

It tells them in the friendliest manner where in its opinion they err.

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

Let me add too that without heeding any pressure from outside I am using the greatest restraint in the choice of printing matter. Nothing is being consciously published that would give any clue to the 'enemy' as to military objectives or dispositions. Care is being exercised to avoid all exaggeration or sensational matter. Adjectives and adverbs are well weighed before being used. And they know that I am ever ready to acknowledge errors and mend them.

(*Harijan*, July 19, 1942, p. 229)

(P) THE WARDHA INTERVIEW

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A MASS MOVEMENT

"Is it possible," asked the A. P. (America) representative, "for you to tell us the things you might do after the All-India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W. C. resolution?"

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

"Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops?"

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

IF IMPRISONED?

"Will you court imprisonment?"

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

Quick came another question: "Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?"

"It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I *can* fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible."

NEGOTIATIONS

"After the recognition of Free India it starts to function at once?"

"Yes, from the very next moment. For, independence will not be on paper but in action. But your next legitimate question would be—'How will Free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said 'Leave India to

God or anarchy.' But in practice what will happen is this—If withdrawal takes place in perfect goodwill, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a Provisional Government. Then, there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory."

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

"Can you visualize the composition of the Provisional Government?"

"I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress—will automatically dissolve. They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. Then, as I said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the phenomenon every day."

"But" asked two of the Indian correspondents rather impatiently, "looking to all their past record will the British have sense to come to terms?"

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

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

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

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

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

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FREE INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION

"You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies," was Mr. Edgar Snow's question, and the last question. "Will Free India carry out total mobilization and adopt the methods of total war?"

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

"But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?" Mr. Snow pertinently asked.

"I have no such desire. I cannot oppose Free India's will with civil disobedience, it would be wrong."

(*Harijan*, July 19, 1942, pp. 233, 234)

(Q) AMERICAN OPINION MAY BE ANTAGONIZED

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

"This belief is born of ignorance," replied Gandhiji. "What possible internal complication can take place if the

British Government declare to-day that India is absolutely independent? It would be, in my opinion, the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction. If anybody could convince me that in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardizing the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one."

OPEN TO CONVICTION

"If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?"

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

... "If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis—" interrupted Mr. Steele.

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

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

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

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

"Would it be within the present constitutional structure?"

"The constitution will be dead" said Gandhiji. "The Government of India Act of 1935 is dead. The I. C. S. would have to go and it might be anarchy, but there *need* be no anarchy if the British withdraw with goodwill. *Free India Government* would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside." . . . "The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom. And I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us."

"Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such?"

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

WHY NOT TODAY

"Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal," said Mr. Emeny returning to the charge.

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

(*Harijan*, July 26, 1942, pp. 242-3)

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(R) TO AMERICAN FRIENDS

. . . I claim to be a votary of truth from my childhood. It was the most natural thing to me. My prayerful search gave me the revealing maxim 'Truth is God' instead of the usual one 'God is Truth'. That maxim enables me to see God face to face as it were. I feel him pervade every fibre of my being. With this Truth as witness between you and me, I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite Great Britain to withdraw her rule over India, irrespective of any demand to the contrary, if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for Britain boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. Without this essential act of tardy justice, Britain could not justify her position before the unmurmuring world conscience, which is there nevertheless. Singapore, Malaya and Burma taught me that the disaster must not be repeated in India. I make bold to say that it cannot be averted unless Britain trusts the people of India to use their liberty in favour of the Allied cause. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India. She will turn the growing illwill into active goodwill. I submit that it is worth all the battleships and airships that your wonder working engineers and financial resources can produce.

. . . We say, 'This is the psychological moment for that recognition. For then and then only can there be irresistible opposition to Japanese aggression. It is of immense value to the Allied cause if it is also of equal value to India. The Congress has anticipated and provided for every possible difficulty in the way of recognition. I want you to look upon the immediate recognition of India's independence as a war measure of first class magnitude.

(*Harijan*, August 9, 1942, p. 264)

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(S) A PLEA FOR REASON

The suppression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment, but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted.

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JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND

The justice of the demand for the ending of British power has never been questioned, the moment chosen for enforcing it is the target of attack. It is clear as crystal in the Working Committee resolution, why this moment is chosen. Let me paraphrase it. India is not playing any effective part in the war. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the World War which has yet to reach its climax. We know that if India does not become free now, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese, should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avoid it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration is to court disaster

AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED

But the critics say : " To whom are the British rulers to hand the keys on their withdrawal ? " It is a good question. Here is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President has said : " The Congress always stands, firstly for sympathy towards democratic countries, secondly, never desires to embarrass Britain and war efforts, and thirdly, it stands for opposition to the Japanese aggression. The Congress does not desire to take power for itself but for all. If real power is handed over to the Congress, surely it will approach other parties and will persuade them to join. "

The Congress President added that he "had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party provided it was real independence. That party will have to approach other parties as no single party can function properly without the cooperation of other parties."

The only thing needful is to hand over complete control without reservation save that during the war period the Allied troops will operate to stem the Japanese or Axis attack. But they will have no power of interference with the affairs of India which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

NOTHING TO CAVIL AT

Surely, there is nothing here to cavil at for anyone. That party or a combination which takes over control of India will have to look to the remaining parties for its retention of power. There is no hope of the parties coming together so long as they have to look not to one another but to an outsider for support and sustenance. Not one of the Viceroy's numerous Indian councillors is dependent upon anybody but the Viceroy for the positions they hold. How can the great or small representative parties operate without mutual support?

In a free India even the Congress could not function efficiently for a day without the support of the smallest party. For in a free India, at least for some time to come, even the strongest party will have no military backing. There will be no military to back. There will only be a raw police in the first stage unless the existing police will service the national government on its terms. But the support, such as it may be, free India will be able to render to the Allied cause, will be of a sterling character. Its possibilities will be limitless and there will be no motive left for welcoming Japanese arms.

On the contrary they will then look to the Allied arms to repel any Japanese or other attack, unless all Indians by then become non-violent. In any case, the Allied arms are there to-day and to-morrow and till the end of the war, whether they are needed for India's protection or not.

If this presentation of the implications of the Congress demand is not appreciated by the Allies' press or the Allies themselves Indian public men should be forgiven if they doubt the sincerity of the fierce opposition which is being organized with ominous unanimity. The latter can only stiffen India's suspicion and resistance.

(*Harjan*, August 2, 1942, p. 252)

(T) WHAT ABOUT MUSLIMS?

* * *
"But *whom* are the British to say — 'India is free'?" asked the friends with a certain degree of exasperation.

"To the world, said Gandhiji without a moment's hesitation. Automatically the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare, they would pack up only after the war is over, but then they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits — beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India afterwards. Today it is all a hypocrisy, unreality. I want that to end. The new order will come only when that falsity ends."

"It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making," said Gandhiji concluding the talk, "the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim, when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage."

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the Allied cause, she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth.

(*Harijan*, June 14, 1942, p. 187)

(U) FOREIGN SOLDIERS IN INDIA

Among the multitude of questions contained in my correspondence is the one referring to the advent of foreign soldiers in India. We have foreign prisoners enough. Now we have promise of a never ending stream of soldiers from America and possibly China. I must confess that I do not look upon this event with equanimity. Cannot a limitless number of soldiers be trained out of India's millions? Would they not make as good fighting material as any in the world? Then why foreigners? We know what American aid means. It amounts in the end to American influence, if not American rule added to British. It is a tremendous price to pay for the possible success of Allied arms. I see no Indian freedom peeping through all this preparation for the so-called defence of India. It is preparation pure and simple for the defence of the British Empire, whatever may be asserted to the contrary. If the British left India to her fate as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would not lose anything. Probably the Japanese would leave India alone. Perhaps India, if the main parties composed their differences as they probably would, would be able effectively to help China in the way of peace and in the long run may

even play a decisive part in the promotion of world peace. But all these happy things may not happen, if the British will leave India only when they must. How much more creditable, how much braver it would be for Britain to offer battle in the West and leave the East to adjust her own position ! There is no guarantee that she will be able to protect, during this war, all her vast possessions. They have become a dead weight round her. If she wisely loosens herself from this weight, and the Nazis, the Fascists or the Japanese instead of leaving India alone choose to subjugate her, they will find that they have to hold more than they can in their iron hoop. They will find it much more difficult than Britain has. Their very rigidity will strangle them. The British system had an elasticity which served so long as it had no powerful rivals. British elasticity is of no help today. I have said more than once in these columns that the Nazi power had risen as a nemesis to punish Britain for her sins of exploitation and enslavement of the Asiatic and African races.

Whatever the consequences, therefore, to India, her real safety and Britain's too lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India. All talk of treaties with the Princes and obligations towards minorities are a creation designed for the preservation of British rule and British interests. It must melt before the stern reality that faces all of us. Princes, in so far as they rely upon their armed strength, are more than able to defend themselves against unarmed India. The big fiction of majority and minority will vanish like the mist before the morning sun of liberty. Truth to tell there will be neither majority nor minority in the absence of the paralysing British arms. The millions of India would then be an undefined but one mass of humanity. I have no doubt that at that time the natural leaders will have wisdom enough to evolve an honourable solution of their difficulties. This

presupposes Japan and other Powers leaving India alone. If they do not, I should hope even then for wisdom to guide the principal parties to devise a scheme whereby they can act with one mind to face the new menace.

Holding the views I do, it is clear why I look upon the introduction of foreign soldiers as a positive danger thoroughly to be deplored and distrusted. The present state of things and the attempt to uphold it are a distinct sign of corroding consumption of the body politic in India.

(*Harijan*, April 26, 1942, p. 128)

APPENDIX II

NOT PRO-JAPANESE

"We can only infer that in the admittedly possible event of Japanese aggression on India after the departure of the British he (I) was prepared to concede to their (Japanese) demands."

(Indictment p. 8)

(A) IF THEY REALLY MEAN ?

Q. If the Japanese really mean what they say and are willing to help to free India from the British yoke, why should we not willingly accept their help?

A. It is folly to suppose that aggressors can ever be benefactors. The Japanese may free India from the British yoke, but only to put in their own instead. I have always maintained that we should not seek any other Power's help to free India from the British yoke. That would not be a non-violent approach. We should have to pay a heavy price, if we ever consented to take foreign aid as against the British. By our non-violent action we were within an ace of reaching our goal. I cling to my faith in non-violence. I have no enmity against the Japanese, but I cannot contemplate with equanimity their designs upon India. Why do they not realize that we as free men have no quarrel with

them ? Let them leave India alone. And if they are well-intentioned, what has China done to deserve the devastation they have wrought there ?

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(*Harizan*, April 26, 1942, p. 136)

(B) FRIENDLY ADVICE

" . . . You say you are willing to take all risks. Every brave man is. At the same time is it not your duty to prepare the ground up to a point so as to minimize the risks as far as possible ? The people must, for instance, be made to shed cowardice and feel that it is possible for us to stand on our own legs. They must not desire, as so many do, Japanese help. . . "

As these columns show, with the overwhelming sense of the truth as it appears to me, I am taking every care humanly possible to prepare the ground. I know that the novelty of the idea and that too at this juncture has caused a shock to many people. But I could not help myself. Even at the risk of being called mad, I had to tell the truth if I was to be true to myself. I regard it as my solid contribution to the war and to India's deliverance from the peril that is and the peril that is threatening. It is too my real contribution to communal unity. No one can visualize what it will be like. Only it will not be the sham we have had up to now. It has touched only the few politically minded people. The masses have remained unaffected by it.

Whilst therefore I will take every imaginable care consistent with the urgency, I cannot guarantee freedom from cowardice, before taking any forward step. The cowardice will probably not be shed without much travail. Nor is waiting possible, till hatred abates. Withdrawal of the hated power is the only way to rid the land of the debasing hatred. The cause gone, hatred must cease.

Of course the people must not, on any account, lean on the Japanese to get rid of the British power. That were a remedy worse than the disease. But as I have already said, in this struggle every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the biggest disease — a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must for ever be slaves. It is an insufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance. (*Harjan*, May 31, 1942, p. 172)

(C) IF THEY COME

Q. (1) If the Japs come, how are we to resist them non-violently ?

(2) What are we to do if we fall into their hands ?

A. (1) These questions come from Andhradesh where the people rightly or wrongly feel that the attack is imminent. My answer has already been given in these columns. Neither food nor shelter is to be given nor are any dealings to be established with them. They should be made to feel that they are not wanted. But of course things are not going to happen quite so smoothly as the question implies. It is a superstition to think that they will come as friends. No attacking party has ever done so. It spreads fire and brimstone among the populace. It forces things from people. If the people cannot resist fierce attack and are afraid of death, they should evacuate the infested place in order to deny compulsory service to the enemy.

(2) If unfortunately some people are captured or fall into the enemy's hands, they are likely to be shot if they do not obey orders, e. g., render forced labour. If the captives face death cheerfully their task is done. They have saved their own and their country's honour. They could have done nothing more if they had offered violent resistance, save perhaps taking a few Japanese lives and inviting terrible reprisals.

The thing becomes complicated when you are captured alive and subjected to unthinkable tortures to compel submission, you will neither submit to torture nor to the orders of the enemy. In the act of resistance you will probably die and escape humiliation. But it is said that death is prevented to let the victim go through the agony of tortures and to serve as an example to others. I however think that a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying.

(*Harijan*, June 14, 1942, p. 189)

(D) WHAT ABOUT RADIO MESSAGES ?

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

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any Power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's

sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty cooperation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

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

(E) IF JAPANESE COME?

The British United Press has cabled the following questions for Gandhiji's reply. They are couched in evidently angry language. But Gandhiji had no hesitation in sending straight replies to them.

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

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

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

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

Q. 3. Whether he would persist in urging (non-cooperation) if Japs shot non-cooperators;

Q. 4. Whether he would rather be shot than cooperate himself.

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

(*Harijan*, July 26, 1942, p. 248)

(F) QUESTION BOX

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? It is necessary that you clear the position in this respect. A very important leader in the Congress thinks like that and he says that he is sure because he has this knowledge from his personal talks with you."

A. I wish you could have given the name of the leader. Whoever he is, 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. Of the Americans in this very issue you will see my answer to *The Sunday Despatch*. It contradicts the "leader's" statements. He has therefore either misunderstood me or you have misunderstood him. But I have said in my talk for the past twelve months and more that this war is not likely to end in a decisive victory for any party. There will be peace when the exhaustion point is reached. This is mere speculation. Britain may be favoured by nature. She has nothing to lose by waiting. And with America as her ally she has inexhaustible material resources and scientific skill. This advantage is not available to any of the Axis powers. Thus I have no decisive opinion about the result of the war. But what is decisive with me is that I am made by nature to side with weak parties. My policy of non-embarrassment is based upon that nature and it persists. My proposal for British withdrawal is as much in Britain's interest as India's. Your difficulty arises from your disinclination to believe that Britain can ever do justice voluntarily. My belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature.

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

(G) UNFAIR TO AMERICA ?

Proceeding evidently on Reuter's summary of Gandhiji's statement about America during the interview he gave to the Bombay press, the *Sunday Despatch* of London sent Gandhiji the following cable :

" You are reported as saying that America could have kept out of the war if she had wished. How can you justify such a statement in view of the fact that while at peace America was attacked by the Japanese 'who simultaneously declared war on her.'"

To this Gandhiji sent the following reply :

" Cable just received. Evidently you have not my full statement. Part relating to America runs thus :

' I know that I have no right to criticize such a big nation, I don't know all the facts which have determined America to throw herself into the cauldron. But somehow or other opinion has forced itself on me that America could have remained out and even now she can do so if she divests herself of intoxication that her immense wealth has produced. And here I would like to repeat what I have said about the withdrawal of the British power from India. Both America and Britain lack the moral basis for engaging in this war unless they put their own houses in order by making it their fixed determination to withdraw their influence and power both from Africa and Asia and removed the colour-bar. They have no right to talk of protecting democracy and protecting civilization and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety.'

I adhere to that statement. How America could have avoided war I cannot answer except by recommending non-violent method. My American friendships had led me to build high hope on American contribution to peace. America is too big financially, intellectually, and in scientific skill, to be subdued by any nation or even combination. Hence my tears over her throwing herself in cauldron."

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

(H)

[Here see letters No. 107, 108, 109]

(K) ' FIRE RAGING IN ME '

A journalist was on a visit here the other day
He was full of the happenings in his province. . . .

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

" But I suppose you know that there he is wrong," said Gandhiji, " and I cannot possibly appropriate the compliments he is paying me. ' Liberty at any cost ' has a vastly different connotation for me from what it has for him. ' At any cost ' does not exist in my dictionary. It does not, for instance, include bringing in foreigners to help us win our liberty. I have no doubt it means exchanging one form of slavery for another possibly much worse. But of course we have to fight for our liberty and make whatever sacrifice it demands. In spite of all the hypocrisy that you find in all the inspired press of Britain and America I do not relent. I deliberately use the word hypocrisy, for they are now proving that when they were talking of the freedom of India they did not mean it. So far as I am concerned I have no doubt about the righteousness of my step. It seems to me to be axiomatic that the Allies are in for a defeat this time if they will not do this initial act of justice, and thus put their own case on an unassailable basis. If they don't, they must face the opposition of those who cannot tolerate their rule and are prepared to die in order to get

rid of it. Convert the deepening ill-will into good-will is a sound proposition. It is not open to them to say that we must smother our consciences and say or do nothing because there is war. That is why I have made up my mind that it would be a good thing if a million people were shot in a brave and non-violent rebellion against British rule. It may be that it may take us years before we can evolve order out of chaos. But we can then face the world, we cannot face the world today. Avowedly the different nations are fighting for their liberty. Germany, Japan, Russia, China are pouring their blood and money like water. What is our record? You talk of the newspapers doing good business out of the war. It is a shame to be thus bought and to refrain from speaking out at Government's dictation. There is many a way of earning an honest crust of bread. If British money—which is our money—can buy us, Heaven help our country."

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

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

Was there the slightest suspicion that he wished victory to the Axis arms in order that the British may be humbled

and their power in India may be destroyed ? Gandhiji asked the friend to disabuse himself of any such notion. " Destruction of the British power is not dependent on Japanese or German arms. If it depended on them, there would be nothing to be proud of, apart from the blight that would settle upon the world. But what matters to me is that I cannot be happy or proud if some one comes in and drives away my enemy. Where do I come in there ? I cannot possibly enthuse over such a thing. I want to have the pleasure of having offered up my sacrifice for fighting the enemy in my own house. If I have not that strength I cannot prevent the other from coming in. Only I must find a middle path to prevent the new enemy coming in. I am sure God will help me to find the way.

" I do not mind honest, strong, healthy criticism. All the manufactured criticism that I find being made today is sheer tomfoolery, meant to overawe me and demoralize the Congress ranks. *It is a foul game. They do not know the fire that is raging in my breast. I have no false notions of prestige, no personal considerations would make me take a step that I know is sure to plunge the country into a conflagration.*"

(*Harjan*, August 2, 1942, pp. 257-258)

(L) LETTER TO CHIANG KAI SHEK

DEAR GENERALISSIMO,

I can never forget the five hours' close contact I had with you and your noble wife in Calcutta. I had always felt drawn towards you in your fight for freedom, and that contact and our conversation brought China and her problems still nearer to me. Long ago, between 1905 and 1913, when I was in South Africa, I was in constant touch with the small Chinese colony in Johannesburg. I knew them first as clients and then as comrades in the Indian passive resistance struggle in South Africa. I came in touch with them in

Mauritius also. I learnt then to admire their thrift, industry, resourcefulness and internal unity. Later in India I had a very fine Chinese friend living with me for a few years and we all learnt to like him.

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

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

I feel India cannot do so while she is in bondage. India has been a helpless witness of the withdrawals from Malaya, Singapore and Burma. We must learn the lesson from these tragic events and prevent by all means at our disposal a repetition of what befell these unfortunate countries. But unless we are free, we can do nothing to prevent it, and

the same process might well occur again crippling India and China disastrously. I do not want a repetition of this tragic tale of woe.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

(*Hindustan Times*, August 15th, 1942)

Further reference to the same subject will be found in :

APPENDIX I

- B. OUT OF TOUCH p. 189
- C. " I AM NOT PRO-JAPANESE " p. 191
- E. IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL p. 198
- K. A POSER P. 202
- L. A FALLACY P. 202
- Q. AMERICAN OPINION MAY BE ANTAGONIZED p. 212
- R. TO AMERICAN FRIENDS p. 215
- S. JUSTICE OF CONGRESS DEMAND P. 216
- * AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED P. 216
- " NOTHING TO CAVIL AT P. 217

APPENDIX III

CONGRESS NOT FOR POWER

'It has been suggested in the preceding paragraph that the Congress intended this government to be under their domination and note has been made of the strength added to this view by the unity of Muslim opinion that the Congress move was aimed at establishing Congress-Hindu domination over India.'

(Indictment p. 12)

(A) NOT RIGHT

Q, Are we right in believing that you wish the Congress and the people to become capable as soon as possible of taking over the administration and to do so on the first opportunity?

A. You are not right. I cannot speak for the Congress. But I want no organization or individual to become capable of taking over the administration. In non-violent technique it is unthinkable. You do not take over power. It may descend to you being given by the people. In an anarchical state, all turbulent elements will make a bid for power. Those who will serve the people and will evolve order out of chaos will spend themselves in removing chaos. If they survive, the popular will may put them in as administrators. This is wholly different from what you have imagined. People who make a bid for power generally fail to achieve it.

(*Harijan*, May 31, 1942, p. 173)

(B) WHAT ABOUT MUSLIMS ?

* * *

"But what does a free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?"

A. "I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to

God or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos."

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(*Harijan*, June 14, 1942, p. 187)

(C) TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

. . . I think that even a large number, if not all of us, prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe too that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may. . .

The Congress and the League being best organized parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly elected Constituent Assembly.

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(*Harijan*, July 12, 1942, p. 220)

(D) AN APPROPRIATE QUESTION

" . . . How is Britain to know what sort of 'resistance' the proposed Indian Government would organize, concludes the *Manchester Guardian*."

This is a good question. But who can speak for the proposed Indian Government? It must be clear that it won't be Congress Government; nor will it be Hindu Maha Sabha Government, nor Muslim League Government. It will be All India Government. It will be a government not backed by

any military power unless the so-called military classes seize the opportunity and overawe the populace and declare themselves the Government as Franco has done. If they play the game then the proposed Government would be a government, though provisional in the first instance, broad-based upon the will of the people. Let us assume that the military-minded persons being without the backing of the popular British arms will think wise not to seize power. The popular government to be must represent Parsis, Jews, Indian Christians, Muslims and Hindus not as separate religious groups but as Indians. The vast majority won't be believers in non-violence. The Congress does not believe in non-violence as a creed. Very few go to the extreme length I do as the *Manchester Guardian* properly puts it. The Maulana and Pandit Nehru 'believe in offering armed resistance'. And I may add so do many Congressmen. Therefore, whether in the country as a whole or in the Congress, I shall be in a hopeless minority. But for me even if I find myself in a minority of one my course is clear. My non-violence is on its trial. I hope I shall come out unscathed through the ordeal. My faith in its efficacy is unflinching. If I could turn India, Great Britain, America and the rest of the world including the Axis powers in the direction of non--violence I should do so. But that feat mere human effort cannot accomplish. That is in God's hands. For me 'I can but do or die.' Surely the *Manchester Guardian* does not fear the real article, genuine non-violence. Nobody does nor need.

(*Harijan*, August 9, 1942, pp. 261-2)

(E) UNSEEMLY IF TRUE

. . . Hindustan belongs to all those who are born and bred here and who have no other country to look to. Therefore it belongs to Parsis, Beni Israels, to Indian Christians,

Muslims and other non-Hindus as much as to Hindus. Free India will be no Hindu raj, it will be Indian raj based not on the majority of any religious sect or community but on the representatives of the whole people without distinction of religion. I can conceive a mixed majority putting the Hindus in a minority. They would be elected for their record of service and merits. Religion is a personal matter which should have no place in politics. It is in the unnatural condition of foreign domination that we have unnatural divisions according to religion. Foreign domination going, we shall laugh at our folly in having clung to false ideals and slogans. The discourse referred to is surely vulgar. There is no question of 'driving out' the English. They cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in by-gone days; it has no meaning today. There is no force in the cry of driving out the English if the substitute is to be Hindu or any other domination. That will be no Swaraj. Self-government necessarily means government by the free and intelligent will of the people. I add the word 'intelligent' because I hope that India will be predominantly non-violent. . . . :

(*Harijan*, August 9, 1942, p. 261)

Further reference to the same subject will be found in :

APPENDIX I

F. ITS MEANING P. 200

G. ONLY IF THEY WITHDRAW P. 200

P. NEGOTIATIONS P. 210

„ SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME P. 211

S. AZAD'S STATEMENT CITED P. 216

„ NOTHING TO CAVIL AT P. 217

APPENDIX IV

'ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE

" Mr. Gandhi knew that any mass movement started in India would be a violent movement."

(Indictment p. 39)

(A) EXPEDIENCE

Yes. I adhere to my opinion that I did well to present to the Congress non-violence as an expedient. I could not have done otherwise, if I was to introduce it into politics. In South Africa too I introduced it as an expedient. It was successful there because resisters were a small number in a compact area and therefore easily controlled. Here we had numberless persons scattered over a huge country. The result was that they could not be easily controlled or trained. And yet it is a marvel the way they have responded. They might have responded much better and shown far better results. But I have no sense of disappointment in me over the results obtained. If I had started with men who accepted non-violence as a creed, I might have ended with myself. Imperfect as I am, I started with imperfect men and women and sailed on an unchartered ocean. Thank God that, though the boat has not reached its haven, it has proved fairly storm-proof.

(*Harijan*, April 12, 1942, p. 116)

(B) NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION

Q. " There is a report about some new scheme that you want to propound in one of your *Harijan* articles about non-violent non-cooperation if any invader came to India. Could you give us an idea ? " Was the next question. '

A. " It is wrong. I have no plan in mind. If I had, I should give it to you. But I think nothing more need be added when I have said that there should be unadulterated non-violent non-cooperation and if the whole of India

responded and unanimously offered it, I should show that without shedding a single drop of blood Japanese arms — or any combination of arms — can be sterilized. That involves the determination of India not to give quarter on any point whatsoever and to be ready to risk loss of several million lives. But I would consider that cost very cheap and victory won at that cost glorious. That India may not be ready to pay that price may be true. I hope it is not true, but some such price must be paid by any country that wants to retain its independence. After all, the sacrifice made by the Russians and the Chinese is enormous, and they are ready to risk all. The same could be said of the other countries also, whether aggressors or defenders. The cost is enormous. Therefore, in the non-violent technique I am asking India to risk no more than other countries are risking and which India would have to risk even if she offered armed resistance."

"But," promptly came the question, "unadulterated non-violent non-cooperation has not been successful against Great Britain. How will it succeed against a new aggressor?"

"I combat the statement altogether. Nobody has yet told me that non-violent non-cooperation, unadulterated, has not succeeded. It has not been offered, it is true. Therefore, you can say that what has not been offered hitherto is not likely to be offered suddenly when India faces the Japanese arms. I can only hope that, in the face of danger, India would be readier to offer non-violent non-cooperation. Perhaps India is accustomed to British rule for so many years that the Indian mind or India's masses do not feel the pinch so much as the advent of a new power would be felt. But your question is well put. It is possible that India may not be able to offer non-violent non-cooperation. But a similar question may be put regarding armed resistance. Several attempts have been made and they have not succeeded, therefore it will not succeed against the Japanese.

That leads us to the absurd conclusion that India will never be ready for gaining independence, and seeing that I cannot subscribe to any such proposition, I must try again and again till India is ready to respond to the call of non-violent non-cooperation. But if India does not respond to that call then India must respond to the call of some leader or some organization, wedded to violence. For instance, the Hindu Mahasabha is trying to rouse the Hindu mind for an armed conflict. It remains to be seen whether that attempt succeeds. I for one do not believe it will succeed."

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

(C) SCORCHED EARTH POLICY

Q. "Would you advise non-violent non-cooperation against scorched earth policy? Would you resist the attempt to destroy sources of food and water?"

A. "Yes. A time may come when I would certainly advise it, for I think it is ruinous, suicidal, and unnecessary — whether India believes in non-violent non-cooperation or in violence. And the Russian and Chinese examples make no appeal to me. If some other country resorts to methods which I consider to be inhuman, I may not follow them. If the enemy comes and helps himself to crops I may be obliged to leave, because I cannot or care not to defend them, I must resign myself to it. And there is a good example for us. A passage was quoted to me from the Islamic literature. The Khaliphs issued definite instructions to the armies of Islam that they should not destroy the utility services, they should not harass the aged and women and children; and I do not know that the arms of Islam suffered any disaster because the armies obeyed these instructions."

Q. "But what about factories — especially factories for the manufacture of munitions?"

A. "Suppose there are factories for grinding wheat or pressing oilseeds, I should not destroy them. But munitions factories, yes; for I would not tolerate munitions factories in a free India if I had my way. Textile factories I would not destroy and I would resist all such destruction. However, it is a question of prudence." Gandhiji continued: "I have not suggested immediate enforcement of the whole programme in pursuance of the demand for British withdrawal. It is there of course. But I am trying, if I am allowed to continue to cultivate and educate public opinion, to show that behind this demand of mine there is no ill-will, no malice. It is the most logical thing that I have suggested. It is in the interests of all, and since it is an entirely friendly act, I am moving cautiously, watching myself at every step. I will do nothing in haste, but there is the fixed determination behind every act of mine that the British must withdraw.

"I have mentioned anarchy. I am convinced that we are living today in a state of ordered anarchy. It is a misnomer to call such rule as is established in India a rule which promotes the welfare of India. Therefore, this ordered disciplined anarchy should go, and if there is complete lawlessness in India, as a result, I would risk it, though I believe, and should like to believe that 22 years of continuous effort at educating India along the lines of non-violence will not have gone in vain, and people will evolve real popular order out of chaos. Therefore, if I find that all the best effort fails, I would certainly invite people to resist destruction of their property."

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

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(D) WHAT WOULD FREE INDIA DO ?

Gandhiji had over and over again said that an orderly withdrawal would result in a sullen India becoming a

friend and ally. These American friends now explored the implications of that possible friendship: "Would a free India declare war against Japan?"

"Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt."

"How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?"

"It is a good question. The *whole* of India is not non-violent. If the whole of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or perhaps by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there too the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree; but they may act when the supreme test comes, or they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present to Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risk, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand."

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(*Harijan*, June 14, 1942, p. 187)

(E) A CHALLENGE

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The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An

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

I hope now my critic realizes the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus :

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

(*Harijan*, June 28, 1942, p. 201)

(F)

... Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe. . . . (*Harijan*, July 12, 1942, p. 217)

(G) GURU GOVIND SINGH

... But for me as a believer in non-violence out and out they (Guru Govind Singh, Lenin, Kamal Pasha, etc.) cannot be my guides in life so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious,

argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realize with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia, and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck.

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(*Harijan*, July 12, 1942, p. 219)

(H) THE CONFLAGRATION

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

A. — The difference will be known if match, if I have ever to light it, does not prove a 'damp squib'. Instead of fiddling in Sevagram you may expect to find me perishing in the flames of my own starting if I cannot regulate or restrain them. But I have a grouse against you. Why

should you shove all the blame on to me for all that may happen by reason of my taking action for the discharge of an overdue debt and that, too, just when the discharge has become the necessary condition of my life?

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

(*Harijan*, July 12, 1942, p. 228)

(K) IN CASE OF ILLNESS

... But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God—the Unseen, even Unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless, as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas I am far from the perfection I am aiming at.

(*Harijan*, July 19, 1942, p. 229)

(L) FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION

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

There is a natural prejudice against it as part of a political struggle. It has a recognized place in religious practice. But it is considered a vulgar interpolation in politics by the ordinary politician though it has always been resorted to by prisoners in a haphazard way with more or less success. By fasting, however, they have always succeeded in drawing public attention and disturbing the peace of jail authorities.

My own fasts have always, as I hold, been strictly according to the law of Satyagraha. Fellow Satyagrahis too in South Africa fasted partially or wholly. My fasts have been varied. There was the Hindu-Muslim Unity fast of 21 days in 1924 started under the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's roof in Delhi. The indeterminate fast against the MacDonald Award was taken in the Yeravda Prison in 1932. The 21 days' purificatory fast was begun in the Yeravda Prison and was finished at Lady Thackersey's, as the Government would not take the burden of my being in the Prison in that condition. Then followed another fast in the Yeravda Prison in 1933 against the government refusal, to let me carry on anti-untouchability work through *Harijan* (issued from prison) on the same basis as facilities had been allowed me four months before. They would not yield, but they discharged me when their medical advisers thought I could not live many days if the fast was not given up. Then followed the ill-fated Rajkot fast in 1939. A false step taken by me thoughtlessly during that fast thwarted the brilliant result that would otherwise certainly have been achieved. In spite of all these fasts, fasting has not been accepted as a recognized part of Satyagraha. It has only been tolerated by the politicians. I have however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of Satyagraha programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given

circumstances. Not every one is qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training.

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

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

(*Harijan*, July 26, 1942, p. 248)

(M) WHAT ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE

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

A.— The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent

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

(N) ANOTHER DISCOURSE

Bharatanandji, whose acquaintance the reader will make in another column, demurred to the compliment given to his countrymen, the Poles, by Gandhiji. "You say that the Poles were 'almost non-violent'. I do not think so. There was black hatred in the breast of Poland, and I do not think the compliment is deserved."

“ You must not take what I say, so terribly literally. If ten soldiers resist a force of a thousand soldiers armed cap-a-pie, the former are almost non-violent, because there is no capacity for anything like proportionate violence in them. But the instance I have taken of the girl is more appropriate. A girl who attacks her assailant with her nails, if she has grown them, or with her teeth, if she has them, is almost

non-violent, because there is no premeditated violence in her. Her violence is the violence of the mouse against the cat."

"Well then, Bapuji, I will give you an instance. A young Russian girl was attacked by a soldier. She used her nails and teeth against him and tore him, so to say, to pieces. Was she almost non-violent?"

"How can it cease to be non-violence, if offered on the spur of the moment, simply because it was successful?" I interposed.

"No," said Gandhiji almost inadvertently.

"Then I am really puzzled," said Bhartanandji. "You say there should be no premeditated violence and no capacity to offer proportionate violence. Here in this case she by her success proved that she had the capacity."

"I am sorry," said Gandhiji, "that I inadvertently said 'no' to Mahadev. There was violence there. It was equally matched."

"But then, is not intention ultimately the test? A surgeon uses his knife non-violently. Or a keeper of the peace uses force against miscreants in order to protect society. That too he does non-violently," said Bharatanandji.

"Who is to judge the intention? Not we. And for us the deed in most cases is the test. We normally look at the action and not at the intention. God alone knows the intention."

"Then God alone knows what is *himsa* and what is *ahimsa*."

"Yes. God alone is the final judge. It is likely that what we believe to be an act of *ahimsa* is an act of *himsa* in the eyes of God. But for us the path is chalked out. And then you must know that a true practice of *ahimsa* means also in one who practises it the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience. It is difficult for him to err. When I used those words for Poland, and when I suggested to a

girl believing herself to be helpless that she might use her nails and teeth without being guilty of violence, you must understand the meaning at the back of my mind. There is that refusal to bend before overwhelming might in the full knowledge that it means certain death. The Poles knew that they would be crushed to atoms, and yet they resisted the German hordes. That was why I called it almost non-violence."

* * *

(*Harijan*, September 8, 1940, p. 274)

Further reference to the same subject will be found in :
APPENDIX I

C. NO SECRECY P. 192

„ TO RESIST SLAVE DRIVERS P. 192

D. WHY NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION ? P. 195

K. A POSER P. 202

L. A FALLACY P. 202

M. OH ! THE TROOPS P. 204

Q. OPEN TO CONVICTION P. 213

APPENDIX V

EXTRACTS FROM PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S UTTERANCES

(A)

[Extracts from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's address to the Journalists Association at Allahabad.]

" We do not wish to take advantage of the peril to Britain, Russia or China, nor do we want the Axis powers to win. We mean to stop the Japanese and to help China and the wider cause of democracy and freedom, but the nature of the peril is such now not only to us but through us to China also that we want to meet it by converting the war into a peoples' war as China has done. The preparation of the Government of India is entirely inadequate. We want to build up the national will to resistance.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTION

"We want to take up the present situation, even if we have to take risk in doing so. We want to save ourselves from immediate peril and not to take advantage of any situation, in order to gain independence. If we remain passive, we allow the popular will against the British Government to be broken gradually, and that will break the popular will to resistance. We want to gamble with fate if one chooses to call it so -- and we will do it bravely."

Pandit Nehru said that it was not going to be a long-drawn-out affair, but it would be short and swift. How short and swift he did not know, because that depended on psychological factors. "Ours is not armed force. Our struggle depends upon the psychological reaction of a few million."

In reply to a question by an American journalist, Pandit Nehru said : "The movement can gain by what we do and can be accelerated by what the Government does." Gandhiji in his *Harijan* has indicated the steps, and the first step may be within a fortnight after the A. I. C. C. meeting. That might be a preparatory step, unless the Government takes such action as might accelerate it.

*

The present decision, the Pandit said, was not taken in a huff, but they came to the conclusion, following a close analysis of the current world politics and the method of the British Government in fighting the war. He emphasized that when the Congress talked of independence, it was thought that it was in the nature of bargaining. Therefore the demand for the withdrawal of British power from India had irritated the British. He explained that this demand was inherent in the nationalist movement. They

were told that the 'Quit India' demand was in the nature of blackmail, and India should wait till the situation was clear after the war.

Continuing, Pandit Nehru said that they waited these years and the Congress was on the point of starting Satyagraha in 1940, but at the fall of France they desisted from starting the movement, because they did not want to embarrass England during her moment of great peril. They wanted to face peril as far as possible. They wanted to prevent the Japanese aggression upon India and help China. He said that he could not have thrown in his weight with the British Government because the British policy was so deep-rooted that they could do nothing. There was no loophole to function effectively. The Congress wanted India not to be a passive onlooker.

In conclusion, Pandit Nehru said that the average man in India looked to the Congress for a lead, and if the Congress failed, the result would be so much spiritual . . . disillusionment that it might break their spirit. So the alternative left to them was to take the risk to shake this spirit and change the whole of Europe and America into the conception of the war of freedom. —United Press

(*Bombay Chronicle*, August 1, 1942)

(B)

[Extracts from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech on Tilak Day celebrations, Allahabad.]

My mind is quite clear that our decision is correct, I can say this with all the authority and dignity of a member of the Working Committee. My mind is at rest. I can clearly see the path before us. We can tread it fearlessly and bravely.

*

*

*

NO TRUCK WITH AXIS

Pandit Nehru said that he wanted to make it clear that there was no intention to help Japan or to injure China. He said: "If we succeed, that will release tremendous spiritual forces for the cause of freedom and democracy and will greatly increase the resistance against Japan and Germany. If on the other hand we fail, Britain would be left to fight against Japan as best she can."

* * *

"CORRECT SLOGAN"

Gandhiji's 'Quit India' slogan correctly represents our thoughts and sentiments. Passivity on our part at this moment and hour of peril would be suicidal. It will break down all our will to resistance. It would destroy and emasculate us. Our step is not merely for the love of independence. We want to take it to protect ourselves, to strengthen our will to resistance, to give a fresh orientation to the war, to fight and to help China and Russia: it is an immediate and pressing necessity with us.

PEOPLE'S WAR

Answering the question "How would you fight against Japan?" Pandit Nehru said: "We would fight in every way possible with non-violence and with arms—by making it a people's war, by raising people's army, by increasing production and industrialization, by making it our primary consuming passion, by fighting like Russia and China and no price would be too big to pay to achieve our success against the aggressor."

* * *

"Struggle—eternal struggle! That is my reply to Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps," said Pandit Nehru spiritedly criticizing the latest statements of Mr. Amery and Sir Stafford Cripps.

"India's national self-respect cannot be a matter of bargaining" he added, "I am galled with sorrow and anger to note that I for years wanted some settlement because I felt that Britain was in trouble. They have had their suffering and sorrow. I wanted my country to move forward step in step with them as a free country. But what is one to make of such statements!" (*Bombay Chronicle*, August 3, 1942)

(C)

STATEMENT ON THE SEIZED DOCUMENTS

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has issued the following statement:—

I have just seen for the first time the Government's 'communique' issuing certain documents obtained during the police raid from the A. I. C. C. office. It is astonishing to what a pass the Government of India has been reduced when it has to adopt these discreditable and dishonourable tactics. Normally such tactics require no answer. But as there is likely to be misapprehension, I wish to clear up some matters.

It is not our custom to keep detailed minutes of the Working Committee's meetings. Only final decisions are recorded. On this occasion the Assistant Secretary took brief notes unofficially, apparently for his own record. These notes are very brief and dis-jointed and represent several days' prolonged debate during which I must have spoken on various occasions for two or three hours. Only a few sentences were taken down and torn from their context. They often give a wrong impression. None of us had a chance of seeing these notes or of revising them. The record is very unsatisfactory and incomplete and hence often incorrect.

In our discussions Mahatma Gandhi was not present. We had to consider every aspect of the question fully and to weigh the implications of words and phrases in the draft

resolutions. If Gandhiji had been there, much of this discussion might have been avoided as he could have explained to us his attitude more fully.

IMPORTANT OMISSION

Thus when the question of British withdrawal from India was considered, I pointed out that if the armed forces were suddenly withdrawn, the Japanese might well advance and invade the country without hindrance. This obvious difficulty was removed when Gandhiji later explained that British and other armed forces might remain to prevent aggression.

In regard to the statement that Gandhiji expected an Axis victory, an important qualification has been omitted. What he has repeatedly said and what I have referred to is his belief that unless Britain changes her whole policy in regard to India and her colonial possessions, she is heading for disaster. He has further stated that if a suitable change in this policy was made and the war really became one for freedom for all peoples, then victory would assuredly come to the United Nations.

MAHATMA'S WAY

The references to negotiations with Japan are also incorrect and entirely torn from their context. Gandhiji always sends notice to his adversary before coming into conflict. He would thus have called upon Japan not only to keep away from India, but to withdraw from China, etc. In any event he was determined to resist every aggressor in India and he advised our people to do so even to the point of death. They were never to submit.

It is absurd to say that any of us envisaged any arrangements with Japan giving her right of passage, etc. What I said was that Japan would want this, but we could never

agree. Our whole policy has all along been based on uttermost resistance to aggression.

A. P.

(*Bombay Chronicle*, August 5, 1942)

(D)

[Extracts from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech at the A. I. C. C. Meeting, August 7, 1942.]

If the British Government were to accept the proposal it would lead to an improvement of the position both internal and international from every point of view. The position of China would be improved. He was convinced that whatever change might come about in India would be for the better. The A. I. C. C. knew that Mahatma Gandhi had agreed to retain and allow the British and armed forces (to be ?) stationed in India. This he agreed to so as not to facilitate Japanese action on the Indian frontier. Those who wanted to bring about a change should agree to this.

* * *

Referring to criticisms from America that Congress was blackmailing, Pandit Nehru said that it was a curious and amazing charge. It was curious that people who talked in terms of their own freedom should level this charge against those who were fighting for their freedom. It was a curious charge to be made against a people who had been suffering for the last 200 years. If that was blackmail, then "our understanding of the English language has been wrong".

* * *

Concluding he said he could not take any more risks and that they should go forward although such step might involve perils and risks.

The attitude of the Government was one of defeatism. He could not tolerate it. His only object was to remove the defeatists and put in their place valiant fighters.

(*Bombay Chronicle*, August 8, 1942)

APPENDIX VI

[Extracts from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's Speech at the A.I. C. C. Meeting, August 7, 1942.]

The extraordinary danger which India was facing was such that they could not face it, unless they had in their hands the reins of power. Danger was knocking at India's doors and it was necessary that they should make all preparations to check the enemy as soon as he jumped into our court-yard. That could be done only when they used every power in their possession. At Allahabad it had been decided that if Japan stepped into the land they would resist aggression with all their non-violent strength; but during the last three months, the world had not stood still. It had moved fast. The sound of war drums was coming nearer, while the world was flowing in blood and nations were fighting and pouring out their lifeblood to preserve their precious possession of freedom.

* * *

The Congress had made repeated proposals to Britain to give the people of India that freedom which would enable them to fight the aggressor. They had not asked for the keys of power so that they could sit back and make merry. That was not the way of the world to-day. The whole world was straining at its leash, was rushing towards freedom. In these circumstances, if they felt that conditions in India required a change, if they felt that their only salvation lay in making and bringing about drastic changes, then they should take such steps as would bring about those changes. At the same time they had to consider the possible consequences of their step on the entire world. They had to weigh the consequences of their action and inaction carefully in the balance.

WHEN INDIANS WILL FIGHT

Therefore, the Working Committee had passed a resolution three weeks ago after fully considering their

responsibilities, their duties, the consequences of their action and how best they could achieve their object? Their view was that unless some change was brought about at once, the same fate which overtook Burma, Malaya and Singapore would overtake this country also. If they wanted to fight for the safety, freedom and honour of India, it was necessary that they should cast off the shackles that were holding them down, to shake off that lethargy and go to work in an entirely new spirit. It was only when they felt that they were fighting for something which they held sacred that the people of this country could fight, pour out their energy and blood and lay down their lives. They had made repeated appeals and entreaties to bring about this change and as they had failed, it had become their duty to take a positive step. That step was certainly fraught with hardships; but they could do nothing unless they were prepared to suffer hardships and make sacrifices. It was only by suffering and strife that they could achieve anything at all. That was the meaning of the resolution of July 14. During these three weeks, the message had spread throughout the land. The resolution only reiterated the position which they had always taken. As long as three years ago the Congress had made its position clear and had cast its lot in favour of democracy and against Fascism. Nothing that they had done since then was inconsistent with this fundamental position. They had always said that they would whole-heartedly aid the cause of freedom and democracy, if they were free. For freedom itself they could wait. But the present question was not merely of freedom but of their very existence. If they survived and lived, they could have freedom. But the position now was that they could not live and survive without freedom.

TWICE-TESTED

Continuing, the Congress President said that the demand they were putting forward before Britain and the United

Nations was to be judged by the one and only test and that test was whether for the sake of the defence of India, for her very survival, freedom was necessary. India had become a vital field of battle. If India were free, she could have kindled a new light throughout the land and the cry of victory would ring from every corner. No army could wage a relentless war unless it had behind it an administration which had the fullest popular support. If anybody could show them that what they were doing would contribute to the defeat of Freedom Powers, they would be prepared to change their course. But if the argument was merely a threat, holding out the prospect of civil war and chaos, he for one would tell them: "It is our right to wage a civil war; it is our responsibility to face chaos."

Proceeding the Congress President observed that having thus once tested the gold of their demand, they took the bright gold and yet applied to it another test and that test was: "Are we contributing to others' defeat, to others' misfortune?"

If their demand was such that it would not contribute to the strength of the Freedom Powers, would not promote the cause of those powers fighting with valour for their freedom, they would never have put it forward. They had considered this question for full nine days. And, the Congress President said: "Our demand is twice-tested pure gold." "Is the British Government prepared to allow its actions and policies to be subjected to these same tests?" he challenged.

Answering critics of the Congress, he said that there was no right thinking man who would not accept the tests he had propounded as valid. It was the duty of the critics to understand their position correctly and not merely to give it a bad name.

In this connection he referred to the statement of Sir Stafford Cripps that if the Congress demand was accepted

the whole government from the Viceroy to the sepoy would have to leave. This was misrepresentation with a vengeance. Their resolution had said in clear terms that as soon as Britain or the Allied Nations declared India's independence, India would enter into a treaty with Britain for the carrying out of the administration and the conduct of the war to victory. They had not asked that all the government officials should go home, bag and baggage, and after reaching England, return to India for negotiations. Gandhiji had repeatedly made it clear that 'Quit India' demand meant only the removal of the British power and not the physical removal of British officers, administrators and army personnel. All of them, including the armies of Britain and the Allies, would continue to stay here — only under an agreement with us and not against our will as at present. Not to see this clear point was suicidal blindness.

SIMULTANEOUS DECISION ON BOTH ISSUES

The Maulana stated: "There was a time for mere promises. But the resolution of July 14 makes one thing clear, namely, the condition of India and of the World has reached a stage when it was absolutely necessary that everything should be done at once. What we ask for from Britain and the Allied powers should be done here and now. We do not rely on mere promises about the future. We have had bitter experiences of promises having been broken. They also suspect our promise to fight with them against the Axis. Let us come together to-day and simultaneously decide both the issues — the freedom of India and India's complete participation in the war efforts. Let there be simultaneous declaration of India's independence and the signing of a treaty between India and the United Nations. If you do not trust us in this, we cannot trust you, either."

Concluding Maulana Azad observed that even in this grave hour when every minute counted, we had decided to

make one last minute appeal to the United Nations, to demonstrate to them that the object of India and the Allied powers was the same, that their interests were the same, that the satisfaction of India's demand would promote the welfare of the Allies. But if the Allies were obdurate and deaf to all appeals, it was their clear duty to do what they could to achieve freedom. (*Bombay Chronicle*, August 8, 1942)

APPENDIX VII

[Extracts from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's public speeches.]

(A)

[From a speech at Chowpati, Bombay, on August 2, 1942.]

The war was coming nearer India and the fall of Malaya, Singapore and Burma which were lost led India to consider all possible steps to prevent a similar fate.

Gandhiji and the Congress thought that such a situation could be avoided, if only the British left the country. Public sympathy and cooperation was necessary to keep the enemy away. If the British left the country, the people could be galvanized and could be made to fight in the same manner as the Russians and the Chinese.

It was also Gandhiji's belief that as long as an imperialist power remained it could also act as a temptation to another imperialist power to covet this land, and in this vortex of imperialist ambitions, war would extend and continue. The only way to stop this was to end the imperialist regime.

The Congress did not desire anarchy or the defeat of the British power. But they found themselves helpless. The curtain had to be rung down before further harm could be done. If the independence of the country was secured, then the Congress would have achieved its goal. It was prepared to give a pledge now that the Congress organization would be disbanded, if that purpose was fulfilled.

(*Bombay Chronicle*, August 3, 1942)

(B)

[From a Speech at Surat.]

Let Britain only transfer power to Indian hands whether it is to the Muslim League or any other party and the Congress is prepared to dissolve itself, declared Sardar Patel, addressing a public meeting here (Surat). The Sardar added that the Congress was started with Independence of India as its main and only goal and once that was achieved, the body would willingly cease to function. A. P.

(*Bombay Chronicle*, August 3, 1942)

(C)

[Extracts from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's speech at the A. I. C. C. Meeting, August 7, 1942]

NO SECRET PLANS

Referring to the charge levelled against the Congress Working Committee that it had secret plans, the speaker said that there was nothing secret about the Congress plans. There were no differences of opinion among the members of the Working Committee regarding the means of achieving India's independence.

Japan professed love for India and promised her freedom. But India was not going to be fooled by the Axis broadcasts. If Japan genuinely wished to secure freedom for India why did the Japanese Government still continue the war against China? It would be Japan's duty to set China free before talking of India's freedom.

FOLLOW MAHATMA'S LEAD

Referring to the struggle ahead, Sardar Vallabhbhai said that it would be strictly non-violent. Many people were anxious to know the details of the programme. Gandhiji was going to place the details before the nation when the time came. The nation would be called upon to follow him. In case of arrest of the leaders, it would be the duty of every Indian to be his own guide. It was necessary to bear in mind that no nation had won independence without sacrifices.

(*Bombay Chronicle*, August 8, 1942)

APPENDIX VIII

[Extracts from Dr. Rajendra Prasad's Speech at the Bihar P. C. C. Meeting, July 31, 1942.]

Explaining the implications of the present Wardha resolution Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasized that it was not going to be mere jail-going this time. It was going to be more drastic, calling for the worst repression—shooting, bombing, confiscation of property, all were possible. Congressmen, therefore, had to join the movement fully conscious that they might be exposed to all these. The new plan of action included all forms of Satyagraha based on pure non-violence and this was going to be the last struggle for the independence of India. They could face all the armed might of the world with non-violence, the greatest weapon in the armoury of Satyagraha, he declared.

* * *

But the Congress had now come to the conclusion that there could be no unity until British power disappeared. The foreign element in the body politic of the country created such new problems that they proved difficult of solution. Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, was now of the definite opinion that there could be no unity in India without Swaraj though formerly he held the opposite view. This opinion was the result of bitter experience and the outcome of the Cripps' mission.

* * *

Concluding Dr. Rajendra Prasad affirmed that the Congress had no quarrel with any one. The Congress only hoped to convert its opposition by its suffering and sacrifice. He was confident that the opposition would also join them in the great cause of India's freedom.

(*Bombay Chronicle Weekly*, August 2, 1942)

APPENDIX IX

[See here letter No. 17 page 15]

Detention Camp,
10th September, 1943

SIR,

On 15th July last I handed to the Superintendent of this Camp for dispatch to you my reply to the Government of India publication entitled "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43". As yet I have no acknowledgement of the receipt of my reply, let alone answer to what I hold to be complete refutation of the charges set forth against me in that publication.

I am etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Additional Secretary,
Home Department, Government of India,
New Delhi

Government of India,
Home Department, New Delhi,
20th September, '43

From
Sir Richard Tottenham,
C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.
Secretary to the Government of India

To
M. K. Gandhi Esquire

SIR,

In reply to your letter of September 10th, 1943, I am directed to inform you that your letter of the 15th July, 1943, has been received and is still under consideration.

I am, etc.,
R. TOTTENHAM
Secretary to the Government of India

Government of India
H. D., New Delhi,
14th October, 1943

From

The Additional Secretary
to the Government of India, H. D.

To

M. K. Gandhi, Esquire

SIR,

I am directed to reply to your letter of the 15th July in which you have attempted to controvert certain passages appearing in the Government publication "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43". At the outset I am to remind you that the document in question was published for the information of the public and not for the purpose of convincing you or eliciting your defence. It was supplied to you only at your request and in forwarding it Government neither invited nor desired your comments upon it. Since, however, you have thought fit to address Government on the subject I am to say that Government have given due consideration to your letter.

2. Government regret to observe that, although your letter contains lengthy quotations from your own utterances and writings, it contains no fresh or categorical statement of your own attitude in regard to the material issues or any clear repudiation of the disastrous policy to which you and the Congress party committed yourselves in the series of events leading to the Congress resolution of the 8th August 1942. The purpose of your letter appears to be to suggest that you have been misrepresented in some way in "Congress Responsibility", but in what substantial respect is not clear. No attempt was made in the book, as you seem to think,

to charge you with pro-Japanese sympathies and the sentence at the end of the first chapter, to which you have taken exception in paragraph 18 of your letter, was merely an echo of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's own words quoted on the previous page. He has not, as you wrongly allege, repudiated those words in the published statements to which you refer. It was, however, one of the purposes of the book to find an explanation of your actions in your own defeatist outlook towards the threat from Japan and your fear that, unless the Allied forces withdrew in time, India would become a battle-field in which the Japanese would ultimately win. This feeling was attributed to you by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself in the course of his remarks to which reference has been made above and your own draft of the Allahabad resolution makes it plain that, both in the "Quit India" campaign and the Congress resolution which was intended to enforce it, your object was to be left in a position in which you and the Congress would be free to make terms with Japan. The Government of India note that your letter makes no attempt to meet this imputation, which they still regard as true. It is the only explanation which is consistent with your own statement that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to the Japanese to invade India. Their withdrawal removes the bait." Nor have you been able to explain on any other theory than that suggested in the book the contradiction between this statement and your subsequent avowal of your willingness to permit the retention of Allied troops on Indian soil.

3. The Government of India are not disposed to follow you into the various verbal points that you have raised. They do not deny that owing to your habit of reinterpreting your own statements to suit the purposes of the moment it is easy for you to quote passages from your utterances and writings which are in apparent contradiction to any view

attributed to you. But the fact that you admit the discovery of important gaps in them, or that you have found it necessary from time to time to put glosses on what you have said, is of itself evidence of the incredible levity with which, in a moment of grave crisis, you made pronouncements in regard to matters of the most vital importance in India's defence and her internal peace. Government can only interpret your statements in the plain sense of the words as it would appear to any honest or unbiassed reader and they are satisfied that the book "Congress Responsibility" contains no material misinterpretation of the general trend of your utterances during the relevant period.

4. You have devoted considerable space in your letter to an apparent attempt to disown the phrase attributed to you in the A. P. I. report of a press conference which you held at Wardha on the 14th of July 1942, where you are reported to have said "There is no question of one more chance. After all it is an open rebellion." This press message was reproduced at the time in newspapers throughout India. You now wish the Government of India to believe that you first became aware of it on the 26th June 1943. They can only regard it as highly improbable that, if it did not correctly represent what you said, it should not have been brought to your notice at the time or that you should have left it uncontradicted during the following weeks while you were still at liberty.

5. The Government of India also note that you still seek to cast on the Government the responsibility for the disturbances for reasons which they can only regard as trivial and which have already been answered in your published correspondence with His Excellency the Viceroy. The point which is clearly established by the book "Congress Responsibility" is that those disturbances were the natural and predictable consequences of your declaration

of an "open rebellion" and the propaganda which preceded it. That you yourself could have foreseen those consequences is clear from the statement which you yourself made in court in 1922 when you admitted the impossibility of dissociating yourself from the "diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura and the mad outrages of Bombay" and went on to say that you knew that you were playing with fire but that you had taken the risk and would do so again. If you now contend that the consequences were unintended and unforeseen this fact is itself an admission of your own inability to judge the reactions of your followers. You now seek to excuse, if not to defend, the barbarities committed in your own name and that of the Congress rather than to condemn them. It is clear where your sympathies lie. Your letter does not contain one word of explanation of your own message "Do or Die", nor does it throw any light on your message, quoted in Appendix X of the book, which, if you cannot disown it, is sufficient to refute your contention that no movement had been launched by you at the time when the disturbances took place.

6. I am finally to refer to your request for the publication of your letter. In the first place, I am to remind you of your own position, which has already been explained to you, viz, that, so long as the grounds of your detention remain unchanged, Government are not prepared to afford you facilities for communication with the general public, nor are they prepared themselves to act as agents for your propaganda. In the second place, I am to point out that you had ample opportunities during the months preceding the Congress resolution of the 8th August 1942 to make your meaning unequivocally clear before you were arrested. The fact that your own followers interpreted your intentions in the same way as the Government leaves no scope for further explanations. I am to inform you, therefore, that

Government do not propose to publish your letter unless and until they think fit. The decision is, however, without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them.

7. To the extent that your present letter may be designed to relieve you of responsibility for the Congress rebellion and the connected events that have taken place, Government regret that they cannot accept it as in any way relieving you of that responsibility, or indeed, to their regret, as a serious attempt to justify yourself. They observe again with regret that you have taken no steps in your letter to dissociate yourself personally from the Congress resolution of 8th August 1942, to condemn unequivocally the violent outrages which took place in your name after the passing of that resolution; to declare yourself unequivocally in favour of the use of all the resources of India for the prosecution of the war against the Axis powers and in particular Japan, until victory is won; and to give satisfactory assurances for good conduct in future. And in absence of any change of mind on your part and of any disclaimer of the policy as the result of which it has been necessary to restrain your movements and those of the Working Committee of the Congress, they are unable to take any further action on your present communication.

I am, etc.,

R. TOTTENHAM

Additional Secretary to the Government of India

Detention Camp,
October 26, 1943

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 14th inst. received on 18th instant.

2. Your letter makes it clear that my reply to the charges brought against me in the Government publication "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43" has failed in its purpose, namely, to convince the Government of my innocence of those charges. Even my good faith is impugned.

3. I observe too that the Government did not desire "comments" upon the charges. Previous pronouncements of the Government on such matters had led me to think otherwise. Be that as it may, your current letter seems to invite an answer.

4. In my opinion, I have, in my letter of 15th July last, unequivocally answered all charges referred to in your letter under reply. I have no regret for what I have done or said in the course of the struggle for India's freedom.

5. As to the Congress resolution of 8th August 1942, apart from my belief that it is not only harmless but good all round, I have no legal power to alter it in any way. That can only be done by the body that passed that resolution, i. e., the All India Congress Committee which is no doubt guided by its Working Committee. As the Government are aware I offered to meet the members of the Working Committee in order to discuss the situation and to know their mind. But my offer was rejected. I had thought and still think that my talk with them might have some value from the Government stand-point. Hence I repeat my offer. But it may have no such value so long as the Government doubt my *bona fides*. As a Satyagrahi

however, in spite of the handicap, I must reiterate what I hold to be good and of immediate importance in terms of war effort. But if my offer has no chance of being accepted so long as I retain my present views, and if the Government think that it is only my evil influence that corrupts people, I submit that the members of the Working Committee and other detenus should be discharged. It is unthinkable that, when India's millions are suffering from preventable starvation and thousands are dying of it, thousands of men and women should be kept in detention on mere suspicion, when their energy and the expense incurred in keeping them under duress could, at this critical time, be usefully employed in relieving distress. As I have said in my letter of 15th July last, Congressmen abundantly proved their administrative, creative and humanitarian worth at the time of the last terrible flood in Gujarat and equally terrible earthquake in Bihar. The huge place in which I am being detained with a large guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

6. As to "satisfactory assurances" about my "good conduct" I can only say that I am unaware of any unworthy conduct at any time. I presume that the impression Government have of my conduct is referable to the charges mentioned in the indictment, as I have succinctly called "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43". And since I have not only denied the charges *in toto* but on the contrary have ventured to bring countercharges against the Government, I think that they should agree to refer both to an impartial tribunal. Seeing that a big political organization and not a mere individual is involved in the charges, I hold that it should be a vital part of the war effort to have the issue decided by a tribunal, if mutual discussion and effort are considered by the Government to be undesirable and/or futile.

7. Whilst your letter rejects my request that my letter of 15th July last should in fairness to me be published, you inform me that their decision in this matter however "is without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them". I can only hope that this does not mean that, as in the case of the "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43", garbled extracts will be published. My request is that my letter should be published in full, if and when the Government think fit to make public use of it.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Additional Secretary,
Government of India (H. D.)
New Delhi

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New Delhi,
3rd November, 1943

From
The Additional Secretary
to the Government of India, (H. D.)
New Delhi

To
M. K. Gandhi, Esquire

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated October 26th, which is under consideration.

I am, etc.,
R. TOTTENHAM
Additional Secretary to the Government of India

Government of India,
Home Department, New Delhi,
18th November, 1943

From

The Additional Secretary
to the Government of India,
Home Department

To

M. K. Gandhi, Esquire

SIR,

In reply to your letter of October 26th I am directed to say that since there is no change in your attitude towards the Congress resolution of August 8th, 1942, and Government have received no indication that the views of any of the members of the Working Committee differ from your own, a meeting between you would appear to serve no useful purpose. Both you and they are well aware of the conditions on which such a proposal could be entertained.

I am to add that the other points in your letter have been noted.

I am, etc.,

R. TOTTENHAM

Additional Secretary to the Government of India

VI
CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT
SMT. KASTURBA GANDHI

83

Detention Camp
Date : 12-3-43

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

With reference to the talk this morning, we would like to bring the following facts to your notice.

As regards Mrs. Gandhi, she has been suffering from chronic bronchitis with dilatation of the bronchi. She has also complained latterly of pain of an anginal character and has had attacks of tachycardia with heart rate of 180 per minute. As you must have noticed she often gets puffiness of the face and eyelids especially in the mornings. Her physical disabilities are telling upon her mental condition though Gandhiji's company mitigates that to a large extent. In view of all this we are of the opinion that she should have a whole time nurse companion with her. A person who can speak her language and is known to her personally is likely to succeed better.

As regards Gandhiji, we are of the opinion that he will require careful nursing and looking after for another month or so. If Kanu Gandhi can be left for that period, it will be the best, as he is attached to Gandhiji and has been trained to anticipate his wants. If the Government have no objection he is ready and willing to stay as long as he is required.

Yours sincerely,
M. D. D. GILDER
S. NAYYAR

[Extracts from a letter from Gandhiji to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, dated Nov. 18, '43.]

" . . . It seems to me that those who are lodged with me have to suffer extra hardship by reason of their being so lodged. For, it is not only Dr. Nayyar who has to suffer, others do likewise. Thus Dr. Gilder is debarred from receiving visits even from his ailing wife and daughter. Little Manu Gandhi can receive neither her father nor her sisters, nor can my wife receive visits from her sons or grandchildren. I discount the fact that the former could have gone out if she resented the restrictions. I know too that my son Ramdas was permitted to visit his mother when she was very ill. I do not understand this denial of ordinary rights of prisoners. I can understand the restrictions against me by reason of the Government's special displeasure against me. But the restrictions against others it is difficult to understand, unless it be that the Government do not trust those who are put in charge of us. On any other basis it is difficult to understand why the Superintendent of the Camp or even the Inspector General cannot deal with the wires* of the nature I have referred to and with the visitors who may be permitted to visit the co-detenus.

I request early relief."

M. K. GANDHI

* Reference is to a wire to Dr. Sushila Nayyar about the death of her sister-in-law which was delivered after a delay of one month.

Detention Camp,
January 27th, 1944

SIR,

Some days ago Shri Kasturba Gandhi told the Inspector General of Prisons and Col. Shah that Dr. Dinshah Mehta of Poona be invited to assist in her treatment. Nothing seems to have come out of her request. She has become insistent now and asked me if I had written to the Government in the matter. I therefore ask for immediate permission to bring in Dr. Mehta. She has also told me and my son that she would like to have some Ayurvedic physician to see her. I suggest that the I. G. P. be authorized to permit such assistance when requested.

I have no reply as yet to my request that Shri Kanu Gandhi, who is being permitted to visit the patient every alternate day, be allowed to remain in the camp as a whole-time nurse. The patient shows no signs of recovery and night nursing is becoming more and more exacting. Kanu Gandhi is an ideal nurse, having nursed the patient before. And what is more, he can soothe her by giving her instrumental music and by singing *bhajans*. I request early relief to relieve the existing pressure. The matter may be treated as very urgent.

The Superintendent of the Camp informs me that when visitors come, one nurse only can be present. Hitherto more than one nurse have attended when necessary. The Superintendent used his discretion as to the necessity. But when difficulty arose I made a reference to the I. G. P. The result was that an order was issued that a doctor in addition may be present. I submit that the order has been issued in ignorance or disregard of the condition of the patient. She often requires to be helped by more persons than one.

Therefore I ask that there should be no restriction as to the number of the attendants.

It would be wrong on my part if I suppressed the fact - that in the facilities being allowed to the patient grace has been sadly lacking. The order about the attendants is the most glaring instance of pin-pricks, besides being in defeat of the purpose for which attendance during visits of relatives is allowed. Again, my three sons are in Poona. The eldest, Harilal, who is almost lost to us, was not allowed yesterday, the reason being that the I. G. P. had no instructions to allow him to come again. And yet the patient was naturally anxious to meet him. To cite one more pin-prick, every time visitors who are on the permitted list come, they have to apply to Government Office, Bombay, for permission. The consequence is that there is unnecessary delay and heart-burning. The difficulty I imagine arises because neither the Superintendent nor the I. G. P., has any function except that of passing on my requests to Bombay.

I am aware that Shri Kasturba is a Government patient, and that even as her husband I should have no say about her. But as the Government have been pleased to say that instead of being discharged she is being kept with me in her own interest, perhaps in interpreting her wishes and feelings I am doing what the Government would desire and appreciate. Her recovery or at least mental peace when she is lingering is common cause between the Government and me. Any jar tells on her.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Additional Secretary to the
Government of India, (Home Department),
New Delhi

Detention Camp,
January 27, 1944

The Secretary to the Government
of Bombay, (H. D.), Bombay
SIR,

I enclose herewith for dispatch a letter addressed to the Government of India, but it need not be dispatched if the Government of Bombay, can *suo moto* deal with the matters referred to therein. As the object is to obtain relief as promptly as possible, instructions from the Central Government, if necessary, may be obtained on the 'phone.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Detention Camp, January 31, 1944

SIR,

I sent on 27th instant a very urgent letter addressed to the Government of India. I am still without a reply. The patient is no better. The attendants are about to break down. Four only can work two only at a time on alternate nights. All the four have to work during the day. The patient herself is getting restive, and inquires, "When will Dr. Dinshah come?" May I know as early as may be—even tomorrow if possible:—

- (1) Whether Shri Kanu Gandhi can come as full time nurse,
- (2) Whether Dr. Dinshah's services may be enlisted for the present,
- (3) and whether the restriction on the number of attendants during visits can be removed.

I hope it may not have to be said that the relief came too late.

Secretary to the Government
of Bombay (H. D.), Bombay

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

(Communication from Government conveyed by the Superintendent of the Camp on 31-1-44 at 4 p. m.)

Regarding request for services of Mr. Dinshah Mehta and Ayurvedic physician.

" Government wants to know whether Mrs. Gandhi has any particular physician in mind and whether she would want one in addition to Dr. Dinshah Mehta."

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(Scribbled out reply to the above handed immediately to the Superintendent of the Camp—it being Monday, the day of silence.)

" She has no particular Ayurvedic physician in mind, but my son Devadas suggested the name of Vaidyaraj Sharma of Lahore. Any physician who is admitted will be in addition to Dr. Dinshah and that too if and when the latter has failed to give satisfaction. She has often expressed a desire to be seen by an Ayurvedic physician. If the permission is granted, it should be of a general character. She is losing will power and I have to judge between a multiplicity of advice so long as I am permitted to have responsibility for her peace of mind, which is about all that is possible at this stage."

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Detention Camp,
31st January, 1944

DEAR COL. BHANDARI,

As you know Smt. Kasturba Gandhi has been gradually losing ground. Last night she had very little sleep, and this morning she had a bad collapse. She became very short of breath (resp. 48), the pulse was very feeble in volume and tension and 100 to the minute, and her colour was a shy grey. She recovered after about twenty minutes' treatment. Now—at mid-day—she is restless, complains of pain in the left chest and back, is cyanotic and dyspnoeic. The pulse rate is 108, the B. P. is 90/50, resp. 40.

Under these circumstances we would like to have the help in consultation of Dr. Jivraj Mehta (Yeravda Central Prison) and Dr. B. C. Roy (Calcutta) who have seen her in her former illness and, in whom she has faith. We might state that the patient's condition is such that if the help of these doctors is to be of any use it should not be delayed.

We might also point out that as she has to be watched all night and day, nursing has become difficult and patient herself has been constantly asking for Kanu Gandhi and Dr. Dinshah Mehta.

Yours sincerely,

S. NAYYAR

M. D. D. GILDER

P. S. Gandhiji's blood pressure this morning was 206/110.

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Detention Camp, February 3, 1944

SIR,

Shri Kasturba asked me yesterday when Dr. Dinshah was coming, and whether a Vaidya (Ayurvedic physician) could see her and give her some drugs. I told her I was trying for both but that we were prisoners and could not have things as we liked. She has since been repeatedly asking me whether I could not do something to hasten matters. She had a restless night again. This is of course nothing new for her at present. I request immediate orders about Dr. Dinshah and Vaidyaraj Sharma of Lahore. The latter will be sometime coming. But Dr. Dinshah can come even today, if authority is given for calling him in.

I must confess that I do not understand this delay when a patient's life is hanging in the balance and may be saved by timely aid. After all for a patient alleviation of pain is as important as the highest matters of state.

I am, etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

Secretary to the Government of Bombay,
Bombay

No. S. D. VI/2035
Home Department (Political)
Bombay, 3rd February, 1944

From

The Secretary to the
Government of Bombay, H. D.

To

M. K. Gandhi, Esquire

SIR,

I am directed to refer to your letter of the 31st January and to reply as follows to the 3 points raised by you.

(1) Government have agreed to Kanu Gandhi staying in for the purpose of helping in nursing Mrs. Gandhi on condition that he agrees to be bound by the same regulations as other security prisoners in the detention camp. Government consider that with Kanu Gandhi staying in, the nursing assistance provided should be adequate and they cannot agree to any requests for further assistance.

(2) Government have decided that no outside doctors should be allowed unless the Government medical officer considers that is absolutely necessary for medical reasons. The question whether Dr. Dinshah Mehta should be called in is accordingly for the Government medical officer to decide on medical grounds.

(3) Interviews with near relatives have been sanctioned for Mrs. Gandhi. While Government have no objection to your being present during those interviews they consider that other inmates of the detention camp should not be present except to the extent demanded by the condition of Mrs. Gandhi's health. It is understood that the Inspector General of Prisons has agreed that one attendant may stay throughout the interviews and that a doctor may come in if necessary. Government considers that normally this should

be adequate, but the matter is one to be decided solely on medical grounds by the Inspector General of Prisons.

Your obedient servant,

H. IYANGAR

Secretary to the Government of Bombay, H. D.

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(In pursuance of the request for an Ayurvedic physician for Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi (letter No. 91), Gandhiji had a talk with the Inspector General of Prisons on the morning of 11-2-'44. He then wrote out the following confirming what he had already told the jail authorities.)

Detention Camp, 11-2-44

The responsibility for bringing in a non-allopath assistant would be wholly mine and the Government shall stand absolved from responsibility for any untoward result following such treatment. I am not sure that I shall accept the advice that such Vaidyas or Hakims may give. But if I do and if the prescription is ineffective, I would like to reserve the right to revert to present treatment.

M. K. GANDHI

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Detention Camp, February 14, 1944

IMMEDIATE

SIR,

I told you yesterday that Shri Kasturba was so bad during the night that Dr. Nayyar got frightened and awakened Dr. Gilder. I felt that she was going. The doctors were naturally helpless. Dr. Nayyar had therefore to wake up the Superintendent who kindly phoned the Vaidyaraj. It was then about 1 a. m.. Had he been on the premises he would certainly have given relief. I therefore asked you to let him stay at the camp during the night. But you informed me the Government orders did not cover night stay. The Vaidya however, you said, could be called in during the night. I pointed out the obvious danger of delay, but you were sorry the orders would not allow you to go further. In vain I