well.

*Yours,*  
M. K. GANDHI

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

### 502. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

*Silence Day, December 16, 1940*

DAUGHTER,

If you wish to act on principles, where is the room for service to me? In that case, all your time should be devoted to the service of Shastriji. I do everything in the capacity of a father, not of a mother, although I aspire to be a mother. The status of a father sets its own restrictions on a man.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 462

### 503. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

*December 16, 1940*

DAUGHTER,

Your behaviour upsets me. You are full of anger and also pride. You think you know a lot, but in fact you are a fool. You talk of principles, but understand nothing about them. You do not act on principles or, maybe, you have only one principle, viz., to stay near me and to serve me. This is no principle. It is a matter of affection. If I allow you to do some service out of love, you start flinging principles at my face. When will you understand this simple thing? Your going to Sind would be futile till you do not understand this.

Think over this letter. Cast away anger and pride and learn humility.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 463

<sup>1</sup> D. B. Kalelkar

<sup>2</sup> Shriman Narayan

## 504. INSTRUCTIONS TO SATYAGRAHIS<sup>1</sup>

WARDHAGANJ,  
December 17, 1940

Under Gandhiji's instructions I have to make the following announcement: All Provincial Congress Committees and other Committees will please note that there is to be no satyagraha during Christmas, that is to say, between December 24 and January 4, both days inclusive. Satyagrahis outside the three permitted classes may start satyagraha on and after January 5 and all lists approved by Gandhiji may be finished by April 5.

A number of applications are being received here direct from various parts of the country. In many cases we have referred them to the Pradesh Congress Committees concerned. But we have not been able to reach all applications. All intending satyagrahis will please note that they have to apply to the P.C.Cs of their respective provinces clearly stating their names and addresses, age, occupation, their freedom from commitments and illness and declaring faith in Truth and non-violence and in the constructive programme. Concretely stated, they should express their belief in non-violence as the only means of attaining swaraj and the only worthy way of ending all wars within the terms of the Bombay resolution<sup>2</sup> of the A.I.C.C.; that they believe in the vital connection between non-violence and constructive programme, and that their faith in the constructive programme is evidenced in regular spinning and habitual wearing of khadi, and insistence on the use of handmade articles and promotion of village industries and crafts, in the total abolition of untouchability, and in the insistence on communal unity.

The best thing perhaps would be for all provinces to have forms stating all these details which should be filled in by those intending to offer satyagraha in the presence of responsible Congress workers. Some provinces have already started this procedure. This will prevent a good deal of waste of time and money involved in postage.

Over and above the fulfilment of the aforesaid conditions, those who have not decided to give up their studies and who have not secured permission of their parents or guardians should not apply.

I would request the Press not to make unauthorized statements about satyagraha. Thus for instance the report that instructions have been sent to Delhi to suspend satyagraha is without foundation.

*The Hitavada*, 18-12-1940

<sup>1</sup> Issued by Mahadev Desai

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "All-India Congress Committee Resolution", 15-9-1940

## 505. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 17, 1940

MY DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Your kind letter and enclosure, both of which I read out to Bapu. He is delighted to hear you are better. But in return for having given your verdict against him<sup>1</sup> regarding the dispute over the handwriting between him and me he orders one year's restraint orders on you! I entirely share his view. You must not *dream* of courting arrest. Surely there is plenty of work to be done outside. And responsible guides outside are really essential when most people capable of giving the right lead and advice have gone to prison.

Of course the 'rumour'<sup>2</sup> was a fabrication. Bapu says, you should ask Dr. Shaukat as to who was really responsible for the muddle. He will be able to enlighten you.

Kindest regards and hoping you will soon be better,

*Yours sincerely,*  
AMRIT KAUR

[PS.]

Bapu's pressure remains within control so long as he does not overwork. But it is hard to control him nowadays. There is so much to be done!

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G.N. 5112

## 506. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEVAGRAM,  
December 17, 1940

This reply is just for your entertainment and mine. You have set down certain maxims without proving their truth. Why do you think sacrifice will harm or weaken the cause? I on the contrary believe that it will bring credit to the cause and lighten the effort. I can offer proof in support of this statement. What you say is mere inference and is incorrect. Will you now dare to say that Mahadev's going was objectionable? The Mayor's authority extends only to the Municipal limits of Bombay. Outside you have to win over people through arguments.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, p. 179

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 9-12-1940.

<sup>2</sup> About Gandhiji's fast; *vide* also "Letter to "Syed Mahmud", 22-11-1940

## 507. LETTER TO P. B. GOLE

[Before December 18, 1940]<sup>1</sup>

I have been told that you observe untouchability, practically according to the original formula which I had used for all caste Hindus. Obviously that is insufficient for Congressmen and specially Congress leaders. I had, therefore, said that if what was reported to me about your belief and practice was true, you should not offer civil disobedience.

When, however, Kishorelalbai Mashruwala sent me a note that you had felt grieved, I at once invited you to come and see me and you were good enough to respond quickly. In the course of our talk I understood that your belief in the necessity of purging Hinduism of the canker of untouchability and the consequent belief in high caste and low caste and outcaste was as pure and as high as that of the tallest Congressman, but in your home you observe strict rules of purity, so that you exclude, irrespective of caste, from the domestic dining *chowka*, those who do not observe the same stiff rules that the members of your family do. This practice has nothing to do with untouchability and had no application to Harijans as such, and stood on its own footing. I also understood that outside the domestic circle, you acted precisely as any Congressman would act towards Harijans.<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry that in my ignorance I attributed to you and Dr. Parasnis a belief which neither of you entertains. I was delighted to find I had erred, and that I could claim you as members of the satyagraha band.

*The Hindustan Times*, 24-12-1940

<sup>1</sup> The letter was reported under the date-line "Nagpur, December 18".

<sup>2</sup> The source reported that it was with these words that Gandhiji "allowed P. B. Gole, ex-Congress Minister, C.P. and Berar, to offer satyagraha".

508. *LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJEE*<sup>1</sup>

[Before December 19, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

You may continue what you are doing so long as you preserve peace. The whole question requires patient consideration.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 20-12-1940*

509. *DISCUSSION WITH G. D. BIRLA AND DEVDAS GANDHI*

*December 18/19, 1940*

I was with Gandhiji at Wardha for two days, that is, on the 18th and the 19th December. . . .

I asked him what was his next plan. He has already informed the Viceroy of it. The next stage will continue for another three months. During that period nearly 10,000 persons will be in. All names will be properly scrutinized. "What after that?", I asked.

[GANDHI:] There is to be no stage after that. It will continue indefinitely and I will send in as many as I can. Sometimes I get a little worried about the mentality of our young men. I know they are impatient. They might do something stupid. Communism appeals to youth, unfortunately.

I replied that in the past whenever satyagraha was in the field, communism disappeared for the time being only to reappear after its suppression. He agreed. . . .

He is anxious to send Mahadev in. I tried to persuade him not to send Mahadev. Gandhiji will be virtually a cripple without him. Mahadev very strongly feels that his absence may be harmful for Gandhiji's health. Pyarelal is already in. Therefore Mahadev thinks he must be kept out. But Gandhiji disagrees:

It is a movement of self-purification, not for embarrassing anyone. As such, I must sacrifice my best. I needed Mahadev out for various other noble missions. This has enhanced his value further. But all the more reason, therefore, for sending him in since the sacrifice will be still greater.

<sup>1</sup> The addressee, ex-President, All-India Trade Union Congress, had sought Gandhiji's advice as he had not been arrested "in spite of offering satyagraha repeatedly". The letter was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, December 19".

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

I then related to him how I was told in Bombay that Sardar Patel and others in Yeravda were quite cheerful and comfortable. I told him that there was too much restriction about interviews about which I had spoken to the Governor of Bombay. He was glad to hear that they were all comfortable.

Devdas at this stage pointed out that things in Madras were different. Rajaji was locked up at night. Interviews were not allowed to last more than 20 minutes. And the C.I.D. remained present at the time of interviews. I said, I would bring this matter to the notice of H.E. But Gandhiji said, there was not much to complain against. After all, jail was jail and one could not expect much while in. If all kinds of freedom was allowed, then there would be no imprisonment in a sense. All said, he thought, Government was fighting in a gentlemanly way. I was glad to hear this tribute to the Government. Good relation is a great thing and its value can never be over-estimated.

I gave my impression of the Viceroy's speech<sup>1</sup>. Devdas at this stage read H.E.'s Calcutta speech to Gandhiji who had not yet read it fully. He listened to it very carefully. After Devdas finished the reading, I asked Gandhiji what his reaction to it was. Gandhiji said, it was very cordial, but no advance. He related some of his old talks with the Viceroy and then remarked:

But the Viceroy believes very strongly in his own views. I could never dislodge him from his own position.

I then told him what I had suggested to Sir Roger Lumley. Here is the gist:<sup>2</sup>

Referring to the failure of an agreement, I said, I felt that to a great extent the failure might be attributed to mutual misunderstanding. Perhaps it was due to this reason that Gandhiji had to write to Lord Irwin when he went to negotiate a pact with him: "I want to see Irwin the man." . . . With reference to the offer of Dominion Status . . . Mr. Amery's speech<sup>3</sup> on the Viceroy's statement has created an impression that since so many conditions were attached to the offer, it was impossible of achievement. One could even

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the Viceroy's speech at Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta on December 16. According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1940*, Vol. II, p. 364, both this and the speech by L. S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, at a luncheon in London on December 12, reiterated the proposals outlined in the Viceroy's statement of August 8 (*vide* "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-8-1940), which "devised a national government for India—a government associated through the War Advisory Council with the Indian States—that will contain itself the representatives of those great parties and communities that will exercise full and real influence on the conduct of the war, leading to the post-war discussions . . . the final settlement of those intricate questions, whether between the communities here or between British Indian States, or between India and His Majesty's Government. . . ."

<sup>2</sup> Only an extract is reproduced here.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* footnote 1 on "Letter to Krishnachandra", 20-12-1940

reconcile to separation, but it was difficult to reconcile to a position which implies no advance until Muslims gave their consent. . . . Discussing the solution for ending the present impasse, I suggested immediate expansion of the Viceroy's Council by taking in men who were neither Congressmen nor Leaguemen but who would command respect. . . . I gave a few names and said could give more.

I told Gandhiji that in my opinion such an expansion would be useful in more than one way. It should definitely end the deadlock. I argued that even if we got national government, Congress would not associate itself with war efforts unless it was prepared again to give up Gandhiji's leadership. But giving up Gandhiji's leadership once more may not now be possible for the Congress. Therefore, for all practical purposes, Congress may be ruled out even for a national government. On different grounds, perhaps the League also could be ruled out. But why wait only for these two parties? If Government, as is suggested, were really anxious about their efforts to lead India towards her goal, then why not begin? I admitted that the success of this scheme depended on the selection of really good men, who though might not command the confidence of the Congress or the League but who at least command respect not only of these two political parties but of the country at large. In the second place all the important portfolios like Law and Order, Commerce, Finance, War Supplies, Defence, Railways, etc., were transferred to these men.

Gandhiji's reaction was not unsatisfactory. He said, he would appreciate this provided Government at the Centre was made virtually a representative government. It may not be responsible but the men so chosen should at least be of a representative character. He realized the difficulty of getting independent men from outside the two parties, but I gave him a few names and he thought they may not be a bad selection.

He agreed that in view of the war exigencies His Majesty's Government would not be able at this stage to go beyond this and he would not quarrel if they did not go beyond this. I, of course, was assuming that no Executive Council composed of such men could afford to keep political leaders in jail, nor could they afford to shut their mouth. Smuts could not shut the mouth of Hertzog and yet war effort of South Africa continued. Similarly, war efforts in India could continue with greater force under my plan. They would definitely be accelerated. Freedom of speech will be there, but once the freedom is given I am sure it will not be abused.

Devdas was not prepared for Gandhiji's good reaction. For clarification, he intervened: "What of the war effort? Will it continue? And will the Congress tolerate it?" Gandhiji said:

Yes, they will. Even today they do. It will all be voluntary. There will be no coercion. And freedom of speech will have been allowed. After all, the main idea of the Congress is not to allow the civil

population to become war-minded. It is not desired that Government should be embarrassed. Besides, even today the whole country is not anti-war-minded. There are people who sincerely believe in waging war. The mission of the Congress is only to educate people. If the Congress could at any time make the whole nation unwar-minded, who could force them to fight? But today it is not so. Therefore why should we grudge war-minded people associating with war?

I pointed out that such a Cabinet may also be able to build a bridge between Hindus and Muslims and also could do the spade work for setting the stage for Constitution-making after the war. He said:

Yes, perhaps.

I asked him if there was no danger that the freedom of speech granted by a representative government may be abused. He did not think so. But at the same time he said that the law was there to punish any such violation. Congress would not tolerate any abuse on the part of its people.

The question of provinces would still remain unsettled but perhaps the lull would give us a breathing ground for the next step,

I suggested why not cry a halt for six weeks before taking the next step?

But the next step is already taken. It could, of course, be stopped, if so desired by the Government.

From a copy: C.W. 7860. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### *510. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*

WARDHA,  
*December 20, 1940*

Sardar Sampuran Singh has seen me with reference to the statement<sup>1</sup> I published on his conduct at his recent trial. Though what I said about my not passing men like him is true, I recognize that he was permitted by the Provincial Congress Committee to offer civil disobedience and from that he had taken it for granted that permission must have been given under my instance. I recognize, therefore, that he was fully justified in offering satyagraha in so far as permission was concerned.

Nevertheless his conduct at the trial was wholly unjustified and I believe that Sardarji now understands and appreciates the meaning of my criticism. He understands, too, that no one can legitimately say

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-12-1940



that he believes in non-violence by way of discipline. Whatever the contents of one's non-violence, either one believes or one does not. Sardarji now realizes this simple truth. I have shown him now that the obvious blunder into which he was betrayed could be repaired. He is considering my suggestion. I would, therefore, ask the public to suspend final judgment about Sardar Sampuran Singh's conduct.

Sardarji tells me that in the Punjab, so far as he knows, no one believes in non-violence except as a matter of discipline. If this is true it is a most serious matter and I would advise every such person to withdraw from the field. I could not possibly lead Congress to success if they do not believe even in Congress fundamental policy or creed except by way of discipline. He enlists because he knows the art of soldiering and believes in it. But after having enlisted he comes under iron discipline that is justly exacted from every soldier if the battle in which he is engaged is to be won. That our fight is non-violent makes no difference or rather the difference is all in favour of stricter discipline and willing obedience to it.

*The Hitavada*, 22-12-1940

### 511. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,

*December 20, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have spoken to Vaidyaji about water. I am trying to set up a cistern. Till then, boiled water should be given for gargling. Vessels should be finally washed in boiled water. This won't need much water. Sushilabehn is coming day after tomorrow; consult her also.

We cannot serve food to visitors and others. We have to plead helplessness if they ask for food. It would be a duty to give it to an ignorant and hungry traveller from afar. Milk and ghee should be given to none. Roti, oil, raw vegetable, etc., may be given.

We can order one book from the Sasta [Sahitya] Mandal.

We have one copy of *Ramayana* in bold letters, it may be given to Ramnarayan<sup>1</sup>. We can get books worth a couple of annas for the children.

<sup>1</sup> Ramnarayan Chowdhary of Rajasthan

Your question regarding Ramanama has not been answered. When I say I remember the name all the twenty-four hours, it does not mean I am explicitly aware of the same. But it is my resolve that it should continue throughout the twenty-four hours like the act of breathing.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4365

### *512. MESSAGE TO KHADI EXHIBITION*

[Before *December 21, 1940*]<sup>1</sup>

I earnestly hope that the Khadi Exhibition will prove a great success and that the citizens of Bombay will give a befitting response to it. For the success of the present satyagraha movement, it is essential for the general public to patronize khadi.

*The Hindu, 23-12-1940*

### *513. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*December 21, 1940*

DEAR SHRI TULPULE,

Your note to Gandhiji has come. He says that unless you have anything of urgent importance to say to him, he will be grateful if you will spare him. He is far from well—has to conserve his energy to the utmost and is advised by doctors to talk as little as possible. Of course, you may see Maganwadi at any time. Do make an appointment with Shri J. C. Kumarappa for this.

*Yours sincerely,*

AMRIT KAUR

SHRI C. A. TULPULE

TILAK ROAD

POONA CITY

From the original: C.W. 2903. Courtesy: C. A. Tulpule

<sup>1</sup> The exhibition was opened on December 21 by Mathuradas Trijumji, Mayor of Bombay.

#### 514. LETTER FO CHRISTOPHER ACKROYD<sup>1</sup>

WARDHA,  
December 21, 1940

I am sorry I have not been able to acknowledge your letter earlier. But I hope that Chaturvedi<sup>2</sup> showed you my letter to him which contains my view on what should be done. I sent you copies of correspondence<sup>3</sup> with the principal which speaks for itself. I have no manner of doubt that unless he withdraws the offending circular and revises his view of communalism, he is unfit to be a teacher. No apology, unless it shows signs of a definite change of heart, can possibly be accepted. In my opinion you owe it to yourselves, you owe it to India that you do not directly or indirectly support an institution which has a principal holding the views that Chatterjee does.

Please share this with Mr. Schiff.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (1). Courtesy: National Archives of India

#### 515. INTERVIEW TO ALL-INDIA STUDENTS' CONFERENCE DELEGATION FROM MADRAS<sup>4</sup>

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 21, 1940

The students discussed with Gandhiji many problems regarding strikes. Gandhiji advised the students to find a better alternative of expressing their protest, such as demonstrations and meetings outside college hours. If they resolved to strike, they must be prepared for all consequences including giving up of their studies. Gandhiji was afraid that the present-day strikes had no determined will behind them and, therefore, did not carry the students very far in the struggle against imperialism. In his opinion, the most effective form of protest was to leave the colleges instead of

<sup>1</sup> The letter is given under a note: "Secret. Copy of an intercepted letter dated December 21, 1940, from M. K. Gandhi, Sevagram, Wardha, C.P., to Professor Christopher Ackroyd, Secretary, S.P.G. Mission, Head of the Brotherhood, Kanpur."

<sup>2</sup> President, Kanpur Students' Union

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 9-12-1940 and "Letter to S. C. Chatterjee", 11-12-1940

<sup>4</sup> This was communicated by R. Achuthan, General Secretary, Madras Students' Organization, Madras.

resorting to half-way methods.

Regarding the Annamalaiagar incidents (relating to the arrest of students) Gandhiji was definitely of opinion that in case the Government did not hold an impartial enquiry, the students concerned should completely boycott the University because of the gross violation of the elementary rights of students. Gandhiji hoped that the Government would revise its attitude and hold an impartial enquiry fully realizing the gravity of the situation.

*The Hindu*, 4-1-1941

### 516. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

*December 21, 1940*

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

When Ramanama becomes as natural as breathing, it does not obstruct but helps other work, just as the tune of the *tembura* sustains other tunes. Ramanama does not amount to doing two jobs at a time. The eye does its work and the ear its own. All these organs work in harmony.

Now you will realize how Ramanama makes my work easy and brings it to fruition. Its effect cannot be described; it can only be experienced.

*Brahmacharya* and ahimsa constitute physical penance. I too had doubts on this score, but now there is none. Both the disciplines pertain to the body. Mental passion leads to physical desire. Similarly, anger and other violent feelings affect the body. *Brahmacharya* and ahimsa would have no meaning in the absence of the body. Thus both are qualities dependent on the body and are related to other bodies.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4365

### 517. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

*December 23, 1940*

CHI. SHARMA,

Your name is already with me. But why should I send you [to jail] as long as I wish to take constructive work from you? And how can I send you unless you become a social animal? Tell me.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, p. 294

518. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 23, 1940

BHAISATIS BABU,

Why did you give money to Harilal and how much did you give? It has done him no good. It was all spent on drinks.

What you write about Annada is right.

Blessings from  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2733

519. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON<sup>1</sup>

[On or before December 24, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

MY HEALTH PASSABLE. SITUATION DEMANDS TIME.  
MOVING WITH GREATEST CAUTION. WHITEHALL, CALCUTTA  
DECLARATIONS<sup>3</sup> IGNORE SOLID FACTS. LOVE.

Home, Political, File No. 3/33/40-Poll. (I). Courtesy: National Archives of India

520. LETTER TO ADOLF HITLER<sup>4</sup>

WARDHA,  
December 24, 1940

DEAR FRIEND,

That I address you as a friend is no formality. I own no foes. My business in life has been for the past 33 years to enlist the friendship of the whole of humanity by befriending mankind,

<sup>1</sup> Secretary of a small group of Quakers known as India Conciliation Group

<sup>2</sup> From the reference to this cable in an unofficial note No. 8/P. F. (D)/ 40-II, dated December 28, by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, which referred to its earlier unofficial note No. 8/P. F. (D)/40-III, D. Birla and Devdas Gandhi", 18/19-12-1940 dated December 24, on the telegram

<sup>3</sup> Vide footnote 1 on "Discussion with G.

<sup>4</sup> This letter was suppressed by the Government of India; vide "Letter to Agatha Harrison", 17-1-1941, and also the following item. Earlier Ghandhiji had written to Adolf Hitler on July 23, 1939; vide "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939

irrespective of race, colour or creed.

I hope you will have the time and desire to know how a good portion of humanity who have view living under the influence of that doctrine of universal friendship view your action. We have no doubt about your bravery or devotion to your fatherland, nor do we believe that you are the monster described by your opponents. But your own writings and pronouncements and those of your friends and admirers leave no room for doubt that many of your acts are monstrous and unbecoming of human dignity, especially in the estimation of men like me who believe in universal friendliness. Such are your humiliation of Czechoslovakia, the rape of Poland and the swallowing of Denmark. I am aware that your view of life regards such spoliations as virtuous acts. But we have been taught from childhood to regard them as acts degrading humanity. Hence we cannot possibly wish success to your arms.

But ours is a unique position. We resist British Imperialism no less than Nazism. If there is a difference, it is in degree. One-fifth of the human race has been brought under the British heel by means that will not bear scrutiny. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them, not to defeat them on the battle-field. Ours is an unarmed revolt against the British rule. But whether we convert them or not, we are determined to make their rule impossible by non-violent non-co-operation. It is a method in its nature indefensible. It is based on the knowledge that no spoliator can compass his end without a certain degree of co-operation, willing or compulsory, of the victim. Our rulers may have our land and bodies but not our souls. They can have the former only by complete destruction of every Indian—man, woman and child. That all may not rise to that degree of heroism and that a fair amount of frightfulness can bend the back of revolt is true but the argument would be beside the point. For, if a fair number of men and women be found in India who would be prepared without any ill will against the spoliators to lay down their lives rather than bend the knee to them, they would have shown the way to freedom from the tyranny of violence. I ask you to believe me when I say that you will find an unexpected number of such men and women in India. They have been having that training for the past 20 years.

We have been trying for the past half a century to throw off the British rule. The movement of independence has been never so strong

as now. The most powerful political organization, I mean the Indian National Congress, is trying to achieve this end. We have attained a very fair measure of success through non-violent effort. We were groping for the right means to combat the most organized violence in the world which the British power represents. You have challenged it. It remains to be seen which is the better organized, the German or the British. We know what the British heel means for us and the non-European races of the world. But we would never wish to end the British rule with German aid. We have found in non-violence a force which, if organized, can without doubt match itself against a combination of all the most violent forces in the world. In non-violent technique, as I have said, there is no such thing as defeat. It is all 'do or die' without killing or hurting. It can be used practically without money and obviously without the aid of science of destruction which you have brought to such perfection. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that it is nobody's monopoly. If not the British, some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. You are leaving no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deed, however skilfully planned. I, therefore, appeal to you in the name of humanity to stop the war. You will lose nothing by referring all the matters of dispute between you and Great Britain to an international tribunal of your joint choice. If you attain success in the war, it will not prove that you were in the right. It will only prove that your power of destruction was greater. Whereas an award by an impartial tribunal will show as far as it is humanly possible which party was in the right.

You know that not long ago I made an appeal<sup>1</sup> to every Briton to accept my method of non-violent resistance. I did it because the British know me as a friend though a rebel. I am a stranger to you and your people. I have not the courage to make you the appeal I made to every Briton. Not that it would not apply to you with the same force as to the British. But my present proposal is much simple because much more practical and familiar.

During this season when the hearts of the peoples of Europe yearn for peace, we have suspended even our own peaceful struggle.<sup>2</sup> Is it too much to ask you to make an effort for peace during a time

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "To Every Briton"

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji ordered suspension of the satyagraha movement during Christmas; *vide* "Letter to Syed Mahmud", 17-12-1940

which may mean nothing to you personally but which must mean much to the millions of Europeans whose dumb cry for peace I hear, for my ears are attended to hearing the dumb millions? I had intended to address a joint appeal to you and Signor Mussolini, whom I had the privilege of meeting<sup>1</sup> when I was in Rome during my visit to England as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. I hope that he will take this as addressed to him also with the necessary changes.

*I am,*  
*Your sincere friend,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7861. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### 521. TELEGRAM TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

*December 24, 1940*

OPEN LETTER<sup>2</sup> TO HERR HITLER BEING SENT TO  
PRESS. HOPE HIS EXCELLENCY COULD ALLOW IT  
QUICK PASSAGE TO THE WEST.<sup>3</sup>

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

### 522. LETTER TO NRIPENDRA NATH SIRCAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
*December 24, 1940*

DEAR SIR NRIPEN,

I have your letter. I would gladly sign for it. I allow my name to be exploited for raising money. Sir P. C. Ray's I hold to be much fitter than mine for such exploitation. I know that when I was in my teens he was already spending himself whether it was for poor students or anybody else. Yet I must resolutely refuse to lend by name to the

<sup>1</sup> On December 12, 1931; *vide* "Letter to Romain Rolland", 20-12-1931, "A Retrospect" and "Diary, 1031"

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

<sup>3</sup> The addressee, in his reply dated December 27, *inter alia*, said: "He has only just seen your open letter but with great regret finds himself quite unable to accept the statements contained in it as in any way a fair representation of the relations of great Britain with India, which has so greatly benefited over so long a period of years from association with the empire, and between which and the forces of aggression outside there stands today only the empire's strength. It is not possible for him, in these circumstances, to give you the assistance for which you ask in connection with it." *Vide* also "Letter to Sir J. G. Laithwaite", 30-12-1940



appeal unless you have a private meeting of would-be subscribers and get the minimum in cash. I have a tragic experience of such appeals being made, widely signed and yet falling flat. I would far rather that no appeal for funds was made in the proud name of India's great scientist-philanthropist than that the appeal having been made, should fall flat. Therefore canvass amongst those who will sign the appeal. Bag the money from them. Wire how much you have bagged and if it is a worthy sum you shall have my signature. Otherwise not.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

### 523. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEVAGRAM, via WARDHA,  
December 24, 1940

BHAI PRITHVI SINGH,

Do go to Bhavnagar. Everything will be all right at Poona. I am writing to Nalini.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH  
C/O SHRI VAISHAMPAYANJI  
"VANDEMATARAM"  
787 SADASHIV PETH  
POONA CITY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5644. Also C.W. 2955. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

### 524. LETTER TO DUNICHAND<sup>1</sup>

[Before December 25, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi in a letter to me has conveyed that only those persons are eligible to offer satyagraha who strictly conform to the following conditions:

<sup>1</sup> The addressee, a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, had quoted the letter in a statement to the Press in which he had appealed "to all concerned to make a careful note of the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi and save the good name of the Punjab". The statement was reported under the date line "Lahore, December 25".

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

1. They are habitual and regular spinners.
2. They are habitual khadi-wearers.
3. They believe in the necessity of communal unity and removal of untouchability in every shape and form.
4. They believe in the necessity of supporting village handicrafts and swadeshi in everything.
5. They believe that swaraj for the millions is unattainable without non-violence.
6. They believe in the Bombay resolution of the All-India Congress Committee.
7. They believe in an inevitable connection between the above mentioned points and non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi stresses that nobody is obliged to court imprisonment merely as a matter of discipline. Civil disobedience thus becomes a matter of inviolable faith and not discipline. Congress does not—at least Mahatma Gandhi does not—expect anybody to offer civil disobedience who does not believe in the urgency of it. Mahatma Gandhi considers it disgraceful for any Congressman to say that he offers civil resistance for the sake of mere discipline. He has further stressed that lukewarm adherence to the Congress brings us no nearer to our goal; nor can half-hearted political belief in the Congress programme, he says, answer the purpose.

Those who do constructive work are just as good as civil resisters and by their faith and devotion to service, he says, they are rendering greater service to the cause of civil resistance than civil resisters of doubtful complexion.

Mahatma Gandhi has stressed that we shall reach our goal if civil resistance has the backing of the nation in the shape of conformity to the constructive programme. Quality is the thing which is required in the fight and not quantity; of course, both combined would be welcomed.

*The Hindu, 26-12-1940*

### 525. *LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA*

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA,  
December 25, 1940

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter. You may come over whenever you wish. I do not like the idea about Nasik. You will not get the real thing there. Nevertheless, Jivanlal<sup>1</sup> is a gentleman. Nasik is a good place. Of

<sup>1</sup> Jivanlal Motichand Shah

course, there are hardships here, but you will get nowhere else the experience you will get here. To live among persons of different temperaments and to devote yourself to the study of herbs are both difficult tasks. If you are weak, how can you be called a vaid? Perhaps your health too may improve only here.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

VAIDRAJ SHRI VALLABHRAM  
DHANVANTARI AYURVED HOSPITAL  
159 PRINCESS STREET, BOMBAY-2

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2909. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

### 526. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEVAGRAM,  
December 26, 1940

CHI, AMRIT,

I have your promised wire. I was glad. Everything going well.

You will know the contents of your parcel. Evidently it was a conspiracy. Why should there be prunes? Do you know that the bottles cost a lot in transit? But you will retort, 'Love counts not the cost'.

Hitler letter<sup>1</sup> not yet published.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3955. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7304

### 527. LETTER TO MAGAN AND MANJULA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
[Before December 27, 1940]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

I was very pleased that you two came and stayed. Appa's name is Indrajit<sup>3</sup> and Munna's Dharmapal<sup>4</sup>. They may be called Indra and Dharma in short.

I have not been able to prepare a plan of the house, but all told,

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 24-12-1940

<sup>2</sup> From the contents, it appears that this letter was written before the one to the addressees dated December 27, 1940; *vide* "God of Love, Not War"

<sup>3</sup> Addressees' sons

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

it will probably cost Rs. 5,000/-. The house itself will take up 4,900 sq. ft. Then there will have to be a fence. The lavatory, etc. will be separate. Counting all this, the expense is estimated to be Rs. 5,000/-

Urmila is well. Do not worry in the least. She slept with Ba.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 1038. Courtesy: Manjula Mehta

### 528. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE<sup>1</sup>

[On or before *December 27, 1940*]<sup>2</sup>

I have already pointed out the royal road to swaraj to my sisters where they can go ahead of their brothers. By traversing this road they can achieve fulfilment.

From a copy: C.W. 10363. Courtesy: All-India Women's Conference

### 529. LETTER TO U. A. ASRANI AND B. L. TRIPATHI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

*December 27, 1940*

DEAR FRIENDS,

I like your letter and offer.<sup>3</sup> I shall treasure your names and will send you in when I find it necessary. Meanwhile go on with the constructive work.

I hope you are yourselves spinning with faith and organizing it among the students.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

<sup>1</sup> The message was sent for the annual session which was held at Bangalore from December 27 to 30, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> The addressees, members of Banaras Hindu University staff, in their letter dated December 24, had sought Gandhiji's permission to take part in the satyagraha movement.

530. LETTER TO MRS. RALLIA RAM

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 27, 1940

DEAR SISTER,

Gandhiji is thankful to you for your letter of the 24th. He reciprocates the season's greetings and hopes you will have a successful session.

Re. the cutting you have sent, this is the first time he has heard the allegation that he is conniving at the doings (or resolutions) of the Hindu Mahasabha. The columns of *Harijan* give the lie to it. Unfortunately *Harijan* is extinct at the present moment, and Gandhiji has no time to overtake everything that appears in the Press.

*Yours sincerely,*  
MAHADEV DESAI

From the original: File No. 83. Courtesy: National Archives of India

531. LETTER TO MAGANLAL AND MANJULA MEHTA

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,  
December 27, 1940

CHI. MAGAN AND MANJULA,

Everyday I mean to write to you but cannot do so. Urmila is happy.

You should not mourn over Mother's death. Instead, you should be grateful to God that she has found peace at last.

I myself cut Urmila's hair today. She looks much better now. Her hair used to fall off a good deal.

It will take some time to get your house ready. But whenever you decide to come, I will arrange for a separate kitchen for you. Let me know in advance.

May your vow bear fruit.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1611. Courtesy: Manjulabehn M. Mehta

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### RAJAGOPALACHARI'S RESOLUTION FOR WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING, DELHI<sup>1</sup>

July 3, 1940

The Working Committee is of opinion that the proposals communicated by His Excellency the Viceroy in his conversation with Mahatma Gandhi do not meet the requirements of the present situation in any satisfactory manner.

According to these proposals the claim of the Congress that the status of India should be declared by Britain to be one of complete independence remains unsatisfied. Any declaration that India shall be in the same position as the self-governing countries in the British Commonwealth does not meet the case of India. Nor has it any real meaning in the present state of world affairs.

Apart from this and what is even more important in relation to the immediate activities in regard to Defence efforts, - the Working Committee is emphatically of the opinion that the Congress cannot withdraw its non-co-operation unless the entire field of central government including defence is immediately placed in charge of a national government, which, though formed *ad hoc* and as a transitory measure, should be so constituted as to command the confidence of all the elected elements of the Central Legislature and of the Responsible Governments in the provinces. Unless such a central national government is immediately formed, any efforts in the direction of the defence of India will not only be contrary to the fundamental principles of justice and democratic government, but will also prove utterly futile.

Wardha office, Satyagraha file, 1940-41. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### APPENDIX II

#### EXTRACTS FROM SRINIVASA SASTRI'S LETTER<sup>1</sup>

July 16, 1940

... When you ask Britain to admit that India is free or declare that India shall be free from a certain date, you ask for the impossible. South Africa and Eire have not asked for it. The right to secede at will is equivalent to independence. This right has been openly claimed by both Dominions and no one in authority has raised a voice of protest from the British side. No one will venture to do so. It is a very different

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Abul Kalam Azad", 19-8-1940

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 20-7-1940

thing to demand a resolution or Act of Parliament declaring or granting in express terms the right of secession. Why shall we not be realists for once and rest content with Dominion Status, of which we now know the implicit as well as the explicit significance? You recently said that Dominion Status will go after the war or change beyond recognition. Let it. We shall be no worse than the other Dominions. . . The Congress and you believed, or allowed yourselves to be persuaded, when the war began in earnest, that your demand of independence would be complied with. As the war grows more grim, you are confirmed in that belief. True, Britain could be squeezed today if things were normal in India. I mean you would obtain your desire if Britain could be sure that she would gain more than she would lose by compliance. She calculates that she would be worse off in the result. Who can gainsay it with confidence? My own opinion —I am so ignorant it isn't worth much— is that Muslim displeasure is a greater minus than Congress adhesion is a plus. Nobody can gauge the precise extent of Jinnah's influence. As a man and as a politician he has developed unexpectedly. . . . Nevertheless, Congress is unable to ignore or neglect him; how can the British Government do so? The risk is great. . . .

To sum up: Independence at Britain's hands is out of the question. Independence of Britain the fortune of war may thrust upon us (God forbid it). But independence we shall neither get nor keep. . . .

Rajaji's resolution in my judgment is foredoomed by being coupled with the independence demand. Consistency and prestige perhaps require it, but neither of these is an all important consideration.

Let me paraphrase the W. C. C. 's offer to Britain. Grant our independence and in earnest thereof nationalize the Central Government. We shall abandon non-violence and harness all India's resources in your aid. It is the clear duty now of the strongest and the most patriotic party to grasp at every opportunity of acquiring power and using it for the protection of the people, subordinating and postponing for the moment all other considerations, including independence. Instead, Rajaji's position, stated briefly, is : "Congress can't do its best till India is independent or declared so. Because you don't enable us to do our best, we won't do even what we can, though for our own people's primary needs."

Suppose, now, on the contrary, the W. C. C. directed the men who were Ministers in the Provinces to resume office and other measures necessary for the protection of the people. Will it not immediately restore the confidence of the public and dispel the fear of anarchy which is now widespread and may soon demoralize the inhabitants of the villages? Power carries a responsibility; Congressmen may not say now to the harassed citizens: "You must suffer till the Britisher yields." Will you not shake off your prepossessions and obsessions and order the provincial

parliamentarians back to their posts of duty? Tell them that peaceful existence is prior to independence, and that Britishers and Muslims may be disposed of later. . . .

Srinivasa Sastri Papers. File No G-1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### APPENDIX III

#### *LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>*

*August 10, 1940*

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have just received your letter of the 8th. About Hyderabad, I can make no suggestion. So much depends on the strength of the people and their organization. I think, however, that it is far better for them to concentrate on the rural areas where the chances of communal clashes are probably less. I do not see how they can remain passive under the circumstances. Yet it may be perhaps better not to precipitate a big crisis immediately in view of the rapid developments of the political situation in India as a whole. When this all-India situation advances further, Hyderabad people might be in a better position to assert their right.

In a sense I am not sorry at the development in Hyderabad. The impossible attitude that Bahadur Yar Khan and others have taken up will react on them. It may of course lead to a great deal of trouble and bloodshed. In any event the State Congress people should make it perfectly clear that they cannot reduce by an iota their demand for responsible government.

I understand the Working Committee is likely to meet in Wardha in eight or nine days' time. I hope to meet you then.

About the exactions for war funds. I have written to the secretary of the U. P. P. C. C. to send you some particulars. Some have been published in the Press and are clear enough. Some others, though equally clear, might be explained differently. For instance an usual case is for a person to be approached for a donation. He refuses or offers a smaller sum than what is demanded. Immediately or a day or two after, he is arrested on the charge of preventing others from subscribing to the war funds, and thereby charge of preventing others from subscribing to the war funds, and thereby coming in the way of war efforts.

I have just had a case like this from Allahabad district. A poor village shopkeeper was asked to give Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. He said the most he could possibly give was Rs. 15. He was cursed and sworn at and immediately a notice was given to him to appear to show cause why he should not be proceeded against under the Defence of India rules. His case is up today in a court here. Usually this kind of thing

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 27-8-1940



is not done with full-fledged Congressmen who are expected to refuse anyhow. Another case which has come to me today is from Kasganj in Etah district. A Naib Tahsildar went to the shop of a Congressman on 2nd of August and demanded money for the war funds. This was refused and the man stated that as a Congressman he could not do so. Thereupon the Naib Tahsildar threatened to take action and had the name of the person noted down. On the next day this man, who is the nephew of a well-known Congressman in the district, was suddenly arrested for non-payment of a punitive police tax. He was put in the lock-up and for 30 hours he was not given any food or facilities for bathing. Etc. This arrest was completely illegal as punitive tax can only be recovered by attachment of property and the person concerned, whose name is Omprakash, has considerable movable and immovable property. The amount of Punitive Tax concerned was only Rs. 6 which could easily have been realized by attachment. Omprakash's uncle, Manpal Gupta, thereupon created a lot of fuss and ultimately Omprakash was discharged. That is how the matter stands now.

Another interesting case is that of Thakur Surendra Bhadur Singh, Taluqadar of Simri in Rae Bareli district. He is a Congress M. L. A. His father, the Taluqadar, recently died and thereupon, at his own request, his taluqa was taken under the Court or Wards. The Deputy Commissioner informed him that he should contribute Rs. 1,500 to the War Fund. He refused to do so as a Congressman. He was then told that he held his taluqa on conditions of loyalty and good service and the Court of Wards had a perfect right to give the donation out of the revenues of the taluqa. Thereupon he sent a registered notice to the Deputy Commissioner protesting against this imposition and saying that it was wholly illegal. His case was that it might or might not be open to the Government to confiscate his taluqa for want of loyalty to them. But it was certainly not open to them to give a donation on his behalf and against his will. In spite of this the Deputy Commissioner has already or is going to pay this sum to the war fund and Surendra Bahadur Singh is thinking of bringing a declaratory suit in a court of law.

I am getting complaints from various districts of pressure being brought on kisans to pay eight annas or a rupee or more per plough. It is obvious that they do not want to pay but are compelled to do so.

Petty Government servants and minor officials dare not say no when they are asked to contribute. A recent case which came to my notice informally but nevertheless correctly was that of stenotypist of a District Magistrate. He was asked to give Rs. 200. His salary was Rs. 125 a month. He pointed out hesitatingly that he had a large family and it was entirely beyond his capacity to pay that sum. He was then told that in any event he and his family would have to starve if the British lost the war. So this was a kind of insurance that he had to pay. Ultimately it was settled that he should pay Rs. 150 to the war fund. A curious thing is that one does not hear

very much about donations from higher officials. They think it is enough for them to serve the cause by giving their very efficient service at a high rate of payment.

That number of new appointments at high salaries grows from day to day. Probably a very large proportion of the funds that are being collected goes towards the payment of these high salaries. Simla, I understand, is crowded with this type of officials serving the great cause by drawing a fancy salary for little or no work. There was a recent case of an English official who was till recently drawing Rs. 750 a month suddenly being pushed into some war work and is being given Rs. 2,500 a month. It was stated that he had accepted this new job at considerable sacrifice to himself.

*Yours affectionately,*

MAHATMA GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

#### APPENDIX IV

##### *STATEMENT MADE BY THE VICEROY ON AUGUST 8, 1940*<sup>1</sup>

India's anxiety at this moment of critical importance in the world struggle against tyranny and aggression to contribute to the full to the common cause and to the triumph of our common ideals is manifest. She has already made a mighty contribution. She is anxious to make a greater contribution still. His Majesty's Government are deeply concerned that that unity of national purpose in India which would enable her to do so should be achieved at as early a moment as possible. They feel that some further statement of their intentions may help to promote that unity. In the hope they have authorized me to make the present statement.

Last October His Majesty's Government again made it clear that Dominion Status was their objective for India. They added that they were ready to authorize the expansion of the Governor-General's Council to include a certain number of representatives of political parties, and they proposed the establishment of a Consultative Committee. In order to facilitate harmonious co-operation it was obvious that some measure of agreement in the provinces between the major parties was a desirable prerequisite to their joint collaboration at the Centre. Such agreement was unfortunately not reached, and in the circumstances no progress was then possible.

During the earlier part of this year, I continued my efforts to bring political parties together. In these last few weeks I again entered into conversations with

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 9-8-1940 and "Draft Resolution for Congress Working Committee", 21-8-1940

prominent political personages in British India and the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, the results of which have been reported to His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Government have seen also the resolutions passed by the Congress Working Committee, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha.

It is clear that the earlier differences which had prevented the achievement of national unity remain unbridged. Deeply as His Majesty's Government regret this, they do not feel that they should any longer, because of these differences, postpone the expansion of the Governor-General's Council, and the establishment of a body which will more closely associate Indian public opinion with the conduct of the war by the Central Government. They have authorized me accordingly to invite a certain number or representative Indians to join my Executive council. They have authorized me further to establish a War Advisory Council, which would meet at regular intervals, and which would contain representatives of the Indian States, and of other interests in the national life of India as a whole.

The conversations which have taken place, and the resolutions of the bodies which I have just mentioned, make it clear however that there is still in certain quarters doubt as to the intentions of His Majesty's Government for the constitutional future of India, and that there is doubt, too as to whether the position of minorities whether political or religious, is sufficiently safeguarded in relation to any constitutional change by the assurance already given. There are two main points that have emerged. On those two points His Majesty's Government now desire me to make their position clear.

The first is as to the position of minorities in relation to any future constitutional scheme. It has already been made clear by that declaration of last October does not exclude examination of any part either of the Act of 1935 or of the policy and plans on which it is based. His Majesty's Government's concern that full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision has also been brought out. That remains the position of His Majesty's Government. It goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a government.

The second point of general interest is the machinery for building within the British Commonwealth of Nations a new constitutional scheme when the time comes. There has been very strong insistence that the framing of that scheme should be primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves, and should originate from Indian conceptions of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life. His Majesty's Government are in sympathy with that desire, and wish to see it given the fullest practical expression subject to the due fulfilment of the obligations which

Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed upon her and for which His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of responsibility. It is clear that a moment when the Commonwealth is engaged in a struggle for existence is not one in which fundamental constitutional issues can be decisively resolved. But His Majesty's Government authorize me to declare that they will most readily assent to the setting up after the conclusion of the war with the least possible delay of a body representative of the principal elements in India's national life in order to devise the framework of the new constitution and they will lend every aid in their power to hasten decisions on all relevant matter to the utmost degree. Meanwhile they will welcome and promote in any way possible every sincere and practical step that may be taken by representative Indians themselves to reach a basis of friendly agreement, firstly, on the form which the post-war representative body should take, and the methods by which it should arrive at its conclusions and secondly, upon the principles and outlines of the constitution itself. They trust however that for the period of the war (with the Central Government reconstituted and strengthened in the manner I have described and with the help of the War Advisory Council) all parties, communities and interests will combine and co-operate in making a notable Indian contribution to the victory of the world cause which is at stake. Moreover they hope that in this process new bonds of union and understanding will emerge and thus pave the way towards the attainment by India of that free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth which remains the proclaimed and accepted goal of the Imperial Crown and of the British Parliament.

From a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Microfilm No. 109, Part II, item No. 137. Courtesy: National Archives of India

#### APPENDIX V

##### *RESOLUTION PASSED AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING AT WARDHA<sup>1</sup>*

*August 21, 1940*

The Working Committee have read that statement issued by the viceroy on the authority of the British Government on the 8th of August and the report of the speech of the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons explaining the Viceroy's statement. They note with deep regret that the British Government have rejected the friendly offer and practical suggestion contained in the Poona resolution of the A. I. C. C. on 28th July framed for a solution of the deadlock and to enable the Indian National Congress to withdraw its non-co-operation and to secure in the present

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Draft Resolution for Congress Working Committee", 21-8-1940

crisis the patriotic co-operation of all the people of India in the governance of India and organization of national defence.

The Working Committee have read with deep pain and indignation the declaration and assumptions contained in the statements and speeches made on behalf of the British Government which seek to deny India her natural right of complete national freedom and reiterate the untenable claim that Britain should maintain herself in a dominant position in India in the discharge of the higher functions of the State. These claims render false and empty even their own promise to recognize India at an early date, as a free and equal unit in the British commonwealth. Such claims and recent events and developments in the world have confirmed the Committee's conviction that India cannot function within the orbit of an imperial power and must attain the status of a free and independent nation. This does not prevent close association with other countries within a comity of free nations for the peace of the world.

The Working Committee are of opinion that the assertion contained in the statement made on behalf of the British Government that they will not part with power and responsibility in favour of the elected representatives of the people of India, and that therefore the present autocratic and irresponsible system of government must continue so long as any group of people or the Princes, as distinguished from the people of the States or perhaps even foreign vested interests raise objections to any constitutions framed by the elected representatives of the people of India, is a direct encouragement and incitement to civil discord and strife, and amounts to a fatal blow to all willingness to compromise and adjustment of claims.

The Committee regret that although the Congress has never thought in terms of coercing any minority, much less of asking the British Government to do so, the demand for a settlement of the constitution through a Constituent Assembly of duly elected representatives has been misrepresented as coercion and the issue of minorities has been made into an insuperable barrier to India's progress. The Congress had proposed that minority rights should be amply protected by agreement with elected representatives of the minorities concerned. The Working Committee therefore cannot but conclude that the attitude and assertions contained in these statements made on behalf of the British Government confirm the prevailing feeling that the British authority has been continually operating so as to create, maintain and aggravate differences in India's national life.

The Working Committee note with astonishment that the demand for the constitution of a Provisional National Government composed of persons commanding the confidence of the various elected groups in the present Central Legislature, formed under the 1919 Constitution of India, has been described by the Secretary of State for India as one that would raise the unsolved constitutional issue and prejudice it in favour of the majority and against the minorities. The Working Committee are of

opinion that the rejection of this proposal unmistakable indicates that there is no willingness on the part of the British Government to part with any power and authority even for the immediate purpose of securing co-operation in war efforts. The British Government would gather together and carry on with such dissentient groups and individuals as oppose the wishes of the majority of the people of India and without any co-ordination with elected legislatures at the Centre or in the Provinces, rather than concede anything that would work towards the recognition of the rights of the people of India to rule themselves democratically.

For these reason the Working Committee have come to the conclusion that the statement referred to are wholly opposed not only to the principle of democracy as acclaimed by the British Government in the war, but also to the best interests of India, and they cannot be a party to accepting the proposals contained in the statements, or advising the country to accept them. The Working Committee consider that these declarations and offers not only fall far short of the Congress demand, but would be impediments to the evolution of a free and united India.

The Working Committee call upon the people to condemn the attitude adopted by the British Government by means of public meetings and otherwise, as also through their elected representatives in the provincial legislatures.

The Indian Annual Register, 1940, Vol. II, pp. 196-7.

## APPENDIX VI

### *A STRANGE PLAN*<sup>1</sup>

As expected, the Congress Working Committee agreed at its meeting in Bombay to hand over the direction of Congress policy to Mr. Gandhi. The three cardinal points emerging from the Working Committee's resolution are that the Congress has no desire to embarrass the British Government in the conduct of the war, that there is to be no mass civil disobedience, but that the Congress must insist "on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy on the basis of non-violence". On the first two points there will be widespread agreement. "Congressmen", so runs the resolution, "cannot withhold their admiration for the bravery and endurance shown by the British nation in the face of danger and peril. They can have no ill will against them, and the spirit of satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them." This tribute and assurance are opportune, and will be widely welcomed. There will also be relief among all classes of the people that whatever action Mr. Gandhi, as dictator of Congress policy, may take, it will not involve mass lawlessness.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Some Criticism Answered"

But there are other features of the resolution and of Mr. Gandhi's exposition of it on Sunday which will arouse misgivings. In the first place the resolution makes it clear that the offer of conditional Congress co-operation with the British Government in the war has lapsed. Moreover, Mr. Gandhi explained very fully what Congress insistence "on the fullest freedom to pursue its policy based on non-violence" really means. He announced his intention of again seeing His Excellency the Viceroy and seeking from him a declaration that the Congress "can go on preaching anti-war propaganda and non-co-operation with Government in their war effort". If this declaration is given, there will be no civil disobedience; if it is not given, Mr. Gandhi will have to consider what action he should take, but he will do his best to avoid satyagraha. This amazing proposal is both impracticable and completely illogical. Mr. Gandhi professes his desire not to embarrass the British Government in any way, yet in the same breath he suggests that he should be allowed to do something which will hamper India's war effort and thus aid the enemy. Even Congress papers have already pointed out the impossibility of reconciling the two ideas. Anything which hinders India's war effort must be an embarrassment to the British Government; it cannot be anything else.

This attitude clearly arises from a grievous misunderstanding of the European struggle. In his speech, Mr. Gandhi made two extraordinary statements. The first was that the peoples of Europe do not know what they are fighting for; the second that the Government of India should give expression to India's freedom by permitting the Congress to conduct an anti-war campaign in the name of liberty. We can assure Mr. Gandhi that the British people know full well what they are fighting for. It is far too late in the day for anyone who does not deliberately shut his eyes to hard facts to pretend that the war is merely a struggle between rival systems of so-called "imperialism". Mr. Gandhi should read *Main Kampf*; he should also study the speeches of those who expound Nazi aims, and he should note what Hitler had done to neutral countries in Europe. He should also pursue the report of Mr. Patel, the former Indian Trade Commissioner in Hamburg, who throws a flood of light on Nazi methods inside Germany in peace time. These things reveal with remarkable clarity the menace which Britain and her Allies are fighting—a menace realized no more keenly than in the United States of America. If Mr. Gandhi is right, the British people are wrong; so are the vast majority of Americans and all free Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Belgians, Norwegians, Poles and Danes who are struggling to rescue their country from Hitler's tyranny.

The fundamental difference between democracy and totalitarianism is evident to the merest child. The one system constitutes the greatest amount of individual freedom consistent with good government; the other regards humanity as a mob of automatons to be directed by the chosen few. There is not a single Congressman from

Mr. Gandhi downwards who does not profess himself to be revolted by the totalitarian system and the mass slavery which it connotes; it is, therefore, almost incredible to find Mr. Gandhi calmly announcing that the British people, among others, have no idea what they are fighting for. Mr. Gandhi must also know that to preach anti-war propaganda and non-co-operation with the war effort in India is to advocate support for the enemy. His plan would create in this country an army of fifth columnists, which is exactly what Hitler desires. Surely Mr. Gandhi knows that Hitler has achieved his success hitherto in destroying democracy by the simple expedient of using the freedom which democracy bestows to encompass its downfall. If Mr. Gandhi seriously believes in democracy, he cannot pretend that this war is of no consequence to India, or that the people of India should be allowed to take no part in it. We sincerely trust that he will reconsider his position before approaching the Viceroy.

*The Times of India, 17-9-1940*

## APPENDIX VII

### *DANGER OF EXTINCTION<sup>1</sup>*

It is very difficult to understand the reported proceedings of the Congress at Bombay. Wading through the sea of words, contradiction after contradiction serves to make the darkness more and more visible. One tangible point seems to be Mr. Gandhi's statement that, if the Viceroy will assure him that the Congressmen will be allowed publicly to advocate non-co-operation in the war-effort—stressing the fact that such non-co-operation must be non-violent—there will be no satyagraha of any kind on his part and that, in any case, there will be no mass civil disobedience. Our first reaction to this was to wonder why the Congress must always be asking for difficult statements and cannot leave well alone. The Government has never prohibited the conscientious teaching of pacifism in India any more than the British Government has interfered with it in Britain. The Quaker and the conscientious objector are not penalized in war unless they take action obviously calculated to help the enemy. Those who attempt to convert soldiers, sailors and airmen, and suborn these or others engaged in direct war work, are clearly helping the enemy. When a whole people is legally conscripted, as is the case in Britain now, the line is still more difficult to draw. Every worker is, in a sense, a war worker. Nevertheless, conversion to the view that it is wrong to be a combatant even in the most righteous cause is not likely to interfere with the output of the ordinary man who is doing civilian work. This is the point of view which is tolerated in Britain and has hitherto been tolerated in India. Mr. Gandhi's own astounding proposal that Britain should

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Some Criticism Answered"



abjectly surrender to Hitler was even, at his own request, put before the War Cabinet which treated it with respect as a sincere opinion and sent a polite reply.

Why then, if you have got what you want, ask the Viceroy for a difficult statement which many will seek to twist and turn into a cloak for their efforts to help the enemy to conquer India? Other passages in Mr. Gandhi's speech throw light on this. What is in his mind is the wholesale arrests of Congress officials and workers which are now continually recorded in the Press, especially in the United Provinces. Details are not given, but the arrests are generally made under the Defence Regulations and appear to be because of speeches in connexion with the war. Mr. Gandhi says he wishes to point out to the Viceroy that the Congress is in danger of "extinction" during the war because of its creed of non-violent non-co-operation, and he wants liberty for Congressmen to preach their doctrine.

We have often expressed our view about the fundamental immorality and contradictory character of the doctrine. Non-co-operation is a method of war and not of peace. For otherwise unarmed or defenceless people it is quite a reasonable method of making war or defending themselves, but it has no more spiritual value than war and probably much less; for it carries with it a pretentious claim to spiritual value which involves sanctimonious insincerities and mass hypocrisy, making intensified hatreds and accompanied by an extraordinary development of violence of language to compensate for the absence of real manliness in defending what must be defended if life is to be worth living. A nation which accepted this doctrine would doom itself to slavery and would breed generations of sycophantic hypocrites crawling before masters who despised them. It is no doctrine for India and, if the Congress persists in it, the Congress will certainly be "extinguished", either because India will have none of it, or because the Congress will so poison the country that Britain cannot save it from three or four totalitarian Powers determined to carve it up, in which case the Congress as an organization will never be heard of again.

Lust of conquest in one country and pacifism in an unaggressive country are twin poisons working together to produce war. The English pacifists have much to answer for. They preached the doctrine of surrender to a country innocent of any desire for war and had not the courage to stand on street corners in Berlin and Rome and go to prison. The non-co-operator has a better case. He was at war against the Government of India and he did go to prison, but he spoilt his case by pretending to be a pacifist. We have no quarrel with the Quaker or with any other quietist. He acts according to his conscience, but he seeks no converts, interferes with no one, and does positive good work in war time refusing true help and sympathy to no man whatever his nationality. But the man who preaches non-resistance and surrender in war time, whatever his motives, is weakening a nation's will to survive and is

helping to destroy it and to deliver it to the enemy. Under this leadership, the Congress has nothing to offer India. At the same time, there is not sufficient assurance that the authorities everywhere—and the doubt is perhaps strongest in regard to the United Provinces—are acting intelligently in regard to the arrests of the Congressmen. It is not yet the accepted practice either in Britain or in India to arrest a man merely expressing pacifist views, though we do not ourselves see how in a war for survival a nation can tolerate aggressive pacifism, which must plainly be one of the enemy's assets. Having, however, recently seen people who were trying to help the war effort, arrested when they tried to organize an Anti-Fascists Day, we cannot help having some doubts whether sufficient care is always taken to prevent injustice. It is necessary to arrest men who preach revolution or violence or any form of action to impede war effort. But it is not yet the business of the authorities to prevent sincere expression of personal conviction of a non-violent character, still less to attempt the extinction of Congress in the name of the war. The Congress is in danger of extinguishing itself and needs no interference. So are the Pakistanists and the vested interests, some of them British, in the services or in business which stand in the way of the war effort. To survive, we have all to shed many prejudices yet and develop new attitudes and new leadership.

*The Statesman*, 17-9-1940

## APPENDIX VIII

### *LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW<sup>1</sup>*

SIMLA,

*September 30, 1940*

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I think it will be convenient if I record very briefly in writing the origin of the talks that we have had on the 27th and 30th September and their outcome.

As you will remember, you wrote to me on the 18th September to ask that I should grant you an interview, and you explained in your letter that you were anxious to discuss the situation covered by the recent resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, not only in your capacity as guide of the Congress but as a personal friend. I was, I need not say, most ready to talk things over with you, and we have now had the advantage of two conversations.

<sup>1</sup> *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-9-1940

In the course of these conversations the situation has been exhaustively discussed, with particular reference to the question of free speech in time of war. On that matter, while professing yourself most anxious to avoid in any way embarrassing His Majesty's Government in the prosecution of the war, you made it clear to me that you regarded it as essential that the Indian National Congress and other members of the public should be in a position to give full expression to their views in relation to the war effort, provided only that such expression was fully non-violent.

I indicated to you the nature of the special treatment laid down by law in the United Kingdom for dealing with conscientious objectors—which I may broadly describe as an arrangement under which, while the conscientious objector is absolved from the duty of fighting and is allowed even to profess his faith in public, he is not permitted to carry his opposition to the length of endeavouring to persuade others, whether soldiers or munition workers, to abandon their allegiance or to discontinue their effort.

You made it clear to me that you would not regard treatment of that nature as adequate in the conditions of India, and that you regarded it as essential that in India, where in your judgment conditions were wholly different from those existing in Great Britain, the Indian objector, either to all war as such, or to the participation of India in the present war, should be untrammelled in the expression of his views.

It emerged further from our conversation that, while you would not yourself preach to workers engaged on war work at the actual works, in an endeavour there to dissuade them from working on war equipment, you could regard it as essential that it should be open to Congressmen and non-Congressmen alike to deliver addresses and otherwise to call upon people throughout the country to refrain from assisting India's war effort in any way which would involve India's participation in bloodshed.

I listened with the utmost care and attention to your argument, and our examination of the situation has been full and close. I felt bound, however, in the outcome, to make it clear to you that action such as you suggest would certainly amount not only to the inhibition of India's war effort, but to that embarrassment of Great Britain in the prosecution of the war which the Congress state that they are anxious to avoid; and that it would clearly not be possible in the interests of India herself, more particularly at this most critical juncture in the war, to acquiesce in the interference with the war effort which would be involved in freedom of speech so wide as that for which you had asked.

*Harijan, 6-10-1940*

## APPENDIX IX

### *LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>*

ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD,

*October 2, 1940*

MY DEAR BAPU,

About six weeks ago, when I was in Bombay for the Planning Committee, I had a remarkable experience, which has oppressed me often since then. I should have told you about it when you were in Bombay last but the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. filled my mind and I forgot. I did not want to write about it through the post.

I came back from the Planning Committee during the midday interval for food. I had to go back soon after and was pressed for time. Just then a young English boy turned up at my sister's flat. He was dressed in khadi—a shirt and loose pyjamas and [a] cap. He told me that he was an officer in the army—a Second Lieutenant—and had decided to leave the army and face the consequences. He produced a copy of a document which he said he had given to his Commanding Officer and which had been forwarded to Army Headquarters at Simla. I read this and was amazed. It was a very fine statement. I enclose a copy of it and you can read it for yourself.

His name was Napier. He was the great grandson of the Napier who is said to have conquered Sind. The family since then had been intimately connected with the army. Apparently it came down in the world. Young Napier joined as a private a few years before the war began. But because he was a bright lad, and possibly also because of his family, he got a scholarship for Sandhurst and later became a commissioned officer. He was sent with his regiment to India a month or two after the war began. He was stationed at Mhow in Central India. Evidently he did not fit in with his brother officers. He was more serious and intellectual and he felt drawn towards India, especially to the poorer classes. He avoided officers' messes and spent his time in the bazaar or elsewhere talking to paltry shopkeepers, labourers, etc. He tried to pick up Hindustani. I think he gave a good part of his salary to the poor.

This was not liked by his brother officers. The Commanding Officer spoke to him about it and they had many arguments. He began to dislike his profession, and especially service in India, more and more. He wanted to leave it but this was not possible in war time. Ultimately he gave the enclosed note to his C.O.

His regiment was transferred from Mhow to Jhansi. This gave him a day and a half or two to join up at Jhansi. He decided to burn his boats whatever the consequences and went and sold his uniform. This was done chiefly to put a definite

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 6-10-1940

end to his military career—also to raise some money. He did not, particularly, want to be sent back from India to England.

He then telephoned to Allahabad to get into touch with me and learnt—found—I was in Bombay and got my address; went straight to Bombay and to my sister's house from the station.

This was a novel situation for me and I was completely taken aback. My heart went out to this young and terribly sincere boy of 25 but I did not know what to do. By coming to Bombay he had deserted—and that too in war time. This is the gravest offence in military law and there was no doubt that he would be arrested in a day or two and court-martialled. I found from him that he was due to report at Jhansi the next morning. There was just a chance of his getting back to Jhansi in time if he took the next train which left soon after.

I wanted to have a much longer talk with Napier but already I had kept the Planning Committee waiting. If he had to go back to Jhansi by the next train then there was going to be no other chance. I felt he must go back. To be charged with desertion was to confuse the issue apart from other consequences. He had already made his position perfectly clear to the army authorities and he could face them and fight them on that issue. I could hardly conceive of his remaining in the British Army after his declaration of faith. Nor could I see how he was to get out of it. Army authorities do not permit this kind of thing. What was going to happen to him I could not guess, but it seemed to be clear that he would have a very hard time. Anyway I felt that this question must not be mixed up with desertion. I advised him, therefore, to go back by the next train to Jhansi and to report himself to the C.O. there. I further suggested to him not to do so in khadi *kurta* and pyjamas. He said he had shorts, etc., and he would wear them. I asked him if he had enough money. He said he had quite enough for his purpose.

He accepted my advice and said he would go back. I asked him to communicate with me, if possible, or with my sister, and to let me know what happened. We have had no news of him since. I am told now that every regiment that is sent to Jhansi, goes off soon after to Egypt. I am trying to find out now what had happened to Napier's regiment. It is quite likely that because of his views and his escapade he was kept under arrest and prevented from communicating, and later sent out of India.

His face haunts me and I often wonder if I advised him rightly.

*Yours affectionately,*

*August 1940*

Having regard to the fact that the country is at war and it is not possible for an officer to resign his commission in the normal manner I here under at the request of my Commanding Officer set down my considered opinions, in the belief that these are incompatible with the retention of my commission. I am infinitely more proud of these opinions than of the fact that my family has an unbroken tradition of service in the British Army for the past 150 years, and that one of my forbears played no small part in conquering India.

I am opposed to British Rule in India. I consider that a country should be ruled by its inhabitants, because freedom is the most important thing of all. It is even more important than food, but food is also important. In India no one has freedom, and a large proportion of the population have insufficient food, a fact plainly evident to any Englishman who took the trouble to miss his drinks at the club for one evening and go into the country to look.

I am opposed to the British Empire. I consider it to be an association for the making of money, propagated by merchants in England under a hypothetical screen of "Empire glory and the betterment of the native races". I consider this bad for the majority of people in England, bad for India, and bad for the world. There is this much difference between Hitlerism and Bolshevism on the one hand and British Imperialism on the other. The latter gives liberty and food to some and neither to others. The former gives food to all and liberty to none. I am opposed to modern European civilization, which is the grandiose name under which the present mess in the vicinity of the North Sea is known. I find it difficult to believe that the peoples at present engaged in a mad struggle generated by greed and fear are a force for good in the world. European civilization has produced the means for making things, and rather more efficiently the means for destroying what it has made. Its most important effect on the mind of the ordinary man is that it has produced an inability to think, and a distrust of those who can. It is seen at its best in war time, when everyone has work and money, and is reasonably happy in the pursuit of killing his fellow men. In peace time, there is unemployment, starvation and misery. Surely even an Englishman can see something wrong there.

I am opposed to the Englishman as a means of spreading culture and civilization. The average Englishman values his body to such an extent that he neglects his mind. Certainly the body should be fit, and be exercised to be fit, but why do people assume that the mind needs no exercise. An effete mind in a healthy body is a matter for satisfaction to an Englishman, whereas an active mind in a feeble body is a thing of contempt to him. English ideas of life are with few exceptions

based on this principle, which is in direct opposition to the Oriental view of life. I cannot willingly help the English to propagate suet-headed mentality. And for the third part of man, that elusive thing called soul! The average Englishman neglects this completely. The English are an irreligious people. The lower classes make no bones about this; on the other hand the higher classes treat religion as a social function. By a mixture of hypocrisy and sheer stupidity they manage to convince themselves they are Christians, though in practice they utterly disregard the magnificent precepts of their religion, and if Christ were to appear today in England, they would regard him as a most undesirable fellow. One point of the Christian religion is to pray daily. *You* who read this, do you pray daily? Would you kneel down in a public place and pray to your God? Yet Indians do this every day. I am not religious myself, a fact which I consider a cause for regret. I am not a Christian, but neither do I pretend to be one. Despite this I deplore my unacceptability in the eyes of my Commanding Officer, a thing which no decent Englishman would do, be he Christian or no. Nor do I in spite of my irreligion scoff at the beliefs of others, whose ignorance and superstition at the present time is due to a Government which so far from teaching them anything, has in a hundred and fifty years made no attempt to see that they have sufficient to eat. I have as much sympathy with the Hindu religion as with the Christian, and infinitely more with the Indian people than with the British.

Few Europeans object to the British themselves, but most of them object to their hypocrisy, which allows them to feather their nests at the expense of all and sundry while believing themselves in a muddled sort of way to be the saviours of mankind.

Few Indians like the British or their rule. This applies equally inside the Cantonments as outside them. The people whose work depends on the British keep their opinions to themselves, but outside the Cantonments any man who is not in receipt of a Government pension will very gladly say what his opinions are. As to the opinion of Indians in the Army, particularly those commissioned, I leave it for someone sufficiently painstaking to find out. Considering that the state of the average Englishman in such matters is such that after thirty years in the country he can with difficulty speak the language, there seems little chance of this happening. But it is quite an important question; and the answer is not merely 'Yes' or 'No'. In India all questions have several answers.

Finally I must assert that I am not taking this course without due consideration, nor was it on the spur of the moment that I suggested to my Commanding Officer that it might be better if I left the Army. I have a good position; pay that is roughly twice my requirements (thanks to the munificence of the Government at the cost of a population who need it far more than myself), in addition to a scholarship obtained with some labour at the Royal Military College. I am now prepared to leave that, to

leave a profession in which I have always been keen, and to cut myself off from such friends and relations as I have in England. 'Prepared' is not the right word. 'Hoping' would be more appropriate. I do this against the advice of every Indian in the *bazar*, who assures me that though he would certainly prefer an *Indian* Government to a British one, he has no intention of doing anything about it, since his livelihood depends on the British. I am well aware that anything I may do will make scarcely a ripple in an ocean which at the present time is as near to being churned with blood as ever before. But if one must join in the general fight in this mad world, it is surely a feeble creature who would not fight for what he believes to be right, even if he must do it without a bank balance. Freedom is more important than food.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1940. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

## APPENDIX X

### *LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW<sup>1</sup>*

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI,

*October 24, 1940*

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have given all possible consideration to your letter of the 20th October and have seen your telegram of the 21st. My further enquiries and the papers which you have sent confirm me in what I told you in my telegram of the 19th October, viz., that no censorship orders were issued by the Central Government. What was done was to advise local editors in their own interests to refer for scrutiny any matter which might be a prejudicial report and the publication of which might, therefore, expose them to penalties under the Defence of India Rules. This, I am informed, is the usual procedure by which the Press are able to obtain advice in doubtful cases.

2. I can, of course, appreciate your desire for freedom to conduct a civil disobedience movement in the way that commends itself to you and I can understand that for that purpose you wish to enjoy unrestricted access to the public through the ordinary channels of publicity. Although, however, you evidently wish me to believe that this movement which you have initiated will be more dangerous if you do not enjoy these facilities, I must credit you personally with the desire that it should succeed in its avowed object, that of persuading the public to withhold all support from India's war effort. I must, therefore, assume that any opportunities afforded to you would be used solely for that purpose. In so far as you ask for my co-operation in such a plan, I must once more make it plain to you as I did in our conversation at the

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 20-10-1940 and "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 30-10-1940



end of September that both I myself as the representative of His Majesty's Government in this country and the Government of India as responsible for its security have a very definite obligation to perform, and it would be disingenuous of me were I to leave any doubt that activities, the effect of which may be prejudicial in terms of the prosecution of the war and which infringe the law, cannot but attract the provisions of the law; and that it would not be possible for me or for the Government of India, consistently with the formal obligations falling upon us, to acquiesce in them. You know how greatly I regret that there should be this conflict of views between yourself and Government as regards the limits within which speeches of a certain character or activities of a certain character affecting the prosecution of the war may be allowed to pass unnoticed, but a point must inevitably be reached at which here as at home and elsewhere in the Empire they cannot but attract, as I have said above, the sanctions which the law provides.

*Yours sincerely,*

LINLITHGOW

From a copy: C.W. 7853a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla