

1. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 9, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER¹,

The account of the work is good. Engross yourself wholly in these activities. Think about nothing while thus occupied. If you do not have the courage to go to the Frontier Province, you need not go. Overcome your sorrow. What do you eat?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 410.

2. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 9, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

You must have got the cable I sent as desired by you. I assume that you will do nothing in haste. I feel that you cannot close the *I. O.*, and it will be best if it is not closed. But if there is no other way, let it be closed.

You will read about the other things from Sushila's letter.

My health can be considered excellent. The fluctuation in blood-pressure is no cause for alarm. My silence is continuing and that is good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4882

3. LETTER TO RATILAL

September 9, 1938

BHAI RATILAL,

I was glad to read the news in your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7177

¹ The superscription is in Urdu.

4. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 9, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The tongue does not readily utter 'tu'¹ addressing the boys and 'tum'² addressing the girls. It is something of a family tradition.

Make any change you think necessary in your diet but never for the sake of taste. Instead, enjoy whatever you have to eat.

It would be better not to accept anything even from your uncle. Do not discriminate between big and small books. It would be appropriate to give up collecting even books. Be content with the books available here.

As you are not coming with me you have to draw your contentment from within yourself. Wherever I may be my home is here, is it not? This ought to suffice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4303; also S.G. 69

5. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 9, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Yes, you have to go to Balkoba. You may also do enthusiastically any other work entrusted to you.

The card is enclosed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4302

6. CONGRESSMEN BEWARE !

I have been inundated with letters and wires complaining of what the senders have regarded as the Madras Premier's terrible, misdeeds. I pick out two which have been the subject of adverse comment in many quarters in India. They are his policy about Hindustani and his employment of the Criminal Law Amendment Act for abating the picketing nuisance.

¹ Thou

² You

My correspondents evidently think that I am the keeper of the Premier's conscience and that I have but to send instructions and they will be obeyed. They know my relations with Rajagopalachari. But I am not the keeper of anybody's conscience, much less of Rajaji's. Let the reader share the secret with me that nobody among those who regard the Congress acceptance of truth and non-violence as the rule of their lives fights me as strenuously as he does. But he has one essential virtue of a soldier. I became my own general of satyagraha and my first recruit in 1906. When I announced my generalship in 1918 in India, Rajaji was among those who enlisted themselves at the very commencement. It was under his roof that the inspiration of the hartal of 6th April came to me. From that day to this his loyalty to his general has been beyond reproach or compare. And if as general I asked him to give up his premiership he would do so without demur. He may not even agree with my judgment. But in battle he knows that a private has no judgement but his general's.

But in spite of the exemplary loyalty that Rajaji gives me in common with many others, I will not issue the instructions my correspondents demand. Let the complainants know that we rarely correspond with each other. I know he has no time and he knows I have equally little for such correspondence. The law of satyagraha forbids such action. If he has to resign, he will do so in the constitutional manner. And there will be no fuss, no complaint. What is more to the point, I have boundless faith in his wisdom, his uprightness, and his unsurpassed ability as a parliamentarian among Congressmen at least. He has to his credit no mean achievements. And those who think that he is wallowing in the constitution gutter are vastly mistaken. We have in our ranks no abler fighter in satyagraha. I see nothing wrong in a satyagrahi winning victories without bluster, without wrangling but by conversion, by carrying conviction. The world will perhaps never know what Congress Premiers have been doing by forcing conviction upon Governors. Rajaji has been in the forefront among these. The greater the peaceful penetration, the greater the virtue of satyagraha. There is little room for tamasha in a fight for truth with truth and nothing but truth.

It hurts me, therefore, when Congressmen decry him and think that he is so enamoured of office that he is afraid to do the right thing. All Congress Ministers naturally come in for trenchant criticism from those who dislike Congress politics. Whatever is sound in such criticism must be accepted with gratefulness. There is criticism that springs from party motives. Even that has to be borne. But when Con-

gressmen take up the same cry, it becomes embarrassing. They have their remedy. They can complain to their Provincial Committees, and failing redress they can go to the Working Committee and finally to the A.I.C.C. Surely there is no room for criticism if all these remedies fail. But my greatest complaint against these critics is that they are too hasty or too lazy to acquaint themselves with facts. There is no sin greater than ignorance. I see daily verification of this great saying.

My first advice then is that my numerous correspondents and those who think like them should first study facts as Rajaji and his Cabinet see them. If then they are not satisfied, they should move for redress in the manner indicated by me.

I can give no direct help. There are limitations to the use of my influence with Congressmen. My retirement does mean non-interference with individual Congressmen in the discharge of their daily duty and even with the Working Committee except when it seeks my help or advice. Thus when Dr. Khare came to me for guidance, I twice refused, saying that he should approach the Parliamentary Subcommittee. Shri Shukla and Mishra were in urgent need. But to them also I had to say the same thing as I said to Dr. Khare. If I do not observe these broad limitations, my retirement becomes meaningless. Indeed I do not follow the day-to-day doings of Congressmen nowadays, whereas when I was in the Working Committee nothing escaped me and I used to scan everything and give guidance in detail in so far as my health permitted. But now I do not even study all the resolutions of the Working Committee.

Let me now say a word about the two main grievances against Rajaji.

There is nothing wrong in making a knowledge of Hindustani compulsory, if we are sincere in our declarations that Hindustani is or is to be the *Rashtrabhasha* or the common medium of expression. Latin was and probably still is compulsory in English schools. The study did not interfere with the study of English. On the contrary English was enriched by a knowledge of the noble language. The cry of "mother tongue in danger" is either ignorant or hypocritical. And where it is sincere it speaks little for the patriotism of those who will grudge our children an hour per day for Hindustani. We must break through the provincial crust if we are to reach the core of all-India nationalism. Is India one country and one nation or many countries and many nations? Those who believe that it is one country must lend Rajaji their unstinted support. If he has not the people behind him, he

will lose his job. But it is strange, if the people are not behind him, that he has his great majority with him. But what if he had not the majority behind him? He must give up office but not his deepest conviction. His majority is worth nothing if it does not represent the Congress will. The Congress is wedded not to a majority; it is wedded to all that which will make this nation great and independent in the least possible time.

And the picketing? It is insufferable that youngsters or even grown-up people should assail homes and offices and howl unmentionable imprecations against those who are shouldering their burden amid the greatest difficulty. Until we have found the correct remedy in terms of satyagraha the Ministers must be permitted to deal with such offences in the manner they consider best. If they are not, the freedom that is possible under Congress Raj will soon degenerate into goondaism, pure and undefiled. That is the way not to salvation but it is the easiest road to perdition. And the Minister who is worth his salt will resolutely refuse to be a cause of the country's perdition.

Lastly, the Criminal Law Amendment Act. We may not make a fetish of Congress resolutions. The Congress has objection not to the name but to the contents of an Act going under that name, and then, too, not to every word or section of the Act. I have never studied it but I see from Rajaji's public declarations that it contains a few sections which suit the new situation that the Congress is facing. If such is the case, Rajaji will be foolish if he does not make use of them. But he will be equally foolish, if not something worse, if he does not summarily repeal the obnoxious clauses of the Act without delay. It is a monster created by the fertile brain of the repressor of the country's liberty. It was used as such against satyagrahis. The sooner, therefore, those clauses go the better for Rajaji and the country. But let Congressmen beware of hanging their trusted servants before they are tried and found wanting.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

7. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Poor Sushila was ready at 5 o'clock, but I did not let her go. I am sending her just now. If you are not feeling well, you may detain her. You ought not to have let the thought enter your mind at all that you were down with a serious illness. Now take complete rest. I for one would put you on fruit juice and try water and earth treatment. But Sushila and other doctors know best. I am after all a sinking ship. Who would choose to sail in such a ship?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11644

8. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

September 10, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

My opinion is clear. If we are unable to maintain cows we must admit defeat and close down the dairy. I kept the cows because of your presence here. Now you and Parnerkar must find a way. We should give up anything that you both do not endorse. We should not have two departments.

Yes, you have also to consider if the calves, etc., can be housed at a different place.

I do not enlarge the establishment. Quite a few are only temporary inhabitants and none of them will stay on after my death. So we need have no worry on that account.

I want a detailed budget of the medicines and other things required. In everything we have to bear in mind that all our activities are conducted with public funds.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1909

9. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON
September 10, 1938

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have been regularly getting the fruit sent by you. I did not write to you because of lack of time. Is Ratna the final examination or will there still be something left?

What happened about the *Ramayana*¹?

I shall spend the whole of October out of Segaoon. Do come and spend a few days with me some time.

Do you receive letters from Kamala?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

10. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 10, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

What must I do to please you? I gave you the cutting to make you laugh. It only hurt you. I showed you Mahadev's letter to make you see what I feel. Even that hurt you.

Why are you so sensitive? If Mother does not see your good the way I see it, how can I keep you? Even you agree that Mother should be kept happy.

Now be calm. Whatever has to happen will happen. If you cannot have peace by staying with me, then leave me. If you think it is in your interest to stay with me, what does it matter to you. . .²

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ She had been working on a Tamil version of Tulsidas's *Ramayana*.

² Illegible in the source

11. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

It is just now striking 9. Sushila has not returned and so I feel a little worried about your health. For the present let the post come unopened. You need not carry any load. I am thinking about future arrangements for *Harijan*. I am not at all worried. The Great Editor¹ will do whatever is necessary.

I am having hearty talks with Mother. She is a flawless jewel.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11645

12. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Unrevised

September 11, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Yesterday I had a long talk with Mother. As I see it she will not be at peace till Sushila goes to Delhi. It also seems to me that although Sushila's heart is here, she cannot stay here in peace so long as Mother is not at ease. And that is how it should be. Children can hardly find peace by making the parents miserable. That would require a special reason involving a religious principle as it was in the case of Prahlad. Sushila does not have such a reason. My idea of Sushila's good is irrelevant here. Hence I feel that Sushila must decide in favour of Delhi. Mother insists that I should send a letter to Sushila. So if you brother and sister agree with my view I shall send the letter.

There is no cause for worry about my health. I shall take care of it. I certainly do not desire to end my life.

Mahadev being an invalid I certainly wish to take work from you. But can you work like him in your present state of mind? I do not wish to burden you. At the same time, we have to decide what you should do when Mahadev recovers. If it is necessary for you to be in Delhi for the sake of the peace of mind of Sushila and Mother, you

¹ God

must be there. It seems to me that none of us, especially I, have given any thought to Mother. Only this time I have been able somewhat to understand her. I can understand every feeling of hers and I appreciate it. Hence, from now on, in whatever I think about the two of you, I shall always keep in mind Mother's feelings.

Do not hurt her feelings. Talk to her patiently and cheer her up.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

13. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *September 11, 1938*]¹

This letter is also a madness. Living with me, you shall not continue to be silly. How can you be affected by whatever other people may say or do? Yes, if Mother's feelings are hurt even slightly, it should be intolerable to both of us. Criticism from others has got to be faced.

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

14. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 12, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been able to touch the mail at all today. After it has been passed on to me, is not your responsibility over? I will do what I can and be content. Go through today's articles. I have not revised the one about violence. I have omitted from your Notes the one about the Frontier Province. I will now see your today's editorial. I have already discussed that subject from another point of view. I am attending to the other things also. And the many responsibilities here, too, take a good deal of my time. If you are fully restored it will be great good news indeed for me. In any case you and I have had a warning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11646

¹ The note is written on the reverse side of a letter from the addressee, dated September 11, 1938.

15. A CIRCULAR LETTER¹

September 12, 1938

I hear that the inmates of the Ashram have been complaining quite a lot about the way Sushilabehn serves me. One complaint is of partiality. The other is that I am crossing my limits. For instance, I lean on her shoulders while walking, which cannot be part of the service. Even when Krishnachandra is present I prefer Sushila's shoulders to lean on. I let Sushila have her bath just when I am myself having my bath. And I cover myself with her *sari* when there is no need for it.

I feel that those who have been talking in this way have betrayed me. It is the clear duty of those who have any grudge in this regard to tell me so at once.

I have never been conscious of any sin in my physical contacts with women. That is why when I accepted service from Sushila, I did not want to exclude my leaning on her shoulders. I consider service from Sushila necessary for me if it is available. No one should have the slightest suspicion of partiality in this. I have an impression that I had made all this clear when I discussed this matter the last time.

There are two new points. Why does Sushila have her bath in the same bathroom when I am lying in the bathtub? The suggestion was mine. I have to be in the bathtub for about 15 minutes. If she can get herself ready by that time, it is convenient to me and she can then have her meal early. The bathing arrangement is this: she bathes in the space behind the bathtub and while she is bathing I keep my eyes-tightly shut. I do not know the manner of her bathing—whether she bathes naked or with her underwear on. I can tell from the sound that she uses soap. I have seen no part of her body which everybody here will not have seen. What can be terrible is that she massages me while I am lying naked. So long as I have not become wholly free from passion I have to be very alert while I bear with that massage. In the hospital, an Englishwoman used to bathe me. She had to clean my private parts too. It never embarrassed me. For, I have a somewhat different conception of *brahmacharya*. It is not *brahmacharya* which cannot bear physical contact with women when it is called for. But this is a digression.

¹ This was intended for, persons, mentioned at the end, each of whom was required to read it and pass it on to the next person on the list.

Now about the *sari*. When I was returning after seeing the patients, I had on only my short dhoti. I felt cold. Therefore I used Sushila's *sari*. I did the same thing on a rainy day. There was an umbrella too, but I did not use it. These things are natural with me and Sushila. Let no one complain against Sushila. She is grown up, but so far God has not made her experience passion. This is what she says and I take her at her word. I have been further convinced by many other instances of her behaviour. I know two other such girls. I have not come across a fourth in thousands.

Now anyone who wants to say anything about this matter should write to me frankly. But no one must discuss the matter among themselves.

This must be returned to me after the following persons have read it: Pyarelal, Sushila, Chimanlal, Shakaribehn, Sharada, Vasumati, Sushila Gandhi, Manu, Kanubhai, Bhansali, Munnalal, Krishna-chandra, Sankaran, Chakraiya, Nanavati, Ba, Mirabehn, Raj-kumari, Amtussalaam, Balwant Singh, Panerkar, Parnerkar's mother.

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

16. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR¹

[After *September 12, 1938*]

You do sometimes talk as if you were a child without knowledge of the world.

A common malady does not yield to heroic treatment. Concubinage is a common malady. Only when women learn self-respect will concubinage go. In this both are equally guilty.

Congress can take up Hindu legislation up to a point.

Unless you have some hard-working and learned women tackling the problem there will be no solid legislation. I can guide a woman or women who have industry, ability and also faith in my instinct. When it is optional, where is the harm? If a husband becomes a leper or contracts that vile disease due to his unfaithfulness, why should the poor wife be condemned to live with him? You must not raise fine objections. I think infectious disease also should allow a woman. Why do you put an undue strain on either?

From the original: C.W. 4222. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7858

¹ Written on a used envelope with the postmark bearing the date "12-9-1938"

17. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After September 12, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am dictating this letter. Enclosed are the letters for despatch. I am sending two articles for *Harijan*. You must have sent that advertisement about Gandhi Jayanti to *Harijan Sevak*.

Take complete rest. I will not have the courage to take you to Delhi in your present state of weakness. In all there are eighteen post-cards and envelopes. Do you want the manuscript of Maithili-sharan's poem?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have dictated this with the help of that board. I shall be ready to carry on with signs even if both my hands get disabled.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11647

18. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am thankful for your letter² of the 8th instant regarding the political convicts. Much as I should like, if only for the trouble you have taken in the matter, to fall in with your proposal, it would be a breach of faith on my part to do so. For, as you know, I am bound by a solemn promise made to these friends when, at my instance, they suspended their hunger-strike. Consistently with that promise I have to make every reasonable attempt to secure their early release. This I cannot do if I identify myself with your proposal.

I cannot agree with you that if you fixed a time-limit it would be

¹ According to *Gandhi—1913-1948*, Gandhiji in order to give rest to his hands began dictating letters by pointing to letters on a board about this date.

² In this the addressee had referred to interviews he had given to Subhas Chandra Bose and said that the latter refused to support the Government's plan about political prisoners unless a time-limit was set for the release of all the prisoners. He had asked Gandhiji whether he accepted the Government scheme, and, if he did not, sought his consent to making public the correspondence on the subject.

inconsistent with the reference of the very thing to a tribunal. Surely there is nothing inconsistent with such reference to say that you expect the tribunal to regulate the dates of discharge within a particular period. Under the terms of your reference the judges need never discharge a single prisoner if, in their opinion, the enormity of their crime did not merit any consideration. However theoretical my objection may appear, it is impossible for me to run risks.

Perhaps the Bengal Government and their advisers have missed one big factor in the consideration of the question of release. These prisoners have no sense of guilt. The crimes, however bad in themselves, were not committed for personal gain. The prisoners, having changed their views on violence, feel their detention an intolerable hardship. They are fretting for public service. The public estimate also in this matter is of a different character from that of the Government. But since yours is admittedly a Government responsible to the people, you are bound to give considerable weight to public opinion which, so far as one can judge, emphatically demands their release.

Though you have, and I admit properly, ruled out the idea of exploiting my influence with the prisoners and the public for the preservation of public peace, I urge that there is nothing inherently wrong in using it if there is a reasonable chance of its telling on the side of public peace. But I may not labour this point.

For the considerations mentioned by me in this letter and in my previous letters and during the talks between ourselves and between your good self now and Subhas Babu who, in this matter, was acting as my representative, I must regretfully withhold co-operation from the Government in the projected scheme. But that does not in any way mean that I should obstruct you in your endeavour to accelerate the process of discharge. My action will largely depend upon the pace with which the discharges take place. My measuring rod will always be my letter of the 13th April, 1938.

I trust that in the interest of the common cause the facilities for correspondence and interviews with prisoners which you have hitherto afforded me will be continued.

I can have no objection to the correspondence that has taken place between us being published. I entertain the hope that this very important question will be kept by all concerned above party politics. I venture also to hope that the Press and the public will write or do

nothing that may give a violent turn to the agitation that may become necessary to procure the prompt discharge of the prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KHWAJA SAHEB SIR NAZIMUDDIN
BENGAL SECRETARIAT
CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 9933

19. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

September 13, 1938

DEAR SUBHAS,

I hope the statement will be soon published.

I suppose it will be issued in pamphlet form. Of course the poison is there but as the agitation is wholly false it is bound to die out. Maharashtra can never be lost for the Congress province and I would feel unmoved if in doing right all the provinces were lost. The thing needful is that the present ministry acts on the square. You will give me your reaction to my letter¹ to Sir Khwaja Nazimuddin.

Yours,

BAPU

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

20. LETTER TO CARL HEATH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 13, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter is quite like you.² It is not easy for the Congress to make a statement offhand. Whatever has to happen will happen as a result of negotiations between parties. Let this be made clear that there is no real difference between Jawaharlal and me. Our language often differs but we arrive at the same conclusion. The present British policy

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² The addressee in his letter had expressed his concern at the impasse on the Federal question and suggested a common statement being made by Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Bose and other known leaders on the question so as to make an impression on British public opinion.

seems to be to do nothing through negotiation. There is something to be said for it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

FRIEND CARL HEATH

From a photostat: G.N. 1031. Also Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

21. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is the result of overworking. You must now stop working altogether and take complete rest. You will perhaps get more peace of mind if you come over here. If you do not come, keep Sushila there.

I am not at all worried.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11650

22. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I completely forgot. Let those C. I. D. men come. I believe they have been coming for the last three nights. Whatever is ordained as Natesan's fate will happen tomorrow.

I think you should send wires to the doctors that they should not take any trouble. I also believe that Calomel has done you good. I cannot cope with the mail, but, unlike you, I will not be overeager to finish the work by keeping awake the whole night. You may go on sending the mail without any qualms.

Gibbon may come for a few minutes if he wishes. I am signing the cheque and sending it to you.

Send a telegram to Sir Nazimuddin:

"Thanks letter. Reply posted. Gandhi." Send a telegram to Subhas also:

“Reply Government posted. Sending you copy. Bapu.” The rest tomorrow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11648

23. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
September 13, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got Chhaganlal's letters. A good many letters are lying unanswered. I get no time and Mahadev gets attacks of giddiness. He has the same illness that I had. Tell Chhaganlal that I shall have no objection to starting a khadi society provided Shankerlal approves of it. The financial arrangement may be as you have suggested.

My message is as follows:

“Congratulations to all those who participated in this charkha *yajna*. Let us hope that hand-spinning will spread so widely that everybody will be wearing khadi.”

I understand about Purushottam. If even men like him cannot subsist on what they get, whom can we expect to cling to spinning, Harijan work, etc.? In saying this I am not blaming Purushottam. The prevailing wind may drive a man along, even against his will.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8548. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

24. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

You seem to be progressing very well indeed. Read my letter to Manjula and give it to her. What is the difficulty about the music teacher?

Convey my humble *pranams* to Gokibehn and tell her that she is often in the thoughts of us all. How is she keeping? How is Kumi

doing? Has Gijubhai's Mandir started? How many children are enrolled in it? Does it have any connection with your school?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is down with typhoid. Cholera too is fairly wide-spread here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8549. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

25. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 13, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

With regard to your previous letter, since you had said you would be coming over I kept silent. The views that you have expressed are correct. As long as you do not hear the inner voice, you should come to no decision. You should, however, try very hard to come to a definite decision.

I am not weak-minded in regard to my resolutions. My reputation is just the opposite of that. But when I myself have a doubt, a resolution made in the past cannot be regarded irrevocable. Whatever I did here was in the nature of an experiment and there are bound to be changes in an experiment. I had no misgiving about my behaviour because it was the result of fifty years of disciplined habit. I therefore felt that I should make no distinction between Mataji¹ and Parnerkar's mother. I have observed that my physical touch has some special effect on men and women. Mataji had been deeply pained on my account. I could remove her pain by putting my hand on her. I had not been able to go to see Parnerkar's mother, but that is not because I did not care for her. As the treatment was being carried out under my supervision, I expressed my love for her by putting my hand on her and made her feel at once that I had not been indifferent to her.

Is there danger of my being pierced with Cupid's arrows in my letting myself be massaged naked, or in a thousand naked women bathing by my side when I am blind? I do feel afraid of myself in letting the pure-minded Sushilabehn massage me. But if I am lying blind-folded and those two are bathing, I would feel no fear at

¹ Pyarelal's mother

all. By all means let those who are as minutely scrupulous as I am make themselves perfectly blind and permit some Rambha¹ to bathe near them. But anybody who lets himself be massaged is sure to be maligned. If he is sure of himself, however, let him by all means copy my example. I think I have replied to all your questions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: G.N. 8565. Also C.W. 7040. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

26. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 13, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Explain fully to Kashinath the contents of the enclosed. If he does not have a copy of the Gram Panchayat Act, ask him to get one from the Government. After he has got it, we shall advise whether a court should be constituted.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8567. Also C.W. 7039. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

27. NOTE TO RAGHUNATH GANESH PANDIT SHELOLIKAR²

September 13, 1938

We can hope to see that scene only as a result of the pure *tapashcharya* of thousands of us.

I found the recitation from the *Gita* very pleasing.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2794-1

¹ Celestial courtesan

² The addressee had asked: "When shall we see the first seven Congress Premiers doing their work in the glorious tradition of the Congress, i. e., the people commending their work?"

28. LETTER TO THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL

September 14, 1938

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

I have your kind message through Shuaib. I understand.

I am sure you will see to prompt arrangements being made for Harold Ansari. He is in dire need. And he won't gain admission to the Hospital if the fees are not guaranteed.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, p. 125

29. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 14, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I must apologize for the delay in replying to your letter.¹ I have been overwhelmed with work. Now I have your wire.

I wish you would trust C. R. to do his best. He should be allowed to do the thing in his own way. If you cannot trust, naturally you will take the course which commends itself to you. All I know is that Harijans have no better friend than him. Go to him, reason with him and if you cannot persuade him, bear with him. That is my advice.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. C. Rajah Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ In his letter dated August 25 the addressee had complained to Gandhiji that Rajagopalachari had opposed the Temple Entry Bill moved by him although he had himself drafted it and said that Harijans were exercised over this question "and contemplating repudiation of the Poona Pact."

30. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA,
September 14, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI,

Kripalani sent me the other day copy of your letter to him in which you said you want some more definite expression of opinion than this that "Bapu was happy" to read your letter. I was in a hurry. Bapu was in substantial agreement with all that you had said and indeed he felt that you had amplified certain points in a way he would never be able to do. Will this do as a definite opinion? The enclosed will help to confirm what I have said.

Yours affectionately,

MAHADEV

[PS.]

Bapu is as well as he can be with the overwhelming burden of work that he has to carry. I hope Indu is quite well now and that Sarupben is flourishing.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

31. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 14, 1938

DEAR MAHADEV,

Shall we say you have a mania for work? That is why I had to write severely. We should admire the British in this respect. Don't you know that if you were to be disabled, I would be a bird without wings? If you become bed-ridden, I would have to wind up three-fourths of my activities. Although I had not apprehended that you would fall ill, I had made up my mind as to what activities to curtail in case you were bed-ridden and had thus lightened my mind. But would not curtailing work in this manner be like a stab in my heart? So I wrote to you to take complete rest and recover fully soon. Follow me in the matter of hip-bath as much as you do in drinking milk. Surely taking hip-bath is not my sole prerogative.

Sushila did not give Jivaraj's letter to Shivdas. Now it is being sent with Shuaib.

I sent the letter for Rishikesh directly with Radhakisan. Thus I do save your labour. The note about the letter was sent by an oversight.

I wanted to send the telegram to Raja yesterday, but forgot about it, Here it is:

“Tortures inconsistent with your rich humour. You must not be grieved over anything. Love. Bapu.”¹

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11651

32. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 14, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have already told you as well that Mother had placed the responsibility on me. I see therein her sincerity and efficiency. It also shows her faith in me. I must on my part shoulder the responsibility.

As a result, I have started wondering whether Sushila should be sacrificed for the sake of serving me. It is an agonizing thought. Parents, even should they be on death-bed, get work from paid servants rather than hinder the studies of their children. Should I do otherwise?

I am afraid you too have been intoxicated by the idea of serving me. Hence, you have been deceiving yourself with regard to Mother's state of mind. Mother has conveyed to me in clear terms that she wishes to see Sushila become a doctor. She must have a degree and also the financial benefit that the degree may bring. She tolerated a son becoming a fakir; she cannot the daughter too becoming a fakir. There is much weight in this argument. Moreover Sushila's mind is oscillating between renunciation and pursuit of medical skill as the world sees it. You sowed the seed of renunciation in her. I watered it. In all this the only thing tying her to me is the personal service I take from her. Should I spoil her future by accepting her? I hold the view that it is in her interest to stay with me. It can hardly be that you agree with the view. Poor Mother is not even aware of it. Does Sushila's boundless love for me stifle her? What can I decide in such a difficult situation? Think about it if you can.

I shall keep you informed of whatever I write about Sushila.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ This is in English.

33. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 14, 1938

CHI. RAMAD,

Today I just feel like addressing you as I did when you were a little child . . .¹ is still not ready with me. You have returned² and you are welcome. I will leave from here for Delhi on the 19th. I shall be there for atleast eight days. You may therefore go to Delhi directly from there or accompany me from here. I wish you to come here so that we may go to Delhi together. A conch-shell or a flute instead of [a clock]³ will do for Kanam for his [bag]⁴. You will then be safe. Bring from there a small conch-shell or flute. Let him blow the conch-shell or play on the flute. Bhansalibhai teaches him with all love. More when we meet. I am quite well. I keep unbroken silence these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru

34. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 14, 1938

MY DAUGHTER,

I do not like your way of working. It is difficult even to suggest a cure for you. Where was the necessity of your waking up at 3 o'clock? You should have rest. You should give up the charkha and take such treatment as Sushila prescribes. It would be good if you went to Bombay. There can be no question of your going to Delhi if Khan Saheb sends a refusal. Even otherwise you cannot possibly go to the Frontier afflicted with piles.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 409

¹A word here is illegible in the source.

²According to a note at the top of the letter, Ramdas had returned from South Africa and was in Bombay at the time.

³The two words are indistinct.

⁴*ibid*

35. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

September 14, 1938

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

Write whatever you want to after obtaining Nayakumji's opinion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11686

36. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After September 14, 1938]¹

If you have faith in me, it does not become you to be obstinate. Khan Saheb was only joking. However, you will not be able to stay in the Frontier Province alone. I therefore advise you to go to Bombay; improve your health there and come back here fully restored when I return. You cannot always accompany me on my tours. Can one obey orders and be obstinate at the same time?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 679

37. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1938

DEAR ATULANAND,

I see no inconsistency between my letters² to you. Your note read like giving stone when bread was wanted. I have in mind the growing distrust and bitterness which no writing can possibly remove. I have told you you have to be your own missionary. I have written as I have felt. Please be patient with me and go your way.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 1480. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

¹ This was obviously written after "Letter to Amtussalaam", 14-9-1938. By that date, the addressee had not heard from Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

² For earlier letters to the addressee, *vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 23-6-1937, "Leter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 28-8-1937 and "Letter to Atuanad Chakrabarti", 8-6-1938

38. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You must have duly received all the material sent yesterday. Prabhuh Dayal's report for today is good.

Manu had high fever yesterday. Today she is better. The ups and downs thus continue. I am sending as many letters as are ready.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11653

39. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 15, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

If you write frankly instead of being vague, you would have your desire fulfilled earlier. If I have to go to the Frontier Province, I shall not be able to call over Saraswati. All the same, I am going to try from today. You should go on supplying me with the necessary material.

You must have received my previous letter. It is good that you are devoting yourself to study, but it is foolish to do so by reducing exercise and food. You may become a first-class doctor but will you consider yourself rewarded if the very next day of your being recognized as such you were to leave the world? Degrees, etc., are but a means; they are certainly not the end. And if you become a sort of permanent invalid, what service would you be able to render to me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7348. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

40. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 15, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have not received the programme from Chhaganlal. Will anyone take charge of Rajkumari at Viramgam? She will be travelling second class. She will be accompanied by her attendant. R. K. eats

very simple food. Nobody should press delicacies on her. It will be enough if she is provided with a commode and facility for bathing in private.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/II. Also C.W. 8550. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

41. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

September 15, 1938

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

Do come to Segaon towards the end of October. Most probably I shall have returned from the Frontier Province by that time.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Paper. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

42. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

September 15, 1938

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I cannot say who will be accompanying me but these names are certain: Mahadev, Kanu, Pyarelal, Sushila, Ba and Kanam. As regards my special requirements, goat's milk, for one thing, will be there. Are all these arrangements to be your responsibility? I shall remain there for a week at least. Ba and Kanam will be staying longer. May be Ramdas too will accompany us. He will be reaching Bombay on the 17th instant.

Manu had fever but she is all right now. If Sushila, Sita and others are ready to come I shall bring them.

I shall try to send a wire finally. Mahadev is slightly unwell. So Chandrashanker too may be with us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2010

43. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have sent the mail in the morning so today I was not in a hurry to send this. Important letters must be despatched. I understand about work. There is no objection to your working in moderation. Are you following Sushila's instructions on walking about on the terrace twice a day?

I have learnt a new thing from Durga: that the remedy for scorpion-sting is a *bhajan*. What kind of scorpion would it be that permits one to sing a *bhajan*? And what a singer she must be who can sing a *bhajan* despite the pain of a scorpion-sting?

I did not ask Shuaib to post Jivaraj's letter. He was to give it to you so that you could send it after affixing the late fee stamp. When two persons do a job which should be done by one, it is bound to be spoiled. I am making this criticism in order that you may have the benefit of our experience here.

I remember to have sent you yesterday a telegram for Parameshwaran. But the memory of a man of 69 cannot be very trustworthy. On the back of one telegram a reply was written. The remaining were in a letter. Please do inquire.

I understood from Sushila that what I had written in my letter to Jivaraj was what you desired.

Behnji was not the cause of my circular. It was Mirabehn. That day she had lectured Pyarelal and Sushila. Though warned she had misunderstood Amtul Salaam. There was a violent quarrel. I, therefore, thought that if I did not clarify things the poison would spread and so I sent round the circular. I see that most of the people here, poor fellows, know nothing. So my conclusion is that Mira was the sole cause of the ill-feeling which has been generated. That is part of her nature. What can we do about it? I will show you the circular as also the replies received. You need not worry about this matter. Despite such shocks, the blood-pressure seems to be behaving normally.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The following for Parameshwaran:
“Your coming unnecessary. BAPU.”

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11652

44. TELEGRAM TO HUMAYUN KABIR

[On or after *September 15, 1938*]¹

PROFESSOR HUMAYUN KABIR
36 AHIRIKUPUR ROAD
CALCUTTA

GLADLY MEET YOU 24TH AFTERNOON. PLEASE REMEMBER I
AM OBSERVING SILENCE BUT THAT DOES NOT MATTER. I CAN WRITE
ANSWERS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

45. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[Before *September 16, 1938*]²

You should completely stop talking to him. What is the use of unnecessary harassing? Tell everyone to sit with him for a while, but he should not be allowed to talk.

As long as Pyarelal is ill, I would not enjoy the massage, etc. Where do you even have the time? I consider it sinful to take two hours of your time. Therefore, I wish that for the time being, you should stop the massage on your own. As for bathing, I shall do it myself.

You must think over all that should be done for Balakrishna. Tell Krishnachandra what should be done. He would send daily reports to you and Mahadev and also to David if necessary. Perhaps Mahodaya can pay even daily visits to Balkoba. Discuss everything with him.

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

¹ The addressee's telegram is dated 15-9-1938.

² From the contents; *vide* “Letter to Munnalal G. Shah”, 21-8-1938 & “Letter to Prabhavati”, 16-9-1938

46. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[September 16, 1938]¹

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I like your idea. It should be given some practical shape. The building meant for Nayakum will have to be vacated. Vacate it whenever he asks for it. If you can accommodate yourself in the spinning-shed which we are putting up, do so. The best course is as follows. You should find some plot for yourself from the surrounding land and the three of you together should build a cottage and try to live in it. I am very much afraid that you may fall ill. It is not without some thinking that I have given you the freedom in regard to food.

The third woman is Amtul Salaam. As you asked for the name I give it. I will have to assure myself further about her. If necessary, I will make a change.

Nobody can come up to her in devotion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have given these two as examples . . .² selected . . .³ they are . . .⁴ Even to A. S. also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8373. Also C. W. 7041. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

47. CABLE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
September 16, 1938

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
INDIA LEAGUE
165 STRAND, LONDON

JUST RECEIVED NOTE. ALREADY WROTE⁵ HEATH. THOUGH OUR LANGUAGE DIFFERENT WE MEAN SAME THING NO DOUBT MY MIND. WRITING. LOVE..

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ In a note the addressee says that he received the letter on this date immediately after it was written.

² Illegible in the source

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ *Vide* "Letter to Carl Heath", 13-9-1938

48. LETTER TO B. K. DUTTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1938

DEAR DUTTA,

I was delighted to hear from you. I hope you will quickly build up your shattered body.¹

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIB. K. DUTTA
C/O SHRI RAJKUMAR SINHA
THE MALL, CAWNPORE

From a photostat: G. N. 9281

49. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

September 16, 1938

MY DEAR C. R. ,

You must have got my wire.² Why should anything torture you? So long as you can easily wear the thorny crown, you may wear it. But if those who have thrust it on you are jealous of your wearing it, it would be good riddance for you. Anyway your philosophy must not desert you. Was your letter a sign only of momentary weariness?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2071

¹ The addressee, a political prisoner, was released from a Bihar jail on ground of ill-health; *vide* "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Viceroy", 1-9-1938 and "Letter to Lord Brabourne", 7-9-1938

² *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 14-9-1938

50. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 16, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Has the complaint on the reverse been investigated into and found to be without substance? If you have not written to the Maulana to that effect, please do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11654

51. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 16, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Whenever necessary, you must not hesitate to write to me or speak to me. Hesitation may even be *adharmā*.

Ba is accompanying me. And even if I do not go to the Frontier Province, Ba will stay in Delhi for one month. You may, therefore, occupy Ba's room. Carry on the classes there. If you have any effects, you may put them in her bathroom.

I am thinking of taking over J.'s House. Let us see what happens. All my plans are indefinite. I can decide something if I know what my place in the Frontier province is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10772

52. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 16, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I assume that you have reached Malabar and that Jayaprakash's treatment has started. Prithuraj, Shamjibhai, etc., are there. See them.

Ba, I and others will reach Delhi on the 20th. We shall be there for about eight days. Thereafter I will go to the Frontier Province. Ba

will remain in Delhi. Ramdas will land in Bombay tomorrow.

I am all right. Manu had fever but she is well now. Pyarelal has fully recovered. I hope to return by the end of October.

Do not be remiss in writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3521

53. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

[September 16, 1938]¹

DEAR SISTER,

The gift from you two sisters comes unfailingly. I shall certainly wear it on my head. Why is Gokhaleji² ill?

Ramdas should be reaching there tomorrow. Nirmala studies at the Kanya Gurukul, Dehradun. I am aware of numerous attacks on me. I do not read them. The praises too are full of exaggerations. Then why not the attacks? Praise does not raise us. Condemnation does not take away anything from us. Then why should we be happy or miserable about it? We shall reap as we sow.

I gather from your other letters that you too, were ill. Do not strain yourself beyond capacity.

[From Gujarati]

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

54. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[On or after September 16, 1938]³

I cannot take the credit of deciding without consultation. I had told Sushila to have a talk with you. She informed me that you were prepared to devote your whole time there after I left.

Amtul Salaam was so ill yesterday that she had to be served. I claim that I can massage better than any of you, including Sushila.

¹ From the contents, specially from the reference to Ramdas's arrival, presumably in Bombay; he reached there from South Africa on September 17, 1938; *vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", 13-9-1938 and "Letter to Prabhavati", 16-9-1938

² Baban Gokhale, addressee's husband

³ *Vide* footnote 2 on the following page.

I gave a massage to Amtul Salaam for a few hours yesterday. If you too fall ill as a result of your foolhardiness I may have to give you a massage too, but it is hardly a very desirable thing. Amtul Salaam has many virtues but she is obstinate in an equal measure.

BAPU

[PS.]

There is very little to learn in this book. I am doing what little it recommends. *Chhilta* water.¹

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4304

55. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[On or after *september 16, 1938*]²

All this can be said only after my death. Let us see where God takes me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4567

56. THE STATES AND RESPONSIBILITY

The partial success of the people of Mysore, instead of liberalizing the other States, seems, so far as one can conclude from known facts, to have stiffened them against the movement for internal responsible government. I have called the Mysore success only partial for nothing has yet been gained in substance by the people. The Maharaja and his cultured Dewan have recognized the State Congress, they have instituted an impartial inquiry into the recent tragic happenings and appointed a Reforms Committee with ample powers. With patience and reasonableness on the part of the Mysore State Congress and with real good will and understanding on the part of the Mysore Government, we may see a large measure of, if not full, responsibility in the government of Mysore.

But the psychological effect of the Mysore events has been exceedingly great. The people of the States have begun to see a new vision of liberty. What seemed to them to be a distant goal now appears to be an event to be realized almost in no time. I believe that

¹ The significance of this is not clear.

² Gandhiji had scribbled this on a letter dated September 16 from the addressee who had touchingly described Amtussalaam's joy when Gandhiji gave her a massage.

if the awakening among the people is genuine and widespread no repression can possibly stay their inevitable march to their cherished goal.

I have said enough of the Travancore frightfulness. I can call it by no other name. Here is an extract from a letter from a Travancorean whose testimony I have never had occasion to doubt. He says:

A careful study of the Dewan's statement shows that he is trying to cloud the issue and mislead outsiders who are not aware of the sequence of events that he narrates. Excepting the threats of 'civil war' alleged by the Dewan, all the other events or occurrences happened subsequent to the promulgation of the proclamation and the declaration of the State Congress as an illegal body. How post-war occurrences justify the war itself, it is difficult to understand.

As regards the violence which we all deplore, the stone-throwing and the burning of buses are attributed to rowdies set up by the police according to one version; but without a thorough inquiry, which is impossible under the present circumstances, it is difficult to say what is the truth. Anyhow, do you not think that it is rather surprising that though all these occurrences took place in clear daylight and at meetings at which large numbers of police and military forces were present, it was not possible to prevent any of them or arrest a single one of the offenders? The explanation of the supporters of the State Congress is that the police dare not arrest any as they and their hirelings commit these atrocities. I cannot say how far the explanation can be accepted. A volunteer who was subjected to a severe lathi charge at the Quilon meeting says in an interview to the *Hindu* correspondent (published in *The Hindu* of 4th Sept.) that he saw with his own eyes some policemen throwing stones. Such allegations are generally made by the State Congress members. Meetings are being held and speeches made in all parts of the country but the arrests are very few. The present policy seems to be to disperse meetings by force. This leads to firing and death of innocent persons. After the Quilon meeting there was firing again at Puthupally, a village about five miles away from Kottayam. One or two died and some were wounded. The actual number is not yet known. All the provisions of the new Regulation are being openly disobeyed by the people. But the Government are not able to bring the offenders to book as there is only one jail in the State and that is already full. If the Government desire to arrest and punish all the offenders, then they will have to build more jails as the number willing to court arrest and imprisonment is very large already and is increasing day after day.

And I am inundated with telegrams describing the fearful repression going on in several parts of Travancore. I do not ask that this testimony should be believed as against the State communiques. But I do suggest that there are, as usual, two sides to the question and that there is a strong case for an impartial inquiry.

But whether there is an inquiry or not, the duty of the Travancore State Congress is clear—on the one hand to see that there is no violence of any sort done by them or their sympathizers, and on the other to go on with their programme of direct action till the Travancore Government relent or the last member is accounted for.

I should like here to state one limitation of ahimsa. If a wrongdoer banks upon the ahimsa of his victim and goes on heaping wrong upon wrong till every one of the victims is crushed, a cry from the surrounding atmosphere rises and the force of public opinion or the like overtakes the wrongdoer. But no satyagrahi should think that he has never to suffer unto death. His victory lies in the defiance by his unconquerable spirit of death and loss of property. The wrongdoer's certain defeat lies in his utter failure to bend or break the spirit of his victim.

If the States persist in their obstinacy and hug their ignorance of the awakening that has taken place throughout India, they are courting certain destruction. I claim to be a friend of the States. Their service has been a heirloom in my family for the past three generations, if not longer. I am no blind worshipper of antiquity. But I am not ashamed of the heirloom. All the States may not live. The biggest ones can live only if they will recognize their limitations, become servants of their people, trustees of their welfare and depend for their existence not on arms, whether their own or British, but solely on the goodwill of their people. Frightfulness will feed the fire of violence that one feels smouldering everywhere. If the States are badly advised and they rely upon organized violence for resisting the just demands of their people, ahimsa, so far generated in the country as a means of redressing social injustice, will not protect them. If it had grown into a Himalayan oak, it would have passed any test however severe. But, sad to confess, it has not gone deep enough into the Indian soil.

The Hyderabad communiques have therefore come upon me as a painful surprise. Sir Akbar is a great educationist. He is a philosopher. It was a pleasure to read his recent convocation address to the Dacca University. It is passing strange that he should have lent himself to the reactionary declarations which condemn an organization even before it has begun to function. What can be the meaning of communalism in a state which is overwhelmingly one population according to religion? What can communalism mean in, say, Kashmir or the Frontier where the population is predominantly of one faith? The doctrine of minority is a good hobby to ride up to a point. But it

must be at least numerically a fair minority. Even a minority of one can expect perfect justice. But it has no status in the political field. When a person belonging to an insignificant minority mounts to power he does so not as a representative of his group but by sheer merit. The State Congress in Hyderabad can never be communal in the sense in which the word is understood in India. An institution in the Frontier Province need not be dubbed communal merely because it has no Hindu member. Of course an organization may be frankly communal in outlook. But the Hyderabad communiques make a subtle distinction and aver that there is presence in the State Congress of persons predominantly communal in outlook. What is more, the State Congress has come out with a statement totally repudiating the suggestion of communalism.

And then comes even the erstwhile progressive Rajkot, Only the other day it had a representative Assembly elected under universal suffrage, and it had complete liberty of speech under its late lamented ruler. One may hope that after the recent display (so far as I can see, wholly uncalled for) of force, the political organization of Rajkot will be not only permitted to function undisturbed but that its demands will be met in a spirit of justice.

Whatever happens in the three States named or on any other, let the people of the States recognize that their salvation depends wholly on their own strength whose generation in turn depends upon an exhibition in action of complete non-violence and truth. They must realize that it is utterly impossible openly to organize along violent lines large masses of mankind deprived of arms and almost from time immemorial brought up as a non-military nation.

Harijan, 17-9-1938

57. ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE

A man reaps as he sows. Having written on violence, I am getting evidence from all parts of India supporting my statement. The saddest case to come under my observation is that of a Congress Committee having incited the ryots of a zemindari simply to take possession of the lands of that zemindari. This act of spoliation was preceded by speeches of Congressmen reeking with violence. I sent the papers to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya for investigation. He confirms generally the complaints made by my correspondent. I am hoping

that the District Committee or the Provincial Committee will be able to right the wrong. Failing that, of course, Rajaji's Government has to give redress. In saying this I do not wish to suggest that the land does not belong to the worker on it. I endorse the socialist theory of possession. But no socialist that I know has defended the usurpation practised in Andhra. If all the land in India is ever to belong to or be possessed by the worker alone, it would be either by a bloody revolution or by equitable legislation. It must be clear to every sane man that the act of confiscation will never last. Had it not been for the Congress Government, the spoliation could never have taken place. The Congress Government will dig its grave if it fails to restore the land to the legal possessor. I may add in parenthesis that the dispossessed zemindar is reputed to be a docile man with pro-Congress tendencies.

The other piece of evidence is choice cuttings from the U. P., C. P. and Bombay press. The singularity of the U. P. cuttings is that they contain incitement to violence in poems and prose. A lady writer waxes eloquent over the misdeeds of the zemindars and the wrongs of the kisans. She draws a terrible contrast between the opulence of the haves and the penury of the have-nots. Having prepared the ground she invites the kisans to a feast of blood and thunder. "Take any weapon you get hold of, strike and strike hard. Don't be cowards. It is all yours and you must seize it by your powerful arms." This is a mild rendering, all too brief, of the red original. Had not the lady's name stared me in the face as writer, I would not have thought a daughter of India to be capable of incitement to such merciless violence. I must confess that even if I screwed myself up properly I could not fill the three columns that she has done with invective. If no one has had his head turned by the writing, it is certainly not her fault. Fortunately the millions to whom it is addressed cannot read.

The C. P. and Bombay cuttings contain unthinkable falsehoods. There is no restraint on the pen. No language is foul enough to blacken the character of persons. Some of the things said are patent inventions. The writings easily come under the law of libel. But what can libel proceedings do? They invite libel proceedings. These advertise the papers. Defence would be an additional opportunity for invention. There are veiled incitements too. And even without incitement, why should not youths reading the portraiture of persons in blackest colours take it into their heads to go and kill the 'lepers' described in the columns? To many, their newspapers are their Bible. They believe in them. And some of these papers are supposed to represent the Congress policy. The evil is on the increase during the

Congress regime. It is well that what was inside is now coming out. But this is not civil liberty; it is criminal licence. Swaraj will not come by way of falsehoods and violence. And we shall do a double wrong if we do all these things in the name of truth and non-violence. I adhere to the advice I have tendered to the Congress and Congressmen.

Harijan, 17-9-1938

58. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 17, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The enclosed is for Durga.¹ I have not the wish nor the courage to do anything that will make her unhappy. Has Brijkrishna's post-card been answered? If not, it should be done on Monday. Please tell Babla. You have to tell him how many people and "Yes" about the laying of the foundation. You should be able to sleep. Do not let your mind be oppressed by thoughts of work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

59. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

September 17, 1938

CHI. DURGA,

Though there is not the slightest cause for worry, still Mahadev's health will require watching. He cannot of course resume work right away. Jivaraj says you would not like Mahadev to go to Delhi. Is that your wish? If your mother and son want to accompany me to Delhi I am willing to take you along. If my health permits me to go to the Frontier Province, you can stay on in Delhi for the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹*Vide* the following item.

60. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 17, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Where did you learn all this cunning? There are criticisms on three heads and still you say it was only for my information. What a way of putting things ! But you have the right to write whatever you like. Chimanlal had asked me whether or not to give you the figure. The expenses here are certainly on a royal scale. I could not preserve my health without that. The experiments in ghee, etc., also mean some expense. So the expenses here are not a standard for anybody to follow. If anyone were to tell me that friends give me money and I squander it I would listen and laugh. No doubt there is scope for improvement but it can be effected only if I get a wise manager like you. But you are not going to stay here for ever. The figure was not given you so that you might pay the amount. You may pay only according to your capacity. I have already told you that I will not mind even if you do not pay. It would be better, however, to pay as long as you can afford.

It would be more accurate if you described me as lazy. Would you consider Chimanlal, Munnalal, Nanavati, Balwantsinha, Parnerkar, Kanu, Sharda and Shakaribehn lazy? The others are only staying there. Bhansalibhai certainly cannot be considered lazy. Krishnachandra is ill but otherwise he is a saintly person. Shankaran has to be trained up. I make do with whatever work Anand does. Even so, because of my incapacity I put up with some laxity. I have only mentioned the names that occurred to me. You may explain to me in greater detail giving particular names.

You did not reply to me. There is no question of your forcing anything on me. In spite of my being not free from passion, do you and Manudi desire that I should let myself be ministered to by and should touch women? This question is an important one. Manudi will not understand it but you can. All of you can say: 'So long as Bapu is not free from passion, let him be served only by Sushila and Ba.' Or you can say: 'When he puts the burden on us, we do wish that he would let us touch him. What effect can his passion have on us?' Either stand can be justified. The first is safer from all points of view. In fine, the experiment which I had commenced with a particular aim

can be said to have ended, and I invite the views of you all regarding any new step I may take. I do not want to act in haste. I will do only what I can with objective detachment. I believe you to be wise. You are thoughtful. In such matters you can guide me as a woman. Please, therefore, give me your independent opinion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: G.N. 4883. Also C.W. 7042. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

61. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

September 17, 1938

CHI. MANUDI,

Consider yourself fortunate that you have arrived when I am observing silence. That silence is for the whole country. You have the benefit of being a witness to it. The silence is not an expression of diminished love. Love does not care for words uttered by the tongue.

I will certainly write to you when you go to Bombay. You should write, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1572. Courtesy: Surendra B. Mashruwala

62. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 17, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Teach Sharda music to her fill. If others also ask for help in learning to recite the *Gita* or music, help them without any hesitation.

Do take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10773

63. *LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT*

September 17, 1938

CHI. JETHALAL,

I got your postcard, etc. I got Lakshmidas's letter today, which I am sending. I have been collecting literature which can be helpful to you and sending it. You may leave out of it whatever is not useful. It is not necessary to reply to me. Where is the need for replying to what I send to you for you to think over?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 9867. Courtesy : Narayan J. Sampat

64. *NOTE TO RAGHUNATH GANESH PANDIT SHELOLIKAR*

September 17, 1938

If you could prolong your stay here by a few more days you could correct Sharda's recitation of the *Gita*.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2794-2

65. *FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

[Before September 18, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

Sushila says that if you can go to Bombay today, you should. I think that will mean unnecessary rushing about. If they² are coming here, they may examine you here. The main thing is rest. If you go, you should stay on in Bombay and then join me at Delhi. If you decide to go, you must leave tomorrow. It will be better if you do not carry the burden of *Harijan* with you. Don't worry about what will happen for two weeks.

Now you will willy-nilly have to . . .

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11630

¹ *Vide* the following item, where Gandhiji mentions Drs. Jivaraj Mehta and Gilder having examined Mahadev Desai and advised him complete rest.

² Drs. Gilder and Jivaraj Mehta

66. TO THE READERS

[September 18, 1938]¹

The readers of *Harijan* will share my sorrow that Mahadev Desai has become very ill. Drs. Gilder and Jivaraj Mehta, who with their usual kindness came specially to examine him, have come to the conclusion that he must take prolonged rest. He has had the same warnings that I had. The doctors think that prolonged overwork has brought about the illness which, if neglected, may bring about paralysis of all activity. Let the numerous friends of Mahadev not be alarmed over the news of his illness. There is nothing to be alarmed about. Only nature has issued a stern warning which he and I may not disregard except at our cost. I include myself as an object of warning, for if I do not insist on Mahadev's taking rest, he is quite capable of cheerfully taking his last breath with the pen in his hand. If I am wise and true, he will take the needed rest. Therefore, for the time being, the readers must miss the familiar and copious writings over the initials M. D.

I am writing this note during the small hours of Sunday morning, having got up at 1.30 a. m. for finishing *Harijan* work. But I dare not repeat such liberty without the danger of a sudden collapse. I have only limited physical energy left in me. It has therefore to be sparingly used.

The third person who can do *Harijan* work is Pyarelal. He has been *hors de combat* for some time and just now he is convalescing after the recent attack of enteric fever.

Harijan is not a newspaper, it is a 'views'-paper representing those of one man. Even Mahadev and Pyarelal may not write anything independently whilst I am alive. I am myself daily growing in the knowledge of satyagraha. I have no text-book to consult in time of need, not even the *Gita* which I have called my dictionary. Satyagraha as conceived by me is a science in the making. It may be that what I claim to be a science may prove to be no science at all and may well prove to be the musings and doings of a fool, if not a madman. It may be that what is true in satyagraha is as ancient as the hills. But it has not yet been acknowledged to be of any value in the solution of world problems or rather the one supreme problem of war. It may be

¹ The Sunday preceding September 24

that what is claimed to be new in it will be proved to be really of no value in terms of that supreme problem. It may be that what are claimed to be victories of satyagraha, i.e., ahimsa, were in reality victories not of truth and non-violence but of fear of violence.

These possibilities have always been in front of me. I am helpless. All I present to the nation for adoption is an answer to prayer or, which is the same thing, constantly waiting on God. Such being the case, whilst I am alive *Harijan* can only be continued so long as I am able to write or Mahadev or Pyarelal can interpret me from week to week.

The readers need not think that there are not others who can take the place of these two workers. There are. But they are all engaged in the respective tasks allotted to them and it would be wrong to remove them from their spheres of work. Satyagraha will not stop for want of *Harijan*, but it will for want of workers to carry on the mighty constructive programme.

Therefore, whilst Mahadev's illness lasts, the readers will overlook the gaps they will notice in the editing of *Harijan*. This illness induces a reflection. I have often expressed the opinion among friends that in the matter of capacity for detachment Englishmen are far in advance of us. No matter how important national affairs may be, they will keep their meal hours and hours of recreation. They are not unnerved in the face of dangers or impending calamity. This may be called working in the spirit of the *Gita*. Among the political workers in India there are very few who come up to the Englishmen's standard.

This English detachment is worthy of emulation. That it is used for the exploitation of the so-called uncivilized or semi-civilized races of the earth is another matter. It would be a distinct gain to the national cause if the leaders and workers strictly keep their hours. No man is expected to do more than he really can. If at the end of the day there is surplus work left or he cannot get through it without missing a meal or encroaching upon the hours of sleep or recreation, there is mismanagement somewhere. I have no doubt that if we cultivate the habit of punctuality and acting according to programme, the index of national efficiency will go up, our advance towards our goal will be repaid and the workers will be healthier and longer-lived.

In conclusion, the readers and correspondents will extend their indulgence if they find, as they will more than heretofore, that they

are not served in time or at all. The correspondence is increasing, the work to do is also on the increase. The capacity for coping with both is diminishing. God's will be done.

Harijan, 24-9-1938

67. NOTE TO RAGHUNATH GANESH PANDIT SHELOLIKAR

September 18, 1938

The fight was directed against the very party before which I had taken the vow.

This did not violate the vow and my fast was aimed at Hindu society, not the English. I believe that had the Award not been changed the Harijans would have become a separate community, which was the object of the Award.

If the work I am doing is in consonance with dharma and for the furtherance of dharma, it should be pursued even at the risk of public disapprobation.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2795

68. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *September 19, 1938*]¹

There is no limit to your obstinacy. If I do not take you after having agreed to it, would it not be because it cannot be helped? I know you will not be able to put up with life in the Frontier Province. Therefore it is no use taking you there. If your health continues to be as bad as it is now I shall have to look after you rather than you looking after Mahadev. I continue to take service from you only to avoid a quarrel. I know your body can no longer give service. If you had had yourself massaged for three nights running you would have become stronger and you would have been in good humour, but that was not to be.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 701

¹ This and the following two notes to the addressee, all undated, have been placed according to the order in which they occur in *Bapuke Patra-8 : Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam*. They were evidently written before Gandhiji left Segaoon to visit the N. W. F. P. on September 19.

69. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *September 19, 1938*]

What a letter you have written! I have included you in my entourage but you may stay back if you want to. I sent your name to Khan Saheb also against my wish. Do you wish to go as a favour to me or because you cannot bear to stay back ?

There was no other thought in my mind about what happened at night.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 675

70. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *September 19, 1938*]

You are only proving what was said to Maulana Saheb. Why do you pester me now? If you wish to come along you have my permission but if you do not I shall not compel you. Please stop harassing me. You are turning to nought all my cajolings. I have not said anything and still you are quarrelling with me. I cannot understand such behaviour. Now stop writing and do whatever you want to do.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 726

71. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[Before *Monday, September 19, 1938*]¹

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Whatever physical service or some such thing is being rendered [to Balkrishna] should continue. Sleeping near [him] should also continue as I have said.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4327

¹ The letter bears the addressee's note : "Monday morning, September 19", presumably, the date of receipt.

72. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,

[On or before *September 19, 1938*]¹

MY DEAR AGATHA,

At last I have a copy of your personal letter. It is exhaustive. Of course you will come when you are ready. I am writing to G.² about your passage. You must not be angry with your friends about their writing to me. But I am at ease now that I have your assurance that you will always let me know your wants no matter whether I can supply them or not.

You are having an anxious time there. Nothing but good can come out of these contacts. I look forward to your account of the happenings.

Here the federation discussion does not worry me. The question of the release of political prisoners³ does. I have not yet made an impression upon the powers that be that their release cannot but make for peace. Their declaration of non-violence needs to be taken at its face value. I can certainly work upon it and hold the declarants to their promise. But the authorities are timid. However, I am patiently working at it and have not lost hope that they will be released before it is too late. I am well, considering the strain I am going through.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : C. W. 7829. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

73. A NOTE⁴

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI

September 19, 1938

I stopped on the night of Saturday (17-9-38) the experiment involving physical contact with women that I had been carrying on. I had been thinking of it for some time but I was not able before that

¹ The letter seems to have been written before Agatha Harrison left England in October 1938 and since Gandhiji had left Segaoon on September 19, 1938, this letter is likely to have been written on or before that date.

² Presumably G. D. Birla

³ Of Bengal

⁴ This was sent as an enclosure to "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-10-1938.

date to come to a decision. That night, however, I had an experience that made me decide to discontinue it. While the experiment went on I had a certain freedom. But it has never been my luck to enjoy this kind of freedom. Now my responsibility increases.

During the experiment I had the opportunity to do a great deal of thinking. I also had some new experiences. I will write about them if I get the time. Writing, however, is not so necessary. It may provide little guidance to others.

I cannot say that I have become more *nirvikara*¹ as a result of this experiment. Some friends had feared that it might result in adding to the *vikara*² since my mind would be perpetually occupied with the thing. Nothing of the sort has happened. It is not my habit to continue to brood over a decision I have taken. The decision works of itself. It is not a burden on the mind—it should not be.

The stopping of the experiment does not mean that things will go on the way they did before. I cannot say that I shall remove myself somewhere.

This, however, I can say that I will not deliberately renounce the service of the few sisters in the Ashram, sisters who are so close to me. I shall take from them the service I require. I had never renounced such physical contact with them as I considered necessary for taking service from them. My practice of resting my hands on their shoulders will continue as before. The restriction that I had been observing during the period of the experiment will be slackened. What I wrote about it in *Harijan* stands as it should. No time limit had been set as regards this practice.

I must add that in giving up this experiment I felt no joy. I gave it up out of a sense of dharma. I have however been able to discover that the harmless physical contact with women which was habitual with me over many years has not done any harm to my practice of *brahmacharya*. The imperfection of *brahmacharya* in me has some other cause. But, as is my nature, when a doubt arose in my mind regarding this it became necessary to make the experiment.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7868

¹ Free from passion

² Passion

74. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 19, 1938

Read this with a calm mind when you have the leisure.

CHI. PYARELAL,

One day I had a talk with Mother and then this letter began to take shape. Last night I came to the conclusion that if I did not write to you, I should be deceiving you.

I decided to write this yesterday because of Mahadev's illness, If you can, you should work whole-heartedly for *Harijan* and [other] papers. For this to be possible there is something that needs to be done. Mother said: "Marry Sharada to Pyarelal. She will agree if I persuade her. But you must take up this responsibility." My immediate reaction was that I do not have that much influence over you these days. Still, should I not convey to you what appears to me in the best interest of you, me and many others? I spoke to Sharada. She is of course willing. I suggested to her that in that case she should herself write to you. She said: "I do not know how to do it. You may write and I will sign. When I have placed myself in your hands, what is the difficulty?" Sharada does not seek to gratify any sensual desires. She is keen to serve. Seeing that you had suffered a terrible shock, Chimanlal thought of entrusting Sharada to you and, moved by a similar feeling, Sharada went along with the idea. Knowing you as I did, I dissuaded him. This of course you know. Now I am approaching you with a different motive altogether. Three or four different people were approached for Sharada. She was turned down because of her weak health. This quite shocked me. In such a state Mother's suggestion was quite a help. It is our duty to accept the hand of someone whom nobody accepts. What does it matter that Sharada is weak of health? I do not consider her weak. I see many qualities in her. She wants a teacher for husband, somebody who will educate her at home. Such a husband should make her overcome her desire to be a mother. If he does not do so she has the strength to remain calm.

You will not be betraying Yoga by accepting the hand of a girl like Sharada. I have already suggested that the Yoga of your imagination whom you have wedded remains what she is. Supposing that Yoga was named Sharada? But if that be not the case, you may not give Sharada a child. So long as you give her knowledge, you give her your love, she will be content. If you can understand this much, my

task becomes easy. And the broken strings of your heart are made whole again. But if you are not convinced at heart, I would certainly not insist that you should abide by what I say.

Sushila told me that the assurance I gave you at the time of your fast, which I later withdrew, had not become inoperative. I have already written you to say that it no longer holds. If you wish you may pursue your fast under my supervision. So, this need not become a hindrance to your *Harijan* work.

My statement that you and I had different ideas of dharma represented a conclusion drawn from your letter. My sending blessings to Yoga on her engagement distressed you. I feel it was my duty to bless her. I was under the impression that you had also taken the same view. I am not convinced in my heart that Panditji¹ or Lakshmi-behn² used coercion with Yoga. I did not simply follow the custom in sending my blessings.

I shall not write anything more now. By accepting Sharada's hand you will be bringing a cow home. It is just possible that she may turn out a *Kamadhenu* for all of us. I for one notice such qualities in Sharada. Do not refuse her hand.

I am not able to break my silence. You have risen from the death-bed. It is a sign from God. You will have truly risen when you come out unscathed from the burning forest in which you are caught and make your full contribution to the *yajna* of non-violence. My silence will easily end if you accept my suggestion. Right now, it is a refuge for one distressed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If you do not like my suggestion, feel free to ignore it. Do not make yourself unhappy.

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

¹ Narayan Moreshwar Khare

² Wife of N. M. Khare

75. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[Before *September 20, 1938*]¹

Right now I am full of thoughts, so many as to drive a man crazy. One of them is that when we go to Delhi you should go to the Frontier Province. I am deciding about the rest.

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

76. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
September 20, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
RASHTRIYASHALA
RAJKOT

ALL REACHED WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 3879. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7036

77. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
September 20, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Better a pencil letter than none.

I have sent you a wire. Mahadev took the journey well. Poor Shraddha was bad. The train reached Wardha 4 hours late.

I hope you are having a good and useful time there. You will insist on keeping well.

No more for the day.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3880. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7036

¹ From the contents; *ibid*

78. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 20, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

All reached well 4 hours late. Mahadev took the journey quite well. Poor Shraddha was bad.

This is a furnace. Not a breath of air.

I hope you are getting the post all right.

Can't say more today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6402. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9997

79. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 20, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter as also the book sent by you. But before I could even begin it, Kaka carried it away. I do hope to glance through it when he returns it.

I expect to return from the Frontier Province by the end of October. Raosaheb and you may come then.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10396. Also C.W. 6835. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

80. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 20, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

Write to me daily. Be careful about food. If there is any trouble let me know. You will have started getting the menses. If not, sitting in warm water will certainly bring them on.

Pyarelal's room is sufficiently bright. You should strip yourself there, plaster your body with mud and walk about for a while. Then when the mud is dry take a bath in the opposite room. This will regularize the menses.

I have detained Dadasaheb only for your sake. Recite the *Gita* properly. Learn music from Nanavati and English from Bhansalibhai. Keep the kitchen, etc., very clean.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9996. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

81. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

September 20, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

You must have heard the story about the true mother and the false claimant. The false claimant agreed to having the baby cut up in two with one portion each being given to the two claimants. But the true mother told the judge that if that was the only way out she would withdraw her claim and let the other woman have the baby. It would at least be alive then. Now, let us see who proves to be the true *go-sevak*. Both of you may be such or both may turn out to be worthless or one true and one false. The problem thus poses three questions for me. Never say die.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1910

82. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After *September 20, 1938*]¹

My mind does not work as regards the ashram. If its existence is needed it may be put on its feet by begging for donations locally. But you should give up the whole idea until you have acquired self-confidence for doing something here on your own. I have already agreed to your living with me and we shall further see in Segaoon what you can do. As regards Hardhyan Singh's house I am writing to Shaukat.

Here is the draft of your will:

¹ Gandhiji arrived in Delhi, where this and the following three notes were evidently written, on September 20. They have been assigned G.N. numbers in reverse order, a procedure followed with regard to all the photostats of the year.

“I hereby bequeath to my surviving brothers all my share in the paternal estate.”¹

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2464

83. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After September 20, 1938]

I have to think about your going to the Frontier Province. I do not wish to do anything that may seem improper. Anyway you should be prepared.

You have given up the thought of restricting your field of service here, I hope.

You may adopt what attitude you please toward Satyavati. There can be no harm done when the heart is pure.

I would like your separating from your brothers though they may continue to give you Rs. 100 per month as long as they can.

There is no difficulty from my side to your living with me. We shall see how far you can preserve your health in Segaoon.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2463

84. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After September 20, 1938]

But there are many such things. How can I check them? Even in cases where I do try to check things, do I succeed? You are to go only if you wish to, not otherwise.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2462

85. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[After September 20, 1938]

It is not a question of inconvenience. I do not know who are going with me. I have said be prepared. Ba said she wanted to go. I said yes to her. Amtul Salaam has taken herself for granted. If there is overcrowding I shall leave you behind. I do not wish to place too

¹ This is in English.

heavy a burden on Khan Saheb. Probably I shall know for certain by this evening.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2461

86. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *September 21, 1938*]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

The time for *takli yajna* is drawing near as I am writing this. I have read *Shivasankalpa*. I like it, too. I will try to read it again. Dreams are unusual for me. But for the last six or seven days, I have had numerous dreams and all concerning you. Last night, there was a break. Let me describe the last one also. You said your legs ached at night and poor Durga and Babla could not go on massaging them all the time. You therefore asked me to send Kanu at least for the nights, so that he might massage them properly. I said our understanding was that if walking twice was too much for your strength, you should walk only once and that overexerting yourself for walking would not be desirable. At this point, "I wake up and see that the world does not exist."² When will these fancies about you stop? Where should I send you? How? If I am not free from passion, will your going away improve my condition?

There is no hysteria in all this constant thinking about you. Sus-hila has not got the medicine. Herewith a copy from the *Reformer* for Khan Saheb. . . .³

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11636

¹ This was written before *Rentia Baras* which fell on September 21, 1938.

² Gandhiji is quoting a line from Narasinha Mehta.

³ The letter is incomplete.

87. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 22, 1938

CHI. MARY,

I am glad you were none the worse for the experience. Find out exactly what you are expected to do as Commissioner and then certainly accept if it appears worth while. Your letter to Amtul Salaam is excellent. I have handed it to her.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here up to 29th.

From a photostat G.N. 6071. Also C.W. 3401. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

88. DRAFT OF RESOLUTION FOR A.I.C.C.¹

[Before September 23, 1938]

Inasmuch as people including a few Congressmen have been found in the name of civil liberty to advocate murder, arson, looting, and class war by violent means, and several newspapers are carrying on a campaign of falsehood and violence calculated to incite the readers to violence and to lead to communal conflicts, the Congress warns the public that civil liberty does not cover acts of or incitement to violence or promulgation of palpable falsehoods. In spite, therefore, of the Congress policy on civil liberty remaining unchanged the Congress will, consistently with its tradition, support measures that may be undertaken by the Congress Governments for the defence of life and property.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

¹ This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Discussion with Communists", Before 11-11-1938. The resolution was passed by the Working Committee, which met in Delhi from September 23 to September 25 and later, on September 26, by the A.I.C.C. when a group of people walked out. *Vide* also "That Unfortunate Walk-out", 5-10-1938.

89. TELEGRAM TO TRIVANDRUM LAW
COLLEGE UNION¹

[On or before *September 23, 1938*]²

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS HEAVY. ARE YOU NON-
VIOLENT IN MIND, WORD AND DEED? IF YOU ARE,
SUFFER TO THE UTMOST AND LIBERTY IS YOURS.

The Hindu, 24-9-1938

90. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

September 23, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Do certainly take tub-baths. It is good indeed that you have left off medicines. That you are not able to sleep is too much. Give up everything except water for a day, and see what happens. The cause of insomnia can be nothing but indigestion.

CHI. VIJAYABEHN
C/O RAMBHAI HIRABHAI PATEL
SAURASHTRA SOCIETY NO. 25
ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7099. Also C.W. 4591. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

91. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

[*September 23, 1938*]³

Mahatma Gandhi began by thanking the members for expressing their views on the questionnaire that he had written out in the last two days. He was sure that the members would have read his articles during the last two months in the *Harijan* on the increase of violence in the Congress organizations. He had thought over the subject very carefully.

First, said Mahatmaji, he had noticed that several Congressmen, who had

¹ This was in reply to the Trivandrum Law College Union's message regarding the situation in Travancore.

² The news item carrying the report is dated September 23.

³ From *The Bombay Chronicle* and *Gandhijiki Dilli Diary*, Part II

joined the Congress and signed the pledge without understanding or believing in the necessity for observing truth and non-violence as essential steps to achieve swaraj, had committed breaches of these two conditions. He had recently noted many Congressmen writing leaflets or making speeches in the name of civil liberty, inciting others to violence. Such speeches and writings, which were retarding the progress of the Congress towards its goal, should be stopped. The Working Committee could do it by defining civil liberty in a resolution. Any incitement to violence in the name of civil liberty should be treated as a breach of Congress discipline and as such severely dealt with by the disqualification of the guilty members from holding offices or posts of responsibility in the Congress. It was open to the Working Committee to accept his suggestion, but he would emphasize the strict enforcement of discipline in the ranks. He would go even to the length of expelling those who committed breaches of discipline from the Congress.

Gandhiji continued that there should be no compromise with violence or untruth. The Congress today was actually manned by those who had lost faith in the creed of non-violence and the constructive programme of khaddar, [removal of] untouchability, prohibition and Hindu-Muslim unity. The real strength of the Congress depended on these twins, non-violence and constructive programme. When certain power was captured by Congressmen, there was an unhealthy competition to divide the spoils, which indicated that Congressmen were not able to digest power. This unseemly rush to capture committees by violence and corrupt methods would make swaraj a distant dream. This was not the way to win swaraj; this was not the way to work the office-acceptance programme. The ministries had been accepted by the Congress in a spirit of service. It was, therefore, necessary to apply the purge, as otherwise the Congress would collapse under its own weakness. Incitement to violence should be checked. Otherwise it would soon degenerate into undignified goondaism.

So far as Congress organizations were concerned, Mahatma Gandhi suggested that only those who had been in the Congress registers for five years should be eligible to hold offices or posts of responsibility in the Congress. He is reported to have added that the yarn franchise which was abandoned in 1926 should be restored. All office-bearers in Congress organizations should annually contribute 5,000 yards of hand-spun yarn to the Congress. He would make yarn franchise a compulsory clause. He knew that it was found unworkable in 1926 by many Congressmen but he would not care for the volume of Congress membership. He would not mind a fall in membership of the Congress. Ten thousand true and non-violent Congressmen could bring swaraj and work wonders rather than ten million Congressmen on the rolls committing violence.

It had been argued, said Mahatma Gandhi, that Congress would cease to be a democratic organization and would be reduced to a closed corporation. Democracy, he said, would not live in the atmosphere of untruth and violence. It would flourish only if truth and non-violence existed. Congressmen should develop a higher degree of non-violence. The Provincial Ministers should soon develop peaceful methods of

dealing with violence. The Peace Brigade was one of such methods. Until a correct remedy was found, the Ministers would be permitted to deal with offences in the manner they considered best, but they could not depend on the military to quell riots for long. If they were unable to establish peace by non-violent methods in the near future, they should resign their offices. The idea of the military was opposed to the Congress creed of non-violence and should be supplanted by stages.

When asked how non-violence could check foreign aggression, Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have replied that if India had one crore of non-violent volunteers, he was confident that no nation could conquer India. If they failed in their attempt to prevent aggression, then the fault was theirs, not in the philosophy of non-violence but in their methods of practising it. Mahatma Gandhi was convinced that non-violence, if properly applied, could not only solve India's problems but also the world's.

Gandhiji concluded that these were his views. The members could ponder over them and tell him whether they could accept and work them. If they were not in agreement with his views, they were at liberty to reject them.

The Hindu, 24-9-1938

92. CORRUPTION IN THE CONGRESS

It is difficult to cope with the correspondence that I am having from several places about violence, untruth and corruption in the Congress. Whilst I must continue to publish typical correspondence about the weaknesses of Congressmen, I must issue a warning against hasty deduction being drawn that all is ill with the Congress. I know it is not. But it is true that violence, untruth and corruption have made inroads enough to warrant drastic measures in order to prevent decay overtaking the great organization.

Here are extracts from two typical letters :

(1) Perhaps you are aware how the enrolment of bogus Congress members is going on unimpeded everywhere, and how rich and unscrupulous persons are controlling the affairs of the Congress organization, keeping skilfully the genuine and devoted workers out of their way. Some are paying the membership subscription of annas 4 for others under their control out of their own pockets, and some are going a step forward and are not paying a single pie to the Congress committees and instead making the primary committees under their clutches prepare false accounts of their apparent collections and thereby evading the supervising eye of the sub-divisional as well as district committees.

Primary committees having less than 25 members are not required, under the rules framed by it, to pay anything to higher committees out of the membership fee. The result is that a good many paper committees are being

set up with less than 25 members to deprive the sub-divisional and district committees of their quota of the membership subscription as also to secure a larger proportion of representation in these Committees.

(2) It is my duty to bring to your notice the open and scandalous corruption in enrolling Congress members. The Congress authorities here, especially the Executives, know this state of things well, but it is difficult to know why the necessary steps are not being taken. If steps are not taken, things will go from bad to worse and the whole Congress institution will be disgraced and the hold on people will be lost.

(i) Every party is trying to capture the Congress office—whether Primary, Sub-divisional, District or Provincial. And for this purpose bogus members are being enrolled by practically every group.

(ii) There are a good many names of persons on the Congress rolls, but on scrutiny it can be easily found out that there are no such persons in existence at all. During election time the same group of persons is mobilized at elections of primary Congress committees of different wards.

(iii) The members are enrolled sometimes without their own signatures on application forms and in most cases without taking payment of the annual subscription of four annas.

(iv) The question arises how the account of collection of subscription by the primary, sub-divisional and district Congress committees is maintained. In almost all cases where a group is in possession of the office and necessarily the office account, collection of the annual subscription for all the bogus members is shown to the credit side, and at the same time nearly the whole amount is shown to the debit side on the different heads of expenses, such as travelling expense, meeting expense, allowance expense, etc. Really they do not collect the subscription and maintain a false account.

I do not know how all these corruptions can be stopped. There will be, I hope, changes of rules at the next A. I. C. C. meeting at Delhi. Some steps should be immediately taken to stop the corruption. Identification of Congress members, signatures of the members on the application forms, actual realization of subscription from the members and true accounts should be enforced.

These statements have been made by responsible parties. The letters are meant for publication. But I have purposely suppressed the names of my correspondents as also of the province in which the corruption is said to exist.

It is to be hoped that the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. will deal with this as well as the other serious questions that will come

up for discussion and decision. It would be a tragedy if the session of the A. I. C. C. were to be frittered away in orations or mutual wranglings.

Harijan, 24-9-1938

93. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

DELHI,
September 24, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Narandas is a worker, not a writer. Therefore the description of things has to come from you and no one else. Chh.¹ does write but he won't have the time to give me details. And they are all afraid to burden me with descriptions.

Well, if your suggestion had been received by me it would have helped me. However I accept your apology. Only don't do it again.

The weather for me is ideal. The blood-pressure is ideal, almost always 160-164/100-104.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original : C. W. 3881. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7037

94. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

DELHI,
September 24, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Here it is all dry, there all wet. This prolongation of wet weather is a ruinous thing. And yet we may not grumble. It is all God's doing. Only we don't know Him. To grumble is also a $\text{Áfl}\cdot\ddot{y}$ ². It won't abate till we know Him face to face.

Both Mahadev and I are keeping ideal health. No strain is put upon me. My silence has done the trick.

You need not worry about the wires. I hope to enclose with this a note to the P. M.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 6403. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9998

¹ Chhaganlal Gandhi

² Gratification of sense

95. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 24, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. If you write 'Personal' no one will read your letter. Do write whatever you have in mind. Are you going on with the *Gita* and music? You have not said anything about your health. Give me full details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 9997. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

96. INTERVIEW TO F. S. YOUNG¹

September 24, 1938

I² first of all related the whole position to Gandhiji and then asked Young to say what he had to say. He then at great length stated the whole position and asked Gandhiji's help. The first two paragraphs are in reply to that.

(1) All I can say is that somehow or other the authorities should be made to see that in Seth Jamnalalji and Pandit Hiralal they have men who are true as steel and who believe in non-violence as their creed.

(2) Surely it will be unwise to imprison them instead of holding them as willing hostages for peace. To ban the Praja Mandal is to invite trouble where there is none today.

In reply to the first two paragraphs, Young said that there was no question of imprisoning anyone. That position had not yet arrived and he hoped that it would never arrive. To this Gandhiji replied in the third paragraph.

(3) You will reach that stage in a moment, if you have an organization which is working [un]constitutionally and with which they are identified. I do not think they can surrender the right to agitate for responsible government. The authorities may or may not grant it. But they should not ban an activity which is in its nature peaceful. You may take all precautions to ensure peace.

¹ D. B. Kalelkar explains : "By the efforts of Shri G. D. Birla a meeting was brought about between Gandhiji and Mr. Young, I. G. P., Jaipur State, to talk about the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal. Gandhiji gave his answers in writing. Later Shri G. D. Birla prepared a note explaining Gandhiji's answers. . . ."

² G. D. Birla

In reply to this, Young pointed out the activities of the Mandal in enlisting Congress members. He said the Council had a suspicion that the Praja Mandal was only another name for the Congress and after having seen the disturbances in Travancore and Mysore, they were rather afraid of Congress creating trouble in Jaipur. Could not the Praja Mandal keep itself separate from the Congress? The fourth paragraph is in reply to that.

(4) You can't prevent natural affinities. People are drawn towards the Congress. You seek its assistance in order to promote peace as Sir Mirza did wisely and as Sir Akbar is already doing and Sir C. P. will do presently.

In reply to this, Young said, "But what if they start trouble? If their constitution is something different, then there should be no difficulty in recognizing it but with this constitution, if they start trouble, peace might be disturbed." The penultimate and the last paragraph are in reply to this.

(5) You can ask them to meet you a long way as to how they should shape their activity. You stifle opinion if you say they may not even ask for responsible government. You should shed the fear of the Congress.

(6) What I have suggested is this. Don't interfere with their objective but regulate the speed with which they move. You may, for instance, regulate the demonstrative part of their programme. You will control their language. But to ask them to change their objective is like asking a man to change his religion.

In the end, Mr. Young profusely thanked Gandhiji and made a request for taking the notes with him as a sort of souvenir to which Gandhiji agreed subject to his being provided with a copy of the same. The last three lines are in reply to my question whether Sir Akbar had already written for help and whether C. P. also had applied for help.

I would like you to give me a copy of the notes.

I have Sir Akbar's letter asking for help.

More than a hope. He has wired to Pattabhi asking him to meet him. (This is about C. P.)

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 382-3

97. *SPEECH AT THE FOUNDATION-LAYING OF PRAYER HALL*

September 25, 1938

I am sorry I am not able to speak on this occasion. For many years now it has been my view that following a death the rich indulge

in a lot of expenditure which serves neither utility nor dharma. I therefore welcome the present occasion. Janakidevi¹ was a godly woman. She passed away a short while ago. The family she left behind is large and well known. Her sons together thought of doing some work of Harijan service in her memory. So they resolved with the concurrence of the directors of this institution² to build a prayer hall. I have been entrusted with the pleasant task of laying the foundation of this prayer hall. I lay the foundation-stone in the presence of you all and hope that the prayer hall will be of benefit to the pupils of the institution. I also hope that others also will similarly honour the memory of their dear departed by undertaking work of Harijan service.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2508

98. DRAFT OF RESOLUTION FOR A. I. C. C.³

[On or before *September 26, 1938*]

The A. I. C. C. notes with sorrow and dismay the repression that has been going on in Travancore for some days. The evidence that has come to the Congress office, if it is to be believed, goes to show that the movement led by the State Congress in Travancore is strictly constitutional and for a constitutional purpose, viz., attainment of responsible government under the aegis of His Highness the Maharaja. The repudiation published on behalf of the State is categorically contradicted by the spokesmen of the State Congress.

In the circumstances the A. I. C. C. recommends to the Travancore Government for adoption the following policy, viz., assurance on the one hand that the State Congress is free to carry on the movement for responsible government in a constitutional manner; appointment of a committee containing, among others, representatives of the State Congress to explore the possibility of granting responsible government, and an inquiry conducted by a jurist outside the State of unimpeachable impartiality into the recent happenings including the charges made by the State of provocations justifying the State mea-

¹ Mother of Brijkrishna Chandiwala

² Harijan Nivas. Brijkrishna Chandiwala in his book, *Gandhijiki Dilli Diary*, Part II, writes that a suggestion to build a prayer hall in Harijan Nivas had come from Viyogi Hari.

³ Published in *Harijan* under the title "Indian States". This was drafted by Gandhiji; vide "Note to Jamnalal Bajaj", 26-9-1938

sures including firing on unarmed people resulting in deaths and injuries, and an amnesty to the prisoners.

The A. I. C. C. regrets that the Hyderabad State has issued ordinances which appear to give to the State power altogether in excess of requirements.

The A. I. C. C. has also received complaints of severe repression in the States like Dhenkanal, Talchar and Kashmir. In all these cases the people of the States have appealed to the Congress for advice, guidance and help.

The A. I. C. C. can but reiterate its policy of non-interference, and, consistently with the resources, to help the people in every way open to the Congress. The policy of non-interference is an admission of the limitations of the Congress. The Congress policy has been one of friendliness to the States. In spite of the declarations of some Congressmen to the contrary, the corporate policy of the Congress, so long as it holds by truth and non-violence, must be one of continuous attempt to convert the Princes to the view that their true welfare consists in a voluntary surrender of power to the people so as to bring them in a line with the people of the so-called British India, consistently with the existence of the constitutional heads of the respective States.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

99. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 26, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I am quite perturbed by your letter. Of course, the perturbation is now gradually diminishing. My interpretation of your letter is that you want to say no but have no courage to say no. So you are planning to write a long letter. Why should I place such a burden on you? I certainly do not want to force you. Moreover, where is the question of coercion in such matters?

Hence I take your letter to mean that you are unable to agree to my proposal. Mother has expressed to me, in a few words, her distress. It is an unbearable thought that I should be instrumental in bringing about your ruin and now Sushila's ruin. It is comforting that whether happy or unhappy, Sushila remains engrossed in her studies and in the hospital work. Hence, if my impression is correct that you are

unable to accept Sharada's hand, then it is also your view that my duty is to give up Sushila's services. Do not misunderstand me. I cannot think of anything else. My heart cries when I look at Sushila. How can I bear to see her life being ruined at my hands?

If your life can be rebuilt Sushila's life will be rebuilt too. In that case, am I not solely responsible for her? She too would want to live with us. Mother would be satisfied. But I see darkness all round if your life is not rebuilt. But what can you do about it? Nothing can be achieved by unnatural means. No good can come of it. You will understand the reason for my haste.

This would mean that Sushila should be free here. I should take possession of my own body. Till Mahadev is ready, you should look after my physical needs and his work in the Frontier [Province] and elsewhere. This much is not beyond your capacity. Once Mahadev is all right, whatever is to be done will be done. There is talk going on about Swami and Chandrashankar. In my view that is not at all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

100. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

HARIJAN NIVAS,
[DELHI,]

September 26, 1938

The resolution I have drafted regarding the Princely States has assumed importance. Have a look at it and if you do not like it do not forward it. I have suggested a committee in it. Withhold it also if you do not like the names. Show it to Vallabhbhai.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 3074

101. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 27, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You do not seem to have started the music lessons for Sharda. Do not wait for her to request you. It is intolerable that Chakraiya should go on losing weight. Think over this. I have kept the question of his pay pending. Please have a talk with him and decide.

Vijaya's health does not seem to have improved. You must be keeping up your health.

Let me know the arrangements for work there. And about sanitary work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10774

102. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
September 27, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. It is good that at last [Jayaprakash] has gone there. Please keep me informed about the treatment. Give me details about the diet there. I hope the handwriting will not get smudgy. Write to me about the estimated expense there, so that I may arrange for the amount to be sent. I should like you to bring Saraswati along with you when you return from there. I will write to her. I am leaving this place for the Frontier Province on the 30th. Address your letters: c/o Dr. Khan Saheb, Peshawar. I am all right. Amtul Salaam, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Sushila are with me. Mahadev is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3522

103. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

September 27, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

If what Chi. Sharda writes is true, it is a serious matter. You must not tolerate such lawlessness. You can ask those who do not work to leave. The remedy is simple. Tell such persons : "Go to Wardha for the present and return when Bapu returns. I must carry on with the work entrusted to me by Bapu. In this I realize that I cannot get on with you." You are at liberty to do this, and it is also your duty to do it. That will lighten your heart. Do not force yourself to do anything. Do not break your health and make suffering which is easy to endure more difficult to endure.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I will be ready to accommodate all those whom you send here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10593

104. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

DELHI,

September 27, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

What a letter you have written ! Carry on for a month somehow. I have got to go to the Frontier Province. There seems to be an exaggeration in your statement that nobody is doing any work. Go into the matter and let me know. Krishnachandra may not be doing the work. What about Shankaran and Amritlal? There should not have been any insistence about the spinning-wheel. How long can the spinning-wheel last if it is taken up because of insistence? Consider everthing properly and then write to me. I have destroyed your letter after reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be leaving for the Frontier on the 30th. Shankaran must be provided with a torch if he needs one. If you feel the need you may cover yourself with a blanket during your menses. I do not think it is necessary.

From Gujarati : C. W. 9998. Courtesy : Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

105. LETTER TO SARASWATI

DELHI,

September 27, 1938

CHI. SARU,

If you are willing to come to me, you may show this letter to Papamma and your grandfather and take their permission. You can come with Prabhavati who is in Malabar. Meet your uncle and your father if you wish to and secure their approval. You are not able to study there. So it would be better if you came over. Of course there is the condition that you will remain calm here. If you cannot, your

coming here will be futile.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Ba is with me. I shall leave for the N. W. F. P. on the 30th. Ba will stay on here. You should continue to write to Wardha.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 6172. Also C. W. 3446. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

106. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,

September 29, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
STATE GUEST
AMRELI

YOUR WIRE. AM EXTRAORDINARILY WELL. NOT
PROCEEDING FRONTIER TOMORROW. MAHADEV WELL.
SUSHILA DOWN WITH FEVER. LOVE.

BAPU

From th original: C. W. 3882. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7038

107. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 29, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You have been as usual good in writing to me. I am glad you have been able to make all those acquaintances. I am waiting for detailed account.

Mahadev is steadily getting better. I am in first-class health. Am going through a lot of work. Sushila is down with fever. She is better today.

As the W. C. is sitting continuously, I am held up here. And may be here when you arrive.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3636. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6445

108. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 29, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I am wiring today to say the post should be directed here. The W. C. is sitting continuously and therefore I may not leave for the Frontier.

I am keeping wonderfully well. The b. p. has never been so steady and low as now.

The nights are superb here just now. I hope you are keeping perfect health. If you have any remarks to offer about management there, you will do so.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6404. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9999

109. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 29, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I have torn your letter into pieces. I have written to Saraswati and Prabha. I have called Saraswati to Wardha. I do not feel inclined to put her with Saundaram. If she wishes to learn nursing, she can do so afterwards. It is for her good that she should stay with me, whatever the circumstances. I agree with you that anybody who lives with me may soon become lazy. But you will not find many such instances. However that may be, as you have left the problem to me, I have called her to Wardha.

Do not spoil your health. Mahadev is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7349. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

110. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 29, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. You did quite well in deciding to stay on. Ramdas has gone to Dehra Dun. Mahadev and I are well. I have been detained here longer than I had expected. I may perhaps start on the 2nd.

Sita and Arun must be fine.

Schlesin writes: "Entrust Phoenix to Pragji." Does it appeal to you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4885

111. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

DELHI,

September 29, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You did well in giving up jaggery. Do not worry about the weakness. The *chhilta* water will bring back strength.

You shall certainly continue to serve me. Do not expect letters from me. I hope Balkrishna is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4305

112. FOREWORD TO "PRAYERS, PRAISES AND PSALMS"

[September 1938]¹

Shri Natesan has gone to the wrong man for a foreword to his collection of *Prayers, Praises and Psalms*. For I am no Sanskrit scholar. I have not read much of the translations or the originals. Nevertheless the collection presented in this volume does enable even one like me to know how our ancestors prayed to the One Supreme Lord of the Universe and in what words they derived solace in the

¹ The first edition of the book came out in September 1938.

hour of their trial or gave praise in the hour of their so-called triumph. May this collection help the reader to dispel his unbelief or strengthen his belief.

M. K. GANDHI

Prayers, Praises and Psalms

113. FEDERATION

A well-known correspondent tells me that in London the common talk is that Gandhi counts for everything and it does not matter what the Congress or Congressmen may say or do. The critics embellish the statement by saying that there is a wide difference of opinion between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and myself, and that while he will not touch Federation with a pair of tongs, I am prepared to submit to it if some trifles are conceded. I have paraphrased in my own words a longish letter¹ giving details which I may not share with the readers at least at the present juncture.

Evidently my critics know more of me than I seem to know myself. For instance I know how little I count among Congressmen; the critics know how much I count among them. Whatever influence I still possess among Congressmen is solely due to my constant appeal to reason and never to authority. But if I had the influence the critics attribute to me, I make bold to say that India would have gained her independence long ago and there would be no repression that is going on unchecked in some of the States. I know the art of winning independence and stopping the frightfulness of which one reads in the papers. If I had my way with the Congressmen, there would be no corruption, no untruth and no violence amongst them. If I had my way with them, they would all be enthusiastic khaddarites and there would be no surplus khadi in the A.I.S.A. bhandars.

But I am going astray. I had intended to write about Federation. In the first place, in all my talks, which have been very few, I have made it clear that I represent nobody and that I have not even aired my views to any Congressman. I have also made it clear that what the Congress says and does is of consequence, whatever I may say is of no value unless it represents the Congress view. As a matter of fact, too, I have said that the Congress will never have Federation forced upon it, and that there was no hope of peace in India till there was indepen-

¹ The reference presumably is to a letter from Carl Heath; *vide* "Letter to Carl Heath", 13-9-1938

dence in virtue of a constitution framed by a duly convened Constituent Assembly. I have also made it clear that so far as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and I are concerned, though we may talk in different language, we are one in most things that matter to India. On the question of Federation there never has been any difference of opinion between us. And I have made a rule for myself that so far as the Congress is concerned, if there is an unbridgeable gulf between him and me his view should prevail. And this for the very good reason that I am not in the Congress and he is in the centre of it, and very much in touch with everything relating to the Congress.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

114. NON-INTERVENTION

Congress non-intervention in the affairs of the States was conceived in 1920 and has been more or less its policy since that time in spite of many onslaughts made on it. But I see that it has become the fashion in the States to quote against the Congress and Congressmen the self-imposed restraint even when there is any attempt to criticize or offer advice or help. It is therefore necessary to examine the implications of non-intervention. It was never regarded as a principle. It was a limitation imposed on itself by the Congress for its own sake and that of the people of the States. The Congress had no sanction behind its resolutions regarding the States. Its advice might be ignored, its intervention resented and the people of the States might be harassed without gaining anything. There was certainly a friendly motive behind that policy. It was a wise recognition of the limited capacity of the Congress for doing good. The restraint exercised by the Congress in this and many other ways has given it a prestige and power which it would be unwise for it not to use. Any hesitation in this respect would be like that of the foolish steward who would not use the talents which were placed at his disposal. Up to a point the States are beginning to recognize the power of the Congress be it ever so reluctantly. It is becoming sufficiently clear that the people of the States are looking to the Congress for guidance and help. I think that it is the duty of the Congress to give them the guidance and help wherever it can. I wish I could convince every Congressman that the prestige and power of the Congress are in exact proportion to its inner purity, its sense of exact justice and its all-round goodwill. If the

people of the States feel safe in entrusting their welfare to the Congress, the Princes should feel equally safe in trusting the Congress. All the prestige built up by patient effort of years will certainly be undermined if the warnings uttered by me to the Congressmen go unheeded.

Even at the risk of tiresome repetition let me say to the people of the States that they must not set much store by the Congress help. It is not enough that they are truthful and non-violent. It is necessary also for them to know their own capacity for suffering. Liberty is a dame exacting a heavy price from her wooers. And unless there are many who are prepared to pay the price, the few enthusiasts that are to be found everywhere would do well to conserve their energy. They will do well to undertake constructive service of the people without having an ambitious political programme. The ability to gain political ends will surely come from constructive service. Wisdom and patience will give them a power which in time will become irresistible.

Harijan, 1-10-1938

115. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹

[*October 1, 1938*]²

I have seen many rumours regarding my resignation from the working Committee. It is perfectly true that I have sent in my resignation. It has no connection whatever with any differences with the Working Committee. My reason is purely personal. Indeed I have sent in resignations from several positions of responsibility retaining only those which I dare not give up without injuring the institutions with which I am connected.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 393; also G.N. 3075

116. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 1, 1938

I do not see any good in taking away Sushila at the cost of incurring Mothers displeasure. It is another matter if Sushila just cannot live away from me. I have never intended to keep her here

¹ The draft is in Gandhiji's hand in the G.N. source.

² According to an entry in the diary kept by Jamnalal Bajaj and published under the title *Bapu-Smaran*. Gandhiji rewrote Jamnalal's resignation on October 1, 1938.

against her will. But is it not also a problem to decide what to do in her present state of health? It seems Mother desires that she should remain here at least for the present. Mohanlal also appears to have postponed his departure. Hence that is also a point to be considered. If he is destined to undertake the fast, it will be only under my protection.

I have written this bit by bit in the midst of a lot of work.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

117. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 3, 1938

Correspondents have been writing and wiring to me about the events in Travancore¹. Shri Changanacheri K. Parameswaran Pillai has been specially to see me and acquaint me with the situation. He has erred in giving his version of my talk with him. Whilst the situation remains delicate, every word has to be weighed before it is uttered. Shri Pillai was clear that mob violence in the shape of stone-throwing had occurred. He, however, made it perfectly clear that the State Congress people had no part in it and that it was contrary to their wish. I have wires denying mob violence and definitely saying that violence was instigated by *agents provocateurs*. I am unable to decide between the two opposite versions. But I can say this that satyagraha demands extraordinary caution, even to the extent of suspension of civil disobedience, if the resisters have not full control over forces of violence.

What exactly should be done I cannot advise from this distance. The responsibility for right decision must be shouldered by local leaders. In coming to their decision they will remember that any the slightest deviation from truth and non-violence, whether in themselves or by connivance in others, is bound to affect the movement adversely.

As to the charges against the Dewan, I telegraphed² the

¹ Where the demand of the State Congress for responsible government had been met with shootings and imprisonments on a large scale with the State Congress itself having been declared a subversive organization; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-9-1938 and "The states and Responsibility", 17-9-1938

² This telegram is not traceable.

imprisoned leaders who were responsible for making them. This is their reply:

Your kind telegram advising withdrawal of the State Congress memorandum. We consulted T. M. Verghese and others. The Working Committee feels satisfied that the Dewan's continuance in office is detrimental to the people's interests. The withdrawal of the memorandum may unmeritedly discredit the State Congress and cause an irretrievable setback to the movement. Pray for support and guidance.

I appreciate the spirit behind the reply. The leaders would be lowered in my estimation if, for the sake of purchasing their liberty, they withdrew the charges. But if the conviction has gone home that in a demand for responsible government such charges could have only a subordinate place, if any at all, and if they saw with me that persistence in them, especially without the ability to prove them, can but seriously harm the movement, it is their clear duty to withdraw the charges and thus free the movement of the initial blunder and handicap. There is no discredit greater than the refusal to acknowledge errors.

I have wires alleging tortures by the authorities. It is hard to believe them. I hope they are baseless, and if isolated cases have happened, I should hope that the Travancore Government will prevent any future recurrence.

I observe that the movement promises to be protracted if only because of violence, whether spontaneous though unconnected with the Congress, or engineered as alleged. I can only entertain the hope that the authorities will relent and magnanimously allow the movement to run its course without the ban which I consider to be wholly unnecessary. A movement in itself wholly noble, which claims cultured men and women as willing and enthusiastic sufferers, should be fostered. It can never be crushed.

Harijan, 8-10-1938

118. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
October 3, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
PALITANA

BOTH MAHADEV SELF QUITE WELL. LEAVING TOMORROW.
MAHADEV REMAINING DELHI. LOVE. LILAVATI ALSO.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3883. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7039

119. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1938

MIRA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

LEAVING TOMORROW. POST UTMANZAI.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6405. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10000

120. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

October 3, 1938

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Shaukat is writing to you about Harold¹. The best method is what I have pointed out. Authorize Agatha Harrison to draw according to needs. All I am anxious about is that Harold should not suffer for want of funds.

You will have seen what I was able to do about the League. In view of the Sind meeting they thought postponement was impossible.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I leave for the Frontier Province tomorrow.

From a facsimile : *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, p. 126

121. NOTE TO P. SREEDHARAN NAIR²

DELHI,
October 3, 1938

In Segaoon there is nothing to learn. It is labour for those who will labour. Otherwise it is idleness. You can take the Village Indus-

¹ Harold Ansari; *vide* letters to Nawab of Bhopal, 19-7-1938 and 14-9-1938

² The addressee had asked Gandhiji where he could find God and whether his staying at Segaoon would be any help. It being Gandhiji's silence day, he wrote out this answer.

tries course in Wardha. For God you have to search within and find Him in His numberless works. There is no faculty there.

From a copy: C.W. 9941. Courtesy: P. Sreedharan Nair

122. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,

October 4, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I write this while I am eating. I got your Amreli letter today. I am not satisfied with the way you seem to have treated your body.

Mahadev is staying behind. You will do what you like with him.

I have not kept so well as I am now for years. Sushila is weak but without fever. A. S.¹ is coming Ba is not well. She stays behind. I am taking Brijkrishna with me. Address me Peshawar.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3884. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7040

123. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,

October 4, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

It is good you are interesting yourself in Balkoba's health. It is well you are taking quinine. The letters to be posted to Utmanzai till further instructions. Though Mahadev is staying here, his letters too must be sent to my address.

I am keeping extra well. It is a wonder to me. Nothing seems to worry me, though there are enough things to worry about. The weather has become extra hot. Quite unusual for Delhi at this time of the year.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6406. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10001

¹ Amtussalaam

124. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,

October 4, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Just now I can only send you the letter you want me to write. If you approve, please forward. You will see my article in *Harijan* in which there is reference to Spain¹ also.

I hope Indu is rapidly progressing and Sarup² is having the full benefit of the change.

What a peace at the cost of honour!³

I wish I had time to write at length.

Mahadev is staying behind for rest. I leave for the Frontier Province.

Love to you three.

BAPU

From Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

125. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEGAON, WARDHA,⁴

October 4, 1938

MY DEAR GLADYS,

It is with difficulty I can cope with the correspondence. I hope you have profited by the treatment there.

Peace has been preserved but at the cost of honour.

Muriel should soon be in India. Mahadev is decidedly on the mend.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 6194

¹ *Vide* "Logical Consequences"

² Vijayalakshmi Pandit

³ The reference is to the Munich Pact signed on September 30, 1938. Chamberlain, describing the Munich Pact, had called it "peace with honour". Under the terms of this pact, Czechoslovakia was forced to cede to Germany all those districts of Bohemia and Moravia which had a 50 per cent German-speaking population; *vide* also "If I were a Czech", 6-10-1938

⁴ Permanent address

126. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

My work is increasing so much that unless I do it myself it will remain undone. Mahadev's share has been taken over by Pyarelal for the present. You can never be a burden to me. But what can I entrust you with after taking you away from what you are doing just now? If You can get some inspiration from what I am writing in *Harijan* and take up something, you are welcome to try. You will be really tested after my death. Dudhibehn and the children must be fine. I am leaving for Peshawar today. Mahadev will stay here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI
GONDAL, KATHIAWAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7482. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

127. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

You must have got one letter I wrote you. This is the second. We are today leaving for the Frontier Province. Mahadev stays behind, as also Ba. Pyarelal, Sushila, Amtul Salaam, Kanaiyo and Brijkrishna will accompany me.

Manilal's statement is correct. I do remember having sent the Diwali message. I may be mistaken though. But now there is hardly any time for a message to be sent. If there is, here is the message.

“When a Holi is raging on all sides, how can we celebrate Diwali? Wherever we look, we see hatred and bitterness. If, therefore, anybody wants to celebrate Diwali, he should try to lessen the hatred and bitterness and, having purified himself, plunge into the *swaraj yajna*.”

How is Sita¹? And Arun²? Sita was going to write to me. What happened?

Ba has been slightly ill. She is feeling better today.

¹ Addressee's daughter

² Addressee's son

How is Manudi¹? Is she still there?
Ramdas came yesterday from Dehra Dun.
Nanabhai² must be well. Did Shanti benefit by the fast?
Write to me and address the letters to Peshawar.

Blessings from
BAPU also BA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4886

128. LETTER TO MATHURIBEHN KHARE

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MATHURI³,

I got your letter.

Do finish your course there and become well-versed in what you study.

You must be keeping fine health. We are leaving for the Frontier Province today. Mahadevbhai and Ba will stay on here. Mahadev is now all right.

Address Peshawar.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MATHURI KHARE
SEVA SADAN
790 SADASHIV, POONA CITY

From Gujarati: C.W. 272. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

129. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. If your heart is no longer there, by all means leave. Following that way, you will some day find peace of mind. "No well-doer, O loved one, meets with a sad end."⁴

¹ Manubehn Mashruwala, Gandhiji's granddaughter

² Addressee's father

³ Daughter of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

⁴ *Bhagavad Gita*, vi. 40

You may go either to Ramana Swami at Tiruvannamalai or again to Aurobindo Ashram. Jankiprasad did find peace.

Have a talk with Kanchan. In short, do whatever will bring you peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8566. Also C.W. 7044. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

130. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 4, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

I have been receiving your letters regularly. Sushilabehn says that you need not worry about the irregular monthly periods. It can happen sometimes. Take more milk and cream if possible. How much do you take? What else do you take? Remain calm. We are leaving today.

What is going on about your music? Now you will recite the *Gita* properly, won't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9999. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

131. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
October 4, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope the writing will not fade. I am lying with a mud-pack on my stomach, hence the pencil.

Your telegram has put me in a dilemma. For one thing, I do not favour marriage within the caste. Manganlal's family is setting to nought all his ideals.¹ Under these circumstances, I am unable to give my whole-hearted approval to the idea. How can I convoy all this in a telegram? You will understand my reservations. The marriage must

¹ Maganlal Gandhi's son, Keshavlal, had been betrothed to Bindumati, daughter of addressee's wife's sister.

have been fixed. If possible, you must dissuade them also from asking for my approval. But, surely, it is not necessary to have my approval in every matter. You can show this letter to them. Taramati should not feel hurt.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

132. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 4, 1938

I should have given my opinion on the Bengal Government's communique¹ on the question of the release of the political convicts earlier. But pressure of work made it physically impossible for me to do so. Though the Bengal Government have not seen their way to accede to my proposal contained in my letter² of 13th April last, I gratefully recognize that from their own standpoint they have endeavoured to make an approach to the letter of 13th April.

But having paid this tribute to the Bengal Government I must say that their rejection of my proposal is a severe disappointment to me. For I claim that my proposal was made after considering and weighing the Bengal Government's difficulties. The decision seems to me to be due to their failure to recognize three factors.

However reprehensible the crimes committed by the prisoners were, there can be no doubt that the crimes were not a result of personal or selfish motive, the motive behind them was purely political.

Whatever the limitations of the Government of India Act, it has transferred power to a parliament responsible to the people and elected under a fairly wide franchise. Apart, therefore, from the declarations of non-violence made by the prisoners, the transfer of power to a popularly elected legislature takes the ground from under the feet of the advocates of terrorism.

In as much as the Congress has chosen to enter the legislatures and even to accept ministerial responsibility, Congressmen are bound to examine the possibilities of the machinery to respond to the popular will. In this particular instance, as we have seen in what may

¹ *Vide* "Lettter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 11-5-1938

² *Vide* "Lettter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 13-4-1938

be described as Congress provinces, the Provincial Governments have been able to release political prisoners. What has been possible in these provinces is possible in Bengal, if the popular will is sufficiently expressed.

The third factor is the Bengal Government's reference to the existence of the two well-known parties connected with terrorist methods. The reference seems to suggest that these parties function for their original purpose. I know, and I had given the Khwaja Saheb the required assurance, that the organizations no longer functioned in the old way. Comrades belonging to groups do not change names of their groups or loyalties because the methods which the labels originally stood for have become obsolete. I would, however, advise amalgamation and the use of another name for the combination, if they must preserve their separate status.

Not only have the Bengal Government failed to take any or adequate notice of these three factors, they have failed to give due weight to the positive assurances of non-violence given by the prisoners, which those who have been discharged seem to have carried out faithfully.

I therefore renew my appeal to the Bengal Government to respond to my proposal of 13th April, and release all the prisoners by 13th April, 1939. I do not mind what procedure they wish to adopt. They can have the committee announced by them and through it regulate the dates of discharge of the prisoners. One thing, so far as I am concerned, is undoubtedly common cause if there is to be a complete clearance, viz., that the atmosphere of non-violence is retained and that those who are discharged carry out the self-imposed obligation about non-violence.

I would appeal to the Press and the public to restrain themselves in their criticism of the action of the Bengal Government in the matter and not embarrass them by bitter criticism.

It must be said to the credit of the Bengal Government that they have certainly not treated it as a party question. Though the release is an integral part of the Congress programme only, it has more or less become an all parties' question. And I have no doubt that the quickest method of securing early release is never to allow the question to become a party question.

I would appeal to the prisoners not to be disturbed by the Bengal Government's communique. Having been myself a prisoner over half a dozen times under varying circumstances, I know how apart from the hardships of jail life, the uncertainty of his fate gnaws

into a prisoner's whole being especially when he is fretting to go out and serve. But I would ask them to treat 13th April or thereabouts as still the last date of their discharge. It is contrary to my nature to import 'thereabouts' in fixing time-tables, but the prisoner friends should extend to me the concession due to old age and its physical limitations. I can give this assurance that 'thereabouts' does not mean years. It can only refer to months. They will please remember that they will hamper the effort of those who are trying to secure their release by resort to hunger-strike. I have given them myself as a hostage. So long as there is life in me, I hope by God's grace to stand by my promise not to relax the effort to secure their discharge. There is no rest for me till every one of the prisoners is discharged. They nobly responded to my call for an assurance of non-violence. I will keep my faith.

Some of my correspondents seem to think that I can work wonders. Let me say as a devotee of truth that I have no such gift. All the power I may have comes from God. But He does not work directly. He works through his numberless agencies. In this case it is the Congress. All the prestige that I have is derived from that of the Congress. The latter derives it from its creed. If Congressmen deny the creed of truth and non-violence, the Congress loses prestige. I assure them that my virtues, real or so called, will not count for anything, if I did not represent the Congress mind.

Friends of prisoners outside Bengal and sometimes the prisoners themselves write to me complaining that I confine my attention only to the Bengal prisoners. In a way this is true. I am bound to them by a written contract. But in another way it is not true. I do interest myself in their discharge also. But the full success depends largely upon what happens in Bengal. Let them, however, know that my efforts for their release continue, even apart from the Bengal prisoners.

Harijan, 8-10-1938

133. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

ON THE WAY TO PESHAWAR,
October 5, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I am working under great difficulty. Even this I am writing on the train taking me [to] Peshawar.

Of course you will publish the correspondence between us

whenever you think it necessary.

Your latest letter shows that you are on the wrong track. I am not partial to Rajaji. But I know that he is as firm on untouchability as I am myself. I must therefore trust his judgment as to how to do the thing. From this distance I can't judge his action.

Do you not see that the whole of the movement is one of conversion of the *sanatani* heart? You cannot force the pace except to the extent that reformers immolate themselves. This process is going on vigorously.

This temple-entry question is a mighty religious reform. I would like you to apply your religious mind to it if you will give your whole-hearted support to Rajaji and make his move a thorough success.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

M. C. Rajah Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

134. LETTER TO PRITHVISINGH

AS AT UTMANZAI,

October 5, 1938

DEAR PRITHVISINGH,

I am on the train taking me to the Frontier Province. I am likely to be there for a month. During that time I must try to send one of my party to meet you. I would like you therefore to keep the nearest visiting day free of other visitors. You will let me know at Peshawar the day on which the visit may take place.

I am not worrying about changing your class from A to B. I am therefore glad that you are not worrying yourself.

I must get hold of the new type of wool-spinning charkha.

Mahadev having become ill, has stayed away in Delhi. Pyarelal is with me and is well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 563. Also C.W. 2942. Courtesy : Prithvisingh

135. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

October 5, 1938

CHI. RUKHI,

I was happy to see your handwriting after a long time. Shanta has been to see me. She told Ba that you get fainting fits and do not keep good health. Is this true?

I am writing this on a train bound for Peshawar. Perhaps I may spend one month in that part. Mahadev needs rest, so Durga and he have stayed back at Delhi. Ba also is there. With me are Pyarelal, Kanu, Doctor Sushila, Amtul Salaam and Brijkrishna. You can write to me at Peshawar.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RUKMINI DEVI BAZAJ
TATHERI BAZAAR
BENARES CITY

From a Gujarati : C.W. 9793. Courtesy : Benarsilal Bazaj

136 LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 5, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I am writing this in the train. You did well in writing a personal letter to Maulana. Even if all the seeds that we sow do not sprout, they help those that do.

Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha has no right to change its object. If it exercises that right, its spiritual connection with the central institution must also end. In my opinion, such a change is not necessary either. I have paid no attention to what has been happening.

It is also not correct that I have been gradually leaving off the use of the word 'Hindi'. The Congress cannot use any other word. But I do not believe that a Congressman working in another institution cannot do so.

I will think about writing when I get the resolutions of the conference. Amritlal is attending to weaving, teaching, music and sanitation. It remains to be seen whether he can fit into Nayakum's mould. Will this suffice for now? Write at Utmanzai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7975

137. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 5, 1938

CHI. ANAND,

Got your letter only today. I am writing this on a moving train. Now [I think] there is no need of a preface. And why so much burden on me? How can I bear it?

I am glad to know that both are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy : National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

138. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

ON WAY TO PESHAWAR,
October 5, 1938

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

What a nice letter you have written to me ! I am writing this in a moving train. The Prince may certainly come in November.¹ For some days now I shall be in the Frontier Province.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4779. Courtesy : S. D. Satavlekar

139. THAT UNFORTUNATE WALK-OUT

The walk-out at the last A.I.C.C. meeting of the opponents of the Civil Liberties Resolution² was an unfortunate and hasty act. What was their protest against? I understand the President went out of his way to let them make as many and as long speeches as they liked. Therefore the protest was against the majority refusing to accept amendments which cut at the root of the resolution which was regarded as vital to the existence of the Congress in its present form.

¹ The Prince of Aundh visited Gandhiji at Segaoon on 29-11-1938 and 1-12-1938.

² *Vide* "Draft of Resolution for A.I.C.C.", Before 23-9-1938

The walk-out has served one good purpose. It has brought out in clear light the fact that the Congress is not today the homogeneous body it used to be. It has members and parties who have no faith in its creed or its constructive programme, specially khadi and prohibition.

In these circumstances the Congress must cease to be a compact fighting organization engaged in a life-and-death struggle against the most experienced and organized corporation in the world. It has been since 1920 like an army in action having one will, one policy, one aim and exact discipline. All this must go if the protesters can have their own way. In the first place there can be no amendment of or protest against accepted policies. But even if such is permissible, there should be perfect and willing obedience after the rejection of amendments and protests. Opposition in the Congress is not to be compared to the opposition, say, in the Central Assembly. There the opposition has little in common with the Government. In the Congress there can only be those who willingly and whole-heartedly subscribe to its creed. Those who do not want independence cannot become its members nor can those who do not believe in truth and non-violence, khadi or communal unity or total abolition of untouchability among Hindus or total prohibition of drink and intoxicating drugs.

It is up to those who do not believe in the fundamental policy of the Congress seriously to consider whether they would not serve the Congress and the country better by remaining outside the Congress and converting the people to their view of conducting the campaign rather than by remaining within and obstructing those who do not see eye to eye with them and yet are in the unfortunate position of having the majority on their side. It is equally the duty of the majority to consider how best to deal with those who will resort to obstructive tactics. My opinion based on experience is that if, after a friendly discussion with the obstructionists (if the use of that word is permissible to describe them), it is found that they believe it to be their duty to continue obstruction, it would conduce to the good of the country to hand over the reins to the minority and themselves follow the existing Congress programme without using the Congress name. All this can succeed beyond expectations if it is done without huff, without malice, without bitterness, and merely to meet a situation that is becoming impossible.

If chaos is to be prevented, proper measures must be taken in time.

PESHAWAR, October 5, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

140. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 5, 1938

If absence of letters means neglect, then I have neglected you. The fact is these days you are ever before me. You see I have come out of my shell and begun to speak to Europe. It is a peace without honour.

SJT. C. F. ANDREWS
BANGALORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

141. LETTER TO LALA GIRDHARILAL

October 5, 1938

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

You are needlessly suspicious. There is no change in me or my form.

I still advise you to resign. It is surely wrong to refuse when your colleagues want you to. They can't take the work from you that they want.

Yours sincerely,
M. K.GANDHI

SJT. LALA GIRDHARILAL
C/O SJT. A HOON, BAR-AT-LAW
55 CANTONMENT
CAWNPORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

142. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,

October 5, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Everybody here asks 'Where is Mahadev'? Chhajjoram wants me to send a wire and call you here and promises to keep you at his place in perfect peace. The climate is fine. I do feel like asking you to come over. But I will not act in haste. I am certainly attracted by the

idea of Simla. The matter will be decided one way or the other tomorrow. I will daily look forward to your letters. We are at Peshawar for three days at least. After that, the programme is uncertain. We had no trouble at all during the journey. At Lahore there was a crowd but I was behind a line of army men. I did not like that at all. My blood-pressure now seems to have become quite steady. In the train and here it had been 160/98. I wrote a heap of letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Preparations for our bath are still going on.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11655

143. IF I WERE A CZECH

If I have called the arrangement with Herr Hitler “peace without honour”, it was not to cast any reflection on British or French statesmen. I have no doubt that Mr. Chamberlain could not think of anything better. He knew his nation’s limitations. He wanted to avoid war, if it could be avoided at all. Short of going to war, he pulled his full weight in favour of the Czechs. That it could not save honour was no fault of his. It would be so every time there is a struggle with Herr Hitler or Signor Mussolini.

It cannot be otherwise. Democracy dreads to spill blood. The philosophy for which the two dictators stand calls it cowardice to shrink from carnage. They exhaust the resources of poetic art in order to glorify organized murder. There is no humbug about their word or deed. They are ever ready for war. There is nobody in Germany or Italy to cross their path. Their word is law.

It is different with Mr. Chamberlain or M. Daladier¹. They have their Parliaments and Chambers to please. They have parties to confer with. They cannot maintain themselves on a perpetual war footing if their language is to have a democratic accent about it.

Science of war leads one to dictatorship pure and simple. Science of non-violence can alone lead one to pure democracy. England, France and America have to make their choice. That is the challenge of the two dictators.

¹ Edouard Daladier, then Prime Minister of France

Russia is out of the picture just now. Russia has a dictator who dreams of peace and thinks he will wade to it through a sea of blood. No one can say what Russian dictatorship will mean to the world.

It was necessary to give this introduction to what I want to say to the Czechs and through them to all those nationalities which are called 'small' or 'weak'. I want to speak to the Czechs because their plight moved me to the point of physical and mental distress and I felt that it would be cowardice on my part not to share with them the thoughts that were welling up within me. It is clear that the small nations must either come or be ready to come under the protection of the dictators or be a constant menace to the peace of Europe. In spite of all the goodwill in the world England and France cannot save them. Their intervention can only mean bloodshed and destruction such as has never been seen before. If I were a Czech, therefore, I would free these two nations from the obligation to defend my country. And yet I must live. I would not be a vassal to any nation or body. I must have absolute independence or perish. To seek to win in a clash of arms would be pure bravado. Not so, if in defying the might of one who would deprive me of my independence I refuse to obey his will and perish unarmed in the attempt. In so doing, though I lose the body, I save my soul, i.e., my honour.

This inglorious peace should be my opportunity. I must live down the humiliation and gain real independence.

But, says a comforter, 'Hitler knows no pity. Your spiritual effort will avail nothing before him.'

My answer is, 'You may be right. History has no record of a nation having adopted non-violent resistance. If Hitler is unaffected by my suffering, it does not matter. For I shall have lost nothing worth [preserving]. My honour is the only thing worth preserving. That is independent of Hitler's pity. But as a believer in non-violence, I may not limit its possibilities. Hitherto he and his likes have built upon their invariable experience that men yield to force. Unarmed men, women and children offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience for them. Who can dare say that it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul that I have.'

But says another comforter, 'What you say is all right for you. But how do you expect your people to respond to the novel call? They are trained to fight. In personal bravery they are second to none

in the world. For you now to ask them to throw away their arms and be trained for non-violent resistance, seems to me to be a vain attempt.’

‘You may be right. But I have a call I must answer. I must deliver my message to my people. This humiliation has sunk too deep in me to remain without an outlet. I, at least, must act up to the light that has dawned on me.’

This is how I should, I believe, act if I was a Czech. When I first launched out on satyagraha, I had no companion. We were thirteen thousand men, women and children against a whole nation capable of crushing the existence out of us. I did not know who would listen to me. It all came as in a flash. All the 13,000 did not fight. Many fell back. But the honour of the nation was saved. New history was written by the South African Satyagraha.

A more apposite instance, perhaps, is that of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the servant of God as he calls himself, the pride of Afghan as the Pathans delight to call him. He is sitting in front of me as I pen these lines. He has made several thousands of his people throw down their arms. He thinks he has imbibed the lesson of non-violence. He is not sure of his people. Elsewhere I reproduce the pledge that his soldiers of peace make. I have come to the Frontier Province, or rather he has brought me, to see with my own eyes what his men here are doing. I can say in advance and at once that these men know very little of non-violence. All the treasure they have on earth is their faith in their leader. I do not cite these soldiers of peace as at all a finished illustration. I cite them as an honest attempt being made by a soldier to convert fellow soldiers to the ways of peace. I can testify that it is an honest attempt, and whether in the end it succeeds or fails, it will have its lessons for satyagrahis of the future. My purpose will be fulfilled if I succeed in reaching these men’s hearts and making them see that if their non-violence does not make them feel much braver than the possession of arms and the ability to use them they must give up their non-violence which is another name for cowardice, and resume their arms which there is nothing but their own will to prevent them from taking back.

I present Dr. Benes¹ with a weapon not of the weak but of the brave. There is no bravery greater than a resolute refusal to bend the knee to an earthly power, no matter how great, and that without

¹ Eduard Benes, President of Czechoslovakia

bitterness of spirit and in the fulness of faith that the spirit alone lives, nothing else does.

PESHAWAR, October 6, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

144. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,

October 6, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We reached quite well. The pressure behaved well in the train also.

Better address letters Peshawar.

There is no cold here as yet. The nights are very good.

My silence continues giving me great peace and saving so much time and energy.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3637. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6446

145. FILTH IN LITERATURE

A Travancore headmaster of a high school writes:

You know the political atmosphere of Travancore is very unhappy just at present. Even high School pupils are going on strike and picketing others. There is feeling among pupils that you are in favour of 'students' strikes' and even 'pupils' strikes'. I would like to get a communication addressed to pupils in general about your opinion on the matter. It will clarify the situation.

I think I have written often enough against strikes by students and pupils except on the rarest of occasions. I hold it to be quite wrong on the part of students and pupils to take part in political demonstrations and party politics. Such ferment interferes with serious study and unfits students for solid work as future citizens. There is one thing, however, for which it is the duty of students and pupils to strike. I have received a letter from the Hon. Secretary, Youths' Welfare Association, Lahore, giving copious specimens of obscene and erotic passages from the text-books prescribed by various universities. They make sickening reading. Though they are from prescribed

text-books, I would not soil these columns with a reproduction of the extracts. I have never come across such filth in all the literature that I have read. The extracts are impartially given both [*sic*] from Sanskrit, Persian and Hindi poets. My attention was first drawn to such writings by the girls of Mahila Ashram, Wardha, and recently by my daughter-in-law¹ who is studying in the Kanya Gurukul at Dehra Dun. Though she is not illiterate, she had never come across such obscenity as she found in some of her text-books. She appealed to me for assistance. I have been moving the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan authorities. But big institutions move slowly. Monopolies grow up. Self-interest of authors and publishers prevents reform. The altar of literature claims incense. My daughter-in-law suggested, and I at once fell in with her suggestion, that she would risk failure at her examination and omit to learn the obscene or erotic passages. This is a mild strike on her part, but a quite good and wholly effective one for herself. But this is an occasion which not only justifies a strike on the part of students and pupils, it is in my opinion their duty to rise in revolt against such literature being forced on them.

It is one thing to defend the liberty to read what one likes. But it is a wholly different thing to force on young minds acquaintance with literature that cannot but excite their animal passions and an unhealthy curiosity about things which, in due course and to the extent necessary, they are bound to learn. The evil becomes accentuated when it comes in the guise of innocent literature bearing the *imprimatur* of great universities.

An orderly strike on the part of students is the quickest way of bringing about the much-needed reform. Such a strike would not be boisterous. It would simply consist in the students notifying boycott of examinations which require a study of objectionable literature. It is the duty of every pure-minded student to rebel against obscenity.

The Association asks me to appeal to the Congress Ministers to take such steps as may be possible to remove text-books or passages which are objectionable. I gladly make the appeal hereby not only to them but [to] the Education Ministers in all the provinces. Surely all are equally interested in the healthy growth of the student mind.

PESHAWAR, October 7, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

¹ Nirmala Gandhi

146. UNCERTIFIED KHADI

Reports have come to me showing that even responsible Congressmen use khadi that is sold in uncertified bhandars. No khadi is guaranteed pure that is sold in uncertified stores of which unfortunately there is quite a number, and which has increased since the phenomenal rise given by the A.I.S.A. in the wages of spinners.

It is not often that workers get better wages without asking. And when that happens enough unscrupulous persons will be found who will exploit the poverty or ignorance of the workers, pay them the old low wages, and sell their manufactures at prices lower than those charged under the raised rate of wages. Then again, cloth is sold under the name of khadi which has its warp made of mill-spun yarn. Pure khadi is that khadi which is hand-woven out of hand-spun yarn and for which wages have been paid according to the A.I.S.A. scale. Such khadi can be had only at certified stores.

Unfortunately Congressmen, out of ignorance or because they do not believe in khadi, buy cheap cloth for make-believe at the uncertified stores and thus thwart the Congress policy about khadi and, to the extent of their purchase, defraud the spinners of the rise in the wages. Let the public realize that every rise in the price of khadi means at least that much more paid to the spinner, I use 'at least' advisedly. For the whole of the rise in wages is not charged to the buyers.

Those Congress leaders who open khadi stores without reference to the A.I.S.A. or without being asked by it, certainly harm their own institution, encourage fraud and violate the Congress policy; whereas it should be the duty and pride of every Congressman to help in every way the effort of the A.I.S.A. to better the lot of the most helpless of humanity.

PESHAWAR, October 7, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

147. SEVEN COMPLAINTS

A Muslim friend writes:

You will be pained to hear that in my province the matters have gone from bad to worse. The Muslims are extremely agitated and invite your immediate attention. A Council of Action is formed and we desire to take a leaf from your own book of truth and non-violence.

1. The Government is persisting in the Vidya Mandir Scheme.
2. Mother tongue is defined as mother tongue of the area—which is divided into Hindi and Marathi—thus excluding Urdu.
3. Urdu schools used to be inspected by Urdu Inspectorate alone; the system is discontinued.
4. My amendment to include Urdu or Hindustani in the recognized languages of the Assembly is turned down.
5. My University Bill demanding representation for Muslims and Depressed Classes in the university is turned down.
6. Hon'ble Biyani held a conference in Chandur in Berar where his procession was taken with music past a mosque during Juma prayers and the flag was worshipped.
7. Your title as Mahatma is officially recognized by a Government circular, your birthday declared as a holiday, and consequently the Local Board in Amraoti has issued orders to take your image in a procession and to worship your image. Gandhiji, you may permit me to say, we are not idolatrous and we do not recognize you as Mahatma or our religious and political leader.

Whatever the nature of the complaints, if the correspondent and his followers pursue the path of truth and non-violence. all will be well, and it will be found at the end of the contemplated action that both the parties have come closer together and that the cobwebs of misunderstanding have all been removed.

As to the complaints, I must warn the correspondent and others who expect the impossible from me that while I am ever ready to use whatever influence I may possess for the promotion of good and goodwill, I have grave limitations. I could not live for two days if I shouldered the burden of investigating every complaint against every Congress Minister. For that purpose there is the Parliamentary Sub-Committee created by the Working Committee.

But I can say generally about the complaints as follows:

1. I see nothing wrong in the scheme as far as I know. I know that the name 'mandir' has been objected to by some Muslims. Shuklaji has made it plain that if Muslim boys or their parents object to attend the schools merely because they are called Vidya Mandirs, it would be open to them to attend schools which will bear an Arabic name. But surely this is a matter for adjustment. The word 'mandir' has no exclusive religious significance. When it has and qualifying adjective it simply means a house. Nor is such use rare.

2. I do not know what actually has been done. But the mother

tongue of an area is surely the tongue which the inhabitants generally speak.

3. If Urdu inspectors have been discontinued because they know only Urdu, on the face of it, it seems to be wrong.

4. As to the amendment about the recognition of Urdu or Hindustani, I do not know the merits.

5. The same is true of the Bill.

6. If music was played before the mosque whilst the Juma prayers were being said, it was certainly wrong. But I will want very strong proof to support the allegation.

7. This is a complaint and an assertion. With both I am in hearty concurrence. It was wrong to give 'Mahatma' official recognition. I registered my protest as soon as it was brought to my notice. I would support any movement to drop altogether the use of the word 'Mahatma' before my name. My simple name sounds sweet without the adjective. The latter often stinks as when it is applied to promote violence or untruth, smoking or drinking or the sale of spurious khadi. To declare my birthday a holiday should be classified as a cognizable offence. The only use of my birthday that I have approved of is intensive spinning or some such national service. That day must be all work and no play. I cannot imagine any Local Board being so foolish as to issue orders to take my image in procession and worship it. I am hoping that my correspondent was wholly misinformed. I should imagine that the issue of such orders would be illegal. As to the assertion and repudiation, I tender my congratulations to my correspondent for them, for I have never aspired after leadership whether religious or political.

PESHAWAR, October 7, 1938

Harijan, 15-10-1938

148. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
October 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. Yes, that is true. We must master adverse circumstances.

I have been enjoying great peace of mind here, Khan Saheb does not let anyone near me. The post is wandering behind me, and so

I have been writing articles to my heart's content. I have started a dialogue with Europe. I will not mind if they decide that I am a fool and leave me alone. The title is "If I Were a Czech". Pyarelal also has written one article. In a way I am keeping all right. But passion and attachment have increased in strength and that pains me. I am hoping that they will lose their strength.

I hope you are taking Durga for a walk every day. You must regain enough strength for walking. At least meet Saraswati¹. Let her try her remedies.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is . . .²

I do not understand at all why Rajkumari's letter has gone astray.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11656

149. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

PESHAWAR,

October 7, 1938

BA,

If you have not written and given news of Lakshmi's³ health and yours, do it now. We arrived here in great comfort. The cold has not yet started. I am keeping up my silence. We are in Peshawar just now. So dictate the letter at the Peshawar address. The heat there must have gone down. Nobody sees me. Khan Saheb does not permit anybody to come to me. Sushila is perfectly well. Ask Kanam to write. And send him for a walk every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 28-9

¹ Saraswati Gadodia

² The rest of the sentence is illegible.

³ Wife of Devdas Gandhi

150. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

PESHAWAR,
October 7, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

We have arrived at Peshawar. Now that Ramdas has returned, do you think you need not write to me? He has complained about your health. Do not do anything at the cost of your health. Do you not get the money regularly? That responsibility is entrusted to Mahadev. He has been left behind in Delhi. You may therefore write to him. Ba and Kanam also are in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

151. LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE

One must feel happy that the danger of war has been averted for the time being. Is the price paid likely to be too great? Is it likely that honour has been sold? Is it a triumph of organized violence? Has Herr Hitler discovered a new technique of organizing violence which enables him to gain his end without shedding blood? I do not profess to know European politics. But it does appear to me that small nationalities cannot exist in Europe with their heads erect. They must be absorbed by their larger neighbours. They must become vassals.

Europe has sold her soul for the sake of a seven days' earthly existence. The peace Europe gained at Munich is a triumph of violence; it is also its defeat. If England and France were sure of victory, they would certainly have fulfilled their duty of saving Czechoslovakia or of dying with it. But they quailed before the combined violence of Germany and Italy. But what have Germany and Italy gained? Have they added anything to the moral wealth of mankind?

In penning these lines my concern is not with the great powers. Their height dazes me. Czechoslovakia has a lesson for me and us in India. The Czechs could not have done anything else when they found themselves deserted by their two powerful allies. And yet I have the hardihood to say that if they had known the use of non-violence as a weapon for the defence of national honour, they would have faced the whole might of Germany with that of Italy thrown

in. They would have spared England and France the humiliation of suing for a peace which was no peace; and to save their honour they would have died to a man without shedding the blood of the robber. I must refuse to think that such heroism, or call it restraint, is beyond human nature. Human nature will only find itself when it fully realizes that to be human it has to cease to be beastly or brutal. Though we have the human form, without the attainment of the virtue of non-violence we still share the qualities of our remote reputed ancestor, the orang-outang.

These are not idle words I am writing. Let the Czechs know that the Working Committee wrung itself with pain while their doom was being decided.¹ The pain was quite selfish in a way. But on that account it was the more real. For though numerically we are a big nation, in terms of Europe, i.e., in terms of organized scientific violence, we are smaller than Czechoslovakia. Our liberty is not merely threatened, we are fighting to regain it. The Czechs are fully armed; we are wholly unarmed. And so the Committee sat to deliberate what its duty was by the Czechs, what part the Congress was to play if the war cloud burst on us. Were we to bargain with England for our liberty and appear to befriend Czechoslovakia, or were we to live up to the creed of non-violence and say in the hour of trial for afflicted humanity that, consistently with our creed, we could not associate ourselves with war even though it might ostensibly be for the defence of Czechoslovakia whose very existence was threatened for no fault of hers, or for the only fault that she was too small to defend herself single-handed? The Working Committee had almost come to the conclusion that it would deny itself the opportunity of striking a bargain with England but would make its contribution to the world peace, to the defence of Czechoslovakia and to India's freedom by declaring to the world by its action that the way to peace with honour did not lie through the mutual slaughter of the innocents, but that it

¹ The Congress Working Committee's resolution on Czechoslovakia read: "The Working Committee has been following with great interest the events as they have been developing in Europe. It views with great concern the unabashed attempt that is being made by Germany to deprive Czechoslovakia of its independence or reduce it to impotence."

"The Working Committee sends its profound sympathy to the brave people of Czechoslovakia in their struggle to preserve their freedom. Being themselves engaged in a war—non-violent but none the less grim and exacting—against the greatest Imperialist Power on earth, India cannot but be deeply interested in the protection of Czechoslovak freedom. The committee hopes that the better part of humanity will still assert itself and save humanity from the impending catastrophe."

lay only and truly through the practice of organized non-violence even unto death.

And this was but the logical and natural step the Working Committee could have taken, if it was to prove true to its creed. If India could gain her freedom through non-violence, as Congressmen are to believe they can, she could also defend her freedom by the same means, and hence *a fortiori* could a smaller nation like Czechoslovakia.

I do not know what actually the Working Committee would have done if the war had come. But the war is only postponed. During the breathing time, I present the way of non-violence for acceptance by the Czechs. They do not yet know what is in store for them. They can lose nothing by trying the way of non-violence. The fate of Republican Spain is hanging in the balance. So is that of China. If in the end they all lose, they will do so not because their cause is not just, but because they are less skilled in the science of destruction or because they are undermanned. What would Republican Spain gain if it had Franco's resources, or China if she had Japan's skill in war, or the Czechs if they had the skill of Herr Hitler? I suggest that if it is brave, as it is, to die to a man fighting against odds, it is braver still to refuse to fight and yet to refuse to yield to the usurper. If death is a certainty in either case, is it not nobler to die with the breast bared to the enemy without malice against him within?

Harijan, 8-10-1938

152. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
October 8, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

DELIGHTED MAHADEV WITH YOU. GOING UTMANZAI TOMORROW.
WELL. HOPE YOU FIT. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3885. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7041

153. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
October 8, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am glad my wire went to you before your letter and wire came into my hands.

I offer no apology for not telling you anything about the closing of the experiment¹. I had prepared you for it. And then I wrote a note² announcing the termination. There was no desire to keep it from you. A copy of the note herewith. Mahadev may not have it handy. He must read it to you, if you can't. It is Kanu's hand.

No apology either for suppressing Mahadev's letter. Mahadev had guessed (wrongly) that something which I forget had happened on the basis of your talk with him. As it had not, and as Mahadev had told me not to deliver it to you if his guess was wrong, I did the right thing. It would have been wrong on my part even to have mentioned the thing to you and taken your time [and] my time for nothing. Supposing somebody swears at you thinking that you had been painting your face every day, I would correct the person but would certainly not feel the call [*sic*] that that person had done you an unintentional wrong. Now you understand, I hope. I won't ask for your apology.

I have never enjoyed so much rest as Khan Saheb gives me. No visitors, no talks practically even on slips of paper. The result is I have been able without effort to write five articles for *Harijan*.

You will give me your reaction to the articles on the European situation.

Your estimate of N. N. Joshi is correct. He prevaricates without knowing that he is doing so. But he is a good worker.

This tour has taught me one lesson. I must not put such heavy

¹ Involving physical contact with women

² *Vide* "A note", 19-9-1938

burdens on you. What I had hoped would be a light thing evidently was a serious drain on your energy. I hope that you will soon regain your lost health such as it is.

I know that Mahadev & Co. will flourish under your grandmotherly care. I was anxious for M. to accept your invitation. And Shummy is there—first class for such occasions. I shall look forward to your daily bulletin.

We are flourishing. There is no cold yet. I have never been so fit as I have felt latterly. There is an interruption because the old devil in the shape of animal passion is at me. When he assails me, I do feel worried. But the thing will wear away. So you see the most relevant thing I do share with you. But you are not to disturb yourself over this. It worries without disturbing me or making me morose. I seek the presence of God.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3638. Courtesy: Amrit kaur. Also G.N. 6447

154. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *October 15, 1938*]

Translate this¹ for *Harijan*. Good work is being done in this village and it deserves to be noticed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11661

155. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS—I

[On or before *October 15, 1938*]²

Gandhiji told them that though it sounded to him as an overbold statement for them to make, still, as was his wont, he would take them at their word.³ He explained to them in detail what his conception of the nature and implications of non-violence was. It was comparatively easy to maintain a passive sort of non-violence, when the opponent was powerful and fully armed. But would they remain non-violent in their dealings amongst themselves and with their own countrymen, when there was no extraneous force to restrain or check them? Again, was theirs the non-violence of the strong or that of the weak? If theirs was the non-violence of the strong, they should feel the stronger for their renunciation of the sword. But if that was not the case with them, it was better for them to resume their weapons which they had of their own free will discarded. For it was much better for them to be brave soldiers in arms than to be disarmed and emasculated. He remarked:

A charge has been levelled against me and Badshah Khan that we are rendering India and Islam a disservice by presenting the gospel of non-violence to the brave and warlike people of the Frontier. They say that I have come here to sap your strength. The Frontier Province, they say, is the bastion of Islam in India, the Pathans are past masters in the use of the sword and the rifle and mine is an attempt to emasculate them by making them renounce their arms and thus undermine the citadel of the strength and security of Islam. I wholly repudiate the charge. My faith is that by adopting the doctrine of

¹ This was a letter addressed to Mahadev Desai from Pipodara. It gave a report of the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in that village from 21-9-1938 to 2-10-1938, which included a round-the-clock spinning programme. For Gandhiji's comments, *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 15-10-1938

² Gandhiji addressed the last batch of Khudai Khidmatgars of Peshawar on October 15.

³ The Khudai Khidmatgars had said that even if Abdul Ghaffar Khan gave up non-violence, they would never do so.

non-violence in its entirety you will be rendering a lasting service to India and to Islam which, just now, it seems to me, is in danger. If you have understood the power of non-violence, you ought to feel the stronger for having put away your arms. Yours will be the spiritual strength with which you can not only protect Islam but even other religions. But if you have not understood the secret of this strength, if as a result of renouncing arms you feel weaker instead of stronger than before, it would be better for you to give up the profession of non-violence. I cannot bear to see a single Pathan turn weak or cowardly under my influence. Rather than that I would that you returned to your arms with a vengeance.

Today the Sikhs say that if they give up the *kirpan* they give up everything. They seem to have made the *kirpan* into their religion. By discarding it, they think, they will become weak and cowardly. I tell them, that is an idle fear and I am here to tell you the same. I have read the Koran with as much care and reverence as I have read the *Gita*. I have read other important books on Islam too. I claim to have as much regard in my heart for Islam and other religions as for my own, and I dare say with all the emphasis that I can command that although the sword has been wielded in the history of Islam and that too in the name of religion, Islam was not founded by the sword nor was its spread due to it. Similarly in Christianity the sword has been freely used. But the spread of Christianity was not due to its use. On the contrary, the use of the sword has only tarnished its fair name. Millions in Europe swear by Christianity. But contrary to the teachings of Jesus, they are engaged in a fratricidal orgy of bloodshed and murder, which is a negation of true Christianity. If you can assimilate what I have been telling you, your influence will travel far and beyond your borders and you will show the way to Europe.

Today a force of 17,000 British soldiers is able to rule over us because they have behind them the power of the British Government. If Khudai Khidmatgars really felt within themselves the upsurge of soul force as a sequel to their renouncing arms, not even 17,000 would be needed to win India her freedom, because they should have the strength of God behind them. As against it if a million of them professed non-violence while there was violence lurking in their hearts, they would count as nothing. You should renounce the sword because you have realized that it is the symbol not of your strength but of your weakness, because it does not make for true bravery. But

if you put away your sword outwardly but there is the sword in your hearts, you shall have begun the wrong way and your renunciation will be devoid of any merit. It may even prove dangerous.

What is the meaning of eradicating violence from the heart?

He next asked and proceeded to explain that it meant not merely the ability to control one's anger but its complete eradication from the heart.

If a dacoit inspires anger or fear in my heart, it means that I have not yet purged myself of violence. To realize non-violence means to feel within you its strength, otherwise known as soul force, in short, to know God. A person who has known God will be incapable of feeling or harbouring anger or fear within him, no matter how overpowering the cause for it may be.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 57-9

156. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS—II

[On or before *October 15, 1938*]¹

A Khudai Khidmatgar, Gandhiji told them at one place, had first to be a man of God, i. e., a servant of humanity. It would demand of him purity in deed, word and thought and ceaseless, honest industry, since purity of mind and idleness are incompatible. They should, therefore, learn some handicraft which they could practise in their homes. This should preferably be ginning, spinning and weaving as these alone could be offered to millions and in their own homes.

A person who renounces the sword dare not remain idle for a single minute. An idle man's brain, as the popular proverb says, is the devil's workshop. Idleness corrodes the soul and intellect both. A person who has renounced violence will take the name of God with every breath and do his work all the twenty-four hours. There will be no room for an idle thought.

Moreover, every Khudai Khidmatgar must have an independent means of livelihood. Today many of you have land, but your land can be taken away from you, not your craft or your manual skill. It is true that God provides to His servant his daily bread but only if he performs bread labour. If you work not, neither shall you eat, is nature's law and should be yours too. You have adopted red shirts as your uniform. I had hoped you would have adopted khadi too which is the livery of freedom. But I see that very few among you wear

¹ Gandhiji met the last batch of Khudai Khidmatgars of Peshawar on October 15.

khadi. The reason perhaps is that you have to provide your own uniform and khadi is dearer. That would not be so if you spin for yourself.

They should further, he told them, learn Hindustani, as that would enable them to cultivate and enlarge their minds and bring them in touch with the wider world. It was up to them also to learn the rudiments of the science of sanitation and first-aid, and last but not least, they should cultivate an attitude of equal respect and reverence towards all religions.

It is not the wearing of the red shirt that makes a Khudai Khidmatgar, nor standing in serried ranks but to feel within you the strength of God which is the opposite of the strength of arms. You have yet only arrived at the portal of non-violence. Still you have been able to achieve so much. How much greater your achievement will be when you have fully entered its holy edifice! But as I have said before, all that requires previous preparation and training. At present you lack both.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 60-1

157. TALK WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[On or before *October 15, 1938*]¹

ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN: There are some Pathans in the villages here who persecute Khudai Khidmatgars beyond endurance. They beat them, seize their lands and so on. What are we to do against them?

GANDHIJI: We have to meet their high-handedness with patience and forbearance. We have to meet their atrocities in the same way as we used to meet the Britishers', not answer violence by violence, nor abuse by abuse, nor harbour anger in our hearts. If we do that it is sure to melt their hearts. If it fails, we shall non-co-operate. If they seize our lands, we shall refuse to provide them the labour even though we may have to starve. We shall brave their wrath but refuse to submit or go against our conscience.

A. K. Would it be permissible for us to lodge a complaint against them before the police and get them punished?

G. A true Khudai Khidmatgar won't go to a law-court. Fighting in a law-court is just like physical fighting. Only, you use force by proxy. To get the police to punish the aggressor is only a form of

¹ The talk took place at Utmanzai where Gandhiji spent a few days at Khan Saheb's country-house before proceeding on a tour of Mardan and Nowshera on October 15.

revenge which a Khudai Khidmatgar must abjure. Let me illustrate my meaning by a personal instance. At Sevagram some Harijans came to me and told me that unless I could get a Harijan included in the C. P. Congress Ministry, they would offer 'satyagraha' by staging a hunger-strike.¹ I knew it was all the doing of a mischief-maker. The Police Superintendent wanted to post some police force as he was afraid that the hooligans might do some mischief. But I said 'no' to him and told the Harijans that they need not sit outside in the sun; they could occupy any room they liked in the ashram. I offered to feed them too if they wanted. They chose my wife's bathroom. I let them occupy it. We looked after their needs and when one of them fell ill, we nursed him. The result was that they became our friends.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 61-2

158. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

UTMANZAI,
October 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

It seems from the translation of this letter² that many details have been omitted, and the report, therefore, does not read well. Did 18 persons besides the children take part? That is, in all 22+18? How many Muslims among them? Was there only one spinning-wheel kept working non-stop? What was the count of the yarn spun? Is Somabhai a teacher or a worker? If there are Muslim children in the school, how many? What is the population of Pipodara? What was the highest speed? And the highest count? What is the average strength? If you wish to send this letter itself, you may do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The tour starts from today, and so the wonderful peace I have been enjoying will end. I hope nevertheless that my health will continue to be as fine as it has been. The first stage of the programme is enclosed. The next has also been chalked out. We are here up to 8th

¹ *Vide* "Discussion with Harijan Satyagrahis", 27-8-1938 and "Message to Harijan Satyagrahis", 28-8-1938

² *Vide* "Note to Mahadev Desai", 15-10-1938

November at any rate.

Khan Saheb has only one thing to occupy him: how to give me complete rest and how to feed the others.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PPS.]

Tell Rajkumari that I am not writing to her today.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11662

159. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters. Although Dr. Benes is practically banished,¹ your letter should go to him even if it has not. If he imbibes the spirit, exile need not matter.

Here we have superb weather. There you have abnormal rains. So had Bombay. I suppose the crops are destroyed.

I am sorry I can't leave this Province before 9th November. You will see the programme in the Press. It remains to be seen how I keep my health during the tour.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6409. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 1000

160. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Jivraj writes to say that you should not climb uphill. You also say that it does not produce a good effect. There are rickshaws there. One can use them in illness. You may get into a rickshaw wherever there is a climb. In this way you can go to a new place every day for a

¹ Following occupation of Sudetenland by Nazi Germany, Eduard Benes was forced, on October 5, to resign as President and leave the country. *Vide* also "If I were A Czech"

walk. I see nothing wrong in this. This is the only way of deriving full benefit from your stay in Simla. Shummy seems to be advising exactly the opposite in regard to Durga. If so, my advice should be disregarded. If I were present there, I would of course wrestle with Shummy.

You know that when there are letters for others along with letters addressed to me, I do not read them. This is my nature. There were two letters by you to Sushila in reply to the same letter. I read them. I can give for this no excuse other than curiosity. From your previous letter, I have forgotten everything except the drawing of the moon. Yesterday's letter I regard as important. I do not know what Sushila wrote to you regarding physical passion, but for me it has become a question of my veracity. You have told her that my last statement¹ should reassure them all. This pricked me. We cannot be complacent regarding physical passion in anybody's case, but, as for myself, I should say that had I, at the time of my last statement, been having such experiences as I am having now, I would most certainly have not issued it. I cannot say, either, whether I would have stopped my experiment. Hence neither you nor anybody else can remain complacent regarding me. I see no need as yet to withdraw the last statement or issue a revised one. This does not mean that any of you should start worrying. For the present, I will not go further than this. I found the time to write this much as being necessary in the interest of truth. You will naturally be curious to know more. But restrain your curiosity.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Rajkumari about physical passion so that I need not write to her separately.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11663

¹ *Vide* "A Note", 19-9-1938

161. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

BA,

You are causing me a good deal of worry this time. I keep swinging between my concern for you and my sense of dharma. The mind prompts me to run down to you. Dharma tells me to remain where I am and finish the work here. If you get well soon now, my worry may end.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 29

162. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your two letters together.

Pay up Rs. 25 to Soptekar. I have already written to you about teaching Vatsala. Chakraiya had written to me about the book. I have replied to him and asked him to tell you. Do what you think proper. How is the newly-arrived friend¹ faring?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10776

¹ Rajbhushan

163. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL¹

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

What a girl you are! No letter from you at all? I see from Amritlal's letter that you have not rallied. I wrote to you and asked you to go to Maroli. When I return to Segaoon you will come back there whatever the condition of your health. But do not spoil it your-self. Do as I have advised you in my letter. If there is any difficulty in going to Maroli, let me know. I must hear from you regularly. Address your letters to Peshawar. Ba has fallen ill in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
C/O SHRI RAMBHAI HIRABHAI PATEL
SAURASHTRA SOCIETY
ELLIS BRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7100. Also C.W. 4592. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

164. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

PESHAWAR,
October 15, 1938

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is bound to take more than a month. We are scheduled to be here till the 9th. I can understand your anxiety. My heart is there, but the work here is so heavy that I should not be impatient. Be patient, whatever the future may be. You want to do service whether you marry or not. And for that you wish to acquire more knowledge. I know that you would bear even blows from me, because they would have been inspired only by love. I do not wish to keep you away from my eyes even for a moment. But I am helpless.

¹ The letter, addressed to Ahmedabad, was redirected to Dakshinamurti in Saurashtra.

You are right about Munnalal. He will leave. It seems it is in his interest to leave.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10022. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

165. LETTER TO H. P. RANGANATH AIYENGAR

PESHAWAR,

October 16, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Mirabai has sent me both your letters. I am sorry I won't be able to avail myself of your assistance, for which however I must thank you.

I think you should remain where you are and do such service as comes your way. Shri Mahadev Desai is better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI H. P. RANGANATH AIYENGAR

B.A., LL.B.

930 NAIDOO STREET

CHICKNAGALUR P. O.

MYSORE STATE

From a photostat: G.N. 1335

166. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,

October 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had two letters awaiting me on our return to Peshawar. I see the right hand must rest a little. It is having more work than it can comfortably manage.

My health still remains ideal. What it will be during the tour I do not know. The silence will help me.

Joshi's letter is quite typical of him.

Tell Mahadev I got a wire yesterday saying Shukla¹ is dead. He was one of my oldest friends, i. e., of English student days. He was practising in Rajkot.

They are still having rains in Segaoon. Here it is perfectly dry.

Kanti's letters herewith for Mahadev. They are interesting. You should ask Mahadev to give you a summary of what he has to say.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3640. courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6449

167. SPEECH AT NOWSHERA²

October 16, 1938

I accept *in toto* your assurance that you have fully understood the principle of non-violence and that you will hold on to it always. I congratulate you on it, and I further say that if you can put the whole of that doctrine into practice, you will make history. You claim to have one lakh Khudai Khidmatgars on your register which exceeds the total number of Congress volunteers as it stands today. You are all pledged to selfless service. You get no monetary allowance. You have even to provide your own uniforms. You are a homogeneous and disciplined body. Khan Saheb's word is law to you. You have proved your capacity to receive blows without retaliation. But this is only the first step in your probation, not the last. To gain India's freedom, the capacity for suffering must go hand in hand with the capacity for ceaseless labour. A soldier for freedom must incessantly work for the benefit of all. The resemblance between you and the ordinary soldier begins and ends with the cut of the uniform and perhaps their nomenclatures which you have adopted. But unlike them the basis of all your activity is not violence but non-violence. Therefore, your training, your preoccupations, your mode of working, even your thoughts and aspirations must necessarily be different from theirs. A

¹ Presumably Dalpatram Shukla; *vide* "An Autobiography" sub-title "London at Last and "An Autobiography" sub-title" My Choice"

² Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-II". The Khudai Khidmatgars of the place presented a written address to Gandhiji and assured him that their faith in non-violence was absolute and unqualified and they would never go back upon it.

soldier in arms is trained to kill. Even his dreams are about killing. He dreams of fighting, of winning fame and advancement on the battlefield by the prowess of his arms. He has reduced killing to an art. A satyagrahi, a Khudai Khidmatgar, on the other hand, would always long for opportunity for silent service. All his time would be given to labour of love. If he dreams, it will not be about killing but about laying down his life to serve others. He has reduced dying innocently and for his fellowmen to an art.

But what shall be the training that will fit you out for this sort of work? It must be training in various branches of constructive work.

With one lakh Khudai Khidmatgars trained in the science of constructive non-violence, he told them, trans-border raids should become a thing of the past.

You should consider it a matter of utter shame if a single theft or dacoity takes place in your midst. Even the thieves and trans-border raiders are human beings. They commit crime not for the love of the thing itself but because they are driven to it largely by necessity and want. They know no other. The only method of dealing with them that has been adopted so far has been that of employing force. They are given no quarter and they give none. Dr. Khan Saheb feels helpless against them because the Government has no other way of dealing with them. But you can make a non-violent approach to the problem, and I am sure you will succeed where the Government has failed. You can teach them to live honestly like yourselves by providing them cottage occupations. You can go in their midst, serve them in their homes and explain to them things in a loving and sympathetic manner, and you won't find them altogether unamenable to the argument of love. There are two ways open to you today, the way of brute force, that has already been tried and found wanting, and the way of peace. You seem to have made your final choice. May you prove equal to it.

Harijan, 29-10-1938

168. SPEECH AT HOTI MARDAN¹

October 16, 1938

Gandhiji explained to them that non-violence could not, like the curate's egg, be accepted or rejected in parts, it had value only when it was practised in its entirety.

When the sun rises the whole world is filled with its warmth, so that even the blind man feels its presence. Even so when one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars are fully permeated with the spirit of non-violence, it will proclaim itself and everybody will feel its life-giving breath.

I know it is difficult; it is no joke for a Pathan to take an affront lying down. I have known Pathans since my South African days. I had the privilege of coming into close and intimate contact with them. Some of them were my clients. They treated me as their friend, philosopher and guide, in whom they could confide freely. They would even come and confess to me their secret crimes. They were a rough and ready lot. Past masters in the art of wielding the lathi, inflammable, first to take part in riots, they held life cheap, and would have killed a human being with no more thought than they would a sheep or a hen. That such men should have, at the bidding of one man, laid down their arms and accepted non-violence as the superior weapon sounds almost like a fairy tale. If the one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars became truly non-violent in letter and in spirit and shed their violent past completely as a snake does its outworn skin, it would be nothing short of a miracle. That is why in spite of the assurance of your faith in non-violence that you have given me, I am forced to be cautious and preface my remarks with an 'if'. My diffidence is only a measure of the difficulty of the task. But nothing is too difficult for the brave and I know the Pathans are brave.

The crucial test by which I shall judge you is this: Have you befriended and won the confidence of each and all in your locality? Do the people regard you with love or with fear? So long as a single individual is afraid of you, you are no true Khudai Khidmatgar. A Khudai Khidmatgar will be gentle in his speech and manner, the light

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal Nayyar's report "At Mardan". In reply to his usual question to the Khudai Khidmatgars whether they would remain non-violent in all circumstances, one of them replied that they could put up with every kind of provocation except the abuse of their revered leaders.

of purity will shine forth from his eyes, so that even a stranger, a woman or even a child would instinctively feel that here was a friend, a man of God, who could be trusted. A Khudai Khidmatgar will command the co-operation of all sections of the community, not the sort of obedience that a Mussolini or a Hitler can command through his unlimited power of coercion, but the willing and spontaneous obedience which is yielded to love alone. This power can be acquired only through ceaseless, loving service, and waiting upon God. When I find that under your influence people are gradually giving up their dirty and insanitary habits, the drunkard is being weaned from drink and the criminal from crime and the Khudai Khidmatgars are welcomed everywhere by the people as their natural protectors and friends in need, I shall know that, at last, we have got in our midst a body of men who have really assimilated the spirit of non-violence and the hour of India's deliverance is close at hand.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

169. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

MARDAN,
October 17, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I have your letter. I do not know what I shall be able to do¹.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAMLAL, M. L. A.
7 BEGUM ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1285

¹ Regarding the Punjab prisoners; *vide* "Letter to Sham Lal", 20-2-1938

170. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HAYAT KHAN

AS AT PESHAWAR,
October 17, 1938

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

I have just received a piteous letter from prisoner Inderpaul's wife who tells me her husband, who has already served 8 years, is suffering from paralysis. May I plead for his release?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR SIKANDAR HAYAT KHAN
PRIME MINISTER
LAHORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

171. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

AS AT PESHAWAR,
October 17, 1938

DEAR BROTHER,

I got your letter from Mahadev only yesterday. How I wish I could respond as you wish! Do you know that I sent Rajkumari specially to intercede¹. But she could make no headway. Sir C. P. won't have any outsider to intervene. I implored him to invite you to inquire into the whole affair.² There was no response. Shamelessly I have again wired to him to allow me to send a representative. Indeed I would go myself if he tolerated me. But he won't listen to reason. Pardon me. That is how I look at his conduct of this business. Nothing has shaken my conviction that the movement is sound and so far as the leaders are concerned, non-violent. Now tell me what I should do. I hope you are keeping fit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8820

¹ With the Travancore authorities; *vide*, "Letter to C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer", 15-8-1938

² *Vide*, "Statement to the Press", 6-9-1938

172. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

MARDAN,
October 17, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Did Kamala resent your guidance in any matter? On what grounds can khadi work or National School get a share of the Palitana or Porbandar money? Explain this to me.

Write about the movement that is going on there.

What has Purushottam¹ finally decided?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8552. Courtesy:
Narandas Gandhi

173. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 17, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. I wish you not to be in a hurry to go to Segaon. Increase your weight there. Come when I return there.

My health is fine. Don't expect more at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9376. Also C.W. 6651. Courtesy:
Lilavati Asar

174. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

PESHAWAR,²
October 17, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got all your three letters. I can see no flaw in your arguments. They are well set out, too. I am sure it is not your view that, in case there is war, we should come to no compromise with the British.

¹ Addressee's son

² As in the source. However, Gandhiji was not in Peshawar on this date.

Moreover, our refusal to take part in the war on any terms would in itself be a harassment to them. We can, however, adopt no other course, that is, if the Congress listens to me.

But I do not think it desirable that you should divert your mind even to this from your study. You will continue to reflect on the matter of course, and you will come to definite conclusions. But I think it desirable that you should not waste your time in explaining your views to others.

Your health causes me worry. You may be certain that there will be no harm at all if for the sake of your health you take one more year. Health, once lost, will not return. You have built up your body with exercise. Your constitution itself is strong. Let it not be undermined. Come to Segaon. Stay there for some time and build up your body there if you can with good food and rest. Listen to me in this matter and do not be negligent. Do not be over-confident and assume that you will somehow be able to improve your health afterwards.

I have written to Saraswati's grandfather.¹ I have written to Prabha too. If she comes I will look after her. Do not be overeager about nursing. After she is trained up, we shall see about other things. I hope that if she stays with me, her intellect will improve and develop. You will admit that that has happened to others who have stayed in the Ashram. It is true that the information they gather in their minds is little, for the curriculum is not planned with that end in view. But the intellects of those boys and girls who have stayed there work well enough in the subjects selected by them.

Write to me if this seems unconvincing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall be here up to November 9 at any rate.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7350. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

¹ This letter is not traceable.

175. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

MARDAN,
October 17, 1938

I have two letters from schoolmasters, besides others from laymen, complaining of students' rowdyism in Travancore. The Principal of C.M.S. College, Kottayam, says that the students blocked the passage of those who wanted to attend the classes. They twice turned away girls who did not listen to them. They rushed at the classes and made noises, making classes impossible.

This violent participation by students in a struggle which its authors claim to be absolutely non-violent, makes progress difficult, if not impossible. So far as I know, the leaders of the movement do not want the students, even if they wish to participate, to depart in any way from the non-violent way. Obstruction, rowdyism and the like are naked violence. I am credited with influence over students. If I have any, I would ask them to observe non-violence in thought, word and deed. If, however, the forces of violence cannot be controlled by those who are in charge of the movement, it may be a question for them whether in the interest of the movement itself it is not wise to suspend civil disobedience.

I must not presume to lay down the law from this distance, but I do feel from the evidence before me that the leaders would incur grave risk if they allowed students to think that their violence would help the movement or that it is secretly liked by the leaders.

Harijan, 22-10-1938

176. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SWABI,
October 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is merely for love's sake. During the tour I must conserve time and energy.

You will give me your reaction to the 2nd article¹ on the European situation.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3641. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6450

¹ *Vide* "Local Consequence", 8-10-1938

177. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SWABI,
October 17, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am writing this at night in Swabi. Last night we slept in Mardan. I have been having long talks these days with the office-bearers of the Khudai Khidmatgars. Except for this, I observe silence all the time. Do resist the temptation to write for *Harijan*. But send me your comments on it for my information. If there are mistakes in proof-reading draw Chandrashanker's attention. Pyarelal will send you a copy of the letter. I have written to Sastri.¹ Give the enclosed letter to Rajkumari.

Lila has become impatient to go to Segaoon. Restrain her. She should go there after I return. Let her improve her health while in Rajkot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11664

178. SPEECH AT SWABI²

[October 17, 1938]³

Gandhiji's speech here was a passionate appeal to the Khudai Khidmatgars to turn the searchlight inwards. They had proved their mettle by marching to jail in their hundreds and thousands. But that was not enough, he told them. Mere filling of the jails would not bring India freedom.

Even thieves and criminals go to prison, but their prison-going has no merit. It is the suffering of the pure and innocent that tells. It is only when the authorities are compelled to put into prison the purest and the most innocent citizens that a change of heart is forced upon them. A satyagrahi goes to prison, not to embarrass the authorities but to convert them by demonstrating to them his innocence. You should realize that unless you have developed the moral fitness to go to prison which the law of satyagraha demands, your jail-going will be

¹ *Vide* "Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 17-10-1938

² Extracted from Pyarelal Nayar's report "At Mardan"

³ Gandhiji was at Swabi on this date.

useless and will bring you nothing but disappointment in the end. A votary of non-violence must have the capacity to put up with the indignities and hardships of prison life not only without retaliation or anger but with pity in his heart for the perpetrators of those hardships and indignities. I would, therefore, today ask you to examine yourselves in the light of my remarks, and if you find that you cannot or do not want to go the full length, to drop your badge of non-violence and request Khan Saheb to release you from your pledge. That will be a species of heroism. But if you have full faith in the creed of non-violence as I have described it, then know it from me that God will arm you with the required strength in your hour of trial.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

179. LETTER TO ROY KUMAR SING

October 18, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

All the points raised by you have surely been dealt with in my articles. Of course, I would have England and France to give up arms, if they have the courage. And of course, I maintain that the law of the lower animal world is not the law of human beings. Brute nature has been known to yield to love.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. ROY KUMAR SING
ZAMINDAR
NATHNAGAR P. O.
DT. BHAGALPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 18, 1938

BA,

I see from Ramdas's and Devdas's letters that you may now be said to be free from danger. When Sushila came to know that I was worried on your account, she asked me to let her go. I replied: "What is the use of sending you? There are many nursing Ba. I wish to be

present by her bedside for my own peace of mind and Ba also would wish it. But I ought to harden my heart and obey the dharma of staying on here.” But God seems to have been kind. Lakshmi and the children will be fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 30

181. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

UTMANZAI,
October 18, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

The accompanying is for your information. What can it mean? It has produced no effect on me. What was there in the letter to Prema?

I hope you are all right. Your health must have been completely restored. Bal is with you. Isn't he? I had got his postcard.

The climate here is excellent. The peace is beyond description. One will not get such peace anywhere else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7683

182. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

ON TOUR,
October 18, 1938

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I am in a position to answer your letter only today. I could not read the book but entrusted the work to Nanavati. I read it¹. I accept its evidence. It is not necessary to uphold the language of Nanavati's criticism, since I am talking only of Swamiji's writings. Nanavati has quoted Swamiji's words to prove that the book, which constricts Hinduism, is disappointing. In my opinion, this debate should not be con-

¹ Presumably a note prepared by Nanavati

tinued. Whatever the merits of the book, it cannot denigrate Swamiji, for who can forget the work that he has done? Swamiji's fame is beyond the confines of the book. I think I have served the Arya Samaj by making these two statements. Even after saying all this, if doubts persist, you may write to me for clarifications.

It will be better if you write direct to Nanavati. He will keep me informed of whatever he writes. I trust him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 828

183. HINDUSTANI, HINDI AND URDU

It is a great pity that bitter controversy has taken place and still continues regarding the Hindi-Urdu question. So far as the Congress is concerned Hindustani is its recognized official language designed as an all-India language for inter-provincial contact. It is not to supplant but to supplement the provincial languages. The recent resolution of the Working Committee should set all doubt at rest. If the Congressmen who have to do all-India work will only take the trouble of learning Hindustani in both the scripts, we shall have taken many strides in the direction of our common language goal. The real competition is not between Hindi and Urdu but between Hindustani and English. It is a tough fight. I am certainly watching it with grave concern.

Hindi-Urdu controversy has no bottom. Hindustani of the Congress conception has yet to be crystallized into shape. It will not be so long as Congress proceedings are not conducted exclusively in Hindustani. The Congress will have to prescribe the dictionaries for use by Congressmen and a department will have to supply new words outside the dictionaries. It is great work, it is work worth doing, if we are really to have a living, growing all-India speech. The department will have to determine which of the existing literature shall be considered as Hindustani, books, magazines, weeklies, dailies, whether written in Urdu script or Devanagari. It is serious work needing a vast amount of plodding if it is to achieve success.

For the purpose of crystallizing Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu may be regarded as feeders. A Congressman must therefore wish well to both and keep in touch with both so far as he can.

This Hindustani will have many synonyms to supply the varied requirements of a growing nation rich in provincial languages. Hindustani spoken to Bengali or Southern audiences will naturally have a large stock of words of Sanskrit origin. The same speech delivered in the Punjab will have a large admixture of words of Arabic or Persian origin. Similar will be the case with audiences composed predominantly of Muslims who cannot understand many words of Sanskrit origin. All-India speakers will have therefore to command a Hindustani vocabulary which will enable them to feel at home with audiences drawn from all parts of India. Pandit Mala-viyaji's name comes uppermost in this connection. I have known him handle Hindi-speaking and Urdu-speaking audiences with equal case. I have never found him in want of the correct word. The same is true of Babu Bhagwandas who uses synonymous words in the same speech, and he sees to it that it does not lose in grace. Among the Muslims at the time of writing I can think of only Maulana Mahomed Ali whose vocabulary was varied enough to suit both audiences. His knowledge of Gujarati acquired in Baroda service stood him in good stead.

Independently of the Congress, Hindi and Urdu will continue to flourish. Hindi will be mostly confined to Hindus and Urdu to Muslims. As a matter of fact, comparatively speaking, there are very few Muslims who know Hindi well enough to be called scholars, though, I expect, in Hindi-speaking parts, to Muslims born there, Hindi is the mother tongue. There are thousands of Hindus whose mother tongue is Urdu and there are hundreds who can be aptly described as Urdu scholars. Pandit Motilalji was one such. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru is another. Illustrations can be easily multiplied. There is therefore no reason for any quarrel or unhealthy competition between the two sisters. Healthy competition there always must be.

From all accounts I have received it seems that, under the able guidance of Moulvi Saheb Abdul Haq, the Osmania University is rendering great service to the cause of Urdu. The University has a big Urdu lexicon. Scientific treatises have been and are being prepared in Urdu. And as the teaching is being honestly imparted through Urdu in that University, it must grow. And if, owing to unreasoning prejudice today, all Hindi-speaking Hindus do not profit by the literature that is growing there, it is their fault. But the prejudice has to die. For, the present disunion between the communities is, like all diseases, only temporary. For good or for ill, the two communities are wedded to

India, they are neighbours, sons of the soil. They are destined to die here as they are born here. Nature will force them to live in peace if they do not come together voluntarily.

And as with the Hindus so with the Muslims. It is the latter's loss, if they will not take advantage of the fruits of the humbler labours of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Nagari Pracharini Sabha. It is a pity they have not taken note with pride and pleasure of the big (for the Sammelan) step taken by it in defining Hindi as the language spoken in the north by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in Urdu or Devanagari script. Thus, so far as the definition is concerned, it answers the Congress definition of Hindustani.

I know that there are some who dream that there shall be only Urdu or only Hindi. I think it will always remain a dream and it is an unholy dream. Islam has its own peculiar culture, so has Hinduism its own. India of the future will be a perfect and happy blend of both. When that blessed day comes, their common speech will be Hindustani. But Urdu will still flourish with a predominance of Arabic and Persian words, and Hindi will still flourish with its abundant Sanskrit vocabulary. The language of Tulsidas and Surdas cannot die, even as the language in which Shibli wrote cannot die. But the best of both will be quite at home with Hindustani speech.

UTMANZAI, October 19, 1938

Harijan, 29-10-1938

184. FOREWORD TO "DADABHAI NAOROJI"

UTMANZAI,
October 19, 1938

It was on 4th September, 1888, that I sailed from Bombay with three letters of introduction, the most precious being for the G. O. M. of India, Dadabhai Naoroji. The letter was given by a Maharashtrian doctor, a friend of the family. The worthy doctor told me the G. O. M. did not know him personally, in fact he had never even had the *darshan* of the G. O. M. "But," said the doctor, "what does it matter? Everyone knows him and adores him as India's great son and champion. He has exiled himself for us. I claim to know him by his service of India. You will see that my letter will serve you just as well as if I had known him personally. The fact is, you need no

introduction to him. Your being an Indian is sufficient introduction. But you are a youngster, untravelled and timid. This letter will give you courage enough to go to the G.O.M. and all will be smooth sailing for you.” And so it was. When I reached London, I soon found that Indian students had free access to the G.O.M. at all hours of the day. Indeed he was in the place of father to every one of them, no matter to which province or religion they belonged. He was there to advise and guide them in their difficulties. I have always been a hero-worshipper. And so Dadabhai became real Dada¹ to me. The relationship took the deepest root in South Africa. For, he was my constant adviser and inspiration. Hardly a week passed without a letter from me to him describing the condition of Indians in South Africa. And I well remember that whenever there was a reply to be expected, it came without fail in his own handwriting, in his inimitably simple style. I never received a typed letter from him. And during my visits to England from South Africa I found that he had for office a garret perhaps 8 feet by 6 feet. There was hardly room in it for another chair. His desk, his chair and the pile of papers filled the room. I saw that he wrote his letters in copying ink and press-copied them himself.

I have not read Shri Masani’s sketch. But if he has at all done justice to the life so noble and yet so simple, his work needs no introduction from me or anybody else. May it be an inspiration to the reader even as Dadabhai living was to me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4875

185. LETTER TO RUSTOM MASANI

UTMANZAI,
October 19, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the promised foreword². I hope it is quite in time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

¹ Grandfather

² *Vide* the preceding item.

[PS.]

I am just now reading during spare moments your *The Religion of the Good Life*, a copy of which you kindly sent me.

I see you want my photo. You will be surprised to learn that I keep none myself.

M. K. G.

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 170

186. DISCUSSION WITH ABDUL GHAFAR KHAN

[October 19/20, 1938]¹

An important stage in Gandhiji's Frontier mission was reached when in his quiet retreat at Utmanzai he devoted two days to confabulate and compare notes with Badshah Khan after his tour of the Khudai Khidmatgars in Peshawar and Mardan districts. He asked Badshah Khan:

What is your impression? How do the Khudai Khidmatgars stand with regard to non-violence?

[A. G. K.] My impression, Mahatmaji, is that as they themselves admitted before us, the other day, they are raw recruits and fall far short of the standard. There is violence in their hearts which they have not been able altogether to cast out. They have their defects of temper. But there is no doubt as to their sincerity. Given a chance they can be hammered into shape and I think the attempt is worth while. . . . If we could assimilate and put into practice the whole of the doctrine of non-violence as you have explained it to us, how much stronger and better off we should be. . . .

Gandhiji suggested to Badshah Khan that if non-violence was to receive a fair trial, the Khudai Khidmatgars must be prepared to go through a rigorous course of training in constructive non-violence which he had in mind for them.

[A. G. K.] My idea, Mahatmaji, is to make Utmanzai into a model village. The spinning and weaving centre will serve as a sort of permanent exhibition for the education of the villagers. At the home for Khudai Khidmatgars we shall set before us the self-sufficiency ideal. We shall wear only the clothes that we ourselves produced, eat only such fruits and vegetables as we raise there and have a small dairy to provide us with milk. We shall deny ourselves what we cannot ourselves produce.

[G.] Good. May I further suggest that the Khudai Khidmatgars should take their due share in the building of the huts too that are to house them?

¹ From Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-IV" published in *Harijan*, 12-11-1938

[A. G. K.] That is our idea.

To train the first batch of workers, Gandhiji suggested that some Khudai Khidmatgars whom Badshah Khan might select might be sent to Wardha, where, besides becoming adepts in the science of khadi, they would also get a grounding in first aid and hygiene, sanitation and village uplift work and in Hindustani. They would also be initiated there into the Wardha Scheme of education so that on their return they would be able to take up the work of mass education. Gandhiji then said:

But your work will not make headway unless you take the lead and yourself become an adept in all these things.

Lastly, your work will come to nought unless you enforce the rule of punctuality in your retreat. There must be a fixed routine and fixed hours for rising and going to bed, for taking meals and for work and rest, and they must be rigorously enforced. I attach the greatest importance to punctuality; it is a corollary to non-violence.

They next proceeded to discuss the *modus operandi* by which the Khudai Khidmatgars, when they had become sure of their non-violence, would fulfil their mission of coping with the trans-border raids. Badshah Khan was of the opinion that the task was rendered infinitely difficult by the presence of the police and the military who were not fully under popular control and whose presence there brought in all the evils of double rule. "Either the authorities should whole-heartedly co-operate with us or they should withdraw the police and the military from one district to begin with, and we shall then undertake to maintain the peace of that district through our Khudai Khidmatgars." But Gandhiji held a different view. He remarked:

I frankly confess that I do not expect the authorities whole-heartedly to co-operate with us. They would distrust our ability, if not our motive. It is too much to expect them to withdraw the police on trust. Non-violence is a universal principle and its operation is not limited by a hostile environment. Indeed its efficacy can be tested only when it acts in the midst of and in spite of opposition. Our non-violence would be a hollow thing and nothing worth if it depended for its success on the goodwill of the authorities. If we can establish full control over the people, we shall render the police and the military innocuous.

And he described to Badshah Khan how during the Bombay riots on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit, the police and the military found their job gone because the Congress immediately regained control and peace was restored.

[A. G. K.] But the difficulty is that the raiders are mostly bad characters, who have absconded from British India. We cannot make contact with them because the authorities won't permit us or our workers to go into the tribal territory.

[G.] They must, and I tell you they will when we are fully ready. But for that we shall need to have a body of Khudai Khidmatgars who are really and truly servants of God, with whom non-violence is a living faith. Non-violence is an active principle of the highest order. It is soul force or the power of the godhead within us. Imperfect man cannot grasp the whole of that Essence—he would not be able to bear its full blaze—but even an infinitesimal fraction of it, when it becomes active within us, can work wonders. The sun in the heavens fills the whole universe with its life-giving warmth. But if one went too near it, it would consume him to ashes. Even so is it with godhead. We become godlike to the extent we realize non-violence; but we can never become wholly God. Non-violence is like radium in its action. An infinitesimal quantity of it imbedded in a malignant growth, acts continuously, silently, and ceaselessly till it has transformed the whole mass of the diseased tissue into a healthy one. Similarly, even a tiny grain of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle, unseen way and leavens the whole society.

It is self-acting. The soul persists even after death, its existence does not depend on the physical body. Similarly, non-violence or soul force too, does not need physical aids for its propagation or effect. It acts independently of them. It transcends time and space.

It follows, therefore, that if non-violence becomes successfully established in one place, its influence will spread everywhere. So long as a single dacoity takes place in Utmanzai, I will say that our non-violence is not genuine.

The basic principle on which the practice of non-violence rests is that what holds good in respect of yourself holds good equally in respect of the whole universe. All mankind in essence are alike. What is, therefore, possible for me is possible for everybody. Pursuing further this line of reasoning, I came to the conclusion that if I could find a non-violent solution of the various problems that arise in one particular village, the lesson learnt from it would enable me to tackle in a non-violent manner all similar problems in India.

And so I decided to settle down in Sevagram. My sojourn in Sevagram has been an education for me. My experience with the Harijans has provided me with what I regard as an ideal solution for the Hindu-Muslim problem, which does away with all pacts. So if you can set things right in Utmanzai your whole problem would be solved. Even our relations with the English will be transformed and

purified if we can show to them that we really do not stand in need of the protection for which their police and the army are ostensibly kept.

But Badshah Khan had a doubt. In every village there is an element of self-seekers and exploiters who are ready to go to any length in order to serve their selfish ends. Would it not be better, Khan Saheb asked, to ignore them altogether or should an attempt be made to cultivate them too.

[G.] We may ultimately have to leave some of them out, but we may not regard anybody as irreclaimable. We should try to understand the psychology of the evil-doer. He is very often victim of his circumstances. By patience and sympathy, we shall be able to win over at least some of them to the side of justice. Moreover, we should not forget that even evil is sustained through the co-operation, either willing or forced, of good. Truth alone is self-sustained. In the last resort we can curb power of the evil-doers to do mischief by withdrawing all co-operation from them and completely isolating them.

This in essence is the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. It follows, therefore, that it must have its roots in love. Its object should not be to punish the opponent or to inflict injury upon him. Even while non-co-operating with him, we must make him feel that in us he has a friend and we should try to reach his heart by rendering him humanitarian service whenever possible. In fact it is the acid test of non-violence that in a non-violent conflict there is no rancour left behind, and in the end the enemies are converted into friends. That was my experience in South Africa with General Smuts. He started by being my bitterest opponent and critic. Today he is my warmest friend. For eight years we were ranged on opposite sides. But during the Second Round Table Conference it was he who stood by me and, in public as well as in private, gave me his full support. This is only one instance out of many that I can quote.

Times change and systems decay. But it is my faith that in the result, it is only non-violence and things that are based on non-violence that will endure. Nineteen hundred years ago Christianity was born. The ministry of Jesus lasted only for three brief years. His teaching was misunderstood even during his own time, and today's Christianity is a denial of his central teaching— "Love your enemy". But what are nineteen hundred years for the spread of the central doctrine of a man's teaching?

Six centuries rolled by and Islam appeared on the scene. Many Mussalmans will not even allow me to say that Islam, as the word im-

plies, is unadulterated peace. My reading of the Koran has convinced me that the basis of Islam is not violence. But here again thirteen hundred years are but a speck in the cycle of Time. I am convinced that both these great faiths will live only to the extent that their followers imbibe the central teaching of non-violence. But it is not a thing to be grasped through mere intellect, it must sink into our hearts.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 71-8

187. NOTES

MR. AND ESQUIRE V. SHRI, MOULVI, MAULANA, JANAB
AND THE LIKE

Some friends told me on my putting 'Shri' before 'Jinnah' instead of 'Mr.' in my statement made before I visited him in Bombay that it must have offended him. I demurred and said that if he was offended he would have given me a gentle hint, I would have apologized and used an adjective he liked best. The readers will remember, in the heyday of non-co-operation the terms 'Mr.' and 'Esq.' were dropped by Congressmen and the nationalist Press, and 'Shri' was the title largely used for all irrespective of religion. Though the practice has largely fallen into desuetude, I have never given it up. But for our bad habit, I was going to say slavish mentality, we would never have used 'Mr.' and 'Esquire' before or after Indian names. In Europe an Englishman never addresses foreigners as 'Mr.' or 'Esquire' but uses the adjectives current in the respective countries. Thus Hitler is never called 'Mr.', he is 'Herr' Hitler. Similarly Mussolini is neither 'Mr.' nor 'Herr', he is 'Signor'. Why we should have dropped our own nomenclature I do not know. But a moment's detachment from the prevailing habit should show us that the use of 'Mr.' and 'Esquire' before or after Indian names sounds ludicrous.

I must, however, admit that the use of 'Shri' before Muslim names, in these days of mutual suspicion, may not please Muslim friends. I have discussed the matter with some Muslim friends. They told me the word 'Moulvi' was the usual adjective. 'Janab' I have heard often in the South. Anyway I can say that in using 'Shri' for Muslim Indian names, I have had no idea except the friendliest. When anybody calls me 'Mr.' the use of the word jars on me. The happiest Hindu usage is 'ji' at the end of the name. 'Saheb' is synonymous

with 'ji'. I remember I always used to address the late Hakim Ajmal-khan as Hakimji. Some Muslim friend told me that Hakim 'Saheb' would be preferred by Muslims. I had not known before of any such preference. But since the correction, except for inadvertent use of 'ji', I always addressed the deceased patriot as Hakim Saheb. I could not address him as 'Mr.' Ajmalkhan even if somebody deposited five salted canes on the naked back. It seems that we become 'Misters' and 'Esquires' after we receive English education!!! Will readers learned in this kind of lore help me and persons like me by giving the uncontaminated usages in vogue in India?

UTMANZAI, October 20, 1938

Harijan, 29-10-1938

188. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 20, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

My post is going abegging. Hence for four days I am without any news from you. I know it is well with Mahadev and yet one wants the written letter. Ba, whose health has caused me anxiety this time, is out of danger. Perhaps Mahadev too gets the news independently.

At this end it is all well. I am having good chats with the Khudai Khidmatgars. The more correct description would be to say that I have been giving them discourses which Khan Saheb translates with rare zeal. He puts his whole soul into the thing. Silence has become second nature with me.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Utmanzai which we leave tomorrow not to return during this tour.

From the original: C.W. 3642. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6451

189. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 20, 1938

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA

We get no time to talk.¹ My prescription is good for you, for me and for the country. You would get the freedom you seek. Your capital is neither silver nor gold, nor intellect; your capital is your infinite love. You can trade it here to your heart's content. I shall not be able to find for you a better field of service. You may accept it if you like.

I got the impression from S.'s² letter that she had given up the thought of F.³ If she wants to marry him you should caution her fully. You should also tell F. that it would not be a proper thing for him to take on a married woman.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2460

190. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

PESHAWAR,
October 20, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Write about your experiences in Calcutta. Satis Babu has grown weak. Do something for him if you can. Or have you lost touch with nature cure? I am only joking. I shall be here till November 9. Then Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 272

¹ The addressee was with Gandhiji at Utmanzai.

² The names have been omitted.

³ *Ibid*

191. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

KOHAT,
October 21, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have replied to your telegram. Even if you go to Travancore as a private citizen, you will succeed. Meet the prisoners. There is a good deal of falsehood in the air. I have received heaps of telegrams from the Congress¹ totally denying the charge of violence by it. But there are other telegrams, too, which say that there has undoubtedly been violence. The truth can be ascertained only if somebody goes there personally. You know the attitude I have adopted. The people should withdraw the allegations against C. P. or make them the main issue. If they adopt the latter course, then there is no need for satyagraha. It is for the local workers to make the choice. If C. P. Offers to invite a judge from outside to try the cases, the people should accept the challenge. If they refuse to do that, the fight will lose its moral basis. You must have seen my last advice. If violence is going on for whatever reason, civil disobedience must be suspended unconditionally. Let those imprisoned remain in jails. Excepting civil disobedience, the rest of the programme may continue. You may, however, decide what you think best after a personal visit. See Ramachandran first and then the prisoners.

Read the accompanying wire from Balkrishna² of Kanpur. I have wired back saying I knew nothing of the matter. The Parliamentary Board, I assume, must have agreed to intervene on the Minister's advice. Even if that is not the case, the Provincial Committee is free to handle the affair as it likes. I suppose all this is not out of your mind.

I hope your health is all right. I am keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Why should you resign from the Gandhi Seva Sangh? Jamnalalji is practically an invalid at present. Even if he resigns, however, won't he continue to give his services? Nothing is going to improve by your

¹ Travancore State Congress

² Balkrishna Sharma, a leading Congress worker of Kanpur

resigning.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 226-7

192. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

October 21, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

It is 12.45 a. m. I do not have a pen. But since this is a good opportunity I am writing in pencil on mill-made paper. I am late in replying to you. I am helpless. The doctor won't allow me to work at night. Today, for some reason, I am not able to sleep. That is how I can write to you. I hope you will not find my handwriting difficult to decipher. Or maybe I shall ask Kanu to copy it out in ink.

Give me time till the end of this tour. Do not mind if this season is wasted. What do the poor do? There is nothing improper in what you say. I am certainly not angry but I am not amused either. I respect your language because you speak or write just what comes to your mind. Maybe I am in the dark. It is more probable because I know nothing of these matters. I have caught hold of one thing. Both of you love the cow. You are more industrious. You have greater love for the cow. Parnerkar has more scientific knowledge. In this situation, I thought I should do something which would allow scope for both. I shall then know who is right. This may entail some loss and I shall suffer it.

However, I approve of your suggestion. I should not involve myself in these complications but should appoint an arbitrator who should listen to both sides and give a decision. His verdict should be accepted. Could Chimanlal, Nanavati or Mirabehn serve the purpose? I am inclined to suggest Kishorelal, but why should I put him to this strain? I do not mind troubling Radhakisan. If Parnerkar approves of these names, the matter can be decided soon. You need not wait till I return. You may mention this to Parnerkar. I think I have now answered all your points. Be patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1911

193. *THE CONFISCATED LANDS*

It would be wrong on my part if I allowed it to be said that the Bill to provide for the restoration of lands forfeited during the Civil Disobedience Movement just passed by the Bombay Legislature, miscalled expropriatory law, would not have been passed if I had my will. I must make the confession that I had some hand in the Ministers' bringing in the Bill. Indeed I felt that any other course would be less than correct. Any parley with those who had bought the lands would be either coercion on behalf of the Government or blackmail by the so-called owners. If it was right to restore the lands to the true owners, it should be done by law. If the Government had not the power under the Government of India Act even to pass such an innocent and necessary relief measure, it was worse than the critics had described it to be. I hold that the Bombay Bill is more than just. The clause providing for compensation to the so-called owners to the extent of their outlay plus interest makes it more than just. The provable facts about these lands are that they were bought in collusion with the authorities. Indeed it was difficult for them to find purchasers. The lands were sold to terrorize the people. It was part of the repressive policy, and they were sold in some cases for a song. When the Government that resorted to such terrorism gave place to those who were its victims, surely they must be credited with magnanimity when, instead of confiscating the lands purchased collusively and in the teeth of strong and overwhelming popular opposition, they offered compensation.

Had the fight between the Government and the people been violent instead of non-violent, the victorious party coming into power would certainly have restored without compensation all property to the legal possessors forcibly taken away from the rightful owners. Surely, the situation could not be altered because the fight was non-violent and there was a semblance of legal procedure about the transfers. The public should know that the lands were first confiscated by the then Government and when the confiscation did not seem to break the spirit of the fighters, the unworthy means of selling the lands was resorted to. But they seemed to be terrified of their own enormity and they desisted from selling further lands. I would far rather draw the curtain over the painful past. I have raised it just to let

the reader know that the Bombay Government have not been guilty of injustice.

KOHAT, October 22, 1938
Harijan, 29-10-1938

194. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

KOHAT,
October 22, 1938

BIRLA

ROYAL EXCHANGE

CALCUTTA

KOHAT UP TO MONDAY. POSTING PROGRAMME. FINISH
NINTH NOVEMBER.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7799. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

195. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

KOHAT,
October 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I got all the five letters yesterday at Peshawar during the 4 hours' halt.

Tyrants would not be tyrants if they did anything but injustice. But thank God for this tyrant you acquit him of conscious injustice. Mahadev says you felt like fainting the other day. Why? And why do you persist in working even when you faint? Or do you want it to be said of you after your death (may it be after many many years) that you were so conscientious that you worked away even though you fainted? In my language it would be called folly. You must not faint. There is no medicine for Shummy save love, more and yet more *ad infinitum*. I must not say more if I am to keep my appointments. Your Kohat letter has come.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3643. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6452

196. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 22, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

We arrived in Peshawar yesterday at 8.30 and started out again at four. Five days' mail had accumulated in Peshawar. I got all your letters only yesterday.

Why did you feel that your letters might be a burden to me? It is not at all so. The fact is that whenever there is no letter from you, I feel very uneasy. And if the letter is short, I get angry and wonder what could keep you so busy that you had to be content with only two lines.

About Bablo, Rajkumari writes to say that he should be given full scope for mental development. I also believe that this should be done, either through the current method, i.e., through the high school, etc., or the other method, of coaching at home. The development through home coaching will be in one direction, and through the college, etc., it will be in another direction. Think over this with Rajkumari. If you can think of anything different from what is being done at present, we may do it. Bablo also may suggest.

I have already written to Lilavati. The only purpose behind asking you also to write to her was that she might hear the same opinion from all sides. She has given me no notice that she will not stay with you now. Nor do I feel so. All the same, we will not keep her there forcibly. But since at present your plans are uncertain why need we think about the matter?

Pothan has been writing to me about Travancore. Generally a man's obituary is written after his death. In your case, this is done before your death. So why should you concern yourself now what will be written after your death? Later on a new and revised edition of your biography will be brought out. If not Pothan, somebody else like him will write a revised obituary.

I may not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11665

197. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

KOHAT,
October 22, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have already written you two letters. In one I sent a note to Shamjibhai for Rs. 300.¹ You must have received it. You should respect Jayaprakash's wishes. Go with him if you are required to do so. Even in that case, however, bring Saraswati with you. Leave her at the nearest station. I will arrange for somebody to escort her from there. This means, of course, that you will have to go to Trivandrum. There is no time for more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3523

198. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KOHAT²

October 22, 1938

I have given over one hour today to acquaint myself with your difficulties and woes. But I confess to you that I am no longer fit to tackle such matters. While, on the one hand, old age is slowly creeping over me, on the other my responsibilities are becoming more and more multifarious and there is danger that if I have too many irons in the fire, I may not be able to do justice to the more important of my responsibilities. And among these, the responsibility that I have undertaken in respect of the Khudai Khidmatgars is the more important, and if I can carry it out to my satisfaction, in collaboration with Khan Saheb, I will feel that my closing years have not been wasted.

People laugh at me and at the idea of Khudai Khidmatgars becoming full-fledged non-violent soldiers of swaraj. But their mockery does not affect me. Non-violence is a quality not of the body but

¹ The letter to Shyamji Sunderdas however mentions Rs. 200; *vide* "Letter to Shayamji Sunderdas", 12-10-1938

² Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-III". At the meeting addresses were presented to Gandhiji by the District Congress Committee on behalf of the citizens of Kohat. The meeting was attended by about 5,000 people.

of the soul. Once its central meaning sinks into your being, all the rest by itself follows. Human nature in the Khudai Khidmatgars is not different from mine. And I am sure that if I can practise non-violence to some extent, they, and for the matter of that anyone else, can. I, therefore, invite you to pray with me to the Almighty that He may make real my dream about the Khudai Khidmatgars.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

199. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

KOHAT,
[October 22/23, 1938]¹

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

I feel on reading your letter that this time at any rate you have to stay in Delhi. All the tasks suggested are a must for you.

I shall write to the Meerut people.

You may do whatever seems proper regarding S. Shall I write to F.?

I certainly gave you permission to live with me but take it that this desire is born of attachment. It would not do simply to assert that Ramana Maharshi and Aurobindo are one-sided while I am all-sided. One who is one-sided but understands his mission and pursues it has merit. One who claims to be all-sided but is only experimenting has even less worth than broken almond shells. Only God knows where I stand. I am an aspirant while they are known to be, and perhaps are, realized souls. Anyway their followers attribute to them full self-realization.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2459

¹ Gandhiji was in Kohat on these dates.

200. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

KOHAT,
[October 22/23, 1938]¹

In the course of his talk before the Khudai Khidmatgar officers at Kohat, he impressed upon them the tremendous nature of the step which they had taken. He had often said before that if the Pathan, famed in the world for the prowess of his arms, really took to non-violence, renouncing arms, it would be a red-letter day in the history of India and the world.

For good or for ill, the Pathan today has come to be regarded as a bogey man by the average person in India. In Gujarat and Kathiawar children turn pale at the very mention of the Pathan. At Sabarmati Ashram, we try to inculcate fearlessness among the children. But I am ashamed to confess that in spite of all our efforts we have not succeeded in making them eradicate the fear of the Pathan from their hearts. I have not been able to impress upon our ashram girls that they have no need to fear a Pathan. They try to make a show of bravery. But it is only a make-believe. During a communal disturbance they dare not stir out of their homes if there is a report of even a casual Pathan being about. They are afraid they would be kidnapped .

I tell them that even if they are kidnapped they must not be frightened. They should appeal to the kidnapper's sense of honour to behave chivalrously towards one who should be as a sister to him. If in spite of their entreaties he persists in his evil intentions (since all must die some day), they can put an end to their life by biting the tongue but not submit. They answer, 'What you say is right. But it is all new to us. We have not the confidence that at the proper time we shall be able to do what you tell us.' If such is the case with the Ashram girls, what must it be with others? When, therefore, I hear that a body of Khidmatgars has arisen among the Pathans, who have completely renounced violence, I do not know whether to believe it or not.

What are the implications of renouncing violence and what is the mark of a person who has renounced violence?

One did not become a Khudai Khidmatgar by adopting that name or by putting on the Khudai Khidmatgar's uniform, he told them. It needed systematic training in non-violence. In Europe where they had glorified killing into a noble profession,

¹ Gandhiji was in Kohat on these two days. However, according to the source this talk took place before "Talk to Khudai Khidmatgars", 23-10-1938

they spent millions on perfecting the science of destruction. Their best scientists were pressed into its service. Even their educational system was centred on it. They spent stupendous sums too on luxuries and means of physical comforts, which formed a part of their ideal. By contrast, the mark of a man of God or a Khudai Khidmatgar should be purity, industry and unremitting hard labour in the service of God's creation.

In the course of serving your fellow creatures you will get a measure of the progress you have made in non-violence and of the power that is in non-violence. Armed with this power, a single person can stand against the whole world. That is not possible with the sword.

Hitherto, non-violence had been synonymous with civil breach of laws and taking the penalty for the same non-violently. But he wished to tell them that, although civil disobedience was included in the programme of non-violence, its essence as he had pointed out at Swabi, was the moral right or fitness which it presupposed in the civil resister and which accrued to one who trained himself in the practice of non-violence.¹ In the satyagraha fight 'civil disobedience is the end, not the beginning. It is the last step, not the first.' People used to have a craven fear of the Government. As a remedy, he had prescribed satyagraha or civil disobedience. It was a sharp medicine.

Unless a physician, who administers powerful drugs, knows exactly when to stop, he loses his patient. That is why I promptly called off civil disobedience, confining it to myself alone when the situation demanded it.² It was just in time. So I would like you, for the time being, to forget civil disobedience.

He next proceeded to explain that service of God could only be performed through service of His creatures. He had made it his habit to try to see always the hand of God in everything even at the risk of being considered superstitious. Thus he saw the hand of God in the name that Badshah Khan had given them. Badshah Khan had not called them *satyagrahis* but servants of God.

But how to serve God since He is incorporate and needs no personal service? We can serve Him by serving His creation. There is an Urdu verse which says: 'Man can never be God but in essence he is not different from Divinity.' Let us make our village our universe. We shall then serve God by serving our village. To relieve the distress of the unemployed by providing them work, to tend the sick, to wean people from their insanitary habits, to educate them in cleanliness and

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Swabi", 17-10-1938

² In April 1934 Gandhiji had advised all Congressmen to suspend civil disobedience for swaraj as distinguished from civil disobedience for specific grievances; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934

healthy living should be the job of a Khudai Khidmatgar. And since whatever he does is in God's service, his service will be performed with far more diligence and care than that of paid workers.

He ended by giving a few practical hints as to how to cultivate non-violent strength.

A Khudai Khidmatgar will keep a strict account of every minute of his time which he will regard as God's trust. To waste a single moment of one's time in idleness or frivolity is a sin against God. It is on a par with stealing. If there is even a tiny little bit of land available, he will occupy himself with growing something on it—food or vegetables for the destitute and needy. If he should feel inclined to sit idle and do nothing because his parents have enough money to enable him to purchase food and vegetables from the bazaar, he will argue to himself that by drawing upon the bazaar supplies, he deprives the poor of the same and steals what belongs to God. Before he purchases or uses anything, a Khudai Khidmatgar will ask himself whether there is not somebody else whose need may be greater than his. Supposing somebody places a sumptuous dish before him and a starving person appears on the scene, he will think of the latter's need first, feed him and then alone partake of the dish.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 83-6

201. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

As the ink in Sushila's pen is exhausted, I am writing with a pencil to save time. This was given to me by Brijkrishna. I am sending the accompanying letter only for your information. I have written to Agatha and asked her to come here directly. My return may be delayed and it does not seem proper that she should keep wandering from place to place. Here some of the sights are so charming that I cannot help thinking about you. The climate of course is excellent. I will not write to Rajkumari today.

There is a heap of letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11667

202. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 23, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You will feel uneasy at Segaoon in my absence. It would be better if you waited till I returned. Is there not enough work of service in Rajkot? What about the struggle there? Let me have your experiences.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

203. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

HUNGOO,

[October 23, 1938]¹

Gandhiji referred to an address of welcome that had been presented to him at Nasarat Khel on the way, at the foundation laying ceremony of the Khudai Khidmatgars' office. In it there was a reference to "our last struggle". He remarked:

Let me tell you that civil disobedience may come and go, but our non-violent struggle for freedom goes on and will continue till Independence is attained. Only the form has changed.

I know that to 90 per cent Indians, non-violence means that and nothing else.² It is good so far. There is bravery in it. But you and particularly the Khudai Khidmatgar officers must clearly understand that this is not the whole of non-violence. If you have really understood the meaning of non-violence, it should be clear to you that non-violence is not a principle or a virtue to be brought into play on a particular occasion or to be practised with reference to a particular party or section. It has to become a part and parcel of our being. Anger should disappear from our hearts altogether, otherwise what is the difference between ourselves and our oppressors? Anger may lead

¹ According to Pyarelal's report in the Frontier Province-III published in *Harijan*, 5-11-1938, Gandhiji visited Hungoo on October 23, 1938.

² The address had mentioned that the Khudai Khidmatgars had not been and would never be cowed down by repression.

one person to issue an order to open fire, another to use abusive language, a third one to use the *lathi*. At root it is all the same. It is only when you have become incapable of feeling or harbouring anger in your hearts that you can claim to have shed violence or can expect to remain non-violent to the end.

He then proceeded to explain the difference between civil disobedience and satyagraha.

Our civil disobedience or non-co-operation, by its very nature, was not meant to be practised for all time. But the fight which we are today putting up through our constructive non-violence has a validity for all time; it is the real thing. Supposing the Government were to cease to arrest civil resisters, our jail-going would then stop but that would not mean that our fight is over. A civil resister does not go to jail to embarrass the jail authorities by indulging in the breach of jail rules. Of course, there can be civil disobedience in jail too. But there are definite rules for it. The point is that the civil resister's fight does not end with his imprisonment. Once we are inside the prison we become civilly dead so far as the outside world is concerned. But inside the prison our fight to convert the hearts of the Government's bond slaves, i. e., the jail officials, just begins. It gives us a chance of demonstrating to them that we are not like thieves or dacoits, that we wish them no ill, nor do we want to destroy the opponent but want only to make him our friend, not by servilely obeying all orders, just or unjust—that is not the way to win true friendship—but by showing them that there is no evil in us, that we sincerely wish them well and in our hearts pray that God's goodness may be upon them. My fight continued even when I was lodged behind prison bars. I have been several times in prison and every time I have left only friends behind in the jail officials and others with whom I have come in contact.

It is a speciality of non-violence that its action never stops. That cannot be said of the sword or the bullet. The bullet can destroy the enemy; non-violence converts the enemy into a friend and thus enables the civil resister to assimilate to himself the latter's strength.

By their civil disobedience struggle, he continued, they had demonstrated to the world their determination no longer to be ruled by the British. But they had now to give proof of valour of another and higher type. During the Khilafat days tall, hefty Pathan soldiers used to come and meet the Ali Brothers and himself secretly. They used to tremble at the thought of their visit being discovered by their superior officers and resulting in their dismissal from service. In spite of their tall stature and

physical strength they used to cower and become servile when confronted by a person physically stronger than they.

I want strength which will enable me to submit to none but God, my sole Lord and Master. It is only when I can do that, that I can claim to have realized non-violence.

He then proceeded to expatiate on another speciality of non-violence, viz., one need not go to a school or a *pir* or a guru to learn its use. Its virtue lay in its simplicity. If they realized that it was the most active principle that worked all the twenty-four hours without rest or remission, they would look for opportunities for its application in their homes, in the streets, in relation to their foes no less than friends. They could begin to practise it in their homes from that very day. He had disciplined himself sufficiently never to feel angry with the enemy, but he confessed that he sometimes lost temper with friends. Such discipline in non-violence as he had, he told them, he had at home from his wife. And with that he unfolded in poignant detail, a chapter of his domestic life. He used to be a tyrant at home, he said. His tyranny was the tyranny of love.

I used to let loose my anger upon her. But she bore it all meekly and uncomplainingly. I had a notion that it was her duty to obey me, her lord and master, in everything. But her unresisting meekness opened my eyes and slowly it began to dawn upon me that I had no such prescriptive right over her. If I wanted her obedience, I had first to persuade her by patient argument. She thus became my teacher in non-violence. And I dare say, I have not had a more loyal and faithful comrade in life. I literally used to make life a hell for her. Every other day I would change my residence, prescribe what dress she was to wear. She had been brought up in an orthodox family where untouchability was observed. Muslims and untouchables used to frequent our house. I made her serve them all regardless of her innate reluctance. But she never said 'no'. She was not educated in the usual sense of the term and was simple and unsophisticated. Her guileless simplicity conquered me completely.

You have all wives, mothers and sisters at home. You can take the lesson of non-violence from them. You must, besides, take the vow of truth, ask yourselves how dear truth is to you and how far you observe it in thought, word and deed. A person who is not truthful is far away from non-violence. Untruth itself is violence.

Referring to the month of Ramzan that had just set in, he told them how it could be used to make a start in non-violence.

We seem to think that the observance of Ramzan begins and ends with abstention from food and drink. We think nothing of losing

temper over trifles or indulging in abuse during the sacred month of Ramzan. If there is the slightest delay in serving the repast at the time of the breaking of the fast, the poor wife is hauled over live coals. I do not call it observing the Ramzan, but its travesty. If you really want to cultivate non-violence, you should take a pledge that come what may, you will not give way to anger or order about members of your household or lord it over them. You can thus utilize trifling little occasions in everyday life to cultivate non-violence in your own person and teach it to your children.

He took another instance. Suppose somebody hit their child with a stone. Usually the Pathan tells his child not to return home to whine but to answer back with a bigger stone. But a votary of non-violence, said Gandhiji, would tell his child not to meet a stone by a stone but by embracing the boy who threw the stone and making friends with him.

The same formula, i. e., to banish anger completely from the heart and to make everybody into one's friend, is indeed enough to win India her independence. It is the surest and the quickest way, too, and it is my claim that for winning Independence for the poor masses of India, it is the only way.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 87-91

204. THE NATIONAL FLAG

Here is a letter from a correspondent:

It has become a far too common occurrence and therefore deserving of notice at your hands to set up the national tri-coloured flag in such a manner as to indicate rivalry with or predominance over the religious flags and other symbols exhibited on occasions of religious worship and festivities. While we all desire that the national flag should be a symbol of unity and determination to achieve uninterrupted progress in all directions, we should be undoing this very purpose by trying to make rivalry between the national flag and other flags and symbols connected with religion which should predominate on occasions of religious ceremony. The enthusiasm of some of our workers leads them to error in this respect and in fact to develop an opposition in some quarters to the national flag which did not exist before.

Sometimes, again, private interests and factions seek to make use of the national feeling in respect of the flag and exploit it for their own purposes by mixing up a quarrel with the national flag and confusing the issues in regard to incidents.

It seems as if ever so many of the movements for which you were

responsible are liable to be misconstrued and misdirected, unless you are always ready to re-explain, re-interpret and prevent misdirection. I particularly fear the consequences of doing anything to create a rivalry between the national flag and the religious symbols of either Hindus or Mussalmans or of others. The tendency of setting up the national flag on temple cars and temple towers offends my sense of the universality of religion and the incongruity of trying to nationalize God.

As the author of the idea of a national flag and its make up which in essence the present flag represents, I have felt grieved how the flag has been often abused and how it has even been used to cover violence. The flag has been designed to represent non-violence expressed through real communal unity and non-violent labour which the lowliest and highest can easily undertake with the certain prospect of making substantial and yet imperceptible addition to the wealth of the country. But today it must be confessed that from that standpoint it is merely a piece of tricolour cloth not always khadi and is not proud of [*sic*] and a living emblem of communal unity and equalizing labour in which all participate. The spinning-wheel does hum in thousands of village huts. But compared to what should be, the result is poor.

Moreover the national flag, if it is a symbol of non-violence must also mean humility. If I had my way I would not exhibit it at any meeting which is not a purely Congress meeting if a single person objects to it. The dignity of the flag cannot be lowered by yielding even to a single objector at a non-Congress meeting. Its dignity will be lowered when it is hauled down for fear of the power we want to oust. The dignity will be still more lowered when we exhibit it at meetings or on Congress offices though we have no living faith in communal unity and the spinning-wheel with all its implications. Since the flag is not a religious symbol and represents and reconciles all religions, in religious processions, or temples or religious gatherings it has no place. Everything has its value when it is in its place. It has none when it is out of its place. Bullion and banknotes have no value whatsoever in the desert of Sahara. Indeed in the present state of tension, I would not hoist it on Government buildings or municipal offices unless it is accepted not merely by an overwhelming vote but unanimously. I have no hesitation in saying that even one vote cast against it, maybe mischievously, should have its weight, if the flag is a symbol of non-violence and humility.

My correspondent has evidently more faith in the power of my pen than I have. I write not because I believe that my word would carry weight where it is intended to carry. But I may not reject the correspondent's appeal. His argument and facts I accept. I may not restrain myself simply because of the fear that my word may miscarry. Anyway, it does me good to redeclare my faith in the flag with all the implications I have mentioned.

BANNU, October 24, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

205. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BANNU,

October 24, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You must do with the pencil hand and on mill-made paper—the pencil does not move well on the glazed hand-made.

Your two letters were awaiting me when we reached Bannu. 'A Woman's Letter'¹ I may use for *Harijan*. Your Kathiawar thing² will go in this week with the last paragraph or two cut out.

It is not likely that my articles on the European situation will bear fruit immediately. But they will, if India develops non-violence. There are grave doubts about its possibility. My own impurity is probably the chief stumbling-block. My word has lost its power as it appears to me. It should, according to my views of purity. However, I push on in faith. I must detach myself from the results of my thought, word or deed. I am not going to judge myself and condemn me to inactivity because I cannot get rid of the impurity in spite of incessant effort. Now perhaps you will understand my disbelief in my power to reach the woman's heart. But this is a long story. So much has come in spontaneously. You won't worry because I do not worry at all. I do not brood over my impurity. I see the snake is there. I know his fangs worse than a krait's. I am therefore on my guard. The best test of no worry is my uniformly steady b. p.

I wish you would show this to Mahadev. When I began the letter I did not know that it would be a serious business. It is good in a way.

¹Vide "Woman's Special Mission", 5-11-1938

²Vide "Kathiawar Notes", 4-11-1938.

I have simply given you a few lines for love's sake.

Love.

TYRANT
OTHERWISE WARRIOR
ACCORDING TO THE
LATEST HONOURS' LIST

From the original: C.W. 3644. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6453

206. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BANNU,
October 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

At the moment I have no pen and so I am writing with a pencil. Rather than write nothing, is it not better to write with a pencil and use even mill-made paper?

I got both your letters on arrival here today. What you write about Kanti's letter is correct. If I can, I will make use of it. I shall see. Rajkumari was to be shown that portion only, that is, the substance, so that she might be pleased to know that Kanti's ideas were developing well.

What you say about her—Rajkumari's—virtues is correct. Such contacts serve to make us humble and increase our spirit of service. From this point of view, such occasions arising without our seeking should be welcomed. When I have completed the tour, we shall think about what you should do. We shall be leaving here on November 10 at the latest. It may even be sooner. Even that Lilavati will consider too late. I do feel, therefore, that if you like the place there, and Rajkumari is ready to stay and have you as her guest, you should stay on. Simla is really at its best in November-December. I do not believe it possible that you can start working by November 10. This rest will not be wasted. You are paying a long-accumulated debt and so, if not to Simla, you must go somewhere else for rest. You may consult Rajkumari about Jullundur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11668

207. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

BANNU,
October 24, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have received your letter. But I have no time today to write you a long reply. Now the days you have to count are becoming fewer and fewer, aren't they?

I shall have to come and make some changes in your diet. I cannot do it from here. Do you have to nurse Bhansalibhai any time? Do you go for your walks alone? Does Shakaribehn¹ go out?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10001. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

208. WOMAN'S SPECIAL MISSION

THE EDITOR, *Harijan*

Sir,

I have read your articles on the recent European crisis with great joy. It was only natural that you should speak to Europe now.

How could you restrain yourself when humanity was on the very verge of destruction?

Will the world listen? That is the question.

There is no doubt—judging from letters from friends in England—that people there went through absolute agony during that ghastly week. I am sure the same applies to the whole world. The mere thought of war—modern warfare—with its devilish ingenuity and consequent pitiless butchery and bestiality—definitely made people think as they had never thought before. “The sigh of relief that was breathed and the gratitude to God that went up from every heart when the news came through that war had been averted are something that I can never forget as long as I live,” writes an English friend. And yet is it just the fear of unspeakable suffering, the dread of losing one's nearest and dearest, of seeing one's country humiliated, that cause one to detest war? Are we glad war has been averted even at the humiliation of another nation? Would we have felt differently if the sacrifice of honour had been demanded of us? Do we hate war because we realize it is the wrong way to settle disputes or is our hatred of it part and parcel of our fear? These are questions

¹ Addressee's mother

that must be answered in the right way if war is really to vanish from the earth.

The crisis over, however, what do we see? A more strenuous race than before for armaments, a more comprehensive and intensive organization than ever of all the resources available—of men, women, money, skill and talent—in the event of war! No avowed declaration that “War shall not be” from anywhere! Is this not a recognition that war—however averted today—is still hanging over our heads as the proverbial sword of Damocles?

To me, as a woman, it is painful to realize that my sex has not contributed to world peace the quota that should be ours by instinct and prerogative to contribute. It pains me to read and hear of women’s auxiliary corps being organized, of women being commandeered and volunteering to take their full share in the actual field as well as behind the lines. And yet, when war comes, it is the women’s hearts that are wrung in agony—it is their souls that are scarred beyond repair. It is all so inexplicable. Why is it that we have not chosen the better part through all the ages? Why have we, without murmur, bowed the knee to hideous, soulless, brute force? It is a sad commentary on our spiritual development. We have failed to understand our high calling. I am quite convinced that if women could only have a heart understanding of the power and glory of non-violence all would be well with the world.

Why cannot you inspire and organize us, women of India? Why will you not concentrate on having us as your “sword arm”? How often have I longed for you to undertake an all-India tour just for this purpose? I believe that you would have a wonderful response, for the heart of Indian womanhood is sound and no women, perhaps in the world, have finer traditions of sacrifice and self-effacement behind them as we. Perhaps if you would make something of us we may, in however humble a manner, be able to show the way of peace to a sorrowing and stricken world. Who knows?

22-10-1938

A WOMAN

I publish this letter not without hesitation. The correspondent’s faith in my ability to stir the woman heart flatters me. But I am humble enough to recognize my limitations. It seems to me that the days of my touring are over. Whatever I can do by writing I must continue. But my faith is increasing in the efficacy of silent prayer. It is by itself an art—perhaps the highest art requiring the most refined diligence. I do believe that it is woman’s mission to exhibit ahimsa at its highest and best. But why should it be a man to move the woman heart? If the appeal is addressed exclusively to me not as man but as the (supposed to be) best exponent of ahimsa to be practised on a mass scale, I have no urge in me to go about preaching the doctrine to the women of India. I can assure my correspondent that there is no want of will in me that deters me from responding to her appeal. My

feeling is that if men of the Congress can retain their faith in ahimsa and prosecute the non-violence programme faithfully and fully, the women would be automatically converted. And it may be that there shall arise one among them who will be able to go much farther than I can ever hope to do. For woman is more fitted than man to make explorations and take bolder action in ahimsa. For the courage of self-sacrifice woman is any day superior to man as I believe man is to woman for the courage of the brute.

BANNU, October 25, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

209. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

BANNU,
October 25, 1938

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I had your affectionate wire. But this I write not to give you thanks which I have done through the Press, but to tell you how heavy the burden of the debt owing by the P. Sangh to the A. I. S. A. lies on me. For I am chiefly responsible for the transaction. Such was my faith in your business-likeness and of course integrity. Both of us are public institutions and I suggest to you that on that account our mutual dealing should be much more correct than those among private businessmen. Do please see to the debt being discharged.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

But address Wardha.

From a photostat: G.N. 11050

210. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

BANNU,
October 25, 1938

BA,

I put off writing to you as you have now recovered. As we are touring at present, I hardly get time even to write a postcard. But you ought to write or send a message. Everything is going well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2215

211. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

BANNU,
October 25, 1938

CHI. VIDYA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. I am glad. Whenever you want you can come to Mahila Ashram after taking Jamnalalji's permission. The rules are a bit changed now. I will reach Wardha probably on November 12. I had seen Anand's letter to Mahadev. As far as possible I avoid writing letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

212. SPEECH AT BANNU¹

October 25, 1938

Perhaps you know that for over two months I have been observing complete silence. I have benefited by it, and I believe it has benefited the country too. The silence was originally taken in answer to an acute mental distress, but subsequently I decided to prolong it

¹At the meeting, which was largely attended, addresses of welcome to Gandhiji were presented by the Bannu District Congress Committee and the Seva Samiti, Chandni Chowk. The report of the speech was also published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Bombay Chronicle*.

indefinitely on its own merits. It has served me as a wall of protection and enabled me to cope with my work better than before. When I came to this province, I had resolved to relax my silence only for the purpose of having talks with the Khudai Khidmatgars, but I had to yield to Khan Saheb's pressure.

Your addresses have eulogized me and thanked me for having come here. I do not think I deserve any praise or thanks. I know that I can do very little to satisfy your expectations. My visit to the Frontier Province is purely to meet the Khudai Khidmatgars and know for myself their understanding of non-violence. Visit to your town is a by-product.

I gave many hours today seeing deputations and studying papers presented to me. The recent raid of Bannu and the happenings during the raid have touched me deeply. This province is peculiarly placed, and is different from the other provinces inasmuch as on one side it is surrounded by a number of border tribes containing men whose profession is raiding. So far as I have been able to know they are not actuated by communal considerations. The raiders' motive seems to be satisfaction of primary needs. That the Hindus are more often their victims is probably due to the fact that they generally possess more money. The kidnappings too appear to have the same motive.

Continuation of the raids is in my opinion a proof of British failure in this part of India. Their Frontier policy has cost the country crores of rupees and thousands of lives have been sacrificed. The brave tribesmen still remain unsubdued. If all the accounts I have heard today are substantially correct, and I believe they are, life and property are not secure in most parts of the province.

A number of people whose relations or dear ones have either been killed or kidnapped and held to ransom by the raiders, saw me today. As I listened to the harrowing tales of distress my heart went out to them in sympathy. But I must confess to you that with all the will in the world, I possess no magic spell by which I could restore them to their families. Nor should you expect much from the Government or the Congress ministry. No Government can afford, and the present British Government lacks even the will, to mobilize its military resources every time one of its subjects is kidnapped, unless the person kidnapped happens to belong to the ruling race.

After studying all the facts I have gained the impression that the situation in respect of border raids has grown worse since the

inauguration of Congress Government. The Congress Ministers have no effective control over the police, none over the military. The Congress ministry in this province has less than the others. I therefore feel that unless Dr. Khan Saheb can cope with the question of the raids it might be better for him to tender his resignation. There is danger of the Congress losing all prestige in this province if the raids continue to increase. Apart from my opinion, you have to say for yourselves whether in spite of the handicaps I have mentioned, you would rather have the Congress ministry or some other. After all, the Prime Minister is your servant. He holds office under the triple sufferance of his electorate, the Provincial Congress Committee and the Working Committee.

Some of those who met me today asked me if they could seek safety by migrating from the Frontier Province. I have told them that migration is a perfectly legitimate course to adopt when there is no other way of living with safety and honour. A complaint has further been brought to me that the Muslim populations in the affected places no longer give help against the raiders which they used to formerly, before certain sections of Frontier Crime Regulation Act were repealed, and that has encouraged the raiders. While that may be true, let me warn you that if you depend for your protection on the armed assistance of others you must be prepared sooner or later to accept the domination of these defenders. Of course you are entitled to learn the art of defending yourselves with arms. You must develop a sense of co-operation. In no case should you be guilty of cowardice. Self-defence is everybody's birthright. I do not want to see a single coward in India.

The fourth alternative is that of non-violent approach which I am here before you to suggest. It is the surest and infallible method of self-defence. If I had my way, I would go and mix with tribes, and argue it out with them and I am sure they would not be impervious to the argument of love and reason. But I know today that door is shut to me. The Government won't permit me to enter the tribal territory.

The tribesman cannot be the bogey man that he is represented to be. He is a human just like you and me and capable of responding to the human touch which has hitherto been conspicuous by its absence in dealing with him. A number of Waziris came and saw me today at noon. I did not find that their nature was essentially different from human nature elsewhere.

Man's nature is not essentially evil. Brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature. You are a community of traders. Do not leave out of your traffic that noblest and most precious of merchandise, viz., love. Give to the tribesmen all the love that you are capable of, and you will have theirs in return.

To seek safety by offering blackmail or ransom to the raiders would be a direct invitation to them to repeat their depredations and will be demoralizing alike to the giver and the tribesmen. Instead of offering them money, the rational course would be to raise them above penury by teaching them industry and thereby removing the principal motive that leads them into the raiding habit.

I am having talks with Khudai Khidmatgars in this connection and evolving a plan in collaboration with Khan Saheb. If the plan bears fruit, and the Khudai Khidmatgars truly become what their name signifies, the influence of their example like the sweet fragrance of the rose will spread to the tribes and might provide a permanent solution of the Frontier question.

Harijan, 5-11-1938

213. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS

BANNU,

[On or before *October 26, 1938*]¹

Gandhiji explained the difference between non-violence of the strong and non-violence of the weak and the difference between constructive work, taken up as a philanthropic activity or as a political expedient, and constructive work linked to non-violence, when it becomes an emancipative force with tremendous potency. He recalled how the movement of non-violence was launched in India. Millions at that time felt that they would not be able to fight the British Government with the sword as the latter was infinitely better armed. He told them that even if they went forth to fight, sword in hand, they had to be ready to face death. If the sword broke in their hand, death would be a certainty. Why should not they then learn the art of dying without killing and pit against the enemy the strength of their spirit? The Government might imprison them or confiscate their property or even kill them. What did it matter? The argument went home. But in their heart of hearts, said Gandhiji, many had the feeling that if only they had sufficient armed strength they would resort to fighting. They accepted non-violence because there was nothing else. In other words, there was violence in the heart. Only it was given up in action. It was non-violence of the weak, not of the brave. Even so it had made them stronger. He

¹ Gandhiji left Bannu on October 26.

was there to tell them that it was a big mistake to regard non-violence as a weapon of the weak or to adopt it as such. If the Khudai Khidmatgars fell into that mistake, it would be a tragedy.

If you give up the sword at Badshah Khan's word, but retain it in your hearts, your non-violence will be a short-lived thing—not even a nine days' wonder. After a few years you will want to revert to it but, maybe, you will then find that you have got out of the habit and are lost to both the ideals. Nothing will, in that event, remain to you but vain regret. What I want of you is a unique thing, i. e., that you will disdain to use the sword although you have got the capacity and there is no doubt as to victory. Even if the opponent is armed with a broken sword, you will oppose your neck to it. And this, not with anger or retaliation in your hearts but only love. If you have really understood non-violence in this sense, you will never want to use the sword because you will have got something infinitely superior in its place.

You will ask, 'How will all this have any effect on the British Government?' My reply is that by uniting all the people of India in a common bond of love through our selfless service, we can transform the atmosphere in the country so that the Britisher will not be able to resist it. You will say that the Britisher is impervious to love. My thirty years' unbroken experience is to the contrary. Today 17,000 Englishmen can rule over three hundred millions of Indians because we are under a spell of fear. If we learn to love one another, if the gulf between Hindu and Muslim, caste and outcaste, and rich and poor, is obliterated, a handful of English would not dare to continue their rule over us.

Just as there are laws of armed warfare, there are laws of non-violent warfare too. They have not been fully discovered. Under violence you punish the evil-doer, in non-violence you pity him, and regard him as a patient to be cured by your love.

What must you do then to drive out the British by the non-violent method? If you want to adopt the method of violence, you have to learn to drill and to become adept in the use of arms. In Europe and America even women and children are given that training. Similarly those who have adopted the weapon of non-violence have to put themselves through a vigorous discipline in non-violence.

And with that he came to the constructive programme and its place in the scheme of non-violence as a dynamic force. He had placed the programme of non-violence before the country in 1920, he explained. It was divided into two parts, non-co-operation and constructive programme. The latter included establishment of

communal unity, abolition of untouchability, prohibition, complete eradication of the drink and drug evil and propagation of khadi, hand-spinning, hand-weaving and other cottage industries. But all these things had to be taken up not as a political expediency but as an integral part of the programme of non-violence. This last made all the difference. For instance, Hindu-Muslim unity regarded as an expedient was one thing and quite another when adopted as an integral part of non-violence.

The former, by its very nature, cannot be lasting. It will be discarded as soon as the political exigency that suggested it is over. It may even be a stratagem or a ruse. When it is taken up as a part of the programme of non-violence it will have nothing but love at its root and will be sealed with one's heart's blood.

In the same way the charkha or the spinning-wheel had to be linked to non-violence.

Today there are millions of unemployed destitute in India. One way to deal with them is to allow them to die off so that, as in South Africa, there might be more per capita land for the survivors. That would be the way of violence. The other way, the way of non-violence, is based on the principle of 'even unto this last'. It requires us to have equal regard for the least of God's creation. A votary of this path will deny to himself what cannot be shared with the least. That applies even to those who labour with their hands—the relatively better off among the labouring class must seek to align themselves with the less fortunate.

It was this line of thinking, said Gandhiji, which had led to the discovery of the charkha on his part.

I had not even seen a charkha when I first advocated its use. In fact I called it a handloom in *Hind Swaraj*, not knowing a spinning-wheel from a handloom. I had before my mind's eye the poor, landless labourer without employment or means of subsistence, crushed under the weight of poverty. How could I save him—that was my problem. Even now while I am sitting with you in these comfortable surroundings, my heart is with the poor and the oppressed in their humble cottages. I would feel more at home in their midst. If I allowed myself to succumb to the love of ease and comfort, it would be my undoing as a votary of ahimsa. What is it then that can provide a living link between me and the poor? The answer is the charkha. No matter what one's occupation or rank in life is, the charkha, taken with all that it signifies, will provide the golden bridge to unite him to the poor. For instance, if I am a doctor, while I draw the sacrificial thread it will make me think how I can assuage the suffering of the destitute

instead of the royalty in rich palaces with the prospect of fat fees. The charkha is not my invention. It was there before. My discovery consisted in linking it to the programme of non-violence and independence. God whispered into my ear: 'If you want to work through non-violence, you have to proceed with small things, not big.' If we had worked the fourfold constructive programme in its completeness during the last twenty years as I had envisaged it, we should have been our masters today. No foreign power would have dared to cast its evil eye upon us. No enemy from outside would have dared to come and do us harm if there had been none within. Even if one had come we would have assimilated him to ourselves and he would not have been able to exploit us.

It is this type of non-violence that I want you to attain. I expect you to be twenty-four-carat gold, nothing less. Of course, you can deceive me. If you do that, I shall blame myself only. But if you are sincere, you have to prove by your action that nobody need be afraid of a Red Shirt or know fear while there is a Red Shirt alive.

A Pilgrimage for Peace, pp. 97-101

214. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 26, 1938

I tender my congratulations to His Highness, Her Highness and the Dewan for the general amnesty granted to civil disobedience prisoners in Travancore on the Maharaja's birthday. It is to be hoped that in order to make the amnesty fruitful and peace permanent it will be followed up by the appointment of a committee of inquiry into past events and another into the nature of responsible government to be granted under the aegis of the Maharaja.

There remain still allegations against the Dewan. I would repeat my suggestion for withdrawal. Withdrawal need not mean disbelief in their truth by the authorities. They should withdraw in the higher interest. The case for responsible government must not be mixed up with the allegations which pale into insignificance compared to the question of the transference of power into the hands of the people.

Harijan, 29-10-1938

215. SPEECH AT LAKKI¹

October 26, 1938

I am here to tell you, with fifty years' experience of non-violence at my back, that it is an infinitely superior power as compared to brute force. An armed soldier relies on his weapons for his strength. Take away from him his weapons—his gun or his sword, and he generally becomes helpless. But a person who has truly realized the principle of non-violence has the God-given strength for his weapon and the world has not known anything that can match it. Man may, in a moment of unawareness forget God, but He keeps watch over him and protects him always. If the Khudai Khidmatgars have understood this secret, if they have realized that non-violence is the greatest power on earth, well and good; otherwise it would be better for Khan Saheb to restore to them their weapons which they have discarded at his instance. They will then be at least brave after the manner of the world that has today made the worship of brute force its cult. But if they discard their old weapons and at the same time remain strangers to the power of non-violence, it would be a tragedy for which I for one am not and, so far as I know, Khan Saheb too is not prepared.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

216. A DENIAL

With reference to my note headed 'Seven Complaints'² Shri Brijlal Biyani writes:

In the issue of *Harijan* dated 15th October there is something which concerns me in your article headed 'Seven Complaints'. The complaint is that I was taken in procession with music past a mosque during Jumma Prayers.

Such a complaint was made directly to me and I issued a statement on October 12, a copy of which I am herewith enclosing.

The procession passed the mosque when the prayers were over. Kazi Saheb Saiyad Mohammad Ali who led the prayers agrees that the prayers were over and that he was in some shop while the procession passed.

In his Press statement I notice the following very relevant sentence:

I am one of those who religiously believe in tolerance and respect for

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"

² *Vide* "Seven Complaints"

all religions and who believe in Hindu-Muslim unity for the attainment of swaraj in India.

LAKKI, MARWAT, October 27, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

217. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LAKKI, MARWAT,
October 27, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

One letter I posted today to catch the local post. This is for tomorrow and to send you letter from Junagadh. After you have seen it, please send it to Narandas—have sent a sweet letter in Gujarati to the Dewan¹. You will of course write.

This I am writing in the midst of the Khudai Khidmatgars to whom I shall presently speak. They are coming in.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

I am sending the cheque to N.²

From the original: C.W. 3886. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7042

218. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS³

LAKKI,
[*October 27, 1938*]⁴

The principles on which a non-violent organization is based are different from and the reverse of what obtains in a violent organization. For instance, in the orthodox army, there is a clear distinction made between an officer and a private. The latter is subordinate and inferior to the former. In a non-violent army the general is just the chief servant—first among equals. He claims no privilege over or superiority to the rank and file. You have fondly given the title

¹ Dewan of Junagadh; *vide* “Letter to Narandas Gandhi”, 27-10-1938

² Narandas

³ Extracted from Pyarelal’s report “In the Frontier Province-V”

⁴ *Vide* the preceding item.

‘Badshah Khan’ to Khan Saheb. But if in his heart of hearts he actually began to believe that he could behave like an ordinary general, it would spell his downfall and bring his power to an end. He is Badshah in the sense only that he is the truest and foremost Khudai Khidmatgar and excels all other Khudai Khidmatgars in the quality and quantity of service.

The second difference between a military organization and a peace organization is that in the former the rank and file have no part in the choice of their general and other officers. These are imposed upon them and enjoy unrestricted power over them. In a non-violent army, the general and the officers are elected or are as if elected when their authority is moral and rests solely on the willing obedience of the rank and file.

So much for internal relations between the general of a non-violent army and his soldiers. Coming to their relations with the outside world, the same sort of difference is visible between these two kinds of organizations. Just now we had to deal with an enormous crowd that had gathered outside this room. You tried to disperse it by persuasion and loving argument, not by using force and, when in the end we failed in our attempt, we withdrew and sought relief from it by getting behind closed doors in this room. Military discipline knows nothing of moral pressure.

Let me proceed a step further. The people who are crowding outside here are all our friends though they are not Khudai Khidmatgars. They are eager to listen to what we may tell them. Even their indiscipline is a manifestation of their love. But there may be others besides them elsewhere who may not be well disposed towards us, who may even be hostile to us. In armed organizations, the only recognized way of dealing with such persons is to drive them out. Here, to consider the opponent, or, for the matter of that, anybody, even in thought, as your enemy would, in the parlance of non-violence or love, be called a sin. Far from seeking revenge, a votary of non-violence would pray to God that He might bring about a change of heart of his opponent, and if that does not happen he would be prepared to bear any injury that his opponent might inflict upon him, not in a spirit of cowardice or helplessness, but bravely with a smile upon his face. I believe implicitly in the ancient saying that “non-violence real and complete will melt the stoniest hearts.”

He illustrated his remarks by describing how Mir Alam Khan, his Pathan

assailant in South Africa, had ultimately repented and become friendly.¹

This could not have happened if I had retaliated. My action can be fitly described as a process of conversion. Unless you have felt within you this urge to convert your enemy by your love, you had better retrace your steps; this business of non-violence is not for you.

‘What about thieves, dacoits and spoilers of defenceless women?’ you will ask. Must a Khudai Khidmatgar maintain his non-violence in regard to them too? My reply is, most decidedly ‘Yes’. Punishment is God’s, Who alone is the infallible Judge. It does not belong to man “with judgment weak”. Renunciation of violence must not mean apathy or helplessness in the face of wrongdoing. If our non-violence is genuine and rooted in love, it ought to provide a more effective remedy against wrongdoing than the use of brute force. I certainly expect you to trace out the dacoits, show them the error of their ways and, in so doing, brave even death.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

219. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

TOURING,
October 27, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your letters I think. Sushila has discussed with me your proposal about avoiding typhoid. She says there is no difference between Nayakum’s well and ours. She says the only safety lies in using only boiled water not merely for drinking but also for washing pots from which we eat and drink and uncooked fruits which [we] handle and eat. She thinks we ought to be able to ensure a proper supply of fool-proof boiled water. But when we meet we shall discuss all the suggestions you have made. Williams did send all the plans. But I came to the conclusion that it was beyond us. In my opinion we must revert to my original plan. We must use buckets and turn night-soil into manure in some distant spot. Even so where we have water rising to the surface there is no absolute safety. I am writing this in the midst of a meeting. So no more.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6410. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10005

¹*Vide* “Satyagraha in South Africa”

220. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 27, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter yesterday as we were leaving Bannu. Why do you think that you are away from me? How do you know that you are not coming nearer? A wall separates two guests in a hotel. Who can say whether you are separated from me only by the thickness of nine to twelve inches of a wall or by a distance of miles and miles? And are there not people who feel near enough even though they may be separated by a distance of miles? This much is certain, however, that you will be so well restored through rest that you will get energy for more work. A still greater benefit will be that your life will become regular in every particular. Observe the hours of food and rest with as religious a strictness as you do the hours of prayers. Is not eating also for the sake of *yajna* only? In any case, it should be so. If you forget one *yajna*, you forget all. As long as you like being there, you must stay on. My returning to Wardha must not concern you in any way just now. The solitude and comfort and good company that you are enjoying there, you will not be able to enjoy elsewhere. So stay there or at Jullundur. If Rajkumari feels that you are overstaying or if she has to go away somewhere else and therefore you cannot stay there, it will be a different matter. My blood-pressure yesterday evening was 136/84. Whose is better—yours or mine?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The name of the place where we are today is Gathari or something like that. At 1 we start for Dera Ismail Khan.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11669

221. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON TOUR,

October 27, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

The enclosed cheque for Rs. 750 is from the Junagadh Durbar. It was received on the occasion of the anniversary celebration. You

may spend the money in the manner we have decided. He will give Rs. 750 more for the local Harijan committee. I have sent a letter¹ to this effect to Rajkumari. She will forward the cheque to you. You need not send any acknowledgment. But write to me of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8553. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

222. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,

October 27, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have gone through your note on the murder, etc., in Gunda. It has produced no effect on me. It is not enough to assert that the murder was not the result of a private feud. Did Savji take part in politics? Had he attracted anybody's attention? Has there been a regular practice in Rajkot of beating up people in this manner? You should get—there should be—some evidence showing that the State authorities had some connection direct or indirect with the murder. You cannot jump to a conclusion on the basis of mere suspicion. The people will believe anything you say, but you should try and get evidence which would compel even opponents to believe the charge. Mere inference will not help. It also does not seem right to say that none of the culprits can be traced. And even if that is true, it does not warrant the conclusion that the State authorities had a hand in the murder. If, despite all efforts, the culprits cannot be traced, an inquiry should be held into the circumstances of the murder and the results should be placed before the public. Your beginning is almost hair-raising, but as one proceeds further one feels that this must be one of those incidents which are all too frequent in the world. But all this is only for your benefit. As for the world, it will go on as it has always done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5546

¹Vide "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 27-10-1938

223. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 27, 1938

BHAI MASANI,

I was pained to read your reply to my article. You seem to say that socialists believe in khadi, in prohibition and in non-violence and that the Committee has no evidence of speeches inciting to violence having been made. I have talked not with one socialist but with many of them. I have read their writings and their speeches. They have not . . .¹ non-violence, have ridiculed khadi and said that prohibition is only a waste of money. As for the evidence of the use of force, I get it almost daily. This being the case, how can I change my opinion?

I have sent to Father the foreword² to *Dadabhai Naoroji*.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4130. Also C.W. 4888. Courtesy: M. R. Masani

224. MONSTROUS IF TRUE

A correspondent writes:

Here in Nasik there is a Police Training School. Police officers are made in this school. They are expected to have their meals in a common mess and they are obliged to partake of fleshmeat and wines. Let alone meat-eating, how far is it consistent with the prohibition policy of the Government to train its police officers in wine-drinking? These officers may well be required to take part in the prohibition drive. Perhaps you do not even know that meat-eating and wine-drinking is compulsory in this school.

I must confess my ignorance of the compulsion. It is only the assurance with which my correspondent writes that has induced me to publish the letter. If the information is true, it is surely monstrous that meat-eating and wine-drinking should be considered a necessary part of a police officer's training. This rule excludes vegetarians and non-drinkers from training as police officers. The rule is a grave injustice in a country in which tens of thousands are vegetarians by religion. I

¹ Not clear in the source

² *Vide* "Foreword to "Dadabhai Naoroji", 19-10-1938

can only hope that the information is incorrect and that if it is true, the glaring wrong will be redressed without delay.

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, October 28, 1938

Harijan, 5-11-1938

225. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DERA,
October 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is merely to tell you this is a lazy day for me in one way and a very busy day in another way.

Did you ever receive my letter in which I asked you to send me some khadi sheets? Whether you did and forgot to send, or whether you never got it, pray do not send any now, as Chandrashanker has sent four pads. They will see me through.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3645. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6454

226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 28, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Yesterday's letter was written in a village. This is from Dera where we are for full three days. I got your draft letter to E.¹ here. It is also good but for the last paragraph. The last para shows mental fatigue. You will see it is disconnected and wholly unnecessary. It will be insulting for England well armed to honour a little nation for her throwing away arms. If Czechs could do the thing, the nations of the earth including Germany will be awe-struck.

You must attend to your eyes at once. You have the right helper in Kri[shna]chandra.

¹ Presumably Emil Hacha, who had succeeded Benes as President of Czechoslovakia, on November 30, after the latter had resigned on October 5 and left the country

I have no recollection of having authorized tube well.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6411. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10006

227. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DERA,
October 28, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending the accompanying letter, which you may like to read. Don't worry about it after reading it. I have even sent a brief note¹ on the Nasik School. They have spared me today and tomorrow for *Harijan* work. With Khan Saheb in command, no one is permitted to come and disturb me. And moreover I am observing silence. Hence I am in an ideal place here, just as you are there. We tour in a lorry. It contains a bed for me. Khan Saheb does not crowd the lorry with too many people. Tell Rajkumari whatever of this you think may interest her.

Tell Bablo to write sometimes to me even under a false pretext. What does he think regarding himself ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11670

228. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 28, 1938

CHI. MANI,

You have been forced to write to me after many years. The letter is full of news indeed. Continue to write in the same way. Assuming the report about the Nasik Police School to be true, I have written a note on it. Also talk to Kher² or Munshi³ if you happen to meet them.

If the officials there do not work sincerely for enforcing

¹ *Vide* "Monstrous If True", 5-11-1938

² B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay

³ K. M. Munshi, Home Minister of Bombay

prohibition, the Ministers should protest to the Governor in strong language. But they must be convinced that the officials do not have the heart in the work.

About lands, I had written even before I received Vallabhbhai's letter. Send me a report of the debate on the subject in the Assembly.

I have not said that no steps can be taken against pornographic literature. I did give my opinion. Of course, I am afraid that people have come to like obscene literature and it cannot, therefore, be easily stopped. It will stop only when learned men themselves are disgusted with such literature. I do believe that pornographic writings should be stopped by law if it can be done. But please remember that there is a great difference between forcing students to read such things and the publication of obscene writing in newspapers.

What is happening in Rajkot is wonderful. If the tempo is kept up, there is no doubt that the people will get what they want. Father has done the correct thing in regard to Travancore. There was no harm in his having called Ramachandran. Before Father's letter arrived, however, I had already issued my statement¹. I feel that it was necessary to issue one. Now there is no immediate need to go to Travancore.

The constant flow of mucus from the nose into the throat is not at all good. It must be stopped.

I understand about Baroda. Let me know what happens in Bhadran.

I hope to reach Wardha about the 15th. The tour here will be over by the 9th.

What is happening regarding Subhas Babu is not out of my mind. That is why I discussed it in the Working Committee. But Father was of the view that we should wait till Jawaharlal's arrival, so I kept silent. There is bound to be some difficulty this time in electing the President. Let Father think over the suggestion² I have made in *Harijan*. I am of the view that letting the present state of affairs continue will be harmful.

I have now replied to both your letters. Show this to Father when he has some free time.

I keep really excellent health. Father should visit this Province,

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 26-10-1938

² *Vide*, "That Unfortunate Walk-out"

in Maulana's company.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 119-21

229. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

October 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your three letters together—one addressed at Delhi, one from Segaon and the third directly.

It is very good indeed that you have gone there.¹ Congratulations on your health having improved. I feel now you are your normal self. So why should I worry?

I am doing very well indeed. The climate suits me. The cold is such as I can bear. Mahadev is flourishing in Simla. You must be getting the news about the sickness at Segaon. How is Nanabhai? How are you getting on there? What work are you doing?

We shall arrive at Segaon about the 15th.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7101. Also C.W. 4593. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

230. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 28, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is good that you have started helping Mirabehn. She has her faults; but she is very devout and you will reap rich benefit from all your service. You will learn from her pure and practical lessons in *brahmacharya*.

¹ The addressee was at this time in Gram Dakshinamurti, a rural education centre near a village Ambla in Bhavnagar district of Saurashtra

I have already written to you about other matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4307

231. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DERA ISMAIL KHAN¹*

October 28, 1938

I thank you for the purse which you have presented but you should know that *Daridranarayana*, whose representative I claim to be, is not so easily satisfied. My business is with the crores of semi-starved masses, who need relief sorely. We have to tackle through khadi the question of a huge annual drain from India for cotton purchase. Through khadi the A. I. S. A. has already distributed over four crores of rupees as wages among the needy, poor, Hindu and Mussalman spinners and weavers. Then there is the question of Harijan uplift—an equally Herculean task. Your donation ought to be commensurate with the magnitude of the task for which it is intended. Yours is not a poor city. The donors are mostly merchants. Surely, you could have done better.

Referring next to the Khudai Khidmatgars and to the strained relations between them and the local volunteers which he had noticed, he proceeded:

These differences are unfortunate. If, however, Khudai Khidmatgars live up to their creed as they have now understood it, the differences and quarrels will be things of the past. They are on their trial. If they come out victorious they will be instrumental in bringing about communal unity and establishing swaraj. I know, to banish anger altogether from one's breast is a difficult task. It cannot be achieved through pure, personal effort. It can be done only by God's grace. I ask you all to join me in the prayer that God might enable the Khudai Khidmatgars to conquer the last traces of anger and violence that might still be lurking in their breasts.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V". A purse of Rs. 5,753 was presented to Gandhiji. He rebuked the people for such a meagre sum as Rs. 5,000 of the total amount was a single donation.

232. *THE PEOPLE'S EDUCATION MOVEMENT*

When Dr. Hengchih Tao visited me some time ago I invited him to give me a note on the remarkable People's Education Movement going on in China. He has now sent the following instructive note¹ which cannot but be useful to us in India.

Harijan, 29-10-1938

233. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

DERA,
October 29, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Though you both say you don't expect me to write daily, you do expect to hear from me!!

I say nothing about myself because I have never kept better. The weather, food and peace have combined to bring about the results. I have nobody to quarrel with except Amtussalaam. But my silence is an effective check on that too.

There was an interruption after I had written the foregoing lines. And when I write with the left hand, everything moves slow, the brain included. It is a good thing.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3646. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6455

234. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

DERA,
October 29, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The right hand needs some rest. The accompanying is for your information. If you wish, you may write a few lines to Dorothy.

Have you heard about Bhansali and Rajendra having had typhoid in Segaoon? Does anyone in Segaoon write to you directly?

¹ Not reproduced here

Bhansali is quite well now. Rajendra is still having fever.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11672

235. *LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI*

October 29, 1938

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. You have my blessings, of course, for the New Year's Day and for the whole year.

I was certainly pained when I heard about your desire to give up public service. But I consoled myself with the thought that you would do nothing without thinking. What guidance can I give you? Don't do anything through false shame or under pressure from anybody. Do only as much as the strength of your heart permits. There is no sin at all in giving up public service and working for money. Doing service is not something that everybody can digest. If we eat anything that causes indigestion, it cannot but result in disease. It would be much better instead, to eat only what one can digest.

It is good indeed that for the present you are staying on. Maybe, by and by, your economic condition will cease to trouble you. Please remember that it is good to live in poverty. Poverty shapes a man's character. In plenty one does not know at all where one is going. Moreover, most of the world lives in poverty. We see very few living in plenty. I have never envied such people. Sometimes I pity them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

236. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

DERA,

October 30, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is nearing 8 p. m.—my time for walking out.

The last of three deputations has just left me.

What did I say about S.'s prescription for Durga?

You are right. If I gave up Segaon altogether, it would be unjust to Aryanayakum. But I am not giving up Segaon. If all goes well, part of the year I must spend there. Let us see. Heaven's Light my Guide.

I am well.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Do you remember where you left Ku's book which I gave you for revision?

From the original: C.W. 3887. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7043

237. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

DERA,
October 30, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Your complaint is just. I have taken up too much on my shoulders. The more correct statement is I have been overwhelmed. And so what could stand by naturally got neglected. I now send you my draft¹ which I hope you will be able to decipher without difficulty. Before making it final please show it to Shankerlal and Jajujee. Your book I gave to R. K. in despair.² I have written to her.

How are you all doing?

I expect to leave Peshawar on 10th.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10136

238. INTERPRETATION OF MEMBER'S PLEDGE

[October 30, 1938]³

The pledge was purposely drawn as it is of a general character. It is a gentleman's pledge, each member being put upon his or her honour as to the interpretation of the expression 'the best part of my

¹ *Vide* the following item.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ *ibid*

energy and talents to the furtherance of its object which is the all-round welfare of the villagers of India’.

Members are also pledged not only to work for the furtherance of the object but also ‘to strive to live up to the ideals’ and ‘prefer the use of village manufactures to any other’.

Recommending members of the Board will therefore see to it that the candidate for membership has, in everything he does, the welfare of the villagers at heart. It follows that such a person will give to village work at least some time every day not necessarily in villages but may be for villages. Thus a member living in a city, who on a particular day sells to or induces a person to buy village manufactures, has done some village work for that day.

The member recommending will also see to it that the candidate wherever possible uses articles of village manufacture, e.g., khadi in the place of mill-cloth, village earthen pots instead of factory-made china, reed-pen instead of steel-pen, handmade paper instead of ordinary paper, wholesome *babul* or *neem* or such other tooth-brush instead of the very insanitary and injurious tooth-brush, leather goods made in villages out of village-flayed cattle instead [of] tanned hide, the ordinary village gur instead of factory sugar, hand-pounded whole rice instead of mill-polished rice, etc.

For Ku

The Board would draw the attention of agents, workers and the public to the importance of dead cattle hide as an article of trade and village manufacture. Workers are advised to study in their own areas the method of disposal of the dead cattle and its preparation from flaying to tanning and report to the Board their observations. Public are invited to prefer the use of only such leather goods as are prepared in the villages.

Things to Remember

Agent’s appointment of Hardhyansingh, Delhi. Accurate description of the areas of work of members of Board and agents.

From a photostat: G.N. 10137 and 10138

239. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

DERA,
October 30, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I think you will like to see the accompanying letter.

Today the tour started at 12 and we returned at 4. We visited a village called Kulachi. Tomorrow we are going to Tank.

Even now there is no cold in the air at all. We sleep in the open.
We leave for Segaoon on the 10th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Does Brijkrishna write to you regularly?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11673

240. *TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

DERA ISMAIL KHAN,
October 31, 1938

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY HIGH

MEET AGATHA HARRISON ARRIVING SECOND OR THIRD. GIVE
HER MY LOVE. TELL HER FINISH BOMBAY. AWAIT MY
RETURN WARDHA ABOUT TWELFTH.

BAPU

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

241. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

October 31, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is just when we are ready to start.

What is the difference between radio news and the paper news?

Both are equally unreliable. My health has suffered no set-back. I am inclined to think that I can flourish even in midwinter. But I may be over-enthusiastic. The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

WARRIOR
ALIAS TYRANT
ALIAS ROBBER
WHAT NEXT ?

From the original: C.W. 3647. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6456

242. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have told Brijkrishna to write to you every day. He alone knows how much love and interest he pours in what he writes.

I cannot give you quite definitely the date of our departure. We are trying to leave on the 9th from Kambalpur or Rawalpindi or Taxila. You should reach Delhi latest by the 10th. It will be better if you can reach on the 9th.

I will not let you stay in Wardha just now. I like the idea of a sea voyage, with Durga and Babla accompanying you, unless Durga likes and wants to stay at Bulsar. I should like you to make a trip as far as Singapore. You may even spend a few days in Singapore. You should resume work on January 20 at the earliest. If you wish to write anything in the mean while, you may do so. I have no fear at all of your time being wasted anywhere. And you will return to work a fitter man.

I am allowing your notes to go as they are. Ask back the article about Massingham. It is very fine indeed. It is poetry, but it is not for *Harijan*. Moreover, though there is poetry in it, it contains nothing of value to learn from our point of view. Is there anything common between their villages and our villages? Even at the time when those villages were formed, the people there were armed pirates and free booters. The villages were signs of this fact. Our villages are so many dung-hills. The king took interest in them only for the purpose of robbing them. The Vaishyas only gathered money. The Shudras and Atishudras slaved. Your article, therefore, can provide us no inspiration. Would it not be sheer ignorance for any superficial observer to see poetry in our villages? And if you take out extracts from the

Vedas and place them beside extracts from modern English, we would have to hang our heads in shame. Elaborate this criticism of mine further and understand my point. If there is any error in my view, let me know. I read the article today at three in the morning. But you may send it to *Modern Review* or the *Hindustan Times* if you wish.

We have to march out immediately. I am writing this while eating. I am eating fruit with a fork.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11674

243. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TANK*¹

October 31, 1938

They² feel that the existence of a microscopic Hindu minority in the midst of the predominantly Mussalman population in this area can be rendered possible only if the latter will be as true *hamsayas*—neighbours—to them and they have asked me to appeal to Khudai Khidmatgars to fulfil their natural role in respect of them. I entirely endorse their feeling and their appeal and I am convinced that it is within your power to set them at their ease if you will but fulfil the expectations you have raised in me. As I observed on a previous occasion, the Hindus, the Mussalmans and the Englishmen in this province are being weighed in the balance. History will record its verdict about the Englishmen's deeds. But Hindus and Mussalmans can write their own history by being correct in their mutual dealings. For the Khudai Khidmatgars their course of action has been determined. They have to become a living wall of protection to their neighbours.

A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. It has happened before and it may again happen if the non-violence of Khudai Khidmatgars is unalloyed gold, not mere glittering tinsel.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"

² The Hindus, who had met Gandhiji in deputation and complained about the state of general insecurity in which they had to live

244. TALE TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS¹

TANK,
October 31, 1938

If in your heart of hearts there is the slightest inclination to regard your non-violence as a mere cloak or a stepping-stone to greater violence as suggested by this friend², nay, unless you are prepared to carry your non-violence to its ultimate logical conclusion and to pray for forgiveness even for a baby-killer and a child-murderer, you cannot sign your Khudai Khidmatgar's pledge of non-violence. To sign that pledge with mental reservations would only bring disgrace upon you, your organization and hurt him whom you delight to call the Pride of Afghans.

But what about the classical instance of the defenceless sister or mother who is threatened with molestation by an evil-minded ruffian, you will ask. Is the ruffian in question to be allowed to work his will? Would not the use of violence be permissible even in such a case? My reply is 'no'. You will entreat the ruffian. The odds are that in his intoxication he will not listen. But then you will interpose yourself between the intended victim and him. Very probably you will be killed but you will have done your duty. Ten to one, killing you unarmed and unresisting will assuage the assailant's passion and he will leave his victim unmolested. But it has been said to me that tyrants do not act as we want or expect them to. Finding you unresisting he may tie you to a post and make you watch his rape of the victim. If you have the will you will so exert yourself that you will break yourself in the attempt or break the bonds. In either case, you will open the eyes of the wrongdoer. Your armed resistance could do no more, while if you were worsted, the position would likely be much worse than if you died unresisting. There is also the chance of the intended victim copying your calm courage and immolating herself rather than allowing herself to be dishonoured.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-V"

² The reference is to a Pathan's question quoted by Gandhiji in his article "Khudai Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan"; *vide* "Khudai Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan", 19-11-1938

245. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS¹

October 31, 1938

It has touched me deeply and also humbled me to find that at a time when, owing to the Ramzan fast, not a kitchen fire was lit in the whole of this village of Mussalman homes, food had to be cooked for us in this place. I am past the stage when I could fast with you as I did in South Africa to teach the Mussalman boys who were under my care to keep the Ramzan fast. I had also to consider the feelings of Khan Saheb who has made my physical well-being his day-and-night concern and who would have felt embarrassed if I had fasted. I can only ask your pardon.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

246. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[October 1938]²

CHI. LILA,

I hope you are bringing credit to me and yourself there. Give no thought to my experiment. I have started the experiment to be able to render greater service to womankind. That includes you. In a note written in jest and a little anger, I called you 'Lila'. You liked it. Your father used to call you 'Lili', and so you demanded that I should also call you 'Lili'. For, you had started showing me the same affection as you did for your father. That alone would make your love for me greater than that for your father. If you cannot understand this, ask Mahadev. Replying to one of his letters, I had told him that I would call you 'Lili' when I had qualified myself to do that. This experiment is also to gain that eligibility because you are also a woman. While being there, think that you are with me not because you have gone there to do your work, but because I have sent you there to do my work. And my work means that you should relieve Mahadev's burden as much as possible. Hence, do not waste Mahadev's time talking about your happiness or unhappiness. Your duty is to go on

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI". Gandhiji gave the talk in a small village near Dera Ismail Khan.

² From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 17-10-1938, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 17-10-1938 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-10-1938

doing unquestioningly whatever work Mahadev or Durga may entrust to you or what you can carry out yourself. And you will do your work silently because I cannot give you here what you would be able to learn there. It is true that you cannot gain there what you can gain here. But since I have sent you there to do my work, you will easily get the benefit of having stayed with me.

Eat well and build up your body. If you do that you can occasionally come here for a brief visit. But do not keep waiting for opportunities to come here. Devote yourself to putting things in perfect order there. You have got to give time to Bablo. Do write to me whenever you wish. And whenever you write, try to make your handwriting beautiful. Do not write with a pencil. And do not follow Mahadev's example of writing with a fountain-pen. I tolerate Mahadev's fountain-pen because Mahadev is a scribe. You are not a scribe and are not going to be one. So, I shall not, and I should not tolerate the fountain-pen in your case.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 11289. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

247. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 1, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I hope you had a comfortable voyage.

On second thoughts I decided to stop you from coming here. During the last days of the tour I could have given you not a moment and Khan Saheb would not be available to you during that period. You will have seen all you could wish of Bombay during these few days.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

Peshawar which we reach this evening.

From a photostat: G.N. 1505

248. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS¹

PANIALA,
[November 1, 1938]²

I have now had the assurance from your own lips of what I had from Khan Saheb already. You have adopted non-violence not merely as a temporary expedient but as a creed for good. Therefore, mere renunciation of the sword, if there is sword in your heart, will not carry you far. Your renunciation of the sword cannot be said to be genuine unless it generates in your hearts a power the opposite of that of the sword and superior to it. Hitherto revenge or retaliation has been held amongst you as a sacred obligation. If you have a feud with anybody, that man becomes your enemy for all time and the feud is handed down from father to son. In non-violence even if somebody regards you as his enemy you may not so regard him in return, and of course there can be no question of revenge. Who could be more cruel or blood-thirsty than the late Gen. Dyer? Yet the Jallianwala Bagh Congress Inquiry Committee, on my advice, had refused to ask for his prosecution. I had no trace of ill will against him in my heart. I would have also liked to meet him personally and reach his heart, but that was to remain a mere aspiration.

At the end of his talk he was presented a poser by one of the Khudai Khidmatgars who had followed his address closely: "You expect us to protect the Hindus against the raiders and yet you tell us that we may not employ our weapons even against thieves and dacoits. How can the two go together?" Gandhiji replied:

The contradiction is only apparent. If you have really assimilated the non-violent spirit, you won't wait for the raiders to appear on the scene, but will seek them out in their own territory and prevent the raids from taking place. If even then a raid does take place, you will face the raiders and tell them that they can take away all your belongings but they shall touch the property of your Hindu neighbours only over your dead body. And if there are hundreds of Khudai Khidmatgars ready to protect the Hindu *hamsayas* with their lives, the raiders will certainly think better of butchering in cold blood

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI"

² According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*, Gandhiji was at Paniala on this date.

all the innocent and inoffensive Khudai Khidmatgars who are non-violently pitched against them. You know the story of Abdul Quadir Jilani and his forty gold mohurs with which his mother had sent him to Baghdad. On the way the caravan was waylaid by robbers who proceeded to strip Abdul Quadir's companions of all their belongings. Thereupon Abdul Quadir, who so far happened to be untouched, shouted out to the raiders and offered them the forty gold mohurs which his mother had sewn into the lining of his tunic. The legend goes that the raiders were so struck by the simple naivete of the boy, as the saint then was, that they not only let him go untouched but returned to his companions all their belongings.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

249. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 2, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

All being well we reach there¹ on 11th including Mahadev. These illnesses have made me impatient to reach you.

Your second letter to Dr. B.² was quite good.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3612. Courtesy: MirabeHN. Also G.N. 10007

250. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

AHMADBANDH,
November 2, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. The other mail must be waiting in Peshawar. We shall reach there at 5. We shall start from there not on the 6th but on the 5th, and instead of returning here, we shall take a train on the 9th from some station on the way. So we are definitely reaching Delhi on the 10th. We don't intend to break journey at Delhi. We shall, therefore, reach Wardha on the 11th. The illnesses at Segaon have set me thinking. I feel that as long as the water there does not improve, the

¹ Segaon

² Dr. Benes

place should be abandoned and only as many people as are absolutely necessary should be retained and the rest asked to go. But why should I make you worry about it now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Bandh is a small village.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11675

251. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

November 2, 1938

BA,

Only nine days remain now, and God willing, we shall meet. We shall leave for Segaon the same day. I forgot to reply to one remark in your letter. You said that while leaving I did not even put my hand on your head. As the motor started I also felt that, but you were away from me. Do you require outward signs? Why do you believe that because I do not show my love by outward signs, it has dried up? I assure you that my love has increased and goes on increasing. Not that it was less before, but what was there is becoming purer day by day. I do not look upon you merely as a clay doll. What more need I say? If you also, like . . .¹ ask for outward signs, I will comply.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 30

252. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

November 2, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

As you are an expert in nursing the sick, you have got such opportunities without seeking them. So far your cases improve and bring you credit. May this be ever so.

It is desirable that Rajbhushan should go home. It is not proper

¹ Omission as in the source

that he should stay in Segaon at the cost of his health. But now I shall be returning there soon. I am counting the days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10777

253. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

November 2, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I feel worried because of the illnesses. I think you, Shakaribehn, Parnerkar and others should leave Segaon for the present. It is not right to risk your lives. But I hope to arrive there on the 11th. Meanwhile think over this. If I can make Segaon healthy, I would call all of you there. This is a new problem facing me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing to Babudi today. I have no time at all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10594

254. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 2, 1938

BAPA,

I got your letter. It is desirable that the money sent to you from here should be spent in this region. I have not been able to study the matter carefully. You should tour this region. If you can bear the cold, then come this very month, otherwise in March next year. It is extremely cold here in December, January and February. It is said that there are eight lakhs of Harijans in this Province. I saw your sharp rejoinder to Ambedkar. But who can wake up a person pretending to sleep?

Who said that you were old? When you pass away, you will pass away in full youth. He is old whose mind is old. Ramdas, for instance, has become an old man in the prime of youth. He has no zest for anything at all.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1179

255. MESSAGE ON OPENING OF KHADI EXHIBITION,
PESHAWAR¹

[Before November 3, 1938]²

Do not be misled by names. A piece of Japanese cloth cannot become swadeshi merely by being labelled 'Swadeshi'. Only an article that is wholly manufactured in India by the hands of millions of villagers and out of raw materials grown in India deserves the name of swadeshi.

Khadi alone, it will be seen, fully satisfies this test; all other cloth is a travesty of swadeshi. Just as there can be no dawn without the sun, so there can be no genuine swadeshi without khadi.

Judged by this test, Peshawar is left far behind in the race for swadeshi. There is only one khadi bhandar here and that too is being run at a loss. I hope that one result of this Exhibition will be to put the khadi bhandar on a firm footing, and to preclude the possibility of its having to close down.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

256. SPEECH AT OPENING OF KHADI EXHIBITION,
PESHAWAR³

November 3, 1938

Dr. Gopichand has thanked the Ministers for the help that they are giving to khadi work. But I find that neither all the Ministers nor all of the Congress M. L. A.s here use khadi as habitual wear. Some wear it only in the Assembly. Some do not do even that. This is contrary to both the spirit and the letter of the Congress constitution. Even the Red Shirts have yet to become khadi-clad. . . . If they all take to khadi, the one lakh of them will in less than no time make the whole province khadi-clad. This province is rich in the resources for the manufactures of khadi but it comes last in respect of khadi work

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Peshawar Khadi Exhibition"

² The Khadi Exhibition was inaugurated on November 3 but the message was printed in advance and was circulated among the visitors.

³ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Peshawar Khadi Exhibition". Among those present on the occasion were Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Dr. Khan Saheb and a number of Congress M. L. A.s.

actually done.

I would like you all to visit the Exhibition in a spirit of inquiry and study. Khadi organization work, unlike textile mill industry, does not require lakhs of capital and highly specialized technical skill. Even a layman can take it Up. I hope that this first Khadi Exhibition in the Frontier Province will be followed by many more in the near future.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

257. KATHIAWAR NOTES

The following notes¹ were prepared for me by Shri Rajkumari Amrit Kaur on finishing her recent tour in Kathiawar for Harijan and khadi work. The notes are valuable not only for the workers in Kathiawar, but contain reflections which are of all-India importance. I hope that workers will profit by the experiences recorded by the Rajkumari. There is one suggestion she has made, which can be immediately given effect to, if what she says of the Princes is true, as I think it is. She has credited the Princes with the opinion that they have no belief in untouchability and that they will fling open all temples to Harijans, if their people desired it. Her suggestion, therefore, is that they need not wait for any expression of opinion on the part of their people but should build and open temples which are accessible to all. The Princes can make it a point of visiting only these temples to the exclusion of those whose gates are barred against Harijans. And if these temples are built and situated attractively and are well managed, they will be a powerful aid to the breaking down of untouchability. It is possible to extend the principle to all the institutions which, for fear of wounding orthodox susceptibility, they would not dare to open to Harijans. This is the line of least resistance. There is not much meaning in a pious declaration of disbelief in untouchability, if the princes cannot or will not take the cautious step suggested by the Rajkumari.

PESHAWAR, November 4, 1938

Harijan, 12-11-1938

¹ Not reproduced here. The notes dealt with the disabilities suffered by Harijans in the various States visited by the author, such as Rajkot, Vankaner, Morvi, Jamnagar, Porbandar, Dwarka, Junagadh, Bilkha, Dhani, Amreli, Lathi, Bhavnagar, Palitana and Wadhwan. The notes also said that khadi worth Rs. 1,000 was sold during the tour.

258. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

November 4, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You seem to be quite busy nursing Balkrishna. Mahodaya seems to have been a little negligent.

The cleaning of the village also seems to have made good progress. Write to Vijaya and tell her that I am hard pressed for time and so she should not complain about the absence of letters from me. I hope you are doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10778

259. NOTES

AUNDH REFORMS

I congratulate both the Rajasaheb and the people of Aundh on the grant of responsible government. This small State has always been progressive. The ruler of Aundh has but anticipated the wants of his people and has even been in advance of them in social matters. The declaration of full responsibility was the natural result of the past acts of the ruler. I hope that the rights conferred by the proclamation will not in any way be whittled down in drawing up the constitution. I would suggest that the privy purse should on no account exceed rupees thirty-six thousand. There should be a definition of fundamental rights, i. e., equality of all in the eye of the law, abolition of untouchability and liberty of speech. The last para of the proclamation is appealing. It truly says that "self-government implies self-control and self-sacrifice", and adds: "in the new era that is coming to Aundh, and we hope to the whole of our country, the strong will serve the weak, the wealthy will serve the poor, the learned will serve the illiterate."

It is to be hoped that the noble example of Aundh will be copied by the other States and that its people will by their conduct prove themselves in every way worthy of the responsibility that is to devolve on them. The fact that in the heir to the gadi they have one who, from all accounts I have received, is a true servant of the people,

must be a great help at the time of the inauguration of responsible government. The Western education received by him has not spoiled him. He is reported to be a votary of truth and ahimsa. He himself takes part in village uplift, does road cleaning himself in common with other volunteers and handles the spade and the basket with as much ease as they. He wields the pen. He takes pride in doing the scavenging work including the removal of night-soil.

ARYA SAMAJ AND FILTHY LITERATURE

Shri Dharma Dev Shastri of Kanya Gurukul, Dehra Dun, and then Acharya Dev Sharma Abhaya of Gurukul Kangri have written to me to say that my reference in my article "Filth in Literature"¹ to my daughter-in-law, who is studying in the Kanya Gurukul and who wrote to me about the filth she found in certain text-books prescribed for her examination, has been interpreted in some quarters to mean that the Arya Samaj authorities countenance such literature. Both the friends repudiate the suggestion in emphatic terms. Acharya Dev Sharma Abhaya tells me that the Gurukul authorities were so meticulous about the matter that even for the works of classical poets like Kalidas they insisted on expurgated editions being printed before they would allow their students to study even a celebrated classic like *Shakuntala*. What has, however, happened is that, of late, they have allowed their students to prepare for Sahitya Sammelan examinations which tolerates books containing unclean literature. I understand that the Gurukul authorities have brought the matter to the notice of the Sammelan management and asked them to withdraw the text-books which contain objectionable references. I hope that they will not rest satisfied till they have succeeded in their battle against unclean literature forming part of students' text-books.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

No matter what warnings I issued, my correspondence is daily growing. Even at the risk of a breakdown, I cannot cope with the whole of it. Nor can Pyarelal, even though he often burns midnight oil. Though Mahadev Desai is decidedly on the mend and is even being permitted to write what he feels impelled to and can write without an effort, he cannot be given any correspondence to deal with. I must not put his health in jeopardy again. Even a well regulated life

¹ Vide "Filth in Literature", 15-10-1938

like his has limitations which must not be disregarded. It is therefore a question if he can ever again be burdened with correspondence which is not strictly connected with *Harijan*. Let the readers, please, recognize my difficulty. I have a file of papers unread. Some has been read and remains undisposed of. Thus there are long statements complaining against the Bihar Ministers, longer still from Malabar complaining against Rajagopalachari. I have cursorily glanced through them. I am wholly unable to deal with them. I may not even send them to the accused Ministers unless I am prepared to give the necessary time to them. I have neither the time nor the inclination. The Working Committee is the proper tribunal for such matters. If I began to handle such complaints it would be an unwarranted interference with the Ministers concerned and with the functions of the Working Committee.

But this solid reason for non-interference is irrelevant to this note. The decisive reason is my utter inability. Therefore, these and such correspondents will forgive me for not even sending them personal acknowledgements. Then, there are letters complaining against the fancied or real misdeeds of Congress Committees in various provinces. These correspondents attribute to me powers and influence I do not possess. But here again the physical inability is the peremptory cause for my silence. Then there is the unread correspondence. Heaven knows what is contained in it. There are, too, personal letters which I would gladly deal with if I could. I know I can give some help or comfort to these correspondents, if I can deal with their letters as I should like to. As it is, I must plead my inability to handle such correspondence. What energy I have left in me has to be reserved for the general causes which, I fancy, I can still serve. Therefore, correspondents who are awaiting answers will forgive me if they never receive any reply. These who are in the habit of writing to me will help me much if they will restrict their correspondence only to such questions as may lend themselves to discussion or advice through the columns of *Harijan*. In other words *Harijan* should, as far as possible, be my only letter or message to those who seek to know my views on matters which interest them and which are also of importance to the public.

PESHAWAR, November 5, 1938

Harijan, 12-11-1938

260. WHY NOT GREAT POWERS?

In the criticisms on my recent writings on the plight of Czechoslovakia,¹ I have observed one thing which demands an answer.

Some critics argue that if the non-violent remedy I have suggested for the Czechs is only for comparatively weak because small nations like them and not for the great powers like England or France or America, it cannot be of much value, if any.

Now if the critics will reread my article, they will see that I have refrained from suggesting it to these big powers because of their bigness, in other words, because of my timidity. But there was a more potent reason for my not addressing them. They were not in distress and therefore in no need of any remedy. To use a medical-expression, they were not ailing as Czechoslovakia was. Their existence was not threatened as Czechoslovakia's was. Any appeal from me therefore to the great powers would have amounted to an empty and unwanted sermon.

By experience I have also found that people rarely become virtuous for virtue's sake. They become virtuous from necessity. Nor is there anything wrong in a man becoming good under pressure of circumstances. It would be no doubt better if he becomes good for its own sake.

The Czechs were given a choice either to surrender peacefully to Germany's might or to fight single-handed and risk almost certain destruction. It was at this moment that it became necessary for one like me to present an alternative which had proved its effectiveness under somewhat similar circumstances. My appeal to the Czechs was in my opinion as appropriate as it would have been inappropriate in the case of the great powers.

My critics might have, however, well asked why I had gone out of my self-prescribed orbit to speak to a Western nation when I could not show cent per cent success of non-violence on the Indian soil,—more especially now, when I had begun to entertain serious doubts as to whether Congressmen were really living up to their creed or policy of non-violence. Indeed I had in mind the limitation and the present state of uncertainty about the Congress position. But my own faith in

¹ *Vide* "If I were a Czech", 15-10-1938 and "Logical Consequence", 8-10-1938

the non-violent remedy was as bright as ever when I wrote that article. And I felt that in the supreme hour of its trial it would be cowardly on my part not to suggest to the Czechs the non-violent remedy for acceptance. What may ultimately prove impossible of acceptance by crores of people, undisciplined and unused till but recently to corporate suffering, might be possible for a small, compact, disciplined nation inured to corporate suffering. I had no right to arrogate to myself any belief that India alone and no other nation was fit for non-violent action. I must confess that I have believed and still believe that India was the fittest nation to enforce non-violent action for regaining her freedom. In spite of signs to the contrary, I have the hope that the whole mass of people, who are more than the Congress, will respond only to non-violent action. They are the readiest of all the nations of the earth for such action. But when a case for immediate application of the remedy presented itself before me, I could not restrain myself from suggesting it to the Czechs for their acceptance.

It is however open to the great powers to take it up any day and cover themselves with glory and earn the eternal gratitude of posterity. If they or any of them could shed the fear of destruction, if they disarmed themselves, they will automatically help the rest to regain their sanity. But then these great powers have to give up imperialistic ambitions and ex-ploitation of the so-called uncivilized or semi-civilized nations of the earth and revise their mode of life. It means a complete revolution. Great nations can hardly be expected in the ordinary course to move spontaneously in a direction the reverse of the one they have followed, and according to their notion of value, from victory to victory. But miracles have happened before and may happen even in this very prosaic age. Who can dare limit God's power of undoing wrong? One thing is certain. If the mad race for armaments continues, it is bound to result in a slaughter such as has never occurred in history. If there is a victor left the very victory will be a living death for the nation that emerges victorious. There is no escape from the impending doom save through a bold and unconditional acceptance of the non-violent method with all its glorious implications. Democracy and violence can ill go together. The States that are today nominally democratic have either to become frankly totalitarian or, if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent. It is a blasphemy to say that non-violence can only be practised by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals.

PESHAWAR, November 5, 1938

Harijan, 12-11-1938

261. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PESHAWAR,
November 5, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Evidently you had the call perhaps at the same hour that I felt you will have it. As far as my recollection goes, I wrote to you also that if you felt the urge I would let you go. Of course the idea originated not with me, but with Rajkumari; and I wrote to her suggesting that she should write to you directly. But in view of your letter, all this becomes past history. We will discuss ways and means when I am there which I hope will be on the 11th. I hope I shall find Agatha there on my arrival. If the final decision is for you to go, what I feel is that the sooner you can go the better, if you can stand the continental winter. I do not want you to risk your health. It may be that if you reconcile yourself to sterile eggs you might be able to stand the cold better, but of course you shall be the sole judge.

I am already moving with reference to the financial part of it. I have relaxed temporarily the silence rule. Hence I have been able to dictate this while munching grapes.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6413. Courtesy: MirabeHN. Also G.N. 10008

262. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PESHAWAR,
November 5, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your decision to stay on is all right. I like it too and I certainly liked the idea about a sea voyage. I like Kallenbach's suggestion very much indeed. You may go and see the field of my battles. I should like you very much to see Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm, the house in which I used to stay in Durban, the Johannesburg office, etc. Manilal will dance with joy. But it might be difficult to take Durga and Bablo as far as that. I should like Bablo to remain with me. And moreover, a visit to South Africa would mean at least four months. South Africa is not less big than India. Go and see the four Colonies. And you must

not miss the Victoria Falls. When you go so far, you cannot return immediately. It is worth going there even if only for the sake of meeting Miss Schlesin. Kallenbach will perhaps have a time that he will remember for ever. The climate there is beyond praise. Think over it. If you feel inclined, I am certainly ready to send you.

If Mirabehn wishes to go, I am ready to let her go. Her going can do no harm at all. While she has to suppress herself with me, in the West she can work independently. There is no limit to her courage.

I completely forgot to write to you about Muirhead. If I had had some talk, I would certainly have written to you. But I think he did not have the courage to discuss anything with me. Or maybe his only aim was to see me. I gave him no encouragement at all. I had no desire to. What was there to talk about? If the corruption in the Congress can be got rid of, we can get swaraj today without any discussion with anybody. If it is not got rid of, swaraj is an impossibility. I will stop my pen now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11676

263. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

PESHAWAR,
November 5, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I can find nothing wrong in your letter. I am convinced that the Congress is on the decline. Falsehood, violence, intrigue and selfishness are growing. The present seems to be the time when those who are devoted to the twin doctrines of truth and non-violence should serve the Congress from outside. I am writing frankly that if there is no improvement, the Congress will lose even my moral support and I will stop guiding it. But I will not use coercion. God Himself will make my way clear.

You must express your views firmly and if you want to come out you should do so. You must continue in the municipality only if you can control it naturally. But do not ruin yourself. There are countless activities for a pure-hearted person like you. Rather than involve yourself in dirty things I would prefer that you lived a private life and

earned a living by honest means. Whenever you feel convinced about your duty to leave, do so. The future is in the hands of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must have done the needful about Agatha Harrison.

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

264. *SPEECH AT MEETING OF BAR ASSOCIATION, PESHAWAR*¹

[November 5, 1938]²

Gandhiji, in a witty little speech, while thanking them for the honour that they had done him, observed that he was hardly entitled to that privilege, in the first place because, as they all knew, he had been disbarred by his own Inn, and, secondly, because he had long forgotten his law. Of late he had more often been engaged in breaking laws than in expounding or interpreting them in the courts of the land. Still another and, perhaps, his most vital reason was his peculiar views about lawyers and doctors which he had recorded in his booklet, *The Indian Home Rule*. A true lawyer, he told them, was one who placed truth and service in the first place and the emoluments of the profession in the next place only. He did not know whether they had all adopted that ideal but if they pledged themselves to render service through their legal acumen in an altruistic spirit, he would be the first to pay them his homage.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

265. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

November 6, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Travelling practically for the whole day by a motor lorry, we arrived at Haripur in the evening.

What you write about Massingham is correct, but the way you applied it to conditions in India did not seem right to me. The article has no place in *Harijan*. Just as dazzling light in a small room out

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI"

² From *Gandhi*—1915-1948

of place, so is the case with your article. Massingham wrote a poem but we are doing things. Only accounts of active work being done have a place in it. But why go on arguing about this? When we meet, we shall discuss it if we have time and if it is necessary to do so. It happens only rarely when what you say does not convince me and what I say does not convince you. I should, therefore, certainly like to avoid arguing about this. I had thought of giving that article to you in Delhi. Now I will post it to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11677

266. TALK AT BIBHUTI¹

November 6, 1938

The Khudai Khidmatgars is an organization with its headquarters at Utmanzai. Anyone who signs their pledge and can speak Pushtu can enrol himself as a Khudai Khidmatgar. The only condition is that he cannot simultaneously be on the register of any other organization. You are, therefore, absolutely free to enrol as Khudai Khidmatgars if you like and no special permission is needed for it.

The Khudai Khidmatgars have proved their undoubted capacity for organization. The presence of a picked body of Khudai Khidmatgars at a public meeting makes all the difference between order and disorder. The principle of non-violence requires that they should make the people do, through their power of love, all those things that the police does through the power of the *lathi* and the bullet. When the seed of love sprouts forth in our hearts our petty quarrels and mutual bickerings will become things of the past. Take today's incident of the calf that was accidentally overrun by our motor-bus.² Love should have prompted the chauffeur to stop the car immediately so that adequate arrangements might be made for the care and

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI". The local Pushtu-speaking people had requested Gandhiji that they should be allowed to join the Khudai Khidmatgar movement although politically and geographically they belonged to the Punjab.

² While Gandhiji was being driven to Bibhuti, a calf had been knocked down and partly run over by Gandhiji's car. The local Congressmen put the blame on the opponents or the Government.

treatment of the injured animal. One of our party showed what seemed to me as unseemly haste in naming the so-called opponents as the deliberate authors of the accident. In non-violence, we must not be in a hurry to ascribe motives to the opponent or regard him with suspicion unless we have proof positive for it. When love fills the hearts of the Khudai we shall have independence. But independence will not come to Khidmatgars us till our love shines out in our littlest acts.

We must send someone to the place where the accident occurred, to offer compensation to the owner of the animal and to take the calf for treatment to a vet.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

267. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HARIPUR¹

November 6, 1938

Scientists tell us that we are descended from the orang. That may be so, but it is not man's destiny to live and die a brute. In proportion as he cultivates non-violence and voluntary discipline, he is contradistinguished from brute nature and fulfils his destiny. One of the obligations that non-violence places upon us is to respect the rights even of the weakest, even a child's.²

. . . We must meet abuse by forbearance.³ Human nature is so constituted that if we take absolutely no notice of anger or abuse, the person indulging in it will soon weary of it and stop. We should harbour no resentment against those who tried to create the disturbance which, without their meaning it, has taught us a valuable little lesson in forbearance. A satyagrahi always regards the 'enemy' as a potential friend. During half a century of experience of non-violence I have not come across a case of enmity persisting to the end in the face of absolute non-violence.

Harijan, 26-11-1938

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VI"

² The reference is to a "gentle complaint" from the head master of a local school that the local congress authorities had not taken his permission for holding the meeting in the school.

³ The reference is to the walk-out of a "socialist" delegation shouting unseemly slogans because they were not allowed to present an address to Gandhiji as the meeting had already commenced when they arrived.

268. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

HARIPUR,
November 7, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Did you notice the recrudescence of riots in Burma?¹ It is a sad thing. The secret of the monks taking a leading part in them we shall perhaps never know.

We visited the famous gurdwara in Hasan Abdal. You should if you have not. Whilst the building is majestic, the Spirit of Nanak was absent.

There was nothing from you yesterday. I expect to have your letter at Abbottabad.

We take the train on 9th at Taxila.

Love.

WARRIOR

From the original: C.W. 3648. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6457

269. *LETTER TO DEV PRAKASH BHATIA*

November 7, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

You have been as good as your word.

Prayer is an intense longing to have communion with our Maker. It is an effort not of the intellect but of the heart. The communion may come soon or it may take years or even ages. It is enough if the effort is sincere and heart-felt.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI DEV PRAKASH BHATIA, B.A., LL.B.
PESHAWAR CANTT.

From a photostat: G.N. 1538

¹*Vide* "Recent Riots in Burma", 20-8-1938

270. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ABBOTTABAD,
November 7, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

This is the last I can write from this province. This is a beautiful place except for its associations. Tell Munnalal I shall discuss his letter when I meet [him]. No time today.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
SEGAON ASHRAM
SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.

From the original: C.W. 6414. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10009

271. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is a . . .¹ letter. If you have reached Delhi, it will follow you. With it is Mani's. Pyarelal's letter seems queer. Let us see what happens.

Don't decide too hastily to remain in Wardha. If nowhere else, go and stay in Bombay or Bulsar. If you can have the courage to go to South Africa, it will be best. But I would not insist. Follow your own inclination. If you cannot feel at ease anywhere outside Wardha, I won't oppose your plan. Let us not take any risk. What has happened to you is something similar to what had happened to me in Nipani,² confining me to bed for six months. Maybe, considering your age, you will not have to take that much rest.

I am sending Radhakrishna's letter also for you to read and then tear up. I have carefully preserved your article. After I know your wish, I shall send it or hand it over personally. How can we afford to lose it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11678

¹ The source is illegible here.

² *Vide* "Discussion with Dr. Wanless", 26-3-1927

272. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

ABBOTTABAD,
November 8, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your telegram. About money I have already decided that we cannot put that burden on Ramachandran. It is my impression that even when she went I myself gave the money. But if it was not so, I shall see when she comes. It is your duty, however, to talk to Ramachandran as I have suggested. Not to tell him is to betray his trust and will not be to Papamma's good.

It is wise on your part that you resist at present the temptation of entering into a discussion. If convincing reasons occur to you and they are borne out by experience, then when your time comes your arguments will have greater force. It is enough for the present that you consider my path the right one and wish to follow it in your life, too. If you remain firm in this, it will be more than enough.

Don't let your health suffer in any way. Don't have the false confidence that you will be able to manage it afterwards. Whatever the disease, trivial or serious, it must be got rid of as soon as it makes its appearance.

The Frontier Province is worth visiting from the point of view of understanding human nature. There is also some beautiful scenery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7351. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

273. TALK TO KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS¹

MANSEHRA,
[November 8, 1938]²

It has become the fashion these days to say that society cannot be organized or run on non-violent lines. I join issue on that point. In a family, when a father slaps his delinquent child, the latter does not think of retaliating. He obeys his father not because of the deterrent

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VII"

² The date is from *Gandhi—1915-1948*.

effect of the slap but because of the offended love which he senses behind it. That in my opinion is an epitome of the way in which society is or should be governed. What is true of family must be true of society which is but a larger family. It is man's imagination that divides the world into warring groups of enemies and friends. In the ultimate resort it is the power of love that acts even in the midst of the clash and sustains the world.

I am told that the Red Shirts here are Red Shirts only in name. I hope the allegation is baseless. I know that Khan Saheb is seriously disturbed at the infiltration of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement by undesirable and self-seeking elements. I share with him this feeling that mere accession of numbers, unless they are true exponents of the creed which they profess, will only weaken instead of adding strength to the movement.

The Red Shirt movement today has drawn attention of the whole of India and even outside. And yet what it has achieved is only a small fraction of what has to be achieved. I implicitly accept the assurance given by the Khudai Khidmatgars that they are anxious to understand and practise the doctrine of non-violence in full. There are tremendous heights lying before them still to be scaled. The programme of constructive non-violence that I have placed before them is self-acting when it is once started well. Its enforcement will be a sure test too of the earnestness and sincerity of the Khudai Khidmatgars.

Harijan, 3-12-1938

274. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, MANSEHRA¹

November 8, 1938

Gandhiji replying assured them that he set great store by what they had already achieved in the field of non-violence. But believing as he did in the old adage that from him who gives much more is expected, he warned them that he would not rest satisfied till they had fulfilled their mission of achieving through their non-violence not only their own freedom but the freedom of India. He had visited their province a second time to know them more intimately and to understand how non-violence

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VII". The local citizens in their address had assured Gandhiji that the Pathans would in a short time constitute "the spear-head of India's non-violent fight for freedom".

worked in their midst and it was his intention to return to them a third time when he hoped once more to pick up the threads of various problems where he had left them.

Harijan, 3-12-1938

275. TALK TO MINORITIES' DEPUTATION¹

ABBOTTABAD,
[November 8, 1938]²

Gandhiji in reply told them that whilst he could support their demand that licences for keeping fire-arms should be freely issued on application, it would be too much to expect the Government to distribute fire-arms free amongst the entire border population. They could raise a fund for free distribution of fire-arms if they wanted, but he had his doubts whether free distribution of and training in the use of fire-arms would solve the question of transborder insecurity. If the experience during the recent raid at Bannu was any guide, such a step would prove to be an expensive pedantry. During the Bannu raid, he was told, only one gun on the part of the citizens was in play although there was no lack of fire-arms in the city at the time of the raid and even that gun occasioned more casualties among the public than among the raiders. He, however, agreed with them with regard to what they had observed about the duty of the majority community. Khan Saheb was trying to prepare the Khudai Khidmatgars for discharging their duty of protecting citizens against raids.

Harijan, 3-12-1938

276. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ABBOTTABAD³

[November 8, 1938]⁴

I thank you for the address that you have presented to me. You have in your address expressed your gratification at having in your midst 'the greatest man on earth'. I wondered as I listened to your address as to who that gentleman could be. Certainly it could not be I. I know too well my shortcomings. There is a celebrated story told

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VII". The deputation among other things suggested to Gandhiji that in view of the growing menace to security, fire-arms and training in the use of them ought to be provided free to the minority population settled in the border to facilitate self-protection.

² From *Gandhi—1915-1948*

³ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "In the Frontier Province-VIII". At the meeting several addresses and a consolidated sum of Rs. 1,125 on behalf of the whole district were presented to Gandhiji.

⁴ From *The Hindustan Times*, 9-11-1938, and *The Hindu*, 9-11-1938

about Solon the great law-giver of Athens. He was asked by Croesus, who was reputed to be the wealthiest man of his age, to name the happiest man on earth. Croesus had fondly hoped that Solon would name him. But Solon replied that he could say nothing as no one could be adjudged happy before his end. If Solon found it difficult to pronounce on a man's happiness during his lifetime, how much more difficult it must be to adjudge on a man's greatness? True greatness in the world is not found set upon a hill, for the vulgar crowd to see. On the contrary, my seventy years' experience has taught me that the truly great are often those of whom and of whose greatness the world knows nothing during their lifetime. God alone is judge of true greatness, because He knows men's hearts. . . .

Not only the inhabitants of Abbottabad but even the sun, the moon and the stars here were eager to have a glimpse of me! Am I to understand, my good friends, that your city has all to itself a set of sun, moon and stars which do not shine upon Wardha or Segaoon? In Kathiawar we have a class of people known as Bhats or professional bards who make it their job to sing the praises of their chieftains for money. Well, I won't call you Bhats. Banter apart, I want you to realize the mistake of indulging in hyperbolic praises of your leaders. It neither helps them nor their work. I would like you once for all to forget this practice of presenting laudatory addresses. At three score and ten I for one have no desire to let what little time God has still left me be frittered away in vain theatricalities. If an address must be presented, I would like it to be descriptive of the defects and shortcomings of the recipient of the address so that he might be helped to turn the searchlight inward and weed them out.

Ever since my arrival in this province I have been trying to expound to the Khudai Khidmatgars the doctrine of non-violence in all its uncompromising completeness, abating not a jot, holding back nothing. I do not claim to have understood the meaning of non-violence in its entirety. What I have realized is only a small and an insignificant fraction of the great whole. It is not given to imperfect man to grasp the whole meaning of non-violence or to practise it in full. That is an attribute of God alone, the Supreme Ruler who suffers no second. But I have constantly and ceaselessly striven for over half a century to understand it and to translate it in my own life. The Khudai Khidmatgars have no doubt set a most brilliant example in the practise of non-violence, to the extent to which they have understood it. It has

earned them universal admiration. But they have now to move a step further. Their conception of non-violence has to be broadened and their practice of it, especially in its positive aspects, to be made fuller and more intense, if they are to come out successful in the final heat. Non-violence is not mere disarmament. Nor is it the weapon of the weak and the important. A child who has not the strength to wield the *lathi* does not practise non-violence. More powerful than all the armaments, non-violence is a unique force that has come into the world. He who has not learnt to feel it to be a weapon infinitely more potent than brute force has not understood its true nature. This non-violence cannot be “taught” through word of mouth. But it can be kindled in our heart through the grace of God, in answer to earnest prayer. It is stated that today there are one lakh of Khudai Khidmatgars who have adopted non-violence as their creed. But before them as early as 1920, Khan Saheb came to recognize in non-violence a weapon, the mightiest in the world, and his choice was made. Eighteen years of practice of non-violence have only strengthened his faith in it. He has seen how it has made his people fearless and strong. The prospect of losing a paltry job used to unnerve them. They feel different beings today. At three score and ten, my faith in non-violence today burns brighter than ever. People say to me, “Your programme of non-violence has been before the country now nearly for two decades, but where is the promised independence?” My reply is that although the creed of non-violence was professed by millions, it was practised by but a few and that, too, merely as a policy. But with all that the result that has been achieved is sufficiently striking to encourage me to carry on the experiment with the Khudai Khidmatgars and God willing it will succeed.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

277. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

[Before *November 9, 1938*]¹

CHI. SARASWATI,

You must have received my letters and given my letter to Grandfather. I am awaiting your letter. I hope you are physically well and mentally calm. Is there any difficulty in deciphering my handwri-

¹ Gandhiji left the Frontier Province on November 9, 1938.

ting? I shall be here till November 9.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ba had been taken ill. She is in Delhi and is slightly better. Write to her at the Harijan Nivas, Kingsway.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 3427. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi. Also G.N. 6154

278. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

November 9, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I know that you like to live in Akola. It is indeed your dharma to serve Nanabhai¹. You are the best judge of how long you should stay there for that. If you are not urgently required there for that purpose, your duty is to go to Natal. The earlier you reach there, the better.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope Nanabhai is better. Write to me at Segaon.

I am writing this in a moving train.

SHRI SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

C/O SHRI NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4888

279. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 9, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I owe you an apology. While on tour, I always leave you out. The work is heavy and my energy is relatively limited. I, therefore, content myself with the fewest possible letters. I realize, all the same, that I ought to write to you. I will try once again to be regular in

¹ Nanabhai Mashruwala, the addressee's father

writing or dictating letters to you. I have been feeling that I am not doing my dharma towards you fully. Though I may not be able to do anything in that direction, still even my letters to you have a value of their own.

I wrote long back to Sushila that her dharma was to be by your side. She has decided to stay on here for a month or so. I have again written today that if she is not required to stay there for nursing Nanabhai, she should immediately return.¹ I will do everything possible to send her.

If you find it necessary to sell any portion of Phoenix and if the trustees agree, you may sell it.

Schlesin's suggestion is certainly worth thinking over.

I am sending your letter to Chhaganlal but I do not think he will want to go. The person who would have benefited by going and staying there was Ramdas, but he does not feel so inclined. The best way is for you and Sushila to do the best you can and be content. It will certainly be good if Schlesin gives whatever help she can. I will have no objection if Pragji takes charge. You should be guided by your experience. Don't do anything which your experience does not suggest as advisable.

Ba has completely recovered now. So also has Mahadev. Today I am travelling in a train bound for Wardha. Ba will meet me in Delhi and join us there.

Dr. Sushila, Pyarelal and Amtul Salaam are with me. Kanaiya also is there. My health is excellent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4887

280. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

November 9, 1938

BHAI MASANI,

You must have seen that Dr. Khan Saheb has released a good many people. He wishes to release the remaining prisoners also but there are difficulties in the way. I have written to the local Secretary in

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

this connection and asked him to send a Copy of that letter to you.
You must have received it.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4129

281. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

November 9, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. It would please me if you stayed there as long as you could. I am writing this letter in a train. I will reach Segaoon on the 11th. Ba will join me at Delhi.

You have given good information.

Manubhai has done well in deciding to stay on there.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
GRAM DAKSHINAMURTI
AMBLA, *via* SONGADH
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7102. Also C.W. 4594. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

282. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[*After November 9, 1938*]¹

CHI. PYARELAL,

I had given you two items to be condensed for *Harijan*. I shall do the condensing myself if you pass them on to me. I can see that you are overburdened.

BAPU

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

¹ This letter is on the reverse side of another dated November 9, 1938

283. MESSAGE ON DEATH OF KEMAL ATATURK¹

November 10, 1938

THIS DEATH IS A GREAT LOSS TO TURKEY. MAY THEY COME OUT SAFE THROUGH THE CRISIS.

The Hindu, 11-11-1938

284. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,

November 10, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is Satis Babu's latest production.² He is making vast strides in this direction.

Your two letters came in today, the first without anything from M³.

What could I say but from the heart about your pathetic appeal? If the message comes to me nothing on earth would deter me. I have told you, perhaps, I have not the requisite purity to penetrate the woman heart. There must be a distance between her and me so long as I have the विकार⁴ snake in me. You can but pray. But the effort has to be mine. Therefore don't feel angry or sorrowful if I can't answer your expectations.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3649. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6458

285. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I had got your letter at Taxila. I received one here also. An earlier letter of Rajkumari I got today, in which I did not see your

¹ President of the Turkish Republic. He died on November 10, 1938.

² The reference seems to be to the paper on which Gandhiji was writing the letter.

³ Mahadev Desai

⁴ Carnal desires

handwriting. I understand about South Africa. We will now think about something else when you return. Don't mind if you sleep less now. It has taught us a lesson that even now you have to be very careful. What Gilder says is quite true. If it is necessary to stay on beyond the 19th, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have no time for more.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11679

286. *DISCUSSION WITH COMMUNISTS*¹

[Before *November 11, 1938*]²

COMMUNISTS: We confess, we do not understand what it is exactly you stand for. We oppose you, not necessarily because we always differ from you but because we do not know your mind and so regard your actions with vague fear and distrust. Faith would become easier if we understand you. So we have come to you. Possibly you too might find that some of your opinions about us needed revision, if you knew us.

And by way of illustration, they cited the resolution on civil liberty³ that had been adopted by the A. I. C. C. at Delhi and which had occasioned the much talked of walk-out on the part of a group of members.⁴ They could not understand why the "High Command" should be so anxious to steamroll that resolution through the house in spite of strong protest.

G. I must confess that I did not like the walk-out. Did it mean that you wanted the Congress to condone incitement to violence?

c. No, we have again and again made it clear that we do not want any condonation of violence or incitement to violence. What distresses us is this. Whereas there was enlargement of civil liberty on Congress taking office, since the Haripura Congress civil liberty has actually suffered curtailment under the Congress ministries. We are driven to feel that this cry about abuse of civil liberty has been raised merely as a convenient pretext to shield the Ministers, some of whom have been behaving exactly like the old bureaucrats.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "A Sporting Offer". Gandhiji, Pyarelal says, made several additions in the writing to bring out his meaning clearly.

² From a reference in the text it is clear that Gandhiji was not at Segaoon at the time of this discussion. He left Delhi for Segaoon on the 11th.

³ *Vide*, "Draft of Resolution for A. I. C. C.", 23-9-1938

⁴ *Vide*, "That Unfortunate Walk-out", 15-10-1938

G. I am more than glad that you have come to me, because you have come to the real culprit. I must confess that I am the sole author of that resolution. It is based upon unimpeachable evidence in my possession. But you should have known from my writings that they were meant to help Ministers to avoid action against those who have incited to violence and even actually committed it. Instead of Ministers taking action against them my purpose was to create public opinion against violent speeches, writings or acts. The resolution was a substitute for legal action. I want you to accept my assurance that I would not screen a single Minister who interferes with civil liberty or acts contrary to Congress resolutions. If you have Rajaji in mind, I am prepared to give you full satisfaction or ask him to resign.

c. We feel puzzled. You have said that coercive measures should be used to put down incitement to violence. Is it right to use Government violence to check the so-called incitement to violence by Congressmen?

G. The question is badly put. But my answer is there. There should be no Government violence. But if a man kills a little child and robs it of its ornaments and if I deprive him of the liberty to repeat the performance, I would not call my act violence. It would be violence if my act was meant to be a punishment.

I would like to make my position clearer still. You cannot have the cake and eat it. Assuming that there has been violence of speech, it has to be noticed by the Congress or the Congress Ministers. I have suggested the former course. The resolution was in pursuance of that course. Of course you may question the validity or sufficiency of proof in the possession of the Working Committee. In that case, you could have called for proofs and accepted the resolution subject to the production by the Working Committee of the proof in its possession. If you admit that violent speech or writing does not come under the protection of civil liberty, there should have been no walk-out. Surely he who runs may see that in the Congress provinces latitude of speech and writing is allowed such as has never before been enjoyed.

c. All the same, we cannot reconcile ourselves to the bias which the High Command has persistently shown against us. We have put ourselves under Congress discipline. We have joined the Congress because it is the only body that can raise a popular movement. If we misbehave, we may be put out and should lose caste with the people. As a people's party we must move with the people or go out. These Ministers, on the other hand, are seeking to set themselves above the people to make themselves immune to democratic influence. We are wedded to no dogma. Tell us what we can do together in immediate practice. Our motives may differ but practice will

count.

G. You should also admit that neither the resolution¹ nor, I think, my article² makes mention of socialists or communists. Violence is no monopoly of any one party. I know Congressmen who are neither socialists nor communists but who are frankly devotees of the cult of violence. Contrariwise, I know socialists and communists who will not hurt a fly but who believe in the universal ownership of instruments of production. I rank myself as one among them. But here I am not thinking of myself but of others whom I have the good fortune to know.

What you have said, however, makes it clear to me that you do not put the same stress as I do on the means. But I understand your argument. Our minds are working at cross purposes. I want to occupy a corner in your hearts, if I can. But some of you have told me frankly that it is impossible, for they look at things from opposite poles. The utmost they can do is to tolerate me because they credit me with some capacity for sacrifice and influence over the masses. Now I make a sporting offer. One of you or all of you can come to me at Segaon when I return there, study me, see all my papers, look at the correspondence, ask me questions, and decide upon the course you would adopt in your dealings with me. There is no secrecy with me. My mission is to convert every single Indian to my view of the means of liberation. If only that happens, complete independence is ours for the having.

They next questioned Gandhiji as to the possibility of the Communist Party being legalized. "We do not *want* violence," they explained. "It is true that we have not made non-violence our creed. We are not pledged to non-violence at all cost and for all time to come, but for the time being and in the immediate future we see no necessity for violence. Our method is thus, just now, the same as that of the Congress. We are forced at present to function as a secret organization because we are under ban. If the ban is removed, the necessity for secrecy should cease. For the rest we can only give the assurance that should we in the future find it necessary to drop non-violence, we shall make a clear and open declaration about it.

G. If you mean that you do not as a party believe in violence, then you should make that statement. All your literature that I have studied clearly says that there is no independence without resort to force. I know that there is a body of communists that is slowly veering

¹ *Vide* "Draft of Resolution for A. I.I.C.", 23-9-1938

² *Vide*, "That Unfortunate Walk-out", 15-10-1938

round to non-violence. I would like you to make your position absolutely plain and above board. I have it from some of the literature that passes under the name of communist literature that secrecy, camou-flage and the like are enjoined as necessary for the accomplishment of the communist end, especially as communism has to engage in an unequal battle against capitalism which has organized violence at its beck and call. I would, therefore, like you, if you can, to make it plain that you do not believe in these things I have mentioned.

The communist friends promised to send Gandhiji an authoritative statement setting forth the position of their party.

G. You may think over what I have said, keep yourself in touch with me, correct me when you think I go astray, and try to understand me. Do not distrust me. When you have doubts express them fearlessly. And I suggest that we leave the discussion at that. But I should be glad to think that we part with the determination to understand one another and but to meet again.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

287. *KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS AND BADSHAH KHAN*

Whatever the Khudai Khidmatgars may be or may ultimately turn out to be, there can be no doubt about what their leader whom they delight to call Badshah Khan is. He is unquestionably a man of God. He believes in His living presence and knows that his movement will prosper only if God wills it. Having put his whole soul into his cause, he remains indifferent as to what happens. It is enough for him to realize that there is no deliverance for the Pathan except through out and out acceptance of non-violence. He does not take pride in the fact that the Pathan is a fine fighter. He appreciates his bravery but he thinks that he has been spoilt by overpraise. He does not want to see his Pathan as a goonda of society. He believes that the Pathan has been exploited and kept in ignorance. He wants the Pathan to become braver than he is and wants him to add true knowledge to his bravery. This he thinks can only be achieved through non-violence.

And as Khan Saheb believes in my non-violence, he wanted me to be as long as I could among the Khudai Khidmatgars. For me I needed no temptation to go to them. I was myself anxious to make their acquaintance. I wanted to reach their hearts. I do not know that I

have done so now. Anyway I made the attempt.

But before I proceed to describe how I approached my task and what I did, I must say a word about Khan Saheb as my host. His one care throughout the tour was to make me as comfortable as the circumstances permitted. He spared no pains to make me proof against privation or discomfort. All my wants were anticipated by him. And there was no fuss about what he did. It was all perfectly natural for him. It was all from the heart. There is no humbug about him. He is an utter stranger to affectation. His attention is therefore never embarrassing, never obtrusive. And so when we parted at Taxila our eyes were wet. The parting was difficult. And we parted in the hope that we would meet again probably in March next. The Frontier Province must remain a place of frequent pilgrimage for me. For though the rest of India may fail to show true non-violence, there seems to be good ground for hoping that the Frontier Province will pass through the fiery ordeal. The reason is simple. Badshah Khan commands willing obedience from his adherents said to number more than one hundred thousand. They hang on his lips. He has but to say the word and it is carried out. Whether, in spite of all the veneration he commands, the Khudai Khidmatgars will pass the test in constructive non-violence remains to be seen.

Though Pyarelal has been giving a faithful record of the tour in the Frontier Province I must even at the risk of repetition in places give in my own way a resume of what has been done.

At the outset both Khan Saheb and I had come to the conclusion that instead of addressing the whole of the Khudai Khidmatgars at the various centres I should confine myself to the leaders. This would save my energy and be its wisest use. And so it proved to be. During the five weeks, we visited all the centres, and the talks lasted for one hour or more at each centre. I found Khan Saheb to be a very competent and faithful interpreter. And as he believed in what I said, he put into the translation all the force he could command. He is a born orator and speaks with dignity and effect.

At every meeting I repeated the warning that unless they felt that in non-violence they had come into possession of a force infinitely superior to the one they had and in the use of which they were adepts, they should have nothing to do with non-violence and resume the arms they possessed before. It must never be said of Khudai Khidmatgars that once so brave, they had become or been made cowards

under Khan Saheb's influence. Their bravery consisted not in being good marksmen but in defying death and being ever ready to bare their breasts to the bullets. This bravery they had to keep intact and be ready to show whenever occasion demanded. And for the truly brave such occasions occurred often enough without seeking.

This non-violence was not a mere passive quality. It was the mightiest force God had endowed man with. Indeed, possession of non-violence distinguished man from the brute creation. It was inherent in every human being, but in most it lay dormant. Perhaps the word 'non-violence' was an inadequate rendering of ahimsa which itself was an incomplete connotation of all it was used for conveying. A better rendering would be love or goodwill. Violence was to be met by goodwill. And goodwill came into play only when there was ill will matched against it. To be good to the good is an exchange at par. A rupee against a rupee gives no index to its quality. It does when it is matched against an anna. Similarly a man of good will is known only when he matches himself against one of ill will.

This non-violence or goodwill was to be exercised not only against Englishmen but it must have full play even among ourselves. Non-violence against Englishmen may be a virtue of necessity, and may easily be a cover for cowardice or simple weakness. It may be, as it often is, a mere expedience. But it could not be an expedience when we have an equal choice between violence and non-violence. Such instances occur in domestic relations, social and political relations among ourselves, not only between rival sects of the same faith but persons belonging to different faiths. We cannot be truly tolerant towards Englishmen if we are intolerant towards our neighbours and equals. Hence our goodwill, if we had it in any degree, would be tested almost every day. And if we actively exercised it, we would become habituated to its use in wider fields till at last it became second nature with us.

The very name Khan Saheb had adopted for them showed that they were to serve, not to injure, humanity. For God took and needed no personal service. He served His creatures without demanding any service for Himself in return. He was unique in this as in many other things. Therefore servants of God were to be known by the service they rendered to His creatures.

Hence the non-violence of Khudai Khidmatgars had to show itself in their daily actions. It could be so exhibited only if they were

non-violent in thought, word and deed.

And even as a person who relied upon the use of force in his daily dealings would have to undergo a military training, so will a servant of God have to go through a definite training. This was provided for in the very foundation resolution of the special Congress of 1920. It was broadened from time to time. It was never toned down to my knowledge. The exercise of active goodwill was to be tested through communal unity, shedding of untouchability by Hindus, the home and hand-manufacture and use of khadi—a sure symbol of oneness with the millions—and prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs. This fourfold programme was called a process of purification and a sure method of gaining organic freedom for the country. This programme was followed but half-heartedly by Congressmen and the country, thus betraying a lack of living faith in non-violence, or faith in the method devised for its daily practice, or both. But Khudai Khidmatgars were expected and believed to have a living faith in non-violence. Therefore they would be expected to follow out the whole of the constructive self-purification programme of the Congress. I have added to it village sanitation, hygiene and simple medical relief in the villages. A Khudai Khidmatgar will be known by his works. He cannot be in a village without his making it cleaner and affording help to the villagers in their simple ailments. Hospitals and the like are toys of the rich and are available for the most part only to the city-dwellers. Efforts are no doubt being made to cover the land with dispensaries. But the cost is prohibitive. Whereas the Khudai Khidmatgars could, with a little but substantial training, easily give relief in the majority of cases of illnesses that occurred in the villages.

I told the leaders of the Khudai Khidmatgars that civil disobedience was the end of non-violence, by no means its beginning. Yet I started in this country at the wrong end in 1918. I was overwhelmed by necessity. The country had not come to harm only because I, claiming to be an expert in non-violent technique, knew when and how to retrace our steps. Suspension of civil disobedience at Patna was part of the technique. I have just as much faith in the constructive programme of 1920 as I had then. I could not lead a campaign of civil disobedience in terms of *purna* swaraj without due fulfilment of the programme. The right to civil disobedience accrues only to those who know and practise the duty of voluntary obedience to laws whether made by them or others. Obedience should come not from

fear of the consequences of the breach but because it is the duty to obey with all our heart and not merely mechanically. Without the fulfilment of this preliminary condition, civil disobedience is civil only in name and never of the strong but of the weak. It is not charged with goodwill, i. e., non-violence. Khudai Khidmatgars had shown in unmistakable terms their bravery in suffering during the civil disobedience days as did many thousands in the other provinces. But it was not proof positive of goodwill at heart. And it would be a deterioration in the Pathan if he was non-violent only in appearance. For he must not be guilty of weakness.

The Khudai Khidmatgars listened to all I said with rapt attention. Their faith in non-violence is not as yet independent of Khan Saheb. It is derived from him. But it is none the less living so long as they have unquestioning faith in their leader who enjoys undisputed kingdom over their hearts. And Khan Saheb's faith is no lip profession. His whole heart is in it. Let the doubters live with him as I have all these precious five weeks and their doubt will be dissolved like mist before the morning sun.

This is how the whole tour struck a very well-known Pathan who met me during the last days of the tour:

I like what you are doing. You are very clever. (I do not know that cunning is not the right word.) You are making my people braver than they are. You are teaching them to husband their strength. Of course it is good to be non-violent up to a point. That they will be under your teaching. Hitler has perfected the technique of attaining violent ends without the actual use of violence. But you have bettered even Hitler. You are giving our men training in non-violence, in dying without killing; so if ever the occasion comes for the use of force, they will use it as never before and certainly more effectively than any other body of persons. I congratulate you.

I was silent and I had no heart to write out a reply to disillusion him. I smiled and became pensive. I like the compliment that the Pathans would be braver than before under my teaching. I do not know an instance of a person becoming a coward under my influence. But the friend's deduction was deadly. If in the last heat the Khudai Khidmatgars prove untrue to the creed they profess to believe, non-violence was certainly not in their hearts. The proof will soon come. If they zealously and faithfully follow the constructive programme, there is no danger of their fulfilling the prognostication of

the critic. But they will be found among the bravest of men when the test comes.

ON THE TRAIN BETWEEN DELHI AND WARDHA,

November 11, 1938

Harijan, 19-11-1938

288. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

ON THE TRAIN (BHOPAL),

November 11, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yes, the lines you have sent me were copied for me by you before also. I shall have them recited by Babla when he comes. You should ask him to remind me.

I hope you got my letter¹ written from Taxila and one² from Delhi where I had a very busy day, seeing people up to the last moment. But the pressure remained quite good, 166/100.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3888. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7044

289. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

ON THE TRAIN,

November 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am writing this after leaving Bhopal. Shuaib had come. He inquired after you and added that you had promised him that on your return you would break journey at Bhopal for two or three days. I feel that it would be good from every point of view, if you gave him two or three days. Durga and Babla will enjoy seeing a good many things there.

As Sushila's bag had been left behind, Pyarelal got off. He will come tomorrow.

Herewith your letters, sent by Mirabehn, which I had opened. I

¹ This is not traceable.

² *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-11-1938

am sending the letter addressed to me also.

Ba is with me. She was tempted to stay on till your return, but I dissuaded her. Nimu came and saw me. She will now go to Lakhtar for a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11680

290. *LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU*

ON THE TRAIN,
November 11, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

The Kanya Gurukul celebrates its Annual Day towards the end of December at Dehra Dun. Acharya Ramdev invariably asks for someone to be sent for the occasion. I wanted to send Rajkumari, but she would be at the Women's Conference. You also must be going. But it would be good if you could spare a day at Dehra Dun. Perhaps you already know about the Kanya Gurukul. It is a good institution.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 3081. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru. Also G.N. 7985

291. *TELEGRAM TO R. S. RUIKAR¹*

November 11, 1938

I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO ABANDON FAST. ON REACH-
ING WARDHA, I SHALL DO MY BEST. WIRE REPLY.

The Hindu, 12-11-1938

¹ Mr. R. W. Phulay, General Secretary of the Provincial Trade Union Congress, was asked to convey this message telegraphically when he came to see Gandhiji at Nagpur station to draw his attention to the textile workers' strike at Rajnandgaon and Mr. R. S. Ruikar's fast since October 29.

292. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[On or after *November 11, 1938*]¹

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Your very kind and full letter of 31st October was sent to me by Mirabai, whilst I was touring in the Frontier Province. I knew that she had acknowledged it. But I had fully intended to express my thanks for the considerate manner in which you dealt with the question of distress in Hissar.² Yes, I know that the Punjab Government is doing all it can. Not knowing the working of the railway system, I approached the fountain-head.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. MASS LITERACY CAMPAIGN IN BIHAR

Dr. Syed Mahmud³ has sent me a copy of his note on the progress of Mass Literacy Campaign in Bihar. Below will be found all the relevant paragraphs⁴ of the instructive note. I commend to the Minister's attention Dr. Tao's note⁵ on a similar movement in China. He will find in it perhaps much to copy.

Harijan, 12-11-1938

294. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 12, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Agatha is sitting in front of me.

¹ Gandhiji returned to Segaoon after his Frontier tour on November 11, 1938.

² The reference is to a famine in the Punjab.

³ Then Minister for Development and Employment in Bihar

⁴ Not reproduced here

⁵ This was published in *Harijan*, 29-10-1938, 5-11-1938 and 19-11-1938.

The rest from Mahadev's letter¹. This is just not to miss the post.
Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3839. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7045

295. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 12, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

You must see me some time before 17th for 30 minutes, when I shall be on speaking terms. Of course it is joint action which has resulted in the appointment of trustees. Is it not so?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10139

296. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 12, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Poor Lila had made preparations for you.

Mirabehn has changed her mind. She has decided to go to the Frontier Province. I have approved of her plan. Khan Saheb also wished that she should go. I have now written to him for his consent. The climate is fine here. Agatha is sitting in front of me. I have still not broken my silence. I will break it at two. You must have received my letter written at Itarsi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11681

297. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. Your second article is lying with me. It is certainly going as the leading article. The other one is still lying with

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 13-11-1938

me. I will take it out today. Now I will return it to you here. I don't want to send it by registered post, and I am afraid of sending it by ordinary post. There is no hurry at all. It is "evergreen".

Rajendra is from U. P. He has been here for the last four or five months. He is a good man. There is no time for more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11682

298. NOTE TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

Sunday, November 13, 1938

I could not reply to your letter. But if Munnalal¹ goes and you don't wish to stay in the Mahila Ashram, you may come here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8564

299. THE CONGRESS AND KHADI

I have letters from Bombay, U. P., Bengal and Sind bitterly complaining that the khadi clause of the Congress constitution is honoured more in the breach than in the performance. I have mentioned the four provinces not to have it inferred that in the other provinces things are better. I have simply referred to these provinces because there are complaints from them. People in the other provinces have not perhaps thought it worth while to draw attention to the evil which is widespread. It may well be that correspondence on the matter from other provinces has not been brought to my notice.

The correspondents' chief complaint is that in selecting Congress candidates for municipalities or local boards, the Congress officials do not enforce the khadi clause for such candidates. One correspondent says that the obligation of wearing khadi is waived because the Congress officials do not find competent enough candidates among khadi wearers. This would be a sound reason, if the dearth of proper khadi-clad men can be proved, for altering the clause, surely not for committing a deliberate breach of the Congress constitution. A writer justifies the waiver by arguing that there is no connection between swaraj and khadi. This again may be a good reason for a change in the constitution but not for disregarding it.

¹ Munnalal G. Shah, addressee's husband

Every Congressman is a potential civil-resister. The right of civil-disobdience accrues only to those who perform the duty of voluntarily obeying the laws of their State, more so the laws of their own making. Therefore, the Congressmen are taking grave risks when they commit wilful breaches of the constitution.

And is there no connection between swaraj and khadi? Were the Congressmen who made themselves responsible for the khadi clause in the constitution so dense that they did not see the fallacy which is obvious to some critics? I have not hesitated to say, and I make bold to repeat now, that without khadi there is no swaraj for the millions, the hungry and the naked, and for the millions of illiterate women. Habitual use of khadi is a sign that the wearer identifies himself with the poorest in the land, that he has patriotism and self-sacrifice enough in him to wear khadi even though it may not be so soft and elegant in appearance as foreign fineries nor as cheap.

But my argument has perhaps no force with many Congressmen when anarchy reigns supreme among them. There is another batch of letters in my file which continue to give me fresh evidence of corruption among Congressmen so called. One correspondent says bogus members are increasing on a wholesale scale. The cry comes from Orissa that Congressmen do not hesitate to spread lies in order to enlist members. A Calcutta correspondent tells me that there are original members who have not paid their own subscriptions. When asked, they say they cannot spare four annas per year. The correspondent indignantly protests that these same men spend many four-anna pieces per year on cinemas. My point however is not that these men can afford to pay and do not. My point is that if they have not paid their subscriptions they are not Congressmen and that the register containing their names requires to be purged of them. A U. P. correspondent says bribery and corruption are spoiling the good name of the Congress. He says that Congressmen do not hesitate to use their influence with Collectors and other officials to have all sorts of injustices perpetrated for the sake of themselves or their relatives. And he adds that the services are ill able to resist the pressure. And he says the growing evil may be worse than the evil that existed when the services did wrong under instructions from British officials. This charge is most damaging if it is true. It requires careful investigations by the U. P. Government and the provincial Congress command. Indeed, the whole of the irregularities I have lumped together in this

note require careful and immediate handling by the Working Committee and the Provincial Congress Committees. If the Congress is not purged of illegalities and irregularities, it will cease to be the power it is today and will fail to fulfil expectations when the real struggle faces the country.

SEGAON, November 14, 1938

Harijan, 19-11-1938

300. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
November 14, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. I hope I misunderstood your letter of yesterday. I loved you all the more for the deep cut I thought you had made. My love can weather storms and misunderstandings. My regret was and is that my reaction should hurt you. The scars left by loved ones never last. They heal as soon as they are made. If they did not, my love would suffer diminution. I hope therefore that on your part you will laugh at your folly and lack of faith or my stupidity in putting in your letter a meaning you had not intended. You must not make yourself sick over this passing episode.

Of course you could not attend Aryanayakum's meeting. But let us hope next year your programme will be better arranged.

Of course I shall write to you about the doings of the Travancore delegation.

Love.

WARRIOR

From the original: C.W. 3650. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6459

301. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

November 14, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Can you come tomorrow, Tuesday? Bring your work and take your meal here though not with me. You should take it after or before me so that you can talk the whole time. I am having my meal which [I] take between [*sic*] 10.30 or thereabouts. You can have a quiet

corner for your work.

Love

BAPU

[PS.]

You need not worry about Travancore Deputation.

From a photostat: G.N. 01401

302. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Vallabhbhai came today. The problem of Rajkot has become fairly complicated.¹ But so long as his stars are favourable, even things that seem to go against him will end well. Mani has been showing her mettle.² I have never seen another daughter like her.

Your second article is going today. I will hand over to you personally the one rejected for *Harijan*. I will go through the one received today. Chandrashanker is really very ill. I am alarmed.

Mirabehn is going ahead with her preparations for the Frontier Province in anticipation of Khan Saheb's consent.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending two things shown to me by Mirabehn. You will understand both.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11683

¹ The people of Rajkot had started an agitation against the autocratic rule of the Prince Dharmendrasingh and his Dewan Virawala. The leaders of the State were in consultation with Vallabhbhai Patel, who in turn was guided by Gandhiji.

² She toured the villages of the State and "sustained the peasants in their struggle".

303. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
November 14, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got both your letters. If I could send you copies of all my labours, you would give me the first rank. But let it be enough for you that I have done all that was possible for me. At last I got the accompanying reply. Ramachandran is coming tomorrow, when I will try again. I will not give up. But it is a great handicap that one cannot discuss things with him. There ought to be no secrecy in this regard. Saraswati is free in such matters. All children are free. I am also returning the letters you wanted me to return. Don't be perturbed. Have patience. I will spare no effort.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7352. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

304. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,
November 14, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I should be happy if both the scripts were made compulsory. There is no question of you or anyone else coming to replace Mahadev. In a way, those who do their duty in their respective positions are also helping.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHETH MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

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

305. LETTER TO PYARELAL

November 14, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I expect regularity from you. Being regular about food will not interfere with work. In the same way, you should have attended to your leg. When you do not do things properly, Ba, Sushila and I do certainly get upset. About *Harijan*, etc., do whatever you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

306. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 14, 1938

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. The Mysore job seems to me rather a difficult one. The Sardar thinks so too. He arrived today. Now we will discuss the matter tomorrow.

It will be good if you build up your body.

I will await a letter from you.

Kanam is doing fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

307. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 15, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

What you say about the Ataturk is all true. Why don't you write a public letter about his removing the *purdah*?

Agatha will be here probably till J.¹ returns. She is doing well. We are discussing things in a leisurely manner.

So M.² leaves you on 19th. He is in ecstasies over your affectionate attention. The Travancore deputation is due now. Hence I must close this.

Love.

WARRIOR

From the original: C.W. 3651. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6460

308. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I read your note about N. It cannot be sent anywhere for publication. Not that your argument is incorrect, but why give so much importance to N.? We know his ideas. Moreover, to reply to him is to raise up a hornet's nest. What is the advantage in publishing N.'s name? His arguments may be analysed and an indirect reply may be given to him as is often done by me. I can do this myself but his arguments do not have sufficient substance to deserve that. The proofs cited by you are worth using. I will see what can be done. I am, therefore, not returning the article. Treat this letter as the last I shall be sending. I will write tomorrow, however. If you have already left, Rajkumari will forward it. I am not sending the other things. As you will start on the 19th, I assume that you will arrive on the evening of the 21st.

Madgavkar is arriving tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11684

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru

² Mahadev Desai; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 16-11-1938

309. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 15, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I had a talk with R. He knows everything. He first heard about it from his father. R. has not made a full inquiry, but from what inquiry he has made, he feels that there is no truth at all in the matter. P. has completely denied the story and she says that P. could be believed guilty of such misconduct only if she also could be believed so. According to him, S. has seen everything through prejudiced eyes. But he says he will inquire into the matter further and will write to me. He has asked me not to worry about S. at all. In this situation, I have become completely helpless. If S. has committed no errors, she should boldly narrate what happened, as Devdas did in regard to Manilal. I would now advise you not to take any further interest in the matter. Don't worry. R. has assured me that he will not let S. come to any harm. Just now she will stay with her grandparents. She will continue to write to me and will accept whatever I finally decide.

I would also advise you to write to R. You may even write through me. If you handle the situation with detachment and calm, the truth will come out and S. can be saved.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Just now there are several deputations and so there is a good deal of pressure on me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7353. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

310. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON,
November 15, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

I saw your letter after many days. Is it any wonder that you win people's appreciation wherever you go ?

Patwardhan may come whenever he can. The family responsi-

bilities are always a problem. Illnesses and accidents are bound to happen. You at any rate ought never to fall ill. The golden remedy for this is obedience to rules in all things.

You may certainly bring your new friend with you.

Kishorelal had talked to me also. I myself have not been able to read the book¹, but I read the letter² which has been objected to. I have found no substance in the objection. Its publication is likely to do me no harm. I would be harmed only if I failed to do what I ought to do and did what I ought not to. I need therefore withdraw nothing. There is one letter among them which perhaps I would not have permitted to be published and that too only because of the prevailing social attitudes.

I am sure, moreover, that you had taken all necessary precautions while publishing the letter.

What Kishorelal has written is well meant.³ Don't take it to heart. Explain courteously your position to him.

I am well.

Khan Saheb has asked for one woman social worker. Your name was almost on my lips, but I did not like to draw you away from your present work. I, therefore, dropped for the moment the idea of sending you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6836. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak. Also G.N. 10397

¹ *Vatsalyachi Prasaddiksha*, a Marathi translation of Gandhiji's letters to the addressee numbering about 90

² This was the one dated 21-5-1936; *vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 21-5-1936

³ Kishorelal had been pained by the storm raised over the book and had written to the addressee criticizing her action in publishing the letters.

*311. TALK TO TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS
DEPUTATION¹*

November 15, 1938

I have received reports that there has been violence on a considerable scale in Travancore. On the other hand I have received wires from the State Congress dictators saying that there has been no violence whatever for which they can be held responsible, that whatever violence there has been was instigated by the authorities. It has been alleged too that there has been secret endorsement of violence by the State Congress people though they are not directly responsible for it. What I say is that if there has been mob violence, by whomsoever wrought, it shows that the State Congress has not acquired sufficient control over the masses. In that case civil disobedience has to be suspended even as was done by me more than once. I admit you were behind the prison bars when most of the alleged cases of violence took place. I appreciate also the fact that you did not get a chance of educating the masses into discipline. I entirely endorse your view that the fight should not be merely to wrest a few concessions from the authorities but for establishing real responsible government. But all that, to my mind, makes out a case for doing more spade-work among the masses. You must build from below.

You tell me that you regard the removal of the Dewan would help your movement as he is the chief obstacle in your way. If you persist in the charges, you must be prepared to prove them. But in my opinion it will have the inevitable result of pushing the question of responsible government into the background by bringing to the fore a purely personal issue. I call that playing the enemy's game. And you would give the wrong lead to the people. I do not want you to withdraw the allegations because they are not true, if you believe in them. I want those allegations to be withdrawn because you have a far bigger issue at stake. The greater includes the less. Removal of the Dewan by itself would not give you responsible government. A clever dewan might choose to slip out and remain in the background till the storm has blown over and in the mean time use a substitute to crush the movement. Such things have happened before and will

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Why the Withdrawal". The deputation had gone to see Gandhiji at Segaon. This, Pyarelal says, is the substance of the talk.

happen again. On the other hand responsible government includes the power to dismiss ministers according to the popular will. You can therefore say, without abating an iota from your charges, you do not want to dissipate your energy by pursuing these charges. There are the two alternatives before you, both of them perfectly legitimate. You have to make your choice. You should know best the psychology of your people. It may be such that the fight can be best conducted through agitation to remove the Dewan. Personally, when I weigh the pros and cons of the matter, I feel like saying you should swallow the bitter cup and concentrate on getting the reins of power into your hands.

But whatever the decision about the allegations, I would advise you not to restart civil disobedience just now. You should put your own house in order. If you keep unadulterated non-violence at the back of your minds, you would not say, "Let us take time by the forelock, and now that there is all this energy bubbling forth, let us consolidate our gains." You would not capture power by madly frittering away the energy generated. That way lies danger. You will, if you follow that, only pave the way for the political schemers who may exploit the situation for furthering their own designs. I would therefore ask you to go slow, steadily gathering all the threads into your hands. You should become a homogeneous and disciplined mass by undergoing training in constructive work and non-violence. You may not take another forward step without canvassing public opinion inside and outside Travancore first.

Apparently there may be no connection between constructive work and non-violence; but there is an internal logic connecting the two when constructive work is taken up as a part of a non-violence programme. The National Flag, for instance, was conceived as a symbol of unity, purity and non-violence. It is the place that we have given it in our non-violence programme that gives it its significance and importance; by itself it has no virtue. In prosecuting your constructive programme, you must always keep the background of non-violence before your mind.

Then I should ask students to remain apart from the civil disobedience part of the struggle and should not carry on any propaganda in their midst. It is not proper to ask students of school-going age to do such work. It is a sign of weakness. It is like asking children to undergo suffering for their parents.

But the students can and ought to take part in the struggle by

becoming adepts in charkha and other items in the constructive programme, as the Chinese students are doing while the fight against Japan is going on. The Chinese students are working to preserve the essentials of Chinese culture through their programme of New Education. They are helping to create a national spirit which will remain unsubdued irrespective of the fortunes of the Chinese arms on the battle field.

The satyagraha struggle in British India had two aspects, non-violent non-co-operation with the Government and co-operation among the people themselves. Both these aspects should constantly be kept before the mind's eye. The constructive programme that I have set before you necessitates perfect co-operation among all the sections. You will therefore go among the Pulayas and the Pariahs, fraternize with them and appeal to them as fellow countrymen and equals to come out and take their due share in the sacred fight along with the Brahmins, Ezhawas, Christians and others. You must all become one. You dare not leave out or antagonize a single section or community without stultifying yourselves and damaging your fight.

Then there is the prohibition work. You would not picket just now, but you would visit the drunkards in their homes and strive with them. Even if you do not succeed in producing immediate tangible results, it will put your struggle on a moral plane and add strength and momentum to it.

Travancore people, both men and women, are so simple in their habits. They wear white and need very little cloth to protect them against the elements. They can easily produce all the khadi they need. Travancore need not import a single yard of cloth or even khadi from outside. This means that there should be a spinning-wheel in every home.

And khadi should be linked with liberty. All the time you are spinning, you would not think in terms of your own requirements but in terms of the requirements of the nation. You will say, 'I want to clothe the whole nation that is naked and I must do it non-violently.' Each time you draw a thread, say to yourselves, 'We are drawing the thread of swaraj.' Multiply this picture millionfold and you have freedom knocking at your door.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

312. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Why do you say when Mahadev leaves you you won't have to write to me (I suppose you mean so regularly)? If you have the time I do want you to write regularly. I may fail to do likewise. But you have always permitted me that latitude.

I hope you will have a kind of relaxation after his departure. Though it was a pleasure to you to have him with you it was undoubtedly a tax on your attention and energy.

The Travancore deputation was finished today. They appeared to be good men. They have real difficulty in withdrawing the allegations. But they have not given me a conclusive answer. They will put the pros and cons before their W. C. and then come to a decision. How I wish you could have been present during the conversations. I gave them four hours. Ramachandran is still here.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

If Mahadev is there when this is received tell him he sh give a day or two to Bhopal if he can.

From the original: C.W. 3890. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7046

313. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
November 16, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I hope both you and Indu have benefited by the voyage. I am expecting you to be in Wardha about 20th. But of course you will come as early as you wish. You have tough problems awaiting solution.

Love to you both.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

314. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 16, 1938

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

So 17th Nov. is your birthday! Many happy returns. But for us these returns can never be happy unless they provide us with fresh scope for service. And you are going to Hyderabad specially to render service. You will write to me of your doings. You are under promise not to overstrain yourself.

Love.

Yours,
PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DECCAN

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

315. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR THAKORE SAHEB OF RAJKOT¹

[Before November 19, 1938]²

1. After having observed the growth of popular feeling and the regrettable sufferings of our people during the last few months for the redress of what they understood to be their grievances, and after having discussed the whole situation with the Council and Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, we are convinced the present struggle and sufferings should end immediately.

2. We have decided to appoint a committee of ten gentlemen who should be subjects or servants of our State, three of whom will be State officers and seven subjects of our State whose names will be declared hereafter. The President of the committee will be a person

¹ This was signed by Dharmendrasingh, Thakore Saheb of Rajkot on December 26 after talks with Vallabhbhai Patel.

² *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-11-1938, where Gandhiji mentions having drafted the statement.

appointed by His Highness.

3. This committee shall draw up by the end of January, after proper investigation, a report to us recommending a scheme of reforms so as to give the widest possible powers to our people consistently with our obligation to the Paramount Power and with our prerogatives as a Ruling Chief.

4. It is our desire that our Privy Purse shall henceforth be regulated in the manner laid down in the circular of the Chamber of Princes.

5. We desire furthermore to assure our people that we intend to consider and give effect to the scheme that may be reported to us by the said committee.

6. It being understood that all unconstitutional agitation shall immediately cease, as a necessary prelude to restore peace and goodwill, we hereby grant full amnesty and release immediately all political prisoners and remit all fines and withdraw all repressive measures.

Harijan, 4-2-1939

316. PROHIBITION IN SALEM DISTRICT

The Syndicate of the Annamalai University deputed Shri C. Jagannathachari to study the problem of prohibition in Salem District under the guidance and direction of Professor B. V. Narayanaswami Naidu. I have been favoured with a summary of the report from which I take the following excerpts¹.

Harijan, 19-11-1938

¹ These are not reproduced here.

317. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
November 19, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

HOPE DESPONDENCY GONE CHEERFULNESS RETURNED. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3891. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7047

318. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 19, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Please study the statement¹ which I have drafted after discussions with Anantrai² and Nanabhai. If you approve of it, the Thakore Saheb may act accordingly and satyagraha should be withdrawn. Decide the names of the members of the Committee in consultation with Bhai Anantrai. The people's representatives should be in a majority in the Committee. If this is accepted, I think we should be satisfied. There is no mention of responsible government in my draft, but I think it is clearly implied.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 227-8

¹ *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

² Anantrai Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar

319. *THE JEWS*

Several letters have been received by me asking me to declare my views about the Arab-Jew question in Palestine and the persecution of the Jews in Germany. It is not without hesitation that I venture to offer my views on this very difficult question.

My sympathies are all with the Jews. I have known them intimately in South Africa. Some of them became life-long companions. Through these friends I came to learn much of their age-long persecution. They have been the untouchables of Christianity. The parallel between their treatment by Christians and the treatment of untouchables by Hindus is very close. Religious sanction has been invoked in both cases for the justification of the inhuman treatment meted out to them. Apart from the friendships, therefore, there is the more common universal reason for my sympathy for the Jews.

But my sympathy does not blind me to the requirements of justice. The cry for the national home for the Jews does not make much appeal to me. The sanction for it is sought in the Bible and the tenacity with which the Jews have hankered after return to Palestine. Why should they not, like other peoples of the earth, make that country their home where they are born and where they earn their livelihood?

Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose the Jews on the Arabs. What is going on in Palestine today cannot be justified by any moral code of conduct. The mandates have no sanction but that of the last war. Surely it would be a crime against humanity to reduce the proud Arabs so that Palestine can be restored to the Jews partly or wholly as their national home.

The nobler course would be to insist on a just treatment of the Jews wherever they are born and bred. The Jews born in France are French in precisely the same sense that Christians born in France are French. If the Jews have no home but Palestine, will they relish the idea of being forced to leave the other parts of the world in which they are settled? Or do they want a double home where they can remain at will? This cry for the national home affords a colourable justification for the German expulsion of the Jews.

But the German persecution of the Jews seems to have no parallel in history. The tyrants of old never went so mad as Hitler

seems to have gone. And he is doing it with religious zeal. For he is propounding a new religion of exclusive and militant nationalism in the name of which any inhumanity becomes an act of humanity to be rewarded here and hereafter. The crime of an obviously mad but intrepid youth is being visited upon his whole race with unbelievable ferocity. If there ever could be a justifiable war in the name of and for humanity, a war against Germany, to

Can the Jews resist this organized and prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race, would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war. A discussion of the pros and cons of such a war is therefore outside my horizon or province.

But if there can be no war against Germany, even for such a crime as is being committed against the Jews, surely there can be no alliance with Germany. How can there be alliance between a nation which claims to stand for justice and democracy and one which is the declared enemy of both? Or is England drifting towards armed dictatorship and all it means?

Germany is showing to the world how efficiently violence can be worked when it is not hampered by any hypocrisy or weakness masquerading as humanitarianism. It is also showing how hideous, terrible and terrifying it looks in its nakedness. shameless persecution? Is there a way to preserve their self-respect, and not to feel helpless, neglected and forlorn? I submit there is. No person who has faith in a living God need feel helpless or forlorn. Jehovah of the Jews is a God more personal than the God of the Christians, the Mussalmans or the Hindus, though, as a matter of fact in essence, He is common to all and one without a second and beyond description. But as the Jews attribute personality to God and believe that He rules every action of theirs, they ought not to feel helpless. If I were a Jew and were born in Germany and earned my livelihood there, I would claim Germany as my home even as the tallest gentile German may, and challenge him to shoot me or cast me in the dungeon; I would refuse to be expelled or to submit to discriminating treatment. And for doing this, I should not wait for the fellow Jews to join me in civil resistance but would have confidence that in the end the rest are bound to follow my example. If one Jew or all the Jews were to accept the prescription here offered, he or they cannot be worse off than now. And suffering voluntarily undergone will bring them an inner strength and joy which no number of resolutions of sympathy passed in the world

outside Germany can. Indeed, even if Britain, France and America were to declare hostilities against Germany, they can bring no inner joy, no inner strength. The calculated violence of Hitler may even result in a general massacre of the Jews by way of his first answer to the declaration of such hostilities. But if the Jewish mind could be prepared for voluntary suffering, even the massacre I have imagined could be turned into a day of thanksgiving and joy that Jehovah had wrought deliverance of the race even at the hands of the tyrant. For to the godfearing, death has no terror. It is a joyful sleep to be followed by a waking that would be all the more refreshing for the long sleep.

It is hardly necessary for me to point out that it is easier for the Jews than for the Czechs to follow my prescription. And they have in the Indian satyagraha campaign in South Africa an exact parallel. There the Indians occupied precisely the same place that the Jews occupy in Germany. The persecution had also a religious tinge. President Kruger used to say that the white Christians were the chosen of God and Indians were inferior beings created to serve the whites. A fundamental clause in the Transvaal constitution was that there should be no equality between the whites and coloured races including Asiatics. There too the Indians were consigned to ghettos described as locations. The other disabilities were almost of the same type as those of the Jews in Germany. The Indians, a mere handful, resorted to satyagraha without any backing from the world outside or the Indian Government. Indeed the British officials tried to dissuade the satyagrahis from their contemplated step. World opinion and the Indian Government came to their aid after eight years of fighting. And that too was by way of diplomatic pressure not of a threat of war.

But the Jews of Germany can offer satyagraha under infinitely better auspices than the Indians of South Africa. The Jews are a compact, homogeneous community in Germany. They are far more gifted than the Indians of South Africa. And they have organized world opinion behind them. I am convinced that if someone with courage and vision can arise among them to lead them in non-violent action, the winter of their despair can in the twinkling of an eye be turned into the summer of hope. And what has today become a degrading man-hunt can be turned into a calm and determined stand offered by unarmed men and women possessing the strength of suffering given to them by Jehovah. It will be then a truly religious resistance offered against the godless fury of dehumanized man. The German Jews will score a lasting victory over the German gentiles in

the sense that they will have converted the latter to an appreciation of human dignity. They will have rendered service to fellow-Germans and proved their title to be the real Germans as against those who are today dragging, however unknowingly, the German name into the mire.

And now a word to the Jews in Palestine. I have no doubt that they are going about it the wrong way. The Palestine of the Biblical conception is not a geographical tract. It is in their hearts. But if they must look to the Palestine of geography as their national home, it is wrong to enter it under the shadow of the British gun. A religious act cannot be performed with the aid of the bayonet or the bomb. They can settle in Palestine only by the goodwill of the Arabs. They should seek to convert the Arab heart. The same God rules the Arab heart who rules the Jewish heart. They can offer satyagraha in front of the Arabs and offer themselves to be shot or thrown into the Dead Sea without raising a little finger against them. They will find the world opinion in their favour in their religious aspiration. There are hundreds of ways of reasoning with the Arabs, if they will only discard the help of the British bayonet. As it is, they are co-sharers with the British in despoiling a people who have done no wrong to them.

I am not defending the Arab excesses. I wish they had chosen the way of non-violence in resisting what they rightly regarded as an unwarrantable encroachment upon their country. But according to the accepted canons of right and wrong, nothing can be said against the Arab resistance in the face of overwhelming odds.

Let the Jews who claim to be the chosen race prove their title by choosing the way of non-violence for vindicating their position on earth. Every country is their home including Palestine not by aggression but by loving service. A Jewish friend has sent me a book called *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization* by Cecil Roth. It gives a record of what the Jews have done to enrich the world's literature, art, music, drama, science, medicine, agriculture, etc. Given the will, the Jew can refuse to be treated as the outcaste of the West, to be despised or patronized. He can command the attention and respect of the world by being man, the chosen creation of God, instead of being man who is fast sinking to the brute and forsaken by God. They can add to their many contributions the surpassing contribution of non-violent action.

SEGAON, November 20, 1938

Harijan, 26-11-1938

320. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 20, 1938

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

No letter from you. I hope no news is good news both about your health and your mission. You are not to wear yourself out on the mission work. I shall never excuse myself if you damage your health by overwork.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD
DECCAN

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

321. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

November 20, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I had got your letter. You must have got mine. After writing to you, I discussed the matter with R. I have not been able to convince him. He says that there must have been some mistake in what S. saw and that the same charge was levelled against you regarding your relations with P. Ultimately it was proved that there was nothing in it. All the same, says R., he will make a full inquiry. But he adds: "Suppose my sister has fallen, is it not S.'s duty to bring her mother to her senses? Was it right for her to run down to you? Have we, who have brought her up, who have given her love, and separation from whom has made her shed tears, ceased to be of any value? If you order, I will certainly bring S. before you even to tell her this." In these circumstances, how could I insist any further? Now it is for S. to show courage. She should boldly prove P.'s misconduct, and having shown that she cannot reform P. She should try to come to me. P.

may have gone astray but all the others cannot be like her. Don't become impatient. It is not proper that you should give up hope of P. Her love for you has not diminished. If it has, cannot the betrothal be cancelled even after it has been made public? But he does not even dream of such a step. You have become a part of that family. You should believe that there is still room for further inquiry in this matter. However that be, I do not want you to let this affair trouble you or take your time. Whatever type of woman P. may be, S. is certainly not going to be affected. It will be enough if she remains engrossed in her duty. Write to her and ask her to write to me as frankly as she does to you. If she is afraid that someone might read her letters, I will tear them up after reading them, as I do R. K.'s. Her letters are given to me unopened, as also others which are marked "Private" "Personal", or anything to that effect. I want that not you but I should worry about S. You are also not right in believing that it was wrong to have made your betrothal public.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Jawaharlal arrives tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7354. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

322. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 20, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Send Rs. 251/- to Thakkar Bapa for the Harijan Sevak Sangh. His address: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

74 WALKESHWAR ROAD

BOMBAY

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

323. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 21, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I do hope you had my note¹ in Bombay. I could not take silence before 2 o'clock. I hope you will have a little quiet till then and enjoy it after the strenuous time in Bombay. Hope Indu is well.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

324. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 21, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

In a few minutes Jawaharlal will be here. I seize them for these few lines. The doleful strain still runs through your letters. Long or short, your letters are welcome and they get read in spite of heavy work.

Your note² on Kemal I had to amend in parts. You will see the corrections which I know you won't mind.

Mira will be going on Wednesday to Bombay for her eyes and thence to the Frontier P[rovince]. I think it is better she goes there first.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3652. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6461

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru"; 16-11-1938

² This was published in *Harijan*, 26-11-1938, under "Notes", sub-title, "The Late Kemal Ataturk".

325. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 21, 1938

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

There is no question of distrust.¹ We all feel that you cannot possibly do justice to your position, being continuously absent from Amritsar. The work suffers. But you can come and explain before your resignation is submitted to the Board. But then you should not be long in coming. I shall not be in Segaoon in January. It would be better if you can come before 15th December.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

326. FOREWORD TO "THE BROTHERHOOD OF RELIGIONS"

These essays of Sophia Wadia show at a glance how much similarity there is between the principal faiths of the earth in the fundamentals of life. All our mutual quarrels centre round non-essentials. Sophia Wadia's labours will be amply rewarded if people belonging to different faiths will study faiths other than their own, with the same reverence that she has exhibited in her essays. An understanding knowledge of and respect for the great faiths of the world is the foundation of true Theosophy—Wisdom about God.

M. K. GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA, November 23, 1938

The Brotherhood of Religions

327. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
November 24, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your note. I knew that once you were in harness you won't be master of your own time. I shall be satisfied with what I get.

¹ *Vide*, "Letter to Lala Girdharilal", 5-10-1938

Here is a letter delivered through messenger from Gurudev. I have replied saying my personal opinion was that he needed to be free from the Presidential work, if he was to rid Bengal of corruption. I have no doubt Gurudev will write to you directly or talk to you. You will give your own opinion.

I hope Indu was none the worse for the journey.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Also A *Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 298

328. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,

November 25, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had intended during the day to write to you but I could not. You must regain full control over your sleep. You must learn the art of producing a blank in the head at night. I understand what you say about Shummy. May everything turn out as it should.

Did I tell you that the programme is to pass January in Bardoli? You are to come to Bardoli. The whole of December will be spent here.

I had good talks with Jawaharlal on all sorts of topics. But I must not describe them. Most of my time is passed in giving interviews.

Mahadev is not extra well. For the time being he stays here.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3892. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7048

329. NOTE ON LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE¹

November 25, 1938

Evidently the writer of the letter at the back addressed yours to me by mistake, and you must have received what was meant for me. Anyway, the mistake enables me to know that you have been ailing

¹ The letter addressed to Dr. Khare by a student from Kanpur had been posted to Gandhiji by oversight.

and hope that this finds you fully restored.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-12-1938

330. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

November 25, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I see no need for withdrawing the 1100 copies of Prema's book¹ and issuing a new edition. When the time comes for a new edition, we may think of omitting something. Prema's argument appears correct to me. I think we should see what effect the 1100 copies have.

Chandan² may now go to Delhi whenever she wishes. The earlier she goes, the better. Bal's letter was interesting. Let him retain possession as a trustee. He may even be given a special right in that capacity. It is desirable that he should keep nothing as heir.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send the accompanying³ to Bal, if you approve it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7977

331. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

November 26, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I won't be satisfied till you can report that you are getting good sleep without difficulty.

This according to your instruction goes to Jullundur.

Your letter to Barnabas is good but very hastily drafted. They may join the Congress in their thousands but why may they not have a separate organization of themselves to consider many questions that specially affect them. For social and religious uplift they need an organization. If they do not have it, they are likely to tire of the Congress for the Congress won't contribute to their all-round uplift. I am therefore not dealing with it in *Harijan*. You should discuss this with

¹ *Vatsalyachi Prasaddiksha*; vide "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", 15-11-1938

² Chandan Parekh, who later married the addressee's son, Satish

³ Not traceable

me when you come.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

How I wish I had known that the toga had to be kept for you!
However you do not mind Indu wearing it.

From the original: C.W. 3893. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7049

332. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEGAON,
November 26, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you had mine of yesterday. This is just to tell you that now that you are gone everybody misses you. Your room is more than full. Mahadev is not going anywhere, for the time being at any rate.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

B. P. 160/98

SHRI MIRABEHN
C/O SETH MATHURADAS TRICUMJEE
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From the original: C.W. 6415. Courtesy: MirabeHN. Also G.N. 10010

333. *LETTER TO HANNAH LAZAR*

November 26, 1938

MY DEAR HANNA,

I had your letter from Kimberley but not the letter you want to write.

You must not only keep well but be robust.

I am not writing to your mother or young Isele.

But my love to all of you.

BAPU

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

334. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1938

MY DEAR FLY,

Who is most distinguished daughter of Bengal and equally distinguished daughter-in-law of Andhra.

Though you are so distinguished, you are still a fly, thank God.

I have already written to Padmaja without in any way mentioning you for the journey. You are past praying for. Much love till we meet on or about 8th Dec.

Yours,
LITTLE SPINNER,
SPIDER, ETC.

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

335. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 26, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I am trying to call over S. in my own way.

When the time for your medical studies comes, I shall see about your increased expenses.

I am trying to find Dharmdevji's letter. If I find it, I will reply to him, otherwise I will ask for a copy.

Take care of your health. Learn the art of preserving it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev has arrived. He will take time to resume work. He is in Segaoon just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7355. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

336. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 26, 1938

CHI. ANAND,

I have sent your letter on to Father and have also written him a good letter. He will melt. Hope Vidya is well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

337. NON-CO-OPERATORS

Several letters have been lying on my file from Congressmen who non-co-operated during the non-co-operation days. Among these were those also who resigned Government services. Some of these are now agitating for reinstatement. They quote in support my appeal to the public including Government servants tonon-co-operate. Among the sufferers who have, to my knowledge, not agitated for restoration are the resisters who were fined, the relatives who lost their bread-winners, the lawyers who gave up their practice and were reduced to penury, and the students who gave up their studies and consequent prospects. They think the suffering voluntarily undergone was its own reward and demands no further compensation.

If all these were to claim restoration from the Congress Ministers, the latter's lot would be truly unenviable and they would have little work to do save that of adjudging claims. They would also have to raise money for discharging claims that must amount to several crores. Moreover, it would be difficult for the discharged Government servants who gave up their jobs whether compulsorily or voluntarily to show that the cases of other sufferers were less hard than theirs.

In my opinion these ex-Government-servants as a class were the least sufferers. And if they have been without work all these years, they can hardly become efficient servants of the State. Government service for Congressmen is not an avenue to material advancement; it should be an avenue to service. Therefore only those Congressmen may enter Government service whose market value is higher than that they can get from the Government. They can be employed only when

they are wanted. There should be no such thing as Congress patronage.

A war, whether violent or non-violent, loses its thrill and its grandeur if the warriors are insured against all loss. A satyagrahi to be worthy of the name stands to lose all without expectation of any compensation in the future. His merit lies in his undergoing the uttermost sacrifice. Indeed the Congress machinery will fall to pieces if men come to it to better their prospects in life. And if the Congress Ministers are expected to satisfy personal ambition they will be themselves discredited and bring down the prestige of the Congress in the end.

I hope the reader will not fail to note the difference between this and the restoration of lands which were vindictively sold for a song by the preceding Government administration. There the restoration was easily possible and was a duty. It was like restoring a bit of country taken away by the victor.

If another civil disobedience campaign becomes necessary, the Government will think fifty times before selling people's land and unpatriotic persons will not dare to profit at the expense of patriots.

SEGAON, November 27, 1938

Harijan, 3-12-1938

338. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEGAON,
November 27, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is for the sake merely of telling you that I have your letter and that all is well. Mahadev seems to be progressing. I wish you could say the same of you.

Here is the Aundh party coming. Jairamdas has also come in. He is looking much better.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3894. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7050

339. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEGAON,
November 27¹, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I shall attend to all your instructions. I do hope your eyes will be so suited as not to cause any trouble for some years to come. Govind² may go astray. Kaka offered him a job but he has not even put in an appearance. A mission has begun operations here and Govind has offered his services. I hear he has now gone to Nagpur to satisfy his would-be employers. He may prove an enemy of his people and Segaon. I do not want you to worry about him. I shall do all I can to wean him. But the lure of money is too great a temptation for poor peoples. Everything else is going well. Mahadev is well. Verrier and his sister came in today. They are passing the afternoon here.

I have been taking silence from 7 p.m. to 2 p.m. next day. So the speaking is confined to 5 hours. But it is incessant for those hours. I must cut off that too, if I am to have the full benefit.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6416. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10011

¹ In the source '28' seems to have been corrected to '27'.

² An inmate of the Ashram working with the addressee

340. STATES AND THE PEOPLE

The almost simultaneous awakening in the various States is a very significant event in the national struggle for independence. It will be wrong to think that such awakening can be due to the instigation of one person or a body of persons or any organization. It is just possible that the Haripura resolution of the Congress put the people of the States on their mettle and they realized as never before that their salvation depended upon their own labours. But above all it is the time spirit that has brought about the awakening. It is to be hoped that the Princes and their advisers will recognize it and meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. There is no half-way house between total extinction of the States and the Princes making their people responsible for the administration of their States and themselves becoming trustees for the people, taking an earned commission for their labours.

I hope, therefore, the rumour is not true that the British Government are likely, at the instance of some Princes or their Dewans, to announce a change in the policy recently enunciated by Earl Winterton, about the ability of the Princes to grant responsible government to their people. If any of them have asked the British Government to reverse the policy, they have undoubtedly done a disservice to themselves. And if the British Government respond to the unworthy wish, they will precipitate a first-class crisis whose magnitude it is difficult to foretell. I must refuse to believe that the British Government can commit such a blunder. Earl Winterton's announcement was but an endorsement of past practice. They are not known to have ever interfered with the States giving powers to their people, however wide they might be.

I go a step further. Even as the British Government, as the Paramount Power, are bound to protect the Princes against harm from outside or within, they are equally or a *fortiori* bound to ensure just rule on the part of the Princes. Hence it is their bounden duty, when they supply the police or the military to any State, to see that there is a proper emergency justifying the request and that the military or the police will be used with becoming restraint. From Dhenkanal have come to me stories of fiendish cruelty exercised by the State myrmidons under the shadow of the police supplied by the Paramount Power. I asked for evidence in support of some of the unnamable

cruelties. And I have enough to inspire belief.

Indeed, it is a question whether responsible Ministers in the provinces have not a moral responsibility in respect of the people of the States in their respective provinces. Under the Constitution, the Ministers have no power over them. The Governor is the agent of the Viceroy who is the representative of the Paramount Power. But the Ministers in autonomous provinces have surely a moral responsibility regarding what happens in the States. So long as the States and the people are satisfied, Ministers have no worry. But have they none if there is, say, a virulent epidemic in the States which, if neglected, may easily overtake the province in which they are situated? Have they none when there is a moral epidemic which seems to be raging in Dhenkanal?

I understand that the persecuted people are taking refuge in British Orissa. Can the Ministers refuse them shelter? How many can they take charge of? Whatever happens in these States affects for better or for worse the province as a whole. I do believe, therefore, that the Ministers by reason of the heavy responsibility resting on their shoulders have the moral right, within strict limits, to assert themselves for the sake of internal peace and decency. They cannot look on with unconcern while the people of the States—an arbitrary creation of the Paramount Power—are being ground to dust as they in Dhenkanal are reported to be.

One reads in the papers that some concessions have been given to the people of Dhenkanal. I do not know whether the report is true and whether the relief answers the purpose for which the people of Dhenkanal are fighting and suffering. It is, however, irrelevant to the issue raised by me. I feel that the Ministers in the provinces are morally bound to take notice of gross misrule in the States within their borders and to tender advice to the Paramount Power as to what, in their opinion, should be done. The Paramount Power, if it is to enjoy friendly relations with the provincial Ministers, is bound to give sympathetic ear to their advice.

There is one other matter which demands the urgent attention of the States and their advisers. They fight shy of the very name Congress. They regard Congressmen as outsiders, foreigners and what not. They may be all that in law. But man-made law, if it is in conflict with the natural law, becomes a dead letter when the latter operates in full force. The people of the States look up to the Congress in all matters

affecting their interest. Many of them are members of the Congress. Some like Shri Jamnalalji hold high offices in the Congress organization. In the eyes of the Congress there is no distinction between members from the States and from India called British. It is surely detrimental to the interests of the States to ignore the Congress or Congressmen, especially when it or they seek to render friendly assistance. They must recognize the fact that the people in the States are in many cases guided by the Congress. They know that I am responsible for the policy of non-interference hitherto followed by the Congress. But with the growing influence of the Congress it is impossible for me to defend it in the face of injustice perpetrated in the States. If the Congress feels that it has the power to offer effective interference, it will be bound to do so when the call comes. And if the Princes believe that the good of the people is also their good, they would gratefully seek and accept the Congress assistance. It is surely in their interest to cultivate friendly relations with an organization which bids fair in the future, not very distant, to replace the Paramount Power, let me hope, by friendly arrangement. Will they not read the handwriting on the wall?

SEGAON, November 28, 1938

Harijan, 3-12-1938

341. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I shall be ready to write to S.¹ as soon as you free me from the restraint. The suspense should cease, if it is at [all] possible. Today is *Harijan* day. Your absence is most felt on Mondays. Of course you can do a lot if you could be here and kept fit.

I understand about Narandas. I am sending him your note, which is sweet.

Mahadev is well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3895. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7051

¹ Shumshere Singh

342. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1938

DEAR MOTI BABU,

My sympathies are with you but equity and justice make me lean towards the A.I.S.A. I relied upon your integrity and business ability. If you must have reduction please start payment and rely upon getting it when you have paid what you contemplate. Is not that right and fair? But I would still plead with you to ask the co-workers to put forth redoubled effort to pay the debt due to a sister Association, which is run wholly for *Daridranarayana*.

Love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11052

343. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 28, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had got your letter. On the basis of it I wrote a couple of lines, not to complain but for information. I am enclosing the reply to that. Destroy the letter after reading it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If you see anything to criticize in the movement, please regard it as your duty to let me know about it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8554. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

344. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 28, 1938

CHI. MANI,

I have got your letter. I had not expected that you would be able to write in the midst of so much pressure of work. I am watching your exploits even from this distance. You seem to have earned great merit in your previous life. I never had any doubt about your courage. As far as possible, don't court imprisonment. That is the Rajkot people's job.

I hope you are taking care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
NEAR TELEGRAPH OFFICE
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 122

345. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
November 28, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am enclosing a letter from Bhavnagar. I have sent a wire asking the man to await a letter before sending any more batches. Participation by students in this manner seems to me altogether improper.

It also does not seem proper that subjects of other States should send batches from places outside Rajkot. This is completely contrary to our policy. That batch does not want and will not get swaraj. Its going to Rajkot will increase ill will and cover up the weaknesses of the Rajkot people if there are any. What will we gain by their weaknesses being covered up? The mettle of the people of Rajkot will shine only as much as it is worth. We may help it to shine brighter, but that can be done only by promoting growth among the Rajkot people

themselves. If you agree with this, stop the batches from outside and stop all students from joining. I can write much more, but where is the time? It doesn't matter, though.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 229

346. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON,

November 28, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The idea for my article came from your letter. There were other letters but I did not write anything. Now see the enclosed reply. If you have any comments to make, do so. Otherwise return it to me as it is. If the corruption does not go I must retire. I am of course carrying on talks.

Read the enclosed letter and do the needful. I take it that you will be receiving Muriel Lester. How can she stay with the Naoroji sisters at this time? You may put her up at Bhulabhai's place if you like. Let her leave for Wardha the same day. Somebody will receive her at the station on the 9th. There will be no time for you to send a telegram. There may not even be sufficient time to catch the train. If you cannot personally go or send someone to receive her then drop her a letter as desired by her. Do you have time to attend to such things? Do warn me if you do not have the time. In that case I shall not burden you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is there an equivalent term for 'Municipal Councillor' in Gujarati?

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

347. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 29, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

A letter for Jayaprakash is enclosed. I hope it will reach in time. I am writing this letter at 3.45 a. m. Take care of Jayaprakash's health. I do not know how yours is. I see that you both could see kanti. I am glad. Didn't I inform you that we would be going to Bardoli on January 1? We will be there for a month. You may come there. Jayaprakash also may come. But he is a fakir, absorbed in himself and lost in his own dreams. How can I expect him to pass some time with me? He will not be able to get anything from me and he may not even like some aspects of my life. What is the remedy? I am glad that you remain busy in his service. My health is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3524

348. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
November 29, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am writing this before the morning prayer. My health is excellent. Ba is fairly well. It is great news indeed that you have recovered. Now you need not come here at present for I expect to be at Bardoli on the 2nd of January. You are already there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7103. Also C.W. 4595. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

349. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

November 29, 1938

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Zakir telegraphed Big Brother's death.¹ What happened? I wrote to him only the other day about his daughter's death. I tried to come near him but failed. Cannot his death be turned to the end for which in his best moments he tried his utmost? This death is a tragedy. It will be doubled if no steps are taken to bring the two together. How it can be done is more than I can say. I am working at it in my own way. But that is not enough.

Love.

BAPU

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, p. 127

350. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 29, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The cause of yesterday's suffocation was that the water was too hot. I also had such experience. If the heat is gradually increased, no discomfort is felt. It is desirable to begin with near-body temperature. The bucket of hot water should be kept just near. This is, of course, to be followed by cold water. It would be best to take the hip-bath in the afternoon. This will cost you some time but let not that worry you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11685

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 29, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Read the accompanying letter and send it to Manilal. Don't change the January date. You may stay there as long as you desire.

¹ Shaukat Ali died on November 27, 1938, at Delhi.

Whenever you wish to run up here, you will have every right to do so. I was thinking only of Nanabhai and Vijayalakshmi. You also would naturally desire to stay with your parents.

In my present condition, I can give you nothing. I cannot spare even a minute for talking with you. And I would not wish that you should come here only in order that I could see your face every day and smile at you. Ba would not accept service from you. She is no longer ill. Having regard to all this, I leave it to you whether you should come here. I will leave this place on January 1 for Bardoli. If you wish to come there, you may do so for three or four days.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kishorelal and Gomati came and met me. Why does not Sita write? How is her health? How is Arun?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4889

352. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is the first letter I take up at 3.30 a.m.

I have your time-table. This is therefore being posted to Delhi.

Mahadev is having better nights than in Simla showing that the improvement continues. Perhaps the intense cold of Simla might not have agreed with him. Here unlike as before, he is sleeping under the open sky. The weather is quite mild. For three or four days I slept on the verandah. S. has permitted me to come out. How long the permission will last, one does not know.

Ever since Mira's departure I have been silent between 7 p. m. to 2 p.m. the day following. Hence there are only 5 speaking hours.

It will be good if Shummy finally makes up his mind to go to Europe. The change is likely to do him good and you will be able without anxiety to be with me. But Mahadev will say, what about the dog? He has been describing with what care that precious member of the family is being looked after.

I am just now engaged in hammering into shape the Aundh

Constitution. The Raja Saheb's son is a delightful boy.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3653. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6462

353. *LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

November 30, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

You did well in sending a copy of the report of Viceroy's talk with Bharatan. It is difficult to say how this catastrophe will end. Also read and think over what I have written about the States.¹ As Anantrai has intervened, the Rajkot matter will perhaps be settled. But how will that help? That will involve all the States. And that is what should happen.

Lakshmi and the children will be well. I am writing this letter before the morning prayer. My health is excellent—at present at any rate. I am taking proper care of it. Ba is fairly well and so is Mahadev. These days the atmosphere at Segaon is quite good. There goes the bell.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2007

354. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

November 30, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I do not mind your having spent the money. I do not want you to be ill for want of warm clothing or other things that may be necessary for keeping the body fit. I have no fear of the cold of the Frontier injuring you. I shall watch your career there with anxiety.

My silence up to 2 p. m. continues. There are thus only 5 speaking hours per day which are all practically given to interviews.

¹ *Vide* "States and the People", 3-12-1938

Mahadev wrote to you yesterday. He is steadily improving.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6417. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10012

355. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The Chinese friends came and instead of five minutes they took thirty-five. I had ultimately to say as gently as I could that they had overstayed their time seven times.

Here is your copy of Agatha's report of the interview with the Viceroy. My message was merely to say that he was to regard me as a friend of the English people, etc. It had nothing to do with politics.

I hope you duly received my letter¹ enclosing Gurudev's letter about Subhas.

Hope you are not killing yourself with work and that Indu is doing well.

Sarup² should be relieved of the heavy work she is doing. She should rebuild her shattered body.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 303

356. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Mahadev has just now placed your letter in my hand. If I said I knew your father it would be an understatement. We were as close to each other as members of a family. It will not be strange, therefore, if

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 24-11-1938

² Vijayalakshmi Pandit

I unveil his statue. But even if I do not do so, will it detract from our bond? Does one unveil the statue of one's brother? I have lost all heart in such ceremonies. Please, therefore, do not take it ill at all. Try to understand my point of view fully and leave me out. Let the statue be unveiled on the same day on which the opening ceremony of the building takes place and let that be done by Sardar. Will you not excuse me?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 4728. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

357. A LETTER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 30, 1938

CHI. LAMBUS,

'Lambodar' means 'long belly'. It is the name of God Ganapati. I should have named you 'Lambus'. Was it not kind of you to write to me after such a long time?

Amtul Salaam, Lilavati and Sharda are here. All of them are very well.

You sisters seem to be doing good work.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1752

358. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

SEGAON,
November 30, 1938

CHI. PREMI,

Your Hindi is not good, but I like it better than your English. Further efforts would improve it. Father has arrived here. He writes better Hindi than you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9250. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

359. *LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH*

[November 1938]¹

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have heard that Govind is taking up a job in a Christian mission. The mission intends to plant its flag in Segaon or has already done so. Find out the facts without making too much fuss.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8378

360. *LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH*

[November/December 1938]²

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

How are things there? Is everybody well? What about the cows? How much milk is left? How is Bhansali? Is Parnerkar happy? Does Shakaribehn feel lonely? Here the cold is not much to speak of. Sharada is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 10663

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 27-11-1938

² *ibid*

361. TELEGRAM TO LOCAL SECRETARY, JALLIANWALA
BAGH MEMORIAL FUND¹

[After December 1, 1938]

HOLD MEETING THIRTEENTH WARDHA THREE AFTERNOON.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI²

[Before December 2, 1938]³

I am lucky to receive your handwriting today after several years. It is difficult to address you when you tender me “*dandavat*”.

I am glad to hear about your ceaseless efforts to achieve my expectations. I never thought that the Rajkot public were presenting a united front single-handed, exhibiting unique solidarity. Vain are our impressions. God willing success is positive. If the unfavourable circumstances are reduced to dust, God may bless your services with singular success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-12-1938

363. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 2, 1938

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Your letter is clear. I knew your worth when you sent me that masterly report of yours on the famine condition. This one can't be compared with that. But it is good. The other was for the public. This is hurriedly drawn for me. You are doing good work. My condition is do not kill yourself over it. If you will only behave yourself, you are

¹ This was in answer to the addressee's letter of December 1, asking if he might convene a meeting of the Memorial Fund at Wardha during the meetings of the Congress Working Committee there.

² Ex-Dewan of Morvi, Palanpur and Gondal States. The letter was presumably in Gujarati.

³ The news report carrying this item is dated December 2.

capable of giving first-class work. You will take extra care to be accurate about your facts. I shall bear your caution in mind. There won't be a hasty word on my part. Continue to write regularly.

Hope you got my second letter.

Love.

PLAYMATE

[PS.]

Shall send for you when it is absolutely necessary. How is Father and the other members?

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

364. A CAUTION

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's and Shri Damodardas's requests respectively to non-Rajkot people and non-Hyderabad people not to take part in satyagraha are timely and deserve to receive hearty response. It is the essence of satyagraha that those who are suffering should alone offer it. Cases can be conceived when what may be termed sympathetic satyagraha may be legitimately applied. But so far as I see there is nothing in the Rajkot or Hyderabad satyagraha to warrant outside participation. Indeed it is likely to acerbate the authorities. The idea underlying satyagraha is to convert the wrongdoer, to awaken the sense of justice in him, to show him also that without the co-operation, direct or indirect, of the wronged, the wrongdoer cannot do the wrong intended by him. If the people in either case are not ready to suffer for their causes, no outside help in the shape of satyagraha can possibly bring true deliverance.

SEGAON, December 3, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

365. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHAGANJ,
December 3, 1938

THANUPILLAI

STATE CONGRESS

TRIVANDRUM

REGARD STATEMENT MADE BY SEBASTIAN OTHERS ABOUT
INTERVIEW INCORRECT. SHALL I ISSUE TRUE VERSION?¹

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial
Museum and Library

366. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

December 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I also wished to open the subject of the budget, but I forgot. We
shall have to discuss the matter a little. A copy is enclosed. Come
down on Tuesday. I will spare some time at 2 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7979

367. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

December 3, 1938

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

Your narration is prolix. You have not cited any evidence in it.²
What you have to say could easily have been put on one sheet. A
factual narration has no need of adornment. Write it again. I will send
it to U. P. You must furnish evidence in support of what you write.

¹ For Gandhiji's version, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 10-12-1938, and for
the interview, *vide* "Talk to Travancore State Congress Deputation", 15-11-1938

² The addressee had complained against the Congress.

Give the names of persons who are your sources. Omit such phrases as “I hope” and the like. You should learn to be precise in writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11519

368. *DISCUSSION WITH JOHN R. MOTT*¹

[On or before *December 4, 1938*]²

Dr. Mott . . . wondered if the world, including the world of missionaries, had advanced since they had last met.³ He was going to preside over the deliberations of the International Missionary Council meeting in Madras during the month, and he wanted to share with Gandhiji the plans of the meeting, and wanted Gandhiji’s “intuition and judgment on things to be discussed at the Convention.”

He said: “. . . This is a unique Convention where 14 councils of the younger churches of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and 14 of the older churches of Europe, America and Australia will be represented by over 400 delegates. We want this to be a help and not a hindrance to India. . . . Am I, I ask, right in thinking that the tide has turned a little bit on the great things you impressed on me? . . . Is there not a clearer recognition of these evils? . . .

GANDHIJI: What I have noticed is that there is a drift in the right direction so far as thought is concerned, but I do feel that in action there is *no* advance. I was going to say “not much advance”, but I deliberately say “*no* advance”. You may be able to give solitary instances of men here and there, but they do not count. Right conviction to be of use has to be translated into action.

JOHN MOTT: Take the first question, viz., that of the Communal Award. Has there been no progress?

G. No progress at all.

J.M. I have been studying the manuscript of the life of K. T. Paul, to which I have been asked to write a foreword. Don’t you think there has been an advance since his time? The attitude of the Roman Catholics is hostile, but what about Protestant Christians?

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai’s “Dr. Mott’s Second Visit”. John Mott’s part of the conversation has been slightly abridged.

² Desai gives no dates. *Vide*, however, “Letter to Amrit Kaur”, 5-12-1938, where Gandhiji says, “Mahadev wrote yesterday for five hours on the Mott visit.”

³ *Vide* “Discussion with John R. Mott”, 13/14-11-1936

G. If Protestant Christians are at one on this question, they can have the Award changed, so far as they are concerned. But there is no solid action in the matter.

J. M. I did not know that they could have an exception made in their behalf.

G. They can.

J. M. Take the next question. Is not taking advantage of people's disabilities being avoided now? I must say I was terribly pained to read of the McGavran incident¹ and greatly relieved to know that the misunderstanding has been cleared up.

G. Even on this question, whilst some friends, I agree, are in earnest, so far as action goes, there has been no change.

J. M. You mean to say there is not action enough?

G. No, there is *no* action at all. I have plenty of evidence to prove what I say. I do not publish all the correspondence I get. Mr. A. A. Paul, whom you may know, convened a conference some time ago. The proceedings were revealing. Their resolutions were half-hearted. As far as I am aware, there was no unanimity about any definite action.

J. M. I was encouraged by a resolution of the National Christian Council which insisted on pure motives and pure practice.

G. You may cite the resolution but you will not be able to show corresponding action.

J. M. I understand. Without action no decision is anything worth. This lesson was burnt on my mind even as a student when Foster's great essay on the *Decision of Character* helped me more than anything I had read.

G. I assure you you will find confirmation of what I say. I would say that there is not even concrete recognition of the danger of taking an undue advantage of people's disabilities. They will never give up what they call the right of mass conversions.

J. M. They are now talking of conversion of groups and families. I am not quite clear, though, as to what in certain cases the word 'group' implies.

G. I am quite clear. It is mass conversions called by another name.

J. M. That is strange. How can groups or families be converted *en masse*? Conversion in my family for instance came first with my father, then my oldest

¹ Mc Gavran had contributed to *World Dominion* a fabricated report of the talk between Gandhiji on the one hand and Bishops Pickett and Azariah on the other.

sister, then youngest sister, then I. It is an individual matter, a matter entirely between one and one's God.

G. So it is. On this matter of untouchability, I may tell you that for years I could not carry conviction to my own wife. She followed me willy-nilly. The conviction came to her after long experience and practice.

J. M. In dealing with the holiest of things we should use the purest methods. But you will pardon me if I reiterate that I am hopeful of the tide having turned. Discerning Christian leaders to my knowledge are not only thinking of these things keenly but sincerely addressing themselves to fostering right practice. On the third question of the wise use of money I see signs of encouragement.

G. But it is a virtue of necessity. The Indian Christians are thinking aloud and of doing things themselves. They are talking of their own responsibilities and saying, "Thank God, American money can't come."

Then came a rather long digression on the wise and unwise use of money. The topic had engaged their attention on the occasion of the last visit too and Gandhiji had put the matter most forcefully when he said:

"I think you cannot serve God and Mammon both, and my fear is that Mammon has been sent to serve India and God has remained behind, with the result that He will one day have His vengeance."

He had made it also clear that there was all the difference in the world between money *given* and money *earned*

J. M. But your own example proves that there are wise uses of money. What do all the organizations I saw this morning testify?

G. You see a contradiction between my theory and practice? Well, you must see the background. With all my experience and ability to collect money I am utterly indifferent in the matter. I have always felt that when a religious organization has more money than it requires, it is in peril of losing its faith in God and pinning its faith on money. There is no such thing as 'wise' or 'unwise' use of money. You have simply to cease to depend on it. You don't even depend on bread, and bargain with God saying you won't pray until God gives your bread!

J. M. I am arguing this at some length as I want to understand you and not to misquote you.

G. Then I will illustrate what I say by two telling illustrations. In South Africa when I started the satyagraha march there was not a

copper in my pocket, and I went with a light heart. I had a caravan of 3000 people to support. 'No fear', said I. 'If God wills it He will carry it forward.' Then money began to rain from India. I had to stop it, for when the money came my miseries began. Whereas they were content with a piece of bread and sugar, they now began asking for all sorts of things.

Then take the illustration of the new educational experiment. The experiment I said must go on without asking for any monetary help. Otherwise, after my death the whole organizations would go to pieces. The fact is the moment financial stability is assured, spiritual bankruptcy is also assured.

J. M. But you wisely used the money.

G. Not metal, but bread; and even the dog, under God's Providence, has not to go hungry.

Then came the last question of untouchability. Dr. Mott wondered if there was no quickening of the conscience all the world over. There had been, he said, battles royal between groups in America, conventions refusing to go to hotels where the Negroes were not received? there were Christians in Germany who had gone to prison for protesting against the inhuman treatment of the Jews. There was gold coming out of dross. What about India?

G. No advance in action, I say again. The British are a fair test. The racial feeling instead of declining is rising. In South Africa the tide of prejudice is rising high, declarations made by former Ministers are being disregarded. Similar stories come from East Africa. But I remain an optimist, not that there is any evidence that I can give that right is going to prosper, but because of my unflinching faith that right must prosper in the end.

J. M. Well, in South Africa too are there not people like Hoffmeyr and Edgar Brookes? There is certainly a turn of the tide on the part of certain individuals.

G. It would be wrong to draw conclusions from a handful of individual instances. Our inspiration can come only from our faith that right must ultimately prevail. But on this matter, as I have said, there is an advance in the thought world, but not in action.

Dr. Mott began the next day with these prefatory remarks: "You put in your quite original way your views on the questions I asked. I value it more than I can say. I was impressed by your recognition that there was a certain amount of advance in thought but not in action. . . . I could show you, too, that there are certain things actually concretely on foot. But, today, I want to engage your attention on another matter. What to do with 'gangster' nations, if I may use the expression frequently used? There was individual gangsterism in America. It has been put down by strong

police measures both local and national. Could not we do something similar for gangsterism between nations, as instanced in Manchuria—the nefarious use of the opium poison—in Abyssinia, in Spain, in the sudden seizure of Austria, and then the case of Czechoslovakia. Now, in this connection, let me say, I was deeply impressed by what you wrote on the Czechoslovakian crisis¹ and on the Jewish question². Can we bring something like international police into being?”

G. This question is not new to me.

J. M. I judge not.

G. I have to deal with identical questions with reference to conditions in India. We have had to quell riots, communal and labour. The Ministries have used military force in some cases and police in most. Now whilst I agree that the Ministers could not help doing so, I also said that the Congress Ministries had proved themselves bankrupt with their stock-in-trade, I mean their avowed weapon of non-violence. Even so, I would say in reply to the question you have asked, viz., that if the best mind of the world has not imbibed the spirit of non-violence, they would have to meet gangsterism in the orthodox way. But that would only show that we have not got far beyond the Law of the Jungle, that we have not yet learnt to appreciate the heritage that God has given us, that in spite of the teaching of Christianity which is 1900 years old and of Hinduism and Buddhism which are older, and even of Islam (if I have read it aright), we have not made much headway as human beings. But whilst I would understand the use of force by those who have not the spirit of non-violence in them, I would have those who know non-violence to throw their whole weight in demonstrating that even gangsterism has to be met by non-violence. For, ultimately, force, however justifiably used, will lead us into the same morass as the force of Hitler and Mussolini. There will be just a difference of degree. You and I who believe in non-violence must use it at the critical moment. We may not despair of touching the heart even of gangsters, even if, for the moment, we may seem to be striking our heads against a blind wall.

J. M. How may the Missionaries and Christians in general help in constructive activities like the village industries movement, the new educational movement and so on?

G. They should study the movements and work under or in co-operation with these organizations. I am happy to be able to say

¹ *Vide* “If I Were A Czech”, 15-10-1938

² *Vide* “The Jews”

that I have some valued Christian colleagues. But they can be counted on one's fingers. I fear that the vast bulk of them remain unconvinced. Some have frankly said that they do not believe in the village movement or the education movement as they are conducted by the associations you have named. They evidently believe in industrialization and the Western type of education. And the missionaries as a body perhaps fight shy of movements not conducted wholly or predominantly by Christians.

If I get in my activities the hearty and active co-operation of the 5000 Protestant missionaries in India, and if they really believed in the living power of non-violence as the only force that counts, they can help not only here but perhaps in affecting the West.

J. M. Happily there are a goodly number amongst them who see eye to eye with you.

G. I know.

J. M. What have been the most creative experiences in your life? As you look back on your past, what, do you think, led you to believe in God when everything seemed to point to the contrary, when life, so to say, sprang from the ground, although it all looked impossible?

G. Such experiences are a multitude. But as you put the question to me, I recalled particularly one experience that changed the course of my life. That fell to my lot seven days after I had arrived in South Africa. I had gone there on a purely mundane and selfish mission. I was just a boy returned from England wanting to make some money. Suddenly the client who had taken me there asked me to go to Pretoria from Durban. It was not an easy journey. There was the railway journey as far as Charlestown and the coach to Johannesburg. On the train I had a first-class ticket, but not a bed ticket. At Maritzburg where the beddings were issued the guard came and turned me out and asked me to go to the van compartment. I would not go and the train steamed away leaving me shivering in the cold.¹ Now the creative experience comes there. I was afraid for my very life. I entered the dark waiting-room. There was a white man in the room. I was afraid of him. What was my duty, I asked myself. Should I go back to India, or should I go forward, with God as my helper, and face whatever was in store for me? I decided to stay and suffer. My active non-violence began from that date. And God put me through the test during that very journey. I was severely assaulted by the coachman

¹ *Vide* "An Autobiography" sub-title "On The Way To Pretoria"

for my moving from the seat he had given me.

J.M. The miseries, the slaps after slaps you received burnt into your soul.

G. Yes, that was one of the richest experiences of my life.

J. M. I am grateful to you for sharing this experience with me.

J. M. What has brought deepest satisfaction to your soul in difficulties and doubts and questionings?

G. Living faith in God.

J.M. When have you had indubitable manifestation of God in your life and experiences?

G. I have seen and believe that God never appears to you in person, but in action which can only account for your deliverance in your darkest hour.

J. M. You mean things take place that cannot possibly happen apart from God?

G. Yes. They happen suddenly and unawares. One experience stands quite distinctly in my memory. It relates to my 21 days' fast for the removal of untouchability.¹ I had gone to sleep the night before without the slightest idea of having to declare a fast the next morning. At about 12 o'clock in the night something wakes me up suddenly, and some voice—within or without, I cannot say—whispers, 'Thou must go on a fast.' 'How many days?' I ask. The voice again said, 'Twenty-one days.' 'When does it begin?' I ask. It says, 'You begin tomorrow.' I went quietly off to sleep after making the decision. I did not tell anything to my companions until after the morning prayer. I placed into their hands a slip of paper announcing my decision and asking them not to argue with me, as the decision was irrevocable.

Well, the doctors thought I would not survive the fast. But something within me said I would, and that I must go forward. That kind of experience has never in my life happened before or after that date.

J. M. Now, you surely can't trace such a thing to an evil source?

G. Surely not. I never have thought it was an error. If ever there was in my life a spiritual fast it was this. There is something in denying satisfaction of the flesh. It is not possible to see God face to face unless you crucify the flesh. It is one thing to do what belongs to it as a temple of God, and it is another to deny it what belongs to it as to

¹ *Vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933

the body of flesh.

Dr. Mott concluded his visit in 1936 with a question on silence. He had done so during a brief flying visit to Ahmedabad in 1928 and during this visit too he asked if Gandhiji had continued to find it necessary in his spiritual quest.

G. I can say that I am an everlastingly silent man now. Only a little while ago I have remained completely silent nearly two months and the spell of that silence has not yet broken. I broke it today when you came. Nowadays I go into silence at prayer time every evening and break it for visitors at 2 o'clock. I broke it today when you came. It has now become both a physical and spiritual necessity for me. Originally it was taken to relieve the sense of pressure. Then I wanted time for writing. After, however, I had practised it for some time I saw the spiritual value of it. It suddenly flashed across my mind that that was the time when I could best hold communion with God. And now I feel as though I was naturally built for silence. Of course I may tell you that from my childhood I have been noted for my silence. I was silent at school, and in my London days I was taken for a silent drone by friends.

J. M. In this connection you put me in mind of two texts from the Bible:

“My soul, be thou silent unto God.”

“Speak Lord, for Thy servant hearkeneth.”

I have often sought silence for communion even during my noisiest time . . .

I am sorry to have overstayed my time. I lose all sense of time when I am with you. I am more grateful than I can say.

SEGAON, December 5, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

369. *HOW TO POPULARIZE KHADI*

A valued khadi worker writes a letter in Hindi which freely translated means:

Compared to mill-cloth khadi is not an economic proposition in terms of prices. To compete with mill-cloth you have to drop the cost of hand-ginning, carding and spinning. Even for self-spinners, therefore, it is not a paying proposition. No doubt you have evolved new economics of khadi. But till the people at large appreciate them, khadi cannot be universal. Even

the Congress Ministers do not understand or appreciate your new economics. In the circumstances, will you not guide khadi workers and even the Ministers and Congressmen in general? Your faith seems to be so strong that you would straightway give eight annas per day to spinners for eight hours' honest and skilled work if we, your co-workers, will let you. Frankly we do not possess your faith.

There is no doubt that khadi cannot compete with mill-cloth, it was never meant to. If the people will not understand or appreciate the law governing khadi, it will never be universal. It must then remain the fad of monied people and cranks. And if it is to be merely that, the labours of a huge organization like the A.I.S.A must mean a waste of effort, if not something much worse.

But khadi has a big mission. Khadi provides dignified labour to the millions who are otherwise idle for nearly four months in the year. Even apart from the remuneration the work brings, it is its own reward. For if millions live in compulsory idleness, they must die spiritually, mentally and physically. The spinning-wheel automatically raises the status of millions of poor women. Even though, therefore, mill-cloth were to be given gratis to the people, their true welfare demands that they should refuse to have it in preference to khadi, the product of their labours.

Life is more than money. It is cheaper to kill our aged parents who can do no work and who are a drag on our slender resources. It is also cheaper to kill our children whom we do not need for our material comfort and whom we have to maintain without getting anything in return. But we kill neither our parents nor our children, but consider it a privilege to maintain them no matter what their maintenance costs us. Even so must we maintain khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth. It is the force of habit which makes us think of khadi in terms of prices. We must revise our notion of khadi economics. And when we have studied them from the point of view of the national wellbeing, we shall find that khadi is never dear. We must suffer dislocation of domestic economy during the transition stage. At present we are labouring under a heavy handicap. Cotton production has been centralized for the sake of Lancashire and, if you will, for the sake of Indian mills. Prices of cotton are determined by the prices in foreign lands. When the production of cotton is distributed in accordance with the demands of khadi economics, cotton prices would not fluctuate

and, in any case, will be, in effect, lower than today. When the people, either through State protection or through voluntary effort, have cultivated the habit of using only khadi, they will never think of it in terms of money, even as millions of vegetarians do not compare the prices of flesh foods with those of non-flesh foods. They will starve rather than take flesh foods even though they may be offered free.

But I recognize that very few Congressmen have this living faith in khadi. The Ministers are Congressmen. They derive their inspiration from their surroundings. If they had a living faith in khadi, they could do a great deal to popularize it.

Khadi was an integral part of the original swaraj programme of 1920. In 1921-22 thousands of Congressmen repeated from hundreds of platforms that swaraj for the millions depended upon the spinning-wheel humming in every village. The late Ali Brothers used to say, at the numerous meetings they addressed, that without the charkha in every cottage and the loom in every village there was no freedom. Maulana Mahomed Ali used to say in his picturesque language that our charkhas were our instruments of war and the cones of yarn turned out by them were our ammunition. He said this with a conviction that went home to his audiences. But the faith of those early days was not sustained. Congressmen in general have ceased to connect khadi with swaraj. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru has called khadi the livery of our freedom. For how many does it bear that meaning? If Congressmen could have that belief, khadi itself would be current coin. Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life. What would a man not pay for living? The Congress flag was designed to represent not civil disobedience which is but a phase, but it was designed to represent the essentials of freedom. Its background is khadi. The spinning-wheel covers and sustains it. Its colours show how necessary communal unity is for the attainment of freedom. Given the fulfilment of these conditions, civil disobedience and the suffering it implies may not be at all necessary. To wear khadi is for me to wear freedom.

Given a full-hearted acceptance of this meaning of khadi, I am able to say what the Congress Ministers and, for that matter, all the Ministers, khadi workers and Congressmen can and should do.

There may be a Minister whose sole business would be to look after khadi and village industries. There should, therefore, be a department for this purpose. The other departments will co-operate. Thus

the Agricultural Department will frame a scheme of decentralization of cotton production, survey the land suitable for cotton production for village use and find out how much cotton will be required for its province. It will even stock cotton at suitable centres for distribution. The Stores Department will make purchases of khadi available in the province and give orders for its cloth requirements. The Technical Departments will tax themselves to devise better wheels and other instruments of hand production. All these departments will keep in constant touch with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. using them as their experts.

The Revenue Minister will devise means of protecting khadi against mill competition.

Khadi workers will with unremitting zeal investigate the laws governing the science of khadi and seek to make it more durable, more attractive and believe themselves to be responsible for discovering means of making khadi universal. God helps only those who are ever watchful and who devote all their talents to their mission.

Congressmen in general will spread the gospel of khadi among their neighbours by themselves wearing it not ceremonially but habitually, by spinning themselves, and by helping khadi workers whenever they are called upon to do so.

SEGAON, December 4, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

370. HARIJAN WELFARE IN TATANAGAR¹

I have before me a full and lengthy report of the function performed at Tatanagar by the Bihar Minister, Shri Jaglal Choudhury, of opening the new extension of the Dhatkidih Harijan School. The manager, Shri J. J. Ghandy, who takes a personal interest in Harijan welfare, in the course of his address requesting the Minister to perform the opening ceremony among other things said:²

SEGAON, December 4, 1938

Harijan, 10-12-1938

¹ This appeared under "Notes".

² The speech is not reproduced here. The speaker gave an account of the Tata Iron and Steel Company's efforts to promote the education of Harijan children.

371. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 4, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

Personally I think that you should respect what Ramdas says. Read the accompanying letter¹. As it is, you keep indifferent health. By all means you may study but only after you are better. It will be possible to arrange for your *sitar*² [lessons] in Poona. Should you go to Dehra Dun and thereby hurt Ramdas? The two girls could stay here. Do as you both wish. I see your good in your giving up the idea of Dehra Dun for the present. For myself, I certainly like your staying in Dehra Dun. Decide only after going to Poona what you will do. Do not decide on the basis of the letter alone.

You do not seem to have received the letter I had dictated for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

372. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 5, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

For the last three days I have neglected you so far as writing is concerned. You have been simply crowded out. So this I am writing before the morning prayer. But though I do not write there is enough here to make me think of you often enough every day.

I wonder how you are getting on in body, mind and soul? I am anxiously waiting to hear from you.

Of the news here I must ask Sharda to write to you.

Love.

BAPU

¹ Not available

² A stringed musical instrument

[PS.]

I have at last your letter from Peshawar. I am quite well B. P. is in order. The cold has begun here.

From the original: C.W. 6418. Courtesy: Mirabeht. Also G.N. 10013

373. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 5, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I wrote two letters to you at Delhi. One was, by my folly, sent to 12 instead of 4 Bhagwandas Road. I hope, nevertheless, it reached you.

Everything seems to be going well here. The pressure of interviews continues. Anand is having a week's fast with a break on the 4th day with lemon and banana.

Mahadev wrote yesterday for five hours on the Mott visit.¹

The rest from Sharda.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

This goes to Lucknow.

From the original: C. W. 3896. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7052

374. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,

December 5, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

I have read the *Gram Udyog Patrika*—both the editions.

Are we in a position to show to the villagers the way to get unpolished rice cheaper than polished?

Has unpolished rice been proved to be digestible by delicate stomachs? I have in mind Chhotelal's and Babasaheb's experiences. Have we an apparatus we can present to the villagers for husking rice? If the C. P. Government offered us a post to organize introduction of

¹ Vide "Discussion with John R. Moti", 4-12-1938

unpolished rice in every village, can we shoulder the burden? If not, how will they manage it?

Who has written the Hindi Patrika? It is bad Hindi whoever the writer may be.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10141

375. LETTER TO. N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I rarely read anything outside my beat. But last week and this week your articles in *Chronicle* weekly riveted my attention and [I] could not leave them unfinished. Let us straighten out a few more wrinkles.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 933

376. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad your first impression is favourable. I think it will abide. Did you visit the Islamia College, Edward College? Did Ramdas or Chandrabhai seek you out? Of course Pushtu you have to learn. And you will find no difficulty. Give the enclosed to Khan Saheb with letter from Mehr Taj¹.

Love.

BAPU

¹ Abdul Ghaffar Khan's daughter

[PS.]

Did you not say that Angad's¹ book was received? I can't trace it. What was its name?

From the original: C.W. 6419. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10014

377. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I wrote about Inderpal from the Frontier Province. I have now written again.

Please let me have the history of the other prisoners you mention. Are they under the Provincial Government jurisdiction or the Central Government?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1286

378. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

Don't hesitate to write whenever necessary.

You did well in sending the cutting. I will reply to the argument if I can spare the time. They will not give Ramdas the agency as readily as you think.

Jamnadas has left. I also would not like the Mysore job. But I attach no importance to the possibility of my being criticized. Let Ramdas accept the job if he can get peace of mind thereby. This is my position. He will not be able to live without work nor will he take up honorary or half-honorary work. You should keep on writing to him. He will certainly respect your advice.

Ramdas is pining for Nimu. He is calling her to Poona. He wants her also to be treated there. I have, therefore, advised her to go to Poona for the present. After the treatment is over, you may certainly

¹ Reginald Reynold's

make arrangements for her in Banaras. I like your idea too, though I also like the plan about Dehra Dun. After she has passed the examination for Ratna, she is bound to get more pay. I do not think it impossible that she may get even Rs. 150. She will have to trust her luck, of course. She can get sixty rupees in any circumstances. How-ever, I would certainly like her to learn *sitar*.

Ba is quite well.

V[allabhbhai] wants that I should spend the whole of January in Bardoli. I have accepted his request. Mahadev also is quite well. As for me, God keeps me going.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You or Lakshmi should drop a few lines to Ba from time to time. She yearns, and naturally, for the love of you all. Where should I address the letter so that you may get it earlier—at the office or at Harijan Niwas?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2008

379. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

December 5, 1938

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Chandrashanker¹ had sent your article here. I have already sent it for publication. Chandrashanker cannot publish articles on his own responsibility. Hence to save time please send articles, etc., to me directly. Mahadev is well. He still needs rest, though.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VAIKUNTHBHAI LALLUBHAI MEHTA

SIR LALLUBHAI SAMALDAS'S BUNGALOW

ANDHERI, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1365

¹ Chandrashanker Shukla, editor of *Harijanbandhu*

380. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

When I happen to be there some time, you may take me to your office. If I send you a message, I shall have to send messages to others too. If friends excuse me, others too may. Such rules cannot, of course, be observed as vows. If you are keen on a message from me, I will not disappoint you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHANTIKUMAR NAROTTAM MORARJEE

JUHU

P. O. SANTA CRUZ

B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4729. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

381. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 5, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Sushilabehn was saying that the latrines remained unserviceable and that Bankelal¹ did not seem to be doing any work. She said that the twenty rupees paid to him could be used in some other way. Think over this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10780

¹ Sweeper at Segaoon

382. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. MANI,

Your account was true. You can always be trusted to acquit yourself well in whatever you undertake. Follow my advice and get your body massaged, or massage it yourself, with oil. The soldier who does not keep his body fit renders himself liable to punishment. And that is as it should be.

If the people have understood the lesson of ahimsa and suffer beatings, etc., they will never be defeated. Mahadev is here of course. He is quite well. He purposely writes less. This time I permitted him to write a good deal for *Harijan*. But I will not do that very often. It is desirable that he should have no responsibility at all. I keep very well these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
NEAR TELEGRAPH OFFICE
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 122-3

383. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

December 5, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I feel that we should not have two goshalas. Expanding the present one will not endanger your health. To say that the goshala will swallow us up means that we will have to spend more and more on it. And if all the land is used for the cattle, that will be the only activity remaining to us. I would, therefore, advise Amritlal, Munnalal, Parnerkar, Balwantsinha and you to discuss the matter among yourselves and put your decision before me. What will be the total expenditure we shall have to incur? It is absolutely necessary to have some outward limit. I can arrange for the cattle which are not required.

Is it true that we shall not be able to increase the yield of milk any further? Have you stopped buying milk from neighbours?

I suppose we shall not now be able to supply ghee to any-body.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10595

384. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 5, 1938

CHI. AMALA,

You will never be Margarete Spiegel to me, but will always remain Amala. How is your health? Please do come some day and let me see how you are.

Did you read what I wrote about the Jews?¹ Did you like it?

Mahadev is improving. He lives in Segaoon at present.

Herewith my autograph.

All are well here. I hope the dog is fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

Your last letter was answered by Pyarelal. Your letter from Rajgarh is before me. You are doing good work. I could prepare an account of the tour from your letters but I have not the time. Therefore do send an account for *Harijan* when you have completed the tour. If it is in Hindi we shall translate it into English and if it is in English we shall have it translated for *Harijan Sevak*. Give a brief description of the towns visited and all that was done there.² The

¹ *Vide* "The Jews"

² An account of Rameshwari Nehru's tour in Central India was published in *Harijan* in seven instalments, beginning with the issue of 18-3-1939.

demands presented to Bhopal are quite legitimate. Something must come about there.

You have to go to Dehra Dun for a day. It will be good to prepare the speech beforehand. Kakasaheb and Ba too expect to reach there.

I hope Bapa is keeping well and so are you.

Did you collect any funds anywhere?

Mahadev is here.

Everything is going on well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7986. Also C.W. 3082. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

386. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your very candid letter. A tabloid machine costing Rs. 30 may be purchased. I shall provide the money.

As regards earning a living I do not believe that you can make a success of this venture. I fear that in one way or another your expenses will go up. The true purpose, which is that you should live simply, will be frustrated. Carrying on a business and doing good to others cannot go together. You should sit down with Draupadi and work out a limit to your expenses and you should make up your mind that you will not go beyond it. If you do that your monthly expenses can be drawn from some institution.

What can I say about the debt of Rs. 850? The mistake was made at the outset in incurring the debt. I can only say that so long as you have not repaid the debt you should forget all about helping others and take up a job so that you can meet your expenses and repay the debt. If you have jewellery or other property in the family you can even dispose of it to clear the debt. This is a drastic cure but I am sure it is also the most effective cure. You should resolve also not

to incur any debts again.

The question then remains as to what should be done about the task you have undertaken. I am myself baffled. You can always come and join me of course but what we have to consider is whether you can face living in society.

The little girl is all right, I hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 274 and 275

387. LETTER TO HARSARAN VERMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 5, 1938

BHAI HARSARAN VERMA,

Do you wish me to forward your letter to Ranjit Pandit?

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 91

388. NOTE TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEGAON,
[*December 5, 1938*]¹

People may not accept my statement. But I do claim that I take ample rest and regulate my life. The blood-pressure was not due to overwork. I have not got the mental poise prescribed by the *Gita*. A certain class of events generally considered trivial upsets me as nothing else can. There was just such an event. People may laugh at it but for me it was no laughing matter.

From the original: C. W. 11044. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

¹ As noted down by the addressee himself

389. TELEGRAM TO PADMAJA NAIDU

WARDHA,
December 6, 1938

PADMAJA NAIDU
ZHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DN.

HOPE YOU FATHER DOING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

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

390. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,¹
December 6, 1938

MY DEAR SLAVE,

I am sorry to hear about Father's and your illness. I sent you a wire which I hope you received.² I am yearning for good news from you. Having undertaken the great mission, you must keep yourself fit.

What a brave letter you have written. It is quite worthy of you. May your mission be crowned with success!

I knew it is a difficult task. But nothing is difficult for God. If He wills it, you will pull through with credit.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MANZIL
RED HILL
HYDERABAD DECCAN

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

¹This is in Hindi.

²*Vide* the preceding item.

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 6, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

There is no letter from you today. You had prepared me for the absence.

I hope you are having a profitable time in Lucknow. I shall expect to have full news about Sarup and J. L. Of the latter you will hardly see anything. I hope you won't be tired out.

I don't write to S.¹ before 10th.

I am still keeping well and so is Mahadev. Balkoba is going to Nagpur for X-ray examination tomorrow.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3897. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7053

392. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 6, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Here is the amended draft.

I hope Satis Babu's certificate won't make you bulkier than you are. The book is still lying untouched. Those who wait and watch have their patience rewarded before they die.

Your answer about rice is very like giving me polished rice when I wanted the whole unpolished.² We must show how to eat unpolished rice and show how a whole village can dehusk. What should I do in Segaoon, say? You have to probe deeper. What you have told me is not new. I want you to tell me something that is new and telling.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10142

¹ Shummy; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 10-12-1938

² *Vide* also "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 5-12-1938

393. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*

December 6, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Today the *Gita* was recited in several tunes. If your tune could not mingle with Lilavati's, you ought to have let her recite by herself. Sushila's tune also sometimes mingled with yours and sometimes broke off. The result was that I perspired listening to such cacophony. That did not matter since it gave me some warmth, but what about Mother *Gita*? How must she have felt?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10781

394. *LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL*

SEGAON,

December 6, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am writing this just to drop you a few lines. Thank God you are keeping well.

Nanabhai¹ must be all right. I hope you don't feel nervous. Do you insist on his taking proper care about his food, etc.? If he can live on fruit juice for some days, he will certainly benefit. At his age, he should require very little of other food. If he is accustomed to taking tea, it should be the colour of hay, that is, tea-leaves should be placed in the strainer and boiling water should slowly be poured through it. He should be content with the colour that this gives. The tea-leaves should never be immersed in the water.

Everything is all right here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7104. Also C.W. 4596. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ Addressee's father

395. DISCUSSION WITH D. TAKAOKA¹

[December 7, 1938]²

It can be possible if Japan ceases to throw its greedy eyes on India. No doubt you do not bring your army to India, but you employ your matchless skill, and your ability to hide the truth and your knowledge of the weaknesses of Indians, in order to flood India with your goods which are often flimsy. You have copied the rulers of India in their methods of exploitation and gone even one better. Now, from the Japanese standpoint you cannot afford to lose the millions of rupees that you get from India. And if you cannot get them voluntarily, you will be quite capable of doing so by force of arms. But that would not be the way of bringing Japan and India together. What can bring them together is a moral bond based on mutual friendship.

But there is no basis for that friendship today. Take your art. I like it. I read a fascinating account of Japan and Japanese life by Edwin Arnold many years ago. That picture has remained with me. I want to assimilate all your good points, but unfortunately no one comes here to give us the good things of Japan. You believe only in dumping your goods on us. How can I take a single yard of Japanese cloth, however fine and artistic it may be? It is as poison to us, for it means starvation for the poor people of India. You have left the West far behind in diplomacy, in skill, in cheap manufactures, in armed warfare, in exploitation. How then can there be friendship between you and us, so long as you see nothing wrong in exploitation?

Mr. Takaoka wondered if Gandhiji could give a message to the new party in Japan which stands for Asia for the Asiatics. Gandhiji said:

I do not subscribe to the doctrine of Asia for the Asiatics, if it is meant as an anti-European combination. How can we have Asia for the Asiatics unless we are content to let Asia remain a frog in the well? But Asia cannot afford to remain a frog in the well. It has a message for the whole world, if it will only live up to it. There is the imprint of Buddhistic influence on the whole of Asia, which includes India, China, Japan, Burma, Ceylon and the Malay States. I said to the Bur-

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Japanese Visitor". Takaoka was a member of the Japanese Parliament and wanted to know how unity could be brought about between India and Japan.

² From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-12-1938

mese and the Ceylonese that they were Buddhist in name; India was Buddhist in reality. I would say the same thing to China and Japan. But, for Asia to be not for Asia but the whole world, it has to relearn the message of Buddha and deliver it to the world. Today it is being denied everywhere. In Burma every Buddhist monk is being dreaded by the Muslims. But why should anyone who is a true Buddhist be dreaded by anyone?

You will therefore see that I have no message to give you but this, that you must be true to your ancient heritage. The message is 2,500 years old, but it has not yet been truly lived. But what are 2,500 years? They are but a speck in the cycle of time. The full flower of non-violence which seems to be withering away has yet to come to full bloom.

Harijan, 24-12-1938

396. *REPLY TO GERMAN CRITICS*

I was not unprepared for the exhibition of wrath from Germany over my article¹ about the German treatment of the Jews. I have myself admitted my ignorance of European politics. But in order to commend my prescription to the Jews for the removal of their many ills, I did not need to have an accurate knowledge of European politics. The main facts about the atrocities are beyond dispute. When the anger over my writing has subsided and comparative calmness has returned, the most wrathful German will find that underlying my writing there was friendliness towards Germany, never any ill will.

Have I not repeatedly said that active non-violence is unadulterated love—fellow-feeling? And if the Jews, instead of being helplessly and of necessity non-violent, adopt active non-violence, i.e., fellow-feeling for the gentile Germans deliberately, they cannot do any harm to the Germans and I am as certain as I am dictating these lines that the stoniest German heart will melt. Great as have been the Jewish contributions to the world's progress, this supreme act of theirs will be their greatest contribution and war will be a thing of the past.

It passes comprehension why any German should be angry over my utterly innocuous writing. Of course, German critics, as others, might have ridiculed it by saying that it was a visionary's effort

¹ *Vide* "The Jews"

doomed to fail. I therefore welcome this wrath, though wholly unmerited, against my writing. Has my writing gone home? Has the writer felt that my remedy was after all not so ludicrous as it may appear, but that it was eminently practical if only the beauty of suffering without retaliation was realized?

To say that my writing has rendered neither myself, my movement, nor German-Indian relations any service, is surely irrelevant, if not also unworthy, implying as it does a threat; and I should rank myself a coward if, for fear of my country or myself or Indo-German relations being harmed, I hesitated to give what I felt in the innermost recesses of my heart to be cent per cent sound advice.

The Berlin writer has surely enunciated a novel doctrine that people outside Germany may not criticize German action even from friendliest motives. For my part I would certainly welcome the interesting things that Germans or other outsiders may unearth about Indians. I do not need to speak for the British. But if I know the British people at all, they, too, welcome outside criticism, when it is well-informed and free from malice. In this age, when distances have been obliterated, no nation can afford to imitate the fabled frog in the well. Sometimes it is refreshing to see ourselves as others see us. If, therefore, the German critics happen to see this reply, I hope that they will not only revise their opinion about my writing but will also realize the value of outside criticism.

SEGAON, December 8, 1938

Harijan, 17-12-1938

397. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 8, 1938

BHAI MUNSHI,

It is some days since Pyarelal sent you a reply regarding the querns. Maybe the letter went astray. You may use mechanical querns in prisons.

If Dharmanand Kosambi can work for Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan without letting the work of the Buddha Mandir suffer, he may certainly do so.

If the Ministry continues for any length of time,¹ you will have to give up many more loves, besides that of home. I have received a complaint against you that you are ruining your health through overwork. You will have to give up this form of attachment too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7642. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

398. *LETTER TO DAMODARDAS MUNDHRA*²

December 8, 1938

BHAI DAMODAR³,

Both the replies are very long. But long or short there is no need to send them. They are all right for my information.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 10154. Courtesy: Secretary, Andhra Pradesh State Committee, Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Hyderabad

399. *SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED*

Friends have sent me two newspaper cuttings criticizing my appeal to the Jews. The two critics suggest that in presenting non-violence to the Jews as a remedy against the wrong done to them I have suggested nothing new, and that they have been practising non-violence for the past two thousand years. Obviously, so far as these critics are concerned, I did not make my meaning clear. The Jews, so far as I know, have never practised non-violence as an article of faith or even as a deliberate policy. Indeed, it is a stigma against them that their ancestors crucified Jesus. Are they not supposed to believe in eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth? Have they no violence in their hearts for their oppressors? Do they not want the so-called democratic powers to punish Germany for her persecution and to deliver them from

¹ The addressee was Home Minister in the Congress Ministry of Bombay Province.

² The letter was written on the reverse of a letter from the addressee with which he had enclosed a letter received from Padmaja Naidu and his reply to it as well as one from Jamnalal Bajaj.

³ Jamnalal Bajaj's secretary

oppression? If they do, there is no non-violence in their hearts. Their non-violence, if it may be so called, is of the helpless and the weak.

What I have pleaded for is renunciation of violence of the heart and consequent active exercise of the force generated by the great renunciation. One of the critics says that favourable public opinion is necessary for the working of non-violence. The writer is evidently thinking of passive resistance conceived as a weapon of the weak. I have drawn a distinction between passive resistance of the weak and active non-violent resistance of the strong. The latter can and does work in the teeth of the fiercest opposition. But it ends in evoking the widest public sympathy. Sufferings of the non-violent have been known to melt the stoniest hearts. I make bold to say that if the Jews can summon to their aid the soul power that comes only from non-violence, Herr Hitler will bow before the courage which he has never yet experienced in any large measure in his dealings with men, and which, when it is exhibited, he will own is infinitely superior to that shown by his best storm troopers. The exhibition of such courage is only possible for those who have a living faith in the God of Truth and Non-violence, i. e., Love.

Of course, the critics can reasonably argue that the nonviolence pictured by me is not possible for masses of mankind, it is possible only for the very few highly developed persons. I have combated that view and suggested that, given proper training and proper generalship, non-violence can be practised by masses of mankind.

I see, however, that my remarks are being misunderstood to mean that because I advise non-violent resistance by the persecuted Jews, by inference I expect or would advise non-interference by the democratic powers on behalf of the Jews. I hardly need to answer this fear. Surely there is no danger of the great powers refraining from action because of anything I have said. They will, they are bound to, do all they can to free the Jews from the inhuman persecution. My appeal has force in the face of the fact that the great powers feel unable to help the Jews in an effective manner. Therefore it is that I have offered the prescription which I know to be infallible when taken in the right manner.

The most relevant criticism, however, which I have received is this: How do I expect the Jews to accept my prescription when I know that India, where I am myself working, where I call myself the self-appointed general, has not accepted it *in toto*. My answer is: 'Blessed

are they that expect nothing.' I belong to the category of the blessed, in this case at least. Having got the prescription and being sure of its efficacy, I felt that I would be wrong if I did not draw attention to it when I saw cases where it could be effectively applied.

Hitherto I have refused to deal with European politics. My general position still remains the same. I presented my remedy almost in suppressed tones in the case of Abyssinia. The cases of the Czechs and the Jews became more vivid to me than the case of the Abyssinians. And I could not restrain myself from writing. Perhaps Dr. Mott was right when he said to me the other day that I must write more and more articles like those on the Czechs and the Jews, if only because they must aid me in the Indian struggle. He said that the West was never more prepared than now to listen to the message of non-violence.

SEGAON, December 9, 1938

Harijan, 17-1 2-1938

400. RED TAPE

A distinguished Indian, who had been watching Ministers Kher and Munshi working at breakneck speed, told me the other day how they seemed to have aged, and warned me that the nation would lose them before their time if I did not prevent them from overworking themselves. I wish I had the influence over them which the friend credited me with. If I had, I would certainly prevent them from committing suicide by inches. What applies to these two Ministers applies to the others. A few days after the visitor, came a high official who has been specially entrusted with responsible work by Shri Kher. He said, "I want to fulfil Shri (of course he used 'Mr.') Kher's expectations. But I do not know how I am to give him satisfaction. I believe I have always been a conscientious worker and kept myself busy. But now since the advent of the Congress Ministry our work has increased. For they give themselves no rest and give us none. The result is an ever-increasing pile of files. It is almost impossible to clear the desk from day to day. And now I have been given work which demands thinking out and planning. I must study. And I do not know what to do with these files." I promptly answered, "Burn them." I meant it too.

The third visitor, who followed quickly after the second, was a

socialist friend. He said: “We are much misunderstood. Your article on the walk-out¹ has added to the misunderstanding. I assure you we want to help, not to hinder, the Congress work and the Ministers, reserving to ourselves the right of constructive criticism. But look at our difficulty. There is the Karachi resolution and the Congress manifesto². We honestly feel that the promises made in them about economic relief are not being fully carried out. I do not want to underrate the Congress Ministers’ difficulties. But mere tinkering with the problem won’t do. There are forces at work which no one can stop. Advantage is being taken of the situation to put up the masses against the Congress. The masses have the vote. They are becoming otherwise conscious of their power. And if we do not take care, the Congress may one fine morning discover that it has lost its hold (at least temporarily) on the masses.”

I agreed in general with the friend and I said, “The reason for dissatisfaction is plain to me. You have a philosophy of your own. The Congress Ministries today are not of the socialist hue. They are supposed to be of the ‘Gandhian’ hue, whatever it may mean. Now, yours is a clear-cut programme. You have textbooks to go by. But I myself do not know what is the Gandhian hue. I am sailing on an uncharted sea. I have to take frequent soundings. If such is my pitiable condition, the Ministers’ is much worse. They are so tied down to red tape that they have no time to think. They have no time to see me or discuss things with me and, what is more or worse, knowing their condition, I have no heart to inflict even letters on them. And I must not speak at them through the columns of *Harijan*.”

I have touched on many topics in the foregoing paragraph. But my main purpose in this article is to deal with red tape. If the Ministers are to cope with their new responsibility, they must discover the art of burning red tape. The old order could only live by and on red tape. It will strangle the new order. The Ministers must see people on whose goodwill alone they can exist. They must listen to petty and serious complaints. But they need not keep a record of all these or the letters they receive nor even of all the decisions they give. They have only to keep sufficient record to refresh their memory and to preserve continuity of practice. Much of the departmental correspondence

¹ *Vide* “That Unfortunate Walk-Out”

² *Vide* “Extracts from the congress election Manifesto”, 22-4-1936

must cease. The Ministers are not responsible to the India Office several thousand miles away. They are responsible to the millions of their masters who do not know what red tape is and care little. Many of them can't read and write. But they have primary wants to be fulfilled. They have been accustomed by Congressmen to think that immediately the Congress comes into power there won't be a hungry mouth in all India nor a naked person who wants to cover himself. The Ministers have to give their time and thought to such problems, if they are to do justice to the trust they have undertaken. If they are of the so-called Gandhian hue, they must find out what it is, not from me but from within by searching inward. I may not always know what it is. But I do know that if it is properly investigated and followed, it is radical and revolutionary enough to satisfy all the real wants of India. The Congress is a revolutionary body. Only its revolution is to be distinguished from all the other political revolutions known to history. Whereas the previous ones have been based on violence, this one is deliberately non-violent. If it was violent, probably much of the old form and practice would have been retained. But, for the Congress most of the old forms and practices are taboo. The most potent is the police and the military. I have admitted that so long as Congressmen are in office and they cannot discover peaceful ways and means of preserving order they are bound to make use of both. But the question ever present before the Ministers must be: is such use indispensable, and if it is, why is it so? If, as a result of their inquiry—not after the old style, costly and more often than not useless, but an inquiry costless but thorough and effective—they find that they cannot run the State without the use of the police and the military, it is the clearest possible sign, in terms of non-violence, that the Congress should give up office and again wander in the wilderness in search of the Holy Grail.

SEGAON, December 9, 1938

Harijan, 17-12-1938

401. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 9, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This letter is going to Jullundur. I have your letters. I am glad you had the talk with Pantji. The matter of corruption is becoming too serious to be neglected. I am going to discuss the whole thing at the forthcoming meeting.

Mahadev is well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3898. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7054

402. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 9, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

Fix any dates¹ you like after 20th December and let me know.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10144

403. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 9, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Just a line to say all well here. Muriel and Dorothy came in this morning. Mary is also here. Shanta will be married in a few days to an Indian in London. She is happy and expects to return with her husband.

Sardar is also here and so is Jairamdas.

I hope the cold won't prove too severe for you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6420. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10015

¹ For the meeting of the A. I. S. A. Council

404. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 9, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I was very much pained by today's incident. But how could you help your nature?

However, my purpose in writing this is different. I have noticed that you and Amtul Salaam cannot tolerate S.¹ sleeping with me. Whatever may be the cause, I do not want to carry on my experiment by displeasing you two. I, therefore, want to tell both of you that I have discontinued my experiment for the present. The fault is not yours. I believe it is entirely mine. But I do not wish to discuss the matter with you, nor do I want you to reply. I have simply informed you.

Show this letter to Amtul Salaam.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wanted to write and give this letter in the morning, but I could find no time.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9794. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

405. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 9, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It would be wonderful of course if one could completely lose oneself in meditation. This means that the person who is the object of one's devotion, has transcended the body. Why watch the activities of one who has left the body? But have I attained to that state? Therefore even the ears cannot be shut. It is not an artificial process. You have to strive towards perfect meditation. My efforts are known to you; there is nothing in them. I am a very imperfect person, I have good deal of intolerance, also anger. I am able to master these but that is nothing so great.

¹ The name has been omitted.

While plying the *takli* fix your mind on the thought that it is God who is doing it, that He is hidden in every fibre of the yarn. See Him with the inner eyes.

Then spinning, which now seems secondary to you, will become the primary thing. In the language of satyagraha the means become identified with the end.

You ought to grasp it by now that observing outward activities is only self-indulgence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4566; also S.G. 71

406. A NOTE

[About *December 9, 1938*]¹

It is my advice that the Mewar satyagraha should be suspended for the moment. Take Rameshwari Nehru for the khadi exhibition. She is a good lady. Rajkumari has gone to Jullunder at the moment. Hence she cannot be taken.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11320. Courtesy: Not known

407. A.I.V.I.A. TRAINING SCHOOL

From the report of the certificate-giving function of this Training School I cull the following: ²

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel presided at the sessional gathering of the A. I. V. I. A. Training School for village workers, which was held at Maganwadi, Wardha, on Thursday 17th November. . . . The Superintendent, Sjt. J. P. Patel, . . . welcoming the President and the guests said among other things:

“. . . The industries that are taught at present are paper-making, oil-pressing, bee-keeping, gur-making, paddy-husking and flour-grinding. The course of the Vidyalaya is for five months. . . .

“Rural economics, book-keeping and health and hygiene are also taught. . . .

¹ From the reference to satyagraha in Mewar, where there had been repression during this period and also from the mention of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur's having gone to Jullunder; *vide* “Letter to Amrit Kaur” and “Mewar”, 18-2-1939

² Only extracts are reproduced here.

“In admitting students our main object is to see that after finishing the course here they devote themselves to some form of village service. . . .

“The instruction is given through the medium of Rashtrabhasha. . . .”

I would advise the management to keep a register of all outgoing students, to keep a living contact with them, and carry on with them a kind of post-graduate correspondence class. So far as it is humanly possible not one of the students should lapse into the old rut or feel despondent because he can make no headway.

Harijan, 10-12-1938

408. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 10, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope you have received all my letters. J. L. and Maulana came in last night. We had 2_ hours together only on the question of Presidentship. Subhas must have arrived in the evening.

I hope you are none the worse for your wanderings. My letter to Shummy goes today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3899. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7055

409. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*

December 10, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I chanced to see Kanam's nails today. Look at them and see how dirty they are! Is not the teacher responsible for the cleanliness of his nails, ears, teeth, etc? He does not still take part in the Ramadhun. How is that? At this age he should be able even to sing *bhajans*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10782

410. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 10, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter and Jayaprakash's.

I have to go to Bardoli on the 1st of January. Come there both of you if you can. The treatment for your hand is steam, hip-bath and a diet of milk and fruit. I will cure you completely if you come to Bardoli.

Ba may perhaps go to Rajkot. Mahadev is better. Please tell Jayaprakash that I should be glad if he could spend some days with me. I sincerely wish that we should understand each other correctly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3525

411. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 10, 1938

Having obtained the permission of the President of the Travancore State Congress, I am now able to tell the public what advice I gave the deputation that saw me on November 13 and 14.¹ I told them that their cause would be damaged by persistence in the charges against the Dewan and that the question was not one of the truth or otherwise of the charges.² It was one of political insight. Allegations were made that the struggle was personal. The demand for responsible government made it impersonal and raised it to a higher level. I could not be a party to the conduct of a struggle which must engage and exhaust time and energy in pursuit of a personal matter to the exclusion of the most important one of swaraj. If they concentrated on the allegations, responsible government was bound to recede into the background.

¹ The deputation actually saw Gandhiji on the 15th; *vide* "Talk to Travancore State Congress Deputation", 15-11-1938

² *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 3-10-1938

Though my conviction about the correctness of my advice was unshaken, the members were to be guided by their own, if it conflicted with mine, for the burden of conducting the struggle rested on them. I also told them that if violence continued, no matter how it occurred, they were bound to suspend civil disobedience; for violence on the part of the public, even though instigated, showed that the State Congress influence was not adequate. This in no way meant suspension of the struggle. It meant merely a change of the emphasis on the instruments. An instrument of permanent value was a constructive programme. The employment of civil disobedience had well-defined limitations and required suspension as the occasion demanded.

Harijan, 17-12-1938

412. DISCUSSION WITH CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES¹

[Before December 12, 1938]²

One of the questioners asked Gandhiji what his motive in life was, “the thing that leads us to do what we do”, whether it was religious, or social or political.

GANDHIJI: Purely religious. This was the question asked me by the late Mr. Montagu when I accompanied a deputation which was purely political. “How you, a social reformer,” he exclaimed, have “found your way into this crowd ?” My reply was that it was only an extension of my social activity. I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man’s activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing!

QUESTION: Seeing the influence you wield over the people, may we inquire whether it is the love of the cause or the love of the people that moves you?

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “Non-violence and World Crisis”. The missionaries included William Paton, Secretary of the International Missionary Council, Leslie B. Moss, Secretary of the Conference of Missionary Societies in North America, Dr. Smith of the British and Foreign Bible Society and John Mott. They were in India to attend the International Missionary Conference which opened at Tambaram on December 12, 1938.

² *ibid*

ANSWER: Love of the people. Cause without the people is a dead thing. Love of the people brought the problem of untouchability early into my life. My mother said, 'You must not touch this boy, he is an untouchable.' 'Why not?' I questioned back, and from that day my revolt began.

Q. You would expect us Christians to copy your example. Should we allow our religious motive to plunge us into politics?

A. Those who come from different parts of the world into this country cannot say: 'We shall have nothing to do with the politics of the country.' They would not be true to their faith if they bargained with the Government in order to supersede their fellow-feeling with the people. Supposing the Government does a grievous wrong to the people of the soil and the missionaries are told that they must not lift a finger to prevent it, surely, the least they can do is to leave the country by way of signifying their displeasure at the perpetration of the wrong. If a missionary puts himself out for service, opportunities will come: today it may be in the economic sphere, tomorrow in the social, next time it may be in the political field. You cannot then say, 'I shall confine myself to this or that work and do nothing else.' When I went to South Africa I knew nothing about that country. I was bound to my client only. Yet, within seven days of my reaching there, I found that I had to deal with a situation too terrible for words.

Gandhiji was next asked in what relation his non-violence stood to the Pacifist attitude, "which we Westerners are trying to adopt without much success."

GANDHIJI: In my opinion non-violence is not passivity in any shape or form. Non-violence, as I understand it, is the activist force in the world. Therefore, whether it is materialism or anything else, if non-violence does not provide an effective antidote it is not the active force of my conception. Or, to put it conversely, if you bring me some conundrums that I cannot answer I would say my non-violence is still defective. Non-violence is the supreme law. During my half a century of experience I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I was helpless, that I had no remedy in terms of non-violence.

Take the question of the Jews on which I have written.¹ No Jew need feel helpless if he takes to the non-violent way. A friend has written me a letter objecting that in that article I have assumed that the

¹ *Vide* "The Jews"

Jews have been violent. It is true that the Jews have not been actively violent in their own persons. But they called down upon the Germans the curses of mankind, and they wanted America and England to fight Germany on their behalf. If I hit my adversary, that is of course violence, but to be truly non-violent, I must love him and pray for him even when he hits me. The Jews have not been actively non-violent or, in spite of the misdeeds of the dictators, they would say, 'We shall suffer at their hands; they knew no better. But we shall suffer not in the manner in which they want us to suffer.' If even one Jew acted thus, he would salve his self respect and leave an example which, if it became infectious, would save the whole of Jewry and leave a rich heritage to mankind besides.

What about China, you will ask. The Chinese have no designs upon other people. They have no desire for territory. True, perhaps, China is not ready for such aggression; perhaps, what looks like her pacifism is only indolence. In any case China's is not active non-violence. Her putting up a valiant defence against Japan is proof enough that China was never intentionally non-violent. That she is on the defensive is no answer in terms of non-violence. Therefore, when the time for testing her active non-violence came, she failed in the test. This is no criticism of China. I wish the Chinese success. According to the accepted standards her behaviour is strictly correct. But when the position is examined in terms of non-violence, I must say it is unbecoming for a nation of 400 millions, a nation as cultured as Japan [*sic*], to repel Japanese aggression by resorting to Japan's own methods. If the Chinese had non-violence of my conception, there would be no use left for the latest machinery for destruction which Japan possesses. The Chinese would say to Japan, 'Bring all your machinery, we present half of our population to you. But the remaining two hundred millions won't bend their knee to you.' If the Chinese did that, Japan would become China's slave.

And in support of this argument he referred to Shelley's celebrated lines from *The Mask of Anarchy*, "Ye are many, they are few":

Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms and looks which are
Weapons of unvanquished war.
And if then the tyrants dare
Let them ride among you there,

Slash, and stab, and maim and hew—
What they like, that let them do.
With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay
Till their rage has died away.
Then they will return with shame
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek.
Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many—they are few.

It has been objected, however, that non-violence is all right in the case of the Jews because there is personal contact between the individual and his persecutors, but in China, Japan comes with its long-range guns and aeroplanes. The person who rains death from above has never any chance of even knowing who and how many he has killed. How can non-violence combat aerial warfare, seeing that there are no personal contacts? The reply to this is that behind the death-dealing bomb there is the human hand that releases it, and behind that still, is the human heart that sets the hand in motion. And at the back of the policy of terrorism is the assumption that terrorism if applied in a sufficient measure will produce the desired result, namely, bend the adversary to the tyrant's will. But supposing a people make up their mind that they will never do the tyrant's will, nor retaliate with the tyrant's own methods, the tyrant will not find it worth his while to go on with his terrorism. If sufficient food is given to the tyrant, a time will come when he will have had more than surfeit. If all the mice in the world held conference together and resolved that they would no more fear the cat but all run into her mouth, the mice would live. I have actually seen a cat play with a mouse. She did not kill it outright but held it between her jaws, then released it, and again pounced upon it as soon as it made an effort to escape. In the end the mouse died out of sheer fright. The cat would have derived no sport if the mouse had not tried to run away. I learnt

the lesson of non-violence from my wife, when I tried to bend her to my will. Her determined resistance to my will on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering my stupidity involved on the other, ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity in thinking that I was born to rule over her, and in the end she became my teacher in non-violence. And what I did in South Africa was but an extension of the rule of satyagraha which she unwillingly practised in her own person.

But one of the visitors objected: You do not know Hitler and Mussolini. They are incapable of any kind of moral response. They have no conscience and they have made themselves impervious to world opinion. Would it not be playing into the hands of these dictators if, for instance, the Czechs following your advice confronted them with non-violence? Seeing that dictatorships are unmoral by definition, would the law of moral conversion hold good in their case?

GANDHIJI: Your argument presupposes that the dictators like Mussolini or Hitler are beyond redemption. But belief in non-violence is based on the assumption that human nature in its essence is one and therefore unfailingly responds to the advances of love. It should be remembered that they have up to now always found ready response to the violence that they have used. Within their experience, they have not come across organized non-violent resistance on an appreciable scale, if at all. Therefore, it is not only highly likely, but I hold it to be inevitable, that they would recognize the superiority of non-violent resistance over any display of violence that they may be capable of putting forth. Moreover the non-violent technique that I have presented to the Czechs does not depend for its success on the goodwill of the dictators, for, a non-violent resister depends upon the unfailing assistance of God which sustains him throughout difficulties which would otherwise be considered insurmountable. His faith makes him indomitable.

The visitor retorted that these dictators wisely refrain from using force, but simply take possession of what they want. In the circumstances what can non-violent resisters do?

GANDHIJI: Suppose they come and occupy mines, factories and all sources of natural wealth belonging to the Czechs, then the following results can take place: (1) The Czechs may be annihilated for disobedience to orders. That would be a glorious victory for the Czechs and the beginning of the fall of Germany. (2) The Czechs might become demoralized in the presence of overwhelming force. This is a result common in all struggles, but if demoralization does

take place, it would not be on account of non-violence, but it would be due to absence or inadequacy of non-violence (3) The third thing that can take place is that Germany might use her new possessions for occupation by her surplus population. This, again, could not be avoided by offering violent resistance, for we have assumed that violent resistance is out of the question. Thus non-violent resistance is the best method under all conceivable circumstances.

I do not think that Hitler and Mussolini are after all so very indifferent to the appeal of world opinion. But today these dictators feel satisfaction in defying world opinion because none of the so-called Great Powers can come to them with clean hands, and they have a rankling sense of injustice done to their people by the Great Powers in the past. Only the other day an esteemed English friend owned to me that Nazi Germany was England's sin and that it was the Treaty of Versailles that made Hitler.

QUESTION: What can I as a Christian do to contribute to international peace? How can international anarchy be broken down and non-violence made effective for establishing peace? Subject nations apart, how can nations at the top be made to disarm themselves?

ANSWER: You as a Christian can make an effective contribution by non-violent action even though it may cost you your all. Peace will never come until the Great Powers courageously decide to disarm themselves. It seems to me that recent events must force that belief on the Great Powers. I have an implicit faith—faith that today burns brighter than ever, after half a century's experience of unbroken practice of non-violence—that mankind can only be saved through non-violence which is the central teaching of the Bible as I have understood the Bible.

Q. You have said that so far as India is concerned you are hopeful that it will stick to non-violence. What are the omens of that hope?

A. If you ask for outward proofs, I cannot give any. But I have an instinctive feeling that the country is not going to take to anything else. You must remember that just now I am filled with what I saw in the North-West Frontier Province. I was not prepared for what I saw. They are in dead earnest about the thing, and there is a deep-rooted sincerity in their hearts. They themselves see light and hope in non-violence. Khan Saheb told me that before that it was all darkness. There was not a family but had its blood feuds. They lived like tigers in a den. Though the Pathans used to be always armed with knives,

daggers and rifles, they used to be terrified of their superior officers, lest they should lose their jobs. All that has changed now with thousands. Blood feuds are becoming a thing of the past among those Pathans who have come under the influence of Khan Saheb's non-violence movement and, instead of depending for their livelihood on paltry jobs, they have turned to the soil for cultivation, and soon they will turn to industry if their promise is kept.

Q. What is your method of worship?

A. We have joint worship morning and evening at 4.20 a. m. and 7 p. m. This has gone on for years. We have a recitation of verses from the *Gita* and other accepted religious books, also hymns of saints with or without music. Individual worship cannot be described in words. It goes on continuously and even unconsciously. There is not a moment when I do not feel the presence of a witness whose eye misses nothing and with whom I strive to keep in tune. I do not pray as Christian friends do. Not because I think there is anything wrong in it, but because words won't come to me. I suppose it is a matter of habit.

Q. Is there any place for supplication in your prayer?

A. There is and there is not. God knows and anticipates our wants. The Deity does not need my supplication, but I, a very imperfect human being, do need His protection as a child that of its father. And yet I know that nothing that I do is going to change His plans. You may call me a fatalist, if you like.

Q. Do you find any response to your prayer?

A. I consider myself a happy man in that respect. I have never found Him lacking in response. I have found Him nearest at hand when the horizon seemed darkest—in my ordeals in jails when it was not all smooth sailing for me. I cannot recall a moment in my life when I had a sense of desertion by God.

Harijan, 24-12-1938

413. MESSAGE TO C. K. GIBBON¹

[On or before *December 12, 1938*]²

I wish you success in your endeavour to wake up the Anglo-Indian community to a sense of their duty as citizens of free India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-12-1938

414. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

I read suggestions about a memorial to the late Maulana Shaukat Ali.³ As soon as I learnt about the wholly unexpected death, I wrote to some Muslim friends sharing with them my innermost thoughts. One of them writes thus:

There can be no two opinions about the extreme urgency and essential necessity of a sincere and lasting Hindu-Muslim unity. And the sooner it is brought about the better it will be for all concerned. Delay in this matter can only be fraught with consequences which nobody can contemplate without serious concern. The present drift may lead to most tragic developments which must, if at all possible, be avoided. I know that Shaukat was in his own way genuinely anxious to bring about real Hindu-Muslim understanding, and nothing will please his spirit more than to know in its rest in heaven that one of the objects after which he strove in this world was at last achieved. There may be people who may doubt this, but knowing him and the working of his mind most intimately as I do, I can assert it with confidence.

I entirely endorse the opinion that, in spite of his outbursts at times to the contrary, deep down in the Maulana was the same longing for peace for which he used to speak and work eloquently during the Khilafat days. I have no doubt whatsoever that the truest memorial to his memory will be a joint determination on the part of both the communities to bring about not a paper-unity but a heart-unity, based not on suspicion and distrust but on mutual trust. No other unity is worth having. And without that unity there is no real freedom for India.

SEGAON, December 12, 1938

Harijan, 17-12-1938

¹ General Secretary of the Anglo-Indian Civil Liberties Association

² The news item carrying the message is dated December 12, 1938.

³ Shaukat Ali died on November 27.

415. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

December 12, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

I think 5 p. m. will be the ideal time.¹ If any other is more suitable, I shall suit myself to it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10146

416. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,

December 12, 1938

MY DEAR L. B.,

Your letter and the files just to hand.

You must go slow. If you are a true and willing slave, you have to listen to the slave-driver. And so you will go with Lilamani² to Delhi, have the bracing air there, be strong and then come to me for a little work and much play.

Tell Lilamani that love always finds and even makes time. How are she and Surya faring? What about the latter's big scheme?

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU

ZAHHEER MANZIL

RED HILL

HYDERABAD DECCAN

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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 9-12-1938

² Addressee's sister

417. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

December 12, 1938

CHI. AMALA,

I received the five rupees. Even if you sign Margarete Spiegel, you will be only Amala to me. I will address the envelope as you desire.

I hope you are keeping fine.

It will be good if you study Gujarati, even if only a little.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

418. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 12, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your anger will eat up both you and the cow. I am unable to see to everything myself. So I have entrusted this work to others. You have no plan. I would have closed my eyes and let you spend as you wished if I had unlimited funds. But I must know where to draw the line. I do not consider you an expert, but I have full confidence in you and also patience, so I go on. Yes, I want to keep more than a hundred cows but where do I have the plan?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you cannot patiently argue with your colleagues, how do you expect to serve?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1912

419. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 12, 1938

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

What I did cannot apply in the case of your brother. I took no medicine except soda and I lived entirely on fruit juice. Massage, hip-baths, etc., were continued. If I tried to eat anything in the mean while my condition became worse. In the end it was goat's milk that saved my life.

Carry on whatever treatment is possible there. See if Saraswati can do anything. If you are so inclined you may take him to Poona.

The problem of Satyavati is a difficult one. She will not even take the full treatment.

It is surprising that there is no reply from the Meerut people. I am writing to them.

Mahadev and I are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not able to suggest anything with regard to the mills except that we should organize the mill-hands.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2458

420. LETTER TO HARSARAN VERMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 12, 1938

BHAI HARSARAN VERMA,

I have your letter. It is good you wrote to me. You should also submit to the Congress Committee all that you have written to me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 90

421. A NOTE

[Before *December 13, 1938*]¹

In my view, we should not interfere with whatever the Princes are doing. But why should not all the obnoxious portions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act be removed? Let only the absolute minimum be retained.

X X X

Such a protest should be considered thoughtless. We want to do away with all that is bad in the [Criminal Law Amendment] Act. But why should we give up what is good in it? The Working Committee should have the courage to lend its support to this much. We must see the spirit [of the Law]. Why should we see only the letter of it? I have been purposely silent because I could not have written fully in favour of the Princes. I would be willing to write in their favour if they are agreeable to my suggestions. Even there the condition would be that after reading the Act, you approve of my suggestions. I do not know for certain that the [present] use of the sections is necessary. If it is necessary, I would certainly say so.

From the Hindi original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹The note has been placed in the source among items of 1938. It appears from the contents that it was written before the Working Committee's resolution on Indian States drafted by Gandhiji on December 13, 1938; *vide*, "Draft of Congress Working Committee Resolution on Indian States", 13-12-1938

422. INTERVIEW TO CELESTINE SMITH¹

[Before December 13, 1938]²

I had never thought of a girl coming. To take the responsibility of a girl so far away from her home would perhaps be a bit too much. But as you can see I have plenty of girls around me here, and if a girl did come from America like that, I should not mind it a bit, i. e., if she could put up with the incredibly simple life here as it would appear to her. What she can learn from here and take back is the secret of simple living. However simple life may be in America, it cannot come anywhere near the simplicity of life here. I do not know if America can assimilate such simplicity, or wants it. The other thing that she could take back is the spirit of non-violence, to the extent that she can assimilate it without the help of any words or speeches, if there is non-violence in the atmosphere here. If there is no non-violence in the atmosphere, no written or spoken word can make her understand it or grasp it.

Harijan, 31-12-1938

423. DRAFT OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON INDIAN STATES³

December 13, 1938

The Working Committee welcome the awakening of the people of Indian States in many parts of the country and consider this as a hopeful prelude to the larger freedom, comprising the whole of India, for which the Congress has laboured. The Committee support the demand for civil liberty and responsible government under the aegis

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Celestine Smith was the Secretary of the Negro Section of the Young Women's Christian Association, New York. She was impressed with the Wardha scheme of education and wanted to know whether she could send one of her girls and, if she did, what she would learn and take back to America.

² A photograph of Gandhiji with Celestine Smith was published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of December 13, which would indicate that they had met before that date.

³ *The Indian Annual Register*, in the Chronicle of Events, notes under the date December 13 that Gandhiji drafted this resolution.

of the Rulers in the States and express their solidarity with these movements for freedom and self-expression. While appreciating that some Rulers of the States have recognized this awakening as a healthy sign of growth and are seeking to adjust themselves to it in co-operation with their people, the Committee regret that other Rulers have sought to suppress these movements by banning peaceful and legitimate organizations and all political activity and, in some cases, resorting to cruel and inhuman repression. In particular, the Committee deplore the attempt of some Rulers to seek the aid of the British Government in India to suppress their own people, and the Committee assert the right of the Congress to protect the people against an unwarranted use of military or police forces, lent by the British authorities, for the suppression of the legitimate movement of the people for responsible government within the States.

The Committee desire to draw attention afresh to the resolution of the Haripura Congress which defines Congress policy in regard to the States. While it is the right and privilege of the Congress to work for the attainment of civil liberty and responsible government in the States, existing circumstances impose certain limitations on this work, and considerations of prudence prevent the Congress from interfering organizationally and directly in the internal struggles of the States. This policy was conceived in the best interests of the people, to enable them to develop self-reliance and strength. It was also intended as a measure of the goodwill of the Congress towards the States and of its hope that the Rulers, of their own accord, would recognize the spirit of the times and satisfy the just aspirations of their people. Experience has proved the wisdom of this policy. But this was never conceived as an obligation. The Congress has always reserved the right, as it is its duty, to guide the people of the States and lend them its influence. With the great awakening that is taking place among the people of the States, there must be an increasing identification of the Congress with States' people.

The policy laid down by the Haripura Congress, which has been so abundantly justified, must continue to be pursued. While, therefore, the Working Committee welcome the movements in the States for the attainment of responsible government, they advise the people not belonging to the States concerned against taking part in civil disobedience and the like. Participation by such people will bring no real strength to the movement, and may even embarrass the people of the

States concerned and prevent them from developing a mass movement on which strength and success depend.

The Committee trust that all movements in the States will adhere strictly to the fundamental Congress policy of non-violence.

Indian National Congress, February 1938 to January 1939, pp. 69-70

424. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 13, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

You understand now that I pleaded with Chimanlal on your behalf that cows need not be kept in two places. What I want to have is an estimate of the expenditure on and income from a herd of cows and calves numbering up to a hundred. You are a worker but a person who has to collect funds must have a plan. Therefore I said that if the workers here could together prepare a scheme I could think over it. It would have made my path easier if you and Parnerkar could get on well together. I want to expedite this matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi; G.N. 1915

425. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHA,
December 14, 1938

THANUPILLAY

STATE CONGRESS

TRIVANDRUM

AM QUITE CLEAR THAT IN SPITE PROSECUTION YOU
SHOULD WITHDRAW ALLEGATIONS BEFORE HEARING COM-
MENCES. IF COURT PERSIST YOU STILL REFUSE DEFEND
SAYING THAT UNDER ADVICE WHICH ON SECOND THOUGHTS
YOU CONSIDER TO BE SOUND YOU HAVE DECIDED NOT
TO PURSUE THEM AS BEING INCONSISTENT WITH PURSUIT
OF LARGER POLICY OF ATTAINMENT RESPONSIBLE GOVT.

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

426. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

SEGAON,
December 14, 1938

BHAI BHULABHAI,

I read Nariman's letter. Personally I feel that a great injustice has been done to him. If there is nothing else apart from that letter and if my view is correct, I should like you yourself to make amends when we meet tomorrow. I write this so that you may think about the matter beforehand. I wrote to Vallabhbai from the car itself. But I see that I ought to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

427. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 16, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I read your postcard addressed to Ba. I should certainly like to drag you here, but now I will not send for you. Stay at Bardoli as long as you can. Here I cannot even raise my head; what is the use of having you here then?

The swelling produced by the vaccination must have subsided.

I trust Nanabhai is well. Will it be too early for you to join me on the 1st itself?

Here we have a stream of visitors coming and going these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4890

428. TELEGRAM TO ZAINAB¹

[December 16, 1938]²

JAMNALALJI'S WIRE BRINGS SAD NEWS. MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY AND PRAYER WITH YOU ALL. I KNOW YOU ARE BRAVE. HOPE DOCTOR'S TRADITION WILL BE FULLY KEPT UP BY FAMILY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-12-1938

429. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHA,

[December 17, 1938]³

THANUPILLAY
PRESIDENT STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

ADVISE YOU EMPHATICALLY NOT TO RESIST PRESENT BAN ON CONTEMPLATED CONFERENCE NEAR TRIVANDRUM AND ON DEMONSTRATIONS DURING FORTHCOMING VICEREGAL VISIT ALSO ADVISE TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE EVEN IN FACE OF PROVOKING RESTRICTIONS. SUCH WILLING OBEDIENCE TO IRKSOME RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM WILL BE A LESSON IN ART OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Widow of Dr. Rajab Ali Vishram Patel, a well-known freemason. During the non-co-operation movement in 1921 he had donated Rs. 50,000 and handed over the amount to Gandhiji for use at his discretion.

² Dr. Rajab Ali died on December 16, 1938.

³ The original telegram as delivered has only "17". However the Viceroy arrived in Travancore on January 9, 1939, and hence the telegram is placed under this date.

430. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

WARDHA,
December 17, 1938

THANUPILLAY
PRESIDENT STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

WITHDRAWAL MAY BE AS FOLLOWS. AFTER SERIOUS AND PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION WE HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST THE DEWAN IN THE MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO HIS HIGHNESS SHOULD BE UNRESERVEDLY WITHDRAWN IN THE INTEREST OF THE LARGER STRUGGLE FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT. BUT WHILST THEREFORE WITHDRAW THE ALLEGATION FULLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY WE WOULD BE UNTRUE TO OURSELVES TO THE CAUSE AND TO THE PUBLIC IF WE DID NOT STATE THAT THE ALL EGATIONS WERE MADE BY US WITH A FULL SENSE OF RESPONSIBILIT AND WITH A BELIEF IN THEM AS FULL AS IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE IN A STATEMENT BASED UPON ONE-SIDED EVIDENCE. OUR BELIEF IN THE TRUTH OF THE ALLEGATIONS MADE PERSISTS BUT THE OPINION HAS FORCED ITSELF UPON US THAT FOR US TO PERSIST IN THOSE ALLEGATIONS WOULD BE TO HARM THE GREAT STRUGGLE FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT IN TRAVANCORE. WE THEREFORE WITHDRAW THE ALLEGATIONS AND ASK THE PUBLIC NOT TO BE AFFECTED BY THE ALLEGATIONS OR BY OUR BELIEF IN THEM. IN CASE PROSECUTION IS PURSUED IN SPITE OF ABOVE WITHDRAWAL ADD LATER IN COURT AS FOLLOWS. WE ARE SORRY THAT THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR IS NOT SATISFIED WITH OUR WITHDRAWAL OF THE ALLEGATIONS. WE SHALL CHEERFULLY UNDERGO ANY SENTENCE THAT MAY BE IMPOSED UPON US FOR OUR UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL MEANS THAT WE HAVE WITHDRAWN THE ALLEGATIONS NOT TO EVADE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE LAW BUT FOR HELPING THE LARGER CAUSE OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT. WE THEREFORE DO NOT PROPOSE TO ENTER UPON ANY DEFENCE AND AS WE HAVE WITHDRAWN THE ALLEGATIONS IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO PLEAD GUILTY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

431. MESSAGE TO ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY UNION¹

[Before December 18, 1938]²

I believe nothing except non-violence can solve our difficulties.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-12-1938

432. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

Strictly Confidential

SEGAON, WARDHA,

December 1938

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I must dictate this as I am wilfully blind. Whilst I am dictating this Maulana Saheb, Nalini Babu³, and Ghanshyamdasji are listening. We had an exhaustive discussion over the Bengal Ministry. I am more than ever convinced that we should not aim at ousting the Ministry. We shall gain nothing by a reshuffle. And probably we shall lose much by including Congressmen in the Ministry. I feel, therefore, that the best way of securing comparative purity of administration and continuity of a settled programme and policy would be to aim at having all the reforms that we desire carried out by the present Ministry. Nalini Babu should come out, as he says he would, on a real issue being raised and the decision being taken by the Ministry against the interests of the country. His retirement from the Ministry would then be dignified and wholly justified. I understand that so far as the amendment of the municipal law is concerned, separate electorate for the scheduled class is given up. There is still insistence on separate electorate for Mussalmans. I do not know whether opposition should be taken to the breaking point. If the Mussalman opinion is solid in favour of separation, I think it would be wisdom to satisfy them. I would not like them to carry the point in the teeth of the Congress opposition. It would be then a point against the Con-gress.

If my opinion is acceptable to you, the release of the Prisoners becomes a much simpler matter than it is today. And if this opinion

¹ This message was sent on the occasion of the unveiling of Gandhiji's portrait-painting in the Senate Hall of the University.

² The report carrying this message is dated December 18, 1938.

³ Nalini Ranjan Sarkar, then Finance Minister of Bengal

commends itself to you there should be an open declaration about the new policy. This ought to result in easing the tension that prevails in Bengal, and Bengal will be automatically free from the state of suspended animation. Maulana Saheb is in entire agreement with this opinion and so are Nalini Babu and Ghanshyamdas.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7784. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

433. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,

[After *December 18, 1938*]¹

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have gone through the papers. They are dreadful. If the Thakore Saheb remains firm, the problem can be solved in no time. But I doubt if he will remain firm. How much use can we make of the information gathered from the papers? If you receive an invitation, do go. I think if you go you should see the Resident² also and tell him the truth. The Ruler's invitation should not be kept a complete secret. If he does not have that much courage, it may not be worth while going to Rajkot.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING

OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 230

¹ The papers referred to in the text consisted of correspondence Thakore Dharmendrasinhji of Rajkot had initiated with the addressee for a settlement. The addressee in his letter of December 18 to the Thakore Saheb had said, "I would come immediately—on receipt of your letter—and persuade the people to agree to the termination of the struggle." This therefore must belong to some date after December 18.

² E. C. Gibson

434. NOTES

COMPLAINT AGAINST CONGRESSMEN

I have a letter from the Rangoon Khadi Bhandar and another from Karnatak complaining that Congress committees have certified khadi which was decertified by the A. I. S. A. There is no doubt whatsoever as to the truth of the complaint. I have copies of the certificates issued by two Congress bodies. Congress committees should know that these certificates are illegal. The only authority that can issue certificates about khadi is the A.I.S.A. No Congress committee has been, or can be, given the right unless the Congress resolution constituting the A. I. S. A. is changed.

There is no such thing as certified khadi. It is impossible to certify every piece and every article made of khadi; only shops and persons can be authorized to sell khadi approved by the A. I. S. A. The original definition of khadi has been broadened to ensure an adequate wage for the manufacturers of khadi. Those who sell any other khadi, deprive khadi workers of the wage that the A. I. S. A. has, of its own accord, ensured for them. Let it not be said of any Congressman and Congress committee that they are interfering with the vast experiment in nation-building that the A. I. S. A. is conducting and which bids fair to put life and lustre in the dying bodies of millions of sisters whom no agency ensures even two pice per day. I hope, therefore, that the Congress committees and Congressmen will not only not interfere with the work of the A.I.S.A., but will give their full-hearted co-operation to numerous organizations of the A. I. S. A., especially in the sale of khadi. If there was a steadily increasing demand, it would be possible to provide remunerative work in every famine area.

HINDUSTANI ONLY

A Muslim friend who calls himself an old Congress worker says:

The Times of India, in its issue of the 12th September last, published an abstract of your article from the *Harijan* under the caption 'Congressmen Beware!'¹. The cogent explanation you have given of the position caused by the anti-Hindi agitation in Madras and the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act is remarkably convincing. I have no doubt that the sound advice you have

¹ *Vide* "Islamic Culture", 28-1-1939

offered to the agitators will go a long way in satisfying them and that they will be brought round to the right way of thinking. But in this connection I should like to draw your attention to an anomaly which seems to have crept in inadvertently regarding the 'Rashtrabhasha' for India. To the best of my knowledge the Congress resolution on the subject contains the word 'Hindustani' and not 'Hindi'. You yourself, in all your speeches and writings, have always used the word 'Hindustani'. It is therefore to be regretted that a majority of Congressmen have, in contravention of the Congress resolution, been using the word '*Hindi*'.

This use of the wrong word has given rise to considerable misunderstanding and contention among the members of the different camps of the Congress. To my mind it should be neither 'Hindi' nor 'Urdu', and all Congressmen when referring to the Rashtrabhasha should use the word 'Hindustani'.

I endorse the suggestion whole-heartedly. Rashtrabhasha has only one name, i.e., Hindustani.

SEGAON, December 19, 1938

Harijan, 24-12-1938

435. PROHIBITION

Prohibition in the Congress provinces is not going on in the spirit in which it was conceived. It is perhaps no fault of the Ministers. Public opinion is not insistent. Congress opinion is equally dormant. Congressmen do not seem to see that prohibition means new life for many millions. It means new and substantial accession of moral and material strength. They do not realize that honest prohibition gives a dignity and prestige to the Congress which perhaps no other single step can give. They do not see that prosecution of prohibition means identification with the masses and a resolute determination to refuse to have anything to do with the drink revenue. Even such a confirmed prohibitionist like Rajaji has not had the daring to set apart the drink revenue purely for the purpose of fighting the drink evil. He has proved in this matter too cautious for me. Congressmen have learnt to count no cost too dear for winning freedom. Our freedom will be the freedom of slaves if we continue to be victims of the drink and drug habit. Is any cost too much to establish complete prohibition in all the provinces?

And yet one finds Ministers drawing up prohibition programmes in a proper bania spirit. They think of their deficits. I wonder

what they will do if all the winebibbers and opiumeaters suddenly give up their drinks and drugs ! They will manage somehow, it may be answered. Why will they not do so voluntarily? Surely, merit lies in doing the right thing voluntarily, not compulsorily ! The Bihar Government did not come to a standstill, when the earthquake swallowed more than their annual income. What do the Governments all over India do, when famines and floods ruin people and materially reduce the State revenue? I maintain that the Congress Governments break the spirit, if not the letter, of their pledge, when they delay prohibition for the sake of revenue.

They can and must make an honest attempt to raise money by fresh taxation. The drink curse is most prevalent in urban areas. It is in these areas that they can resort to fresh taxation. Prohibition gives direct help to the employers of labour. They can surely afford to bear the loss of revenue caused by prohibition. The few months of prohibition in Ahmedabad have put money into the pockets both of the employers and the labourers. There is no reason whatsoever why the employers should not pay for this inestimable service. Many similar sources of revenue can easily be thought of.

I have not hesitated to suggest a grant or at least a loan without interest from the Government of India where it can be proved that the raising of additional revenue is not a practical proposition.

The only valid reason for not having immediate prohibition is want of previous experience and hence the need for caution. I viewed the Salem experiment in that light. The Madras Government wanted to take the first step with great deliberation and did not want to take any risk of failure. The success of the Salem experiment should be sufficient encouragement to go on with the whole scheme. But it is not impossible to understand the desire of each Government to go in for prohibition in stages so as to have local experience. It was for that reason that the Working Committee fixed three years as the period to bring about complete prohibition. The time is running fast. And if India is to be free of the curse within the period fixed, there should be no delay for want of money or for fear of deficit in revenue. And if the programme is prosecuted with single-minded zeal, there is no doubt that the other provinces and the States will follow.

SEGAON, December 19, 1938

Harijan, 24-12-1938

436. *DISTRICT BOARDS*

It has often been borne in upon me that District Boards and Municipal Councils are excrescences involving a useless tax upon the people's purses. This became patent to me during the non-co-operation days in Mehmadaabad. I had then advised the people that, if they boycotted their council or whatever it was called, they could do their own sweeping and lighting and conduct their schools without fuss and without much expense and avoid wrangling into the bargain.

The truth of my remark became clear to me a few days ago when a member of the Surat District Board came to me, showed me a circular issued by the Board, and asked me for my blessing on their scheme. The scheme was extra-official. There are about forty members of the Board. I write from memory. They have really no work except to meet at stated intervals and hold debates on certain items of expenditure. As the Board has a sweeping Congress majority and as some of the members are conscientious, they do not know how to use their time for the service of the people. The Board has an income altogether inadequate for the expenditure required to keep all its departments in good order and condition, especially the roads. The circular, therefore, contained a pompous advertisement that the members and the officials would work during the National Week in April at road repairs, etc. On the strength of the proverb that something is better than nothing, certainly the National Week idea was commendable. But it was not good enough for me. I said, "If you want my blessing, you must begin work now and not merely for one week as a holiday, but for the whole term of your office and regularly as if you were members of the paid staff—no doubt consistently with your domestic and other obligations. In other words, you should constitute yourselves into a national service. You will meet officially only to vote items you must, but never to hold long debates or wrangle over petty appointments and the like. But your real and solid work would be extra-official. You would take pride in having first-class roads which you will have built yourselves. You will run your schools efficiently. You will see that your district has its proper supply of water, and your fields are well manured and grow crops that are useful from the national standpoint. You will teach the people proper methods of sanitation and ensure voluntary prohibition by weaning the people from the drink habit. You will run night-schools for adults. If you are

in earnest about your duty, you will be too few for the task. You will set an example to the other boards and you will justify the choice of the electors. The result will be that the electors themselves and the others will become a voluntary brigade of workers who will revolutionize the life of the people around you. If you take to heart what I am telling you, you will find at once that you cannot do without hand-ginning, hand-carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving This will give full occupation during leisure hours to every boy, girl, man and woman who is not disabled for light labour, and you will immediately add a good few lacs of rupees to your income as a district. When you have achieved this programme you will have my blessings. I shall become your advertising agent. If you cannot do this, do not play with your work by having a spectacular demonstration of your holiday patriotism.

I fear, however, that the District Boards in India will not quite approve of the programme of voluntary service I have sketched above. I, therefore, suggest that at least the Congress provinces have a model and novel legislation constituting municipal, local and district boards on the basis of efficiency. I would have them elected, but there would be very few men and women capable of doing administrative, plodding work. Each one of the members will have his work cut out for him. I should impress the services of the paid officials side by side with the elected members who will be at once their masters and co-workers. This is but the barest outline of Boards of my notion. The Congress is a revolutionary body in the widest and the wisest sense. It must be original. All its activities must be derived from its creed of non-violence. There must be a perfect chain linking the smallest to the biggest unit after the same pattern, so that he who runs may see that it is an artistic whole designed to answer the main purpose. This presupposes one united mind and will in the Congress—not the mind and will of one man but the minds and wills of many men and women acting as one mind and one will.

SEGAON, December 19, 1938

Harijan, 24-12-1938

437. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 19, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have not been able to give you a line.

Yes, I shall not part with the blanket designed for me. I do not know whether I am wearing the old or the new. I shall inquire and get the new. What shall I do with the old?

Of course you will have a copy of the Aundh Constitution when it is ready.

If K.¹ has responsible government, why can't you be its first Minister and shape its destiny at will? But we shall discuss when you come.

I fear I must leave for Bardoli on 1st Jan. The W. C. meets there on 7th, so you should come *via* Ahmedabad. If you leave on 3rd, you will reach Bardoli on 6th. No time for more.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3654. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6463

438. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 20, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I cannot let your sweet note go unanswered. I know what Xmas means to the English people. All my good wishes accompany you.

I knew you would understand Mira's letter. Yes, do keep in touch with her. She is in God's good hands.

You will come as often as you like and stay as long as you like.

Nobody gave you fudge today! Some goes with this.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1506

¹ Kapurthala

439. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 20, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

This is just to tell you that I remember you. There is a terrible pressure of work, but that seems to be God's pleasure. I do not work beyond the time fixed. I hope your stay is proving fruitful. Amtul Salaam is badly ill—malaria. There is a large crowd—Pannalal, Gangabehn, Nanibehn have come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11686

440. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 20, 1938

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Here is the reply from Vichitra¹. What should be done now? I hope your brother is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2457

441. LETTER TO N. M. JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

MY DEAR JOSHI,

I am very grateful to you for your two letters containing an exhaustive reply to my letter. I am glad too that Parulekar took the trouble of writing out his speech. Though the sentences marked do not appear in the speech, there is hot stuff enough in it, perilously going near to the sentiments ascribed to Parulekar in the report I sent to you. Mark the following:

¹ Vichitra Narayan Sharma, a khadi worker of Meerut. He had stated in his letter of December 14 that starting khadi work in famine-affected areas was bound to result in financial loss while expanding the work to include Delhi was inconvenient.

They often described British bureaucracy as Satanic. I must find out a stronger term than the word "Satanic", as this act is more devilish. . . . They know that the Bill is not in your interest and, therefore, they are afraid of you. They feel nervous. They think that you will throw away their Gandhi caps. This "Gandhi Cap Government" has shown by its acts that they are not the friends of the poor. They are there to work in the interests of the rich. . . . If they postpone the discussion they will have to discuss the Bill in Bombay who are politically conscious. The workers in Bombay will take out monster demonstrations and will create such a row that those who are responsible for the Bill will not be able to enjoy sound and comfortable sleep. The workers can be compared to a sleeping lion. I warn Government not to wake him up. Let them not tease him. Let them not attack him. They must realize that if they provoke him the working class has enough strength to retaliate on the strongest Government. . . . This Bill is a deadly poisonous pill coated with sugar. We must scratch the sugar and leave the poison to be swallowed by the framers of the Bill.

I should not like such language in the mouth of a member of the Society.

As to your remark about the danger to civil liberty, I would like you to give me some concrete suggestion for a Provincial Government to be at least able to know what public men are saying and doing. Or, do you suggest that they ought not to concern themselves with the sayings and doings of public men? I am not now thinking of the possible punishment that might be inflicted upon those who make speeches inciting to violence or whatever is considered contrary to law. I am thinking of peaceful action such as warning to reckless speakers and establishing contact with organizations to which they belong. So far as Paruleker is concerned, I am making further inquiry. In any case I am quite clear in my mind that there should be no prosecution against him and I am writing to Kher accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

442. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Maulana Saheb does not want the crown of thorns. If you want to try again please do. If you won't or he won't listen, Pattabhi seems to be the only choice.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

443. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEGAON,
December 21, 1938

MY DEAR PRITHVI SINGH,

I have your two letters. I have been too busy to write to you earlier, but Pyarelal has been attending to every one of your requirements. The wool is being taken up and I shall have it woven and of course make use of it myself, unless I make better use of it by using it for exhibition purposes. I have not decided.

Though I do not want to publish your letter as the authorities may not like its publication whilst you are still a prisoner, I am going to make judicious use of it amongst those who are still unconvinced of the matchless superiority of non-violence over violence. So far as your own case is concerned you may depend upon my doing everything in my power. You need not do anything there till I advise you otherwise.

I have a very fine portrait of you taken by Kanu which Pyarelal is sending to your brother, but he will be writing independently to you.

Mahadev is quite well now, though I do not want him to return to his regular work.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5632. Also C.W. 2943. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

444. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

Your letter surprises me, for in your previous letter you said that while the prisoners were not ready to give the assurance to the Government, they were ready to give it to me. You now tell me they will not. Why this change? Please bring this to the prisoners' notice that if they cannot give this assurance even to me, so far as I am concerned, I am powerless.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1287

445. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I had both your letters. I had acted on the first. Why do you insist on my acting on the second, too? You need not attend the Jallianwala Bagh Committee. Keshavdevji may well attend. There will be no need of a vote. Don't take it into your head that your health is bad. The body only needs rest. If you get it, your health will be all right. It will be enough if you travel a little in India or Ceylon. Give up all worry about work.

Are Rajabali's affairs being properly administered? How is Janakibehn?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2996

446. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

CHI. MANUDI¹,

Do come to Bardoli if you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1573. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

447. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 21, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

The Maulana has flatly refused, and it does not, therefore, seem proper to press him further. I think it will be best to think of Pattabhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 230

448. MESSAGE TO ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE²

[Before December 22, 1938]³

Women alone can emancipate themselves not men. If women will, they can help in the fulfilment of ahimsa. Through the charkha, they can serve the cause of their poor sisters. By wearing khaddar, they can bring help to the homes of the poor. They can bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. They can abolish the purdah and drive away the ghost of untouchability.

¹ Gandhiji's granddaughter

² The Conference opened in Delhi on December 28. Amrit Kaur presided. Gandhiji's message according to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-12-1938, was in Gujarati.

³ *Vide* the following item.

Will the Women's Conference at Delhi undertake to fulfil any of these causes?

The Hindustan Times, 28-12-1938. Also from a copy: C.W. 10362. Courtesy: All-India Women's Conference

449. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am just now managing things through deputies. I can't cope with work otherwise. You are going to keep well in Bardoli.

Herewith a letter for Tai and a message¹ for the Conference. You having had one, naturally she also wants one.

I hope you left Shummy in a good condition. I am glad you liked my letter.

Mahadev should return on 24th.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Herewith draft reply to the Jewish appeal.

From the original: C.W. 3900. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7056

450. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

CHI. MANI,

Mridula and you make a good pair. I got both your letters. Take complete rest. I am very glad that you spin. Write about food, etc., if you are permitted to do so. How does Mridula spend her time?

Mahadev has gone for four days to see the goshala near Calcutta. He is expected to return on the 24th. I am keeping excellent health. Ba has not yet got the permission to go there. She is going to

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

Dehra Dun for the Kanya Gurukul. I am leaving for Bardoli on the 1st of January.

Blessings to you and Mridula from

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL

STATE JAIL

RAJKOT—KATHIAWAR

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 123

451. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

December 22, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. I do not mind your having stayed on. Didn't you get my letter there? Take the treatment as long as you wish and see that the body becomes all right. It will certainly mean expense but the expense will not go waste. Let me know the result.

Ba will leave for Dehra Dun tomorrow. She will meet me in Bardoli. Dharamdevji will be able to come in February. For the whole of January, I will be in Bardoli. Kanam will stay with me. He gives no trouble at all. He has come to be perfectly at ease with me. Neither you nor Ramdas need worry about him.

Tell Ramdas that Sardar has found a job for him in the Scindia.¹ He does not seem to be happy at Mysore. Ask Ramdas to write to me what he thinks in the matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ The Scindia Steam Navigation Company

452. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

December 22, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I gave much thought to your letter. You did make a mistake, but who doesn't? Your simplicity of nature consists in that you readily admit your mistake. The service of the cow and the good of all of us, including you, now lies in sticking to the decision that has been taken. If your anger really subsides everything will turn out well in the end. You and Parnerkar will have been tested. Give whatever help Parnerkar asks for. Find out what else can be done and tell me. You have to be in good cheer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1913

453. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 22, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

At least you have written a letter today. I am sending this through Ba. On receiving the letter from Prakash, for a moment Sushila was inclined to go there. But I did not approve of her going for just a few days. Right now, Sushila is serving me. She is also helping me with the letters, etc. This she has been doing for the last two or three days. I do not like to send her away all of a sudden. It is another matter if you want to call away Sushila for good. In that case I have no authority to hold her. I keep Sushila with me because I trust your words. I have no doubt a selfish purpose in keeping her. But I am also convinced that staying with me is good for Sushila from every point of view. I also consider it necessary that Sushila should be near Pyarelal. Sushila will not be at peace staying in Delhi or away from me. Think of all this and write to me frankly. Come to Bardoli if you can. I shall feel happy if you do.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

454. SPEECH AT SCOUTS RALLY¹

SEGAON,
[December 22, 1938]²

I congratulate you on the demonstration of the drill that you have given. It is a necessary part of your training. But while you have made a fine beginning, you have still much ground to traverse.

The object of mass drill is to enable large bodies of people to perform any movement rhythmically and swiftly and with absolute precision. What a saving in national time and energy it would mean if we could do that in our public meetings and functions ! There is a silent music in disciplined movement of masses of men and women. Just now I asked you to move a little towards me so that my low voice may reach you. Had you advanced far enough in your drill, you would have been able to perform that movement with ease without any noise or confusion. There is a rhythm and music in drill that makes action effortless and eliminates fatigue. If the whole nation of 300 millions could be drilled so as to move together and act together and if necessary to die together as one man, we should attain independence without striking a blow and set an example of a peaceful revolution for the whole world to emulate.

I was particularly glad to note that the Khoja Boarding House at Wardha had sent its quota of scouts to participate in your rally. This is as it should be. Boy scouts' training has been incorporated in the Wardha Scheme of Education. It would be nothing worth if it did not serve to remove all mutual distrust and suspicion and foster among the various sections and communities a perfect spirit of camaraderie which is an integral part of that scheme, although it is not set down in so many words in the Zakir Husain Committee's report. The Wardha Scheme of Education does not aim merely at imparting literary training to the students; its object is to give an education for life that would answer the need of our millions. It is calculated to be a living and life-giving experiment. Teachers, who have in their turn to become torch-bearers of this education, have need, therefore, of a broader and

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The rally was held at the end of a 21 days' training course in scoutcraft conducted at Wardha for pupil teachers under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

² The date is from *The Hindu*, 23-12-1938.

wider training. And scoutcraft is an important and useful part of that training.

I know something of the work of the old Seva Samiti founded by Revered Malaviyaji. I know also Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru's work on it; and I have come in contact with Shri Bajpai, the organizer of the Samiti. If, therefore, I offer a few remarks by way of suggestions, they must be taken as those of a friend. As I watched the flag salutation ceremony, there seemed to be an air of unreality about it. Your song is composed in highflown language. You have in that song expressed your readiness to lay down your lives for that flag which you have envisioned as one day floating over the whole world. Could you seriously mean it, I asked myself, as you sang that song. I venture to suggest that such sentiments as are expressed in that song may not be associated with any other than the national flag—if they are not to remain a mere pious wish calculated to begin and end with the singing of that song. People cannot die for many flags. If you must have a separate flag and a hoisting ceremony, your song should be pitched in a lower key. Then, again, I see you have your inscription on the flag in English. That seems to me an anomaly. You should have on your flag Hindustani inscription. Scouting must aim not merely at the training of the body but that of the brain and heart too. It would be a poor performance if it confines itself to mere externals and ignores the internal.

A word to the pupil teachers who are assembled here. As the first batch, on them rests a heavy responsibility. It is not merely they but the scheme of education which they are out to work that is going to be put on its trial. It therefore behoves them to be punctilious and exact in every little thing that they say or do. They must weigh every word that they utter and take care never to utter a word in vain. It is a new and untried experiment that they are going to launch upon, i.e., to give the whole education through a craft. Success will be the reward of unremitting exercise of intelligence in all their acts. Nothing will be more detrimental to it than insincerity in speech, thought or action.

Harijan, 31-12-1938

455. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I find that Residents in certain States are discouraging Ruling Chiefs from having any dealings with Congressmen such as Sardar Patel. I have unimpeachable evidence in two cases. Of these I am free to mention one. That is in connection with Rajkot. I do not wish to tax you with details. I hope it is not the intention at the headquarters to discourage ruling Chiefs from cultivating friendly relations with Congressmen. The States people have always looked to the Congress for guidance and advice. With increasing awakening among the States people, there should be no wonder if Chiefs seek Congress advice and assistance in settling their differences with their people. Discouragement by Residents amounts to orders to them. Recent declarations in London seem to show that there is no intention, on the part of the superior authority, to interfere with the Chiefs in such matters. If my impression is correct and if on enquiry you find that the statement I have made about Rajkot is borne out, may I expect that you will instruct Residents in general not to interfere with the Ruling Chiefs who may choose to seek the assistance of Congressmen in solving the difficulties that face them?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Lord Linlithgow Papers: Microfilm No. 107. Courtesy: National Archives of India

456. LETTER TO J.C . KUMARAPPA

December 23, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

I am glad you went to Bombay. It would have been a mistake if no one had gone. No doubt you were the best man for our purpose. I would like you to tell me more about your doings on 30th if possible. But you may anticipate the date if you think it necessary.

I would like Sir P. to come to Bardoli on the earliest day after 3rd January.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10147

457. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

DEAR SIR RADHAKRISHNAN,

As you know I have always aimed at a redistribution of Provinces on a linguistic basis. The cue was taken from the Andhra movement. I should therefore be more than glad if Andhra could have its status as a Province recognized even now.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile in *Mahatma*, Vol. VI, between pp. 352 and 353

458. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

CHI. INDU,

I got your letter. I had got the previous one also. In both you are carried away by your emotions. Be patient and search for a job there or come to me in Bardoli. We will think it over. Why do you lose heart? I will leave for Bardoli on January 1.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6256

¹ At this time the addressee was in Segaon to persuade Gandhiji to prevail upon Rajaji not to make Hindi compulsory in Madras schools. *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 24-12-1938

459. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON,
December 23, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have gone through your letter carefully. It is good. But I notice that you cannot bear to be separated from the cows. You should take it that the separation is in the interest of greater service to the cow. I shall gain some experience and so will you. You have doubts as to the propriety of what is being done. It is not right. For if you have doubts it denotes a lack of knowledge behind your renunciation. From what you told me yesterday I thought your heart was cleansed and you had realized that what was being done was all to the good. I never attributed to you any baseness of spirit. I did mention your pride and that too by way of praise. I even said that in your devotion to the cow you have no equal, not even Parnerkar, and the same applied to your capacity for hard labour. Your experience too is considerable, for you have been familiar with agriculture and cattle-keeping from childhood. But I also said that notwithstanding all this your knowledge was not systematic or scientific and consequently you would not be able to make further progress in animal husbandry and that your anger would consume you as well as the cow. At the same time I asked Parnerkar to examine his heart and to take possession of the dairy only if he was confident of himself. He has been given charge only under this stipulation and these conditions. I have had a talk with Nayakumji. He will discuss the matter with you. Do not commit yourself definitely to any work for the present. Have a little rest; give some quiet thought to what has been and is being done; read and ponder a little and do whatever Ashram tasks naturally come your way. Consult Chimanlal and take up any job for which he is hard-pressed. There can never be any want of work in our institution for a worker like you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1914

460. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 23, 1938

CHI. SURU,

I have your letter. I do not remember about your earlier letters but I have replied to them all. I talked at length with Uncle¹ and strongly requested him to send you to me. If you continue your request he might send you. Keep writing to me. Uncle knows everything. You should speak to him fearlessly.

Ba has gone to Dehra Dun today to attend the Kanya Gurukul function. We all leave for Bardoli on January 1, to spend a month there. I hope that you will be reaching there.

I am keeping well, Kanti keeps on writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: *G.N.* 6174. Also *C.W.* 3448. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

461. NON-VIOLENCE THE ONLY WAY

I share with the reader the following letter² from Mr. Gregg, the author of several books on khadi and non-violence. He is an industrious and accurate student of world events. The reader may know that Mr. Gregg was in India long enough to study things in India.

Harijan, 24-12-1938

462. WANTED A GUIDE BOOK

Shri Mridulabehn has sent me a letter which freely translated means:

¹ G. Ramachandran

² Not reproduced here. Richard B. Gregg, after describing the horrors resulting from "modern methods and weapons of war", had argued that it was "not bravery but utter folly" to pretend to fight that kind of thing. He had also forwarded a copy of Russell's *Which Way to Peace?* to reinforce the argument that war could not end war and that complete pacifism was the only practical possibility.

A beginning has been made in forming girl volunteer brigades. Naturally they require lessons in drilling, salutation to the flag, national songs, etc. If there was a book of instructions covering these important matters, we should have uniformity of practice throughout India. At present there is anarchy. Every gymnasium teaches what it likes, uses or coins its own technical words, and in many cases orders are given in English. Imagine village girls being given orders in English which they do not understand. This is essentially for the central office to handle, and that too with the quickest despatch. If the book suggested by me is published immediately, it will be useful for the instruction of the corps that are being formed in view of the coming Congress session in Mahakoshal.

I commend this letter to the central office. It ought not to be difficult to bring out the required book inside a week. The material is there in a scattered form. Dr. Hardikar has, I think, published some literature on the subject. Pandit Malaviyaji's organization must have also issued some instruction book. I know that Prof. Manikrao of Baroda has taken great pains to produce simple technical terms in Hindustani answering most of the requirements. It ought to be a simple matter to bring out an authoritative book out of this material.

In this connection I would remind the Mahakoshal Reception Committee of the suggestion I had made at Haripura that there should be a guide book for Congressmen and visitors in simple Hindustani, written in Devanagari and Urdu scripts, about sanitation, etc. Generally the visitors are left to their own resources. They do not even know where to find the places they want to go to or the things they need. A guide book with a map of the Congress Nagar for the help of those thousands of people who attend the Congress session from year to year is a necessity.

SEGAON, December 24, 1938

Harijan, 31-12-1938

463. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 24, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

Sir Radhakrishnan was here yesterday. He said that anti-Hindi agitation was on the increase. He had suggested to you that you should accept a conscience clause, exempting those children from learning Hindi whose parents stated in writing that they had a conscientious objection to their children learning Hindi. I suppose you remember that such a suggestion was made in *Harijan* in the initial stages of the agitation. I think that it is not too late to give effect to it. It should not matter to you even though the concession may be interpreted as concession to unreasonable agitation. You will do what appears to you to be best.

What about separation of Andhra as a separate province? You had made some statement that you were moving in the matter. Are you? How are you keeping otherwise?

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2079

464. INTERVIEW TO H. V. HODSON¹

[Before December 25, 1938]²

Mr. Hodson expressed the opinion that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question was made difficult by the fact that, owing to its very nature, the Congress tended to take on the nature of a "totalitarian party" and acted as if it were the one and the only party in the country that mattered, instead of regarding itself simply as one of the principal parties.

GANDHIJI: It is a very wrong view to take of the Congress. The Congress does claim to be the one and the only party that can deliver the goods. It is a perfectly valid claim to make. One day or the other some party has to assert itself to that extent. That does not make it a totalitarian party. It is the ambition of the Congress to become all-re-

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated December 25. H. V. Hodson was the editor of *Round Table*.

² *ibid*

representative of the entire nation, not merely of any particular section. And it is a worthy ambition in keeping with its best tradition. If you have studied Congress history, you will find that since its very inception the Congress has sought to serve and represent all sections in the country equally without any distinction or discrimination. Thus it used to have Rajas and Maharajas on the Reception Committee, and has defended the cause of the States against the Paramount Power as in the case of Kashmir and Mysore. It would love to be absorbed by the Muslim League if the Muslim League would care to absorb it, or to absorb the Muslim League in its turn, so far as the political programme is concerned. For religious and social activity, of course, every community can have its separate organization.

HODSON: But if the Congress has the ambition of absorbing other political organizations, it cannot help being a totalitarian party.

GANDHIJI: You may try to damn it by calling it totalitarian. Absorption is inevitable when a country is engaged in a struggle to wrest power from foreign hands; it cannot afford to have separate, rival political organizations. The entire strength of the country must be used for ousting the third and usurping party. That is what is happening in India today. Where there is no common danger to oppose, there must be separate parties representing different schools of thought. You should bear in mind that the Congress does not impose its will on others. Its sanctions are non-violent.

HODSON: Would not the march to full responsible government be more rapid if the Muslims were taken along?

GANDHIJI: Of course it would be. Personally I do not want anything which the Muslims oppose. But I have faith that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim tangle will come much sooner than most people expect. I claim to be able to look at the whole position with a detached mind. There is no substance in our quarrels. Points of difference are superficial, those of contact are deep and permanent. Political and economic subjection is common to us. The same climate, the same rivers, the same fields supply both with air, water and food. Whatever, therefore, leaders, Mahatmas and Maulanas may say or do, the masses, when they are fully awakened, will assert themselves and combine for the sake of combating common evils.

The effect of the Socialist and Communist propaganda too is to bring the masses of both the communities together by emphasizing identity of interests. I have my differences with them, but I cannot

withhold my admiration for their endeavour to demolish the superstition that keeps the different communities apart.

Harijan, 31-12-1938

465. MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT, TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS

[On or before *December 25, 1938*]¹

On receipt of a telegram from the President of the Travancore State Congress, Gandhiji said he was delighted that personal allegations against the Dewan were withdrawn. He added that civil disobedience should also be suspended in order to examine the whole position afresh. He hopes that in view of the withdrawal of the allegations prosecutions will be withdrawn by the State and prisoners will be set free.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-12-1938

466. MANIBEHN AND THE SPINNING-WHEEL

Manibehn is a *mani*². I know of only one Mani in India who has sacrificed her all in order to serve her father and who has readily accepted spinsterhood for his sake. She left for Rajkot at one single word from her father and the strength that she had derived from her incomparable devotion is amazing. She is now in prison.³ She keeps writing letters to me. Some of them deserve to be published. But, nowadays, I just cannot write for *Harijanbandhu*. I find no time for it. But I cannot help quoting the last sentence of her latest letter from jail. It is in praise of the spinning-wheel. It runs as follows:

It is after a long time that I have found such leisure to work on the spinning-wheel. And when I can spin so peacefully, I do not need anything else. I find incomparable joy in this. I feel that I should spin enough to make up for the many days when I could not spin.

We do not come across many persons who combine so well in themselves love of the spinning-wheel, sacrifice, devotion to one's father and courage of the highest order. But, when I do come across one, my heart dances with joy.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 25-12-1938

¹ The report carrying the message is dated December 25, 1938.

² Gem

³ Manibehn Patel was arrested on December 5, 1938, for participating in the Rajkot satyagraha.

*467. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR HYDERABAD
STATE CONGRESS¹*

[Before *December 26, 1938*]²

The Working Committee of the Hyderabad State Congress after great deliberation has decided upon a temporary suspension of satyagraha, which was launched recently and which has already resulted in the imprisonment of more than 400 satyagrahis. Sentences range from one month to 3_ years.

The public would like to know the reasons that have prompted this decision.

The State Congress has come in for a great deal of misrepresentation. It has been called a communal body. Its activities have been mixed up with those of the Aryan Defence League and the Hindu Civil Liberties Union. Unfortunately the movements of the A. S.³ and the Hindu M. S.⁴ synchronized with the civil disobedience of the State Congress. The decisive cause has been the advice given by Gandhiji, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress leaders that in order to make our position absolutely clear it was essential that we should suspend C. D. They say suspension would give the Government of H. E. H. the Nizam an opportunity to review the situation. We could not disregard the advice of the leaders whose sympathy and support are always a valuable asset in the conduct of the struggle for swaraj within the State.

We suspend C. D. in the hope that it will not need to be revived. But whether it will have to be revived, and if so when, will depend wholly upon the attitude of the State authorities. It is not without a wrench that we are suspending the struggle when more than 400 of our comrades are undergoing imprisonment ranging from 4_ years to two months [*sic*]. We have more than 2000 persons on our list as volunteers for C. D. The list is daily increasing. Every fresh arrest brings an addition to the list. We have had embarrassing offers of volunteers from outside the State. We have been obliged to decline the offers as we realize that the movement in order to remain strictly non-

¹ Except for the first two paragraphs the draft is in Gandhiji's hand.

² *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 26-12-1938

³ Arya Samaj

⁴ Hindu Maha Sabha

violent must depend upon internal strength and support.

But we have no desire to use our strength and undergo suffering, if we can achieve our end through negotiation and entreaty. We hope therefore that the Government of H. E. H. will recognize the wholly peaceful and loyal motive underlying the suspension. We hope that they will release the C. D. prisoners and lift the ban on the S. C. and its activities and pave the way to the inauguration of a scheme of responsible government consistently with reasonable safeguards for the rights of minorities.

Here we would draw the attention of the members of the State Congress that there are two arms to a non-violent swaraj movement, the remedial and constructive. C. D. is remedial and therefore in its nature temporary. The other is constructive and permanent. We hope that the people will never lose sight of the permanent arm. Indeed our fitness for C. D. increases in the same measure as the intensity of the constructive programme. The constructive activities include hand-spinning, hand-weaving and like productive pursuits, activities promoting heart unity between the different communities composing the subjects of H. E. H. the Nizam, removal of untouchability, total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs and kindred reforms. For a non-violent movement for gaining freedom must necessarily be a process of purification and social and economic reform. No one should run away with the idea that suspension of C. D. is suspension of movement for responsible government. Indeed its constructive nature should be doubly strengthened because suspension of C. D. frees the mind for constructive work.

In conclusion we wish to thank all those friends who have helped us by their advice and even material assistance.

From a copy: C. W. 101529

468. STUDENTS' SHAME

There is a most pathetic letter from a college girl in the Punjab lying on my file for nearly two months. Want of time was but an excuse for shirking the answer to the girl's question. Somehow or other I was avoiding the task, though I knew the answer. Meanwhile I received another letter from a sister of great experience, and I felt that I could no longer evade the duty of dealing with the college girl's very real difficulty. Her letter is written in chaste Hindustani. I must

try to do as much justice as I can to the letter, which gives me a perfect picture of her deep feeling. Here is my rendering of a portion of the letter:

To girls and grown-up women there come times, in spite of their wish to the contrary, when they have to venture out alone, whether they are going from one place to another in the same city or from one town to another. And when they are thus found alone, evil-minded people pester them. They use improper or even indecent language whilst they are passing by. And if fear does not check them, they do not hesitate to take further liberty. I should like to know what part non-violence can play on such occasions. The use of violence is of course there. If the girl or the woman has sufficient courage, she will use what resources she has and teach miscreants a lesson. They can at least kick up a row that would draw the attention of the people around, resulting in the miscreants being horse-whipped. But I know that the result of such treatment would be merely to postpone the agony, not a permanent cure. Where you know the people who misbehave, I feel sure that they will listen to reason, to the gesture of love and humility. But what about a fellow cycling by, using foul language on seeing a girl or a woman unaccompanied by a male companion? You have no opportunity of reasoning with him. There is no likelihood of your meeting him again. You may not even recognize him. You do not know his address. What is a poor girl or a woman to do in such cases? By way of example I want to give you my own experience of last night (26th October). I was going with a girl companion of mine on a very special errand at about 7.30 p. m. It was impossible to secure a male companion at the time and the errand could not be put off. On the way a Sikh young man passed by on his cycle and continued to murmur something till we were within hearing distance. We knew that it was aimed at us. We felt hurt and uneasy. There was no crowd on the road. Before we had gone a few paces the cyclist returned. We recognized him at once whilst he was still at a respectful distance. He wheeled towards us, heaven knows whether he had intended to get down or merely pass by us. We felt that we were in danger. We had no faith in our physical prowess. I myself am weaker than the average girl. But in my hands I had a big book. Somehow or other courage came to me all of a sudden. I hurled

the heavy book at the cycle and roared out, "Dare you repeat your pranks?" He could with difficulty keep his balance, put on speed and fled from us. Now, if I had not flung the book at his cycle, he might have harassed us by his filthy language to the end of our journey. This was an ordinary, perhaps insignificant, occurrence; but I wish you could come to Lahore and listen to the difficulties of us unfortunate girls. You would surely discover a proper solution. First of all, tell me how, in the circumstances mentioned above, can girls apply the principle of ahimsa and save themselves. Secondly, what is the remedy for curing youth of the abominable habit of insulting womenfolk? You would not suggest that we should wait and suffer till a new generation, taught from childhood to be polite to their womenfolk, comes into being. The Government is either unwilling or unable to deal with this social evil. The big leaders have no time for such questions. Some, when they hear of a girl bravely castigating ill-behaved youth, say, 'Well done. That is the way all girls should behave.' Sometimes a leader is found eloquently lecturing against such misbehaviour of students. But no one applies himself continuously to the solution of this serious problem. You will be painfully surprised to know that during Diwali and such other holidays newspapers come out with notices warning women from venturing outdoors even to see the illuminations. This one fact should enable you to know to what straits we are reduced in this part of the world! Neither the writers nor the readers of such warnings have any sense of shame that they should have to be issued.

Another Punjabi girl to whom I gave the letter to read supports the narrative from her own experiences of her college days and tells me that what my correspondent has related is the common experience of most girls.

The other letter from an experienced woman relates the experiences of her girl friends in Lucknow. They are molested in cinema theatres by boys sitting in the row behind them using all kinds of language which I can only call indecent. They are stated to resort even to practical jokes which have been described by my correspondent but which I must not reproduce here.

If the immediate personal relief was all that was needed, no doubt the remedy that the girl who describes herself to be physically weak adopted, i. e., of flinging her book at the cyclist, was quite

correct. It is an age-long remedy. And I have said in these columns that when a person wants to become violent, physical weakness does not come in the way of its effective use, even against a physically powerful opponent. And we know that in the present age there have been invented so many methods of using physical force that even a little girl with sufficient intelligence can deal death and destruction. The fashion nowadays is growing of training girls to defend themselves in situations such as the one described by my correspondent. But she is wise enough to know that even though she was able to make effective use for the moment of the book she had in her hand as a weapon of defence, it was no remedy for the growing evil. In the cases of rude remarks, there need be no perturbation but there should be no indifference. All such cases should be published in the papers. Names of the offenders should be published when they are traced. There should be no false modesty about exposing the evil. There is nothing like public opinion for castigating public misconduct. There is no doubt that, as the correspondent says, there is great public apathy about such matters. But it is not the public alone that are to blame. They must have before them examples of rudeness. Even as stealing cannot be dealt with unless cases of thieving are published and followed up, so also is it impossible to deal with cases of rude behaviour if they are suppressed. Crime and vice generally require darkness for prowling. They disappear when light plays upon them.

But I have a fear that the modern girl loves to be Juliet to half a dozen Romeos. She loves adventure. My correspondent seems to represent the unusual type. The modern girl dresses not to protect herself from wind, rain and sun but to attract attention. She improves upon nature by painting herself and looking extraordinary. The non-violent way is not for such girls. I have often remarked in these columns that definite rules govern the development of the non-violent spirit in us. It is a strenuous effort. It marks a revolution in the way of thinking and living. If my correspondent and the girls of her way of thinking will revolutionize their life in the prescribed manner, they will soon find that young men, who at all come in contact with them, will learn to respect them and to put on their best behaviour in their presence. But if perchance they find, as they may, that their very chastity is in danger of being violated, they must develop courage enough to die rather than yield to the brute in man. It has been suggested that a girl who is gagged or bound so as to make her powerless even for struggling cannot die as easily as I seem to think. I

venture to assert that a girl who has the will to resist can burst all the bonds that may have been used to render her powerless. The resolute will gives her the strength to die.

But this heroism is possible only for those who have trained themselves for it. Those who have not a living faith in non-violence will learn the art of ordinary self-defence and protect themselves from indecent behaviour of unchivalrous youth.

The great question, however, is why should young men be devoid of elementary good manners so as to make decent girls be in perpetual fear of molestation from them? I should be sorry to discover that the majority of young men have lost all sense of chivalry. But they should, as a class, be jealous of their reputation and deal with every case of impropriety occurring among their mates. They must learn to hold the honour of every woman as dear as that of their own sisters and mothers. All the education they receive will be in vain if they do not learn good manners.

And is it not as much the concern of professors and school masters to ensure gentlemanliness among their pupils as to prepare them for the subjects?

SEGAON, December 26, 1938

Harijan, 31-12-1938

469. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI¹

SEGAON,
December 26, 1938

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have purposely refrained from troubling you over the Hyderabad affairs. But as I have played an important part in shaping the decision of the H. S. Congress, I feel I should write to you. I do hope that you will appreciate the wisdom of the suspension² and return a generous response to their action.

I hope you are fully restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6841

¹ Dewan of Hyderabad

² Of civil disobedience. *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", 26-12-1938

470. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 26, 1938

We shall talk for some time tomorrow, or, if you can stay on for a day or two, do so. I think the remedy for your disease is quite simple. There is no need to get alarmed. You are certainly not fated to be destroyed. But I do admit your blemishes, for I have gone through all such experiences. At the moment I will say only this, that you should go only after solving the problem.

I will write this very evening.¹

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2997

471. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Unrevised

SEGAON,
December 26, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Recently there was a thought for the day in English. It means: Man should not think about his shortcomings but should think about his virtues, for man becomes as he thinks. This does not mean that one should not see one's faults. One must see them, but one should not brood over them and lose one's balance of mind. We find the same advice in our Shastras. You should, therefore, have confidence in yourself and be sure in your mind that you will be an instrument of good. You have already been so.

You should overcome excessive greed. You should give up private business even if it is intended to help you in public service. If you cannot do that, you must lay down strict limits. You should try to retire from politics. If you think that you must remain in it, and if you can do so on your own terms, you should devote yourself exclusively to the advancement of the C. P. But your real field is altruistic business. Hence you should again use all your ability for the Charkha Sangh. That activity can make full use of your intellect, your moral qualities and your business acumen. In politics lots of dirty things go on. You are not likely to get much satisfaction from it. If the Charkha Sangh succeeds fully in its object, we shall easily get *purna swaraj*. If

¹ *Vide* the following item.

you take up that work, you can also do some work for village industry, eradication of untouchability, etc. But that depends on your inclination. I have said this only to dissuade you from excessive greed and to suggest to you work which would give you heart-felt satisfaction.

The other thing is impure thoughts. This is a rather difficult problem. If I understand you rightly, I feel that you should stop the practice of being nursed by women. All cannot digest it. In our circle, it can be said that I am practically the only one who follows such a practice. The measure of my success or failure will be judged after my death. For me the thing is still an experiment. I cannot confidently claim that I have succeeded. I yearn to reach the condition of Shukadevji¹. I am miles away from such a condition. If you have confidence in yourself I have nothing to say. But if you don't have it, and if I understand you rightly, you should examine yourself deeply and make the necessary change. I am not suggesting here stopping of women's service.

If none of these things find an echo in your heart, you need not do them. Continue to consult me on the matter. There is no cause at all for despair. You are not a fallen person, you are a votary of truth. There is no possibility of a fall for such a person.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2998

472. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,

[December 27, 1938]²

CHI. MIRA,

Your daily post is an eagerly awaited event for me. My heart and spirit are with you. The spirit is hovering round you. You must not accept defeat. You should learn the art of saying everything to K. S.³ in the gentlest manner possible. You must keep your health and keep it there. There means the Frontier Province. I am prepared to

¹ Son of Vyasa, regarded as the supreme example of one who has risen above body-consciousness.

² As given in *Bapu's Letters to Mira*. The source, however, has no date.

³ Khan Saheb

risk your death there rather than that you should return to Segaoon to live. You will be all right in Peshawar. You may pass the week-end in Peshawar, if you cannot keep well in Utmanzai. You should have the three things. You must be able to go out, you must have a boy or a girl exclusively to yourself. Tell K. S. you do not expect him to spend money after you. I hope to send you some tomorrow.

I told Agatha to ask Jardine to invite you. Of course you could go to Hindu homes. But I do not want you to do that just yet, unless K. S. himself suggests.

Anyway see if my suggestion commends itself to you that you are going to do or die there. Of course I shall be there in March. It may not be before the middle because the Congress does not meet before 10th March.

Mahadev returned yesterday. He broke down the last day of his stay in Calcutta. He is looking quite well but has something wrong in his head. He needs rest and proper dieting. He overdid it in Gosaba.

I have a crowd of visitors. But I am keeping my times fairly well. I do not need the silence as completely as I used to have. You should not worry about me. I am really keeping quite well, even becoming steadily better.

Here is Holmes's¹ letter. There is a letter from Lothian which I shall deal with in *Harijan*.²

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6421. Courtesy: Mirabeehn. Also G.N. 10016

¹ John Haynes Holmes

² *Vide* "Working of Non-violence", 6-2-1939.

473. LETTER TO DR. ABRAHAM PAUL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 28, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter.¹ I do not need to give you a detailed reply and I have not the time if I wish to. Now that the allegations are withdrawn any controversy about them can only be theoretical. If responsible government comes quickly, maladministration goes or should go. If it does not come quickly maladministration should be dealt with separately and probably civil disobedience will be wholly unnecessary for removing the grievance.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10975. Courtesy: Dr. Abraham Paul

474. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN TEACHERS ²

[Before December 29, 1938]³

TEACHER: How would you, an old and experienced leader, advise young men to throw away their lives in the service of humanity?

GANDHIJI: The question is not rightly put. You don't throw away your lives when you take up the weapon of satyagraha. But you prepare yourself to face without retaliation the gravest danger and provo-cation. It gives you a chance to surrender your life for the cause when the time comes. To be able to do so non-violently requires previous training. If you are a believer in the orthodox method, you

¹ The addressee in his letter to Gandhiji, explaining the substance and nature of the allegations contained in the memorandum submitted by the Travancore State Congress against the Dewan, G. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, had written: "You have said in one of your earlier statements that these allegations should find a place in a memorial to remove the Dewan and not in a memorial for responsible government, and in another statement you said that the remedy for maladministration if the allegations are true lies in responsible government." *Vide* also "Telegram to Pattom Thanu Pillai", 17-12-1938 and "Message to President, Travancore State Congress", 25-12-1938

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated December 29

³ *Ibid*

go and train yourselves as soldiers. It is the same with non-violence. You have to alter your whole mode of life and work for it in peace time just as much as in the time of war. It is no doubt a difficult job. You have to put your whole soul into it; and if you are sincere, your example will affect the lives of other people around you. America is today ex-ploiting the so-called weaker nations of the world along with other powers. It has become the richest country in the world, not a thing to be proud of when we come to think of the means by which she has become rich. Again, to protect these riches you need the assistance of violence. You must be prepared to give up these riches. Therefore, if you really mean to give up violence, you will say, "We shall have nothing to do with the spoils of violence, and if as a result America ceases to be rich, we do not mind." You will then be qualified to offer a spotless sacrifice. That is the meaning of preparation. The occasion for making the extreme sacrifice may not come if you as a nation have fully learnt to live for peace. It is much more difficult to live for non-violence than to die for it.

T. The friends wanted to know if non-violence as enunciated by Gandhiji had a positive quality.

If I had used the word 'love', which non-violence is in essence, you would not have asked this question. But perhaps 'love.' does not express my meaning fully. The nearest word is 'charity'. We love our friends and our equals. But the reaction that a ruthless dictator sets up in us is either that of awe or pity according respectively as we react to him violently or non-violently. Non-violence knows no fear. If I am truly non-violent, I would pity the dictator and say to myself, 'He does not know what a human being should be. One day he will know better when he is confronted by a people who do not stand in awe of him, who will neither submit nor cringe to him, nor bear any grudge against him for whatever he may do.' Germans are today doing what they are doing because all the other nations stand in awe of them. None of them can go to Hitler with clean hands.

T. What is the place of Christian missions in the new India that is being built up today? What can they do to help in this great task?

G. To show appreciation of what India is and is doing. Up till now they have come as teachers and preachers with queer notions about India and India's great religions. We have been described as a nation of superstitious heathens, knowing nothing, denying God. We are a brood of Satan as Murdoch would say. Did not Bishop Heber in

his well-known hymn “From Greenland’s Icy Mountains” describe India as a country where “every prospect pleases, and only man is vile”? To me this is a negation of the spirit of Christ. My personal view, therefore, is that if you feel that India has a message to give to the world, that India’s religions too are true, though like all religions imperfect for having percolated through imperfect human agency, and you come as fellow-helpers and fellow-seekers, there is a place for you here. But if you come as preachers of the ‘true Gospel’ to a people who are wandering in darkness, so far as I am concerned you can have no place. You may impose yourselves upon us.

T. What is India’s real message to the world?

G. Non-violence. India is saturated with that spirit. It has not demonstrated it to the extent that you can go to America as living witnesses of that spirit. But you can truthfully say that India is making a desperate effort to live up to that great ideal. If there is not this message, there is no other message that India can give. Say what you may, the fact stands out that here you have a whole subcontinent that has decided for itself that there is no freedom for it except through non-violence. No other country has made that attempt even. I have not been able to influence other people even to the extent of believing that non-violence is worth trying. There is of course a growing body of European opinion that has begun to appreciate the possibilities of the weapon of non-violence. But I want the sympathy of the whole world for India if she can get it while she is making this unique experiment. You can, however, be witnesses to that attempt only if you really feel that we are making an honest effort to come up to the ideal of non-violence and that all we are doing is not fraud. If your conviction is enlightened and deep enough, it will set up a ferment working in the minds of your people.

T. This is an admirable charge.

G. Take that charge with you then.

Harijan, 7-1-1939

475. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
[December 29, 1938]¹

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your love notes. I am going through terrible rush. But I am keeping quite fit. I do not read Sharda's letters. What was there disturbing?

Do you say I sent you no message for Nagpur? It was wrung from me. And only you could have performed the trick. But having landed me in it, there was no getting out when the summons came from Tai. I can only call that your making.²

Your health causes me anxiety. The sooner you come to me the better.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3901. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7057

476. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 29, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

It is strange you have not yet heard from Jardine. Did I ask you to tell K. S. that if he was invited to see the Governor he should not say 'no'? You are also likely to be invited. I am glad you are having the pupils fairly regularly now.³ It is a great thing that is being done.

Mildred has come in today, two days in advance of the Muriel party.

No winter here now. There has been hardly any cold this winter. Rs. 25 herewith.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6422. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10017

¹ The date is in the addressee's handwriting.

² *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 22-12-1938

³ She was teaching carding and spinning to the Khudai Khidmatgars.

477. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 29, 1938

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have sent the money to Shankar. If you have not written to Anantbhai, write a nice letter of thanks. Send a copy of it to me.

Herewith is a letter from H.¹ Think over it. If there is any possibility of your both being innocent, give the benefit of it to H. If there is none, you may give whatever reply you wish to. Send the letter to me. Keep a copy of it.

You promised to write to me but have not kept the promise. If you had kept it, you would have written to me as soon as you arrived there.² I naturally desire to know how things are going there. And you alone can give me news about Ba. She herself is a cripple, so to say. So long as she is there, you can write on her behalf.

It is never too late to mend. Fulfil your promise even now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 945. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

478. SPEECH AT OPENING OF MAGAN SANGRAHALAYA AND UDYOG BHAVAN³

WARDHA,
December 30, 1938

Maganlal Gandhi was one of those few spirits who chose to face a precarious future by casting their lot with me in South Africa when I decided to give up my legal practice in order to embrace the ideal of

¹ The name has been omitted.

² The addressee on her return from America had gone to Dehra Dun Kanya Gurukul to teach English to the girls and study Hindi herself. D. B. Kalelkar and Kasturba had accompanied her.

³ Extracted from Pyarelal's "A Dream Fulfilled". The function was attended by a large gathering which included over thirty economists who had come to take part in the Economic Conference being held at Nagpur. Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani.

voluntary poverty and service. He became a foundation member of the Phoenix Settlement, and took charge of the printing press when *Indian Opinion* was shifted there from Durban. Although he had gone there primarily with the intention of earning money, he sacrificed his ambition and decided to sink or swim with me and he never turned back.

He was, in my opinion, a genius. He had a versatile mind. His life was well ordered and disciplined. This enabled him to pick up anything new with ease and facility. Although not a mechanician by training, he soon made himself master of the printing machinery that was set up at Phoenix. On returning to India he made the service of the masses the passion of his life. He laid the foundation of the science of khadi by writing his *Vanat Shastra*. This book still holds its place as a classic although the science of khadi has made great progress since Maganlal's death. Although he had not specialized in all the various crafts that are at present being tackled by the A. I. V. I. A., his khadi activity, by providing the nucleus round which the village industries movement has since grown up, became its precursor.

A word about the buildings. Although, as Shri Kumarappa has observed, they follow the rural style, they are still far above the rural standards of living as they obtain in our country today. They stand there as a futurist symbol of what artisans' dwellings should be and would be in the rural India of the A. I. V. I. A.'s dreams. This much assurance, however, I can give you in this connection, that no pains have been spared to enforce the stingiest economy and simplicity commensurate with the purpose that they are intended to serve. The worst that can be said about the organizers of the Association is that they did not know their job as well as they might have. The Association is always ready to admit mistakes and to regard them as stepping-stones to knowledge. The one thing that it dreads is ignorance that masquerades as perfection.

So much for the externals. Proceeding to the exhibits inside the Museum, a critic may object, 'How can reversion to these primitive appliances and methods of production lead to swaraj? These village crafts have been with us always. Can they win the race against the industrial competition of the West and achieve anything like what the Western countries with their latest inventions of science and engineering skill have been able to achieve?' My reply is that although village crafts have been with us always, our forefathers were not aware of the

tremendous possibilities that lie hidden in them and, they were never plied by awakened masses as a means for attaining freedom. I admit that in terms of orthodox and stereotyped standards of economics, as that science is understood and taught in our colleges today, and in a society governed by these standards, village industries including spinning have perhaps no chance, and to revive them might appear like reversion to Middle Ages. But I would like you to enter the Udyog Bhavan with a fresh and unsophisticated mind that has shed its prejudices. Envisage this spinning-wheel as a spinning mill in miniature, that enables a person to earn two annas daily in his home in this land of chronic and nationwide unemployment and starvation when otherwise he would not be earning two pice even. Picture this mill planted in lakhs of homes, as it is capable of being planted, and I see nothing in the world which can compete with it.

And yet two annas a day by no means exhausts its income-yielding capacity. If only I get the co-operation of our intelligentsia, I hope, before I close my eyes, to see it bring a wage of eight annas a day to the spinner. Show me another industry or industrial corporation in the world that has in the course of eighteen years of its activities put four crores of rupees into the pockets of lakhs of the neediest and most deserving of men and women, with the same capital expenditure that the A. I. S. A. has done. And this money has been evenly distributed among Hindus and Mussalmans, caste and the outcaste, without any distinction, uniting them in a common economic bond. Imagine what this would mean in terms of swaraj if many helped to cover the entire seven lakhs of our villages with this life-giving and unifying activity. You need not be highly specialized engineers or technicians to take part in this work of industrial revolution. Even a layman, a woman or a child can join in it.

I would like you to regard the Magan Museum and the Udyog Bhavan not as the 'old curiosity shop' but as a living book for self-education and study.

Harijan, 14-1-1939

479. DISCUSSION WITH ECONOMISTS¹

WARDHA,
December 30, 1938

I want you to criticize what you have seen, and tell me the defects you may have discovered. Praise won't help me. I know where I deserve praise. Do not tell me *ex cathedra* that the whole thing is doomed to failure, as some economists have done before. Such condemnation would not impress me. But if after a close and sympathetic study you discover flaws and point them out to me, I shall feel thankful.

Q. Are you against large-scale production?

A. I never said that. This belief is one of the many superstitions about me. Half of my time goes in answering such things. But from scientists I expect better knowledge. Your question is based on loose newspaper reports and the like. What I am against is large-scale production of things villagers can produce without difficulty.

Q. What do you think of the Planning Commission ?

A. I cannot say anything. I have not studied it. It was not discussed in my presence in the Working Committee. Because I still continue to tender advice to the Working Committee whenever my advice is sought, it does not mean that everything that emerges from the Working Committee bears my *imprimatur* or is even discussed with me. I have purposely divested myself of responsibility, so far as the general body of decisions are concerned.

Q. It has your blessings?

A. What can be the use of my blessings in a thing I do not know, or in which I am not interested.

Q. Do you think that cottage industries and big industries can be harmonized ?

A. Yes, if they are planned so as to help the villages. Key industries, industries which the nation needs, may be centralized. But then I would not choose anything as a 'key industry' that can be taken up by the villages with a little organizing. For instance, I did not

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The economists, some thirty in number, had been attending the Economic Conference at Nagpur and had gone to Wardha to meet Gandhiji and to attend the opening of Magan Sangrahalaya.

know the possibilities of hand-made paper. Now I am so hopeful that I believe that every village can produce its own paper, though not for newspapers, etc. Supposing the State controlled paper-making and centralized it, I would expect it to protect all the paper that villages can make.

Q. What is meant by protecting the villages?

A. Protecting them against the inroads of the cities. At one time cities were dependent on the villages. Now it is the reverse. There is no interdependence. Villages are being exploited and drained by the cities.

Q. Don't the villages need a lot of things that the cities produce ?

A. I wonder. In any case, under my scheme, nothing will be allowed to be produced by cities which can be equally well produced by the villages. The proper function of cities is to serve as clearing houses for village products.

Q. Can we harmonize cloth-mill activity with handloom production?

A. So far as I know, my answer is an emphatic 'no'. All the cloth we need can easily be produced in the villages.

Q. But the number of mills is increasing.

A. That is a misfortune.

Q. But that is one of the things that the Planning Commission has set itself to do.

A. It is news to me. In that case the Congress will have to scrap its resolution on khadi.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

480. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
December 31, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You know Shambhushankar. He is hoping to win self-rule for Palitana. I have of course written to the Durbar. Shambhushankar is a man of fairly independent nature. He hopes to be able to achieve his aim with God's help only, but he certainly expects the blessings of respected leaders. I have told him that if he can and does fight with such faith he is bound to have their blessings. A votary of truth and ahimsa cannot but command the blessings of all. But he won't be

satisfied with such an assurance. He insists on having your blessings. Hear him and give him your blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPPOSITE OPERA HOUSE
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 231

481. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

December 31, 1938

“JAMNALALJI

Fill in the Address¹

DELHI

Wire. No worry about order. If possible come Bardoli. Bapu.”²

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Please send off this wire tomorrow.³ The letter is also enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must have got the message regarding the arrangements to be made for Muriel Lester. Send her here tomorrow at 3 o'clock.

From a photostat: G.N. 3039

¹ Instructions in Gujarati to Radhakrishna Bajaj

² This is in English. What follows is in Hindi.

³ In the mean while a telegram from Jamnalal Bajaj had been received and Gandhiji asked Pyarelal to write to Radhakrishna Bajaj to send the following wire instead: “Your wire. Will gladly meet you Jaipur friends Bardoli fourth. Bapu” (*Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad.*).

482. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON,
December 31, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

You are right in saying that time is against us. It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that you do not think that our ways of thinking differ. What pleases me, more than anything else, however, is your decision. It is not your dharma to sell ghee. Your dharma consists in curing patients by nature cure or other acceptable treatment. It is good that you will now earn a living in the city practising nature cure. स्वधर्मे निधन श्रेय : says the *Bhagavad Gita*. It is part of a verse¹ and means that even death in the pursuance of one's own dharma is good. There is only fear in another's dharma, never profit.

If you like you may also bring out a small magazine making a mention of the statement you made while withdrawing your books,² and outlining your future course. Keep me informed.

You have to pass one test. You have to master the art of getting on well with everybody, especially those with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 274-5

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

² This had appeared in *Harijan*, 14-12-1934, with a comment by Gandhiji. *Vide* "Notes", 14-12-1934.

483. INTERVIEW TO TIMOTHY TINGFANG LEW¹

December 31, 1938

Rev. Lew, . . . in conveying thanks for the Indian medical mission to help the Chinese, remarked:

“We appreciate it as an expression of India’s sympathy and goodwill towards China. China’s struggle is not merely for China but for the whole of Asia. . . .

“We are not afraid of material destruction, . . . but of cultural destruction. The first bomb in Shanghai hit a library. Colleges have been wiped out. Professors have been killed. . . .

“Even worse is the moral injury. . . .

“We want your message. . . . We look to you for spiritual guidance.”

GANDHIJI: I was once asked by a Chinese friend from Santiniketan to give a message to the Chinese people. I had to ask him to excuse me. I gave him my reasons. If I merely said I sympathized with the Chinese in their struggle, it would be not of much value as coming from me. I should love to be able to say to the Chinese definitely that their salvation lay only through non-violent technique. But then it is not for a person like me, who is outside the fight, to say to a people who are engaged in a life-and death struggle, “Not this way, but that”. They would not be ready to take up the new method, and they would be unsettled in the old. My interference would only shake them and confuse their minds.

But whilst I have no ‘message’ to send to the Chinese people who are engaged in fighting, I have no hesitation in presenting my viewpoint to you. I was almost going to ask you as to what you meant by being culturally ruined. I should be sorry to learn that Chinese culture resided in brick and mortar or in huge tomes which the moths can eat. A nation’s culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people. Chinese culture is Chinese only to the extent that it has become part and parcel of Chinese life. Your saying, therefore, that your culture and your morals are in danger of being destroyed, leads

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “A World in Agony”. Rev. Timothy Tingfang Lew was a member of the Chinese delegation to the Missionary Conference at Tambaram. Lew was a member of the Legislative Yuan of China. He had gone to Segaoon to see Gandhiji along with two other Chinese delegates, Y. T. Wu, editor of Association Press of Y. M. C. A., Shanghai, and P. C. Hsu, author of several works on Confucius. There were also delegates from Rhodesia and one from Japan—a “world in miniature”, as Gandhiji described them; *vide* “Letter to F. Mary Barr”, 7-1-1939

one to think that the reform movement in your country was only skindeep. Gambling had not disappeared from the people's hearts. It was kept down not by the tone set by society, but by the penalty of the law. The heart continued to gamble. Japan is of course to blame and must be blamed for what it has done or is doing. But then Japan is just now like the wolf whose business it is to make short work of the sheep. Blaming the wolf would not help the sheep much. The sheep must learn not to fall into the clutches of the wolf.

If even a few of you took to non-violence, they would stand forth as living monuments of Chinese culture and morals. And then, even if China were overwhelmed on the battlefield, it would be well with China in the end, because it would at the same time be receiving a message which contains a promise of hope and deliverance. Japan cannot force drugs down unwilling throats at the point of the bayonet. It can only set up temptations. You cannot teach people to resist these temptations by replying to Japanese force by force. Whatever else force may or may not be able to achieve, it cannot safeguard Chinese morals or save Chinese culture.

If you feel the truth of my remarks, you will become a living message to China. You will then tell the Chinese people: "No matter what material destruction Japan inflicts, it cannot bring about China's cultural destruction. Our people must be sufficiently educated and warned to resist all the temptations that Japan may devise. Monuments and cities may be razed to the ground. They are but a passing show that is going one day to be claimed by time as its own. If they are destroyed by the Japanese, it will only be a morsel taken out of time's mouth. The Japanese cannot corrupt our soul. If the soul of China is injured, it will not be by Japan."

The Chinese friend was of opinion that only the economic collapse of Japan could save China. He wanted to know what the prospects of a boycott of Japanese goods by India were.

GANDHIJI: I wish I could say that there was any great hope. Our sympathies are with you but they have not stirred us to our very depths, or else we should have boycotted all Japanese goods, especially Japanese cloth. Japan is not only conquering you but it is trying to conquer us too by its cheap, flimsy machine-made goods. The sending of the Medical Mission was good as a gesture of friendship and goodwill which there are in abundance. But that does not give me much satisfaction when I know we could do much more. We too are a

big nation like you. If we told the Japanese: 'We are not going to import a single yard of your calico nor export any of our cotton to you,' Japan would think twice before proceeding with its aggression.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

484. NOTE TO PADMAJA NAIDU

[1938]¹

If you have run away, correspond with me freely but not at the risk of your health. I was asking the old woman whether you could go or can she go to Hyderabad. If you can make an authorized statement merely of facts, you may do so if you are sure of your facts. I could not deal with it more than I did. I will gladly write more, if you prompt me by raising questions better in the form of a signed letter. Have you any status with Mr. Akbar?² All I can say for the present is that one should sit still and watch. If an opportunity occurs, intervention may take place. No use plunging in unknown waters.

You assure. . .³ that I don't want to interfere with anything at all.

I certainly do not want to confiscate a single article of jewellery, nor do I want Sarup to feel constrained to wear khaddar sari even today, much less tomorrow. She is her own mistress today and so shall she remain tomorrow. I quite agree with you that things should be finished smoothly—I have only given my opinion today on one matter and that too when asked.

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

485. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

[1938]⁴

CHI. SHARDA,

It can be said only now that you have come in my grip. It is just that you have fallen into my clutches. Have you come knowingly and

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Gandhi", 23-1-1902, "Letter to D. B. Shukla", 25-1-1902, "Speech at Calcutta Meeting" and "Letter to G. K. Gokhale", 30-1-1902

² Akbar Hydari, Dewan of Hyderabad.

³ Illegible in the source.

⁴ From the suggestion in the post-script that the addressee was learning music; *vide* "Letter to Balwantsinha", 20-9-1938

of your own free volition? I have, of course, said that you are not one to yield easily. Well, now you have come to me, but after what a long wait? Had I not been trying for several years? Dinshaw's treatment requires that you put your feet in hot water. The vessel containing hot water would be placed between two bath-tubs. One with hot water and one with cold must be placed opposite each other. The feet would be already in hot water and you will have to move from one tub to the other.

I am not writing to Nanvati, Chimanlal, Dahyalal and Manjula.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You must acquire good knowledge of notes.

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 9974. Courtesy: Sharadabehn G. Chokhawala

486. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[1938]¹

CHI. A. S.,

What can I say! There is 'I' in whatever you do. I do not complain of that. Your inability to eat yesterday proves that I have no influence over you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 612

487. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[1938]²

DAUGHTER,

You can do anything to improve your health but nothing if you find excuses to put it off. I shall be very happy if you get well,

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 613

¹ From the placing of the letter in *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*

² *ibid*

488. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[1938]¹

I cannot write anything today. Do what Sushila says in her letter. Do not let your health deteriorate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 614

489. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[December 1938]²

I have already said that you should stick to the timings that have been fixed. This is meaningless pity. The better thing would be for you to regard Segaon as the hospital and go there at a fixed hour. You will have to work for one hour here and one hour there. Everything will go on well once the people get used to it. Hence fix your time either in the evening or morning. Then we shall see. Of course, one point to consider while deciding about the village is that we are not permanent residents here. Being temporary, it does not seem proper to go for 15 days and then stop.

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

¹ From the placing of the letter in *Bapuke Patra-8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Nam*

² As placed in the source

490. NOTE TO PYARELAL

*Sunday (at night) [1938]*¹

CHI. PYARELAL,

Herewith a list in pursuance of the talk we had earlier in the evening. You can start taking from tomorrow whatever you chose from it. Experience will suggest any changes necessary.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

491. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

CHI. SUSHILA,

Write to Mahodaya². After the spinning sit down with the teacher who came in the morning and will be coming again. I had quite forgotten. I hope you had not forgotten.

BAPU

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

492. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

Why are you tormenting me? Crying is forbidden and you have accepted it yourself. You do not even know the full details. I wish you would calmly try to find out the cause of my present pain. I wanted to sleep, but what can I do when I cannot sleep? I even walked for about half an hour. I have never given up *Ramanama*. What is there to cry over? Be sensible.

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

¹ This and the following eleven items have been placed in the source in 1938.

²Dr. Mahodaya

493. *NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

[1938]

If I say that I did not get any sleep last night, you may attribute it to my sinfulness. Today's blood-pressure is also due to the same thing. Till one o'clock I alternated between sleep and wakefulness. At the moment no worry torments me nor am I troubled by anything external. Partly I understand what has happened and partly I do not understand. I am not worried. But I must tell you people about the turmoil through which I am passing.

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

494. *NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

[1938]

Something must be done about Mathew. Advise him to leave the place.

You have not been looking after Anand. You must spend a minute or two with him every day. Note down how much urine he passes, what his weight is, and so on.

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

495. *INSCRIPTION IN AUTOGRAPH-BOOK*¹

[1938]

This is rich man's toy. Let the poor not imitate the bad habits of the rich.

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10991. Courtesy: Erkula Kumarila Swamy

¹ Written for Erkula Kumarila Swamy, who was studying at the Ashram as a teenager. Swamy had borrowed 12 annas to buy an autograph-book and Gandhi came to know about it.

496. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

You have to bring one more tin of prunes from Nagpur. If Pyarelal considers it necessary to stay on for one more day, he may do so.

Leave to me the question how L. and A. S.¹ are to sleep. But if you have no interest, if you have no confidence in yourself, you may withdraw. This experiment has become important to me. But I can carry out the experiment only if I have your full co-operation. You will certainly discuss it with Pyarelal. You may also discuss it with Mahadev. I do need Pyarelal's full co-operation and understanding.

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

497. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

If something is written down wrongly, must one read it wrong? Today at least we must give proper thought to the matter and assign a suitable description. to the chapter. There is surely a mistake about it because it is Ch. V that is described as the *Sanyasayoga* and there cannot be two chapters bearing the same description.²

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

498. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

All this is pervaded by the Lord.³ God fills everything. Hence, everything is yours if you will use things in a spirit of renunciation. Nothing is yours if you want to use things solely for yourself.

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

¹ Amtussalaam

² The reference obviously, is to Ch. IV of the *Bhagavad Gita* which is called the *Jnana-Karma-Sanyasayoga*, Ch. V being described as the *Karma-Sanyasayoga*.

³ The line quoted here from *Ishopanishad*, 1, in Sanskrit reads ईशावास्यामिदं सर्वं तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा

499. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

Where did you get wet? Even the blessing of someone with a disordered mind is terrible. When will your disorderliness go? To leave one's meal and go away is an insult to *Annadevata*. You could have asked me if it was to be fetched immediately or after the meal. I shall have to be more strict now. I shall eat only when you are ready. And once you sit down to eat you shall get up only after finishing the meal. I eat early for the convenience of both of us. You can get ready to eat with me. You must plan your life with some thought. If you do that, you can have more time at your disposal; you can perform your duty better and you can acquire more experience and knowledge.

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

500. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

You make Pyarelal's bed but when does he ever sleep? He was awake till one o'clock. What is the condition of the latrines here? Why do you not have earth kept there? That is not right. There are so many . . .¹ There is not enough care shown and not enough effort. I am too busy in my own work, otherwise I would take care of all the latrines and clean them myself or have them cleaned. I would say you might do something even now.

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

501. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[1938]

That you would go to the toilet only when I did is also part of your disorderliness, is it not? There is no peace of mind, no stability. Doing things haphazardly. Going to the toilet, eating, sleeping—everything, only if you have the time. The rest is all duty, is it?

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

¹ The rest of this sentence and the one following are not clear.

502. ENLIGHTENED ANARCHY—A POLITICAL IDEAL

Political power, in my opinion, cannot be our ultimate aim. It is one of the means used by men for their all-round advancement. The power to control national life through national representatives is called political power. Representatives will become unnecessary if the national life becomes so perfect as to be self-controlled. It will then be a state of enlightened anarchy in which each person will become his own ruler. He will conduct himself in such a way that his behaviour will not hamper the well-being of his neighbours. In an ideal State there will be no political institution and therefore no political power. That is why Thoreau has said in his classic statement that that government is the best which governs the least.

[From Hindi]

Sarvodaya, January, 1939

503. DISCUSSION WITH MAURICE FRYDMAN¹

[On or before *January 1, 1939*]²

FRYDMAN: What attitude should I, as a realist, adopt with regard to the tide of industrialization that is sweeping over the world? . . . Is it not waste of energy merely to oppose it? Would it not be better to try to change its direction ?

GANDHIJI: You are an engineer. You will therefore appreciate an illustration from mechanics. You know the parallelogram of forces. There the forces do not neutralize each other. Each force acts freely along its own line and we get the resultant which indicates the final direction of motion. It is the same with the problem you have mentioned. As I look at Russia where the apotheosis of industrialization has been reached, the life there does not appeal to me. To use the language of the Bible, "What shall it avail a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" In modern terms, it is beneath human dignity to lose one's individuality and become a mere cog in the machine. I want every individual to become a full-blooded, fully

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Frydman, commonly known as Bharatanand, was a Pole. He was the head of the Government Electrical Workshop at Bangalore. He took a keen interest in Indian politics and philosophy.

² Gandhiji was in Segaon, where Frydman visited him, till January 1.

developed member of society. The villages must become self-sufficient. I see no other solution if one has to work in terms of ahimsa. Now I have that conviction. I know there are others who believe in industrialization. I work with all my being for my conviction. The process of adjustment goes on all the time. I do not know what the outcome of it will be. But whatever it is, it will be to the good.

F. But, is no compromise with industrialization possible without imperilling the ideal of self-sufficient villages?

G. Oh yes, Railways are there, I do not avoid them. I hate motor-cars, but I make use of them willy-nilly all the same. Again, I dislike fountain-pens, but just now I am making use of one though I carry a reed pen about in my box. Every time I use the fountain-pen it hurts me and I think of the neglected reed pen in my box. Compromise comes in at every step, but one must realize that it is a compromise and keep the final goal constantly in front of the mind's eye.

F. When I turn from the busy West to masses in the Indian villages, I seem to be moving in a different world altogether in which stagnation reigns.

G. Yes, so long as you look on the surface. But the moment you talk to them and they begin to speak, you will find that wisdom drops from their lips. Behind the crude exterior you will find a deep reservoir of spirituality. I call this culture. You will not find such a thing in the West. You try to engage a European peasant in conversation, and you will find that he is uninterested in things spiritual. In the case of the Indian villager an age-old culture is hidden under an encrustment of crudeness. Take away the encrustation, remove his chronic poverty and his illiteracy and you have the finest specimen of what a cultured, cultivated, free citizen should be.

Harijan, 28-1-1939

504. LETTER TO S. VELU PILLAI¹

WARDHA,
January 1, 1939

Your telegram made painful reading. I have given the best advice I was capable of giving. I have no partiality for the Dewan. I

¹ This was in answer to the addressee's telegram saying that the Dewan had not responded to the withdrawal of the allegations by the State Congress, that the Travancore fight had resulted in nothing, that arrests were continuing and that there was unrest everywhere in the State.

repeatedly told the friends who came here that they were not to withdraw the allegations, unless they felt that my advice was thoroughly sound. I never said they were to be withdrawn against the express wish of the people. After all you, as leaders, were expected to know the wishes of the people. In spite of your telegram, I hold that withdrawal of the allegations was sound. If now the prosecutions continue, your course is clear. If there is unrest, you the leaders should be able to allay the unrest by showing the wisdom of the step you have taken. If the movement is really sound and the people are backing it with knowledge, it should be now stronger than it ever was. The burden of the allegations being removed, your course is absolutely clear and if you can control the forces of violence there is no difficulty in the way of your launching civil disobedience. My own conscience is absolutely clear. My advice is still at your disposal.

The Hindu, 16-1-1939

505. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 1, 1939

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

Dr. Zakir Husain was here with me for a few days. He has prepared a memorandum on the Hindu-Muslim question. I send you the portion concerned with U.P.¹ I like the suggestions he makes. Please go through it and implement what it is possible to implement. If you wish, you may write direct to Dr. Zakir Husain. I have known him for many years. He is a good man.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ In this Zakir Husain had suggested Government help being extended to the various Muslim educational institutions in U. P. He had also recommended that assistance should be provided to libraries and societies doing literary work in Urdu.

506. INTERVIEW TO TINGFANG LEW, Y. T. WU AND
P. C. HSU¹

[January 1, 1939]²

The Chinese delegates put searching questions. . . . One of them asked: "Is it not necessary that individuals should practise non-violence first in their own person, in their relations with other individuals?"

GANDHIJI: It would be a delusion to think otherwise. If one does not practise non-violence in one's personal relations with others and hopes to use it in bigger affairs, one is vastly mistaken. Non-violence like charity must begin at home. But if it is necessary for the individual to be trained in non-violence, it is even more necessary for the nation to be trained likewise. One cannot be non-violent in one's own circle and violent outside it. Or else, one is not truly non-violent even in one's own circle; often the non-violence is only in appearance. It is only when you meet with resistance, as for instance when a thief or murderer appears, that your non-violence is put on its trial. You either try or should try to oppose the thief with his own weapons, or you try to disarm' him by love. Living among decent people, your conduct may not be described as non-violent. Mutual forbearance is not non-violence. Immediately, therefore, you get the conviction that non-violence is the law of life, you have to practise it towards those who act violently towards you, and the law must apply to nations as to individuals. Training is no doubt necessary. And beginnings are always small. But if the conviction is there, the rest will follow.

Q. In the practice of non-violence, is there not danger of developing a 'martyrdom complex' or pride creeping in?

A. If one has that pride and egoism, there is no non-violence. Non-violence is impossible without humility. My own experience is that whenever I have acted non-violently I have been led to it and sustained in it by the higher promptings of an unseen Power. Through my own will I should have miserably failed. When I first went to jail, I quailed at the prospect. I had heard terrible things about jail life. But I

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "A World in Agony"

² Pyarelal says the Tambaram Conference delegates were in Segaoon "on the last day of the dying year and the New Year's Day". Also that Lew saw Gandhiji separately on the first day and that the whole group had discussion with him "later", which presumably meant January 1.

had faith in God's protection. Our experience was that those who went to jail in a prayerful spirit came out victorious, those who had gone in their own strength failed. There is no room for self-pitying in it either, when you say God is giving you the strength. Self-pity comes when you do a thing for which you expect recognition from others. But here there is no question of recognition.

Another friend thus placed his dilemma: "I am a firm believer in non-violence. Eight years ago, I read your *Experiments with Truth* and . . . translated the book into Chinese. And then came the Japanese invasion. My faith in non-violence was put to a severe test. . . . On the one hand, I felt I could not preach non-violence to my people who . . . believed that resistance with force was the only way out. . . . But on the other hand, when I try to take a sympathetic attitude and try to do something helpful in such a situation, I find I am giving moral and material support directly and indirectly to something which is against the highest that I know. . . ."

G. Yours is a difficult situation. Such difficulties have confronted me more than once. I took part on the British side in the Boer War by forming an ambulance corps. I did likewise at the time of what has been described as the Zulu revolt. The third time was during the great war. I believed in non-violence then. My motive was wholly non-violent. That seemingly inconsistent conduct gave me strength. My example cannot be used as a precedent for others to follow. Looking back upon my conduct on those three occasions, I have no sense of remorse. I know this too that my non-violent strength did not suffer diminution because of those experiences. The actual work I was called upon to do was purely humanitarian, especially during the Zulu revolt. I and my companions were privileged to nurse the wounded Zulus back to life. It is reasonable to suggest that but for our services some of them would have died. I cite this experience not to justify my participation however indirect it was. I cite it to show that I came through that experience with greater non-violence and with richer love for the great Zulu race. And I had an insight into what war by white men against coloured races meant.

The lesson to be learnt from it by you is that, placed as you are in a position of hopeless minority, you may not ask your people to lay down their arms unless their hearts are changed and by laying down their arms they feel the more courageous and brave. But whilst you may not try to wean people from war, you will in your person live non-violence in all its completeness and refuse all participation in war. You will develop love for the Japanese in your hearts. You will examine yourself whether you can really love them, whether you have not

some ill will towards them for all the harm they are doing. It is not enough to love them by remembering their virtues. You must be able to love them in spite of all their misdeeds. If you have that love for the Japanese in your hearts, you will proceed to exhibit in your conduct that higher form of courage which is the hall mark of true non-violence and which your Chinese friends will not fail to detect and recognize as such. You will not wish success to Japanese arms because you 'love' the Japanese. At the same time you will not pray for the success of Chinese arms. It is very difficult to judge, when both sides are employing weapons of violence, which side 'deserves' to succeed. You will therefore pray only that the right should prevail. Whilst you will keep yourself aloof from all violence you will not shirk danger. You will serve friend and foe alike with a reckless disregard for your life. You will rush forth if there is an outbreak of an epidemic or a fire to be combated and distinguish yourself by your surpassing courage and non-violent heroism. But you will refuse to call the curses of heaven upon the Japanese. If by chance some Japanese soldiers or airmen fall into the hands of the Chinese and are in danger of being lynched by an infuriated Chinese mob or otherwise ill-treated, you will plead for them with your own people and if necessary even protect them with your life. You know the story of Emily Hobhouse. Though an Englishwoman, she courageously went to the Boer concentration camps. She exhorted the Boers never to lose heart, and it is said that if she had not steeled the hearts of the Boer women as she did, the war might have taken a different turn. She was full of wrath against her own people for whom she had not a good word to say. You would not copy her unmeasured wrath which somewhat vitiated her non-violence, but you will copy her love for the 'enemy' that made her denounce the misdeeds of her own countrymen. Your example will affect the Chinese and might even shame some Japanese who will become bearers of your message among the Japanese.

A very slow process, you will perhaps say. Yes, possibly, under the existing adverse circumstances to begin with. But it will gather momentum and speed in an incalculable manner as you proceed. I am an irrepressible optimist. My optimism rests on my belief in the infinite possibilities of the individual to develop non-violence. The more you develop it in your own being, the more infectious it becomes till it overwhelms your surroundings and by and by might over-sweep the world.

Q. I, a believer in non-violence, often find that I am actuated by mixed motives. So does a war general have mixed motives. Is it not possible to fight with love for the enemy in one's heart? May we not shoot out of love?

A. We do often have mixed motives. But that would not be non-violence. There can be degrees in violence, not in non-violence. The constant effort of the votary of non-violence is to purge himself of hatred towards the so-called enemy. There is no such thing as shooting out of love in the way you suggest.

The last to place before Gandhiji his problem was Mr. P. C. Hsu.

P. C. HSU: I can say honestly, I have no feeling of hatred towards the Japanese people but I feel their military system is an evil. . . . I had hoped that at Tambaram, at any rate, an international link between the two countries on the basis of mutual goodwill and peace would be forged. But I was disillusioned. . . . Our difficulty is this: While sincerely believing in non-violence, we have not found a way of making it effective.

G. Should that present a difficulty? A person who realizes a particular evil of his time and finds it overwhelms him, dives deep in his own heart for inspiration, and when he gets it, he presents it to others. Meetings and group organizations are all right. They are of some help, but very little. They are like the scaffolding that an architect erects—a temporary and makeshift expedient. The thing that really matters is an invincible faith that cannot be quenched.

Faith can be developed. Only, the way it can be developed and in which it works differs from that in the case of violence. You cannot develop violence through prayer. Faith, on the other hand, cannot be developed except through prayer.

Non-violence succeeds only when we have a living faith in God. Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed—they were all warriors of peace in their own style. We have to enrich the heritage left by these world teachers. God has His own wonderful way of executing His plans and choosing His instruments. The Prophet and Abu Bakr trapped in a cave were saved from their persecutors by a spider which had woven its web across the mouth of that cave. All the world teachers, you should know began with a zero!!

Q. Whilst we have isolated individuals who have the mind of Jesus, because they are not united, not organized, theirs remains a mere cry in the wilderness. The question that arises in my mind is: Can love be organized, and if so, how?

A. Organization in the orthodox sense may not be possible. But there is no bar to united non-violent action. I am trying to show by a series of experiments that it is possible. It has its own technique.

Q. If China wins the war, will she be worse off or better off for her victory ?

A. If China wins and copies Japanese methods, she will beat Japan hollow at her own game. But the victory of China will not mean a new hope for the world. For China will then be a multiple edition of Japan. But whether China wins or goes down, your line of action is clear. If China is defeated on the battlefield, your non-violence will remain undaunted and will have done its work. If China wins, you will go to the gallows in the attempt to wean China from copying Japan's methods.

Harian, 28-1-1939

507. INTERVIEW TO S. S. TEMA¹

[*January 1, 1939*]²

TEMA: How can my people make their Congress as successful as the Indian National Congress?

GANDHIJI: The Congress became successful for the simple reason that it was inaugurated by the most selfless and cultured people that could be found in that age. They made themselves the representatives of the people and captured their imagination by reason of service and self-sacrifice. They were from the people and of the people. You have not, as far as I am aware, a band of Africans who would be content to work and live in impecuniosity. Among those who are educated there is not that absolute selflessness. Again, while most of your leaders are Christians, the vast mass of the Bantus and Zulus are not Christians. You have adopted European dress and manners, and have as a result become strangers in the midst of your own people. Politically, that is a disadvantage. It makes it difficult for you to reach the heart of the masses. You must not be afraid of being 'Bantuized' or feel ashamed of carrying an assagai or of going about with only a tiny clout round your loins. A Zulu or a Bantu is a well-built man and need not be ashamed of showing his body. He need not dress like you. You must become Africans once more.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "A World in Agony-II". Rev. S. S. Tema of D. R. Mission, Johannesburg, was a Negro and a member of the African Congress. He was one of the delegates to the Tambaram Conference who had come to see Gandhiji after the Conference was over.

² The delegates were in Segaoon on December 31 and January 1. On December 31 only Lew saw Gandhiji. Tema presumably met him on January 1.

T. Of late there has been some talk of forming an Indo-African united non-white Front in South Africa. What do you think about it?

G. It will be a mistake. You will be pooling together not strength but weakness. You will best help one another by each standing on his own legs. The two cases, are different. The Indians are a microscopic minority. They can never be a 'menace' to the white population. You, on the other hand, are the sons of the soil who are being robbed of your inheritance. You are bound to resist that. Yours is a far bigger issue. It ought not to be mixed up with that of the Indian. This does not preclude the establishment of the friendliest relations between the two races. The Indians can co-operate with you in a number of ways. They can help you by always acting on the square towards you. They may not put themselves in opposition to your legitimate aspirations, or run you down as 'savages' while exalting themselves as 'cultured' people in order to secure concessions for themselves at your expense.

T. What sort of relations would you favour between these two races?

G. The closest possible. But while I have abolished all distinction between an African and an Indian, that does not mean that I do not recognize the difference between them. The different races of mankind are like different branches of a tree—once we recognize the common parent stock from which we are sprung, we realize the basic unity of the human family, and there is no room left for enmities and unhealthy competition.

T. Should we adopt violence or non-violence as a means for our deliverance ?

G. Certainly, non-violence under all circumstances. But you must have a living faith in it. Even when there is impenetrable darkness surrounding you, you must not abandon hope. A person who believes in non-violence believes in a living God. He cannot accept defeat. Therefore, my advice is non-violence all the time, but non-violence of the brave, not of the coward.

T. Your example has shed so much influence upon us that we are thinking whether it would not be possible for one or two of our young men, who we are hoping will become leaders, to come to you for training.

G. It is quite a good and sound idea.

T. Do you think Christianity can bring salvation to Africa?

G. Christianity, as it is known and practised today, cannot bring salvation to your people. It is my conviction that those who today call themselves Christians do not know the true message of Jesus. I wit-

nessed some of the horrors that were perpetrated on the Zulus during the Zulu Rebellion. Because one man, Bambatta, their chief, had refused to pay his tax, the whole race was made to suffer. I was in charge of an ambulance corps. I shall never forget the lacerated backs of Zulus who had received stripes and were brought to us for nursing because no white nurse was prepared to look after them. And yet those who perpetrated all those cruelties called themselves Christians. They were 'educated', better dressed than the Zulus, but not their moral superiors.

T. Whenever a leader comes up in our midst, he flops down after a while. He either becomes ambitious after money or succumbs to the drink habit or some other vice and is lost to us. How shall we remedy this?

G. The problem is not peculiar to you. Your leadership has proved ineffectual because it was not sprung from the common people. If you belong to the common people, live like them and think like them, they will make common cause with you. If I were in your place, I would not ask a single African to alter his costume and make himself peculiar. It does not add a single inch to his moral stature.

Harijan, 18-2-1939

508. RAJKOT

Hitherto I have said hardly anything about the Rajkot struggle which has just ended¹ as brilliantly as it began. My silence was not due to lack of interest. That was impossible owing to my intimate connections with the place. Apart from my father having been the Dewan of the State, the late Thakore Saheb looked up to me as to a father. My silence was due to the fact that Sardar Vallabhbhai was the soul of the movement. To praise him or his work would be like self-praise.

The struggle showed what non-violent non-co-operation could do, if there was adequate response from the people. I was wholly unprepared for the unity, grit and capacity for sacrifice that the people showed. They showed that they were greater than their ruler, and that

¹ The settlement about establishing responsible government was reached on December 26, 1938. The main terms were: (1) All repressive measures should be withdrawn; (2) all political prisoners should be released; (3) satyagraha should be called off; (4) to draft the constitution a committee of 10 persons should be appointed, seven of whom should be those suggested by Vallabhbhai Patel.

even an English Dewan was powerless before a people united in non-violent action.

The Thakore Saheb deserves congratulations for taking the reins in his own hands and overruling the English Dewan's advice and the known wishes of the Resident.

From documents in my possession I know that Sir Patrick Cadell, supported by the Resident, cut a sorry figure as servant of the Thakore Saheb. He acted as if he was the master. He traded upon the fact that he belonged to the ruling race and his appointment was subject to the sanction of the central authority, and thought that he could do what he liked. At the time of writing I do not know whether he has wisely retired or what has happened. The correspondence in my possession shows that the ruling chiefs have seriously asked themselves whether it is wisdom to have Europeans as their Dewans. The central authority has to keep watch over Residents if its declarations are to be carried out as well in the letter as in the spirit.

It is to be hoped that the ruling chiefs who stand in awe of Residents will know from the Rajkot example that if they are straight and if they have their people really at their back, they have nothing to fear from the Residents. Indeed they should realize that the Paramount Power resides not in Simla, not in Whitehall, but in their people. An awakened people who rely upon non-violent strength are independent in the face of any conceivable combination of armed powers. What Rajkot could do in three months every State can do if the people show the qualities that the people of Rajkot showed.

But I do not claim that the people of Rajkot had developed the rare type of non-violence that would stand true in the face of all odds. But Rajkot did show what even ordinary non-violence by a whole people in an organization could do for it.

But great as was the work done by the people of Rajkot, as civil resisters their real test is yet to come. Their victory, if it is not followed up by a sustained exhibition of the same qualities that secured it, may prove also their undoing. By a long course of training Congressmen all over India have shown their capacity for offering civil resistance, but they have yet to show capacity for constructive non-violence. Civil disobedience may well be adulterated with much incivility, i. e., violence, and yet pass current. But construction is very difficult. In its detection of violence is easy. And existence of violence may even turn victory into a trap and prove it to have been a delusion. Will the

people exhibit the requisite selflessness and self-denial? Will they resist the temptation to serve themselves and their dependants? Any scramble for power will rob the people at large of what they should really get if there was wise and resolute leadership that would command ready and willing obedience. Kathiawar is noted for its intrigues. It contains a race of politicals whose one aim in life is self-advancement, if it is also known to contain stuff of which heroes are made. If the politicals gain the upper hand, there will be no *Ramraj* in Rajkot. *Ramraj* means renunciation all along the line. It means discipline imposed by the people on themselves. If constructive non-violence is displayed by the people, it is possible for Rajkot to radiate an influence that can easily make Rajkot an example to follow.

Let the victory, therefore, be a time for humility, heart-search and prayer instead of self-satisfaction and vain rejoicings. I shall watch, wait and pray.

ON THE TRAIN TO BARDOLI, January 2, 1939

Harijan, 7-1-1939

509. IS NON-VIOLENCE INEFFECTIVE?

In dealing with my answer¹ to the criticism that the Jews had been non-violent for 2,000 years, *The Statesman* says in the course of an editorial:

The whole world has heard of Pastor Niemoeller² and the sufferings of the Lutheran Church; here many Pastors and individual Christians bore themselves bravely before People's Courts, violence and threats; without retaliation they bore noble witness to the truth. And what change of heart is there in Germany? Buried in prisons and concentration camps are today, and have been for five years, members of the Bible Searchers' Leagues who rejected Nazi militarism as conflicting with Christ's Gospel of peace. And how many Germans know of them or, if they know, do anything about it?

Non-violence, whether of the weak or of the strong, seems, except in very special conditions, rather a personal than a social gospel. A man's salvation may be left to himself; politicians are concerned with causes, creeds and minorities. It is suggested by Mr. Gandhi that Herr Hitler would bow before a courage "infinitely superior to that shown by his own Storm

¹ *Vide* "Some Questions Answered", 17-12-1938

² Martin Niemoeller, anti-Nazi Protestant theologian, who had been arrested by the Gestapo and imprisoned in a concentration camp

Troopers". If that were so, one would have supposed that he would have paid tribute to such men as Herr von Ossietzky¹. Courage to a Nazi, however, seems a virtue only when displayed by his own supporters: elsewhere it becomes the impudent provocation of Jewish-Marxist *canaille*. Mr. Gandhi has produced his prescription in view of the inability of the Great Powers effectively to move in the matter, an inability we all deplore and would see remedied. His sympathy may do much for the comfort of the Jews, but seems likely to do less for their enlargement. Christ is the supreme example of non-violence and the indignities heaped upon Him at His tortured death proved once and for all that in a worldly and temporal sense it can fail hopelessly.

I do not think that the sufferings of Pastor Niemoeller and others have been in vain. They have preserved their self-respect intact. They have proved that their faith was equal to any suffering. That they have not proved sufficient for melting Herr Hitler's heart merely shows that it is made of a harder material than stone. But the hardest metal yields to sufficient heat. Even so must the hardest heart melt before sufficiency of the heat of non-violence. And there is no limit to the capacity of non-violence to generate heat.

Every action is a resultant of a multitude of forces even of a contrary nature. There is no waste of energy. So we learn in the books on mechanics. This is equally true of human actions. The difference is that in the one case we generally know the forces at work, and when we do, we can mathematically foretell the resultant. In the case of human actions, they result from a concurrence of forces of most of which we have no knowledge. But our ignorance must not be made to serve the cause of disbelief in the power of these forces. Rather is our ignorance a cause for greater faith. And non-violence being the mightiest force in the world and also the most elusive in its working, it demands the greatest exercise of faith. Even as we believe in God in faith, so have we to believe in non-violence in faith.

Herr Hitler is but one man enjoying no more than the average span of life. He would be a spent force if he had not the backing of his people. I do not despair of his responding to human suffering even though caused by him. But I must refuse to believe that the Germans as a nation have no heart or markedly less than the other nations of the earth. They will some day or other rebel against their

¹ Carl von Ossietzky (1889-1938), German pacifist and writer. He was arrested as an enemy of the State and imprisoned. While in jail he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. Hitler was so enraged that he prohibited Germans thenceforth from accepting such awards.

own adored hero, if he does not wake up betimes. And when he or they do, we shall find that the sufferings of the Pastor and his fellow-workers had not a little to do with the awakening.

An armed conflict may bring disaster to German arms; it cannot change the German heart even as the last defeat did not. It produced a Hitler vowed to wreak vengeance on the victors. And what a vengeance it is! My answer, therefore, must be the answer that Stephenson gave to his fellow-workers who had despaired of ever filling the deep pit that made the first railway possible. He asked his co-workers of little faith to have more faith and go on filling the pit. It was not bottomless, it must be filled. Even so I do not despair because Herr Hitler's or the German heart has not yet melted. On the contrary I plead for more suffering and still more till the melting has become visible to the naked eye. And even as the Pastor has covered himself with glory, a single Jew bravely standing up and refusing to bow to Hitler's decrees will cover himself with glory and lead the way to the deliverance of the fellow Jews.

I hold that non-violence is not merely a personal virtue. It is also a social virtue to be cultivated like the other virtues. Surely society is largely regulated by the expression of non-violence in its mutual dealings. What I ask for is an extension of it on a larger, national and international scale.

I was unprepared to find the view expressed by *The Statesman* writer that the example of Christ proved once and for all that in a worldly and temporal sense it can fail hopelessly!! Though I cannot claim to be Christian in the sectarian sense, the example of Jesus' suffering is a factor in the composition of my undying faith in non-violence which rules all my actions, worldly and temporal. And I know that there are hundreds of Christians who believe likewise. Jesus lived and died in vain if he did not teach us to regulate the whole of life by the eternal Law of Love.

ON THE TRAIN TO BARDOLI, January 2, 1939

Harijan, 7-1-1939

510. TELEGRAM TO SUPERINTENDENT, TELEGRAPH
OFFICE, MADRAS

January 3, 1939

SUPERINTENDENT
TELEGRAPH OFFICE
MADRAS

IF CABLE RECEIVED FOR SOGA TO REPEAT DREISLER
METHODIST MISSIONARY HOME 22 CLUB BACK ROAD BYCULLA
BOMBAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

511. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[On or after *January 4, 1939*]¹

PLEASE CONVEY MY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCE FOR THE
UNTIMELY DEMISE OF MR. RAMAN MENON TO THE
BEREAVED FAMILY. SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ JOINS.

The Hindu, 6-1-1939

512. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNASWAMY²

January 5, 1939

WIRE REDIRECTED. MY OPINION SUCH CANDIDATE INELIGIBLE
BUT YOU SHOULD SECURE AUTHORITATIVE RULING FROM
PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Raman Menon died on January 3. Jamnalal Bajaj arrived in Bardoli, where Gandhiji was, on January 4.

² The addressee had asked whether producers and weavers of uncertified khadi were eligible to stand for election as delegates to Tripura Congress.

513. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

BARDOLI,
January 5, 1939

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

Zakir Husain was with me for four or five days. In the course of our conversations I learnt that the aid that was given to the Jamia Millia by Bhopal had been stopped. Is there any reason for the stoppage except the pressure on the purse? If there is not, I would like you to think of some retrenchment for the sake of the Jamia. It seems to supply a felt want. It seems to be the only institution manned by Muslims which has self-sacrificing workers who are staunch Muslims and equally staunch nationalists.

Now that I have disburdened myself of the load that was weighing on me, I leave the matter in your safe hands.

I hope Gulnar and baby are doing well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

JANAB SHUAIB QURESHI SAHEB
BHOPAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

514. LETTER TO RANCHHODLAL PATWARI

BARDOLI,
January 6, 1939

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I have received your letter. What you write is quite true. The real test is yet to come.¹ I have shown your letter to Sardar. He has just left for Bombay. However, he has left word that your fear is out of place.

My going to Ahmedabad is not in the programme.

Salutations from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4123. Also C.W. 2789. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

¹ The reference is to the Rajkot Satyagraha; *vide* "Letter to Ranchhodlal Patwari", 2-12-1938

515. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

PRESIDENT STATE CONGRESS

TRIVANDRUM

GLAD DEMONSTRATIONS CANCELLED AND PROHIBITION
LAUNCHED. DELIGHTED PROSECUTIONS WITHDRAWN.¹

GANDHI

From the original: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial
Museum and Library

516. TELEGRAM TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

[*January 7, 1939*]²

WHY NOTHING FROM YOU? LOVE.

BAPU

Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*517. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA*³

January 7, 1939

IN JAMNALALJI'S LETTER JAIPUR STATE THERE IS
REFERENCE TO YOUR TELEGRAM DATED OCTOBER
TWELFTH ADVISING THAT REMAINING SIKAR PRISONERS
WILL BE RELEASED THIRTEENTH. YOUR NAME NOT MENTIONED
BUT MAY HAVE TO BE IF CHALLENGED. HAVE YOU
ANY OBJECTION? WIRE BARDOLI.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 209

¹ This was in reply to the Acting President R. Sankar's telegram dated January 3, 1939, informing Gandhiji of the launching of a prohibition campaign.

² This was written on the same sheet on which the telegram to Pattom Thanu Pillai, the preceding item, was drafted.

³ This was sent to Pilani.

*518. DRAFT OF PRESS STATEMENT FOR
JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹*

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

Rumours have been going the round as to what I am going to do about the ban on my entry into Jaipur State—my birth-place and ancestral home. The ban is as much a surprise to me as to my friends. My whole life has been passed in the interests of peace in all walks of life. Whatever else non-violence may be with Congressmen it is my creed and I try as much as it is in my power to live up to it. I am no enemy of States. I have always maintained a friendly attitude towards them. I have always believed the States to be capable of responding to the new awakening that has taken place in India. I am now carrying on correspondence with a view to find out the secret lying behind the ban. The wording of the order in no sense applies to me. I do not wish to act in haste. I have no desire to embarrass the Jaipur State authorities. But if every honourable effort to have the ban removed fails the public may depend upon my doing my duty.

My present and immediate object is to afford through the Mandal² relief to the famine-stricken in Jaipur State. I hope that the ban will not be allowed to disturb the would-be donors. I am making arrangements for all eventualities. Indeed my main reason for going to Jaipur was to devise measures for famine relief.

My second immediate concern is to try to secure the release of the nine prisoners during the recent crisis in Sikar. One of them is convicted and eight are still awaiting trial. I had good grounds for hoping that they would come in for general amnesty. I can only assure them that I shall leave no stone unturned to secure their release while I am still free.

From a photostat: G.N. 3077

¹ The draft was in Gandhiji's hand.

² Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal

519. DRAFT OF LETTER FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹

CAMP BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

TO
THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL OF STATE, JAIPUR
SIR,

The attached order dated 16th December last was served on me on the 28th of the same month at Sawai Madhopur whilst I was on my way to Jaipur.

The order came as a painful surprise to me. At the station I had over an hour's chat with Mr.F.S.Young,I.G.P.,who was persuading me not to commit a breach of the order. I did not need much persuasion as in a discussion with Gandhiji, of the possibility of such an order being served on me, he had advised me not to break the order immediately but to consider the whole situation in consultation with him before taking any final step.

Accordingly I suspended my journey and proceeded to Delhi. After having conferred with friends and fellow-workers and finally Gandhiji, I have come to the conclusion that on the 1st of February next I should commit a breach of the order unless, before then, it is unconditionally revoked.

The authorities know that a public appeal was issued by me on 1st November last on behalf of the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal, of which I am President, that as famine had overtaken Shekhawati and other areas, relief work was to be undertaken by the Mandal to the exclusion of all other activity. They were also aware that on a newspaper report having appeared to the effect that civil disobedience was to be started in Jaipur I had issued a flat contradiction.

I do not know what had happened on or before the 16th December to warrant the passing of the order in anticipation of my seeking to enter Jaipur State. I note that on the same date a notification was published in the State Gazette to the effect that "an emergency has arisen which makes it necessary to provide against insti-

¹ The draft was prepared and twice revised by Gandhiji. The first draft in Gandhiji's hand is available in G.N, 3076.

gation to illegal refusal to the payment of certain liabilities". Seeing that the order against my entry was passed the same day, it is reasonable to assume that in the opinion of the authorities I would be connected with the feared movement of illegal refusal of taxes. Surely if the authorities had any fear of my leading such a movement, they might have at least ascertained from me as to the truth or otherwise of the information in their possession. They knew me sufficiently to feel sure that I would not conceal the truth from them.

Indeed the authorities know I rendered help to them also during the recent crisis in Sikar consistently with my obligations to the people. They know that my offices were used entirely on behalf of peace.

My surprise may therefore be better imagined than I can describe it when I learnt from the order that "your (my) presence and activities are likely to lead to a breach of the peace", and that, therefore, "it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquillity to prohibit your (my) entry within the Jaipur State." I have no hesitation in saying that the notice belies the whole of my public career.

I observe that I have been described as of Wardha. I hope this is a slip. For the Jaipur State, surely I am of Jaipur. I do not cease to be of Jaipur because I have interests in Wardha and elsewhere.

It has become a serious question for my co-workers and me to consider our position in the State.

The Praja Mandal was started in July of 1931 and reorganized in November 1936. It has a constitution. It has many distinguished men of Jaipur State as its members. It has hitherto carried on its activities within the four corners of the Jaipur law and submitted even to irksome and illiberal restrictions regarding meetings and processions.

But the order served on me has opened the eyes of the Mandal. It has come to the conclusion that it must resort to civil disobedience if civil liberty is not guaranteed and meetings and processions and forming of associations are not allowed without let or hindrance so long as they observe strict non-violence.

I should define the scope of our activity. There is no mistake as to our goal. We want responsible government under the aegis of the Maharaja. We must therefore tell the people what it is and what they should do to deserve it. But we do not propose to offer civil disobedience for it. We must, however, seek the redress of the grievances of

all classes of the people; we must carry on constructive and educative activities. The Mandal has no desire whatsoever to preach non-payment of taxes at this stage. If we secure the co-operation of the State in our essentially peaceful and life-building activities and in the redress of admitted grievances there never need be any resort to non-payment of taxes. But should it unfortunately become a necessity, the Mandal will give the State authorities ample notice of its intention to do so. For the Mandal stands for open, honourable and strictly non-violent methods. Therefore, what I am pleading for is full liberty to the Mandal to carry on its perfectly legitimate and non-violent activities without let or hindrance. If, however, this reasonable request is not granted before the 31st day of this month, I shall reluctantly be compelled to attempt to enter the State in spite of the order, and the Mandal will hold itself free to take such steps as it may deem necessary for self-expression consistent with human dignity.

I hold that to do less will be to commit civil suicide. I trust that the Council of State will not put an unbearable strain upon my loyalty and that of the members of the Mandal.

I have, etc.,

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 393-6; also G.N. 3076

520. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

BARDOLI,

January 7, 1939

CHI. MARY,

Of course your letters are business letters, but business letters, when the business is the service of God's creatures, become love letters. Therefore there need be no apology for your letters being business letters.

I can't think of any woman who will suit the purpose mentioned by you.

Muriel brought a party of 18 persons. I called it a world in miniature.¹

Though it is quite a formal thing, let me reciprocate the good wishes for this year.

Love to you and Mira.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6074. Also C.W. 3404. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

¹ *Vide* footnote on "Interview to Timothy Tingfang Lew", 31-12-1938

521. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

BARDOLI,
January 7, 1939

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

How are you getting on? What are you doing? Are you keeping cheerful? Tell me everything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1916

522. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

BARDOLI
January 7, 1939

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your letter. I hope your feet are all right now.

I wrote a letter regarding what you had said about Basti and the matter has been fully investigated. I even received a reply from there. Ask me about it when we return. I will show you the letter if it is lying somewhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11688

523. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 7, 1939

The murder of Major R. L. Bazalgette,¹ the Political Agent of Orissa States, is most unfortunate and comes as a rude shock. I tender my sympathy to the bereaved family. I hope that the subedar, who accompanied the deceased, will recover from the wounds. The Praja Mandal is expected to carry on the strictest investigation and find out the cause of the murder. It should be a warning to all workers to be

¹ Bazalgette was killed by a mob in Rampur State in Orissa on January 5, 1939.

most careful in conducting mass agitations. They should realize that the slightest departure from non-violence is bound to harm the movement for freedom, whether in the States or all India.

Harijan, 14-1-1939

524. *UNCERTIFIED DEALERS*¹

The Secretary of the Tamil Nad Spinners' Association has sent us a complaint which he has received from the Kerala Branch of the Spinners' Association. The complaint gives conclusive proof that some merchants of Tiruppur are dumping cloth under description 'shuddha khadi' and even making use of the name of the Spinners' Association. Two labels have been sent by the Secretary which were affixed to the cloth thus sold, and the labels show the names of 'S. Mariasusai Chettiar, Khaddar Store, Tiruppur' and 'M. K. Chidambaram Chettiar and Brother A. Palaniappa Mudaliar, Khaddar Store, Tiruppur', and the description is 'shuddha khadi, certified by A.I.S. A'.

S. Mariasusai Chettiar has never been certified by the A. I. S. A. for dealing in khadi, and A. Palaniappa Mudaliar was decertified some four years ago. Such deception can certainly be punished under the ordinary Indian Penal Code. It would, however, be much better for the merchants as well as for the public if the public demand for khadi were not thus exploited, and if merchants who have not been certified abstain from such business, or at least abstain from fraudulently using the name of the Spinners' Association.

BARDOLI, January 8, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

525. *SARDAR PRITHVI SINGH*²

Sardar Prithvi Singh writes to me to say that he is keeping well and that his requirements are being supplied by the authorities and friends as the case may be. I am in constant correspondence with him. He tells me that many friends are desirous of meeting him. He wishes me to thank them all but also to tell them that they need not take the trouble to go all the way to Rawalpindi to meet him. And when they do wish to do so, they should not feel disappointed if they are not

¹ These appeared under "Notes".

² *ibid*

immediately given a date. The visiting days generally remain full. He would like all friends desiring to visit him to correspond with me so that I might guide them. Whilst I convey this wish to the would be visitors, and whilst Pyarelal, or Mahadev as soon as he is permitted to take up full work, will gladly make arrangements, this will be possible only in a few cases. For nothing will be possible without correspondence with the authorities. This means taxing work to which those who are helping me are hardly equal in the present state of my health.

BARDOLI, January 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

526. TRAVANCORE

A Travancore Christian friend writes:

There is a great misunderstanding about you among the Christian circles of Travancore that you are absolutely against the interests of Christians, and this has originated since you have begun to insist on the withdrawal of the memorial to the Maharaja. The trend of public opinion as has been expressed to me by many friends is something like this:

By the influence of the Travancore Maharani and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer you are wrongly made to understand that the present movement in Travancore is only a rising of the Christians for absolute supremacy over the Hindus of Travancore. It is with this impression in the background of your mind that you are today working against the Travancore movement. Besides, due to the famous temple-entry proclamation, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer has done a great service to the Hindu community as a whole, and therefore you want to save him from any blemish and personal charges, whatever be his shortcomings. It is with this end in view that you are so strongly pressing the State Congress to withdraw the memorial. Otherwise there is no reason why you should adopt one policy for Rajkot and another for Travancore. For in the case of Rajkot Vallabhbhai Patel and many others have made so many personal charges against the Dewan, and recently Vallabhbhai even threatened to start another fight for the removal of the present Dewan. You simply approve of all this. While in the case of Travancore, even though it is absolutely impossible for you to understand the situation on the spot being so far off, you simply dictate terms on the memorial question and keep mum over all the unjust actions of the Government. Even after the memorial has been withdrawn the leaders are kept in prison and arrests are being continued in large numbers, and people are terrorized all over the State even though the movement is almost dead. All this you view in silence without uttering a word. This is a further evidence of your partiality in siding with the Travancore

Government.

Similar communications, more strongly worded, have also been received by me. It might clear the atmosphere a little if I answer the charges. My conscience is quite clear. I claim that in no other State movements have I taken so much interest as in the Travancore movement, for the simple reason that I was pressed to do so by Shri G. Ramachandran who belongs to the Sabarmati Ashram and in whose wisdom, courage, sincerity and non-violence I have very great faith. He threw himself into the struggle after receiving my consent. He had told me that there were all sections interested in the struggle. It was at his instance that I requested Shrimati Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to go to Travancore and do what was possible by way of negotiation.

I have been against the mixing up of the struggle for responsible government with the charges against the Dewan. But I have been equally insistent that the leaders need not withdraw them unless they realized the soundness of my advice, for they had to bear the brunt of public opposition, if there was any. They could not do so, unless they could speak with conviction. I told them too that they would be justified in prosecuting the charges, if they made the dismissal the only issue, as they well might. But if they insisted on responsible government, there was no meaning in proceeding with the charges. It would divide the country's attention, and in the event of prosecution their time and resources would be employed in proving the charges. Whereas, if they got responsible government, which they were bound to if they were united and strong in their faith in non-violence and truth, they would have control over all the Dewans, present and future. The charges have been withdrawn, therefore, only because the leaders, as I see from the acting President's statement just received by me, were fully convinced of the advisability of withdrawing the charges.

The comparison with Rajkot is ignorant. I never guided the movement there. There was no occasion for my guidance. The Sardar was in no need of it. If he needed it, it was always at his disposal. There was no question there of dismissal of the Dewan. The Sardar resolutely refused to have anything to do with the charges, if the fight was to be for responsible government. Of course all sorts of people who opposed the struggle came under his lash, but that was wholly different from making dismissal of an official a plank in the struggle.

And my guidance in the Travancore struggle has never been

lacking. But the critics should understand that I am not conducting the struggle. I advise when I am referred to. Nor need or can all my advice and all my work be before the public gaze. Much of my work is behind the curtain. It is not therefore secret. I have nothing to hide. But many things need to be done silently, even secretly (in the right sense of the word), in the interest of the cause.

Lastly, let my critics understand that I am not interested in the present Dewan retaining his office. If I have been in correspondence with the Dewan, it has been only for the sake of the cause, pleading for justice. And as for the Maharani, I have never been in correspondence with Her Highness throughout the struggle. I claim to be and have always been above partisanship. I know no distinction between Christians and non-Christians in terms of politics. I do in terms of religion, and then, too, I hold the Christian religion and the other religions in the same respect as my own.

BARDOLI, January 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

527. *THE BAN ON JAMNALALJI*

The ban on Jamnalalji makes curious reading. Here it is:

TO

SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ

OF WARDHA (C. P.)

Whereas it has been made to appear to the Jaipur Government that your presence and activities within the Jaipur State are likely to lead to a breach of the peace, it is considered necessary in the public interest and for the maintenance of public tranquillity to prohibit your entry within the Jaipur State.

You are, therefore, required not to enter Jaipur territory until further orders.

By order of the Council of State

(Sd.) M. ALTAF A. KHERIE

Secretary, Council of State, Jaipur

He is the last person whose presence anywhere can be a danger. He has ever been known as a peacemaker. He has enjoyed the happiest relations with the official world. His worth was so much recognized that he was awarded the title of Rai Bahadur in 1916 or thereabouts. This he returned during the non-co-operation days. He is

one of the best known merchants in the commercial world. He is a banker besides being a commercial magnate. Though an ardent Congressman he has never been known as “an agitator”. He is foremost in constructive work and social reform. True he has the courage of his convictions and has more than once staked his all for these. He is never afraid of prison. Obviously the description given in the order served upon Jamnalalji is false and wholly inapplicable to him. It will be probably urged that the wording is a mere formality, and that without it the order could not be legally served upon him. If that be so, it proves conclusively that persons like Jamnalalji were never meant by the law to be affected by it. It is an abuse, pure and simple, of the law to keep a person like Jamnalalji out of Jaipur or any other part of the country.

And the humorous part of it all is that Jamnalalji had to be described in the order as “of Wardha”. As a matter of fact he belongs to the Jaipur State, has property there, and has many relations residing there.

It is to such an order that Jamnalalji has submitted wholly on my advice. There was a rumour that he might be arrested if he attempted to enter Jaipur. He had therefore consulted me as to his duty if an order was served on him. His co-workers of Jaipur had held that he should defy any such order there and then. I held a contrary opinion. And I have no cause to regret my opinion. The order, I reasoned, would be a mad act. Mad people should not be taken at their word. They should be given time to cool down. I understand that great preparations were made in anticipation of the arrest. There must have even been a kind of disappointment when the arresting party discovered that they were not to have their prey.

Jamnalalji has lost nothing by waiting and reasoning with the authorities¹ and telling them that they have acted wrongly and hastily. As a responsible man and Jaipur subject, it was perhaps his duty to give them time to reconsider their decision. If they do not, and Jamnalalji decides, as he must, to defy the order, he will do so with added moral strength and prestige. And it is moral strength that counts in non-violent action.

Let it be known that the Maharaja is merely a tool in the hands of his Ministers who are all outsiders and some of them English. They know nothing of the people or the country. They are, as it were, imposed upon them. Jaipur talent is at a discount, though before the

¹ *Vide* “Draft of Letter for Jamnalal Bajaj”, 7-1-1939

foreigners came, Jaipur was somehow or other able to hold its own as a State. I had reason to remark last week on the sorry figure the English Dewan cut in Rajkot during his very brief term of office. At least the act of the Jaipur Council consisting of outsiders is a sorry exhibition of irresponsibility and ineptitude. The externment of one man, however great, may appear to be insignificant. But events may prove that it was a foolish and costly affair, if not much more. For the reader may not know that there is a Praja Mandal in Jaipur which has been working under Jamnalalji's inspiration for the past six years. Jamnalalji is its present President. The Mandal is a strong organization containing responsible men as its members and has a good record of constructive work to its credit. The Mandal will have to do its duty if the ban is not removed. For the ban is, it is said, a precursor of stopping even the constructive and constitutional activities of the Mandal. The authorities cannot brook the growing influence of a body which aims at responsible government in Jaipur under the aegis of the Maharaja, no matter by means howsoever honourable. It seems to be the precursor also of a ruthless policy of stopping all activities of bodies having political ambition in any shape or form. And rumour has it that it is a concerted policy on the part of the Rajputana States. Whether it is true only of Jaipur or all the other States, it is sufficiently ominous, and Jamnalalji and the people of Jaipur are in honour bound to resist it with all the strength at their command, no doubt consistently with the Congress creed of non-violence and truth.

BARDOLI, January 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

528. TELEGRAM TO AKBAR HYDARI¹

BARDOLI,
January 9, 1939

SIR AKBAR HYDARI
HYDERABAD DN

THANKS WIRE ADVISING CERTAIN RELEASES. LETTER NOT
RECEIVED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10094. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

¹ A photostat of the telegram was displayed at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

529. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[January 9, 1939]¹

CHI. JAMNALAL,

G.'s telegram has been received.² He has consented. The letter has been sent by registered mail.³

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2999

530. AUNDH CONSTITUTION⁴

There are several startling things in the Aundh constitution. For the moment I am concerned with only two things—the qualifications for the vote and the courts of justice.

I have myself hitherto sworn by simple adult franchise as well for the illiterate as the literate. My observation of the working of the Congress constitution has altered my opinion. I have come round to the view that a literacy test is necessary for two reasons. The vote should be regarded as a privilege and therefore carry some qualification. The simplest qualification is a literacy test. And if the ministry appointed under the literacy franchise is sincere and solicitous about the disqualified illiterates, the much desired literacy would come in no time. The Aundh constitution has made primary education free and compulsory. I have been assured by Appasaheb that he will see that illiteracy is driven out from Aundh State inside of six months. I hope, therefore, that there will be no opposition in Aundh to the literacy test.

The second important departure from the ordinary practice is the making of justice in the lower court free and incredibly simple. What would, however, displease critics is not the freeness or the simplicity as such but the abolition of intermediate courts and the fate of litigants and persons charged with offences being made to depend on

¹ The date is in a hand other than Gandhiji's.

² *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 7-1-1939

³ The reference presumably is to the letter to President, Council of State, Jaipur; *vide* "Draft of Letter for Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1939

⁴ This appeared under "Notes".

a High Court presided over by one person. In a population of 75,000 a multiplicity of judges would be both unnecessary and impossible. And if the right type of person is chosen as the Chief Judge, he is as likely to deal out unadulterated justice as a bench of highly paid judges. This simplification contemplates abolition of the cumbrous procedure and the use of tomes of law books including hundreds of law reports used in British law-courts.

BARDOLI, January 10, 1939

Harijan, 14-1-1939

531. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

BARDOLI,

[*January 11, 1939*]¹

CHI. KAKA,

I have been observing silence for the last three days and hence I can do justice to correspondence.

The enclosed is about Sanjiva Kamat.

Shanker's letter is enclosed for your information. Write to him again. I have already written to Nanavati. After careful thinking, I have instructed him to pass the night in Segaon and the day with you. But if you need him in the tour, he may remain with you all the time. I consider your need more important.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My coming there will be delayed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10917

532. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

BARDOLI,

January 11, 1939

It has always been my firm view (and it still holds complete sway over me) that in every province, except for one or two selected leaders, all the others should observe silence. When this is not possible, they

¹ The date is in a hand other than Gandhiji's

should read out at meetings carefully considered, short, simple written speeches. Everybody should remember that the people are getting increasing power in their hands now. In such circumstances no thoughtless word should escape the lips of the people's leaders.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 232

533. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

BARDOLI,
January 12, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. Have I changed my policy? In Calcutta what has happened has happened. We should take our hands off that class. He will be paying Vamanchand's wages today, won't he? Not to start a separate class at present will perhaps be better. We shall discuss this matter when I come. I am afraid of internal disputes.

You must have received my letter¹ of yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The enclosed is for Shriman.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10918

534. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BARDOLI,
January 12, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I do not have a minute to spare. Even this I am writing with difficulty.

The most powerful aid to *brahmacharya* is purification of the heart. In this external measures are to a certain extent helpful.

Prayer can go on even unconsciously, which means that when a person is engrossed in prayer he is not conscious of praying. It is like

¹ *Vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 11-1-1939

a man in deep slumber not being aware that he is asleep. Ramanama in its scope includes Krishnanama also. Even the plying of charkha can be regarded as Ramanama. Only so much for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4309. Also S.G. 72

535. *LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA*

BARDOLI,

January 12, 1939

BHAI SRI PRAKASA,

Why an invitation to tea on the occasion of your father's completing 70 years? I was very pained to receive your letter. What is the relation between tea and snacks and your father's religious life? I find the two very contradictory.

For me this auspicious day is meant for religious activity and thanksgiving. And whatever is to be done, why should it be from your side? Is there no public life in Kashi? Would not the public do anything?

In spirit I shall be there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 11162. Courtesy: Sri Krishna Nath

536. *DISCUSSION WITH TOYOHICO KAGAWA*¹

*[January 14, 1939]*²

Now for his talk with Gandhiji.

Your reputation has preceded you, Dr. Kagawa.

With these words Gandhiji stood up to greet Dr. Kagawa. . . . The preliminary questions were about the drought in South India and famines and the co-operative movement. Was the movement flourishing in India?

GANDHIJI: I can't say that it is flourishing. It is going on

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Dr. Kagawa's Visit". Kagawa, a Japanese social reformer, evangelist and author, had come to India to attend the Tambaram Conference.

² From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

somehow. It was initiated by the British Government. It did not come from within, but was superimposed upon the people. It is managed after a certain stereotyped pattern and has therefore no room for growth according to the exigencies of time. Whereas I know you have a big co-operative movement.

KAGAWA: Yes, it is growing every day. There are 3,50,000 producers' co-operatives organized by themselves. There are national health insurance co-operatives, harvest insurance co-operatives and storage co-operatives.

G. What is the feeling of people in Japan about the war?

K. I am rather a heretic in Japan. Rather than I express my views, I would like to learn from you what you would do if you were in my position.

G. It would be presumptuous for me to express my views.

K. No, I would like very much to know what you would do.

G. I would declare my heresies and be shot. I would put the co-operatives and all your work in one scale, and put the honour of your nation in the other, and if you found that the honour was being sold, I should ask you to declare your views against Japan and in so doing make Japan live through your death. But, for this, inner conviction is necessary. I do not know that I should be able to do all that I have said if I were in your position, but I must give you my opinion since you have asked for it.

K. The conviction is there. But friends have been asking me to desist.

G. Well, don't listen to friends when the Friend inside you says, 'Do this.' And friends, however good, can sometimes well deceive us. They cannot argue otherwise. They would ask you to *live* and do your work. The same appeal was made to me when I took the decision to go to jail. But I did not listen to friends with the result that I found the glow of freedom when I was confined within the four solid walls of prison. I was inside a dark cell, but I felt that I could see everything from within those walls, and nothing from outside.

K. Have you some irrigation co-operatives in India?

G. I do not think so. Of course you have all these things. You have done marvellous things, and we have many things to learn from you. But how can we understand this swallowing alive of China, drugging her with poison and so many other horrid things that I read about in a book called *What War Means* which Pandit Jawaharlal has given me. How could you have committed all these atrocities? And then your great poet calls it a war of humanity and a blessing to China!

Dr. Kagawa is a student of religions. He wanted to know how Gandhiji's

ahimsa teaching could be reconciled with the *Bhagavad Gita*. Gandhiji said it could not be discussed in a brief interview, but he would ask him to read his introduction to the *Gita* where he had answered the question. The answer had just come to him as part of his experience, and the interpretation was, as he thought, not laboured in any way.

K. I am told you recite the *Bhagavad Gita* daily?

G. Yes, we finish the entire *Gita* reading once every week.

K. But at the end of the *Gita* Krishna recommends violence.

G. I do not think so. I am also fighting. I should not be fighting effectively if I were fighting violently. The message of the *Gita* is to be found in the second chapter of the *Gita* where Krishna speaks of the balanced state of mind, of mental equipoise. In 19 verses at the close of the 2nd chapter of the *Gita* Krishna explains how this state can be achieved. It can be achieved, he tells us, after killing all your passions. It is not possible to kill your brother after having killed all your passions. I should like to see that man dealing death—who has no passions, who is indifferent to pleasure and pain, who is undisturbed by the storms that trouble mortal man. The whole thing is described in language of beauty that is unsurpassed. These verses show that the fight Krishna speaks of is a spiritual fight.

K. But there was actual fighting then, and your interpretation is your own peculiar interpretation.

G. It may be mine, but *as mine* it has no value.

K. To the common mind it sounds as though it was actual fighting.

G. You must read the whole thing dispassionately in its true context. After the first mention of fighting, there is no mention of fighting at all. The rest is a spiritual discourse.

K. Has anybody interpreted it like you?

G. Yes. The fight is there, but the fight as it is going on within. The Pandavas and Kauravas are the forces of good and evil within. The war is the war between Jekyll and Hyde, God and Satan, going on in the human breast. The internal evidence in support of this interpretation is there in the work itself and in the *Mahabharata* of which the *Gita* is a minute part. It is not a history of war between two families, but the history of man—the history of the spiritual struggle of man. I have sound reasons for my interpretation.

K. That is why I say it is your interpretation.

G. But that is nothing. The question is whether it is a reasonable interpretation, whether it carries conviction. If it does, it does not matter whether it is mine or XYZ's. If it does not, it has no value even

if it is mine.

K. To my mind Arjuna's ideas are wonderful. Krishna has found some excuse for him, and it was natural and necessary before Christianity.

G. This interpretation is even historically wrong. For Buddha existed long before the Christian era, and he preached the doctrine of non-violence.

K. But Arjuna's views seem to me to be superior to Krishna's.

G. Then according to you the disciple was greater than the master !

K. But I agree with what you say, with your teaching of non-violence. I shall read the *Gita* again, bearing your interpretation in mind. . . .

Dr. Kagawa again turned to his great theme—agriculture and cooperation which he has studied carefully. "You get famine once in every *ten* years," he said.

G. We get it every year, famine is our constant friend.

K. Then you should have more tree culture, more trees for fuel and for cattle fodder. Rice and barley are not enough, you need more protein trees. . . .

G. No. We need a change in the method of government!

It was a great pity that Dr. Kagawa had to go away to Bombay the same evening. . . . Even for a detailed discussion of his co-operative programme he might have stayed longer with the leading men in India. But Gandhiji appealed to him on a different ground.

How can you leave India without seeing Santiniketan?

K. But I have read the Poet's poems, and I love them.

G. But you have to love the Poet.

K. If I can repeat the *Gitanjali* every day, I can see the Poet every day and do I not love him? Maybe he is greater than his poems.

G. Sometimes the reverse is the truth, but in the case of the Poet he is infinitely greater than his great poems. Now, another question. Have you included Pondicherry in your programme ? If you want to study modern India, you must see both Santiniketan and Aurobindo Ghose's Ashram. I wonder who your tour advisers are. I wish you had appointed me your adviser in this matter!

K. No. You are a good guide for life.

Dr. Kagawa asked what other books Gandhiji read every day. Gandhiji mentioned the *Ramayana* in which he said there was supposed to be enough blood and thunder, "*but not for me*". Dr. Kagawa said he too loved it for the story of Sita—the ideal of chastity.

G. But there are other fine things also in that unique poem. I have not read the original which is great. But the Hindi rendering

done by a great devotee is the scripture for the masses of India. In the North India Tulsi *Ramayana* has been the inspiration of many a home for four centuries.

Dr. Kagawa discussed Shankaracharya and Ramanuja, and Gandhiji expressed his predilection for the former, and for his direct and marvellously logical way. But Gandhiji reverted again to his itinerary and expressed his great regret that Rev. Hodge who had been in charge of it had, out of his partiality for him (Gandhiji), included Bardoli, but not Santiniketan! [He said:]

You are going to Calcutta and not Santiniketan! It is a great pity. You say you are going to Gosaba. Well Gosaba is Gosaba, but Santiniketan is India.

Harijan, 21-1-1939

537. JAIPUR

Jaipur authorities will not be happy until they have brought the Jaipur patriots to their senses. For they have now banned the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal of which Jamnalalji is the President. Jamnalalji has released for publication his letter¹ to the President of the Jaipur Council of State. The readers will find it elsewhere in these columns. That letter should induce withdrawal of the order. But evidently the Jaipur Council, which I erroneously described as entirely composed of outsiders in my last week's article², but which I understand does contain four members from the State, is intent upon wiping out of existence every activity whether social, humanitarian or other with which Jamnalalji or his co-workers are connected.

This is the newest method of dealing with people whom the authorities do not like. I can only hope against hope that the Jaipur authorities will shrink from precipitating an all-India crisis. For there are three reasons which might well give the Jaipur question that character. Jamnalalji is himself an institution. He is, moreover, a member of the Working Committee of the Congress and its Treasurer. The method being adopted in Jaipur is too drastic to be suffered without a desperate struggle. If it goes unchallenged, it may mean a death-blow to every activity in the States when it is even remotely connected with the legitimate political aspirations of their people.

The curious thing about Jaipur is that the real ruler is a

¹Vide "Draft of Letter for Jamnalal Bajaj", 7-1-1939

²Vide "The Ban on Jamnalalji", 14-1-1939

high-placed Englishman¹ and not the Maharaja. Can it be that he represents the wishes of the central authority? If he does, what becomes of the recent declarations? If he does not, may an English Dewan initiate policies that may in the end spell disaster to the State itself? I understand that the Jaipur treasure chest is over-full. If the worst happened, it could stand a prolonged boycott by the people, that is, assuming that the modern weapons of destruction do not tame the people into submission. It is time for the Princes and the Central Government to evolve a common policy of action. Or is the Jaipur method the common policy of action, as some tell me it is? I can only hope that it is not.

BARDOLI, January 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-1-1939

538. DRINKING METHYLATED SPIRITS²

A correspondent writes:³

The correspondent's letter deserves the attention of those who are engaged in prohibition work.

BARDOLI, January 16, 1938

Harijan, 21-1-1 939

539. VIOLENCE v. NON-VIOLENCE

Everywhere in India there is a duel going on between the method of non-violence and that of violence. Violence like water, when it has an outlet, rushes forward furiously with an overwhelming force. Non-violence cannot act madly. It is the essence of discipline. But when it is set going, no amount of violence can crush it. For full play, it requires unsullied purity and an unquenchable faith among the leaders. Therefore, if non-violence seems to fail in the duel, it will do so because the leaders lack the purity or the faith or both. There seems, however, to be reason to believe that non-violence will triumph

¹ Sir W. Beauchamp St. John, Prime Minister of Jaipur

² This appeared under "Notes".

³ The letter is not reproduced here. It stated that with the introduction of prohibition drink addicts had started drinking diluted methylated spirit and suggested that its sale should be controlled.

over violence. Things seem to be shaping so that the workers will see for themselves the futility of violence.

But a well-known public worker writes:¹

“The States’ method of dealing with satyagraha seems to be different from the British method. The methods adopted in some States are too inhuman and brutal. Will non-violence succeed against such brutal methods? . . .

I have carefully read and re-read your views² on the murder of the Political Agent of Orissa States. I was rather pained to find that you made no reference to the terrible atrocities committed on the poor State subjects of Orissa. . . . If the mob was wrong in using violence against the Political Agent, was the latter justified in firing on the mob and thus provoking them to violence? . . .

. . . I fail to understand why you as the greatest apostle of truth and non-violence should not have also conveyed a warning to the Political Department of the Government of India, and especially the Eastern States Agency, that they should not adopt brutal methods in dealing with the States subjects’ fights? I feel that the Eastern States Agency has been most brutal in dealing with the States subjects’ fights, and murder of the Political Agent is the climax of the brutal repression carried on by the Eastern States Agency. . . . And if we are to show sympathy for the loss of life of the Political Agent, what about the two persons who died on the spot as a result, possibly of the police violence? . . .

Of course the right of self-defence is there and so is the right of armed rebellion. But after deep deliberation the Congress has abjured both and that for valid reasons. Non-violence is not worth much if it is worsted in the face of the greatest provocation. Its true test consists in its capacity for standing any amount of provocation. If there were eye-witnesses of the rapes and if the witnesses were non-violent, why are they alive? If the rapes became known after the event, of what use is violence? The non-violent method is still open. The men may be tried or they may be brought up before the bar of public opinion, if there was any. To expose the criminals to mob fury would be barbarity.

The argument about the murder of the late Political Agent of the Orissa States is irrelevant to the issue. I was not called upon to adjudge the merits of the action of the ruler and the Political Agent on the one hand and the people’s action on the other. It was enough for

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

² *Vide* “Statement to the Press”, 7-1-1939

me at the time to condemn in unqualified terms the murder of the Political Agent not merely as a mark of sympathy, though that was deserved, but as an act of gross indiscipline and breach of the fundamental Congress policy. The misdeeds of the rulers have been exposed often enough in these columns. But they have not been mentioned for the purpose of drawing the wrath of the people upon the doers, but for the sole purpose of showing the people the way of dealing with them non-violently. Things were shaping themselves well in Orissa. I can quote chapter and verse in support of this assertion. This murder has disturbed the even course of the movement. Ranpur is a howling wilderness. The people, both innocent and guilty, are in hiding. They have deserted their homes in order to escape repression. For it will not be merely the actually guilty persons who will suffer. The technique of frightfulness in some shape or other is no doubt being applied and the whole of India has to be helpless witness of it. The authorities know no other way of dealing with murders of their officials, especially when they are Europeans. The non-violent method has been slowly educating them to know the new way. But I need not prolong the argument. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Both methods are being tried out in India. The workers have to make their choice. I know that India's freedom is possible only through non-violence. Those workers in the Congress who think or act otherwise are wronging themselves and the Congress.

BARDOLI, January 16, 1939

Harijan, 21-1-1939

540. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BARDOLI,
January 16, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have been unable to write a single letter during these exacting days. Today I worked at *Harijan* till after 5 p. m. Now I have a minute or two before going to the evening prayer.

Of course you will pay Jurab as you suggest. He will be worth all that and more, if he gives you full satisfaction.

I am glad your recent letters have been hopeful. Had they been otherwise, I would have made time to send you, if it was only a line.

Sushila has been writing to you daily. So you know all about my health. So far as the feel goes, it is excellent.

Events are fast shaping themselves. You will see the coming *Harijan* to show you what is happening.

I hope you are now having the food you need.

Devdas and Laxmi are here just now. Ramdas came in yesterday. He leaves tomorrow for Poona. Kallenbach lands on Saturday.

There are numberless visitors here. There is no such thing as the quiet of Segaon. But Sardar protects me against intruders.

Ramdas is looking none too well. Premabehn came in today. Mridula has been here for the past four days.

There is nothing to report about Agakhan's visit. He wants the Congress to settle with Jinnah if it is at all possible.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6424. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10010

541. NOTE TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

BARDOLI,

January 16, 1939

This should be credited to the *Harijan* fund and a receipt sent to me.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1181

542. LETTER TO SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

BARDOLI,

January 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

My first thought was to publish the accompanying letter purporting to describe your attitude with regard to the ban on Seth Jarnalalji's entry into Jaipur State. But on second thoughts I felt that my purpose would be better served by sending you a copy of Shri Chudgar's¹ letter and inviting your opinion on it. My purpose is to

¹ Barrister and legal adviser of Rao Rama of Sikar; *vide* "Jaipur"

promote harmony between the Princes and the people who are obliged in one way or the other to come in contact with them to secure justice wherever possible by friendly negotiation. And now that I have felt the necessity of writing to you, whatever may be your opinion on Shri Chudgar's letter, I would like to suggest to you that the bans upon Seth Jamnalalji and his organization might be removed without endangering the peace of Jaipur State. Indeed, I feel that peace is certainly endangered by the bans.¹

Yours sincerely,

SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN
DEWAN, JAIPUR STATE JAIPUR

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 397-8. Also C.W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

543. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES²

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the newspaper cutting. The heading is a misrepresentation of the purpose of my article.³ This is clear even from the cabled summary. But when you read the original you will discover what a cruel misrepresentation it is.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MINISTER
JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: C. W. 11074. Courtesy: Roger W. Holmes and Francis L. Brown

¹ For Sir Beauchamp's reply, *vide* "Jaipur"

² 1879-1954; American clergyman; founder-member of American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People; editor of *Unity*; author of *My Gandhi* and books on religion and social subjects

³ The reference, it appears, is to the article "The Jews", dated November 20, 1938 and the criticism it generated in Germany; *vide* "The Jews", "Reply to German Critics", and "Some Questions Answered"

544. *LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH*

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. I am forwarding the letter which you have written to H. Nanabhai has also met me. He has left Dakshinamurti because of my letter. Thus H. has agreed to the first alternative. He is, however, firm about his innocence. But since he has left Dakshinamurti and withdrawn himself from women's education, nothing more remains to be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 946. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

545. *LETTER TO RAVINDRA R. PATEL*

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

CHI. RAVINDRA,

I have your letter. If you have had enough of that place and are giving up all thought of making money you can embrace poverty and serve the country. I shall consider it a success.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7455

546. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR*

BARDOLI,
January 18, 1939

BAPA,

A cheque for Rs. 5,000 was sent to you from the Frontier Province. Shri Jasaram writes that it was meant for khadi work. The amount may therefore be remitted to Dr. Gopichand. I hope to raise money from the same person for Harijan work when I go again to the Frontier Province.

BAPU

[PS.]

I received just now your letter about Orissa. It is very difficult for Sardar to go there. Rajendra Babu will certainly go. He is doing that work from here also. Will you be able to spare 15 days for prohibition in Khandesh? Dr. Gilder has promised to get 12 shops closed provided you come. If you can, come immediately. Send a telegram.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1182

547. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

BARDOLI,

January 18, 1939

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I return your old letter. Your handwriting is better than it was but there is still much scope for improvement. Do not cram the sheet too full. There should always be a margin on the left side and the words should be spaced well. The pen should be finely pointed. You must take a vow that you will effect these improvements for the sake of mother cow. You know the importance of vows, don't you?

The account you have sent could not but be good. There was never any doubt about your sincerity and your unselfishness.

It is good that you are at peace. Make yourself strong and improve your knowledge of Hindi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1917

548. LOVE A UNIVERSAL VIRTUE

An Indian Christian writes:¹

Your article "The Jews"² has evoked considerable comment of varying nature. I propose to confine myself to the criticism that the love that Jesus taught was a personal, not a social or collective, virtue.

To deny that Jesus' way of life was meant for all—collectively no less than individually—is surely to deny the basic truth of the religion of Christ.

¹ Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

² *Vide* "The Jews"

He was utterly dissatisfied with the existing order; the hypocrisy and pride of the Scribes and Pharisees riled him sufficiently for him to call them a 'generation of vipers' and 'whited sepulchres'; he openly protested against bribery and corruption when he 'upset the tables of the money-changers' and accused them of having made his house 'a den of thieves'; he denounced the sin of untouchability by dining with outcastes and speaking words of comfort to prostitutes.

His preaching roused the anger of the people because it was revolutionary and universal; otherwise why should those in authority have cared to arrest and condemn to the extreme penalty of the law a man in whom even the judge who tried him could find no 'sin'?

They sensed in his teachings a power which, if exercised by those who believed in them, would surely cause to fall the whole framework of their society. To 'turn the other cheek' to him who smites you on one, to love the enemy, to rejoice in suffering, to love your neighbour as yourself, to remove the beam from your own eye before pointing to the mote in another's, to pray for those who persecute you, to forgive the offender until seventy times seven, to serve the poor, to leave all and follow Jesus, are of the essence of a universal gospel for which he lived and died. That he asked his disciples to let the world see this message by virtue of their own example, that the disciples themselves felt the call to recreate a new order, bears ample evidence in the very formation, through their martyrdom, of the early Church which is termed to be the body of Christ. One of the most beautiful passages in the New Testament, the 13th Chapter of *I Corinthians*, was written by St. Paul at a time when the Church of Corinth was torn by internal dissensions. The message of love therein was the message for collective action. The 'Church Militant', as it is called, is surely the emblem of Christian society trying to war against the powers of evil by means of love which 'conquers all things'.

But while it may be convenient, because of the lack of courage and faith within us, to set aside the central teaching of the religion of Christ as a mere rule for personal conduct, it is a dangerous doctrine which has brought the so-called Christian nations to a sorry pass today.

No doubt the result of non-violence is not always visible to the naked eye. That the way of love—for what is non-violence except boundless love—is not easy to pursue is only too true. But to rule love out as a social virtue is to deny the existence of not only the religion of Jesus but of all the great religions of the world and to give way to fear which is the ruling passion in the world today.

Non-violence on a national or international scale has not yet been sufficiently tried; where it has been tried by Gandhiji it has met with success. Is not Europe, by subordinating her mind to the doctrine that 'Might is Right', giving a direct lie to the teaching of Jesus? This is the question before

Christendom today. Does the greatest measure of freedom consist in being able to resist force with the weapons of force, or may it not be that its highest and eternal form will be born out of the blood willingly shed by one nation or many nations?

Oh cross that liftest up my head,
I may not ask to flee from thee,
I lay in dust, life's glory dead.
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

This letter should convince honest doubters that the love that Jesus taught and practised was not a mere personal virtue, but that it was essentially a social and collective virtue. Buddha taught and practised the same thing six hundred years before Jesus.

BARDOLI, January 20, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

549. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have your wires and your letter of the 5th instant, with enclosure which came later. The two documents were redirected from Wardha and then I had to see the State Congress friends before I could reply. Hence the delay which please forgive.

At the outset I must thank you for the friendly tone of your letter. Nothing else and nothing less was expected of you.

Nevertheless the letter has not given me satisfaction. The only thing relevant to my request was the statement issued by the State Congress manifesto¹ calling off civil disobedience and its language. If it left nothing more to be desired, the immediate result should have been the discharge of the prisoners who had offered civil disobedience from within and as members of the State Congress.

Even Shri Kashinathrao Vaidya's statement was irrelevant. The State Congress manifesto was not before him. Had he known the implications of the manifesto, he should not have courted imprison-

¹ *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", 26-12-1938

ment at all. But his case needs to be condoned by the State Congress manifesto. Perusal of Shri Kashinathrao Vaidya's statement did not confirm the impression created by your letter. His statement I regard as mild and subdued. There is no threat in it. He has endeavoured calmly to argue the position of the State Congress and brought out the facts to the date of his conviction. It is noteworthy that he has accepted the fact of suspension and exhorted the State Congress members to desist from civil disobedience.

The Aryan League and the Hindu Mahasabha activities should not be confused with that of the State Congress. There never was any intention of amalgamation on the part of the State Congress.

Do you want me to find out what Sardar Patel, Shri Deo or Shri Bhulabhai said or did? As a matter of fact I have not even showed your letter to the Sardar though I am living with him at present. Not that I would not share your letter with him, only he has his work cut out for him as I have mine. But I could find out what they said if their opinion was relevant to my purpose or to the argument. If, however, you want me to, I shall gladly do so.

You were quite right in dismissing from your mind the suggestion that I had secretly advised anyone against the attempt to reach a settlement between Hindus and Muslims. Baba it was who brought Shri Narasingh Rao with him. Maulvi Bahadur Yar Jung was also to be of the party. But he could not come. They had come to a standstill. I, therefore, advised them to proceed no further but await Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's advice and be guided by him. Maulana Saheb is now in correspondence with you.

Now about "Bande Mataram". Some students did come to me. I told them that "Bande Mataram" was no religious prayer but that they had a perfect right to say it in their rooms or their prayer room. I told them too that by proper representation they would get redress and that till they had the redress they should remain without their studies unless they could go elsewhere. I have seen the explanation issued by the Osmania University authorities. It has not given me satisfaction. I do think that this is a matter you should set right without delay. If I have erred, not having all the facts before me, you will please correct me. But, of course, this question stands on its own footing.

I have not interested myself in it. The students are not under my guidance. And I told those who came to me that I had no time to

study their question, important though I admitted it to be.

You say that drunkards and the like have sought imprisonment. My informants say that if such people have courted imprisonment they were unauthorized and had nothing to do with the State Congress.

I believe I have now covered all the points in your letter.

If my argument has any substance in it, I repeat the request for the discharge of all the State Congress prisoners and for permission for the State Congress to pursue such activities, political or otherwise, that are constitutional.

I hope this finds you in the possession of the best of health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6846

550. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BARDOLI,

January 20, 1939

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I was ashamed of your letter to Banker¹. I enclose a copy received by me. Is your notion of agency so low and the worth of khadi so poor as to make you write what you have done? I would far rather let khadi die in Sind than be treated with such contempt as you have been betrayed into showing. Surely your other work should be subordinate to khadi. I do not want you to retort that Choithram and even Jairamdas did worse than you had contemplated. Then it was an evil of necessity.

I am deeply hurt.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 930

¹ Shankerlal Banker, Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association

551. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Your letters are all works of art whether brief or long. I am glad you are getting on so well with John. If you will be patient, you will find that the Pathan grows on you. He is an admirable fellow—open if he once trusts you.

You need not worry about my health. I am taking all the care I can. I am taking the rest that is possible. B. P. is under control. Jumpy, I fear, it will remain unless I lead the forest life and cease all outward activity. But that would be wrong. I must discover the art of living long though full of activity to the end. I shall never completely master it, having dissipated so much of my life in youth. We have to be thankful for what God vouchsafes of the rest of my life.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6425. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10020

552. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

BARDOLI,
January 20, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Kakasaheb's letter was sent to you yesterday. Everyone here has been distressed to hear that you will have to go. Music that was considered a permanent feature will now be discontinued. No one likes this idea. It also makes me unhappy. If your health permits, this is my suggestion. You should walk down at 6 in the morning every day after partaking of milk and fruit. You can easily be with Kakasaheb at 7.15. You can start work at 7.30 and go on till 5 or 4.30 and reach Segaon at 6 or 6.30 every evening. If you can do this, both the purposes will be served. The exertion is not too much for a healthy man. In South Africa I lived at a distance of 7 miles from my office and used to go there and come back either on foot or on bicycle. But I do not wish to overburden you. Think it over. Show this letter to Kakasaheb and do

what is right. Think about other things having in mind that your decision to go to Kakasaheb is a firm one. I do not think that Kakasaheb wants you with him all the 24 hours. But if it is so, the question does not arise. Or even if he desires you to tour with him, then also there is no question of doing any work in Segaon. I have written in the dim light.

Everything else must be going well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10783

553. A NOTE

[After January 20, 1939]¹

It is not easy to take away the girl [after the wedding]. After coming here they will have to fast, perform *yajna*, etc. Do not, therefore, keep them there. Send them away directly, if they stay on after the ceremony. Let them spend a night or two at Wardha and give them *kheer* to eat.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10988. Courtesy: Ramakrishna Bajaj

554. TELEGRAM TO BALKRISHNA

BARDOLI,

January 21, 1939

BALKRISHNA

“PRATAP” OFFICE

CAWNPORE

AM GIVING ALL ATTENTION² GUIDED BY MEHTAB³.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The note is written on the back of a letter from Bombay dated January 20, 1939.

² The addressee, in his telegram, had described the sufferings of the refugees in Dhenkanal satyagraha camp.

³ Harekrushna Mahtab

555. *LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM*

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You should not write but ask someone else to write. Somehow I feel it is wrong to go to Hyderabad. Mothers are often more affectionate than wise. But if not to fulfil her wishes disturbs you, I suppose you must go to Hyderabad. Is Indore not possible? Why not Matheran? Nasik or Deolali are good. So is Sinhagadh for that matter and you have Dinsha Mehta's help there. How I wish you could make up your mind soon.

Don't write.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 9253. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

556. *LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have just now received your letter. Since I am continuing my silence I can answer it. If the reason for stopping you is merely sentimental, then it is certainly better for you to go to South Africa. By your going there, Manilal will certainly be helped. You are worried about Sita. I am not. She will certainly learn at least something there also. Hence my opinion is this: if your services are not essential at Akola you may gladly go to South Africa. It is your duty. Since you have stayed on, write to Manilal and know his views. This is the right course.

Does Sita read the book she has received?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4891

557. *LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH*

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. Did I send you the money or not? Kanu is not here. I do recollect that I had already instructed him.

I send herewith H.'s letters Iying with me. You may preserve them. Now we do not need to make them public. He left both Dakshinamurti and women's education. That was exactly what we wanted him to do. Let me know what impression these letters make on you. Now you need not write to H. However, if you still feel like it, you may write and send the letter to me. If I think it proper I shall forward it. Now the H. episode should not trouble you.

Absorb yourself in your study. Be careful about your health. Take long walks. Do you get fruit? Abstain from spices and oil.

Improve your handwriting. There is scope for improvement even in the Gujarati. There certainly is in the English. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The sweet letter from Shankar was in acknowledgement of the receipt of the money.

From Gujarati: C.W. 947. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

558. *LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI*

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

The reason you have given for selling to the Government at a lower price is not a valid one. We can reduce the price for everyone if we get a large order, as executing it will also cost less. Since you have already written, it is all right. I have made the suggestion for future guidance. Discuss with Shankerlal the merits and demerits of my

suggestion. Ultimately in the face of your experience, my own opinion will be of only secondary importance to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10840. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

559. LETTER TO SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

BARDOLI,

January 22, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of the 18th instant.

I had expected your version of the interview, if you repudiated Shri Chudgar's version. The matter is too important to be dropped by me. I shall gladly publish your version together with Shri Chudgar's if you so wish.¹

SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN

DEWAN, JAIPUR STATE, JAIPUR

Yours sincerely,

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p.399. Also C. W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

560. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

BARDOLI,

January 22, 1939

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Just now Mahadev is out of work. And the cashier Kanu² is yet too boyish to shoulder the burden. He is a good boy but mere goodness without attention to one's duty is of no value. I gave him Chandwani's cheque to be sent to you as soon as it came. He forgot to send it. Then went on leave. On asking him today, he shamelessly said he forgot all about it. The fault is mine, not his. I have trained him badly.

¹ For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Jaipur"

² Kanu Gandhi

Please forgive. You will find the cheque herewith.

Return it, if you cannot give undivided attention to the village construction work. I must be faithful to Chandwani. If you cannot concentrate on this work do not look to me for the monthly payment. Of course I shall send you money for three months in any case.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 931

561. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I could read Manilal's letter fully only yesterday. I am enclosing it. It seems to have come direct. On reading that letter I felt that you should leave by the first available steamer. I cancel what I wrote yesterday. This is the first letter from Manilal which satisfied me. Ordinary letters from you both are drab and empty. Letters should reflect the life of the writer. I like this letter so much that I want it back. Ba is of the opinion that you should immediately go to Manilal. I do think about the needs of Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4892

562. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. MANUDI,

Will it be all right if I do not write but dictate a letter to you? I dictated one to Sharda yesterday. Grandmother was angry and said, "Manu pines for a letter from you and you have no time to write to her." You know better whether you pine or not, but you can have this letter. You never write about yourself nor about Surendra.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1574. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

563. *LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH*

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. RAMI,

I saw your handwriting after many months—or is it years? I should be happy if you kept on writing. Even if I do not write, being too busy, you must. Hope you and the children are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9727

564. *LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL*

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I had received your letter. Your action cannot be defended morally. You cannot be considered a cultivator. It can be said that you conspired to be listed as a cultivator. But you did not find any immorality in your action and so nothing remains to be done for the present. It would perhaps be proper if you withdrew from the Board at the earliest. You may seek some lawyer who can legally interpret such matters and act according to his advice. That seems the best way.

I do not intend to reply to the complainant. He will not understand such intricacies.

Understand about Ramjibhai.

I do not remember about leather and dead animals. Write again if the matter is important.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2710. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

565. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

BARDOLI,
January 21, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

On second thoughts I feel that you should give the enclosed letter to Jairamdas to read. Then let me know what he thinks. I am quite worried about him. He is very shy. So he will not ask for help. His letter is enclosed. You will understand his situation from it. There is no question at all of taking his time. It will be good if Jivaraj, Bharucha, etc., also go.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

566. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. What can I say? Ba is of course unhappy. She wants you to come soon. I do not want that. I want you to stay on if you have work there. You must visit your brothers also. You are crazy not to be able to live away from me. Anyway, do what you think best.

What can I say about my suspicion? I cannot free myself of it. Time alone can do that. It came of itself and it will disappear of itself if that is to be. If you can become stable and discharge your duties the suspicion is bound to disappear. You will continue to get an occasional letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 411

567. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

BARDOLI,
January 22, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your two letters.

I hope your brother is better. I understand about the . . .¹ of Delhi.

If Dr. Gopichand wants to work in the neighbourhood of Delhi, he may.

What is the harm in the Harijan Ashram contributing the major portion towards the construction of the prayer hall? You should be agreeable. It does not require any deliberation.

My health is good. Here I have more than enough work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2476

568. THE STATES

The movement for liberty within the States is entering a new stage. History is going to repeat itself. Talcher and Dhenkanal have led the way in repression. It is no small matter that 26,000 out of 75,000 all told have migrated from Talcher to British Orissa. Prof. Ranga has published harrowing details of the sufferings of these refugees. His narrative is supported by Thakkar Bapa, the great social reformer and philanthropist, who responds to the call of distress no matter from what quarter it comes. They have been in exile for two months. I had hoped that they would have returned to their homes. But there seems to be no peace for these people as yet.

It is not possible for Orissa alone to tackle the relief work. The Government of Orissa has not much money to spare. I hope that the Marwadi Relief Society will take up the relief work bearing in mind that labour should be found for the refugees.

Ranpur has murdered a political agent.² And the police and

¹ Obscure in the source

² Vide "Statement to the Press", 7-1-1939

military are having a merry time at the expense of innocent men and women. I hope the Government of Orissa will firmly handle the situation and not let the Imperial Power deal with the situation as it chooses. The Imperial Power loses its head when it loses one of its own class in the circumstances attending the unfortunate murder of Major Bazalgette. This murder should show us that there is nothing to be gained by the people by such acts.

Jaipur will not tolerate even the education of the Jaipurians to ask and fit themselves for responsible government and would presently bury alive one of its foremost sons.

The advisers of the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot think nothing of making him eat his own words and commit a breach of his promise solemnly made to his people. The Resident of the Western States is party to this breach, if evidence in my possession is to be relied upon. To him the Congress and Sardar are anathema. Ground is being prepared in Rajkot for fomenting quarrels between Hindus and Muslims and the people in general and the Bhayats. None of these have hitherto quarrelled. It is to be hoped that the Muslims and the Bhayats will not prove enemies of their own deliverance. The reformers' course is clear. They must avoid all clash. They must be prepared to die at the hands of their own people if the occasion arose. They have tried with marvellous success the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation. They can enforce it fully and simply sit still. The people are the paymasters, and the Prince and the officials are their servants who have to do the will of their masters. This is literally true of an awakened and enlightened people who know the art of thinking and acting as of one mind.

I would urge the people in the other States to hasten slowly. Liberty is theirs if they will have patience and self-restraint. Let them everywhere knit themselves together and have a consciousness of their strength. They should not have internal dissensions. They must know how to combat the maxim of irresponsibility—divide and rule. It is easy enough if the reformers master the technique of non-violence.

Travancoreans had better be on their guard. I have sufficient evidence in my possession to show that attempts are being made to create divisions between Hindus and Christians and Ezhawas. If they are to have responsible government, they must forget that they are of these different communities. They must learn that they are one and indivisible political unit, and they must attain control over all forces of

violence. They must take full responsibility for peace throughout Travancore without the aid of the police, if they are to win freedom through non-violent means. Meetings and processions are necessary for propaganda among ignorant masses. They are not necessary for a people awakened to a sense of their duty as citizens. Swaraj is for the awakened, not for the sleepy and the ignorant.

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

569. INTERNAL DECAY

My time and that of co-workers is largely taken up in wading through complaints about corruption among Congressmen. The latest typical letter received is from a Bombay Congressman:¹

Tripuri Congress delegates' elections took place last Sunday in Bombay. The voting was to start at 8 a. m. in the morning. I reached Congress House at nearly 8.45 a. m., but to my consternation I found that I had already been impersonated in the short span of forty-five minutes. Scores of others had the same experience. I tried to trace the source, and though (as expected) I could not trace the miscreant I found that this impersonation business was regularly organized and practised on a mass scale as soon as the polling had started. Naturally those who came even half an hour late were disappointed, they having been impersonated meanwhile.

Many suggestions have been made to you to abate this nuisance, but in my humble opinion unless we introduce the system of asking the prospective voters to *produce their membership cards* to be duly stamped by the issuing officers before slips are issued to them, nothing will do the trick . . .

The correspondent's suggestion is quite sound. I should have thought that every voter had to produce an identification card before being allowed to register his vote.

My purpose, however, in reproducing the correspondent's letter is not merely to draw attention to the impersonation in Bombay and the method of dealing with it. The letter is a pointer. Besides impersonation there is the wholesale tampering with the Congress registers which contain bogus names. These registers have as much value as a box containing counterfeit coins though it is claimed to contain rupees. Strife at Congress elections is becoming a common occurrence. The indiscipline of Congressmen is on the increase everywhere.

¹ Only an extract from the letter is reproduced here.

Many of them make irresponsible, even violent, speeches. Many fail to carry out instructions. Bihar is a notable example. Kisans of Bihar are supposed to be Congressmen. Their leaders are Congress-men. Bihar Ministers live in perpetual dread of kisan risings and kisan marches. Only two days ago I had a wire from Khandesh of a contemplated march to the Collector's bungalow by kisans headed by a well known Congress worker. Such instances can be multiplied.

Rome's decline began long before it fell. The Congress, which has been nursed for over fifty years by the best brains of the country, will not fall the moment it has begun to decay. It need not fall at all, if the corruption is handled in time.

In my opinion the greatest work before the Congress will be to deal with this fourfold process of decay. We are yet far from our goal. We shall be no nearer it if we are not sure of our means and their meaning and implications. When the real time comes we shall be found wanting. If I was called upon to lead, say, an army of civil resisters, I should be unable to shoulder the burden. This is a big admission to make. But I should be guilty of cowardice and worse if I did not make it. Though there is non-violence enough among the masses, there is not enough among those who have to organize the masses. Even as a banker cannot run a bank if he has nothing in his chest, so can a general not lead a battle if he has no soldiers on whom he can rely implicitly.

Let no Congressman blame me for thinking aloud. Though I am not in the Congress, I have not ceased to be of it. Congressmen still expect me to give the call when in my opinion the time for action has come. What is more, if God so wills it, I feel I have enough strength and energy in me to lead a battle much more strenuous than any I have fought. But there are Saharas in the way. I have mentioned one which Congressmen can see, touch and handle. The Congress would not be harmed by my having lifted the curtain and exposing our uglinesses to the public gaze. It would be harmed if knowing the truth I hid it from the public.

Out of the present condition of the Congress I see nothing but anarchy and red ruin in front of the country. Shall we face the harsh truth at Tripuri?

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

570. 'WHAT A MAN OF GOD!'

The much-travelled Miss Muriel Lester, my East End hostess during the Round Table days, who is in the Frontier Province at the time of writing this, having met Badshah Khan, thus writes of him:

Now I have got to know Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, I feel there is not likely to be another such honour in my life so far as meeting wonderful people goes. He is an Old Testament prince with the New Testament gentleness. What a man of God ! Thank you for making it possible for us to know him.

He is taking us tomorrow to Utmanzai. It will be a pleasure to see Mira again.

I would not have published this private testimony if I had thought it to be the exaggeration of an unbalanced mind. It is true that Muriel Lester readily sees the bright side of those whom she meets. It is not a fault but a virtue. There is no one without faults, not even men of God. They are men of God not because they are faultless but because they know their own faults, they strive against them, they do not hide them and are ever ready to correct themselves. Such is Khan Saheb who prides himself in calling himself a servant of God. He is a devout Muslim who never misses his prayers and fasts. His interpretation of the Koran is the most liberal I have known. He had to make a choice of one from among the workers whose services I had offered him for introducing spinning, etc., among Khudai Khidmatgars. He deliberately chose Mirabai, Madeleine Slade. She was until recently living under the same roof as Khan Saheb and is now living in rooms adjoining Khan Saheb's residence where she conducts her class. She writes to me almost daily. I am glad to be able to say that her letters, though she does not spare those whom she loves, bear out Muriel Lester's first impression of this noble fakir. And yet the English officials have no use for him. They fear him and distrust him. I would not mind this distrust so much if it did not hamper progress, did not harm India and England and therefore the world.

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

571. ISLAMIC CULTURE

A great Muslim asked me what appeared to me strange questions the other day. Strange, because I should have thought that every Muslim who knows me, and this great Muslim knew me, could answer them for me. Here is the dialogue:

Q. Are you the same to Muslims now that you used to be in South Africa—their friend, father and guide?

A. I never claimed the privilege of being father to them or anyone in South Africa. But I certainly was their guide and friend. (I may state in passing that I was addressed as Bhai—brother—by them and others.) I am absolutely the same as I was in South Africa, twenty-four years ago. I regard Muslims like other Indians as blood brothers entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other Indian.

Q. Then do you cherish their culture as you would cherish your own Hindu culture?

A. Of course I do. I cannot do otherwise, as I believe Islam and other great religions to be as true as my own. India is the richer for the cultures that Islam and Christianity brought with them. I regard the present antagonisms as a passing phase.

Q. Let me be plain. I do not believe in Akbar's dream. He aimed at fusing all religions into one and producing a new faith. Do you have some such aim?

A. I do not know what Akbar dreamt. I do not aim at any fusion. Each religion has its own contribution to make to human evolution. I regard the great faiths of the world as so many branches of a tree, each distinct from the other though having the same source.

Q. I would like you to tell me what you mean by Hindustani. Do you favour a common dictionary ?

A. I have anticipated you. I understand that Maulvi Abdul Haq Saheb has produced a dictionary which has taken all the Urdu words that are to be found in the Benares Hindi Lexicon and Hindi words from the Osmania Lexicon. I have recommended to the Congress the adoption of the Maulvi Saheb's dictionary. And for new words have suggested a board composed of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Rajendra Babu.

Q. What about the Border Tribes? You know they are being crushed under the British heel. Will you favour their relations with India being regulated by the Frontier Province?

A. I would most decidedly. I have been moving in that direction. I have publicly stated more than once that India has to trust and befriend them and not regard them as her natural enemies. I have been trying to go in their midst myself and secure the same permission for Badshah Khan.

There were other questions also asked, but they are not of such public interest as the ones I have dealt with. And they are not matters of controversy so far as I know. I should like to add here that I have not lost my faith in communal unity. My life is still dedicated to it. Though a political pact has to come, it will never satisfy me without a heart unity. And a heart unity is inconceivable without non-violence as the basis of permanent friendship or brotherhood.

BARDOLI, January 23, 1939

Harijan, 28-1-1939

572. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BARDOLI,
January 23, 1939

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
CARE KANORIA
CALCUTTA

TIME RESERVED.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, P. 210

573. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

BARDOLI,
January 23, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter, but what a letter! You bite even from a distance! Why should I worry about you? God takes care of all. It is surprising that you could not meet Mridulabehn. I am well. The reading was 160/94 at noon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 412

574. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

BARDOLI,
January 23, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have both your letters. The articles will be published in *Harijan*.¹ I had myself asked for them—hadn't I? I was only awaiting the second. I hope your daughter-in-law is well. Ba is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMESHWARI NEHRU
PAKPATTAM
PUNJAB

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7987. Also C.W. 3083. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

575. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

BARDOLI,
January 24, 1939

In reply to the correspondent's question as to what Gandhiji meant by saying in the last week's *Harijan* that an all-India crisis would occur if the Jaipur authorities persisted in prohibiting the entry of Seth Jamnalal Bajaj into the State,² Gandhiji replied:

Seth Jamnalal is an all-India man, though a subject of Jaipur. He is also a member of the Congress Working Committee, and essentially and admittedly a man of peace. He is the president of an organization which has been working and has been allowed to work in Jaipur for some years. Its activities have always been open. It contains well-known workers who are sober by disposition and who have done much constructive work, both among men and women. There is at the head of affairs in Jaipur a distinguished politico-military officer. He is shaping the policy of the State in connection with the ban pronounced against Jamnalalji and his association, the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal. I

¹ They were published in *Harijan*, 18-3-1939, 1-4-1939, 15-4-1939, 29-4-1939, 6-5-1939 and 20-5-1939.

² *Vide* "Jaipur"

take it that Sir Beauchamp St. John, Prime Minister of Jaipur, would not be acting without at least the tacit approval of the Central authority, without whose consent he could not become the Prime Minister of an important State like Jaipur.

If the action of the Jaipur authorities precipitates a first class crisis, it is impossible for the Indian National Congress, and therefore all India, to stand by and look on with indifference whilst Jamnalalji, for no offence whatsoever, is imprisoned and members of the Praja Mandal are dealt with likewise. The Congress will be neglecting its duty if, having power, it shrunk from using it and allowed the spirit of the people of Jaipur to be crushed for want of support from the Congress. This is the sense in which I have said that the example of Jaipur, or say Rajkot, might easily lead to an all-India crisis.

The policy of non-intervention by the Congress was, in my opinion, a perfect piece of statesmanship when the people of the States were not awakened. That policy would be cowardice when there is all-round awakening among the people of the States and a determination to go through a long course of suffering for the vindication of their just rights. If once this is recognized, the struggle for liberty, wherever it takes place, is the struggle for all India. Whenever the Congress thinks it can usefully intervene, it must intervene.

In answer to a further question how the Congress as an institution and the Congress Ministries in the various provinces were justified in precipitating a crisis on an issue which exclusively concerned a State, Gandhiji said:

Supposing in a particular district in British India the Collector butchered the people of that district, is or is not the Congress justified in intervening and precipitating an all-India crisis? If the answer is 'yes', then it applies to Jaipur also for examining the conduct of the Congress in terms of intervention. If there had been no non-intervention resolution by the Congress, this question really would not have arisen. Therefore, unthinking people very often blame me for having said that constitutionally Indian States were foreign States. I do not accept that blame at all. I was wandering about in the States and I knew as a matter of fact that the people of the States were not ready.

The moment they became ready, the legal, constitutional and artificial boundary was destroyed. This is a tremendous moral question. Constitutionalism, legality and such other things are good enough within their respective spheres, but they become a drag upon human progress immediately the human mind has broken these

artificial bonds and flies higher. That is precisely what is happening before my eyes. Without any spur from any outside agency I saw at once that there must be intervention by the Congress of the type you see today. And it will go on from stage to stage, if the Congress remains the moral force that it has become—in other words, if the Congress lives up to its policy of non-violence.

People say that I have changed my view, that I say today something different from what I said years ago. The fact of the matter is that conditions have changed. I am the same. My words and deeds are dictated by prevailing conditions. There has been a gradual evolution in my environment and I react to it as a satyagrahi.

The correspondent next drew Gandhiji's attention to recent developments in Rajkot and in Baroda, where the minorities were protesting against the Congress dictation. Gandhiji said in reply that he was unperturbed by those developments. He said:

The movement for liberty cannot possibly be withdrawn or arrested because there are at the moment so-called communal splits. I see that history is repeating itself and the power that is losing ground is becoming desperate and fomenting trouble and dissension within, hoping to drag on its existence by means of these dissensions. If the people know how to work the non-violent technique, the powers that are acting in this manner will be confounded and the people will rise victorious.

The Muslims in Rajkot, for instance, have everything to gain by the people of Rajkot securing liberty. They are today depending upon the sweet will, not of the Rulers, but of the advisers of the Rulers; tomorrow they will share power with the people because they are of the people. But I really do not believe that there is real Muslim opposition in Rajkot. They have enjoyed the best relations with the Hindus. I know this from personal experience myself. During the three months' brief but brilliant struggle there was no dissension between the Hindus and the Muslims in Rajkot. Though many Muslims did not court imprisonment, the Muslims as a community remained at the back of the agitation.

I really do not understand this unfortunate squabble in Baroda. I am as yet too paralysed to get a full grasp of the situation. There again, what can Maharashtrians lose if there is self-rule in Baroda? They are powerful enough to assert themselves. It is not as if they will be crushed by the so-called Gujarati majority, and if the majority gets

its share of the crumbs of office, that should not be a matter for non-participation by the Maharashtrians in the struggle for liberty. Hence, though I have not been able to fathom the bottom of this quarrel, I have no misgivings so long as the reformers remain non-violent and do not harbour any ill will against the Maharashtrians for their action. The question dwindles into insignificance so far as Baroda is concerned when it is remembered that against its population of 2,500,000 there are only a few thousands of Maharashtrians, mostly to be found in Baroda city itself.

The Times of India, January 25, 1939, and *Harijan*, 28-1-1939

576. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 25, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

Enclosed is a cheque for £100. It is for the repairs of the library building—is it not? Why should you be afraid of the astrological prediction? Now it is certainly time for me to leave the world. Do not weep if you hear the news of my demise tomorrow. Both of you may look after my work. You should shine as my heir. Add to the inheritance. Money is something that comes and goes, but if I have some virtues those are your inheritance. Add to them and be happy. All are sharers in this inheritance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4893

577. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 25, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter does you justice. It came to my hand at 6.30. It is 7.50 now. I only think of your good. How can I claim to be a father otherwise? It is wrong for you to stay back for fear of your dreams and forecasts coming true. One should not deviate from one's duty even if the forecast is trustworthy. What does it matter if I or anybody

at Akola dies when you are not here? If your presence here is necessary for some service, it becomes your duty to stay back. Otherwise, your place is by Manilal. You are his wife, his *vamangini*, which means the left side of the body. You are his better half. Your place is where Manilal is. Go without hesitation and with a light heart. That is your duty.

The enclosed is for Manilal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4894

578. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

Confidential

BARDOLI,

January 26, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Your clear reply of the 4th inst. in reply to mine of the 23rd ultimo emboldens me to bring to your notice certain happenings as I see them.

In Orissa things seem to be worst.¹ Public opinion there is not so strong as elsewhere and the most unfortunate murder of Major Bazalgette in Ranpur has complicated the situation. The Orissa Government, as has been officially admitted, has rendered every assistance it could have. This unfortunate event apart, out of a total population of 75,000 souls in Talcher, 26,000 have been compelled by sufferings said to be indescribable to migrate to British Orissa.

I feel that it is the clear duty of the Resident to see that the cause of this migration is investigated and redress given to the people.

The Resident in Kathiawad, as far as I can see, has made the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot break his solemn pact with his people published in the form of an official Notification.²

The struggle has, therefore, been resumed in Rajkot.

The British Prime Minister of Jaipur is said to have vowed to crush Seth Jamnalaji, a well-known banker, philanthropist and social reformer, and socio-political organization of which he is the President³. Their crime consists in aiming at responsible government

¹ *Vide* "The States"

² *ibid*

³ *Vide* "The States"

in Jaipur under the aegis of the Maharaja.

I take it that the Central Government cannot escape responsibility, if the information given herein is trustworthy.

This means that the people of the States have to fight not only their rulers who by themselves cannot resist their people but they have also to combat the unseen and all too powerful hand of the Central authority.

I venture to present this awful problem to you. I call it awful because I do not know how far it will commit both the Central authority and the Congress which has a moral duty by the people of the States. I can understand the treaty obligations of the Paramount Power to protect States against danger from without and anarchy within. Is not the corollary equally true, that if the States suppress their people, the latter have also to be protected by the Paramount Power? Can a State suppress free speech, meetings and the like, and expect the Paramount Power to help it in doing so, if the afflicted people carry on a non-violent agitation for the natural freedom to which every human being in decent society is entitled ?

I do not expect any reply to my letter unless there is anything to tell me. I know how every moment of your time is occupied. It is enough for me to know, as I do know, that my letters receive your personal attention.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of a printed copy: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, pp. 401-2

579. LETTER TO JAMES A. H. MILLS

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C. P.),
BARDOLI,
January 26, 1939

DEAR MILLS,

Gandhiji has your letter of 18th inst.

Since you disown all responsibility for what appeared in the Press there is nothing more to be said about it, though he is still unable to understand how such a

wholesale misrepresentation of what you reported could take place. He is sorry he has not got that cutting with him to send to you but surely, you will be able to procure it for yourself and have a look at it. Anyway, Gandhiji desires me to say that if he is pure he will outlive all propaganda that ignorance or malice may set on foot against him.

Yours sincerely,

PYARELAL

JAMES A. H. MILLS, ESQ.
ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA
DJIBUTI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

580. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

BARDOLI,
January 26, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have asked Kanu to send you Rs. 30. I am sorry this was overlooked.

You should take it for certain that H. would not have left had it not been for the episode in which you figured. Do not forget the purport of your first letter. You wanted that H. should give up women's education. That has been done. To do anything more is cruelty. Your purpose is served. I do not hold you guilty. You wanted such justice from me, did you not ? If I hand over the papers to Jamnalalji and others and if they hold you guilty, will you accept the verdict? Are you so foolish? But that is the meaning of your letter. You write that you will accept the verdict if they hold you guilty. This statement lacks wisdom. When I have acquitted you, what more is there for you to do? But I have done more for you. I pronounced you not guilty and made H. give up Dakshinamurti and women's education. What more would you gain by making him accept his guilt? A prisoner is punished but he is never forced to confess the guilt. You are really exhibiting your foolishness. Have you or have you not given me the right to call you foolish? Write your reply with an easy mind. If you insist, I shall certainly give trouble to Jamnalalji and others.

I advise you to forget about H. and absorb yourself in your

work. If you do not find the food suitable, cook yourself. It will take 15 minutes in a cooker.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 948. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

581. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

January 26, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You will have received my letter. Your question is pertinent. But the solution is not to be found in what happened. We must find out why it happened. There is plenty of violence in the Aryan League. Who will counteract it? The substance of what you say is that the Muslims are more given to the gospel of violence. What is the non-violent person to do when two violent parties fight? When he is powerless to do anything he should pray, keep away from the conflict and seek for an opportunity to sacrifice himself.

About *The Hindustan Times* you should speak to Devdas.

The newspapers here do not contain any news of the riot. Was there anything in *The Statesman*?

I have not read the letter to Kripalani. I gave it to Pyarelal to forward to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2475

582. SPEECH AT MEETING OF PEASANTS¹

BARDOLI,
January 26, 1939

I went through the resolutions you have passed before coming here. Let me congratulate both the parties on it. Sardar has said that you have passed these resolutions with God as your witness. You have already had some experience of what happens when a man breaks his vow. I do hope that you will fully adhere to these resolutions. Quite often, when people do not make such resolutions of their own accord, law compels them to do so, which carries with it some kind of punishment. It is a good thing that you have passed these resolutions of your own free will. It is not an ordinary thing that the Dublas have ceased to be serfs and have become free. Of course, these resolutions gave me an impression that the peasants in this part are big businessmen for, through these resolutions they have indeed struck a big bargain. What is so great about paying fair daily wages to the Dublas for the full quota of work whereas formerly they were made to work as much as the owners desired? I am not greatly impressed by it. According to me, any man or woman must get the minimum wage of 8 annas for 8 hours of work. God willing, such conditions will be created in my lifetime. You may find 8 annas a big thing; but it really is not so big. But you have fixed 3 annas as the wages for a woman labourer, whereas you will take the same amount of work from her. Do you think

¹ The meeting, with an attendance of between 10 and 15 thousand landowners and Halis or Dublas, was held to approve the recommendations made by a committee of farmers and village workers, formed in the previous year to consider the question of the emancipation of Halis whose status was that of serfs. The committee had made the following recommendations:

(1) Every Hali to be emancipated, the wages from 26th January 1939 to be as 4/6 (for males) and as. 3/- (for females); (2) every Hali who has worked on his master's farm for twelve years or more is automatically free from all his debts to him; (3) such Halis as may have worked for less than twelve years to have credited to their account a twelfth of the debt for every year that they have worked; (4) an anna per day to be deducted from the wage, in the case of men, until the debt is repaid; (5) everyone to be declared free from debt on expiry of 12 years, whether the debt be paid or not; (6) every debt to expire with the debtor's life; (7) a Dubla may engage himself on an annual wage of Rs. 80, and Rs. 15 may be deducted from his wage for repayment of a debt due if any; (8) a village committee to be appointed to settle all questions pertaining to debts.

those people will run away from you? Hence, even while congratulating you, I tell you that you have struck a bargain.

I would like to insist that you should not take the resolution too literally. Do not think that you can never pay more than 4_ annas and 3 annas. The very fact that you have made them free implies that they are free to work wherever they choose and earn the wages they can. The great significance of this resolution is that they will remain where they are and your relations will be pure. The fact that a Dubla ceases to be a serf and becomes a ploughman does not mean that the farmer will not plough the land. The plough will belong to the farmer and the Dubla will use it for him. But the real ploughman, in fact, is the tiller of the land and the ideal condition will be that in which both the farmer and the serf become ploughmen. Further, the resolution does not mean that even when it has been a good year and there are bumper crops you will pay only 4_ annas as wages. If you do so, I would say that you have not carried out your resolution.

You had taken the great vow of independence in 1921. You have not yet fulfilled the major part of it. What you have done now should have been done in 1921. This means that you delayed what should have been done many years ago. Nevertheless, I congratulate you as this is a meritorious act.

Agriculture is our basic occupation. But we are not very good agriculturists, because our farming does not keep us busy throughout the year. Nor does it give us enough to eat. That is why I have described the charkha as Annapurna and praise it even today as much as I did formerly. Hence, if the farmers want to make progress, they will have to supplement their income by taking to the charkha. Thus you should devote all your free time to the charkha.

I hope the resolutions will be implemented by both the parties.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-2-1939

583. *LETTER TO SIR W. BEAUCHAMP ST. JOHN*

BARDOLI,
January 27, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for yours of the 25th inst.

I am afraid I cannot sympathize with you in your hesitation.

The report Shri Chudgar has sent is too valuable not to be published. My concern was to see that I did not give currency to a report whose accuracy could be successfully challenged.

I am in correspondence with Shri Chudgar and if he adheres to the report he has given to Seth Jamnalalji, I may feel compelled to publish it in the interest of the cause of the people of Jaipur.

I have not understood the meaning of “suitable action” to be taken by you in the event of publication of Shri Chudgar’s version.

Yours sincerely,

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 400-1. Also C.W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

584. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 27, 1939

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I am puzzled. I did not say no. I only explained my predicament. You made the suggestion and I accepted it. You are so unpredictable. If you are not worried over the lack of my contact but only about the refusal from Maulana, why is the letter so full of that topic? But I do not wish to get into an argument with you. There is no need for you to go to Mridula.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 669

585. TELEGRAM TO BISWANATH DAS

[Before *January 28, 1939*]¹

PRIME MINISTER

CUTTACK

THAKKAR BAPA SAYS TALCHER REFUGEES STARVING AND
SUFFERING. WANT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. PLEASE GIVE RELIEF.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ From the reference to the plight of Talcher refugees; *vide* “The States”, 23-1-1939

586. TELEGRAM TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

JANKIDEVI BAJAJ
WARDHA

DON'T GO JAIPUR NOW TILL CERTIFIED BY DOCTORS
AND ME AS PERFECTLY FIT AND CHEERFUL

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 210

587. DRAFT OF STATEMENT FOR JAMNALAL BAJAJ¹

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

The Prime Minister of Jaipur is reported to have vowed to crush the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal and me. In pursuance of that policy I have been put out of harm's way as they may think. Presently the same fate will overtake the members of the Mandal. But if we are true to ourselves and our self-imposed trust, though our bodies may be imprisoned or otherwise injured, our spirits shall be free.

As I go into enforced silence let me reiterate what we are fighting for. Our goal is responsible government under the Maharaja but our civil disobedience has not been taken up so as to influence the Durbar to grant us responsible government. Civil disobedience is aimed at asserting the elementary right that belongs to all societies, to speak and write freely, to assemble in meetings, to take out processions, to form associations, etc., so long as these activities remain non-violent. We have been forced to resort to civil disobedience because this elementary right has been denied to us. The moment this right is restored civil disobedience should be withdrawn.

Hence there is no question as yet of mass civil disobedience or a no-tax campaign.

Seeing that the Mandal has been virtually declared an illegal

¹ This was to be issued by Jammnalal Bajaj at the time of his arrest. The draft in Gandhiji's hand is available in G.N. 3078.

body, let us regard our existing register to be abrogated. A new register should be opened if possible within the State and without if necessary. Those only will become members who know that there is risk today even in becoming members of the Mandal. It is to be hoped, however, that there will be a large number of Jaipurians living within the State or without who will become members of the Mandal and thus at least show their disapproval of the ban.

The names, addresses and occupations of these members will be registered and published from time to time.

The affairs of the Mandal will in my absence be managed by . . .¹ and they will exercise all the powers of the Mandal and the President as if the constitution was in operation. This council of five will have the right to substitute others in their respective places. In all matters of civil disobedience the council will whenever necessary seek and be guided by the advice of Gandhiji.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 403-4. Also G.N. 3078

588. *DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF MUNICIPALITIES AND LOCAL BOARDS*²

BARDOLI,
January 28, 1939

The first question they asked related to the question of taxation:

The Congress is pledged to the policy of reducing the burden of taxation. Yet when Congressmen enter the local boards and municipalities, they required more money for carrying out their programme of beneficent municipal activity. How can this be done without fresh taxation which the people naturally dislike? How is the dilemma to be solved?

A. If I were a tax-payer within the jurisdiction of a local board or a municipality, I would refuse to pay a single pie by way of additional taxation and advise others to do likewise unless the money we pay is returned fourfold. Those who enter local boards and municipalities as people's representatives go there not to seek honour or to indulge in mutual rivalries, but to render a service of love, and that does not depend upon money. Ours is a pauper country. If our

¹ Omission as in the source

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Municipal Service and Non-violence". About 200 representatives of municipalities and local boards had met Gandhiji to discuss the various knotty problems relating to their day-to-day work.

municipal councillors are imbued with a real spirit of service, they will convert themselves into unpaid sweepers, Bhangis and road-makers, and take pride in doing so. They will invite their fellow-councillors, who may not have come on the Congress ticket, to join them, and if they have faith in themselves and their mission, their example will not fail to evoke response. This means that a municipal councillor has to be a whole-timer. He should have no axe of his own to grind. The next step would be to map out the entire adult population within the jurisdiction of the municipality or the local board. All should be asked to make their contribution to municipal activity. A regular register should be maintained. Those who are too poor to make any money contribution but are able-bodied and physically fit, can be asked to give their free labour. Real India consists not of a few big cities and our Presidency towns, but of seven lakhs of villages. It is there that the real problems of India have to be faced and solved. We require better roads, better sanitation, better drinking water supply for our villages.

We shall never be able to get through even a fraction of this stupendous work if we proceed on a money basis. But India has an inexhaustible reserve of manpower. If we can mobilize that, we can transform the entire look of the country in an incredibly short time.

And the charkha is a means *par excellence* for effecting this mobilization of our labour resources. It is a natural symbol of non-violence too, which is the soul of all voluntary life-giving corporate activity. The popularization of the charkha thus has a definite place in any scheme of municipal work, whether it relates to the liquidation of rural unemployment and the consequent penury and appalling conditions of existence under which vast sections of our rural population live, or whether it refers to the amelioration of slum life that is the shame of our big cities.

But this presupposes a living faith in the charkha, a faith that should lead to an intelligent study and mastering of the science of spinning and its allied processes. As it is, we today love to kill our time by going to cinemas and picture houses or even in idle talk. Pursuits of making money without work interest us, but not the charkha. Yet it is my faith that we shall advance towards our goal of non-violence to the extent we succeed in universalizing the charkha.

By following the plan of work outlined above, we shall be able to return to the ratepayers whatever taxes they may have paid,

multiplied manifold, in the form of vastly improved services and municipal amenities, and they will not grudge the levying of additional taxes, too, should that become necessary.

A member of the Jambusar Municipality asked: "In our municipality there are 17 members, out of whom eight have been returned on the Congress ticket, the remaining nine are non-Congress. They can always outvote us and thwart our plans. What should we do?"

G. That should present no problem. If they want to proceed in the orthodox style and fill up their time with speechifying and so on and so forth, you need not imitate them, or waste your time like them; you may just put in your appearance at these meetings, but need not waste your time by taking part in idle controversy. Instead, you should occupy all your time with useful service of the ratepayers, by yourself wielding the bucket and the broom, by working with the spade and the basket, by nursing and rendering medical aid to the sick and ailing, and by teaching the ratepayers who are illiterate, and their children, to read and write. As a result, two things may happen. Either your opponents will be infected by your example and will align themselves with you and there will be an end to all controversy. Or the ratepayers will learn to know the sheep from the goats, and at the next election all the seventeen seats will be filled by Congressmen. That is the non-violent way of liquidating opposition. It eliminates all conflict and clash and makes our way clear irrespective of what the other party may or may not do.

Q. Since in many places in Gujarat the National Week is being observed by inviting the people to take part in rural uplift or municipal service work, would it not be desirable to alter the dates of the celebration so that the week should fall within the bright phase of the moon? This will enable mass operations to continue even after nightfall and economize lighting.

A. A multitude of calendars are at present in vogue in different parts of the country. But for a national celebration it is desirable to follow a calendar which is universal. If your civic zeal is not a vain show, beginning and ending with the National Week, you will have a series of municipal service weeks in addition to the National Week. The dates for these weeks in each place can be fixed according to the requirement of the activity suited to that particular place.

"Which form of taxation is better for municipal purposes, direct or indirect?" asked a city father from Surat.

G. Indirect taxation is found to be more popular with the ratepayers, because its incidence is not directly felt. But the direct

taxation has more educative value and will be found more handy when the object is to make the ratepayers municipal-minded.

A friend from Kheda District complained: "We would like to introduce the Wardha scheme of basic education in the primary schools run by local boards. The local bodies are willing, but the Inspectorate and the higher officials of the Education Department are still old-fashioned in their outlook. They have not developed faith in the Wardha principles. How shall we circumvent this handicap?"

G. That does not surprise me. I should be surprised if the higher educational authorities developed faith in the Wardha scheme of education all at once. Faith will follow experience. In the mean time all I can say is that where there is a will there is a way. I do not think there is any legal difficulty in the way of the Education Minister instructing his Director of Public Instruction to help, in every possible way, those who might wish to give effect to the Wardha scheme of education. The C. P. Ministry has not found any difficulty in making the Education Department to fall into line with them. But if a legal or technical difficulty is discovered, it can be removed in a legal way.

Q. In our schemes for adult education, should the aim be to promote the spread of literacy or to impart 'useful knowledge'? What about the education of women?

A. The primary need of those who are come of age and are following an avocation, is to know how to read and write. Mass illiteracy is India's sin and shame and must be liquidated. Of course, the literacy campaign must not begin and end with a knowledge of the alphabet. It must go hand in hand with the spread of useful knowledge. But municipal bodies should beware of trying to ride two horses at a time, or else they are sure to come a cropper.

As for illiteracy among the women, its cause is not mere laziness and inertia as in the case of men. A more potent cause is the status of inferiority with which an immemorial tradition has unjustly branded her. Man has converted her into a domestic drudge and an instrument of his pleasure, instead of regarding her as his helpmate and better half ! The result is a semi-paralysis of our society. Woman has rightly been called the mother of the race. We owe it to her and to ourselves to undo the great wrong that we have done her.

"You have expressed varying opinions on certain subjects at different times," asked a friend from Kapadwanj, Kheda Dist. "These are sometimes exploited by our opponents to oppose our current policies. What should we do under these circumstances?"

G. The contradiction in these cases is only in appearance and

easily capable of being reconciled. A safe rule to follow would be that the latest utterance, in order of time, should be given precedence over all the previous ones. But no utterance of mine, whether late or early, need bind you if it does not appeal to your heart and head. That would not mean that my standpoint was wrong. But it would be wrong to accept a standpoint which you cannot appreciate or assimilate.

Q. How to deal with people who commit nuisance by using any and every place for evacuations? They defend the practice on the ground that it is enjoined by their religion. Again, how to cope with the nuisance of flies, mosquitoes, rabid dogs and monkeys, etc.? Their extermination is objected to by some on the ground of ahimsa.

A. With regard to the first, there are two ways of dealing with the problem—the apparently violent, and the non-violent. You can enforce the penalty of law against those who may infringe the laws of sanitation. I have used the word ‘apparent’ advisedly. Religious freedom, like liberty, becomes licence when it is indulged in at the expense of the health and safety of others, or in contravention of the principles of decency or morality. If you want to claim unrestricted and absolute liberty for yourselves, you must choose to retire from society and take to solitude. I call the practice of making evacuations anywhere and everywhere, regardless of the health and convenience of others, a travesty of ahimsa. Where there is filth, whether physical or moral, there is no ahimsa.

The other way is to seek out the religious heads of the sects that indulge in these insanitary practices and to try to touch their heart and reason by patient argument.

As for the nuisance of flies, mosquitoes, street dogs and monkeys, etc., I in my individual capacity may choose to put up with it, but society as a whole cannot afford to do so if it at all wants to exist. These pests are a result of our misdeeds. If I feed the monkeys in a public place and thereby make life impossible for others, it is I who commit *himsa*, and society will have no choice but to exterminate the pest that my *himsa* has created. The criterion of ahimsa is the mental attitude behind an act, not the mechanical act by itself. A citizen who lets loose pests on others by indulging in a mistaken humanitarian sentiment is guilty of *himsa*.

Shrimati Mridulabehn Sarabhai, who is a keen social worker and founder of the Jyoti Sangh, an institution for the uplift and emancipation of women at Ahmedabad, put Gandhiji a few leading questions on the position of women in society: “The awakening of civil and political consciousness among Indian women has created a

conflict between their traditional domestic duties and their duty towards society. If a woman engages in public work, she may have to neglect her children or her household. How is the dilemma to be solved?"

Basing his reply on a celebrated text of the *Gita*, Gandhiji remarked that it was always wrong to run after the 'distant scene' to the neglect of the more immediate duties that might have accrued to one naturally. Neglect of present duty was the way to destruction. The question was whether it is a woman's duty to devote all her time to domestic work. More often than not a woman's time is taken up not by the performance of essential domestic duties but in catering for the egoistic pleasure of her lord and master and for her own vanities.

G. To me this domestic slavery of women is a symbol of our barbarism. In my opinion the slavery of the kitchen is a remnant of barbarism mainly. It is high time that our womankind was freed from this incubus. Domestic work ought not to take the whole of a woman's time.

MRIDULABEHN: At the elections your Congressmen expect all manner of help from us, but when we ask them to send out their wives and daughters to join us in public work, they bring forth all sorts of excuses and want to keep them close prisoners within the four domestic walls. What remedy do you suggest?

G. Send the names of all such antediluvian fossils to me for publication in *Harijan*.

SEGAON, February 7, 1939
Harijan, 18-2-1939

589. LETTER TO GENERAL SHINDE

BARDOLI,
January 29, 1939

DEAR GEN. SHINDE,

I am obliged to you for your letter of the 25th inst.

I want unity between Maharashtrians and Gujaratis. There is no reason whatsoever for a split.

If you have copies of Sardar Vallabhbhai's speeches at Bhadran and Ena,¹ I would like to see them. Sardar is not the man to foment dissensions between the two communities.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The addressee in his letter had charged Sardar Patel with fomenting dissensions between Gujaratis and Maharashtrians by his speeches at Bhadran and Ena and by his Press statements.

590. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

BARDOLI,
January 29, 1939

DEAR MAHARAJA SAHIB,

I had intended long since to thank you for the woollen shawl you were good enough to send me through Shri Rangaswami. I hope that the relations between the State and the people are happy and that the forthcoming reforms will inaugurate an era of peace and prosperity.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAHARAJA OF MYSORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

591. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 29, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your two letters.

How can I order you? I have already said that you are free to do as you like as I do not know what is in your best interest. It would be absurd for me to express any opinion under such circumstances. So the best thing would be for you to do what you think proper. I shall be content with that. I write this neither in grief nor in anger, only with your good at heart.

I hope everyone there is well, including yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 413

592. SPEECH AT MEETING OF PEASANTS¹

VARAD,
[January 29, 1939]²

There can be no two opinions that this is an auspicious occasion. There was a time when we were faced with confiscation of our lands and when they were actually confiscated we declared times without number in our speeches that the Government would not be able to retain them, that they would be returned to the owners. And now these lands have been returned. Do not think that we have been able to get them back by our ceaseless efforts. You would be making a great mistake if you thought so. We have succeeded to the extent we adhered to truth and non-violence. Chitta Patel³ remained firm and never came to Varad. He therefore completely fulfilled his pledge. It is not that Chittabhai alone had taken such a pledge. India abounds in such men and it is owing to their merit alone that we have got back our lands.

But we must know how to lose them again should an occasion arise. To believe that restoration of lands means that we have won swaraj or that we have become fit for it is to commit a sin. It suggests that for winning swaraj we have to tread the path which we have trodden so far. Let us not delude ourselves that nothing remains for us to do now. If we play the game guided by self-interest and pecuniary motives, we are bound to lose. I wish to warn you that a greater ordeal is yet to come.⁴

Let us in all humility pray to God that He may bless us with strength a hundredfold of that which He has bestowed on us up to now, so that we may be able to stand more fiery ordeals. We have had the courage to go to jail, to lose our homes and lands. Let us now pray for the courage to go to the scaffold cheerfully or to become ashes in a consuming fire. When we have exhibited that courage, swaraj will be ours, and no one dare rob us of it. But if we forget the lesson today, we shall lose the battle and be bankrupt. I hope and pray that none of us may be found wanting when the supreme test comes.

Harijanbandhu, 26-2-1939, and *Harijan*, 18-2-1939

¹ On the occasion of restoration of confiscated lands. The text has been extracted from Mahadev Desai's reports in Gujarati and English under the heading "Bardoli".

² From *Gandhi—1915-1948*

³ Chitta Patel had vowed not to enter the British territories until the confiscated lands were restored.

⁴ The paragraph that follows is from *Harijan*.