

IT WILL BE FELT BY THE WORLD

Coming to the point Mr. Grover said again: "There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?"

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

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

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

"I am not," said Mr. Grover, "you have been asking for it and working for it."

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

"Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?" Mr. Grover pertinently asked.

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

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

"It does."

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

"Not necessarily."

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

"You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*. I do not want them to go on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their

withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might, the charge of inviting Japan to India."

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

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

INDIA'S GAINS FROM BRITISH VICTORY?

"All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?" was Mr. Grover's next question.

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

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

WHAT CAN AMERICA DO ?

" You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India, " asked Mr. Grover half incredulously.

" I do indeed, " replied Gandhiji.

" With any possibility of success ? "

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

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

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

" It may, slowly, " said Mr. Grover apologetically.

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

WHAT DO YOU PROMISE TO DO ?

" Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue. " What specific things would be done by India to save China, " asked Mr. Grover. " If India is declared independent ? "

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

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

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

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

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

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

"You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little cooperation from Burmans, on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say today that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her; in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt India becomes a powerful Ally."

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States. "I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks," said Gandhiji. "Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears."

WHY NOT DOMINION STATUS?

"Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?" was Mr. Grover's final question.

"No good," said Gandhiji instantaneously. "We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself." (Harijan, June 21, 1942, pp. 193 et seq.)

17. The rest of the chapter is taken up with a colourful description of the draft resolution I sent to Allahabad and a quotation containing remarks attributed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and Shri Rajagopalachari on that resolution. Immediately after the publication of the extracts from the notes seized by the Government, Panditji issued a statement which I append hereto [vide Appendix V (C)]. I cannot understand why the author has disregarded that important statement, unless for the reason that he disbelieved Panditji's explanation. As for Shri Rajagopalachari's statement, the author stands on less insecure ground. Rajaji certainly holds the views attributed to him. In the interview with Mr. Grover, the American correspondent, this is what I said about Rajaji's difference with me :

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

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

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

"You are right," said Gandhiji. It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause." (Harijan, June 21, 1942, P. 195)

18. The first chapter concludes with the following commentary on the draft which had been sent by me to the Committee at Allahabad :

"A draft, to repeat, of which the whole thought and background is one of favouring Japan, a resolution which amounts to running into the arms of Japan."

And this is written in spite of Pandit Jawaharlal's repudiation of the statement attributed to him, and in spite of my explanation about differences with Rajaji — all of which was before the writer.

19. In support of my contention that the author had no warrant for the opinions expressed in the sentences quoted, I would like to draw attention to the following extracts from my press statement reported in the *Bombay Chronicle* of 5th August last :

"As the language of the draft (the one that was sent to Allahabad) shows, it had many I's to be dotted and T's to be crossed. It was sent through Miraben to whom I had explained the implications of the draft and I said to her or to the friends of the Working Committee who happened to be in Sevagram to whom I had explained the draft, that there was an omission, — deliberate — from my draft as to the foreign policy of the Congress and, therefore, any reference to China and Russia.

For, as I had said to them, I derived my inspiration and knowledge from Panditji about foreign matters of which he had been a deep student. Therefore, I said that he could fill in that part in the resolution.

But I may add that I have never, even in a most unguarded moment, expressed the opinion that Japan and Germany would win the war. Not only that; I have often expressed the opinion that they cannot win the war, if only Great Britain will once for all shed her imperialism. I have given expression to that opinion more than once in the columns of *Harijan* and I repeat here that in spite of all my wish to the contrary and of others, if disaster overtakes Great Britain and the Allied Powers it will be because even at the critical moment — most critical in her history — she has most obstinately refused to wash herself of the taint of imperialism which she has carried with her for at least a century and a half."

How in the face of this categorical statement the author could say that the actuating motive behind the 'Quit India'

move was that I was "convinced that Axis would win the war" passes understanding.

20. In support of the same charge the author says :

"That this attitude persisted long after the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee is shown by the following remark made by Mr. Gandhi in *Harijan* of July 19th, in reply to a question whether it would not be wiser to postpone his movement until Britain had settled with the Germans and the Japanese :

"No, because I know you will not settle with Germans without us."

I quote below from the article in which this opinion is expressed. It is from the *Harijan* of July 19, 1942, pp. 234 and 235, and is entitled "A Two Minutes' Interview", the interviewer being a correspondent of the *Daily Express*, London.

"But the correspondent of the *Daily Express* (London) who was among the first to arrive and who was not staying until the end said he would be content with just a couple of minutes' interview, and Gandhiji acceded to his request. He had made up his mind that if the demand for withdrawal which seemed to gather strength every day was rejected, there would be some kind of a movement. So he asked :

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

"Our movement," said Gandhiji, "will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But of course if there is no cooperation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say."

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

"Yes, if my submission is accepted."

"What do you mean by your submission ? —That Britain should offer non-violent battle ?"

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

This was far from convincing Mr. Young. He would not think of any movement with equanimity. So he made an appeal to Gandhiji's sentiment—a sentiment he had more than once expressed:

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

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

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

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

It is curious that sentences taken out of a piece breathing concern for the success of the Allied arms are here presented as an indication of my 'pro-Axis' mentality!

21. The following passage is then reproduced from my letter to H. E. the Viceroy of 14th August last as 'significant':

"I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of *China and Russia* than I can."

The misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia has been underlined by the author who thus comments on the passage:

"They foresaw a British rearguard action across India and the devastation that this must entail."

According to his wont the author has failed to quote the whole of the relevant part of the letter. Nor has he

guided the reader by quoting the letter in the appendix. I quote below the relevant part :

"One thing more. The declared cause is common between the Government of India and us. To put it in the most concrete terms, it is the protection of the freedom of China and Russia. The Government of India think that freedom of India is not necessary for winning the cause. I think exactly the opposite. I have taken Jawaharlal Nehru as my measuring rod. His personal contacts make him feel much more the misery of the impending ruin of China and Russia than I can, and may I say than even you can. In that misery he tried to forget his old quarrel with imperialism.

He dreads much more than I do the success of Nazism and Fascism. I argued with him for days together. He fought against my position with a passion which I have no words to describe. But the logic of facts overwhelmed him. He yielded when he saw clearly that without the freedom of India that of the other two was in great jeopardy. Surely you are wrong in having imprisoned such a powerful friend and ally."

The full letter is given in the appendix (vide Appendix IX).

I suggest that the full quotation gives a meaning wholly different from that given by the author. The following passages from *Harijan* will further prove the baselessness of the charge of pro-Axis or 'defeatist' tendency on my part :

Q. "Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the Allies are going to be defeated in this war ? ..."

A. "..... I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated."

(*Harijan*, June 7, 1942, P. 177)

"..... America is too big financially, intellectually and in scientific skill, to be subdued by any nation or even combination..."

(*Harijan*, June 7, 1942, P. 181)

22. A further complete answer to the same charge, if one were still needed, is furnished by my letter to Shrimati Mirabehn, dictated on the spur of the moment, and never meant for publication. The letter was written to her in answer to her questions which carried to me her belief that the Japanese attack was imminent and that they were likely

to have a walk over. My answer leaves no doubt whatsoever as to my attitude. The letter was written after the Allahabad meeting of the All India Congress Committee. It was dictated by me to the late Shri Mahadev Desai. The original is in Shrimati Mirabehn's possession. I know that she wrote a letter to Lord Linlithgow from this camp on December 24th last sending copies of this correspondence and requesting its publication. She never received even an acknowledgement of her communication. I hope it was not pigeon-holed without so much as being read. I give it in the appendix for ready reference (vide Appendix II (H)).

23. In view of the colourful description of my draft resolution sent to Allahabad, I reproduce opposite passages from the resolution, to show that the author has gone to everything connected with the Congress with the deliberate intention, as it seems to me, of seeing nothing but evil. Thus " Britain is incapable of defending India " is followed by these sentences :

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

24. Then there is this sentence taken from the draft :
" If India were freed her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan. " This has to be read in conjunction with the following paragraphs from the draft :

" This Committee desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity either towards Japan or towards any other nation. India only desires freedom from all alien domination. But in this fight for freedom the Committee is of opinion that India while welcoming universal sympathy does not stand in need of foreign military aid. India will attain her freedom through her non-violent strength and

will retain it likewise. Therefore the Committee hopes that Japan will not have any designs on India. But if Japan attacks India and Britain makes no response to its appeal the Committee would expect all those who look to Congress for guidance to offer complete non-violent noncooperation to the Japanese forces and not render any assistance to them. It is no part of the duty of those who are attacked to render any assistance to the attacker. It is their duty to offer complete noncooperation.

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

1. We may not bend the knee to the aggressor nor obey any of his orders.

2. We may not look to him for any favours nor fall to his bribes. But we may not bear him any malice nor wish him ill.

3. If he wishes to take possession of our fields we will refuse to give them up even if we have to die in the efforts to resist him.

4. If he is attacked by disease or dying of thirst and seeks our aid we may not refuse it.

5. In such places where the British and Japanese forces are fighting our noncooperation will be fruitless and unnecessary.

At present our noncooperation with the British Government is limited. Were we to offer them complete noncooperation when they are actually fighting, it would be tantamount to placing our country deliberately in Japanese hands. Therefore, not to put any obstacle in the way of the British forces will often be the only way of demonstrating our noncooperation with the Japanese. Neither may we assist the British in any active manner. If we can judge from their recent attitude, the British Government do not need any help from us beyond our non-interference. They desire our help only as slaves — a position we can never accept.

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

I contend that from this setting it is impossible to infer pro-Japanese attitude or anti-British attitude on my part or that of the Working Committee. On the contrary, there is determined opposition to any aggression and meticulous concern for the Allied arms. The demand for immediate freedom itself is born of that concern. If the search be for implacable opposition on my part to British imperialism that search is superfluous, for it is patent in all my writings.

25. I would like to close this subject by quoting some passages from my speeches on the 7th and 8th August last:

Extracts from the Hindustani speech of 7th August.

Then, there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. They say they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British imperialism and the British people. To them the two are one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. This is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour so long as we do not feel that it is our war, so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must therefore purge ourselves of hatred. Speaking for myself I can say that I have never felt any hatred. As a matter of fact I feel myself to be a greater friend of the British now than ever before. One reason is that they are today in distress. My very friendship therefore demand that I should try to save them from their mistakes. As I view the situation they are on the brink of an abyss. It therefore becomes my duty to warn them of their danger even though it may, for the time being, anger them to the point of cutting off the friendly hand that is stretched out to help them. People may laugh, nevertheless that is my claim. At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody. The idea of taking

advantage of the opponent's difficulty and utilizing it for delivering a blow is entirely repugnant to me.

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There is one thing which I would like you always to keep before your mind. Never believe that the British are going to lose the war. I know they are not a nation of cowards. They will fight to the last rather than accept defeat. But suppose, for strategic reasons they are forced to leave India as they had to leave Malaya, Singapore, and Burma what shall be our position in that event? The Japanese will invade India, and we shall be unprepared. Occupation of India by the Japanese will mean too the end of China and perhaps Russia. I do not want to be the instrument of Russia's and China's defeat. Pandit Nehru was only today describing to me the wretched condition of Russia. He was agitated. The picture he drew still haunts me. I have asked myself the question, 'What can I do to help Russia and China?' And the reply has come from within, 'You are being weighed in the balance. You have in the alchemy of Ahimsa a universal panacea. Why don't you give it a trial? Have you lost faith?' Out of this agony has emerged the proposal for British withdrawal. It may irritate the Britishers today and they may misunderstand me; they may even look upon me as their enemy. But some day they will say that I was their true friend.

From the Hindustani speech on 8th August.

After showing concern for China I said:

I therefore want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. It cannot now wait for the realization of communal unity. If that unity is not achieved, sacrifices for attaining freedom will need to be much greater than would otherwise have been the case. The Congress has to win freedom or be wiped out in the effort. The freedom which the Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for Congressmen alone but for the whole of the Indian people.

From the concluding speech in English on 8th August.

It will be the greatest mistake on their (United Nations') part to turn a deaf ear to India's non-violent pleading and refuse her fundamental right of freedom. It will deal a mortal blow to Russia and China if they oppose the demand of non-violent India which is today, on bended knee, pleading for the discharge of a debt long overdue. . . . I have been the author of the non-embarrassment policy of the Congress and yet today you find me talking in strong language. My non-embarrassment plea, however, was always qualified by the proviso, "consistently with the honour and safety of the nation". If a man holds me by the collar and I am

drowning, may I not struggle to free myself from the strangle-hold? Therefore there is no inconsistency between our earlier declarations and our present demand I have always recognized a fundamental difference between Fascism and the democracies, despite their many limitations, and even between Fascism and British imperialism which I am fighting. Do the British get from India all they want? What they get today is from an India which they hold in bondage. Think, what a difference it would make if India were to participate in the war as a free ally. That freedom, if it is to come, must come today. For she will utilize that freedom for the success of the Allies, including Russia and China. The Burma Road will once more be opened, and the way cleared for rendering really effective help to Russia.

Englishmen did not die to the last man in Malaya or on the soil of Burma. They effected instead, what has been described as a 'masterly evacuation'. But I cannot afford to do that. Where shall I go, where shall I take the forty crores of India? How is this mass of humanity to be set aflame in the cause of world deliverance unless and until it has touched and felt freedom? Today there is no life left in them. It has been crushed out of them. If lustre has to be restored to their eyes, freedom has to come not tomorrow but today. Congress must therefore pledge itself to do or die.

These quotations show clearly why I advised the Congress to make the demand for the withdrawal of British power. The quotations also show that non-violence, i. e., self-suffering and self-sacrifice without retaliation, was the key-stone of the movement.

26. The author has had difficulty in finding an adequate explanation for my agreement to the stationing of Allied troops in India in spite of the withdrawal of British power. If he had an open mind, there should have been no difficulty. My explanation was there. There was no occasion to doubt its sincerity unless there was positive evidence to the contrary. I have never claimed infallibility or a larger share of intellect for myself than the ordinary.

27. The author says that no "satisfactory solution" of the difficulty raised by Rajaji, namely, that the stationing of the Allied forces, without the civil power being with the British Government, would be "reinstallation of the British"

Government in a worse form" was "ever made public by Mr. Gandhi". The author therefore suggests that "the solution was one which he (I) preferred should remain a secret"; and he proceeds to say:

"Now while the details of Mr. Gandhi's personal solution of this problem must remain a matter for speculation, an explanation which fulfils the logical requirements of the above situation immediately comes to mind; it is that, as has been shown above to be probable, Mr. Gandhi's admission of this amendment to his scheme was intended primarily as a bid for American support and secondarily as a sop to his opponents on the Working Committee, but that he envisaged, or planned to create, circumstances in which this permission would be meaningless, that is to say, circumstances in which the troops would either be forced to withdraw, or would, if they remained, be rendered ineffective."

It is difficult to characterize this suggestion. I take it that the secrecy suggested was to be secret even from the members of the Working Committee. If not they would also become conspirators with me in the fraud to be perpetrated on the Allied powers. Amazing consequences would flow from such a fraud. Assume that the British Government has shed all power in India, that by an agreement between the free India Government and the Allied powers, their troops are stationed in India. This assumption carries with it the further assumption that the agreement has been arrived at without any pressure violent or non-violent and simply from the British recognition of the necessity of recognizing independence of India. Assume further that the secret has all this time remained buried in my bosom, and that I suddenly divulge it to the free India Government and therefore to the world, and they carry out my plan to frustrate the terms of the agreement, what would be the result? The Allied powers, having all the overwhelming military strength at their disposal, would forfeit my head to themselves—which would be the least—and would further let their righteous rage descend upon the free India Government and put an end to independence, which was won, not by

military strength, but simply by force of reason, and therefore make it impossible, so far as they can, for India to regain such lost independence. I must not carry this train of thought much further. The author's suggestion, if it were true, would also conclusively prove that all of us conspirators were thinking, not of the deliverance of India from bondage, or of the good of the masses, but only of our base little selves.

28. The difficulty pointed out by Rajaji and on which the writer has laid stress in order to infer 'secret motive' on my part was pointed out even more forcibly by another correspondent and I dealt with it in the issue of *Harijan* dated 19th July, 1942, pp. 232 and 233. As the whole of the article consists of questions and answers which have a bearing on the author's insinuations, I reproduce them without apology :

PERTINENT QUESTIONS

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

A. The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by Free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never been claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy. And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstand a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a Free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength. The demand therefore is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure

was wrong ? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain moral status which could ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have reason to fight is a question I need not consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

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

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

A. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France ? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my own terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q. 6. If the Congress, as Maulana Saheb has just stated, 'considers defence as armed defence only', is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources 'independently' to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4000 miles of coast line and no navy and shipbuilding industry?

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

Q. 7. What material aid could India send to China today, even if she were declared 'independent' by the British?

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

Why has the author ignored the explanation, for instance, in answers 2 and 4 which was before him? Boiled down, my explanation means that I would trust the Allies to carry out faithfully the conditions of the contract to be fulfilled by them, just as I would expect them to trust the Government of Free India to carry out their part of the contract. British withdrawal, whenever it comes, will carry with it so much honour that everything to be done thereafter by either party

will be done with the greatest good-will and utmost sincerity. I hold that this solution of the difficulty presented is perfectly comprehensible and satisfactory.

29. As to secrecy, this is what I said on the 8th August in my Hindustani speech before the A. I. C. C. meeting:

Nothing, however, should be done secretly. This is an open rebellion. In this struggle secrecy is a sin. A free man would not engage in a secret movement. It is likely that when you gain freedom you will have a C. I. D. of your own, in spite of my advice to the contrary. But in the present struggle we have to work openly and to receive bullets in our chests, without running away. In a struggle of this character all secrecy is sin and must be punctiliously avoided. [See also Appendix I (C).]

It is somewhat hard for a man who has avoided secrecy as a sin to be accused of it, especially when there is no evidence whatsoever for the charge.

30. The author proceeds:

and it is no coincidence that, at the same time as Mr. Gandhi was developing his 'Quit India' theme in *Harjan*, he was also inveighing against any form of 'scorched earth' policy (Mr. Gandhi's solicitude for the property, largely industrial property, be it noted which it might have been necessary to deny to the enemy, contrasts strangely with his readiness to sacrifice countless numbers of Indians in non-violent resistance to the Japanese. The property must be saved. It is perhaps legitimate to ask -- for whom?) "

"No coincidence" is a gratuitous suggestion for which there is no proof. The suggestion behind the parenthetical gloss is evidently that I was more solicitous about the property of moneyed men than of the lives and property of the masses. This appears to me to be a wilful distortion of truth. I give the following quotations which show the contrary:

'As a war resister my answer can only be one. I see neither bravery nor sacrifice in destroying life or property for offence or defence. I would far rather leave, if I must, my crops and homestead for the enemy to use than destroy them for the sake of preventing their use by him. There is reason, sacrifice and even bravery in so leaving my homestead and crops, if I do so not out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy, that is, out of a humanitarian motive.

But in India's case there is, too, a practical consideration. Unlike Russia's, India's masses have no national instinct developed in the sense that Russia's have. India is not fighting. Her conquerors are."

(*Harijan*, March 22, 1942, p. 88)

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

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

(*Harijan*, April 12, 1942, p. 109)

So far there is solicitude only for the poor man's property. There is no mention of industrial property. I have also given my reasons, which I still hold to be perfectly sound, for non-destruction of such property. I have found only one note in the issues of *Harijan* in my possession which refers to industrial property. It is as follows :

"Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oil seed. I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; . . . Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction."

(*Harijan*, May 24, 1942, p. 167)

The reason is obvious. Here too the solicitude is not for the owners, but for the masses who use food products and cloth produced in factories. It should also be remembered that I have all along written and even acted against both kinds of factories, in normal times, in the interests of village industries, my creed being to prefer the products of hand-labour in which millions can be engaged, to those of factories in which only a few thousands or at best a few lacs can be employed.

31. Mark too the last sentence in the penultimate paragraph of the draft resolution sent to Allahabad: "But it can never be the Congress policy to destroy what belongs to or is of use to the masses." It is incomprehensible how the author could, in the face of the foregoing, distort truth as he has done.

32. In the same paragraph from which I have quoted the parenthetical remark of the author, I find the following:

"We have however his own admission that he could not guarantee that non-violent action would keep the Japanese at bay; he refers indeed to any such hope as an 'unwarranted supposition'."

And this is cited to support the conclusion that in order to prevent India from becoming a battle-field between the Allied Nations and Japan I was prepared "to concede to their (Japanese) demands". Let me quote where the phrase is taken from. In an article entitled "A Fallacy", in *Harijan* dated 5th July, 1942, I have dealt with the following question addressed to me by a correspondent:

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

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

My reply to this runs as follows :

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

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

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twentytwo years." (Harijan, July 5, 1942, p. 210)

The supposition referred to here is my correspondent's, namely, that the non-violent force created by my action, which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw, will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also and therefore I should not have resiled from my original proposition that the British power should withdraw their troops from India. I have shown the absurdity of such a supposition made for the sake of preventing the retention of British troops. My belief in the power of non-violence is unchangeable, but I cannot put it before the British in order to prevent their use of India as a base, if they consider it necessary, for dealing with the Japanese menace.

33. The author has further sought to strengthen his inference by quoting the following from my appeal to the Japanese :

"And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours (the Japanese) and Nazism."

The author has conveniently omitted the sentences which follow and which instead of strengthening his inference would negative it altogether. These are the sentences :

"Our resistance to it (British Imperialism) does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

"But in this they need no aid from foreign powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity, we should have done it as soon as the war broke out nearly three years ago. Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact, if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain, should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

"I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarization of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the independence of India the Allied powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it, their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to nought. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognizing now the freedom of India,

and turning sullen India's forced cooperation into freed India's voluntary cooperation.

"To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win, you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skilfully achieved.

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

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

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

(*Harijan*, July 26, 1942, p. 243 et. sq.)

I have given this long quotation because I see that it is a complete answer to the author's insinuations, as it is also an open gate to the whole of my mind regarding the movement contemplated in the resolution of 8th August

last. But the author has many arrows in his quiver. For, in defence of his inference that I was prepared to "concede to their (Japanese) demands", he proceeds:

"Only in the grip of some dominant emotion would he (I) have contemplated such a capitulation. This emotion was, there seems little doubt, his desire to preserve India from the horrors of war."

In other words, I would exchange Japanese rule for British. My non-violence is made of sterner stuff. Only a jaundiced eye can read such an emotion in the face of the clearest possible writings of *Harijan* that I would face all the horrors of war in order to end the horror of horrors which British domination is. I am impatient of it because I am impatient of all domination. I am in "the grip" of only one "dominant emotion" and no other—that is *India's Freedom*. The author has admitted this in the same breath that he has charged me with an unworthy emotion. He has thus condemned himself out of his own mouth.

34. At page 14 of the indictment the author says:

"In conclusion there are the famous words uttered by Mr. Gandhi at a press conference at Wardha, after the Working Committee had passed the resolution of July 14th, which show clearly how even at that early stage he was fully determined on a final struggle:

"There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation. There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion*."

"There also lies the answer to those who have since accused Government of precipitating the crisis by the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders, and have suggested that the period of grace referred to by Mr. Gandhi in his Bombay speech should have been utilized for negotiation: "there is no room left for withdrawal or negotiation", Mr. Gandhi had said a month earlier. Moreover the Wardha resolution merely threatened a mass movement if the demands of Congress were not accepted. The Bombay resolution went further. It no longer *threatened* a movement with the delay that that might entail. It *sanctioned* the movement and if any further delay was intended, are there not at least good grounds for believing in the light of all that had been said, that it was to be used not for the purpose of negotiation but for putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution?"

I shall presently show that the "famous words" attributed to me are partly a distortion and partly an interpolation not to be found in the authentic report of the Wardha interview as published in *Harijan* of 19th July, 1942. Let me quote in full the portion of the Wardha interview in which that part of the quotation which I claim is distorted appears in its correct form.

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

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

(Capitals mine)

(*Harijan*, July, 1942, p. 233)

The corresponding quotation in the indictment I reproduce below in capital letters:

"THERE IS NO ROOM LEFT IN THE PROPOSAL FOR
WITHDRAWAL OR NEGOTIATION"

I suggest that in the context from which this is torn and distorted, it is entirely out of place. I was answering the question: "Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?" As an answer to the

question, the sentence as it appears in *Harjan*, "there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal", is perfectly intelligible and harmonizes with the sentences preceding and succeeding.

35. The distorted sentence in the indictment has two others tacked on to it. They are "There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an *open rebellion*." The underlining is the author's. The two sentences are not to be found anywhere in the report of the interview as it appears in *Harjan*. 'There is no question of one more chance', can have no place in the paragraph about negotiations with my approach to them as revealed in my answer. As to 'open rebellion', I have even at the Second Indian Round Table Conference used that expression coupled with the adjective non-violent. But it has no place anywhere in the interview.

36. I have taxed myself to know how the two sentences could have crept into the author's quotation. Fortunately on 26th June, while this reply was being typed there came the *Hindustan Times* file for which Shri Pyarelal had asked. In its issue of 15th July, 1942, there appears the following message:

Wardhaganj, July 14

There is no room left in the proposal for withdrawal or negotiation either they recognize India's independence or they don't, said Mahatma Gandhi answering questions at a press interview at Sevagram on the Congress resolution. He emphasized that what he wanted was not the recognition of Indian independence on paper, but in action.

Asked if his movement would not hamper war efforts of the United Nations, Mahatma Gandhi said "The movement is intended not only to help China but also to make common cause with the Allies."

On his attention being drawn to Mr Amery's latest statement in the House of Commons, Mahatma Gandhi said "I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms, but that cannot possibly delay the pace of the people or the group that is determined to go its way." Mahatma Gandhi added, "There is no question of one more chance. After all, it is an open rebellion."

Asked what form his movement would take, Mahatma Gandhi said: "The conception is that of a mass movement on the widest possible scale. It will include what is possible to include in a mass movement or what people are capable of doing. This will be a mass movement of a purely non-violent character."

Asked if he would court imprisonment this time, Mahatma Gandhi said: "It is too soft a thing. There is no such thing as courting imprisonment this time. My intention is to make it as short and swift as possible."

— A. P. I.

37. This message is an eye-opener for me. I have often suffered from misreporting or coloured epitomes of my writings and speeches even to the point of being lynched. This one, though not quite as bad, is bad enough. The above A. P. summary gives, if it does, the clue to the author's source for the misquotation and the additional sentences. If he used that source, the question arises why he went out of his way to use that doubtful and unauthorized source, when he had before him the authentic text of the full interview in *Harijan* of 19th July last. He has made a most liberal, though disjointed and biased use of the columns of *Harijan* for building up his case against me. At page 13 of the indictment he thus begins the charge culminating in the misquotation at page 14:

"From this point onwards Mr. Gandhi's conception of the struggle developed rapidly. His writings on the subject are too lengthy to quote in full, but the following excerpts from *Harijan* illustrate the direction in which his mind was moving."

On the same page he has quoted passages from page 233 of *Harijan* from the report of the interview in question. I am therefore entitled to conclude that the quotation under examination was taken from *Harijan*. It is manifest now that it was not. Why not? If he took the three sentences from the afore-mentioned A. P. report, why has he quoted them without asterisks between the sentences that appear apart in the A. P. report? I may not pursue the inquiry any further. It has pained me deeply. How the two sentences

not found in the authentic text of the interview found place in the A. P. summary I do not know. It is for the Government to inquire, if they will.

38. The author's quotation having been found wanting, the whole of his conclusions and inferences based upon it must fall to the ground. In my opinion therefore the Government does stand accused not only of 'having precipitated', but of having invited a crisis by their premeditated coup. The elaborate preparations they made for all-India arrests were not made overnight. It is wrong to draw a distinction between the Wardha resolution and the Bombay one in the sense that the first only *threatened* and the second *sanctioned* the mass civil disobedience. The first only required ratification by the All-India Congress Committee but the effect of either was the same, i. e., both authorized me to lead and guide the movement if negotiations failed. But the movement was not started by the resolution of 8th August last. Before I could function they arrested not only me but principal Congressmen all over India. Thus it was not I but the Government who started the movement and gave it a shape which I could not have dreamt of giving and which it never would have taken while I was conducting it. No doubt it would have been 'short and swift', not in the violent sense, as the author has insinuated, but in the non-violent sense as I know it. The Government made it very swift by their very violent action. Had they given me breathing time, I would have sought an interview with the Viceroy and strained every nerve to show the reasonableness of the Congress demand. Thus there were no "grounds" "good" or bad for believing, as the author would have one believe, that the "period of grace" was to be used for "putting the finishing touches to a plan to which its authors were already committed but which might not yet be completely ready to put into execution." In order to sustain such a belief it has

become necessary for the author to dismiss from consideration the whole of the proceedings of the Bombay meeting of the All India Congress Committee and even vital parts of its resolution—save the clause referring to the mass movement—and the very awkward word ‘non-violence’ to which I shall come presently.

39. I give below extracts from my speeches and writings to show how eager and earnest I was to avoid conflict and achieve the purpose by negotiation and to show that the Congress aim never was to thwart the Allies in any way :

“ . . . It would be churlish on our part if we said, ‘we don’t want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.’ Then the Congress Committee won’t be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing press representatives.”

(*Harjan*, July 26, 1942, p. 243.)

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

A. “ No, not on the question of independence. It is possible only on questions on which sides may be taken. The outstanding question of independence should be treated as common cause. It is only then that I can conceive possibility of arbitration on the Indo-British question But if there is to be any arbitration—and I cannot logically say there should not, for if I did, it would be an arrogation of complete justice on my side—it can be done only if India’s independence is recognized.”

(*Harjan*, May 24, 1942, P. 168.)

An English correspondent : “ . . . Would you advocate arbitration for the Indo-British problem ? . . . ”

A. “ Any day. I suggested long ago that this question could be decided by arbitration. . . . ”

(*Harjan*, May 24, 1942, P. 168.)

The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hands. My first act will be to wait upon H. E. the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you to do in the meanwhile ? I will tell you. There is the spinning wheel. I had to struggle with the Maulana Saheb before it dawned upon him that in a non-violent struggle it had an abiding place. The fourteen-fold constructive

programme is all there for you to carry out. But there is something more you have to do and it will give life to that programme. Every one of you should from this very moment consider yourself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism. This is no make-believe. You have to cultivate the spirit of freedom, before it comes physically. The chains of the slave are broken the moment he considers himself a free man. He will then tell his master: "I have been your slave all these days but I am no longer that now. You may kill me, but if you do not and if you release me from the bondage, I will ask for nothing more from you. For henceforth instead of depending upon you I shall depend upon God for food and clothing. God has given me the urge of freedom and therefore I deem myself a free man."

You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministries and the like. I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. May be he will propose the abolition of the salt tax, the drink evil etc., but I will say, "Nothing less than freedom."

Here is a Mantra—a short one—that I will give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The Mantra is this: "We shall do or die. We shall either free India, or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery." Every true Congressman or woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your badge. Dismiss jails out of your consideration. If the Government leaves me free, I shall spare you the trouble of filling the jails. I will not put on the Government the strain of maintaining a large number of prisoners at a time when it is in trouble. Let every man and woman live every moment of his or her life hereafter in the consciousness that he or she eats or lives for achieving freedom and will die, if need be, to attain that goal. Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved, and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life shall gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the faint hearted. (From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August before the A. I. C. C.)

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Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence today. I have yet to go through much ceremonial, as I always do, and this time more than ever before—the burden is so heavy. I have yet to continue to reason with those with whom I seem to have lost all credit

for the time being. (From the concluding speech in English on 8th August before the A. I. C. C.)

In the same connection I give extracts from the utterances of Maulana Saheb and others in the appendix. (vide Appendices V, VI, VII, and VIII.)

40. At page 11 of the indictment the author says:

"To summarize briefly, Mr. Gandhi did not believe that non-violence alone was capable of defending India against Japan. Nor had he any faith in the ability of the Allies to do so: 'Britain', he stated in his draft Allahabad resolution, 'is incapable of defending India.' His 'Quit India' move was intended to result in the withdrawal of the British Government to be succeeded by a problematical 'provisional Government, or as Mr. Gandhi admitted to be possible, by anarchy; the Indian army was to be disbanded; and Allied troops were to be allowed to operate only under the terms imposed by this provisional Government, assisted by India's non-violent non-cooperation to Japan, for which, as Mr. Gandhi had already admitted, there would be little scope with Allied troops operating in India. Finally, even if, in the face of the above arguments, it could be supposed that Mr. Gandhi and the Congress proposed to pin their faith on the ability of Allied troops to defend India, it should be noted that the former himself admitted that the ability of Allied troops to operate effectively would depend upon the formation of a suitable provisional Government. Now since this Government was to be representative of all sections of Indian opinion, it is clear that neither Mr. Gandhi nor the Congress could legitimately commit it in advance to any particular course of action; they could not, that is to say, undertake that it would support the Allies in defending India against Japan. They could not in fact make any promise on behalf of this provisional Government unless they intended that it should be dominated by Congress; the whole trend of Congress policy, however, coupled with the extravagant promises made in the Bombay A. I. C. C. resolution on behalf of this provisional Government, leave little doubt that this was their intention, a view held, significantly, by the Muslim League and Muslims in general! You have then a situation in which the Allied troops would be dependent for support on a Government dominated by a clique which has already been shown to be thoroughly defeatist in outlook, and whose leader has already expressed the intention of negotiating with Japan.

It is not the intention here to examine the third aim, the establishment of communal unity followed by the formation of a provisional Government, at all closely. It has been suggested in the preceding para-

graph that the Congress intended this Government to be under their domination and a note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India. It will suffice here to show, from Mr. Gandhi's own writings, the doubts that he entertained as to the feasibility of establishing any such Government.

This brief summary is a perfect caricature of all I have said or written, and the Congress has stood for and expressed in the resolution of 8th August last. I hope I have shown in the foregoing pages how cruelly I have been misrepresented. If my argument has failed to carry conviction, I should be quite content to be judged on the strength of the quotations interspersed in the argument and those in the appendices hereto attached. As against the foregoing caricature, let me give a summary of my views based on the quotations referred to above.

1. I believe that non-violence alone is capable of defending India, not only against Japan but the whole world.

2. I do hold that Britain is incapable of defending India. She is not defending India today; she is defending herself and her interests in India and elsewhere. These are often contrary to India's.

3. 'Quit India' move was intended to result in the withdrawal of British power if possible with simultaneous formation of a provisional Government, consisting of members representing all the principal parties, if the withdrawal took place by the willing consent of the British Government. If, however, the withdrawal took place willy-nilly there might be a period of anarchy.

4. The Indian army would naturally be disbanded, being British creation — unless it forms part of Allied troops, or it transfers its allegiance to the Free India Government.

5. The Allied troops would remain under terms agreed to between the Allied powers and the Free India Government.

6. If India became free, the Free India Government would tender cooperation by rendering such military aid as it could. But in the largest part of India where no military effort was possible, non-violent action will be taken by the masses of the people with the utmost enthusiasm.

41. Then the summary comes to the provisional Government. As to this, let the Congress resolution itself speak. I give the relevant parts below :

"The A. I. C. C., therefore, repeats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence, a provisional Government will be formed and free India will become an ally of the United Nations, sharing with them in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom. The provisional government can only be formed by the cooperation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the non-violent forces at its command, together with its Allied powers, and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution, according to the Congress view, should be a federal one with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

Lastly, while the A. I. C. C. has stated its own view of the future governance under free India, the A. I. C. C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on a mass struggle, it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes, will belong to the whole people of India."

I claim that there is nothing in this clause of the resolution that is 'extravagant' or impracticable. The concluding sentence proves in my opinion the sincerity and non-

party character of the Congress. And as there is no party in the country which is not wholly anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi and anti-Japan, it follows that a government formed by these parties is bound to become an enthusiastic champion of the Allied cause which, by the recognition of India as a free state, will truly become the cause of democracy.

42. As to communal unity, it has been a fundamental plank with the Congress from its commencement. Its President is a Muslim divine of world wide repute, especially in the Muslim world. It has besides him three Muslims on the Working Committee. It is surprising that the author has summoned to his assistance the Muslim League opinion. The League can afford to doubt the sincerity of Congress professions and accuse the Congress of the desire of establishing a "Congress-Hindu domination". It ill becomes the all powerful Government of India to take shelter under the Muslim League wing. This has a strong flavour of the old Imperial Mantra **DIVIDE AND RULE**. League-Congress differences are a purely domestic question. They are bound to be adjusted when foreign domination ends, if they are not dissolved sooner.

43. The author winds up the second chapter as follows:

"Whether the authors of the resolution genuinely believed that the Congress demand would, if accepted, help rather than hinder the cause of the United Nations and intended that it should have that effect, depends on the answer to two questions. In the first place, could any body of men who honestly desired that result have deliberately called the country, if their way of achieving it was not accepted, to take part in a mass movement the declared object of which was to have precisely the opposite effect by paralysing the whole administration and the whole war effort? In the second place, bearing in mind that less than a year previously it had been proclaimed under Mr. Gandhi's orders to be a "sin" to help the war with men or money, can it be denied that these men saw their opportunity in Britain's danger and believed that the psychological moment for the enforcement of their political demands must be seized while the fate of the United Nations hung in the balance and before the tide of

war turned — if it was ever going to turn — in their favour? The answer to these two questions is left to the reader."

I have to answer these two questions both as reader and accused. As to the first question, there is no necessary inconsistency between the genuine belief that an acceptance of the Congress demand would help the cause of the United Nations, i. e., of democracy all the world over and a mass movement (which moreover was merely contemplated) to paralyse the administration on non-acceptance of the Congress demand. It is submitted that the attempt 'to paralyse the administration' on non-acceptance proves the genuineness of the demand. It sets the seal on its genuineness by Congressmen preparing to die in the attempt to paralyse an administration that thwarts their will to fight the combine against democracy. Thus it is the administration's dead-set against the Congress which proves the hollowness of its claim that it is engaged in a fight for democracy. My firm belief is that the administration is daily proving its inefficiency for handling the war in the right manner. China is slowly pining away while the administration is playing at war-handling. In the attempt to suppress the Congress it has cut off the greatest source of help to the millions of China who are being ground down under the Japanese heel.

44. The second question hardly demands a separate answer. Congressmen who proclaimed a year ago under my "orders" that it is a "sin" to help the war with "men or money" need not be considered here, if I give different "orders". For me, I am as much opposed to all war today as I was before a year or more. I am but an individual. All Congressmen are not of that mind. The Congress will give up the policy of non-violence today, if it can achieve India's freedom by so doing. And I would have no compunction about inviting those who seek my advice to throw themselves heart and soul into the effort to help themselves

and thus deliver from bondage those nations that are wedded to democracy. If the effort involves military training, the people will be free to take it, leaving me and those who think with me to our own non-violence. I did this very thing during the Boer War, and in the last war. I was a "good boy" then, because my action harmonized with the British Government's wishes. Today I am the arch enemy, not because I have changed but because the British Government which is being tried in the balance is being found wanting. I helped before, because I believed in British good faith. I appear to be hindering today because the British Government will not act up to the faith that was reposed in them. My answer to the two questions propounded by the author may sound harsh, but it is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as God lets me see it.

45. The gravamen, however, of the charges against me is that "every reference to non-violence in the forecasts of the forms the movement would take made by Mr. Gandhi and his Congress disciples and in the post arrest programmes and instructions is nothing more than a pious hope or at best a mild warning which was known to have no practical value." It is also described as mere "lip service".

46. The author gives no proof to show that it (the warning) "was known to have no practical value". If the references to non-violence are removed from my writings and my utterances in order to condemn me and my "Congress disciples", the removal would be on a par with the omission of 'nots' from the Commandments and quoting them in support of killing, stealing etc. The author, in robbing me of the one thing I live by and live for, robs me of all I possess. The evidence given in support of dismissing references to non-violence as "valueless" mostly consists of innuendoes. "It was to be a struggle, a fight to the finish in which foreign domination was to be ended, cost what it may." In

a non-violent struggle the cost has always to be paid by the fighters in their own blood. "It was to be an unarmed revolt, short and swift." The prefix 'un' in 'unarmed', unless it be regarded as "valueless", gives 'short and swift' an ennobling meaning. For, to make the struggle, 'short and swift' prisons have to be avoided as too soft a thing and death to be hugged as a true friend enabling the fighters to affect opponents' heart much quicker than mere jail-going can. Mention by me of 'conflagration' meant *giving* of lives in thousands or more, if need be. The author has called it a "grimly accurate forecast". This has a *post-facto* meaning unintended by the author in that a heavy toll of lives was taken by way of reprisals by the authorities, and an orgy of unmentionable excesses let loose upon the people by the soldiery and the police; if the press reports and statements by responsible public men are to be believed. "Mr. Gandhi was prepared to risk the occurrence of riots." It is true that I was prepared to take such a risk. Any big movement whether violent or non-violent involves certain risks. But non-violent running of risks means a special method, a special handling. I would have strained every nerve to avoid riots. Moreover, my first act would have been to woo the Viceroy. Till then no question of running any risk could arise. As it was, the Government would not let me run the risk. They put me in prison instead! What the mass movement was to include and how the risk was to be taken, if at all, the author could not know, for the movement was never started. Nor had any instructions been issued by me.

47. The author complains of my "making full use of existing grievances". The use began even before the birth of the Congress. It has never ceased. How could it, so long as the foreign domination, of which they were a part, lasted?

48. " Finally every man and woman was to consider himself free and act for himself." These last words or at least their sense finds a place in the resolution itself." This last sentence is a specimen of *suppressio veri*. Here is the relevant extract from the Congress resolution :

" They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or for instructions to reach our people, and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India."

There is nothing new or startling in this. It is practical wisdom. Men and women must become their own leaders when their trusted guides are removed from them, or when their organization is declared illegal or otherwise ceases to function. True, there were formerly nominal 'dictators' appointed. This was more to court arrest than to guide followers by being in touch with them. For, touch was not possible except secretly. This time not prison but death was to be sought in the prosecution of the movement. Therefore, every one was to become his own leader to act within the four corners of the square foundation—non-violence. The omission of the two conditions for every one becoming his or her own guide was an unpardonable suppression of relevant truth.

49. The author then proceeds to consider whether the movement contemplated by me could, by its very nature, be non-violent and further whether " Mr. Gandhi (1) intended that it should be so or hoped that it would remain so." I have already shown that the movement never having been started, nobody could say what I had contemplated or hoped unless my intention or my hope could be justly

deduced from my writings. Let me however observe how the author has arrived at this conclusion. His first proof is that I have employed military terms in connection with a movement claimed to be wholly non-violent. I have employed such language from the commencement of my experiment in South Africa. I could more easily show the contrast between my move and the ordinary ones by using identical phraseology, so far as possible, and coupling it with non-violence. Throughout my experience of Satyagraha since 1908, I cannot recall an instance in which people were misled by my use of military phraseology. And, indeed, Satyagraha being a "moral equivalent of war", the use of such terminology is but natural. Probably all of us have used at some time or another, or, are at least familiar with, expressions such as 'sword of the spirit', 'dynamite of truth', 'shield and buckler of patience', 'assaulting the citadel of truth', or 'wrestling with God'. Yet no one has ever seen anything strange or wrong in such use. Who can be ignorant of the use of military phraseology by the Salvation Army? That body has taken it over in its entirety, and yet I have not known anyone having mistaken the Salvation Army, with its colonels and captains, for a military organization trained to the use of deadly weapons of destruction.

50. I must deny that "it has been shown that Mr. Gandhi had little faith in the effectiveness of non-violence to resist Japanese aggression". What I have said is that maximum effectiveness cannot be shown when it has to work side by side with violence. It is true that Maulana Saheb and Pandit Nehru have doubts about the efficacy of non-violence to withstand aggression, but they have ample faith in non-violent action for fighting against British domination. I do believe that both British and Japanese imperialisms are equally to be avoided. But I have already

shown by quoting from *Harijan* that it is easier to cope with the evil that is, than the one that may come. [vide Appendix II (D).]

51. I admit at once that there is "a doubtful proportion of full believers" in my "theory of non-violence". But it should not be forgotten that I have also said that for my movement I do not at all need believers in the theory of non-violence, full or imperfect. It is enough if people carry out the rules of non-violent action. [vide Appendix IV (A).]

52. Now comes the author's most glaring lapse of memory or misrepresentation in the paragraph under discussion. He says, "... remember too that he had before him the example of his previous movements, each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence." I have before me a list of 20 civil resistance movements beginning with the very first in South Africa. I do recall instances in which popular frenzy had broken out resulting in regrettable murders. These instances of mob-violence, though bad enough, were but a flea-bite in proportion to the vast size of this country—as big as Europe less Russia territorially and bigger numerically. Had violence been the Congress policy, secretly or openly, or had the Congress discipline been less strict, it is simple enough to realize that the violence, instead of being a flea-bite, would have been more like a volcanic eruption. But every time such outbreaks took place the most energetic measures were taken by the whole Congress organization to deal with them. On several occasions I had myself resorted to fasting. All this produced a salutary effect on the popular mind. And there were also movements which were singularly free from violence. Thus the South African Satyagraha which was a mass movement and similar movements in Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli and Borsad—not to mention others in which collective civil disobedience on a wide scale was offered—

were wholly free from any outburst of violence. In all these the people had conformed to the rules laid down for their observance. The author has thus gone against history in making the sweeping statement that I had before me the "example of previous movements each professedly non-violent, yet each giving rise to the most hideous violence". My own experience being quite to the contrary, I have not the shadow of a doubt that if the Government had not, by their summary action, unnecessarily provoked the people beyond endurance, there never would have been any violence. The members of the Working Committee were anxious that violence on the part of the people should be avoided, not from any philanthropic motive, but from the conviction borne in upon them from the experience of hard facts, that violence by the people could not usher in independence. The education that the people had received through the Congress was wholly non-violent, before 1920, because of the leaders' belief in constitutional agitation and faith in British promises and declarations, and since 1920, because of the belief, in the first instance induced by me and then enforced by experience, that mere constitutional agitation, though it had served upto a point, could never bring in independence, and that regard being had to the condition of India, non-violent action was the only sanction through which independence could be attained in the quickest manner possible. The accumulated experience of the past thirty years, the first eight of which were in South Africa, fills me with the greatest hope that in the adoption of non-violence lies the future of India and the world. It is the most harmless and yet equally effective way of dealing with the political and economic wrongs of the down-trodden portion of humanity. I have known from early youth that non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for his

peace and final salvation, but it is a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace for which it has been yearning for ages past. It is therefore sad to think that a government, the most powerful in the world, should have belittled the doctrine and put its votaries, however imperfect they may be, out of action. It is my firm opinion that thereby they have injured the cause of universal peace and the Allied Nations.

53. For the author "the certainty" was "that his (my) movement could not remain non-violent". For me "the certainty" was quite the contrary, if the movement had remained in the hands of those who could guide the people.

54. It is also now "clear" what I meant when I said I was prepared to go to the extremest limit, that is that I would continue the non-violent movement even though the government might succeed in provoking violence. Hitherto I have stayed my hand when people have been so provoked. This time I ran the risk because the risk of remaining supine in the face of the greatest world conflagration known to history was infinitely greater. If non-violence be the greatest force in the world, it must prove itself during this crisis.

55. The final proof given by the author of my non-violence being "mere lip service" consists of the following caricature of my writing in defence of Polish bravery:

"In other words in any fight the weaker of the two combatants may employ as violent measures as he likes or is able, and may still be considered to be fighting non-violently; or to put it in another way, violence when employed against superior odds automatically becomes non-violence. Surely a very convenient theory for the rebels in an 'unarmed revolt'."

I claim the writing quoted by the author does not warrant the misleading deduction. How can I possibly lay down a proposition against every day experience? There is rarely a fight among absolute equals. One party is always weaker

than the other. The illustrations I have given, taken together, can lead to one conclusion only, namely, that the weaker party does not make any preparation for offering violence for the simple reason that the intention is absent, but when he is suddenly attacked he uses unconsciously, even without wishing to do so, any weapon that comes his way. The first illustration chosen by me is that of a man who having a sword uses it single handed against a horde of dacoits. The second is that of a woman using her nails and teeth or even a dagger in defence of her honour. She acts spontaneously. And the third is that of a mouse fighting a cat with its sharp teeth. These three illustrations were specially chosen by me in order to avoid any illegitimate deduction being drawn in defence of offering studied violence. One infallible test is that such a person is never successful in the sense of over-powering the aggressor. He or she dies and saves his or her honour rather than surrender to the demands of the aggressor. I was so guarded in the use of my language that I described the defence of the Poles against overwhelming numbers as "almost non-violence". In further elucidation of this see discussion with a Polish friend. [vide Appendix IV (M).]

56. Here it will be apposite to give extracts from my speeches bearing on non-violence on the 7th and 8th August last before the A. I. C. C. at Bombay:

"Let me, however, hasten to assure you that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I did then. If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances. . . . Occasions like the present do not occur in everybody's and but rarely in anybody's life. I want you to know and feel that there is nothing but purest *ahimsa* in all that I am saying and doing today. The draft resolution of the Working Committee is based on *ahimsa*, the contemplated struggle similarly has its roots in *ahimsa*. If therefore there is any among you who

has lost faith in *ahimsa* or is wearied of it, let him not vote for this resolution.

Let me explain my position clearly. God has vouchsafed to me a priceless gift in the weapon of *ahimsa*. I and my *ahimsa* are on our trial today. If in the present crisis, when the earth is being scorched by the flames of *himsa* and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God-given talent, God will not forgive me and I shall be judged unworthy of the great gift. I must act now. I may not hesitate and merely look on when Russia and China are threatened.

Ours is not a drive for power but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle a successful general has been often known to effect a military *coup* and set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress scheme of things, essentially non-violent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself, he fights only for the freedom of his country. The Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule when freedom is attained. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it should be entrusted. May be that the reins will be placed in the hands of the Parsis for instance — as I would love to see happen — or they may be handed to some others whose names are not heard in the Congress today. It will not be for you then to object saying, 'This community is microscopic. That party did not play its due part in the freedom's struggle; why should it have all the power?' Ever since its inception the Congress has kept itself meticulously free of the communal taint. It has thought always in terms of the whole nation and acted accordingly.

I know how imperfect our *ahimsa* is and how far away we are still from the ideal, but in *ahimsa* there is no final failure or defeat. I have faith therefore that if, in spite of our shortcomings, the big thing does happen it will be because God wanted to help us by crowning with success our silent, unremitting *sadhana* (striving) for the last twenty two years.

I believe that in the history of the world there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. I read Carlyle's History of the French Revolution while I was in prison, and Pandit Jawaharlal has told me something about the Russian Revolution. But it is my conviction that inasmuch as these struggles were fought with the

weapon of violence they failed to realize the democratic ideal. In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between Hindus and Muslims and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence."

(From the Hindustani speech on 7th August before the A. I. C. C.)

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After describing personal relations with the Viceroy, the late Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews and the Metropolitan of Calcutta, I proceeded :

With the background of this consciousness I want to declare to the world that, whatever may be said to the contrary and although I may have today forfeited the regard of many friends in the West and even the trust of some—even for their love and friendship I must not suppress the voice within That something in me which has never deceived me tells me that I shall have to fight on even though the whole world be against me.

. . . I hold that there can be no real freedom without non-violence. This is not the language of a proud or an arrogant man but of an earnest seeker after Truth. It is this fundamental truth with which the Congress has been experimenting for the last twenty-two years. Unconsciously, from its very inception the Congress has based its policy on non-violence known in those early days as the constitutional method. Dadabhoi and Pherozeshah Mehta carried Congress India with them. They were lovers of Congress. They were, therefore, also its masters. But above all, they were true servants of the nation. They became rebels. But they never countenanced murder, secrecy and the like. Subsequent generations have added to this heritage and expanded their political philosophy into the principle and policy of non-violent non-cooperation which the Congress has adopted. It is not my claim that every Congressman conforms to the highest tenet of non-violence even as a policy. I know that there are several black sheep, but I am taking all on trust without subjecting them to cross examination. I trust, because I have faith in the innate goodness of human nature which enables people instinctively to perceive the truth and carries them through crisis. It is this fundamental trust which rules my life, and enables me to hope that India as a whole will vindicate the principle of non-violence during the coming struggle. But even if my trust is found to be misplaced I shall not flinch.

I shall not abandon my faith. I shall only say, "The lesson is not yet fully learnt. I must try again." (From the English speech on 8th August.)

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The Congress has no sanction but the moral for enforcing its decisions. I believe that true democracy can only be an outcome of non-violence. The structure of a world federation can be raised only on a foundation of non-violence, and violence will have to be totally given up in world affairs. Solution of the Hindu Muslim question too cannot be achieved by resort to violence. If Hindus tyrannize over Mussalmans, with what face will they talk of a world federation? It is for the same reason that the Congress has agreed to submit all differences to an impartial tribunal and to abide by its decisions.

In Satyagraha there is no place for fraud or falsehood. Fraud and falsehood are today stalking the world. I cannot be a helpless witness of such a situation. I have travelled all over India as perhaps nobody in the present age has. The voiceless millions of the land saw in me their friend and representative, and I identified myself with them to the extent it was possible for a human being to do so. I saw trust in their eyes, which I now want to turn to good account in fighting this Empire, which is built on and upheld by untruth and violence. However tight the Empire's control of us, we must get out of it. I know how imperfect an instrument I am for this great task, and how imperfect is the material with which I have to work. But how can I remain silent at this supreme hour and hide my light under a bushel? Shall I ask the Japanese to tarry a while? If today I sit quiet and inactive in the midst of this conflagration which is enveloping the whole world, God will take me to task for not making use of the treasure, He has given me. But for this conflagration I should have asked you to wait a little longer, as I have done all these years. The situation has now become intolerable, and the Congress has no other course left for it.

(From the concluding speech in Hindustani on 8th August.)

57. Having given proof against me to show that my professions about non-violence were "valueless" the author turns to my colleagues in the Congress High Command to observe how they interpreted my "views to their Congress followers and to their masses". The author sees objection in Pandit Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Shankarrao Deo having singled out the student community for attention. Attention paid to the student community and peasantry was no new thing introduced for the first time,

for the sake of the struggle, in the history of the Congress. As early as 1920 students were specially invited to join the noncooperation movement and several thousand had responded to the call by suspending their studies. I do not know what happened after the August arrests, in the Benares Hindu University. But assuming that some students belonging to it went astray, that is no ground for associating Pandit Nehru with their acts. Positive proof would be necessary to establish such connection. Overwhelming proof can be produced in support of the contention that his faith in non-violence for the purpose of achieving Swaraj is inferior to nobody's. The same thing can be said about his exhortation to the Kisans of the United Provinces. There is too nothing in favour of violence, in the other leaders' speeches so far as one can judge from the extracts given in the indictment.

58. Having dealt with the leaders' speeches, the author comes to "detailed instructions regarding the conduct of the movement in existence before the All India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay". The "first example" has been "chosen" from *Harijan* of August 9th. The article is entitled "Ways of Non-violent Non-cooperation". As it happens, it is a discussion in connection with the threatened invasion from Japan. Thus the article opens :

"Ever since 1920 we are familiar with some of the ways of offering non-violent non-cooperation. These included boycott of all government institutions and services and extended to the non-payment of taxes. They were directed against a foreign government in occupation of the country for years. The ways of non-cooperation to adopt against a new foreign invader would naturally differ in details. It would, as Gandhiji has said, extend to the refusal of food or water. All non-cooperation calculated to make the functioning of the enemy impossible has to be resorted to within the limits of non-violence."

Then the writer of the article (M. D.) has given samples of non-violent non-cooperation offered elsewhere than in India. They are not examples of non-violence consciously

exercised. That the whole article was written to show what could be non-violently done to repel the invader, is clear from the final paragraph :

" What one has to remember is that in war repression would be ten times as severe as was resorted to in France, but if there is the will to suffer, the resourcefulness to devise ways and means on the lines indicated in these different instances of passive resistance, and above all the determination to drive out the invader, cost what it may, victory is certain. The vastness of our country, far from being a disadvantage, may be an advantage, as the invader would find it difficult to cope with resistance on a thousand and one fronts. "

The theme of the article is not racial but anti-invader.

59. The other example given by the author is an extract from an article by Shri K. G. Mashruwalla in *Harijan* of 23rd August, 1942. Shri Mashruwalla is a valued co-worker. He carries non-violence to an extreme which baffles those who know him intimately. Nevertheless I do not propose to defend the paragraph quoted. He has guarded himself by saying that it represents his personal opinion only. He must have heard me debating the question whether interference with bridges, rails and the like could be classified as non-violent. I had always questioned the practicability of the interference being non-violent. Even if such interference could conceivably be non-violent, as I hold it can be, it is dangerous to put it before the masses who cannot be expected to do such things non-violently. Nor would I expect the classification of the British power in the same category as the Japanese for the purposes of the movement.

60. Having allowed myself to criticize the opinion of a respected colleague I wish to say that Shri Mashruwalla's opinion is no evidence of violent intention. At best it is an error of judgement which is much more likely in a novel subject like the applicability of *ahimsa* practised in all walks of life by masses of mankind. Great generals and statesmen have been known before now to have committed errors of

judgement without losing caste or being accused of evil intentions.

61. Then comes the Andhra circular. I must regard it as forbidden ground for me inasmuch as I knew nothing about it before my arrest. Therefore I can only comment on it with reserve. Subject to that caution I consider the document to be harmless on the whole. This is its governing clause :

"The whole movement is based on non-violence. No act which contravenes these instructions should ever be undertaken. All acts of disobedience committed should be overt never covert (open but not under cover). "

The parenthesis is in the original. The following warning is also embodied in the circular:

"Ninety nine chances out of hundred chances are for the inauguration of this movement by Mahatmaji at an early date, possibly a few hours after the next All India Congress Committee meeting at Bombay. The D. C. C.'s should be alert and begin to act immediately, but please also take note that no movement should be launched or any overt act done till Mahatmaji decides. After all he may decide otherwise and you will be responsible for a great unwarranted mistake. Be ready, organize at once, be alert, but by no means act. "

As to the body of the circular, I could not make myself responsible for some of the items. Bnt I must refuse to judge a thing which I cannot correct, especially in the absence of what the Committee has to say on them, assuming of course that the circular is an authentic document. I miss in the indictment the text of the alleged "written amendment" "raising" the ban on the removal of rails.

62. Attention is then drawn to the fifth appendix showing how my mind was working in the direction of violence under the "valueless" cover of non-violence, as the author would say. The appendix gives what purport to be All India Congress Committee instructions with extracts from my writings in parallel columns. I have tried to study that appendix. I have nothing to withdraw from my writings. And

I contend that there is not a trace of violence in the instructions alleged to be from the All India Congress Committee.

63. Independently of the argument in the indictment, I must now say something about non-violence as I know it. Its spread in all walks of life has been my mission from early youth. This covers a period of very nearly sixty years. It was adopted at my instance as a policy by the Congress in 1920. In its very nature it was not meant to be paraded before the world, but it was accepted as a means indispensable for the attainment of Swaraj. Congressmen saw at an early date that its mere adoption on paper had no value. It was of use only in so far as it was put into practice individually and collectively. It was of no more use as a badge than a rifle in the hands of a person who did not know how to use it effectively on due occasion. Therefore if non-violence has raised the Congress prestige and popularity since its adoption it has done so in exact proportion to its use, even as the power which the rifle gives to its possessor is in exact proportion to its effective use. The comparison cannot be carried very far. Thus while violence is directed towards the injury, including the destruction, of the aggressor, and is successful only when it is stronger than that of the opponent, non-violent action can be taken in respect of an opponent, however powerfully organized for violence. Violence *per se* of the weak has never been known to succeed against the stronger in violence. Success of non-violent action of the very weak is a daily occurrence. I make bold to say that I have applied to the present struggle the principles of non-violence as enunciated here. Nothing could be farther from my thought than injury to the person or property of those who are manning and regulating the machinery of British Imperialism as it operates in India. My non-violence draws a fundamental distinction between the man and his machine. I would destroy a harmful machine without

compunction, never the man. And this rule I have enforced in my dealings with my nearest relatives as also friends and associates, not without considerable success.

64. After disposing of non-violence the author has summarized what he calls the "ostensible aims" of the Wardha resolution of July 14th and the Bombay resolution of August 8th as follows:

"Three main ostensible aims are common to both the Wardha resolution of July 14th (Appendix III-1) and the Bombay resolution of August 8th (Appendix III-2). These are:

1. To remove foreign domination over India.

2. To check the growing ill-will against Britain, with its danger of passive acceptance by the masses of aggression against India; to build up a spirit of resistance to aggression among Indians; and by granting India's millions immediate freedom to release that energy and enthusiasm which alone can enable India to play an effective part in her own defence and in her war as a whole.

3. To achieve communal unity, by the removal of the foreign power with its policy of divide and rule, which will be followed by the formation of a Provisional Government representative of all sections of the Indian people.

Three further aims appeared for the first time in the Bombay resolution:

4. To bring all subject and oppressed humanity to the side of the United Nations, thus giving these nations the moral and spiritual leadership of the world.

5. To assist Asiatic nations under foreign domination to regain their freedom and to ensure that they are not again placed under the rule of any colonial power.

6. To bring about a world federation, which would ensure the disbanding of national armies, navies and air forces, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all."

He says that "the genuineness of the first of these aims is undeniable. The freedom of India, in whatever terms it may have been expressed, has long been the main goal of the Congress and it has been shown above how this aim coincides with one of the main motives underlying the 'Quit India' move." Strange, as it appears to me, notwith-

standing this admission of the genuineness of the first aim, he ridicules the others in some shape or form. I contend that all the others follow from the first. Thus if the foreign domination goes by agreement, illwill against Britain is automatically turned into goodwill, and the energy of millions is set free on behalf of the Allied cause. Similarly communal unity must follow as day follows night when the night of foreign domination is gone. If nearly four hundred million people become free, other portions of oppressed humanity must also become free and naturally the Allied Nations being privy to this freedom, the moral and spiritual leadership of the world comes to them without seeking. The fifth aim is included in the fourth, and the sixth is but a repetition of the aim of the whole of humanity which it must attain or perish without. It is true that the three last aims were added in Bombay. That surely is not a matter to cavil at. Even if they were a result of criticism, what is there wrong about it? No democratic organization can afford to defy criticism, for it has to live upon the fresh air of criticism. As a matter of fact, however, world federation and rights of non-white people are no new ideas for Congressmen. They have been mentioned in Congress resolutions on other occasions. The paragraph about world federation found place in the August resolution at the instance of a European friend, and about non-white people at mine.

65. As to the disturbances that took place after the arrests of 9th August I have carefully read chapters IV and V of the indictment detailing them as also the appendices purporting to be instructions from various bodies. I must refuse to judge these one-sided statements or unverified documents. As to the so-called instructions, I can say that, so far as they are contrary to non-violence, they can never have my approval.

66. One searches in vain in the indictment for a detailed account of the measures taken by the Government by way of reprisals. And if one is to believe what has been allowed to appear in the press about these measures, the so-called misdeeds of exasperated people, whether they can be described as Congressmen or not, pale into insignificance.

67. Now for the responsibility for the happenings after the wholesale arrests of 9th August last. The most natural way to look at the disturbances is that they broke out after the arrests which were therefore the cause. The indictment has been framed for the sole purpose, as the title shows, of fastening the responsibility on the Congress. The argument seems to me to be this. First I and then the Congress had been setting the stage for a mass movement since April 1942 when I first bruited the idea of British withdrawal popularly known as "Quit India". Mass movement was bound to result in the outbreak of violence. I and the Congressmen who had accepted my guidance had intended that violence should take place. Leaders had been preaching it. Hence the disturbances were to take place in any case. The arrests therefore merely anticipated the violent movement and nipped it in the bud. This sums up the reasoning in the indictment.

68. I have endeavoured to show that no special stage for a mass movement was set or contemplated because of my proposal for British withdrawal, that violence was never contemplated by me or any Congress leader, that I had declared that, if Congressmen indulged in any orgy of violence, they might not find me alive in their midst, that the mass movement was never started by me, the sole charge for starting it was vested in me, that I had contemplated negotiations with the Government, that I was to start the movement only on failure of negotiations, and that I had envisaged an interval of "two or three weeks"

for the negotiations. It is therefore clear that but for the arrests no such disturbances would have taken place as happened on 9th August last and after. I would have strained every nerve first to make negotiations successful and secondly, if I had failed, to avoid disturbances. The Government would have been no less able to suppress them than they were in August last. Only they would have had some case against me and the Congress. It was the duty of the Government, before taking action, to study the speeches of the Congress leaders and myself at the All India Congress Committee meeting.

69. The Congress leaders were desirous that the movement should remain non-violent, if only because they knew that no violent movement in the existing circumstances could possibly succeed when matched against a most powerfully equipped Government. Whatever violence was committed by people, whether Congressmen or others, was therefore committed in spite of the leaders' wishes. If it is held otherwise by the Government it should be proved beyond doubt before an impartial tribunal. But why seek to shift the responsibility when the cause is patent? The Government action in enforcing India-wide arrests was so violent that the populace which was in sympathy with the Congress lost control. The loss of self-control cannot imply Congress complicity, but it does imply that the power of endurance of human nature has limitations. If Government action was in excess of the endurance of human nature, it and therefore its authors were responsible for the explosions that followed. But the Government may assert that the arrests were necessary. If so, why should the Government fight shy of taking the responsibility for the consequences of their action? The wonder to me is that the Government at all need to justify their action when they know that their will is law.

70. Let me analyse the system of Government in vogue here. A population numbering nearly four hundred millions of people, belonging to an ancient civilization, are being ruled by a British representative called Viceroy and Governor-General aided by 250 officials called Collectors and supported by a strong British garrison with a large number of Indian soldiers, trained by British officers, and carefully isolated from the populace. The Viceroy enjoys within his own sphere powers much larger than the King of England. Such powers, as far as I know, are not enjoyed by any other person in the world. The Collectors are miniature Viceroys in their own spheres. They are first and foremost, as their name implies, collectors of revenue in their own districts and have magisterial powers. They can requisition the military to their aid when they think necessary. They are also political agents for the small chieftains within their jurisdiction, and they are in the place of overlords to them.

71. Contrast this with the Congress, the most truly democratic organization in the world—not because of its numerical strength, but because its only sanction deliberately adopted is non-violence. From its inception the Congress has been a democratic body, seeking to represent all India. However feeble and imperfect the attempt may have been, the Congress has never in its history of now nearly sixty years shifted its gaze from the Pole Star of India's freedom. It has progressed from stage to stage in its march towards democracy in the truest term. If it is said, as it has been, that the Congress learnt the spirit of democracy from Great Britain, no Congressman would care to deny the statement, though it must be added that the roots were to be found in the old Panchayat system. It can never brook Nazi, Fascist or Japanese domination. An organization whose very breath is freedom and which pits itself

against the most powerfully organized imperialism, will perish to a man in the attempt to resist all domination. So long as it clings to non-violence, it will be uncrushable and unconquerable.

72. What can be the cause of the extraordinary resentment against the Congress into which the Government have betrayed themselves? I have never known them before to exhibit so much irritation. Does the cause lie in the 'Quit India' formula? Disturbances cannot be the cause, because the resentment began to show itself soon after the publication of my proposal for British withdrawal. It crystallized into the wholesale arrests of 9th August last which were pre-arranged and merely awaited the passing of the resolution of 8th August. Yet there was nothing novel in the resolution save the 'Quit India' formula. Mass movements have been known to be on the Congress programme ever since 1920. But freedom seemed elusive. Now the Hindu-Muslim disunity, now the pledges to the Princes, now the interests of the scheduled classes, now the vested interests of the Europeans barred the gateway to freedom. Divide and rule was an inexhaustible well. The sands of time were running out. Rivers of blood were flowing fast among the warring nations and politically minded India was looking on helplessly—the masses were inert. Hence the cry of 'Quit India'. It gave body to the freedom movement. The cry was unanswerable. Those who were anxious to play their part in the world crisis found vent in that cry of anguish. Its root is in the will to save democracy from Nazism as well as Imperialism. For, satisfaction of the Congress demand meant assurance of victory of democracy over any combination of reactionary forces and deliverance of China and Russia from the menace of Japan and Germany respectively. But the demand irritated the Government. They distrusted those who were associated with the demand and thereby they themselves became the

greatest impediment to the war effort. It is wrong therefore to accuse the Congress of hindering war effort. Congress activity up to the night of 8th August was confined to resolutions only. The dawn of the 9th saw the Congress imprisoned. What followed was a direct result of the Government action.

73. The resentment over what I hold to be a just and honourable desire confirms the popular suspicion about the *bona fides* of the Government's professions about democracy and freedom after the war. If the Government were sincere they would have welcomed the offer of help made by the Congress. Congressmen who have been fighting for India's liberty for over half a century would have flocked to the Allied banner as one man for the defence of India's freedom newly won. But the Government did not wish to treat India as an equal partner and ally. They put out of action those who made this demand. Some of them are even being hounded as if they were dangerous criminals. I have in mind Shri Jaiprakash Narayan and others like him. A reward of Rs. 5000, now doubled, has been promised to the informant who would show his hiding place. I have taken Shri Jaiprakash Narayan purposely as my illustration because, as he very rightly says, he differs from me on several fundamentals. But my differences, great as they are, do not blind me to his indomitable courage and his sacrifice of all that a man holds dear for the love of his country. I have read his manifesto which is given as an appendix to the indictment. Though I cannot subscribe to some of the views expressed therein, it breathes nothing but burning patriotism and his impatience of foreign domination. It is a virtue of which any country would be proud.

74. So much for politically minded Congressmen. In the constructive department of the Congress also the Government have deprived themselves of the best talent in the

country for the organization of hand industries which are so vital a need in war time. The All-India Spinners' Association, which is responsible for having distributed without fuss over 3 crores of rupees as wages among the poor villagers whom no one had reached and whose labour was being wasted, has come in for a heavy hand. Its president Shri Jajuji and many of his co-workers have been imprisoned without trial and without any known reason. Khadi centres which are trust property have been confiscated to the Government. I do not know the law under which such property can be confiscated. And the tragedy is that the confiscators are themselves unable to run these centres which were producing and distributing cloth. Khadi and charkhas have been reported to have been burnt by the authorities. The All-India Village Industries Association worked by Kumarappa brothers has also received much the same treatment. Shri Vinoba Bhave is an institution by himself. Many workers were incessantly doing creative labour under his guidance. Most men and women of constructive organizations are not political workers. They are devoted to constructive work of the highest merit. And if some of them have found it necessary to appear at all on the political field, it is a matter for the Government to reflect upon. To put such organizations and their supervisors under duress is in my opinion an unpardonable interference with war effort. The self-satisfaction with which the highest officials proclaim that limitless men and material are being had from this unhappy land, is truly amazing, while the inhabitants of India are suffering from shortage of food, clothing and many other necessities of life. I make bold to say that this scarcity would have been largely minimized, if not altogether obviated, if instead of imprisoning Congress workers throughout India, the Government had utilized their services. The Government had two striking illustrations

of the efficient working by the Congress agency—I mean the handling of the disastrous Bihar earthquake by Congressmen under Dr. Rajendra Prasad and of the equally disastrous flood in Gujarat under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

75. This brings me to the end of my reply to the indictment. It has become much longer than I had wanted to make it. It has cost me and my coworkers in the camp no end of labour. Although I must ask, in fairness to myself and the cause I represent, for the publication of this reply, my chief purpose is to carry conviction to the Government that the indictment contains no proof of the allegations against the Congress and me. The Government know that the public in India seem to have distrusted the indictment and regarded it as designed for foreign propaganda. Men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Rt. Hon'ble Shri M. R. Jayakar have given their opinion that the 'evidence' produced in the indictment is of no judicial value. Therefore the Government should withdraw the indictment. I see from the preface to the indictment that Government have in their possession "valuable evidence", presumably incriminating the detainees. I submit that if the Government cannot safely divulge the evidence, they should discharge the detainees and bring to book those who, after discharge, maybe caught in the act of committing or promoting crimes. With limitless power at their back, they need not resort to unsustainable accusations.

76. It will be noticed that although the indictment is a Government publication, I have only criticized its unknown author in the fond hope that the individual members composing the Government of India have not read the originals on which it is based. For, I am of opinion that no one having a knowledge of the originals could possibly endorse the inferences and innuendoes with which it is replete.

77. Lastly, I wish to state that if I have anywhere erred in analysing the indictment, and if my error is pointed out to me, I shall gladly correct myself. I have simply written as I have felt.

I am, etc.,
M. K. Gandhi

APPENDIX I

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL

"In its earlier stage Mr. Gandhi's 'Quit India' move was meant and was widely interpreted as a proposal for the physical withdrawal from India of the British, and of all British and allied troops."

(Indictment P. 2)

(A) CONFUSION

There is evidently confusion in some minds about my invitation to the British to withdraw. For a Britisher writes to say that he likes India and her people and would not like willingly to leave India. He likes too my method of non-violence. Evidently the writer has confused the individual as such with the individual as the holder of power. India has no quarrel with the British people. I have hundreds of British friends. Andrews' friendship was enough to tie me to the British people. But both he and I were fixed in our determination that the British rule in India in any shape or form must end. Hitherto the rulers have said, "We would gladly retire if we know to whom we should hand over the reins." My answer now is, "Leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy." I invite every Britisher who loves Britain, India and the world to join me in the appeal to the British power and, if it is rejected, to adopt such non-violent measures as would compel the power to comply with the appeal. (*Harijan*, May 24, 1942, P. 161)

(B) OUT OF TOUCH

I am showing the futility of hatred. I am showing that hatred injures the hater never the hated. An imperial power

cannot act otherwise than it has been doing. If we are strong the British becomes powerless. I am therefore trying to wean the people from their hatred by asking them to develop the strength of mind to invite the British to withdraw and at the same time to resist the Japanese. With the British withdrawal the incentive to welcome the Japanese goes and the strength felt in securing British withdrawal will be used for stemming the Japanese inroad. I endorse C. R.'s proposition that the millions of India can resist the Japanese even without the possession of arms, modern and ancient, if they are properly organized. I differ from him when he says that this can be done even when the British arms are operating without coordination when you force yourself on the British power. Experience teaches us that hearty coordination and cooperation is impossible where mutual trust and respect are wanting. British presence invites the Japanese, it promotes communal disunion and other discords, and what is perhaps the worst of all, deepens the hatred born of impotence. Orderly British withdrawal will turn the hatred into affection and will automatically remove communal distemper. So far as I can see two communities are unable to think or see things in their proper perspective as long as they are under the influence of the third power.

(*Harijan*, May 31, 1942. P. 175)

(C) FREE INDIA CAN HELP BEST

Answering to the question of a press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said: "My answer is an emphatic 'no'."

I remain the passionate friend of China that I have always claimed to be. I know what the loss of freedom means. Therefore, I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in

violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity.

“ I AM NOT PRO-JAPANESE ”

“ Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion, for, if I am sincere in my passion for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul, the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion which, even from the military standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden

of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of Empire — because she would have renounced *in toto* all her imperial designs, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings and I shall continue to do so so long as I am allowed by the British power."

NO SECRECY

"Now what about your plan; you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?" was the next question. Gandhiji replied: "Well, I have never believed in secrecy nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do before I enforce it. Remember I have yet to see the Maulana Sahib. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation."

TO RESIST SLAVE DRIVERS

"How are we to help in driving away the British from here?" was the first question that was asked.

"We don't want to drive away the British people from here. It is the British rulers whom we are asking quietly

to withdraw. It is the British domination that we want to vanish from our land. We have no quarrel with the Englishmen, many of whom are my friends, but we want the rule to end altogether, for that is the poison that corrupts all it touches, that is the obstacle that stops all progress.

"And what is needed for this are two things—the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil we can think of, and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost. The knowledge is so necessary because the British exercise their power and domination in all kinds of subtle and insidious ways that it is sometimes difficult to know that we are bound hand and foot. Next is the will to throw off the chains. We have simply to cultivate the will not to do the rulers' bidding. Is it very difficult? How can one be compelled to accept slavery? I simply refuse to do the master's bidding. He may torture me, break my bones to atoms, and even kill me. He will then have my dead body, not my obedience. Ultimately, therefore, it is I who am the victor and not he, for he has failed in getting me to do what he wanted done.

"That is what I am trying to impress both on those whom I want to retire and those who are bound in their chains. I am going to use all my powers to do so, but not violence—simply because I have no faith in it.

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"But I am going to be patient, I am not going to hurry or hustle you. I am busy preparing the atmosphere, and whatever I will do I shall do having in view the limitations of our people. I know that neither the rulers nor public opinion understand the implications of my proposal."

"But", asks a friend, "have we not to see that the remedy may not be worse than the disease? There will be, in the course of resistance, in spite of all our will to

prevent them, clashes and resultant anarchy. May not that anarchy be worse than the present anarchy which you have called ordered anarchy ?"

" That is a very proper question. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these 22 years. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed for and worked for may never come, and in the mean time I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. That is why I have decided that even at certain risks which are obviously involved I must ask the people to resist the slavery. But even that readiness, let me assure you, depends on the non-violent man's unflinching faith. All I am conscious of is that there is not a trace of violence in the remotest corner of my being, and my conscious pursuit of *ahimsa* for the last 50 years cannot possibly fail me at this crisis. The people have not my *ahimsa*, but mine should help them. There is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us and our decision to defy their authority will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence. But to be passive witness of the terrible violence that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression, is a thing I cannot stand. It is a thing that would make me ashamed of my *ahimsa*. It is made of sterner stuff."

(*Harijan*, June 7, 1942, p. 183/184)

(D) WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION ? *

" Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal,—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen ? What would India do ? "

" That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that."

" Well, therein comes my non-violence. For we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the United American and British armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the Allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter."

" Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent non-cooperation help the Japanese ?" asked Mr. Chaplin reverting to the first question he had asked.

" If you mean non-cooperation with the British, you would be right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to *any* foreign power. But when the British are offering violent battle, our non-violent battle—our non-violent activity—would be neutralized. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British military are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organization representing the millions of

the poor of India—has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say 'socalled' voluntary subscription. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it, that the British do not want it, they don't set any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India's non-violence can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese."

"But not helping the British?"

"Don't you see non-violence cannot give any other aid?"

"But the railways, I hope, you won't stop; the services, too will be, I hope, allowed to function."

"They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today."

"Aren't you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?" asked Mr. Belldon.

"We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy."

A BAD JOB

"Don't you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process (process of withdrawal)?"

"You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the sacrifice of the inviters. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently."

"Is the possibility of strikes precluded?" wondered Mr. Belldon.

"No," said Gandhiji, "strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measure I must endeavour

to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean *only the loss of India* but if Japan wins India loses *everything*."

THE CRUCIAL TEST

"If you regard the American troops as an imposition, you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?" was the next question.

"A tree is judged by its fruit," said Gandhiji succinctly. "I have met Dr. Grady, we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends, in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but goodwill for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks. Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence—and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: 'For Heaven's sake leave India alone. Let us breathe the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate

us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation. But I want the present sham to end."

"But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?"

"It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible."

"Is there any hope of Britain listening?"

"I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long lease of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so wholeheartedly Britain does not deserve to win."

(*Harijan*, June 14, 1942, pp. 185-186-187)

(E) IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL

The following are the questions put by a representative of *The News Chronicle* (London) to Gandhiji (Bombay, 14-5-42) and the latter's replies to them :

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

A. It has cost me much to come to the conclusion that the British should withdraw from India, and it is costing me still more to work out that conclusion. It is like asking loved ones to part, but it has become a paramount duty. And the beauty and the necessity for withdrawal lie in its being immediate. They and we are both in the midst of fire. If they go, there is a likelihood of both of us being safe. If they do not, Heaven only knows what will happen. I have said in the plainest terms that in my proposal there is no question of entrusting the administration to any person or party. That would be a necessary consideration, if the withdrawal was part of a settlement. Under my proposal

they have to leave India in God's hands—but in modern parlance to anarchy, and that anarchy may lead to internecine warfare for a time or to unrestrained dacoities. From these a true India will rise in the place of the false one we see.

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

A. My policy of non-embarrassment remains intact in terms in which I have described it. If the British withdraw, surely there is no embarrassment; not only so, they become eased of a tremendous burden, if they would calmly consider the meaning of the enslavement of a whole people. But if they persist, well knowing that they are surrounded by hatred, they invite embarrassment. I do not produce it by stating the truth, however unpalatable it may appear for the moment.

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

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

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

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

it can be today, when it cannot be appreciated for the violent British action going on side by side.

(*Harijan*, May 24, 1942, p. 166)

(F) ITS MEANING

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

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognize their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India. This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India. Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the Free State to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

(*Harijan*, June 21, 1942, p. 197)

(G) ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW

"Till the last day you said there can be no Swaraj without Hindu Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence", the Nagpur correspondent of the *Hindu* asked Gandhiji the other day.

Gandhiji replied, "Time is a merciless, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organizations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominantly non-violent. Anyway, upto my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue."

(*Harijan*, June 21, 1942. p. 198)

(H) DELIBERATE DISTORTION

I regard my proposal as fool-proof. The operations of the Allied forces against Japanese aggression have been left

intact under my proposal which amounts to this that Britain should become true to her declaration, withdraw from India as conqueror and therefore controller of her destiny, and leave India to shape her own destiny without the slightest interference. This, as I can see, puts her case on a moral basis and gives her in India a great ally not in the cause of imperialism but in the cause of human freedom. If there is anarchy in India, Britain alone will be responsible, not I. What I have said is that I would prefer anarchy to the present slavery and consequent impotence of India.

(*Harijan*, June 28, 1942, p. 203)

(K) A POSER

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

(*Harijan*, June 28, 1942, pp. 204, 205)

(L) A FALLACY

Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a fool-proof non-violent

method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

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

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

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twentytwo years.
(*Harijan*, July 5, 1942, p. 210)

(M) OH! THE TROOPS

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstances the reverse of the existing

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean

As I have said already in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops.

It (non-violence) will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized and successful violence the world has seen.

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

(*Harijan*, July 5, 1942, p. 212)

(N) FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT IN INDIA

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

"My first writing," said Gandhiji, "did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made it clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognized as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever. And so when I said 'withdraw', I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal has another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

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

have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

. . . "And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you."

That put both the friends at ease and prompted them to try to understand the whole of the back-ground of Gandhiji's mind. And in this connection I may mention a curious but very significant fact. When Sir Stafford Cripps' mission was announced, Prof. Horace Alexander and Miss Agatha Harrison had sent Gandhiji a cable reminding him of the phrase Gandhiji himself had used, viz., "Andrews' legacy" meaning thereby that in memory of Andrews the best Englishmen and the best Indians should come together to bring about a permanent understanding between England and India. "Here," their cable seemed to say in effect, "is one of the best Englishmen coming to India. You had better settle with him, as there is a great opportunity."

It was in reply to this cable that Gandhiji wrote a long letter to Prof. Horace Alexander soon after the failure of the Cripps' mission, — a letter in which he gave expression for the first time to the demand for British withdrawal. He had not discussed it with any soul on earth, but as he was writing the letter the thing that was, so to say, cooking in his mind ever since his return from Delhi came to his pen. "Sir Stafford," he said in that letter, "has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission . . . How could the British Government at this critical hour have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all, the proposals pleased none.

"I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else for Andrews' sake. I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews' spirit as my witness. I made suggestion, but all to no avail. As usual, they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say being 'anti-all-wars'. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the Working Committee. I came away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth."

And now comes the key paragraph: "My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore, Malay and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations, and right doing by India."

Gandhiji's talk was almost a commentary on the parts of the letter I have quoted. "You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malay neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: 'Don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner,'" said he, concluding the talk. The whole talk, even as the letter I have reproduced, was inspired by the spirit of C. F. A. and the idea of asking the British to withdraw was conceived in the friendliest spirit, as it was done with a remembrance of C. F. A. and all his noble work. As Gandhiji said, "So you have now to do what Andrews did — understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger", Prof. Alexander felt overwhelmed and said: "We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try."

(*Harijan*, July, 1942, p. 215)

(O) IF *HARIJAN* IS SUPPRESSED

Anxious inquiries are being made as to what I would do if *Harijan*, was suppressed. Rumours are afloat that orders are on their way. I would ask inquirers not to be agitated if *Harijan*, is suppressed. The paper may be suppressed. The manager has been instructed to stop the paper immediately orders are served on him. It is no part of the movement to publish *Harijan* in defiance of orders. But *Harijan* may be suppressed, its message cannot be, so long as I live. Indeed, the spirit will survive the dissolution of the body and somehow speak through the millions. For, with due apologies to Veer Savarkar and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I claim to represent the joint spirit of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, and other non-Hindus who call themselves children of Hindustan. I am living, and hope to have the strength to die, for the freedom of every inhabitant of this land.

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

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

And *Harijan* is not an anti-British paper. It is pro-British from head to foot. It wishes well to the British people.