

1. TELEGRAM TO APPASAHEB PANT

RAJKOT,
May 31, 1939

APPASAHEB PANT,
AUNDH

CAN SEE FOR FEW MINUTES ANY DAY FROM SECOND
TO SIXTH AT BOMBAY EXCEPTING MONDAY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

2. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, RAJKOT

May 31, 1939

It is growing upon me every day that we shall have to lower our key, our demand for full responsible government will have to remain in abeyance for some time. Not that we are not entitled to it, but it is clear to me that we have not the will for it, we are not ready to pay the price. There is an awakening, but it is not the awakening of active non-violence of the brave. Not that I have suddenly realized this point. The realization was there, the will to face the conclusion was not there, and I am reaping the fruit of that weakness of the will. I have been weak-willed ever since Bardoli onwards, but my co-workers deluded themselves into the belief that we had attained the requisite non-violence and I shared their delusion.

I do not repent of this. It is likely that if we had acted otherwise there would not have been the awakening we see today. But that seems to lead one to a rather dreadful conclusion, viz., that compromise with non-violence was necessary for a widespread awakening ! But that is not the conclusion. The conclusion is that God chooses as his instruments the humblest and weakest of His creatures to fulfil Himself.

Today with [this] great realization I would not lead another Dandi March. The breach of the salt laws was a perfect proposition, but violence of the mind had crept in almost from the beginning. All that we had learnt then was that it was expedient to refrain from the

¹ This is extracted from "The Decision and After-III" by Mahadev Desai. Gandhiji was speaking at the Executive Committee meeting.

use of physical violence. This was the non-violence of the calculating Bania, not of the brave Kshatriya. This non-violence of the calculating Bania has not, could not have, carried us far. It could not possibly avail to win and retain swaraj, to win over our opponent who believed in the use of arms.

Today I sense violence everywhere, smell it inside and outside Congress ranks. In 1921 even goonda element outside the Congress was more or less under our control. Perfect non-violence is difficult. It admits no weakness. It made me take the false step of approaching the Viceroy in order to end my fast. It was unpardonable on the part of a general who claims to derive his whole strength from God. But God gave me that courage to retrieve the blunder, and we are all the stronger and purer for it.

I am not tired of repeating again and again that we should be non-violent in thought and word and deed. We had been saying so, but there was no emphasis on the first of these. A dissolute character is more dissolute in thought than in deed. And the same is true of violence. Our violence in word and deed is but a feeble echo of the surging violence of thought in us.

Are you prepared to go with me so far? Does all that I say carry conviction? If so, violence should be eschewed from the innermost of our thoughts. But if you cannot go with me, do go your own way. If you can reach your goal in any other way, do so by all means. You will deserve my congratulations. For I cannot in any case stand cowardice. Let no one say when I am gone that I taught the people to be cowards. If you think my ahimsa amounts to that, or leads you to that, you should reject it without hesitation. I would far rather that you died bravely dealing a blow and receiving a blow than died in abject terror. If the ahimsa of my dream is impossible, you can reject the creed rather than carry on the pretence of non-violence.

Fleeing from battle—*palayanam*—is cowardice, and unworthy of a warrior. An armed fighter is known to have sought fresh arms as soon as he loses those in his possession or they lose their efficacy. He leaves the battle to get them. A non-violent warrior knows no leaving the battle. He rushes into the mouth of *himsa*, never even once harbouring an evil thought. If this ahimsa seems to you to be impossible, let us be honest with ourselves and say so, and give it up.

For me there is no laying down arms. I cannot do so. I am trying to be the warrior of my description and, if God wills, I may be that during this life. Such a warrior can fight single-handed.

Let me give a bit of my own experience in South Africa. When thousands joined the movements, I had not spoken to them, not even seen them. Papers they could not read. My heart was working in unison with them. Living faith is all that is necessary. It is evident that I have not the capacity today to inspire faith in the millions. This needs superior living faith in non-violence and in God. This faith is self-acting, and illumines man's life more and more every day. In the pursuit of my earnest research I may seem to act strangely. I should not grumble if everyone left me in the honesty of his conviction. Let no one stick to me in the blind faith that something will happen. Such [faith] will hinder rather than help the cause.

Harijan, 17-6-1939

3. TALK WITH A MUSLIM FRIEND¹

[May 31, 1939]²

I have been talking of non-violence these 20 years but I have made unlawful compromises with myself. My mind goes back to the days of Khilafat agitation. I had the friendship of thousands of Muslims then. When at a meeting of the Muslim League before 1920 I asked for the supreme sacrifice, two or three names were given by Khwaja Saheb Abdul Majid, but I believed that many would come forward at the right time. And they did. But looking back upon those times I see that I compromised non-violence. I was satisfied with mere abstention from physical violence.³

The fact is I have never placed unadulterated ahimsa before the country. If I had done so, there would have been complete Hindu-Muslim unity. No doubt I kept on saying there would be no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity, but I should have seen that there was no Hindu-Muslim unity because there was not that insistence on unadulterated ahimsa on the part of all, whether Hindu or Muslim. No wonder my new technique puzzles many. But I must go on. If I am right, the puzzles will be solved.

Harijan, 17-6-1939

¹ The talk is extracted from "The Decision and After-III". Mahadev Desai explains that Gandhiji was "speaking on another occasion", and includes this after his report of the speech at Executive Committee meeting of Kathiawar Political Conference; *vide* the preceding item.

² *ibid*

³ Here Mahadev Desai has omitted "instances" given by Gandhiji.

4. MESSAGE TO NAWANAGAR STATE PEOPLE'S
CONFERENCE¹

May 1939

If you cannot do anything else, at least wear pure khadi and identify yourselves with the poor.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Sevamoorti: Shri Virchand Panachand Shah, p. 121

5. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

RAJKOT,
June 1, 1939

VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
DHANWANTARI BHAVAN
RAIPUR, AHMEDABAD

PLEASE MEET KATHIAWAR MAIL² TONIGHT AHMEDABAD STATION.
GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 2905. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

6. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT

ON THE TRAIN,
June 1, 1939

BHAI NANABHAI,

I wanted to write to you as soon as I got your wire, but could not do so. Now I am writing this in the train. The path of those who worship ahimsa under all circumstances is straight. Such a person will not indulge in fighting even in self-defence. But he who does not have that strength has but to run away—that is, play the coward—if he does not attack the attacker. Cowardice is worse than violence because cowards can never be non-violent. So such people should learn to

¹ According to the source, the third session of the Conference was held some time in “May, 1939”.

² By which Gandhiji travelled to Bombay.

defend themselves. Under its constitution members of the Parishad¹ can be said to be wedded to non-violence. But here such ahimsa is of no use. A person who has full faith in non-violence should be a thousand times more fearless than an armed man. Such fearlessness is not gained by joining some organization. Hence every member of the Parishad should find an independent way for himself. It is the duty of every believer in ahimsa to see that cowardice is not propagated in the name of non-violence. So we must frankly tell the common people that we are unable to guide them. It is not proper that they should look to us. If they can independently think of non-violent ways they will not ask us and if they do ask us we should give them only one guidance that they should not be weak under any circumstances. They should learn to deal with the attacker. It is possible that if they observe restraint and if a handful of us can manifest true ahimsa, the attacker too may turn to ahimsa.

Please explain all this to all our workers there. The talk of secret settlement that is going on in Bhavnagar is harmful. Settlement can be with straightforward people. Here there is nothing of the sort.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

7. DISCUSSION WITH TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS DEPUTATION

ON THE TRAIN,
[June 1, 1933]²

QUESTION: What about swaraj that we have been fighting for? How does Gandhiji's faith in non-violence burning brighter than ever help those who want swaraj here and now? Does not the emphasis on non-violence of his conception make of swaraj a very remote vision hardly to be fulfilled?

GANDHIJI: For me, it is true, as I have often declared, ahimsa comes before swaraj. I would not care to get power through anarchy and red ruin, among other things, because I want freedom and power even for the least among the people. This can only be when freedom is won

¹ Kathiawar Political Conference.

² The discussion is extracted from "The Decision and After—IV". According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-6-1939, the deputationists, Pattom Thanu Pillai, Verghese and Philipose, were travelling with Gandhiji from Rajkot to Bombay. *Vide* also "Statement on Travancore", 4-6-1939.

³ *ibid*

through non-violence. In the other case the weak must go to the wall, only the physically strong and fit will remain to seize and enjoy power.

But you too cannot help putting ahimsa before everything else if you really mean business. *Ahimsa must be placed before everything else while it is professed. Then alone it becomes irresistible.* Otherwise it will only be an empty hulk, a thing without potency or power. A soldier fights with an irresistible strength when he has blown up his bridges, burnt his boats. Even so it is with a soldier of ahimsa.

Q. But how will this lowering of the pitch work out in action? How will it help us in attaining our goal of responsible government?

G. Today when we talk of responsible government, it frightens the States authorities. The Paramount Power too do not like it. They think it will result in red ruin and anarchy. The argument is unsound but let us give them credit for honesty. If you follow my advice, therefore, you will say, 'We, for the time being, forget swaraj. We shall fight to vindicate the elementary rights of the people, to remove corruption.' In short, you will concentrate your attention on details of administration. The authorities won't be frightened, and it will give you the substance of responsible government. That has been the history of all my work in India. If I had only talked of swaraj, I would have come a cropper. By attacking details we have advanced from strength to strength.

What did I do at the time of the Dandi March? I reduced our demand for complete independence to my eleven points.¹ Motilalji was at first angry with me. "What do you mean by lowering the flag like this?" he said. But he soon saw that if those points were conceded, independence would stand knocking at our door.

Let me explain to you the working of my mind. As I have already told you, I had thought that responsible government in the States was within easy reach. We have now found that we can't at once take the masses with us along non-violent lines. You say that violence is committed by a few hooligans only; but capacity to obtain non-violent swaraj presupposes capacity on our part to control the hooligans too as we temporarily did during the non-co-operation days. If you had complete control over the forces of violence and were ready to carry on the fight with your back to the wall in defiance of the Paramount Power, looking neither to me nor to the Congress outside

¹ *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

for guidance or help, you would not need to lower the key temporarily even. In fact you will not be here to seek my advice at all.

But that is not your case, on your own admission. Nor, so far as I know, is it the case anywhere else in India. Otherwise people would not have suspended civil disobedience in many places even without my asking.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

8. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF VICTUALLERS' ASSOCIATION'

BOMBAY
[June 2, 1939]²

Gandhiji congratulated them on the restrained language of their representation. They had every right to go to him, as he was specially attached to the Parsis [He said:]

What I gather from your representation is that far from being opposed in principle to prohibition, you have pointed out the difficulties and hardships involved. But I am afraid you have come to the wrong man. I never interfere with the work of the Ministries. But on prohibition I am keener even than the Ministers. I confess I have not studied the economic aspect of the question. With me it is a creed and I would, if I could, fulfil it at any cost. If I had the administration in my own hands, I should study all the figures you have given. I am sure the Ministers have studied them, and you should approach them. They would gladly discuss the whole question with you and try to show the way out the difficulties you have pointed out.

¹ This and the following item are extracted from "The Anti-Prohibition Deputations" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that "the first deputation consisted of representatives of toddy, country liquor and foreign liquor dealers". Their representation addressed itself mainly to the hardships and sufferings that would be the result of several thousand Parsi families being thrown out of employment; their being reduced to poverty and even bankruptcy; illicit sales and clandestine breaches of the law; impossibility of disposing of 50 to 60 lakhs of rupees worth of material by August 1; the loss on having to dispose of costly furniture. *The Bombay chronicle*, 3-6-1939, reports that the deputation, which met Gandhiji in the afternoon, was led by M. B. Baria. It included R. R. Patel, R. D. Shroff, Phirozeshaw Shroff, J. D. Crawford and M. M. Surve.

² From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-6-1939; also *Gandhi—1915—1948*

They also raised the question of short notice. The Congress Election Manifesto,¹ they said, did not contain this programme, and the decision to introduce it in August had come upon them as a bolt from the blue. In reply to this Gandhiji said:

The Congress Election Manifesto is principally a political document and naturally does not contain the prohibition programme. But prohibition has been in the forefront of the Congress programme since 1920. With me it has been a passion ever since my close contact with the Indian immigrants in South Africa and also with the South Africans. I have seen with my own eyes the terrible scourge drink can be. It has ruined people morally, physically, economically and it has destroyed the sanctity and happiness of the home. My heart bleeds as I think of the disaster that comes in its wake and I have really pined for the immediate introduction of prohibition. When the Congress decided to accept offices, I thought it had a golden opportunity to introduce it at once, but it was the Ministers who pleaded for fixing the time-limit at three years. To my mind, therefore, there is no question of short notice. It is coming several years too late. Hundreds and thousands of women have in the past picketed liquor shops, suffered insults and assaults. In one case a woman volunteer was so hit on the forehead that the evil effect still persists. There was no compulsion. It was all peaceful persuasion, and it had succeeded so remarkably that in some provinces the excise revenue was almost reduced to zero. As for its effects here in India I would like you to study the condition of workmen in factories, and I would like to tell you also the boon prohibition has been to them in Ahmedabad.

One of the gentlemen in the deputation said that 12 to 15 thousand tappers would be adversely affected and that fresh toddy had great medicinal value.

It is *nira* you are referring to. For I agree it is a refreshing drink, and we make *gur* out of it.²

If the tappers took to tapping the juice for *gur*-making, there was no question of their unemployment. In Bengal tons of *gur* was prepared from *nira* and in South India *arrack* was prepared from *gur* made out of fresh juice.

But the gentleman maintained that it was impossible to draw fresh *nira* from a tree more than ten times during a season and that *gur* was not a feasible proposition. Gandhiji said that the evidence in his possession was to the contrary. He would, however, inquire.

Harijan, 10-6-1939

¹ Vide Appendix "Extracts from the Congress Election Manifesto", 22-8-1936.

² Then Gandhiji offered them a plate of palm-juice and date-palm juice.

9. INTERVIEW TO PARSI DEPUTATION¹

[June 2, 1939]²

The gravamen of their charge was that the prohibition policy was tantamount to coercion as the community had for centuries indulged in drink without being any the worse for it. There was the argument of dislocation of trade and financial and economic structure of the province, of the hardships it would cause to traders and tappers, and the interference with the religious rites of the people. They said they also resented the distinction between Asiatics and non-Asiatics, and even suggested that not only the Parsis but Mussalmans and Hindus were also opposed to the policy!

Some of the gentlemen have been friends of Gandhiji for years, especially Sir Cowasji. And so he was the most vehement in his attack, but the utmost friendliness prevailed during the discussion.

COWASJI: Drunkenness is bad, not drink. And for the sake of a few who drink, why penalize the whole community? I take two or three glasses of sherry every day and I know hundreds of others who talk of prohibition but who do drink and will do so in spite of prohibition.

There was obvious defiance in his voice, but Gandhiji disarmed it by ultimately reminding Sir Cowasji how he had helped him (Gandhiji) in the past at various junctures, and how he expected him to stand by him at this!

Sir Cowasji had a hearty laugh.

Mr. Khareghat, the veteran temperance reformer who, said Gandhiji, reminded him of Dadabhai by his silvery beard, entered a curious plea :

I do not drink, nor am I dealer in drinks. But this policy will ruin thousands, and I want you to realize your error and do as you did in Rajkot. I would then honour you with all my heart. According to our religion it is the duty of the host to offer the guest good bread and good wine.

GANDHIJI: But it must be unfermented wine. Whatever it may be, one wonders how this can be a *religious duty* at all! What would a poor man do?

SAKLATWALA: I do not drink, and thank God I have enough property to enable me to pay the property tax. But why should others regulate my life? I tell you, although, I do not drink, if someone came and told me I might not drink, he would make my blood boil.

GANDHIJI (smilingly): Even so you do not steal, and yet there is the law against thieving. Would you therefore steal to defy the law?

¹ Mahadev Desai explains: "The deputation was headed by Sir Cowasji Jehangir and its other members were Sir J. C. Koyaji, Sir H. P. Modi, Messrs Khareghat, A. D. Shroff and Saklatwala." *Vide* also the preceding item.

² From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-6-1939

H. P. MODI: We do not believe in prohibition. Why do you tempt us to break the law? We want to be exempted. Drink has become part of our social habit, our daily life, and we *want* to drink.

GANDHIJI: AS I told¹ the deputation that preceded you, you have come to the wrong man. There is a wide gulf between you and me. It was Dadabhai Naoroji who taught me prohibition and the distinction between prohibition and temperance. Individual liberty is allowed to man only to a certain extent. He cannot forget that he is a social being, and his individual liberty has to be curtailed at every step. I would appeal to you to consider one thing. What is your population? One lakh at the most in a population of 35 crores. You have become famous in the world not as residents of Persia but as Indians. I want you to consider not in terms of your one lakh but in terms of India, not the narrow interest of your whole community but of the large interests of the whole country. How can you interrupt and ruin a noble experiment? You say you cannot get rid of this, so very much you are wedded to it! You are not fair to yourselves there. You have given up so many things. You gave up your language and adopted Gujarati, you changed your dress, you changed many of your manners and customs. Why must you then stick to this one infirmity? You may plead your weakness, but for Heaven's sake don't advance the plea of individual liberty. There you have given away the whole case. You have sacrificed much for India, sacrifice this bad habit too. I have seen men and women wallowing in gutters in South Africa and families ruined.

H. P. MODI: Where do you see the ruin in India?

[GANDHIJI:] I tell you I have seen it with my own eyes. There is the tragic case of my own son. 60,000 men in Ahmedabad are blessing the prohibitionist. I claim that the moral conscience of the public is with me. The issue between us is the narrowest possible. Do you want to press the question of a few individual consciences to the extent of ruining a whole country?

But are there not other evils? There is gambling, for instance.

None so disastrous as this, and this breeds the rest. But I am for the abolition of gambling too. This evil, however, ruins the victim body and soul.

The same thing would happen if you were to overeat ! You are talking of the 60,000 mill-hands in Ahmedabad. Why not listen to the appeal of 50,000 Parsis of Bombay? Drunkenness is unknown amongst us.

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

Let us assume that for a moment. It proves that you are temperate. Well, then why will you not carry temperateness a little further and co-operate in this the greatest of all moral reforms in India? And remember there is ample provision for those who need drink for their health or religious rites. I suggest your working along these lines but not seeking to ruin the reform.

But why draw the line between Europeans and Indians?

Call it my weakness, and agitate for including the Europeans too in the prohibition. They will, like us, profit by being included in the general law. Their health will not suffer for they will have all the drink they may need for their health.

Harijan, 10-6-1939

10. TELEGRAM TO SIR RAZA ALI¹

June 3, 1939

SIR RAZLI

CECIL

SIMLA

AM CONSTANT TOUCH OUR COUNTRYMEN SOUTH AFRICA.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

11. STATEMENT ON TRAVANCORE²

BOMBAY

June 4, 1939

I have had prolonged conversations³ with Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai, Shri Verghese and Shri J. Philipose over the situation in Travancore. My rich experiences in Rajkot show me that civil disobedience in Travancore was suspended at the right time. The Rajkot recantation teaches me that it is not enough to have with-drawn the charges

¹ This was in response to a telegram from Sir Sayed Raza Ali, received on June 3, 1939, which read: "Indians meeting Johannesburg tomorrow to consider civil resistance. Am advising them against it as premature India too weak to help them. Please cable your advice Congress care Gabaco Johannesburg."

² In *Harijan*, this appeared under the title "New Technique in Action". The statement was also published in the *The Hindu*, 4-6-1939, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-6-1939.

³ Vide "Discussion with Travancore State Congress Deputation", 1-6-1939.

against Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer. But it is necessary to recognize that Travancoreans have not only to reckon with the Maharaja, but also with his Dewan. I also observe that several Travancorean critics have asserted that suspension has led to greater repression. These critics do not know that suspension was not advised in order to avoid repression, nor even in expectation of its being stopped. It was advised in order to avoid popular violence, no matter how caused or by whom instigated, if it was instigated. It was also advised in order to avoid brutalization of human nature. These two objects may be said to have been attained in a fair measure. It was also advised in order to pave the way for an honourable understanding with the authorities and to educate the people in the true way of ahimsa. These objects have still to be worked for. Here my new light, which I seem to see dimly, enables me to tender advice which, but for the light, I would perhaps not have been able to give with as much confidence as now.

I am convinced that direct negotiations should be opened with the authorities. Hitherto the State Congress people have talked at the authorities and the latter at them. The result has been a widening of the gulf between the two. It would not do for a satyagrahi to argue that the approach must be mutual. That assumes the existence of the spirit of satyagraha in the authorities, whereas satyagraha is offered in respect of those who make no claim to be satyagrahis. Hence the first and the last work of a satyagrahi is ever to seek an opportunity for an honourable approach. Now this is impossible so long as the heart is steeled against a belief even in the possibility, let alone advisability, of such approach. And hitherto the impossibility has been unquestionably assumed. I have been a tacit party to it. I now know better. If the leaders have active ahimsa in them, they must cultivate a belief in the perfect possibility and necessity of such approach. And if they have that belief, the way will surely be open to them. In my own person, it is well known, I have always acted on that principle. In making such an approach it would be necessary to lower the key of our note. Our aim must remain what it is, but we must be prepared to negotiate for less than the whole so long as it is unmistakably of the same kind and has in it inherent possibility of expansion. I have found that nowhere, with the only exception of Aundh¹, are the Princes ready to part with

¹ The reformed Aundh constitution became law on January 21. It aimed at total transfer of power to the people.

all the power in favour of the people. Nor is the Paramount Power anxious for the people in the States to receive full responsible government. If I interpret its mind correctly, assuming that an institution can have a mind, it would be sorry if any State of importance copied the example of Aundh. But, what is most important of all, the States people themselves, as a mass, are nowhere prepared to pay the price. There is no mistaking the awakening that has taken place in the States. But it is not enough for the great purpose to be attained. It will be well to recognize this fact. In aiming beyond our capacity we are likely to lose all. I would give much to have in all the States a reign of law instead of the reign of a person or persons, however well-meaning they may be. I can then see my way to build up responsible government on the solid foundation. But responsible government, which is only a gift without the will and the power of the people behind it, will be a mere paper responsibility, hardly worth the paper on which it may be printed.

The second object of suspension is closely related to the foregoing. If it is a fact that the atmosphere for immediate responsible government among the States is not propitious and that the people are not ready to pay the price, it follows that they should have the proper training for it. I am not likely, lightly and in the near future, to advise mass satyagraha anywhere. There is neither adequate training nor discipline among the people. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the people at large should pass one or more positive tests. Mere abstention from physical violence will not answer our purpose. In the centre of this programme of positive tests I unhesitatingly put the spinning-wheel and all it means. If there is quick response, this can be a short course. But it may well be a long course if the people do not make an enthusiastic response. I know no other programme than the fourfold constructive programme of 1920. If the people do not take it up whole-heartedly, it is proof enough for me that they have no ahimsa in them, or not the ahimsa of my conception, or, say, they have no confidence in the present leadership. For me there is no other test but what I have ever put before the nation since 1920. The new light tells me that I must not weaken as I have done before in exacting the discipline I have mentioned. I can quite clearly see my way to advise civil disobedience wherever the conditions mentioned are amply fulfilled. That civil disobedience will be individual but in terms of ahimsa far more effective than any mass civil disobedience of the past. I must own that the past movements have been more or less tainted. I have no

regret for them. For I knew no better then. I had the sense and humility to retrace my steps whenever I discovered blunders. Hence the nation has gone forward from step to step. But the time has come for a radical change in the direction indicated.

Thus my opinion on Travancore has resolved itself in the enunciation of my present mental condition and its reaction on the Travancore situation.

To sum up: (1) suspension of mass civil disobedience should be indefinite; (2) there should be the will among the State Congress people to open a way to honourable negotiation with the authorities; (3) there should be no anxiety about those satyagrahis who are in prison or new ones. If the spirit of satyagraha is rightly assimilated, these imprisonments and disabilities should hearten the people; (4) the pitch of the immediate demands should be lowered if necessary, in order to quicken the progress towards the final goal; (5) the condition precedent to any civil disobedience is the fulfilment by the general mass of the constructive programme as a test, if nothing more, of their coming under the discipline of the State Congress.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that it is open to the workers to reject my advice. They should adopt it only if it appeals to their heads and their hearts and tallies with their own reading of the local situation of which I own they must be better judges.¹

BOMBAY, June, 4, 1939

Harijan, 10-6-1939

12. TELEGRAM TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYER

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY

June 5, 1939

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI
TRIVANDRUM

HOPE IF STATE CONGRESS ADOPT MY ADVICE² YOU WILL
MAKE GENEROUS RESPONSE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ In "The Decision and After—IV", Mahadev Desai explains that the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress passed the following resolution: "We accept Gandhiji's advice, and our acceptance fully warranted by the circumstances; but the responsibility for acceptance is entirely our own."

² *Vide* the preceding item.

13. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

SIMLA

NOT EVEN ABLE WRITE THREE DAYS. ALL WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3916. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7225

14. TELEGRAM TO PHIROZSHAH DAMRI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

PHIROZSHAH DAMRI

BHAVNAGAR

READ DAILY PRESS AND "HARIJAN". DOING MY BEST.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Many thanks for your letter of 30th ultimo and telegram.

I am pleading with the Aryasamajists to give up civil disobedience and with you to grant their minimum request. It is unfortunate that the talks with Mr. Hollins broke down.¹ I would still suggest your making a gesture. Of course new constructions should be subject to permission which should be governed by fixed rules and times. You alone can end the agony. Why wait for the constitutional reform?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 6844

¹*Vide* letter to the addressee, "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Hudli-III", 20-4-1937.

16. LETTER TO KUNVAR SIR JAGDISH PRASAD

June 5, 1939

DEAR SIR JAGDISH,

Many thanks for your full letter of 31st ultimo on the S. A. Indian question. I share the hope with you that H. M.'s Government will make effective representations. The expression Commonwealth of Nations, has no meaning for us if what is going on in S. A., Kenya, etc., is its connotation. I had a full chat with Sir Girjashanker¹ . . .²

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

17. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

BOMBAY
June 5, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I wish your function success. You certainly have the blessings of us both.

Blessings from
BAPU

MITHUBEHN PETIT
KASTURBA SEVASHRAM
MAROLI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II

18. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI AND SUMITRA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I received your letter. I am not sending over Kanam to you. You need not therefore wait for the day I leave. You should complete your studies there. The figure of expenditure you have put down for your books is correct. You may take charge of Kanam after you are free from there. Do not worry about him. You may send for Usha.

¹ Sir Girjashanker Bajpai

² Omission as in the source

CHI. SUMI,

I got your letter. Improve your handwriting, but however indifferent it may be, do keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN GANDHI
KANYA GURUKULA
DEHRA DUN
U.P.

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

19. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I got your letter. The aims should not be changed now. Developments in Jaipur and other places may be awaited.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1376

20. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W.

FRONTIER VISIT POSTPONED. REACHING SEGAON EIGHTH
MORNING. EXPECT YOU THERE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3917. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7226

21. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

MIRABEHN
CARE POSTMASTER
MANSEHRA

AGAIN HELD UP¹ TILL END MONTH.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6444. Courtesy: MirabeHN. Also G.N. 10039.

22. INTERVIEW TO KOLHAPUR STATE PRAJA PARISHAD DEPUTATION

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

That he would not object to any State, which is really ready for it, resorting to the direct step of civil resistance towards achieving responsible government and that he always recommended it to such States but that he would not be willing to allow any State to launch satyagraha unless he was satisfied that the State was fully prepared for it, was the view expressed by Gandhiji. The deputation asked Gandhiji several questions to which he gave answers. The following are some of the questions and answers :

Q. Even in spite of the fact that at present the Kolhapur State authorities are not in a mood to negotiate with the Parishad workers, in view of your latest statement² on the Travancore State should negotiations be started with the State authorities?

A. My statement is meant only for the Travancore State. I know more than anyone that the State authorities in any state are never willing to have negotiations with their people. This I have realized from the talks I had with Mr. Virawala in Rajkot. Negotiations should always be started in an honourable way and for such negotiations there should be a suitable and proper atmosphere. If that is not possible in your State, it is far better for you not to start negotiations at an immature time. I found that opportunity and I have issued that statement concerning Travancore only.

¹ The reference is to the postponement of visit to the Frontier Province; *vide* the preceding item.

² *Vide* "Statement on Travancore", 4-6-1939.

Q. What should the workers do on whom notices have been served by the Durbar to be present before the court failing which their properties will be confiscated?

A. There is no objection in being present before a court. But it would be noble to lose the properties remaining outside the State and to work for ideals, like Garibaldi, Mazzini, etc. It is a sin even to hold properties in a State where no law prevails. Here you may think that the people will think in a different way about your staying outside the State and they will get demoralized. But if you really lose your property and if the people are convinced that you work sincerely for them, you need not fear demoralization of any kind in them. You should always be sure that self-sacrifice carries public support.

The Hindu, 10-6-1939

23. NOTES

LEADERS MUST LEAD

A Cutch worker came in yesterday and said :

Some leaders in Cutch are telling the people there that but for your stopping civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it.

I must deny having stopped civil disobedience in Cutch or for the matter elsewhere. All I gave was my opinion. I had told Shri Mulraj who had come to consult me that the workers should weigh my opinion in the light of their own personal experience of things and adopt it only if it coincided with their own experience. I should be noted that my opinion was not given publicly. If it was not acceptable to the local leaders, it need never have been published. Even now in Cutch as elsewhere responsible leaders are free to act according to their own judgment. We should never develop the requisite qualities of leadership, unless leaders shoulder responsibility and even dare to commit mistakes in acting contrary to the advice of persons like me. Here there would be no question of indiscipline, for I am not in active command anywhere. I give advice as an expert when reference is made to me. Those who seek my advice will wrong themselves and those whom they lead, if they will suppress their own judgment when it seems contrary to mine, especially when mine is not based on direct local knowledge.

JAIPUR AGAIN

Things are moving much too slow in Jaipur. The papers reported that a settlement between the Durbar and the people was imminent

and that Seth Jamnalalji and his co-workers would be free. The matters in dispute seem to be incredibly simple. Civil disobedience was decided upon only to vindicate civil liberty. It was resorted to when even the right of the Praja Mandal to function for the purpose of educating the people in a constitutional manner to agitate for local responsible government in the State was questioned. Some time ago a communique was issued by the Durbar setting forth the conditions for the recognition of the Praja Mandal. Surely the Durbar could easily have adjusted the conditions to suit the civil disobedience leaders. Thus, for instance, the condition that "no office-holder of the local association shall be also an office-holder of any political association outside the State" seems to be vexatious. Why should Seth Jamnalalji be disqualified from being President of the Praja Mandal by reason of his being a member of the Working Committee of the National Congress? Or is the condition specially aimed at him? An explanation is necessary. There are other conditions which too require elucidation. The last two are :

1. That the Association shall undertake to represent aspirations and grievances of the people of the Jaipur State through the proper channel as they develop from time to time under the constitution established by His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur, and

2. That membership shall be restricted to persons domiciled in Jaipur State.

Both are vague. Why should the people not be free to advocate reforms in advance of what the State is prepared to grant? But the meaning of the penultimate condition seems to restrict this natural right. And the term 'domicile' is a risky legal term of little political use. Why should not the homely word 'resident' be used instead?

BOMBAY, June 7, 1939

Harijan, 10-6-1939

24. LETTER TO SATYANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 8, 1939

MY DEAR SATYANAND¹,

Pyarelal has preserved many letters for me to read when I can. I can just now find yours of 31st March in this bundle. I have devoured its contents with avidity simply because it is your letter.

¹ S. E. Stokes, Christian missionary, social worker and close associate of C. F. Andrews; an American naturalized as a British subject, married an Indian Christian and lived in Kotgarh near Simla; a Congress worker; was arrested in 1921.

I never knew that you had gone to Vienna. What was the operation for? Was it not successful? I have never appreciated the homage paid to the Vienna surgeons. However this is all by the way. I do hope your incapacity is not permanent.

As to the great question raised by you, my reading of *Gita* and interpretation of ahimsa is different from yours. I do not believe that killing in war can never be done without anger or zest. As I believe in unadulterated ahimsa I am groping as to India's duty. I am shirking the national solution. I discuss without coming to a decision. My own individual conduct is determined. But I quite agree with you that national can be exactly the opposite. My present mood is to ask the Working Committee to decide for itself. It was not without cause that God prompted me to cease even to remain a four-anna member of the Congress. Hence there is no moral obligation on me to give an opinion. At the same time if I felt the call, I should not hesitate to announce my opinion. As it is I am praying for light.

How is Mrs. Stokes? What are the children doing? How long were you away?

Mahadev was ailing as you might have known. He is fully restored now. He is with me. Pyarelal has stayed in Bombay for his teeth.

We all go back to Bombay on 21st.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON,
June 8, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

Amtulbehn seems to have engrossed herself there in working among the Muslim women. Guide her and give her whatever help you can. She has taken the money with her and will credit it there, but see that the work is not held up for want of funds. Either Sardar or I will remit the money. Mridulabehn¹ is going to talk to Sardar about it.

I have told Ramjibhai that if he does not trust you, he should not expect any guidance from me.

His letter is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ Mridula Sarabhai

[PS.]

We will be returning to Bombay on the 22nd.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9116

26. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
June 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I could not write to you from Bombay. We reached Segaon today. Pyarelal has stayed back for nursing Manjula and attending to his own teeth. We are going again to Bombay on the 20th. Thence probably by the 1st of July to the Frontier.

What I wrote¹ to you was not in the spirit of fault-finding. It was to give expression to my own feelings. The desire to stay with me is not at all a wrong thing. It is only when such desire comes in the way of service that it should cause concern. There was no such problem in your case.

You have to stay there with Balkrishna as long as it suits him. Balvantsinha says you can go to Panchgani whenever necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4318

27. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 9, 1939

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter and enclosures make sad reading. Distribution of a few thousand rupees among the people would be a false salve for conscience. The work you may provide would be a fraud for they will eat only Rangoon rice. The case presented by Hemprabha is one not for finding temporary work for a few but it is for an agitation for banishing rice mills and Rangoon rice. To this end you should see Subhas Babu, Dr. Ray, and the Premier. You will not hesitate to see the other Ministers if found necessary. You should put before them a faithful picture of the condition of the villagers and trace the cause of the misery. You will equally strongly present your remedy. You will

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Chandan Parekh", 24-5-1939.

find perhaps that all the parties will take up the cause and you will have solved a ticklish problem without much difficulty. Should it prove otherwise you will still have done the only possible thing. Your diagnosis must be faultless and your remedy perfect. Could you give the villagers any of the processes in match-making, road-making, tank-digging or any other work of public utility?

Who are the villagers? If they are Muslims your work will be easier. If my idea does not commend itself to you and you need funds for starting relief, you should go to the Marwari Relief Society and Ghanshyamdasji.

Tell Hemprabha that I read up the papers she sent me regarding Annada. Annada has a reply for everything she has to say.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO BINODE KANUNGO¹

[On or after *June 9, 1939*]²

What can I do about the undoubtedly improper appointments? If a proper complaint is made before the Working Committee something may be possible. Where public opinion is unsound and non-existent the things you describe will happen.

Yours.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

29. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
June 10, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. Absence of wire from you had prepared me for your 'No'. Though we were all expecting you last evening for certain and I had made all sorts of preparations for you, your letter makes it clear that you did well in not coming, not because I had no work for you but because your work there which is also mine is more

¹ The letter was in reply to a joint letter dated June 9 from Binode Kanungo and Gurchandra Das who had protested against the appointment of Gobinda Misra, Bansidhar Ratha and Godassi Mahapatra as Inspectors of Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee.

² *ibid*

important than what I had devised for you. It would be better for you to be with me in August when I expect to return from the Frontier.

I am not going to Kashmir unless J. L. comes and takes me there.

I wish you will cease to think that I misunderstand you. Whatever be the truth, you *must* be cheerful.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Sharda came in today from Surat.

From the original: C.W. 3918. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7227

30. MEANING OF PROHIBITION

His Grace the Archbishop of Bombay has been kind enough to send me letter¹ and a copy of his address to the Rotary Club against prohibition. I have read both with the respect and attention their author deserves.

My study of His Grace's letter and address at once revealed a serious flaw for which I must be held primarily responsible. The word prohibition is a misnomer for what the Bombay Government and the other Provincial Governments where the Congress controls the Ministries are doing regarding the liquor trade. What the Governments are in reality doing is not prohibiting drink but they are closing liquor shops which are absolutely under Government control. The shop-owners have no statutory protection save what they get from year to year. Every owner of a liquor shop knows that his licence may not be renewed next year. He may be even outbidden if he possesses a country liquor or toddy licence as these are auctioned every year. Therefore the licensees have no vested interest in their licences beyond the year for which they are held and then too subject to the observance of the stringent conditions laid down for them. Therefore I claim that the law for the abolition of liquor licences "is an ordinance of reason for the common good made and promulgated for the community by the competent authority." All that the State is doing is to remove from the drinker the temptation or the facility which the State considers is harmful to him except for medicinal purposes.

The Archbishop says: "To win the allegiance of body, of mind

¹ The letter dated June 1, from T. D. Roberts, the Archbishop, was published separately in the same issue of *Harijan*.

and of heart needed by any law . . . that law must be just”, that is to say, “the conscience of millions must say this is just.” I have no difficulty in endorsing the proposition. Viewed in the manner indicated by me the State does not need to carry with it the conscience of millions. But I hold that India is the one place in the world where the conscience of the millions would justify the law of abolition of the State trade in intoxicating liquors and drugs. There is no need to take any referendum. It consists in the overwhelming number of legislators approving of the law. Let me remind His Grace of the past history of this great reform movement. It began with the grand old man, Dada-bhai Naoroji. In 1920 it became an integral part of the Congress constructive programme. In the absence of political power the Congress arranged an elaborate programme of picketing liquor and opium shops. In this programme thousands of men and women took part all over India. All communities including Parsis took part in the picketing programme. Attempts were made even in the days of Non-cooperation to induce the authorities to undertake the abolition legislation. Without exception they pleaded financial inability, never the impropriety of so-called interference with the right of the people to be supplied with liquor by the State. Indeed one Minister told me that If I would help him to raise the revenue needed to make up for the loss caused by the drop in the drink revenue, he would introduce prohibition at once. It is an open secret that the reform has been delayed simply for the sake of the revenue. In other words, the people have been tempted to drink for the sake of raising the revenue. The black history of the opium trade bears out the truth of this statement.

Those who speak in the name of individual freedom do not know their India. There is as much right of a person to demand drinking facilities from the State as there is to demand facilities for the supply of public women for the satisfaction of his animal passion. I hope that those who pride themselves on their moderation in drinking will not feel hurt by the illustration I have taken. In this country we are not used to legislation for the regulation of vice. But in countries like Germany the houses of women who sell their virtue are licensed. I do not know what will be more resented in those countries, the stopping of the licences for the houses of ill fame or the houses of drink. When woman realizes her dignity she will refuse to sell her virtue and those members of the sex who are jealous of its honour will move heaven and earth to have legalized prostitution abolished. Will it be then contended that such abolition will go hard with the prostitutes

and their dependants whose only means of livelihood depended upon this calling?

I plead that social workers cannot work effectively so long as licensed liquor dens continue to lure the drinkers to enter them. It is curious that in all India any opposition to prohibition comes from the Parsis. They pride themselves on their temperance and resent what they call encroachment upon their personal liberty. They also make it a grievance that the Europeans have been given facilities, thus constituting a bar sinister against Asiatics. I have already pleaded¹ with the Parsis that they should rise superior to their habit and allow the great reform to proceed with their active co-operation. As to the alleged bar sinister let me point out that a bar sinister is imposed from without. In the case in point we the Asiatics voluntarily recognize the limitations of the Europeans. But even they have to secure exemption and submit to regulations. The proper course for the Parsi friends would be to agitate, if they wish, for the removal of the discrimination, not use it for securing similar exemption for themselves.

His Grace has further argued that if the price to be paid for removing the temptation of drink from the drunkard “is out of all proportion to the good attempted”, the reform is harmful. The proposition is well stated, but it is a matter of opinion whether the price to be paid is out of all proportion to the good attempted. I have endeavoured to show that the whole of the excise policy has been not to supply any felt want but to increase the revenue. I would invite the Archbishop to study the history of the excise administration. He will find that all the advanced legislators have condemned the policy in unmeasured terms. The price that is being paid for the attempted reform is insignificant if the history is borne in mind. And even the insignificant price will not have to be paid, if the Archbishop and the influential Parsi friends will lead an agitation for the reduction in the wholly indefensible army expenditure and free the money thus saved for the purpose of bringing about all-India abolition of the liquor traffic. It is an overdue reform. They should congratulate the Bombay Ministers on their courage in levying a tax which was the easiest to be borne. But I have no doubt that the Ministry will gladly remit the tax, if they are helped by the Central Government. Only they could not delay the reform whilst they were fighting the Central Government single-handed. Let all the parties recognize the necessity of the reform

¹ *Vide* “Interview to Parsi Deputation”, 2-6-1939.

and demand justice from the Central Government and the hardship referred to by the Archbishop will be reduced almost to a nullity.

There is a curious question asked of Dr. Gilder¹. To do the Archbishop justice I must copy the question in his own words:

Does he admit that there are several kinds of intoxication which have nothing at all to do with drink? Drunkenness paralyses the reason and wrecks homes. But the intoxication of false ideals is now wrecking whole nations and the world itself. Moreover, does Dr. Gilder admit that such intoxication is highly infectious? He will hardly deny it, knowing as he does the recent history of the nations. Then will he tell us, 'Is India necessarily immune from the infection of false ideals which intoxicate?'

This suggests that the exercise by the State of the undoubted discretion to stop the issue of drink-shop licences is a false ideal which intoxicates and which has infected Dr. Glider. Of course everything is possible in this world. But I venture to suggest that this abolition being a half-century-old national cry is not likely to be a false, intoxicating and infectious ideal. An ideal that is false and intoxicating and highly infectious must in its nature be temporary.

The last paragraph of the address is a question addressed to me. The half dozen lines are packed with suggestions which hardly answer known facts. Thus His Grace suggests, among other things :

Prohibition tends to be regarded by its advocates not as one possible course but as the only possible religion.

Nobody has called it a religion. After having stated the proposition His Grace ends:

The author of the creed of truth and non-violence will not resent this last question: 'Is he still quite certain that all religions are true?'

In any other mouth I would consider the question to be unpar-donable. But I do not expect a busy administrator like the Arch-bishop of Bombay to study all a man like me may say or to verify his quotations. His question to tally with what I have said should have been: 'Is he still quite certain that all the known great religions of the earth are equally true?' My answer to this revised question would be, 'Emph-atically yes.' Only the revised question is obviously irrelevant to the Archbishop's thesis.

His Grace has propounded a conundrum in his letter which now hardly needs a separate answer. So far as I know the Ministers have no qualms of conscience. They are robbing no one. All trade is pre-

¹ Dr. D. D. Gilder, Health and Excise Minister of Bombay

carious. Liquor trade is doubly so everywhere. The Bombay Government are straining every nerve to see that poor traders do not suffer avoidable hardships.

There is one sentence in the letter which makes me pause:

The last few-months have convinced me that the cause of charity in Bombay is threatened with a shattering blow.

All the Archbishop's beliefs have been based, as I think I have shown, on unproved assumptions. I should want proof for this unqualified assertion. If the cause of charity is threatened as stated, I would request him to produce the proof before the Ministers and I doubt not that they will soon set the thing right.

The Archbishop's last paragraph in his letter is worthy of his high office. Only his offer appears to be conditional.¹ Let him and his assistants and disciples unconditionally become total abstainers and help the noble cause of temperance. They will lighten the task of the law-giver and help to make of the abolition of liquor traffic the success that it deserves to be in this land where the public conscience, i.e., the conscience of the dumb millions, is undoubtedly in favour of the abolition.

SEGAON, June 11, 1939

Harijan, 17-6-1939

31. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 12, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your letter.

Of course everything is forgiven you. The fact is I have not felt offended against you. My love burns as bright as ever. It is little worth if it cannot stand the heart pourings of loved ones. I simply gave you my reactions² to your letters. You are as much wanted here as ever. You will find me not in the least altered or if altered, it will be for the better. I shall know how much more tender you are than I had believed you to be.

¹ The Archbishop had said: ". . . I would gladly promise—as so many thousands of priests have done—never to drink alcoholic liquor except at the times when we believe its use enjoined by God in His own temple . . ."

² *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 26-5-1939, "28-5-1939, and 10-6-1939.

Navin is in Bombay tending his sister. His address is care Dr. Shah, Polyclinic, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3919. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7228

32. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters the same day. Not having been able to write to you for three days I have sent you [a] wire in Hindi which I hope you had no difficulty in understanding.

Of course I shall try to soothe. . . ¹. But she is a most difficult person to please. But my effort continues after my own style.

I have written to Sir Kailash². Copy of the letter Mahadev will send with this.

I do hope you are more composed than before.

Syed Mahmud and his children were in Segaoon for three days. They went this evening.

No more just now.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3920. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7229

33. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,³

I got your letter. I do not know how to keep you happy. I have told you that I accept financial responsibility to the tune of Rs. 2,000. I have also told you that you can say you recognized me alone and no

¹ The name is illegible in the source.

² Kailash Narain Haksar, Personal Adviser to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. Gandhiji was to visit Kashmir as Haksar's guest. The visit was, however, cancelled; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-7-1939.

³ The superscription is in Urdu.

one else [as the source of the money]. But I did not say nor did I mean that I would not take the money if Sardar gave it. How can I accept such restrictions? I am not different from Sardar. Why should it take so much of my time to explain such a simple thing? I have said you can spend moderate amounts on medicines. Have I not made everything clear now? Don't make a mountain out of a mole-hill.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

This will be posted on the 14th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 421

34. INTERVIEW TO MYSORE CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES¹

SEGAON,

June 13, 1939

If the proposed reforms are unacceptable as your fear they are likely to be, you may take no part in working them. But regarding offering any opposition to them you must be the best judges. What I have said in my statement² on Travancore does not apply wholly to any single State. You must study the general principles laid down in it and do what you think fit. Do not ask me to judge whether Mysore is well organized or ill-organized. You are the best judges. Facts themselves are opinions. If you are ready, you are ready, irrespective of what I may say.

¹ The interview is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Decision and After—IV" in *Harijan*. *The Hindu* reported: "H. C. Dasappa, President, Mysore Congress, acquainted Gandhiji with the present political situation, struggles undergone, agreements entered into at Sardar Patel's and Mr. Kripalani's intercession, Government's recent denial of agreement itself and how the State Congress had to withdraw from Reforms Committee and constitutional bodies. He referred to uncontradicted forecasts of reforms recommended by Reforms Committee which contemplates introducing a very dilute diarchical form of government and which is quite disappointing and unacceptable. Mr. Dasappa said: 'Considering all circumstances, it is impossible to achieve responsible government without struggle and the country (State subjects) was prepared for carrying the struggle on strictly peaceful lines.'"

² *Vide* "Statement of Travancore", 4-6-1939.

The readiness may be of two kinds. You may be able to embarrass Government sufficiently by making a big enough demonstration which invites shooting or compels them to yield. But the demonstration may not be non-violent as I am defining it. Not that my definition has changed. There is only a difference of emphasis. I formerly compromised non-violence in the belief that thereby India would progress further on the path of non-violence, but that belief was not fulfilled. So the non-violence that you display may appear to be effective but it may not be unadulterated non-violence in thought, word and deed. If it is not, I should rule it out. What I would *not* rule out today I cannot say. I have come up to the point of saying, in the language of the Vedic seer, '*neti*', '*neti*' ('not this', 'not this'), but I have not yet been able to say, 'it is this', 'it is this'. That is because I have not seen the full light yet.¹

That school says, 'We believe both in violence and non-violence, for sometimes non-violence answers, and we resort to non-violence because it appears to be best under the circumstances.' But for me means and ends are convertible terms, and non-violence and truth are therefore the end, so long as the end conceived has not been attained. But in Rajkot I compromised the means; I was weighed in my own scales and found wanting. But no harm has been done because I retrieved my error immediately I saw it. My surrender was not due to weakness, it was a surrender out of the fullness of strength. It came out of non-violence which for me is the weapon of the bravest and not of the weak. I will not be guilty of encouraging cowards amongst us, or of allowing people to hide their weakness under cover of non-violence.

You will say that you will not make a declaration about non-violence or satyagraha or civil disobedience. It need not on that account be the reverse of any of these. But you will say, 'After having read all that Gandhiji has written, or has been written about in *Harijan*, we have come to the conclusion that we must not bandy about these technical expressions. Whether you call it violent or non-violent, we offer what resistance we can and what we feel our people are ready to

¹ Referring to "this middle course" which is neither violence nor non-violence, Mahadev Desai explains: "Mr. Case gave the appropriate word for it—*Non-violent Coercion*—which he made the title of his book. . . . In fact there is a school of thought in India which makes no secret of it, and says, 'Satyagraha of Gandhiji's definition is not for us, non-violent coercion is what we understand.'!"

offer.’ If you want further guidance, you should approach Vallabh-bhai who has been handling this movement and Pandit Jawaharlal who is the Chairman of the States Committee. I come in as author of satyagraha, but for the moment I am bankrupt. My faith is brighter than ever but I have not seen the full light. I am advising Travancore, Rajkot, and to a certain extent Talcher, as I have been constantly guiding them. But even with regard to them I have been tendering my advice which it is for them to accept or reject.

But I would ask you to see the Sardar who has a marvellous capacity of separating wheat from chaff. He is no visionary like Jawaharlal and me. For bravery he is not to be surpassed. If he had any sentiment in him, he has suppressed it. Once he makes up his mind he steels it against all argument. He has all the making of a soldier. Even I do not argue with him, but of course he allows me to lay down the law. He will always be the people’s man. He cannot hit it off with the people in power. See him. He has studied the situation, and he may be able to make concrete suggestions. Have the setting from Jawaharlal and the concrete suggestions from the Sardar.

I love Mysore and Mysoreans. I like spending days together at Belur and Halebidu but I cannot go there for sightseeing. I can go there only if duty calls.¹

Harijan, 24-6-1939; also *The Hindu*, 16-6-1939

35. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 14, 1939

DEAR PRITHVI SINGH,

Your letter of 27th May is very good. It shows that you have no difficulty in understanding the working of ahimsa. There are many who swear by ahimsa [but] have not understood my step.

I have not given up the attempt to secure possession of your book.

Attempts continue to be made about the release of the political prisoners. There are difficulties [in] the way. But for those who only know the non-violent way, success is contained in the effort itself. And

¹ This paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu*, which added: “It is understood that Gandhiji received an invitation also from Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, to take a trip to Mysore for health, which also Gandhiji found impossible to accept.”

prisoners who believe in non-violence regard prison-life and the outside with indifference. They serve whether in prison or outside.

I hope to go to the Frontier Province early July when both Mahadev and Pyarelal will be with me. One of them will surely see you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5635. Also C.W. 2946. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

36. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA

June 14, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. Now that [Amritlal] Nanavati is with you, get well soon.

There is no harm in your having written to your distant cousin about Harbhai. Send me more details about the Home School when you get it. I shall certainly be surprised if you again start teaching the girls. Do go to Ahmedabad for treatment if you think it necessary to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 952. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

37. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

SEGAON,

June 14, 1939

It is a pity that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose and Lalit Chandra Das had to resign from the Prisoners' Release Advisory Committee² when they found that they could not make further headway and that their views differed from those of their colleagues and of the Government.

¹ This is extracted from "Bengal Political Prisoners". According to the source the statement was given "in releasing the letter" dated May 31, 1939, from Sarat Chandra Bose, Leader of the Opposition, Bengal Legislative Assembly; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Sarat Chandra Bose", 31-5-1939.

² Appointed by the Bengal Government; it started working from December 1938.

They had no option. I had hoped, when the Committee was formed, that they would evolve a joint scheme whereby the question of political prisoners would be solved on an all-India basis and on non-party lines. Provincial autonomy should have meant at least the release of all political prisoners throughout India especially when they declared their faith in non-violence as the vast majority, if not all, have done. The releases already effected have shown that there is no danger of revival of terrorism such as the country has known. Therefore I would suggest that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose and Lalit Chandra Das be reinvited to serve on the Committee and a formula be found so as to satisfy their viewpoint. It would be unfortunate if a hurricane agitation were to be restarted on an issue which does not warrant any such agitation and which is capable of being decided by mutual accommodation. I hope that my appeal¹ to the Government of Bengal not to abandon the policy of conciliation they had adopted on this very important question of the release of political prisoners will not go in vain. It ought to be enough for them that the prisoners have declared their faith in non-violence. I hope that the prisoners will not be restless but will allow friendly effort to take its course without the interruption of a hunger-strike or the like. I would ask them to continue the dignified restraint they have so wisely observed.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

38. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

WARDHAGANJ,
[June 15, 1939]²

MIRABAI

CARE BIRLA HOUSE

NEW DELHI

COME SEGAON EIGHTEENTH OR REACH BOMBAY TWENTY-FIRST

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6440. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10035

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-4-1938 and 4-10-1938; also "Statement on Bengal Government's Communique", 21-11-1937.

² The postmark is illegible in the source. *Vide*, however, the following item.

39. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I wonder if I ever told you that you were to write to Sardar Datar Singh, your dairy friend, whether he is now prepared to receive Balvantsinha in his dairy near Lahore and give him the necessary training. You will remember that he said he would gladly take him as soon as he had put his branch dairy in Lahore in order. You will tell him all about Balvantsinha, that he has considerable practical experience of handling cattle but that he has no knowledge of English. He belongs to Khurja and hence his mother tongue is Hindi. He is now picking up Urdu.

Lilavati¹ went today to Bombay for her matriculation. She was wavering but I told her it was the best thing to do. Sharda has come in. I have no doubt that she is bearing. She is likely to be in Segaoon for a few months. Shankaran is not overwell.

Mira seems to have become ill on the high altitude and is due in Birla House tomorrow. I am asking² her to see me in Bombay.

I hope you are well and that you had a good time at the educational meeting.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3921. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Aslo. G.N. 7230

¹ Lilavati Asar

² *Vide* the preceding item.

40. LETTER TO KAPILRAI PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

BHAI KAPILRAI,

I have your letter. Let us hope that there will be no partiality in Bihar. But I cannot interfere. I think you should personally go and see Munshiji in Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAPILRAI PAREKH
GORJI'S BUNGALOW
RAIKHAD, AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C.W. 9828. Courtesy: Kapilrai Parekh

41. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am sending Captain Gokhale's lectures in a separate cover. You have to think about only one point in those lectures. You need not read them if you do not want to. He says that schools should be run only from 7.00 am to 11.30 a m., so that the health of the pupils is not harmed by the sun. Is this possible in Bombay? If the health of the students demands it it should be made possible.

How many Parsis are likely to be affected by the new levy? How far is it a valid argument that it will adversely affect the charities? I feel that an estimate can be obtained only from your end. Have it prepared. This argument should be effectively answered. If there is no answer, the mistake should be corrected.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ For Gandhiji's article on the resistance of the Parsi community to the liquor policy of the Congress; *ibid.*, pp. 387-9.

42. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 15, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,¹

I have your letter. Everything will work out well. Be patient. Don't worry yourself over money. Keep in touch with the Muslim Leaguers. When you were invited by them to a dinner, you should have gone. You should not be angry with them even in your heart. Propagation of khadi is our mission. Do not forget the vow to wear khadi. One may spin thin yarn and weave fine and coloured cloth. If we gave up the vow to wear khadi, we would be lost.

Take care of your health.

Ba and Kanam² may perhaps go there when I leave for the Frontier. Give the enclosed to Lakshmidasbhai³.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 402

43. A LETTER

June 16, 1939

For me if ahimsa is not applicable to all walks of life, it is no use. My experiments therefore must have that end in view. I may correct myself a thousand times but I am not likely to give up an experiment in which visible results have been attained. This earthly life is a blend of the soul and the body, spirit and matter. We know the soul only through the body and so shall we know true ahimsa through its action in the daily life.

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

¹ The superscription is in Urdu.

² Son of Ramdas Gandhi; also called "Kana" and "Kano"

³ Lakshmidas Asar

44. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1939

CHI. DEVDAS,

I had carefully preserved your letter of the 30th. I could reach it only today. I could never be unmindful of Jawaharlal's feelings. But when it becomes one's dharma to express a certain view, what else can one do? When saying something becomes absolutely necessary, it would be violation of truth to suppress it for anybody's sake. I restrain my pen to a great extent for the sake of Jawaharlal. I had long talks with him and even showed him your opinion. One may say that as a result we came to understand each other better. The differences, however, persist. We will bear with each other. You also should do the same. Time will do its work.

I understand your views regarding the people around me. Let me deal with the problems in my own way.

The programme is as follows: [From June] 21 [to] July 1, Bombay, then most probably in the Frontier Province.

Ba and Kanam will most probably go to the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati. Today¹ Lilavati left for Bombay for her studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2031

45. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read all your letters. Whether the climate there suits Balkrishna's health can be judged only after an adjustment of diet. Wai has less rains and you can perhaps get good milk there. If Wai suits you better you can go there. It is said that Panchgani is good for T. B. patients despite the rains. We have to be guided by Balkrishna's reactions. If he does not feel better there, come over here. We are leaving for Bombay on the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4319

¹ *Vide*, however, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-6-1939.

46. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. AMRIT,

Yes, a tyrant I am, but non-violent. My tyranny too arises from love. Therefore it only does good to the victim, does it not?¹

I hope you had no difficulty in deciphering my wire. I purposely wrote the wire in Hindi to make it ununderstandable save by you. It was my first or second attempt to send my wire in Hindi. If it was tyranny, it was tyranny of love.

The draft Muslim League resolution² on Basic Education is revealing.

If I succeed in going to the Frontier, you will join me at some station during my return journey and have the luxury of travelling third class with me on your line !!!

I understand . . . 's³ message. I am writing to him.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3922. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7231

¹ This paragraph is in Hindi

² The resolution which rejected the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education was passed by the Working Committee meeting of the League held in Bombay on July 2 and 3.

³ The name is illegible in the source.

47. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

DEAR ATULANAND,

I have your letter. I can make no suggestions. My mind somehow runs in a different direction. The disease has gone too deep for books to help. Some big action is necessary. What, I do not know as yet. I wish you could see this very obvious thing.¹

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY
166/A JATIN DAS ROAD
P. O. KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C. W. 1481. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

48. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. VANAMALA,

Your friend is sitting near me and I have heard from her plenty of stories about your sense of humour. I hope you are adding to it there. I have your letter. Guess who this friend of yours is. Perfect your Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5787

¹ Reproducing a part of this letter in *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 338, Louis Fischer explains : "Atulanand continued to concentrate on the Hindu-Muslim tension and suggested a book about it". *Vide* also "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", 28-8-1937.

49. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. Do write what you feel you must. It is not as if you had to follow my advice. You must follow the dictates of your inner voice.

It is good you decided to get married. I have no girl in view. Only your own endeavour can bear fruit. You must be patient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Museum and Library

50. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI AND SUMITRA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. NIMU-SUMI,

I got your letter. Kanam is here sitting with me. He keeps me talking to him. So how am I to complete this letter? For the present, you should continue with your studies there. Do not worry about Kanam. We will think about the matter after I return from the Frontier Province.¹ Ba will go to live in the Harijan Ashram for the present. Kanam will study there.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Gandhiji returned from a tour of the Frontier Province on July 27, reaching Segaoon on the 28th.

51. A LETTER

June 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I delayed writing to you in the hope of being able to send you a more helpful reply to your kind letter of the 15th ultimo. But I cannot go beyond saying that you should act in accordance with your lights. You should be the sole judge of the situation there and seeing that our own non-violence has been found to be skin-deep, I have not the courage to propose anything worthy of your consideration. This does not mean that my faith in non-violence has suffered any diminution.

Yours sincerely,

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

52. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 18, 1939

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I am quite at one with you about Congressmen not being able to belong to any other political organization. But nobody will go so far. Your other suggestions are also worthy of consideration. My influence is limited as it should be. After all I am not in touch with the working of the organization. I suggest your pressing your points at the A. I. C. C. meeting¹. But you must not come at the sacrifice of your health. I am keeping your letter with me. I shall let Rajen Babu and others see it.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C. W. 10199. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

¹ This was to be held in Bombay from June 24 to 27.

53. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI'

June 18, 1939

BHAI KAKALBHAI,

I got your misty vapourings about Rajkot. I glanced through the thing. I saw nothing in it but rhetoric. But isn't rhetoric your life? How then can you help yourself? If you have patience, one day you will realize the truth of these remarks of mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

54. LETTER TO MULRAJ

June 18, 1939

BHAI MULRAJ,

I have your English letter. I thought you could write in Gujarati. I am sure you will be able to read this. Otherwise ask someone to read it to you. I adhere to my view. Even in Travancore and Jaipur where I have some control over the movement, I give advice only when asked. What else, then, can I do for Kutch? Please, therefore, understand that I [accept] no responsibility for stopping civil disobedience in Kutch.² The responsibility rests entirely on you workers. You may make public use of this letter.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

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

55. HOW FAR ?

With reference to my advice³ to the States people to lower their demands if necessary, a correspondent asks :

How far are the people to go and what reduction if any is suggested or contemplated, for instance, in the Jaipur demand which has been practically

¹ Congress worker of Saurashtra and editor of Gujarati daily, *Prabhat*, published from Ahmedabad

² *Vide* also "Notes", subtitle, "Leaders Must Lead", 7-6-1939

³ *Vide* "Statement on Travancore", 4-6-1939.

framed by you?

This question would never have arisen if my language had been properly attended to. In the first place, I have added the proviso 'if necessary'. This must be clearly proved and each committee should judge the necessity and the extent of the reduction. In the second, there can be no question of reduction where the people are ready for the sacrifice involved in the development and the consolidation of the strength to enforce the demand. Take the case of Rajkot itself. Award or no award, if the people in general had the capacity for the required measure of sacrifice and if they had been ready for swaraj, nothing would have kept them from their prize.

It would be wrong to say or believe that but for my mistake the people of Rajkot would have got what they wanted. My mistake has been admitted. But it must not be held responsible for the failure of the famous Notification. The talk of demoralization resulting from my 'bad handling' of the situation is nonsensical. In satyagraha there is no such thing as demoralization. Those who are truthful, non-violent and brave do not cease to be so because of the stupidity of their leader. Of course there would be demoralization or rather exposure, if the three virtues were put on for the occasion and were to fail on the real test being applied. People who are strong by nature displace weak leaders and go about their business as if they never needed a leader. If they needed one, they would soon elect a better one. Workers in the States should try to understand the Rajkot case, if they will profit by it. If it is too complicated for them, they should leave it alone and go forward as if it had not happened. Nothing will be more misleading than to think that before my so-called mishandling of the Rajkot case the Princes were so trembling in their shoes that they were about to abdicate their powers in favour of their people. What they were doing before I even went to Rajkot was to confer among themselves as to the ways and means of meeting the menace, as they thought it to be, to their very existence. We know what Limbdi did.¹ The talk of combining with the Muslims, the Garasias and even the Depressed Classes against the Congress workers was in the air. My action has resulted in the discovery of the unholy combination. A true diagnosis is three-fourths the remedy. The workers are today in a position to devise remedies to combat the combination. It simply resolves itself into the

¹ *Vide* "Lawless Limbdi", 20-2-1939.

necessity of Congressmen or satyagrahis gaining control over the forces arrayed against them. They are as much out to gain liberty for the Muslims, Garasias, Depressed Classes and even the Princes as for themselves. The satyagrahis have to show by cold reasoning and their conduct that the Princes cannot remain autocrats for all times, and that it is to their interest to become trustees of their people instead of remaining their masters. In other words, what I have done by correcting myself in Rajkot is to show the true way to the satyagrahis. In following it, they may find it necessary to lower their immediate demands but only so as to really hasten their progress to their goal. Therefore there can be no lowering out of weakness. Every lowering must be out of due appreciation of the local situation and the capacity of the workers to cope with it. Here there is no room for demoralization and rout. In cases like Jaipur of course there can [be] no question of lowering. The demand itself is in the lowest pitch. There is no room in it for lowering anything. In essence it is one for civil liberty. Civil liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj. It is the breath of political and social life. It is the foundation of freedom. There is no room there for dilution or compromise. It is the water of life. I have never heard of water being diluted.

Another question has been raised by another correspondent. He says :

You expect us to work by negotiation. But if there is no wish on the other side and the only wish is to humiliate the party of freedom, what is to be done?

Of course nothing is to be done except waiting and preparing for suffering and promotion of constructive work. Absence of wish for negotiation by authority may mean despise or distrust of the party of freedom. In either case silent work is the remedy. Negotiation has been mentioned as a substitute for the ignoring of, i.e. the despise of, the

constituted authority whether it is the Dewan or any other. And what I have pleaded for is desire and readiness for negotiation. It is not inconceivable that the stage of negotiation may never be reached. If it is not, it must not be for the fault of the satyagrahis.

SEGAON, June 19, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

56. WILL KHADI KILL KHADI ?

When the increase in the spinners' wages was decided upon by the A. I. S. A., the Maharashtra Branch was the foremost in giving enthusiastic support to the proposal. It has the direct guidance of Shri Vinoba. It has worked out the increase programme with a precision not approached by the other provinces. The result is that the other provinces not having increased the wages to the same extent as the Maharashtra Branch are able to undersell the latter's khadi and do not hesitate to send their stock to the areas covered by the Maharashtra Branch. Unscrupulous merchants are not slow to take advantage of the situation. Thus uncertified stores have sprung up in Nagpur, Wardha and elsewhere. The unwary public, not knowing the new arrangements and eager to buy cheap khadi, prefer to patronize uncertified stores, thus doing great damage to the Maharashtra Branch stores. The result is that the Maharashtra Branch has either to reduce wages or to close down its business. This would amount to khadi killing khadi. Khadi-lovers should know that the economics of khadi are different from and often contrary to the ordinary economics of the competitive system which is not governed by the principle of the greatest good of all, i. e., of the least among the downtrodden. Thus I have endeavoured to show in these columns that if khadi is to fulfil its mission,

1. There must be progressive increase in the rise of the wages of the spinners till the minimum of one anna per hour is reached.

2. The ideal is that each village should produce and use its own khadi. From this it is clear that the least that should be done at present is that each province should produce enough and no more for its own requirements, permission being given for the sale outside its limits of such khadi as can only be produced by that province. For instance, Andhra can export, say, 80 counts khadi outside its limits but not coarse khadi no matter how cheap it is.

3. No profits can be made for the sake of profits. The wage-earners are the shareholders and the proprietors in this the greatest co-operative organization in the world. If, therefore, there happen to be profits made in any single year, the proper use to make of them is to devote them to increase the number of spinners so long as there are any to be provided for, otherwise to increase the wages of the existing spinners.

4. Any province that makes an attempt to increase the wages of spinners to the desired level should be encouraged by the other branches and khadi-lovers.

5. The general public should restrict their use of khadi to the khadi produced in their own provinces although it is dearer than in the other provinces. They must trust the A. I. S. A. to do its best for every province.

6. The policy of the A. I. S. A. no doubt should be to reach uniformity of wages and prices throughout India. But till that ideal condition is reached the public should have humanitarianism enough to know that they have a duty by the wage-earners of their own province. It is almost as bad to have inter-provincial competition as it is to have competition with the outside world.

The immediate thing to be wished for is that all uncertified stores should be closed. Congressmen and others should warn the public against buying from such stores, and provincial branches should resolutely refuse to sell their stock outside except at the instance of the provincial agencies concerned of the A. I. S. A.

SEGAON, June 19, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

57. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 19, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have read the titbits in your letter to Mahadev Desai. What is to be done with the Princes? Gods confound those whom they want to destroy. It may be that their days are numbered. Only as believers in ahimsa we have to so act that we do not become directly or indirectly instruments of their destruction.

You have asked me to pray for you not in the letter before me but in the previous ones. I am doing it daily. I do not want to find fault with your logic or, which is the same thing, your reason. But we shall talk to our hearts' content when we meet, not even fearing explosions and storms. They clear the air. You must therefore reserve all your tears. Do not spend up all behind closed doors. I smiled to myself to read your reference to Hansa. You successfully hid your grief even from her as from everybody else. Shall I bestow one more title¹ on you? Can you guess?

Love,

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3657. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6466

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-6-1939.

58. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Now that I write to you quite regularly, you can't complain. What was all the fight there about? Who were the persons involved? I suppose you have written and given me this information. You would certainly get help from here if the [Indian] community there had strength of its own.

My health is good. Ba's indifferent. We are leaving for Bombay tomorrow. From there we shall perhaps go to the Frontier Province. Ba may go to Sabarmati and stay there during that period.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4898

59. ITS IMPLICATIONS

I am sorry that my recent statements about States have perplexed even those who have hitherto had no difficulty in understanding my writings or my actions. But the Rajkot statements, my actions in Rajkot, and the statement on Travancore have made 'con-fusion worse con-founded'. Pyarelal and latterly Mahadev have been manfully trying to interpret for the readers of *Harijan*, both my writings and doings. I know that they have somewhat helped to clear misunderstandings. But I observe that something is required from me directly. I must therefore try to give the implications as I understand them of my recent writings and actions.

I had better first say what they do not imply. Thus my ideas on civil disobedience—individual, group or mass—have not changed, nor have my views about the relations between the Congress and the Princes and the people changed. Nor has my view undergone any change that it is essential for the Paramount Power to do its duty towards the people of the States—a duty which it has woefully neglected all these years. My recantation had reference only to my distrust in God, in whose name the fast was undertaken, and my seeking to supplement His work by Viceregal intervention. For me to rely upon the Viceroy, instead of God or in addition to God, to act upon the Thakore Saheb, was an act of pure violence which the fast was never conceived to imply or use in the remotest degree.

The positive implication of the Rajkot chapter in my life is the discovery that the non-violence claimed for the movement since 1920, marvellous though it was, was not unadulterated. The results though brilliant would have been far richer if our non-violence had been complete. A non-violent action accompanied by non-violence in thought and word should never produce enduring violent reaction upon the opponent. But I have observed that the movement in the States has produced violent reaction on the Princes and their advisers. They are filled with distrust of the Congress. They do not want what they call interference from it. In some cases the very name 'Congress' is anathema. This should not have been the case.

The value of the discovery lies in its reaction upon me. I have definitely stiffened in my demands upon would-be satyagrahis. If my stiffness reduces the number to an insignificant figure, I should not mind. If satyagraha is a universal principle of universal application, I must find an effective method of action even through a handful. And when I say I see the new light only dimly, I mean that I have not yet found with certainty how a handful can act effectively. It may be, as has happened throughout my life, that I shall know the next step only after the first has been taken. I have faith that when the time for action has arrived, the plan will be found ready.

But the impatient critic will say, 'The time has always been there for action; only you have been found unready!' I cannot plead guilty. I know to the contrary. I have been for some years saying that there is no warrant for resumption of satyagraha.

The reasons are plain.

The Congress has ceased to be an effective vehicle for launching nation-wide satyagraha. It has become unwieldy, it has corruption in it, there is indiscipline among Congressmen, and rival groups have come into being which would radically change the Congress programme if they could secure a majority. That they have failed hitherto to secure it is no comfort to me. The majority has no living faith in its own programme. In any case satyagraha through a majority is not a feasible proposition. The whole weight of the Congress should be behind any nation-wide satyagraha.

Then there is the ever-growing communal tension. Final satyagraha is inconceivable without an honourable peace between the several communities composing the Indian nation.

Lastly, there is the provincial autonomy. I adhere to my belief

that we have not done anything like justice to the task undertaken by the Congress in connection with it. It must be confessed that the Governors have on the whole played the game. There has been very little interference on their part with the ministerial actions. But the interference, sometimes irritating, has come from Congressmen and Congress organizations. Popular violence there should not have been whilst the Congressmen were in office. Much of the ministerial energy has been devoted to dealing with the demands and opposition of Congressmen. If the Ministers are unpopular, they can and should be dismissed. Instead they have been allowed to function without the active co-operation of many Congressmen.

It will be contrary to every canon of satyagraha to launch upon the extreme step till every other is exhausted. Such haste will itself constitute violence.

It may be said in reply with some justification that if all the conditions I have mentioned are insisted upon, civil disobedience may be well-nigh impossible. Is that a valid objection? Every measure carries with it conditions for its adoption. Satyagraha is no exception. But I feel within me that some active form of satyagraha, not necessarily civil disobedience, must be available in order to end an impossible situation. There must be either effective non-violent action or violence and anarchy within a measurable distance of time. I must examine this position on a future occasion.¹

SEGAON, June 20, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

60. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

Please find enclosed a letter from Amritlal. Return it to me today along with the prescription.

The very next day after your visit I gave instructions to Jivanji to print the *Autobiography* in the Nagari script and sell it at one anna less.

There is no reply from Sardar. I will insist on getting one. I will

¹ *Vide* "Non-violence v. Violence", 4-7-1939.

be going to the Mahila Ashram at 4 and to Jamnalalji's bungalow at 4.30. Vinoba will be there. Have you agreed to keep Prabhu Dayal?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10922

61. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 20, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Why did you not come to the station? Observe the rules about eating, sleeping and going for walks. I want your letters every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

62. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1939

NANAVATI
CARE PAREKH BROTHERS
BHAVNAGAR

CONSULTED SUSHILA SEGAON. SHE SAID JIVRAJ SHOULD NOT BE WORRIED IN ANY CASE. IF DIAGNOSIS CORRECT TREATMENT NOT LIKELY TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THERE. MY EMPHATIC OPINION IS CHANDAN SHOULD HAVE AYURVEDIC TREATMENT. THEREFORE SHE SHOULD PROCEED AHMEDABAD. SEVERAL AYURVEDIC PHISICIANS THERE. WELL-EQUIPPED HOSPITALS ALSO THERE. WEATHER THIS TIME FAVOURABLE. OTHER RESPECTS ALSO BOMBAY UNDESIRABLE. CAN GIVE NO PERSONAL ATTENTION. ACCOMMODATION BIRLA HOUSE IMPROPER. ONLY PROPER PLACE FOR ALLOPATHIC TREATMENT WOULD BE HOSPITAL. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED MY CHOICE IS AHMEDABAD UNLESS CHANDAN AND HER FATHER HAVE FAITH IN NATURECURE IN WHICH CASE SHE SHOULD BE SENT POONA TO TAKE TREATMENT UNDER DINSHA MEHTA WHERE KAKASAHEB AND BAL TREATED.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 953. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

63. LETTER TO AMRITLAL SHETH

June 21, 1939

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I was pleased to see your letter. I did not even know for certain where you were living and what you were doing. I hope you keep good health.

I cannot guide you in the Limbdi affair. Perhaps the right course will be to obey the dictates of your heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

64. LETTER TO NATHALAL

June 21, 1939

BHAI NATHALAL,

Your letter came into my hands only today. I cannot see the post every day as soon as it comes. Your unhappiness is completely imaginary. You should forget that woman. Let her stay at her father's if she wishes. If it is necessary to give something for her maintenance, send her a fixed amount. Why should you be unhappy because of her shortcomings? We believe that a wife is our property. But in fact she is not. What difference does it make even if she is married to you? If you wish to divorce her and if that is possible, you may do so. Do not be deterred through any false regard for society. Even the parents' authority will be of little use in this matter. You should, therefore, stop being unhappy. Cast off the load from your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

65. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 21, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have received the letter I sent you yesterday from the station. I shall expect your letter tomorrow. Come soon. Manju has

returned from the hospital. You will be well. Lilavati has not met me yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

66. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, MALABAR HILL,

BOMBAY,

June 22, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant.

Though it is a pity that prisoner Prithvi Singh cannot be discharged, I have no difficulty in understanding your decision. I must await another opportunity.

The case of Jaipur is hanging fire. I wonder if a solution may be expected. As far as I know the Maharaja himself was quite willing to set free Sheth Jamnalalji and the other prisoners, to recognize the People's Association and to respect full civil liberty so long as it did not cross the bounds of non-violence.

There is one other matter which I had better mention in this letter. I understand there are Princes who are desirous of seeing me but they have hesitation in doing so for fear of the disapproval of the Political Department. As I had said during our talks¹ in New Delhi, I am of opinion that they should be free to meet any person so long as they do so openly. It would be a good thing if a declaration of your policy on this subject were made either openly or privately as may be thought advisable. I feel that it would not be enough if the permission is given in individual cases like mine. Seeing that the people of the States have intimate connection—political and social—with Congressmen and others all over India, is it not wise and proper to encourage the practice of Princes establishing friendly relation with those who have influence over their people? To treat Congressmen and others as outsiders seems to be so unnatural that the barrier cannot last long. It would be a pity if it is broken after a clash and creation of bad blood.

¹ On April 4, 1939

I wonder if you have noticed that some States have invited or welcomed visits of anti-Congress personalities. I do not complain of this but it is in striking contrast to the opposition fostered often by the Political Department to the visits of Congressmen.¹

Yours sincerely,

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

From a copy: C. W. 7827. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

67. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

BOMBAY,
June 22, 1939

MY DEAR UMA²,

Why did you think I would not give my blessings? The friend said he was satisfied with the talk I gave. And in proof of what I say here is [the] thing duly signed. I hope you are flourishing. My going to the Frontier is uncertain.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI UMA DEVI
ISHAR HILLS
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From a photostat: G. N. 1201. Also C. W. 5096. Courtesy: Uma Devi

68. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 22, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

You were not there and I woke up at 2 o'clock last night. Then I could not sleep, so I got up and started writing letters. Now what would you say?

The rest from Pyarelal's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ For Lord Linlithgow's reply to this, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 1-7-1939.

² Wanda Dynowska, a Polish lady.

69. ADVICE TO CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

June 22, 1939

It is understood that Gandhiji suggested that any amendment to the Constitution which was being given effect to should find favour with the general body of Congressmen in the country. His opinion seems to have been that such changes of far-reaching importance should not be decided by a mere majority vote. This suggestion of Gandhiji is regarded in responsible Congress circles as a hint particularly to drop the Clause¹ for the present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-6-1939

70. A. I. C. C. RESOLUTIONS

[June 23, 1939]²

1. The All-India Congress Committee views with grave concern the measures proposed by the Ceylon Government with reference to their Indian employees and hopes that it may be possible to find a way to avoid the most undesirable and grave conflict that, as a result of these measures, is threatened between such near and ancient neighbours as India and Ceylon.

¹ The reference is to the proposed amendment to Article V (c) of the Congress Constitution. In his Presidential Address at the A. I. C. C. meeting on June 24, Rajendra Prasad said: "With the object of tightening up the Congress organization, attempts have been made to amend the Constitution. The Tripuri Congress gave special authority to the A. I. C. C. for this purpose. . . . Among the recommendations made by the Constitution Sub-committee was the addition of some words to Article V(c) of the Constitution so that the rule applying to communal organization might also be applied to other anti-national organizations. The Working Committee agreed with this recommendation. . . . It appeared to the Working Committee that there was a fear in the minds of some Congressmen that the proposed change in Article V(c) was intended to be used to penalize opinion or to suppress organizations. This fear was entirely unjustified. . . . When, however, any organization is continually being attacked and run down by another organization, it is improper for the same person to be a member of the executives of both organizations. This produces not only conflict between the organizations but continuous internal conflict within them. It was with a view to avoid this and thus to have greater harmony even between the organizations that the amendment to Article V(c) was suggested. But in view of the suspicions some members have, the Working Committee have decided not to press for the change . . ." (*The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. I, pp. 355-6*).

² The resolutions were drafted by Gandhiji on this date; *vide* the following item. These were passed by the A. I. C. C. at its session held in Bombay from June 24 to 27.

The Committee cannot contemplate without much concern a quarrel between the two countries which are separated only by a strip of water but which have a common culture and which have been intimately connected from times immemorial. The Committee desires to explore every means of avoiding conflict and, therefore, appoints Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to go to Ceylon and confer with the authorities and representative associations and individuals on behalf of the Working Committee and do all that may be possible to effect a just and honourable settlement.

2. The A. I. C. C. regrets the attitude of the Union Government towards Indian settlers. It betrays utter disregard of the obligations undertaken by the predecessors of the present Government. The policy¹ just initiated by them is in direct breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914,² the Cape Town Agreement of 1927,³ the Feetham Commission of 1932⁴ and the subsequent undertakings on behalf of the Union Government. The A. I. C. C. notes with pride and satisfaction the firm stand taken up by the Indians of South Africa. They will have the sympathy of the whole Indian nation behind them in their fight for self-respect and honourable existence. The A. I. C. C. trusts that there will be no dissensions among them and that they will present a united front. The A. I. C. C. appeals to the Union Government to retrace their steps and carry out the promises of their predecessors to adopt a policy of progressive amelioration in the status of the Indian nationals in South Africa, 80 percent of whom are born and bred in that sub-continent and to whom South Africa is their only home.

3. This meeting of the A. I. C. C. resolves that no Congressman may offer or organize any form of satyagraha in the Administrative

¹ Vide 2nd footnote of "A Letter", 7-4-1939.

² Vide Appendix "The Indians Relief Act, 1914", .

³ Vide "Sir Habibullah Deputation", 10-2-1927 and "Honourable Compromise", 24-2-1927.

⁴ Also called the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act Commission under the Chairmanship of justice Feetham, appointed by the Union Government of South Africa, "to enquire into the occupation by Coloured persons of proclaimed land in the Transvaal." As the Commission "was unable to finish its work before April 30, 1935, as had been hoped, the Union Government of South Africa took steps early in the year to amend the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1932, so as to extend the protection provided by it to April 30, 1937" (*India in 1931-32*, p. 85 and *India in 1934-35*, pp. 92-3).

Provinces of India without the previous sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee concerned.

4. The Working Committee has repeatedly laid stress on the desirability of co-operation between the Congress Ministry, the Congress party and the Provincial Congress Committee. Without such co-operation misunderstandings are likely to arise with the result that the influence of the Congress will suffer. In administrative matters the Provincial Congress Committee should not interfere with the discretion of the Congress Ministry, but it is always open to the executive of the Provincial Congress Committee to draw the attention of the Government privately to any particular abuse or difficulty. In matters of policy if there is a difference between the Ministry and the provincial Congress Committee, reference should be made to the Parliamentary Sub-committee. Public discussion in such matters should be avoided.

5. This Committee views with grave concern the prolonged strike at Digboi and expresses its sympathy with the strikers in their distress.¹ The Committee regrets that the Assam Oil Company has not seen its way to accept the modest suggestion of referring the question of the method and time of re-employment of the strikers to a Conciliation Board to be appointed by the Government of Assam.

In the opinion of this Committee no Corporation, however big and influential it may be, can be above public criticism or Government supervision and legitimate control. Moreover as was declared at the Karachi session the Congress policy is that there should be State ownership or control of key industries. The oil industry is undoubtedly a vital key industry. This Committee therefore hopes that better counsels will prevail with the Company and that its directors will accept the modest suggestion made on behalf of the Committee by the President of the Congress. If, however, the directors do not see their way to do so, the Committee advises the Assam Government forthwith to undertake legislation for making the acceptance of the decisions of Conciliation Boards obligatory and further give notice to the Company that the Committee may reluctantly be obliged to take such steps as may be necessary to stop renewal of the lease to the Company on its termination. At the same time that this Committee urges the Company to fall in with the just suggestion made by the Committee, it

¹ The workers of Assam Oil Company, Digboi, had been on strike since April 3 on account of the discharge of some 63 workers from service.

hopes that the Labour Union will be ready to listen to the Committee's advice and if they were to retain Congress and public sympathy they will be ready and willing to abide by the advice that may be tendered to them by the Committee.

6. The All-India Congress Committee is strongly of opinion that immediate steps should be taken for the formation of a separate Andhra Province.

Harijan, 1-7-1939

71. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 23, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is just 6 a. m. Amtul Salaam is as busy as ever doing nothing useful and wasting her time in preparing my breakfast. She is disconsolate because I can't give her hours. She defies analysis. She baffles me. There is something wrong in my handling her.

Mira is here silently watching everything. She is without occupation as she has not to go to the Frontier. I am now considering what use to make of her talents.

Jawaharlal is quite convinced that I have put back the clock of progress by a century or thereabout by my Rajkot misdeeds. I am equally sure that I have rendered great service by my good deeds in Rajkot. We have not found an umpire. Therefore we are none the wiser for our assertions. He thinks I am impossible for an organization. He is right there. But I am helpless. Of course there is this thing possible. I can voluntarily retire from all activity. It may come but only by a call from God. I am praying.

This news must not disturb you. I am as cheerful as ever. The differences do not worry me. I am drafting resolutions¹ for the Committee and Jawaharlal is drafting a statement. There is no coolness between us. Perhaps we have come nearer for the discovery of the wide divergence of views.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3658. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6467

¹*Vide* the preceding item.

72. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 23, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received your letter. I slept a lot last night. Yes, Ba is unhappy. She has a cough. For her sake your absence irks me. Be here by Sunday if you can do so.

Have I told you that we are co-existing with snakes and scorpions? God protects us. Have you got the antidote for snake bite?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

73. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

BIRLA HOUSE,

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,

June 24, 1939

DEAR THANU PILLAY,

You have all the copies of the wires exchanged between the Dewan and me. My suggestion is, you or he who is considered the most suitable amongst you should write to Sir C. P. referring to the wires and seeking an appointment as a preliminary to establish direct contact to enable you to answer and clear out the charges made against the Congress in Sir C. P.'s wires. This you will do, if you have assimilated the new technique. The new technique is not a mere idle expression. It has great potency. You will closely follow the columns of *Harijan*. If you have understood it, there must be new access of faith, courage and hope.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

74. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Today I must write to you. Sharda is all right. When she goes to Surat, Shakaribehn may go and stay with her, or she may come away after watching for some time how Sharda feels at Surat. I see no cause at all for worrying.

I had expected some information about Balvantsinha today. Permission for him to go to Lahore has been received.

I got Munnalal's letter. Let the book remain there for the present.

Ba is still weak, though she is a little better today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10597

75. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

June 24, 1939

DADACHANJI,

This morning I saw the monthly that you left yesterday. I read Baba's article. I just glanced through the other articles also. As I understand it, Baba's wish seems to be that if I approve of what he says in his article I should myself translate it. But there are many Gujarati translators more proficient than I am. I cannot say 'I approve of it' nor would I say 'I do not', for either way it would be presumption. So, in other words, 'I am just wondering what all this is.' Send me the other issues also. I admit that my curiosity for understanding Baba and his works has increased. If Baba agrees, I wish to send one of my co-workers to Meherabad. Thus, after getting to know him in my own way, if [his articles] appeal to me, I shall certainly translate them. I will be guided by God in this. Let me know through a postcard after meeting Baba or even otherwise whether I should send one of my co-workers to Meherabad.

Vandemataram from

DADACHANJI

SORAB BHARUCHA HOUSE

VINCENT ROAD, DADAR, BOMBAY

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

76. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I have wired that Balvantsinha be sent to Panchgani and he may have reached there by now.¹ If he has not arrived and you intend to stay there till I return to Segaon, I have no objection. You may do what you consider proper. I received no letter from you today.

Sushila may reach here tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4321

77. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. There is no need to consult a lady doctor. You may engage a tutor. I will pay up to Rs. 25 for him. But then please see that you plunge yourself whole-heartedly in your studies. After engaging a tutor, you will not be free to move from place to place. If your household chores also take up too much of your time, engaging a tutor will serve no purpose. When the tutor devotes one hour you must devote four hours for studying by yourself. Only then will you benefit by it. Let me know what you finally decide. But take care of your health whatever you do.

My tour of the Frontier Province is still not certain. I am here up to July 1 at any rate. Sushila will return from Segaon tomorrow. She is better now. Ba is ill, though. She has a cough.

I am all right. The diet remains the same, one and a half pounds

¹ Balvantsinha did not go to Panchgani as the wire was not dispatched; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 26-6-1939.

of milk. Amtul Salaam is with me. Lilavati has joined a high school for study. Would you like to do the same?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3476

78. *LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI*

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,

June 25, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

You must have read the resolution¹. It is not proper that I have not received any information about the fight there. There is no news about the struggle either. Everyone believes that I am being kept informed. But there has been no information from that side. Who is Dadu²? There was a cable from him. After that there has been nothing. I am preparing the ground for whatever help can be given. But if I get no regular news from there at all, nothing can be done.

Ba is with me. She keeps indifferent health. Ramdas and Devdas also are here. Lakshmi is here on her way to Madras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4899

79. *LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI*

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,

June 25, 1939

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Only today Kanu told me about Krishnadas's health and I was shocked to hear the news. He says he is staying with Radha and has got very much emaciated, and that tuberculosis is suspected. How did this happen to him? If you wish you may take him to Rajkot. Dr. Variava there is a very kind and efficient doctor. If you get all the

¹ Of A. I. C. C. on the attitude of the Union Government towards Indian settlers; *vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

² He was leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 19-6-1939.

requisite facilities there, let him stay on. There is no harm in proceeding on the assumption that he is suffering from tuberculosis. Let him drink plenty of milk and eat as much butter as he can digest. Also green vegetables and fruits. Garlic is considered very good for tuberculosis. He had better go to Ahmedabad and get himself X-rayed. Give me all the details. I am here till July 1. It should be kept in mind that rest is the main thing. Talking and movement also should be reduced to a minimum. Manojna must be all right. You and Kashi should not get alarmed. Ba is with me. She gets slight fever daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10090. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

80. NOTES

INDIA'S AMBASSADOR OF PEACE TO CEYLON

The A. I. C. C. has done well in choosing its best man¹ to proceed to Ceylon as the nation's Ambassador of peace. It is, at least it should be, impossible for India and Ceylon to quarrel. We are the nearest neighbours. We are inheritors of a common culture. There is daily contact between the two countries. From Rameshwar one almost steps on to Ceylon and finds that one is on no foreign land. But even as blood brothers sometimes differ, so do next-door neighbours. And like brothers, they usually adjust their differences and are often more closely knit together after the clearance. So may it be between Ceylon and India through the efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

No better man could have been chosen for the task. The Indian side is clear. Several thousand men who have been in Government service for years, whether as day workers or other it does not matter, are being dismissed for no fault save that they are Indians. Private firms have been, it is said, told to copy the Government. Now this procedure seems to be extraordinary, arbitrary and unjust. But we do not clearly know the other side. It will be for the Pandit to study the Ceylon Government case and make due allowance for everything that might be justly pleaded on their behalf. Let us hope that both the Ceylon Government and the Indians in Ceylon will make the way smooth for an honourable settlement.

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru; *vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

I must confess that these acute differences come upon me as a revelation. I have a vivid recollection of my visit¹ to Ceylon. There seemed to be most cordial relations between the Indians and the Ceylonese. The monks and the laymen of Ceylon vied with the Indians in lavishing their affection on me. I do not remember anybody having complained to me about acute differences between the two. Why has the partial responsible government that Ceylon enjoys made all the difference that we witness today? It will be for the Pandit to unravel the mystery.

RAJKOT—WAS IT A BETRAYAL?

I have always felt that whatever Gandhiji done at any time from his spiritual standpoint, has been proved to be correct from the practical point. He is not great for his enunciation of spiritual theories which are to be found in the scriptures of all countries. His contribution to the world is his showing the way to put into practice, in the ordinary day-to-day life, those great spiritual theories. For me, if any of Gandhiji's actions done from a spiritual point of view failed to prove that it was *the* correct thing to be done from a practical standpoint, then he would be considered to have failed to that extent. Let me apply that test to what he did in Rajkot.

When he discovered that his fast became vitiated by his having requested H. E. the Viceroy to intervene, he renounced the Gwyer Award. The practical effect was to free him from Rajkot. But did his renunciation free the Viceroy from the obligation of seeing that the Rajkot Notification was acted upon according to the Chief Justice's interpretation? In my opinion Gandhiji's renunciation casts a double duty on the Viceroy. And if the Viceroy does not perform his duty, the people of Rajkot are free to act as they choose, and the Congress will have a powerful case against the Viceroy if the Notification proved abortive.

This is an abridgement of an article sent by a noted Congressman for publication in *Harijan*. He has built up an elaborate case in defence of my action regarding Rajkot, in reply to the criticism that I had betrayed the cause of the Rajkot people. The heading of this note is the correspondent's. I need not weary the reader with the whole of his argument. After all, time alone is the true test. It will finally show whether my action was right or wrong. But the abridgement is given for the novelty of the thought about the Viceroy's duty. I had no thought of the consequence of the renunciation. As soon as I

¹ In November 1927.

saw that my fast had become tainted for my seeking Viceregal intervention, I renounced the Award. But now that my correspondent mentions it, I must admit the force of his reasoning. My renunciation should act as a double spur to the Viceregal duty of seeing that the Rajkot Notification No. 50 is carried out according to the interpretation put upon it by the Chief Justice. So far as I am concerned my renunciation debars me, in this instance, from invoking Viceregal intervention. I also endorse the correspondent's statement that if any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be unpractical it must be pronounced to be a failure. I do believe the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term.

BOMBAY, June 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

81. SOUTH AFRICA RESOLUTION

It is a matter of congratulation that the South Africa Resolution¹ of the A. I. C. C. escaped complete disfigurement which the learned Dr. Lohia's amendment would have caused. I tender him my thanks for having listened to Pandit Jawaharlal's advice to respect the opinion of an expert like me who had passed the best part of his life in South Africa and who had not lost touch with that great country after retiring from it. This incident is an illustration showing that mere learning, mere humanitarianism divorced from actual experience may spell disaster to the cause sought to be espoused. Dr. Lohia's amendment had as much place in the resolution as mine would have in a resolution framed by him as an authority on socialism to meet a socialist difficulty. If I made any such attempt, he would very properly say, 'Don't pass the resolution if you don't like it, but don't disfigure it. It would defeat the purpose for which it is framed.' What I have said about the South Africa resolution applies more or less to the Working Committee's resolutions. That Committee is the expert body on matters relating to the Congress. It is dangerous to tamper with its resolutions unless reason convinces the Cabinet of the soundness of alterations suggested by members of the A. I. C. C. Acceptance of this practical advice, which I tendered more than once when I was a member of the Working Committee, would facilitate the despatch of national business.

¹ *Vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 1-7-1939.

Having said this let me say for the information of Dr. Lohia and his fellow humanitarians that I yield to no one in my regard for the Zulus, the Bantus and the other races of South Africa. I used to enjoy intimate relations with many of them. I had the privilege of often advising them. It used to be my constant advice to our countrymen in South Africa, never to exploit or deceive these simple folk. But it was not possible to amalgamate the two causes. The rights and privileges (if any could be so called) of the indigenous inhabitants are different from those of the Indians. So are their disabilities and their causes. But if I discovered that our rights conflicted with their vital interests, I would advise the forgoing of those rights. They are the inhabitants of South Africa as we are of India. The Europeans are undoubtedly usurpers, exploiters or conquerors or all these rolled into one. And so the Africans have a whole code of laws specially governing them. The Indian segregation policy of the Union Government has nothing in common with the policy governing the African races. It is unnecessary for me to go into details. Suffice it to say that ours is a tiny problem compared to the vast problem that faces the African races and that affects their progress. Hence it is not possible to speak of the two in the same breath. The A. I. C. C. resolution concerns itself with the civil resistance struggle of our countrymen on a specific issue applicable solely to them. It is now easy to see that Dr. Lohia's amendment, if it had remained, would have been fatal to the resolution which would have become perfectly meaningless. The appeal to the Union Government would have lost all its point.

But good often comes out of evil. The amendment, wisely withdrawn, shows to the Africans and to the world in general that India has great regard and sympathy for all the exploited races of the earth and that she would not have a single benefit at the expense of the vital interest of any of them. Indeed the war against imperialism cannot wholly succeed unless all exploitation ceases. The only way it can cease is for every exploited race or nation to secure freedom without injuring any other.

My examination of the South Africa resolution would be incomplete if I did not warn the Indians in South Africa against building much on the resolution itself. It is a potent resolution only if the Indians take the contemplated action. The motherland will not be able to protect their self-respect, if they are not prepared to protect it themselves. They must therefore be ready to suffer for it. The struggle may be prolonged, suffering great. But they will have the moral backing of

the whole nation. In this Hindus, Muslims, and all political parties including Europeans are united. The Government of India may feel powerless. I fancy they are not so powerless as they imagine. I am reminded of the 'Thought for the Day' in *The Times of India* of the 24th instant. It begins, 'We have more power than will.' I know their sympathy is with the Indians. If they have the strength of will, they have the power. Our countrymen in South Africa know the conditions of satyagraha. The foremost condition is unity among themselves.

To the Union Government I would say, "You have never proved your case. Your best men have admitted that there is no difficulty in your absorbing the two hundred thousand Indians in your continent. They are but a drop in the ocean. Remember that 80 percent of them are born in South Africa. They have adopted your manners, customs and costume. They are intelligent. They have the same feelings and emotions that you have. They deserve better treatment than to be regarded untouchables fit only to be relegated to ghettos. This is not playing the game. And you should not wonder if, at last, Indians say, 'We shall rather die in your jails than live in your segregation camps.' I am sure you do not want to go to all that length. Let it not be said of you that you had no respect for your promises."

BOMBAY, June 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

82. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BOMBAY,
June 26, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter just now. To me also you are just a girl of ten. May you always remain the same. I am submerged in work here. I shall be here up to the 1st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10400

83. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 26, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I got your letter. Consent for the dairy was received four days ago. I had drafted a telegram about Panchgani and given it to Pyarelal but I learn today that it was not dispatched. What shall I do? After all our family is what it is ! Every moment I realize that I am personally responsible for this confusion. But I cannot overcome this short-coming at this stage.

I shall not send you to Panchgani now. Get ready for Lahore. Sardar Sir Datar Singh has agreed to make all arrangements. When will you leave? If you let me know, I shall send him word.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1921

84. THE NATIONAL FLAG

The question of the use of the national flag still continues to agitate the public mind. It was designed when non-co-operation was at its height.¹ It was accepted without reserve, without opposition, by all communities. The Muslims and others vied with the Hindus in hoisting, carrying and honouring it. I recall having listened to the Ali Brothers enthusing over its praises from many a platform. It was conceived as a symbol of the peaceful revolt against imperialistic exploitation of a nation pledged to non-violence through a mighty, constructive and united effort through the spinning-wheel and khadi signifying out-and-out swadeshi and identity with the poorest in the land. It also symbolized unbreakable communal unity, the colours being specially and deliberately designed and chosen. That flag can admit of no competition as national flag. At national gatherings it should command unquestioned and universal respect. But it has to be admitted that it does not command that respect today. Instead of being a symbol of simplicity, purity, unity, and through these a determined revolt against exploitation, moral, material and political, it nowadays often becomes a signal for communal quarrels. Even among Congressmen attempt is sometimes made to prefer the red flag

¹ *Vide* "The National Flag", 13-4-1921; also "My Notes", 13-1-1929.

to the tricolour. Some Congressmen do not even hesitate to run it down.

In these circumstances I personally would like to remove it from public gatherings and not unfurl it till the public feel the want and impatiently demand to see it restored to its original and unique place. But the vast majority of Congressmen who have suffered under this well-tryed banner and drawn inspiration and strength from it will not go the length I would like them to. I therefore suggest that where there is any opposition in a mixed gathering, the flag should not be hoisted. This can happen in schools, colleges, local boards, municipal councils and the like. The flag should not be insisted on when there is opposition even from one member. Let it not be called the tyranny of one person. When one person among many offers opposition and if he is allowed to have his way, it is proof of magnanimity or farsightedness on the part of the overwhelming majority. I have no doubt that this is the most effective non-violent way of dealing with the question. My advice applies even to those places where the flag is already flying. It was triumphantly flown in many places when the nation was offering non-co-operation on a scale perhaps hitherto unknown in history. Times are changed. Opposition wherever it is offered is fomenting communal dissensions. Surely it is wisdom on the part of those who treasure the flag and unity to submit to the opposition of a minority be it ever so small.

What I have said about the flag applies *mutatis mutandis* to the singing of the *Vandemataram*¹. No matter what its source was and how and when it was composed, it had become a most powerful battle-cry among Hindus and Mussalmans of Bengal during the partition days. It was an anti-imperialist cry. As a lad, when I knew nothing of *Anandmath* or even Bankim, its immortal author, *Vandemataram* had gripped me, and when I first heard it sung, it had enthralled me. I associated the purest national spirit with it. It never occurred to me that it was a Hindu song or meant only for Hindus. Unfortunately now we have fallen on evil days. All that was pure gold before has become base metal today. In such times it is wisdom not to market pure gold

¹ The song occurs in *Anandmath* by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. In 1937, the Congress Working Committee meeting in Calcutta passed a resolution that "Whenever and wherever *Vandemataram* is sung only the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organizers to sing any other song of unobjectionable character in addition to, or in the place of, *Vandemataram* song."

and let it be sold as base metal. I would not risk a single quarrel over singing *Vandemataram* at a mixed gathering. It will never suffer from disuse. It is enthroned in the hearts of millions. It stirs to its depth the patriotism of millions in and outside Bengal. Its chosen stanzas are Bengal's gift among many others to the whole nation. The flag and the song will live as long as the nation lives.

BOMBAY, June 27, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

85. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 27, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Sushilabehn is here now. She will write everything in detail. Balvantsinha's letter is enclosed. I shall not send him there now. You may stay there for the present. If you need anyone's help, you may take it. We shall see what can be done after I return [to Segaon]. As long as you stay there, you must be at ease. I have forgotten to write about the book. Ask for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4320

86. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

BOMBAY,
June 28, 1939

CHI. PURATAN,

Amtulbehn has been working among the Muslim women. Both of you should help her as much as you can without allowing your Harijan work to suffer.

I did not like it at all that Anandi¹ did not come along beyond the Sabarmati station. I very much wanted to enjoy a few minutes' fun with her and was disappointed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9173

¹ Addressee's wife

87. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

VISHRAM VATIKA, JUHU,
June 28, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I had received your earlier letter. Now I have the second one. As long as there is the least hope from the Viceroy, we should neither think nor write about the breakdown of negotiations.

A copy of my letter¹ to the Viceroy must have been sent to you the same day; but perhaps I could not instruct anyone. If it has not been received, you will get a copy now with this. The reference to waiting on the Premier should be overlooked.

Keep me informed about the satyagraha by Muslims.

Jamnalal's knee causes anxiety. The main thing is rest. Does he take enough fruits? It is also necessary to take green leafy vegetables. Oil should be eschewed. What about the vaid who used to treat him? Is the hospital all right? Send the leg X-ray for Sushila's examination.

I may leave for the Frontier Province on the 2nd. Mahadev has been sent to Rajkot. The work which was progressing there is, I am afraid, likely to suffer a set-back.

Ba is slightly unwell. She will be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9125

88. TELEGRAM TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

June 29, 1939

HAVE BEEN JUST SUPPLIED WITH TALCHER'S REVISED
DECLARATION. HAVING STUDIED IT CAREFULLY MUST SAY
IT DOES NOT MEET SITUATION. GIVES NO HOPE
REFUGEES. I CONCLUDED THAT DECLARATION IS THE
BEST HIS EXCELLENCY CAN SECURE FROM RULER.
IF SO I MUST ADVISE REFUGEES HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY
TO CONTINUE SUFFER TILL DESIRED RELIEF IS FORTH-
COMING. BUT BEFORE MAKING PUBLIC DECLARATION
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF I MAY WHETHER HIS

¹ Dated June 22; *vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-6-1939.

EXCELLENCY CAN DO ANYTHING FURTHER REDEEM HOPE
CONTAINED IN DOCUMENTS SIGNED BY POLITICAL
OFFICERS.¹

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

89. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

VISHRAM VATIKA, JUHU,
P. O. SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY,
June 29, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER²,

Your ban about your letters renders it impossible for me to answer all questions. They are either passed on to Mahadev or destroyed as soon as I have read them.

I have advised you about Jawaharlal Nehru's invitation. In my opinion the whole of his planning³ is a waste of effort. But he can't be satisfied with anything that is not big.

Here there is interruption and if I am to catch the post I must stop.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3659. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6468

¹ The addressee's telegraphic reply dated July 2 read: "Your telegram of 29th June, and my interim reply of 30th Talcher refugees. According to His Excellency's information Raja's latest declaration supplementing his previous announcement fulfils substantially all expectations held out to refugees. Position has been fully explained to a responsible Minister of Orissa Government who has undertaken to do his best to get refugees to return on these terms. It seems to His Excellency that genuine well-wishers of refugees should unite in offering this advice so that they may return to their homes before weather conditions increase their difficulties. Any other course means sacrificing their interest for a purpose which it appears clearly impossible to justify."

² New title given to Amrit Kaur; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-6-1939.

³ Jawaharlal Nehru was Chairman of the National Planning Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress in 1938.

90. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR¹

June 30, 1939

Just a line to say you will not grieve over your mother's death. Living faith in God is tested on these occasions.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6076. Also C. W. 3406. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

91. LETTER TO SAIYID ASGHAR HASAN

July 1, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 19th ultimo. As I get the time, I try to read the literature you have sent me. It is a difficult job for me. I have so many things on hand that I cannot do justice to the study required. Meanwhile it grieves me that the matter² cannot be adjusted by the united effort of the two sections. Adjustment seems to me, an outsider, to be simple.

From your letter I gather that nothing emerged from your visit to the Maulana Saheb.

JANAB SAIYID ASGHAR HASAN SAHEB
RETIRED SESSIONS JUDGE
TANZIMAL M. VICTORIA STREET
LUCKNOW, U. P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

92. INDIANS IN BELGIAN CONGO

The case of our countrymen in Belgian Congo does not admit of easy treatment. It consists in the prosecution, alleged to be political, though technically under the Gold Law of Belgian Congo, of certain Indian settlers for being in possession of illicit gold. In the case as stated in the circulated pamphlet it is suggested that the accused were arrested without just cause. Witnesses for the Crown are said to have been perjured. Every obstacle is being placed in the way of the accused being properly defended. The expectation of our country-

¹ This was written by Gandhiji on Mirabehn's letter dated June 30, 1939, to the addressee; *vide* also "Letter to F. Mary Barr", 4-7-1939.

² This was in connection with the Shia-Sunni differences; *vide* also "A Letter", 23-5-1939.

men in Congo is that we should send eminent counsel from here to defend them. Representations have been made to the Government of India on their behalf. This is essentially a case, however hard in itself, in which effective public action is hardly possible. But it is undoubtedly a case in which the Government of India can do much. It can through the Foreign Office in England ascertain the exact position. The British Consul can be instructed to watch the case and see that the accused get a fair trial. Indeed British Consuls have been known to have been instructed to engage counsel to watch cases on behalf of their proteges. I hope that the Government of India are giving attention to this hard case of the Indians of Belgian Congo.

BOMBAY, July 3, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

93. *LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE*

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

CHI. MAMA,

We shall start¹ on Wednesday the 5th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3841

94. *LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKWASA*

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

BHAI MANGALDAS,

As I made some important changes, I got the draft retyped. The original draft also is enclosed. I am here till the 5th at any rate. If you think it is necessary to see me, do come. I have not checked the revisions in the copy retyped.

Blessings form
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 4683. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakwasa

¹ For the Frontier Province

95. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have both your letters. The last one was excellent. Learning to remain untouched by either respect or disrespect is the first lesson to learn. Without laws the sun and the other heavenly bodies would not move and even the trains would not run and hundreds of thousands of people would die. Nothing in this world can function without laws. Hence wherever you go, you will have to abide by certain rules. And when we consider ourselves smaller than even a particle of dust, by whom would we feel insulted or pained? Having said this, I should add that I believe your good lies in staying where you have peace of mind. If you do not get peace in Segaon, then you may assume that my company is not *satsang*¹ for you. You are bound to derive peace from *satsang*. That is why I suggested² that if you got no peace in Segaon, you should go to Aurobindo Ashram or Ramanasramam. I see that many people who have not found peace with me have found it with them. Just now your duty lies in Segaon only.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Sharda went yesterday to live with her husband. She is still in Bombay. They will leave for Surat this evening. Tell Shakaribehn that Sharda benefited a lot by staying here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8573. Also C. W. 7029. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

96. PARSIS AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC

How I wish Parsis will shed their anger and look at the liquor policy of the Congress square in the face. If they have made it a principle to resist by all means at their disposal the Government's undoubted right to refuse to auction or sell liquor licences, there is no argument left to be advanced. It is the assertion of a principle against principle. But I hope they have taken up no such uncompromising

¹ Company of good men

² *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", 27-4-1939.

attitude. The deputation of licensees and tappers took up no such attitude.

But apart from the question of principle there are objections raised against the working out of the policy. They are chiefly about :

- (a) the right to use wines for religious purposes.
- (b) the right to have liquor on medical, i. e., health grounds,
- (c) racial discrimination,
- (d) compensation to those who will be thrown out of employment, i. e., tappers, contractors and liquor-dealers, etc.,
- (e) the effect of the property tax on charities.

All these are pertinent questions demanding clear answers. Ministers are bound to remove every valid objection that can be advanced against the working out of the policy.

The right to use wines on religious or health grounds has always been recognized by Dr. Gilder.

I understand that in law there will be no racial discrimination. It may appear to be in the administration of the law. No one will be entitled to have the permit for the asking, not even the Europeans, if only so that the law might not be evaded. Every case will be examined on merits. Even Europeans will be expected to respect the liquor policy of the

country and, wherever they can, to refrain from asking for permits. The Archbishop of Bombay, in spite of his unconvincing opposition¹ to the closing of liquor shops, has gracefully announced that he and many under him are not going to ask for permits for their personal use. Many Protestant divines, I understand, have already announced similar self-denial. I should not be surprised if many European laymen copy the estimable example of the European divines. Nevertheless there is no doubt that in the administration of the law there will be more indulgence to Europeans than to those like Parsis for whom India has been their home for centuries. But I have not the shadow of a doubt that every genuine case will be considered with sympathy. May not the Parsis be expected to fall in with the general sentiment, especially when it conduces to the conservation of the social and economic welfare of the labouring classes? Enlightened Parsis must surely recognize the necessity of checking the drink evil while there is still time.

¹ *Vide* "Meaning of Prohibition", 11-6-1939.

The points (d) and (e) cannot be dealt with at all satisfactorily without the hearty co-operation of the parties concerned. Thus, so far as the charities are concerned, it is surely up to the trustees of these charities to support their case with facts and figures. Some hardship no doubt there will be. Every tax is a hardship. But I should be surprised if any single charity is seriously affected. After all, the tax calculated to bring in from the city of Bombay about Rs. one crore is so widely distributed that no individual or corporation will be hit beyond endurance. But it is for those who contend otherwise to prove their case.

Liquor-dealers have to present their case with full detail so as to enable the Government to deal with it. I understand that most owners of stocks of wine have not even furnished the information asked for by the Government. How is the Government to deal with them, if they will sullenly refuse to help the Government to help them? I know that the Government are taxing themselves to meet every case of proved and avoidable hardship. I use the word 'avoidable' purposely. The 'Taj' will certainly be affected, but that is as much as saying that the liquor shopkeepers will be affected. The 'Taj' is a mighty liquor-dealer. The house of Tata is resourceful enough to devise other and better ways of supporting the many charities for which it is so justly famed. I dare say that the charities themselves will bear richer fruit for their being purged of the questionable income from the drink traffic. Let it not be said of the Parsis, known the world over as the greatest philanthropists as a class, that they lagged behind, nay actually obstructed a reform which was urgently needed for the sake of saving the helpless labouring population from social and economic ruin.

BOMBAY, July 4, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

97. *NON-VIOLENCE* v. *VIOLENCE*

I must resume the argument about the implications of the Rajkot step, where I left it the week before.¹

In theory, if there is sufficient non-violence developed in any single person, he should be able to discover the means of combating violence, no matter how widespread or severe, within his jurisdiction. I have repeatedly admitted my imperfections. I am no example of per-

¹*Vide* "Its Implications", 20-6-1939.

fect ahimsa. I am evolving. Such ahimsa as has been developed in me has been found enough to cope with situations that have hitherto arisen. But today I feel helpless in the face of the surrounding violence. There was a penetrating article in *The statesman* on my Rajkot statement. The editor had therein contended that the English had never taken our movement to be true satyagraha, but being practical people they had allowed the myth to continue though they had known it to be a violent revolt. It was none the less so because the rebels had no arms. I have quoted the substance from memory. When I read the article, I felt the force of the argument. Though I had intended the movement to be pure non-violent resistance, as I look back upon the happenings of those days, there was undoubtedly violence among the resisters. I must own that had I been perfectly tuned to the music of ahimsa, I would have sensed the slightest departure from it and my sensitiveness would have rebelled against any discord in it.

It seems to me that the united action of the Hindus and the Muslims blinded me to the violence that was lurking in the breasts of many. The English who are trained diplomats and administrators are accustomed to the line of least resistance, and when they found that it was more profitable to conciliate a big organization than to crush it by extensive frightfulness, they yielded to the extent that they thought was necessary. It is, however, my conviction that our resistance was predominantly non-violent in action and will be accepted as such by the

future historian. As a seeker of truth and non-violence, however, I must not be satisfied with mere action if it is not from the heart. I must declare from the house-tops that the non-violence of those days fell far short of the non-violence as I have so often defined.

Non-violent action without the co-operation of the heart and the head cannot produce the intended result. The failure of our imperfect ahimsa is visible to the naked eye. Look at the feud that is going on between Hindus and Muslims. Each is arming for the fight with the other. The violence that we had harboured in our breasts during the non-co-operation days is now recoiling upon ourselves. The violent energy that was generated among the masses, but was kept under check in the pursuit of a common objective, has now been let loose and is being used among and against ourselves.

The same phenomenon is discernible, though in a less crude manner, in the dissension among Congressmen themselves and the use of forcible methods that the Congress Ministers are obliged to adopt

in running the administrations under their charge.

This narrative clearly shows that the atmosphere is surcharged with violence. I hope it also shows that non-violent mass movement is an impossibility unless the atmosphere is radically changed. To blind one's eyes to the events happening around us is to court disaster. It has been suggested to me that I should declare mass civil disobedience and all internal strife will cease, Hindus and Muslims will compose their differences, Congressmen will forget mutual jealousies and fights for power. My reading of the situation is wholly different. If any mass movement is undertaken at the present moment in the name of non-violence, it will resolve itself into violence largely unorganized and organized in some cases. It will bring discredit on the Congress, spell disaster for the Congress struggle for independence and bring ruin to many a home. This may be a wholly untrue picture born of my weakness. If so, unless I shed that weakness, I cannot lead a movement which requires great strength and resolution.

But if I cannot find an effective, purely non-violent method, outbreak of violence seems to be a certainty. The people demand self-expression. They are not satisfied with the constructive programme prescribed by me and accepted almost unanimously by the Congress. As I have said before, the imperfect response to the constructive programme is itself proof positive of the skin-deep nature of the non-violence of Congressmen.

But if there is an outbreak of violence, it would not be without cause. We are yet far from the independence of our dream. The irresponsibility of the Centre, which eats up 80 percent of the revenue, grinds down the people and thwarts their aspirations, is daily proving more and more intolerable.

There is a growing consciousness of the terrible autocracy of the majority of the States. I admit my responsibility for the suspension of civil resistance in several States. This has resulted in demoralization both among the people and the Princes. The people have lost nerve and feel that all is lost. The demoralization among the Princes consists in their thinking that now they have nothing to fear from their people, nothing substantial to grant. Both are wrong. The result does not dismay me. In fact I had foretold the possibility of these results when I was discussing with the Jaipur workers the advisability of suspending the movement, even though it was well circumscribed with rules and restrictions. The demoralization among the people shows that there was not non-violence in thought and word, and therefore when the

intoxication and excitement of jail-going and the accompanying demonstrations ceased they thought that the struggle was over. The Princes came to the hasty conclusion that they could safely consolidate their autocracy by adopting summary measures against the resisters and placating the docile element by granting eye-wash reforms.

Both the people and the Princes might have reacted in the right manner—the people by recognizing the correctness of my advice and calmly generating strength and energy by quiet and determined constructive effort, and the Princes by seizing the opportunity afforded by suspension, of doing justice for the sake of justice and granting reforms that would satisfy the reasonable but advanced section among their people. This could only happen, if they recognized the time-spirit. It is neither too late for the people nor the Princes.

In this connection I may not omit the Paramount Power. There are signs of the Paramount Power repenting of the recent declarations about the freedom to the Princes to grant such reforms to their people as they chose. There are audible whispers that the Princes may not take those declarations literally. It is an open secret that the Princes dare not do anything that they guess is likely to displease the Paramount Power. They may not even meet persons whom the Paramount Power may not like them to meet. When there is this tremendous influence exercised over the Princes, it is but natural to hold the Paramount Power responsible for the unadulterated autocracy that reigns supreme in many States.

So if violence breaks out in this unfortunate land, the responsibility will have to be shared by the Paramount Power, the Princes, and above all by Congressmen. The first two have never claimed to be non-violent. Their power is frankly derived from and based on the use of violence. But the Congress has since 1920 adopted non-violence as its settled policy and has undoubtedly striven to act up to it. But as Congressmen never had non-violence in their hearts, they must reap the fruit of the defect, however unintentional it was. At the crucial moment the defect has come to the surface and the defective method does not seem to meet the situation. Non-violence is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion. We have failed to convert the Princes, we have failed to convert the English administrators. It is no use saying that it is impossible to persuade persons willingly to part with their power. I have claimed that satyagraha is a new experiment. It will be time to pronounce it a failure when Congressmen have given it a genuine trial. Even a policy, if it is honestly pursued, has to be

pursued with all one's heart. We have not done so. Hence Congressmen have to convert themselves before the Paramount Power and the Princes can be expected to act justly.

But if the Congressmen can or will go no further than they have done in the direction of non-violence, and if the Paramount Power and the Princes do not voluntarily and selfishly do the right thing, the country must be prepared for violence, unless the new technique yields a new mode of non-violent action which will become an effective substitute for violence as a way of securing redress of wrongs. The fact that violence must fail will not prevent its outbreak. Mere constitutional agitation will not do.

BOMBAY, July 4, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

98. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

BOMBAY,
July 4, 1939

CHI. MARY,

I wrote a few words¹ on Mira's letter to you. I have a few minutes to write more fully. If you feel the call to go and serve your father, you will answer it without hesitation. You will do what is possible for the continuity of work begun in Central Provinces. I know you will give a good account of yourself wherever you are. It will be risky to bring out Father to India. He won't stand the climate of this country.

Your letter to Narandas is interesting. If you are not to go, you will be safe in taking up the rural reconstruction committee. I hope to leave for the Frontier Province tomorrow. Ba is likely to go with me. She is quite well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6077. Also C. W. 3407. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr. Also *Bapu—Conversations and Correspondence*, p. 178

¹*Vide* letter to the addressee, 30-6-1939.

99. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
July 4, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I am writing to Mary Barr.

The note you gave me about khadi is still lying with me. I shall dispose of it at leisure. Is anything special going on there?

A letter from Manju is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We are leaving for the Frontier Province tomorrow. Ba will probably accompany me.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8557. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

100. *ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK¹*

July 4, 1939

I was delighted to visit the Indian enterprise.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-7-1939

101. *FOREWORD TO "THE LATEST FAD"*

I have gone through these pages from beginning to end. The booklet will supply a felt want. It is an attempt to answer the many doubts that have assailed inquiry about what has been called my 'latest fad' and that too in the domain of education ! Acharya Kripalani who has spent many years as an educationist has tried to show that this 'fad' has a sound bottom to it.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN, July 6, 1939

The Latest Fad

¹ The source reported that "Gandhiji, accompanied by Vallabhbhai Patel, Devdas Gandhi and Dr. Sushila Nayyar, paid a visit to the Chemical and Industrial and Pharmaceutical Laboratories (CIPLA) Ltd.", Bombay, in the afternoon.

102. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I have simply not been able to write to you as regularly as I had liked. Even the 'library' claimed other work. You tell me you asked me a question about non-violence. I have forgotten all about it. Please repeat. I have assumed that Mahadev deals with the questions he can, for your letters are given to him as soon as I have done with them. If you permit me to retain them with the note at the top 'Not to be read' and trust that then they will not be, I would be better able to cope with your questions.

I hope all the patients are better if not well and that your flu was a passing affair.

I am writing to Datar Singh. I should have written earlier. But as you were protecting me, I did not hurry.

You should have sent me copy of your letter to Jawaharlal.¹

I do not like your repeating you are dead. You are not dead. You have to give me much work. Any time I might have to send you to Travancore or some such place. As it is you are doing khadi and Harijan work there. Your contribution to the Education Board is quite effective. And if you have better perception of things and do not feel any conscious injustice on my part, surely there is no occasion for this deadness !

We are only four travelling—Mahadev, Bablo², Kanu and I. Pyarelal had a little throat operation which will detain him for three or four days. Ba won't come without Sushila and the latter could not come leaving Pyarelal to his fate. They three will follow later if I find that my stay in Frontier Province will be prolonged.

Nothing is certain about my movement. Ordinarily I should return to Segaoon when you will join me. Nothing is certain about Talcher.³ The latest from the Viceroy⁴ means cutting off all contact with me. Mahadev should send you a copy of his letter and of my reply⁵, if I draft it today.

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 29-6-1939.

² Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai

³ *Vide* "The Tragedy of Talcher", 18-4-1939 and "Talcher", 16-5-1939.

⁴ *Vide* Appendix- "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 1-7-1939.

⁵ Gandhiji sent a brief reply on July 12, 1939.

The question of my retirement has been exploded for the time being at any rate.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3923. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7232

103. LETTER TO S. K. BOLE

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I have read your letter to the Prime Minister with great care.¹ I think that if you will help the Ministry you will find that no tapper need give up his tapping and there need be no unemployment. The whole of the *nira* can be turned into *gur*. Those who are used to alcoholics won't be satisfied with non-alcoholic *nira*.

I am sorry for the threat issued in your last paragraph. Request for help and threat go ill together.²

Yours sincerely.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 4879

104. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

Though I do not write to you I do think of you. I hope you remember what I told you. I hope you are calm. Study well. Take full advantage of the quiet you have got just now and improve your knowledge. Who conducts the prayers at present? What prayers are sung in the morning and in the evening?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8292. Also C. W. 7051. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

¹ A group of forty Bhandaris, led by the addressee, met Gandhiji on July 5 at Bombay Central and gave him a copy of their petition addressed to the Premier of Bombay; *vide* also "Bhandaris and Prohibition", 7-7-1939.

² The addressee subsequently sent an explanation; *vide* "An Explanation", 7-8-1939.

105. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have spoken to Amtussalaam. For the present, I shall let Lakshmidas have Rs. 2,000 for khadi work. That work should be carried on under the name of the Jyoti Sangh or under any other name, but under the supervision of Lakshmidas. I would advise you only to collect the yarn till you are able to train a woman worker. The yarn should be tested by Lakshmidas. This he will have to do.

Sardar will speak to you about the work of training. Right now I have advised him to give you Rs. 1,000. This he will probably do. I have not had time to speak to him at length. Write to me whatever you want. Come and stay with me when you can. Do not do anything in haste.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11208. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

106. LETTER TO PYARELAL

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I shall wait till your next letter. Get the thing corrected by Doctor. If you quit writing for *Harijan*, Mahadev and I will be crushed under the burden. And of course you are going to shoulder the burden of the correspondence. Otherwise, Mahadev or, maybe, both of us, will have a break-down. Leave the dream state. Whatever, He wills will be; why grieve over anything? Things will happen at the appointed hour as He desires. Why should we devise schemes, nurse dreams or worry?

Sushila should give the accompanying letter to Lilavati and also comfort her.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

107. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. LILA,

What weakness you are displaying! It is now that you are being tested in your life. Matriculation is only an excuse God has provided. You have been sent to Vanita Vishram on that pretext. If you fail there, your ashram life will have gone in vain and my hopes will have been destroyed. Why should you be defeated by minor inconveniences? Even if you help the lady who is looking after things there, you will be doing admirable work and satisfying your needs also in the right way. But you must have that much love within you; you must have patience and courage. Bear it in mind that your [matriculation]¹ is in Vanita Vishram, not in New Era².

Blessings from
BAPU

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

108. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,³

You have only to place the spinning work at Ahmedabad on a sound footing. Do whatever Lakshmidasbhai suggests in this connection. Do not spend more than Rs. 2,000 this time. Help Mridulabehn in every possible way. Do not bribe anyone into doing work. You have to do the work while preserving your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 422

¹ The source is damaged here.

² New Era High School, Bombay, which the addressee had joined for studies

³ The superscription is in Urdu.

109. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[Before July 7, 1939]¹

STUPID DAUGHTER,

Stupid is an apt adjective for you. And how stupid? It was nothing yesterday. Do you think there was any malice in what Devdas said? If there was any it was directed towards me. And whatever he says is for the good of all of us. Where was then any place in it for anger? How you cried—and for no reason! You must shed the habit. Why so much touchiness? Send me a telegram that you have calmed down. Abandon this stupidity. Ask Devdas's forgiveness. This does not mean that you should do everything that Devdas says. Do only what you think proper. Persuade him patiently. I want a letter from you every day. I shall send you a telegram from Abbottabad to say what you should do. Keep writing to Vijaya and others.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

110. BHANDARIS AND PROHIBITION

As the train taking me to the Frontier Province was steaming out of the station, Rao Bahadur Bole handed me a copy of the petition of the Bhandaris of Bombay addressed to the Prime Minister. He pressed me to read it and send him my reply. I read the petition after resting my tired limbs and sent him my reply.²

The petition is an interesting document and deserves public notice. According to it the Bhandaris got the concession to tap trees as early as 1672 as a mark of favour for military services rendered to the then British Power. Then they lost the concession. But they were able to continue their occupation, and to the present that is the occupation of about 8,000 people.

The petitioners say they are not against prohibition but they plead for gradualness extending to a few years.

¹ The date has been inferred from the sentence "I shall send you a telegram from Abbottabad". Gandhiji was in Abbottabad from July 7 to 26, 1939.

² *Vide* "Letter to S. K. Bole", 6-7-1939.

Then comes the sting at the very tail end. It runs :

If the Government fail to pay heed to all these entreaties and leave the Bhandaris to their fate as it falls upon them, we do not know what course these poorly educated and uneducated people may follow in their sheer disappointment. We are afraid they may even go to the length of adopting not only Congress methods of seeking relief but adopting more drastic measures in their frenzy.

The threat, in my opinion, vitiates a good case and raises grave doubts about the *bona fides* of the signatories. Are the Government to yield to cold reason or to the cold steel?

If the Bhandaris have a good case, why do they not rely upon its commanding public sympathy? Let me inform the public that the Ministers are trying their best, in spite of threats, to remove every kind of injustice. In these days of the growing violence of the mind, threats must be regarded as the ordinary lot of Ministers elected under the extensive democratic franchise. They may not be deterred even at the cost of their offices or lives from doing what they hold to be their duty, nor can they afford to be angry and refuse to do justice because as in the case under consideration, the petition for justice ends by issuing an ugly threat. I have, therefore, pleasure in informing the public that the Ministers are applying themselves to the task of keeping every tapper employed at the very work to which he has been used. Only the tappers have got to help the Ministers to apply the remedy. It consists in the tappers tapping *nira* during the *nira* season and turning it into *gur*. This requires honest care and attention. The pots have to be treated as has been pointed out in these columns. The *nira* need not be drunk. Pure *nira* cannot take the place of toddy which contains a certain percentage of alcohol and which therefore changes in quality. Pure *nira* is food even as sugar is. Toddy, even sweet, is not in the same sense and to the same extent as *nira*. Hence *nira* will be turned into *gur* which can compete with the ordinary *gur* which is often dirty, adulterated, full of grit. Palm *gur* is any day more tasty than sugarcane *gur*. It can be eaten raw whereas sugarcane *gur* being much sweeter does not admit of being eaten raw. And palm *gur*, when it is manufactured under State supervision, will always carry with it the guarantee of being pure. Many sweets can be manufactured out of palm *gur*. But in order to accomplish this great task wholehearted co-operation of the Bhandaris is necessary. If they are in earnest, they will help the Government and help themselves. What to do during the

off-season will be a question. I have not been able to study the condition under which toddy is drawn. But this is a matter of detail and adjustment.

ON THE WAY TO PESHAWAR, July 7, 1939

Harijan, 15-7-1939

111. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS¹

ABBOTTABAD,

[On or after *July 7, 1939*]²

WHY IS AGREEMENT OF 1914 BEING VIOLATED WITH YOU
AS WITNESS? IS THERE NO HELP FOR INDIANS EXCEPT
TO PASS THROUGH FIRE ?³

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

112. WAR SPURS INVENTION OF NEW MACHINE

The invention of a revolutionary type of spinning machine that will raise the daily output of the individual Chinese spinner from its present standard of one pound of yarn a day to an average of between twenty and thirty pounds, by Mr. Kanya Nieh, of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and a graduate of Cornell University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was announced in Chingkiang on May 26. The invention, stimulated and hastened by the demands of China's war-time economy, represents the fruit of six years of research and experimentation, during the last twenty-two months of which the inventor was constantly moving about the country as he followed the National Government in its transfer to the interior of the province. . . .

Mr. Nieh's new frames are based somewhat remotely on the old native spinning methods of China. He studied and analysed according to modern principles all the motions that go into the process of spinning until he had reduced each one to its essential scientific function—then he constructed a machine which utilized and intensified all the useful motions in the old process of spinning, and which discarded the useless motions which serve

¹ Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); South African soldier and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24 and 1939-48

² Gandhiji reached Abbottabad on July 7, 1939.

³ *Vide* also "A Letter", 7-4-1939, "Message to Indians in South Africa", 23-5-1939 and "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

only to waste the individual's energy and time. The machines that Mr. Nieh has built according to these principles of scientific analysis are strong, sturdy machines that are at the same time extremely cheap. They are built basically of wood, with copper used as the chief metal. Iron and steel are used only at a few key parts, while the cogs are made of hard wood. The new machine is so made that it works almost automatically with a minimum of exertion on the part of the operator. The energy to operate the machine is supplied by a foot treadle which the operator keeps in motion. . . .

The actual introduction of the new machine to the people will fall to the lot of the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives and several private concerns. The Chinese Industrial Co-operatives plan to establish in the coming year over 10,000 co-operatives, of which at least thirty percent will be textile co-operatives. It is the belief of the Co-operatives that of the normal consuming capacity of Free China of 10,000,000 bolts of cloth a year, at least, 3,000,000 will be produced by its co-operatives within the next twelve months. In the production of these textiles, the new spinning frames will play an important part. It is planned to introduce the new machine to its users at the rate of two machines per family. Cotton yarn, now selling in the interior at 2.30 dollars per pound, will be reduced to a fraction of its former cost.

The foregoing¹ was received by Shri Aryanayakam² from a friend in China. I wish I could give more details about this invention. For me its merit lies in China finding it necessary to introduce village, in the place of town, production.

Harijan, 8-7-1939

113. JAIPUR

Those who are interested in Jaipur affairs have been living in suspense for they had learnt that some talks were taking place between the Prime Minister³ of the State and Sheth Jamnalalji. I regret to have to inform them that nothing worth has come out of the talks. Therefore the struggle continues. Even civil disobedience continues in a way though it is suspended in regard to further formation of *jathas*⁴ for courting arrest. Those who courted arrests remain in the State prisons. They have not sought release. They will come out in due

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

² E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sang.

³ Sir Beauchamp St. John

⁴ Batches

course on the termination of their sentences. Shethji's detention¹ is indefinite. And he will not come out by undertaking to leave the State on release, and the authorities will not permit him to remain in Jaipur as a free man in spite of the fact that further courting of arrests has stopped. Thus they will not allow Shethji even to do constructive work among the people. They know that they have no fear of any secret propaganda or his part on his saying one thing and doing the contrary. His reputation for [the] strictest honesty is too well established to admit of any doubt.

Some complication has arisen because Shethji is suffering from pains in the knees. The State Medical Officer advises Shethji to go to Europe or at least to the seaside for treatment. He is himself doing all he can, but he is of opinion that change of place is indicated. Shethji whilst he is under detention would not go out of Jaipur even for the sake of getting well. He thinks that self-respect requires unconditional release. He will not think of a change so long as he is under a ban for which he feels there is no justification. Since civil disobedience is suspended there is no warrant whatsoever for detain-ing Jamnalalji in custody. Why won't the authorities release him and arrest him when he commits an offence against the laws of the State? To say the least there is something uncanny about the treatment of Sheth Jamnalalji. It is the duty of the Jaipur authorities either to justify the indefinite detention or to release him unconditionally.

The Jaipurians have been asking me how long the embargo on their civil resistance will last. I can only answer, as long as the atmosphere demands suspension. Meanwhile let them carry out the constructive programme. I retain the opinion that no one is fit for offering civil disobedience who has not satisfied the conditions I have laid down. And there is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice. In other words, it applies only to those who are not conscious of any inner call and who have faith in my riper experience and soundness of my judgment.

Though the talks have broken down, the authorities are not absolved from the duty of finding a solution for the impasse. Absence of civil disobedience does not mean cessation of agitation in some

¹ In Jaipur jail

form or other for securing the rudiments of freedom for which the fight was undertaken. Public opinion will give the authorities no rest. Let the Jaipurians, therefore, know that so long as they have the will they have the power. And it increases with every effort to keep it under check. Every power is not meant to be immediately used. Garnering it often makes it far more effective than if it is used the moment it is generated.

ABBOTTABAD, July 8, 1939.

Harijan, 15-7-1939

114. TO THE PRINCES

Several persons interested in the States have asked me what in my opinion is the minimum that all States should guarantee in order to come in line with the enlightened opinion in what is called British India. I cannot vouch for what the Congress would say if it had to give any such opinion. Perhaps it would be wrong for the Congress to have or to give such opinion. A democratic body can only pronounce opinion on events as they happen. Be that as it may, the opinion I am about to give is only my own and binds no one but me.

The minimum then that all States great and small can give is :

1. Full civil liberty, so long as it is not used to promote violence directly or indirectly. This includes freedom of the Press and freedom to receive newspapers which do not promote violence.

2. Freedom to the people of the States to form associations and educate public opinion in favour of establishing responsible government in their own States.

3. Freedom for Indians outside particular States to enter them without let or hindrance so long as their activities are not directed towards the destruction of the States in question.

4. The privy purse should be limited so as not to exceed one-tenth of the income where it ranges between Rs. 10 to 15 lakhs per year, and in no case should the purse exceed Rs. 3 lakhs per year, and should include all the private expenses of the Ruler (e. g., palace expenses, cars, stables, the Ruler's guests) except those which have reference to performance of public duty which should be clearly defined.

5. Judiciary to be independent and permanent and free of all interference. In order to ensure uniformity of practice and strict impartiality, there should be an appeal to the High Court of the Province within which the State in question is situated. This may not be possible without a change in the law governing the High Courts. It can, I imagine, be easily altered if the States agree.

I have purposely avoided reference to constitutional reform. This will depend upon the situation as it exists in every State. I should assume that where local public opinion demands it, the Ruler is bound to respond.

The most contentious part of my minimum is perhaps the right of appeal to the High Courts. And yet unless some such arrangement is made, pure justice cannot be guaranteed in the States whatever may be said to the contrary. This is one institution which the British have built up with patient care. No doubt the High Court procedure is expensive and far from expeditious. The poor of the land cannot reach it. The processes are cumbersome. Often the unscrupulous win. With all their faults, however, and except where high politics have come in, the decisions of High Courts have been just and fearless. I can think of no easy and ready-made check save that of the High Courts on the vagaries, and sometimes subservience to the executive, of the judiciary in the States. But I am not wedded to my solution. If something else equally effective can be devised, I should have no objection.

One thing seems to me to be clear. If the transfer of power from the Princes to the people is to take place without violence, and if the Princes are to live as such, they will have to adapt themselves to the changed circumstances. Very few people have faith in my plan, viz., the plan of Princes voluntarily parting with power and becoming real trustees. The critics say it is Utopian and against human nature. I must advocate it so long as I believe in its practical possibility. The world is inevitably moving to self-destruction or to a non-violent solution of all its ailments, moral, social, economic and political. The threatened world war will bring us nearer the desirable solution if a respectable part of it survives the impending catastrophe. Whoever recognizes that the only escape from the impending fate is a non-violent solution will, therefore, apply it to his own problems, whether they are domestic, communal or any other. Non-violence is a universal law acting under

all circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to destruction. It is only a question of time.

The Princes would not solve the riddle by the proposed combination with Garasias, Muslims, Scheduled Classes, and their own subjects who are too cowed down to resist. It is a combination that is bound to break under its own weight. It is itself an inflammable mixture. And a combination against whom? The Congress which seeks to represent all these not excluding the Princes themselves? The Congress will die a natural death when it ceases to be national in every sense of the term. It has that unbroken tradition for the past fifty years. Whatever transformation it undergoes, it is the only institution¹ that will succeed British Imperialism whose days as imperialism are numbered. British politicians realize this. They would not resist, do not want to resist, its transformation or destruction. The imperialism is increasingly becoming a dead weight if only because it is based on highly organized violence. The Princes may ignore the Congress for a time. But they cannot for all time. Some are reported to have said that after all it was composed of Banias who would show the white feather on a few knock-out blows on the head by the strong combination pictured above. I would like respectfully to point out that the Congress is not composed of Banias who can be counted on one's fingertips. The millions who took part in the civil disobedience fights were not Banias. I do not thereby mean to imply that they were desirous of giving blow for a blow. Many could. But they had forsworn violence. Many Congress heads were broken by something severer than knock-out blows. All I wish to imply is that the Congress is not composed of mere cowards. Non-violence and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true non-violence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness.

I beseech the Princes not to underrate the Congress as a force in the country. Its policy still remains non-violent. I admit it is fast tending towards violence. I and a few of my companions are putting forth every effort in favour of non-violence. I ask the Princes, for their own sakes and for the sake of the country that has given them birth, to throw in their weight in favour of non-violence. It seems to be touch-and-go with the Congress. It will either become growingly non-violent or will presently become a violent organization, not necessarily doing

¹ The source, however, has "constitution".

immediate deeds of violence but preparing itself for ultimate violence. It would not harbour cowards. If it does, it will cease to be the power it has become. Every Indian, high or low, (there is no high and no low for the Congress) has to make his choice.

ABBOTTABAD, July 8, 1939.

Harijan, 15-7-1939

115. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,

July 8, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA WEST

ARRIVED LAST EVENING. ALL GOOD CONDITION. WEATHER
MODERATE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3924. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7233

116. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,

July 8, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I sent you a wire today as letter would have taken long. I hope you had my letter¹ written on the way. I met Balvantsinha in Delhi. He will follow the instructions. Let us hope the experiment² will be a success. Lilavati's³ may not be. She is not happy in the place where she is boarding. She is not able to put up with any inconvenience. However, I have spoken to her and implored her not to give in without an effort.

The weather here is ideal for us all. During the day a punka becomes necessary. I sit bare-bodied, nothing but a thin woollen blanket was needed during the night.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6-7-1939.

² Balvantsinha was to join Datar Singh's dairy near Lahore; *vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-6-1939.

³ She went to Bombay for her matriculation.

I had a long letter from Haksar¹ pressing me to go to Kashmir while he is there. I have not yet acknowledged it. I hope to, tomorrow. I shall send it² to you when I have done with it.

I hope you have got rid of your flu and that the other patients are also doing well.

Love.

Tyrant

From the original: C. W. 3925. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7234

117. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,

July 8, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. We arrived here yesterday. Mahadev, Bablo and Kanu are with me. Pyarelal has had to have an incision made under his tongue and has had to stay on in Bombay. And so Ba and Sushila also have stayed back. All the three of them will come over here when Pyarelal is discharged. Mirabehn must have reached Patna. She will work there for the present. You will of course see her. She is likely to attend the Congress meeting. We shall probably be here for a month. Sushila is all right now. Amtul Salaam will do khadi work in Ahmedabad. Jayaprakash had met me. He will probably come to see me here also. We had talked about you. He says you are to be the leader of women volunteers. But in that case your study will suffer. But that will not matter. Do the duty that comes to you unsought. The other things discussed were about our reunion. But he will not accept khadi. And I am not likely to give it up. That makes our working together difficult. Ba is keeping well. I am of course all right. There is no change in the diet. I keep fairly good strength. The weather here is not so cold. It is not too hot either. Give the enclosure to Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3533

¹ *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-6-1939.

² *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 9-7-1939.

118. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 8, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have only a few minutes today. You must have received the letter¹ which I wrote on the way. We are all well. There is no cold here. It is quite warm. But no hot breeze.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 423

119. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS²

ABBOTTABAD,

July 8, 1939

I observe that political prisoners of Bengal in Dumdum and Alipore jails are determined upon hunger-strike for their unconditional release. I would urge them strongly not to take to hunger-strike. I am sure Sarat Babu, who is handling the case, thinks likewise. I would ask the prisoners to be guided by Sarat Babu.³

Harijan, 15-7-1939; also *The Hindu*, 9-7-1939

120. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS⁴

ABBOTTABAD,

July 8, 1939

I have carefully read Sir Raza Ali's condemnation of my advice⁵ to Indians in South Africa not to embark upon a non-European front. My advice may be bad on merits but does not become bad because I have been absent from South Africa for a quarter of a

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 6-7-1939.

² In *Harijan*, this appeared under the title "Bengal Political Prisoners".

³ *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 14-6-1939, and "Telegram to Secretary, Political Prisoners' Release Sub-Committee", on or before 9-7-1939

⁴ This is extracted from "Notes" in *Harijan*. According to *The Hindu*, Gandhiji made this statement "on being shown Sir Raza Ali's statement on A. I. C. C. resolution regarding South Africa"; *vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

⁵ *Vide* "South Africa Resolution", "26-6-1939.

century. I have no doubt about the soundness of my advice. However much one may sympathize with the Bantus, Indians cannot make common cause with them. I doubt if the Bantus themselves will as a class countenance any such move. They can only damage and complicate their cause by mixing it up with the Indian, as Indians would damage theirs by such mixture. But neither the A. I. C. C. resolution nor my advice need deter the Indians from forming a non-European front if they are sure thereby of winning their freedom. Indeed, had they thought it beneficial or possible, they would have formed it long ago.

Harijan, 15-7-1939; also *The Hindu*, 9-7-1939

121. MESSAGE TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

[On or after *July 8, 1939*]¹

Congratulations on the opening of the Meenakshi Temple for Harijans.² Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindu, 11-7-1939.

122. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, POLITICAL PRISONERS' RELEASE SUB-COMMITTEE³

ABBOTTABAD,

[On or before *July 9, 1939*]⁴

BE GUIDED BY SARAT BABU. HUNGER-STRIKE, I CONSIDER,
IS BAD AND INADVISABLE IN ANY CASE.⁵

The Hindu, 9-7-1939

¹ From the reference to Meenakshi Temple, which was thrown open to Harijans on July 8

² *Vide* also "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

³ Of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

⁴ The telegram was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, July 9".

⁵ *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 8-7-1939.

123. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR¹,

Parsi friends told me with glee that you had described the prohibition programme of the Bombay Ministry as a 'madcap scheme'. Can this be true? If so, why do you consider it to be such?

I have been receiving letters telling me that you contemplate introducing separate electorates for Harijans at Municipal elections! I wonder if there is truth in this information.

I observe that your scheme² is already before the public. I have not had a moment to give to its study. I hope early next week to take it up and the papers you were good enough to leave with me.

I hope your backache has subsided. I would strongly recommend nature cure as a permanent remedy. It consists in strict diet, vapour baths and cold hip-baths. Abdominal mud bandages help considerably. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has some experience of this treatment. She has tried it herself off and on. She is your neighbour. Do discuss it with her.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I wrote yesterday. But the post has not gone yet. So this will be in the packet.

J. L.'s letter is good. I hope you will give him your opinion of *Hind Swaraj*. The deadness must go. Eczema, laryngitis are your two enemies. You must drive them out. You have to be in Segaoon, the

¹ Premier of the Punjab

² Alternative scheme for Federation, which was finally published on July 30; *vide*, "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939.

moment I reach there. Both the maladies can be brought under control in Segaoon. Nothing is certain about Talcher. I am hoping that I won't have to go there. J. L.'s letter herewith. Haksar's also. I am telling him I would try to go to Kashmir.¹ His letter is good though difficult to understand.

Nothing can be done by you about the Viceregal letter. Things should be allowed to take their own course. I do not yet know when Ba will come. There is no reply to my wire. Mira has gone to Patna on Rajen Babu's wire. She will be happy there. She has made several friends among Englishmen and Indians. It is a pity she could not hit it off with Khan Saheb and could not stand any altitude. However she might come back in October. I leave these parts by 5th August.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3926. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7235

125. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ABBOTTABAD,

July 9, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I am glad that you are keeping good health.

We are likely to spend at the most one month in this district.

As a small incision was made under Pyarelal's tongue, he had to stay behind. Hence Ba and Sushila also stayed on. They are likely to return in about three days. Ba is not going to Sabarmati. I am in excellent health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10013. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

¹*Vide* also Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-7-1939.

126. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I read here today your letter of the 4th. Your complaint is justified. It is strange that there is no letter from Sushila. Shakaribehn is bound to feel hurt. If I were in your place I also would feel hurt. A calamity like this is an example of my mismanagement. I hold myself responsible for the mismanagement among those around me. Shankaran had a narrow escape. He is better. He will perhaps take a month to get well. If Sushila did not write about the old man's dressing, it was a serious lapse on her part. I think she would not commit a mistake like that. I hope you will continue to hear from her. Lilavati's address is: New Era High School, Bombay. She is staying in Vanita Vishram but she is not happy there. Let us see what happens. Amtul Salaam is at Sabarmati Harijan Ashram. She seems likely to prove a good worker.

As an incision has been made under Pyarelal's tongue, Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila are expected to come after about four or five days. The weather here is better than at Segaon. It is neither too cold nor too hot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8353. Also C. W. 7052. Courtesy: Chimanlal N. Shah

127. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I hope you reached the dairy farm today on time. About your expenses there, I have written to Sardar Saheb that I shall be responsible for whatever expenses are incurred.

It is hot here too; but no hot breeze. I sit bare-bodied.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1922

128. INTERVIEW TO L. W. JARDINE¹

ABBOTTABAD,
[July 9, 1939]²

GANDHIJI: That is the only correct position, and no other is possible. If you have followed my writings, you know that I have declared that no one is competent to offer satyagraha unless he has a living faith in God. I had formerly not the courage to say so bluntly to my co-workers. I knew it was difficult to get a heart-response to this thing. For there are many who say they have living faith and yet are not godfearing, and others who scoff at the idea of believing in God and yet are at heart godfearing. But I said it did not matter how difficult it was, I must put it forward as I know it.

[JARDINE:] You came only recently to the conclusion that you must insist on the condition?

G. Yes. I felt I must make it an indispensable condition. I knew it, I practised it, but had not declared it for acceptance by all. I knew some resented this and even imputed to me motives of excluding them from the chosen circle. But I said I must take even the risk of being misunderstood, but must declare the truth at all cost. How to reduce the whole thing to practice I do not know.

J. That is simply terrific. To hear you say that it is difficult is tremendous, for it is an encouragement to me. There is a kind of hero-worship that attributes to you superhuman powers. It is something to hear that you have difficulties and are human, and thus to feel kinship with you.

Then there is another thing that has come home to me. You must not think of taking but always of giving something.

G. That is right in a sense, but you can't give without taking, and to go on saying that you will always give would be humbug.

¹ Revenue Commissioner, Frontier Province; President, Oxford Movement. The interview is extracted from "The Oxford Group and Moral Rearmament" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "We have found them refreshingly frank . . . On some of the basic principles we found ourselves in complete agreement . . . The friend who met Gandhiji described the object of the movement as the 'eradication of fear by bringing people under the guidance of God'."

² Vide the following item.

Honesty, purity, unselfishness and love are their fourfold principles, and the friend said that whilst the first two would come under the heading 'truth', the other two would come under the heading 'non-violence or bravery'. . . . Gandhiji asked:

How is a civilian who is trained not to establish any human contact with the ruled to fare under this rule? Perhaps you will not admit that they are so trained ?

J. No

G. Well, you will by and by. I do not make a charge of it. It was worldly wisdom that dictated the course to those who organized the Service. How could they allow them to live on terms of familiarity with those over whom they had to rule, especially when the rulers were only a handful? And yet if you accept the creed of the Oxford Group, you have to establish human contact with me. And if you do it with me, you must do it with others. You will have to contact the whole of India through me, and I with all Englishmen through you. That at any rate is what the Oxford Group must stand for, otherwise it would be like many other similar movements.

J. You are right, and that is why I kept out of freemasonry. We have to meet under God, and we shall not make demands from another which are inconsistent with the guidance of God.

G. Anyway, I have expressed my difficulty.

J. A programme of moral rearmament for the world cannot fail to lessen the dangers of armed conflict. Such moral rearmament must receive support on a world-wide basis.

Gandhiji was invited to put his signature to a "response" to President Roosevelt's message.¹

¹ Mahadev Desai explains: ". . . President Roosevelt advocated, before four thousand persons assembled in Constitution Hall in America, moral rearmament as a means of maintaining world peace. . . . Two of the paragraphs in it read thus:

'MRA means first of all a change of heart. It means admission of our responsibility for the past, a frank acceptance by nations as by individuals of the standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love daily listening and daily obedience to God's direction.

'At this fateful hour we pledge ourselves to give the last full measure of our devotion—the service of heart, mind, will—to the Moral and Spiritual Rearmament of our nation—to building the world of tomorrow, the world of new men, new nations, where every resource of human genius is liberated under God's leadership to enrich the heritage of all mankind.'

With all deference to those in India who had signed this “response” Gandhiji said he could not in all conscience sign this. He could not endorse a falsehood. How can India accept responsibility for the past?

All this has no application to me. The whole paragraph applies to exploiting nations, whereas India is an exploited nation. The second paragraph too applies to nations of the West and not to us. The whole appeal is so unreal. I can think of moral rearmament, but that would be in a different setting. I can think of communal unity through moral rearmament. As a member of an exploited nation I can have a different moral rearmament programme, and I may invite China to it, but how can I invite the West or Japan? And just as it would be unreal for me to invite the West, it would to that extent be unreal for the West to invite India. Let them shed their exploitation policy and their immoral gains first.²

Harijan, 12-8-1939.

129. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

PYARELAL
BIRLA HOUSE
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

IF YOU ARE WELL START INSTANTLY.¹ WIRE

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-7-1939, reported: “Jardine had a further interview with Gandhiji” on July 12.

² The addressee who had had a small incision made under his tongue, could not accompany Gandhiji when he left Bombay on July 5 for the Frontier Province.

130. LETTER TO MAURICE FRYDMAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

MY DEAR FRYDMAN,

I am only today able to deal with your letter of 18th May. You say there should be no self-torture, self-compulsion, self-violence in the practice of non-violence. This is a profound error. There is no salvation without the cross. Self-torture is only so called. The right word is self-purification. The flesh must be subdued. The flesh has gained such mastery over us that it has to be dislodged. We are born slaves of the flesh. Freedom from that bondage is mastery over the flesh, the self. All *tapasya* is self-torture. All restraint is self-torture. It is a surgical operation which has got to be performed. The fleshly mantle divides you from me. I must destroy it if I love you, i. e., if I want to be one with you. Its destruction in this life means its complete subjection. Is this not quite clear? Love to you and Appu.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 11330

131. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have your second letter. I gave Jardine yesterday one hour. He was quite satisfied. He said he would come again if he felt the call. He spoke very nicely of you. Your host here whom Mahadev has met adores you. Kazi Saheb wanted to know why you had left and why you had not returned. I told him about the climate and the altitude.¹ I told him too that if you were needed you would return in October. Badshah Khan was present during the conversation. So far as I can fathom him, he does not want to lose you.

Kisenchand Bhatia came in today (Monday). The talks begin tomorrow. Badshah Khan is away keeping an appointment. He remains as lovable as before to me. But that is nothing. What you feel is the only right [thing] for you.

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur" 15-6-1939 and 9-7-1939.

Mahadev Desai has gone to inspect Nathiagali. The hostess¹ here is anxious for me to go there. I am not anxious to change. This place is good enough and cool enough for me.

There is no news from Pyarelal as to when they are coming.

I am still keeping well. You can easily imagine from my having to use the left hand how much writing the right must have done. Jayaprakash came in today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6445. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10040

132. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter when I was very busy. I could not, therefore, call for Ambashankar Vaidya. I do not know if he had come of his own accord.

Ba was to have gone to Sabarmati, but the plan was changed at the last minute. She is not with me, either, but she will soon join me. I will not trouble you at present on her account.

I am very happy that Chandanbehn is improving, because it was I who had insisted on putting her under your treatment. You may now keep her as long as necessary and send her back after she is completely cured.

Vijaya doesn't seem to have completely recovered. That responsibility, therefore, still remains with you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2906. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

¹ Mrs. Parmanand

133. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I hope Chandan is improving. I have had a letter from her. Shankar was improving rapidly. Aren't they both, Shankar and Chandan, fortunate? Shankar should be arriving there soon now.

You had asked for Kaka's opinion, but he has left the decision to me. If Chandan does not require your presence now and you also feel the same, please return to Wardha.

Ba has fully recovered. But, as a small incision was made under Pyarelal's tongue, Sushila and Ba had to stay back. They will be leaving in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10789

134. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am worried for there has been no news from you since Wednesday. If you have not written anything by the time you get this letter, send a telegram. I hope Balkrishna is well, and your worry has ended. At the moment your duty is to stay put. We shall see what can be done when I come down.

Sushila, Pyarelal, Ba are still in Bombay.

I hope you have found a good help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4322

135. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 193 [9]¹

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have been writing regularly. How about you? I hope your health is all right. We are all well.

Ba and others have not arrived yet. A telegram intimating their departure is expected today or tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 237

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN²

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

MIRABEHN
C/O KHADI BHANDAR
MADHUBANI

YOU CAN REMAIN IF HEALTH CONTINUES GOOD.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6446. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10041

¹ The original, in Gandhiji's hand reads "1930"; but Gandhiji was not at Abbottabad in that year.

² In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "The long delay in Bapu's coming to the Frontier had told severely on my health and at last I returned to Sevagram. Knowing that Bapu wanted me to work independently, I mustered up courage and went on to Bihar. In the mean time, Bapu's long-postponed visit to the Frontier materialized, and the sorrow in my heart became further accentuated."

137. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I kept your letter of 6th April till today. I was glad you were able to make up your mind. I hope the vow is being kept and that keeping of it is doing you good.¹

Yours,
BAPU

LALA SHAMLAL, M. L. A. (CENTRAL)

From a photostat: G. N. 1288

138. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

CHI. VIDYA,

I had your letter of June 13. I could not reply earlier.

My health is now all right. Do come over when I reach Segaon.

Tell me all about the conditions there. If you write to Rajendra Babu and others, they will all listen to you.

Where is Lakshmi these days? What does she do? Have you fully recovered? I shall be here till the end of this month, if not longer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

¹ Acknowledging the addressee's reply dated July 13, Pyarelal wrote (G. N. 1289): "Bapu was very glad that you had taken to spinning regularly and were feeling attached to it. He would like you to learn spinning on the *takli*."

139. NOTES

A REPUDIATION

Janab Yusuf Meherally, President, Cutch Prajakiya Parishad, writes:

In a recent issue of the *Harijan*, under the caption "Leaders Must Lead"¹, you have made reference to Cutch which raises one or two points that need to be cleared up. The note has it that a Cutch worker informed you that "some leaders in Cutch are telling the people there that but for your stopping civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it."

We were not a little surprised to read this, for to the best of my knowledge none of our responsible workers in Cutch has said this. Since the suspension of the satyagraha by us under your advice on April 1, I alone must have addressed over 200 meetings all over Cutch. My other colleagues in Cutch have similarly done a great deal of touring. But nowhere have our leading workers given expression to such sentiments. In fact, at a public meeting in the capital town of Bhuj, which is our headquarters, I asked the large gathering present if any among them had heard these or similar words. The unanimous reply was in the negative. I asked again if there were any person in the audience who had recollection of hearing anything that even resembled this. Not one such person was there. I do not wish to labour the point any further. But we could not help feeling hurt that you should have lent the weight of your name to a statement which on further enquiry you would have found to be incorrect.

I gladly publish this repudiation. But I must say that there was no occasion for the President to feel hurt. Had I mentioned names, I would certainly have referred to him before writing the note. But when a responsible worker asked me if I had stopped civil disobedience in Cutch and wanted a public declaration from me, I could not wait for confirmation before giving my answer. Nor does the present repudiation take the matter any further than where it was left by my note except that Janab Meherally and those whom he asked did not make the statement alluded to. The proper procedure is to challenge my informant to produce the names of those whom he knew had made the statement imputed to them or unreservedly to withdraw his

¹ Vide "Notes", 7-6-1939.

allegation. I may inform the reader that I have adopted the procedure myself and asked my informant to produce the names or to withdraw his allegation. Meanwhile my note has served a very useful purpose in the other States if not in Cutch. The leaders have a greater sense of responsibility and realize that my opinion should have no weight with them except to the extent that it appeals to their heads and hearts. They are solely responsible for any action they take. And naturally. They alone know the situation at first hand within their own spheres of action.

THE WAY TO DO IT

Narandas Gandhi is khadi-mad. He is a good teacher after my style and an able accountant, but has been for years a staunch believer in the gospel of khadi. He devotes about four hours daily to spinning. His output gives him khadi enough for his house-hold. Five years ago he conceived the idea of popularizing khadi and raising funds for public services by dedicating as many days as my years at the time of my birthday. He began with my 66th year. I attach the greatest importance to my service of the poor through khadi. I do not regard it as a mad man's mad idea. It cannot be so mad when it is remembered that it has put into the pockets of Hindu and Muslim spinners and weavers nearly five crores of rupees. Though, therefore, Narandas Gandhi's enterprise is connected with my name, I do not hesitate to advertise it year after year. His ambition rises as years roll by. And it has been always hitherto more than fulfilled. He began by asking co-workers to contribute in all 66,000 yards of yarn and collecting 66 coins from those who would care to give them. Collection of yarn was made from all over India. Collection of coin was naturally confined to Rajkot for it was matter of door-to-door begging. This time Narandas Gandhi hopes to receive, instead of seventy thousand, 70 lakhs of yards of yarn. Is there anything which the determination of the good cannot achieve?¹ It should not be difficult of fulfilment if 100² volunteers spin 1,000 yards of yarn daily from 2nd August for seventy days. The programme commences on 2nd August and finishes on 10th October. A fast spinner would do 1,000 yards in three hours. But an average spinner would easily do it in four hours. If Narandas secures the co-

¹ This sentence is from the Gujarati leaflet, "Note on *Rentia Baras*", written by Narandas Gandhi (C. W. 8566).

² The source has "700" and "7,000" a misprint; *vide* also "Notes", 6-8-1939.

operation of 1,000¹ volunteers, the output need not be more than 100 yards per day. That means giving less than thirty minutes daily. And of course merit lies in an increasing number of volunteers responding every year. The virtue of khadi lies in bringing the distribution of the work of spinning as near the individual use of khadi as possible. The spinning provides the best and the easiest method of voluntary and useful co-operation. India has man-power in crores and that is why it does not require giant soul-less machines.² Given the co-operation of crores of people, it would be child's play for them to produce cloth for their own use. That would save the drain of crores of rupees to foreign countries and the wealth would automatically be distributed among crores of people. Let me hope Narandas Gandhi will secure the association of many volunteers in his enterprise. They should send their names and addresses to him as early as possible. The money contributions and the proceeds from the sale of yarn or khadi as the case may be, though they will be nominally presented to me, will be returned by me to be equally divided in three parts for Harijan and khadi work in Kathiawar and the Rajkot Rashtriyaashala.

ABBOTTABAD, July 12, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

140. MEENAKSHI TEMPLE OPEN

I have before me Rameshwari Devi's address to the Tamilnad Provincial Harijan Temple-entry Conference held at Madura on 13th June last. I had a letter from her describing how successful her tour seemed to have been from the numbers who attended her meetings and the enthusiasm they showed. She had also expressed the hope that the famous Meenakshi temple was likely soon to be opened to Harijans. Little did I then know that the temple was to be opened so soon. But the wonderful event happened on the 8th instant.

It is a great event in the campaign against untouchability and the movement for the opening of temples to Harijan. The Proclamation opening the State temples of Travancore was no doubt a very big step. But it was the prerogative of the Maharaja. He had in his Dewan a wise adviser. The Maharaja, the Maharani and the Dewan brought about

¹ The source has "700" and "7,000" a misprint; *vide* also "Notes", 6-8-1939.

² This and the following two sentences are from the Gujarati.

the transformation. But the opening of the celebrated temple of Madura is a greater event in that it is the popular will that has brought about the happy consummation. It reflects a decided conversion of the temple-goers of the Meenakshi temple. Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar and his co-workers deserve all the praise for the ceaseless effort that they have put forth in educating public opinion.

Let us hope that this opening will be followed up by the opening of the other great temples of the South. There should be no hurry, no hustling of the public. The opinion of the temple-goers is of the greatest value. Theirs should be the deciding voice. The workers will consolidate every gain so as to prevent any set-back. Every opening of a temple to Harijans should mark greater purification inside and outside the temple opened. The sanctity of such temples should on no account be marred. No political capital should be made out of what is, and is intended to be, a purely religious act.

Harijans too should be taught to understand the religious significance of the opening of temples for them.

There were fifteen useful resolutions taken at the Conference. Of these the following three attract special attention:

1. This Conference notes with deep regret the recent action of the Mysore Government in having withdrawn their order permitting Harijans into the Sravana Belagola temple even up to the limits where non-Hindus are allowed.

2. This Conference resolves that the Provincial Boards of the Harijan Sevak Sangh should take up the organization of a Provincial Sevak Service with the following objects:

- (a) There should be a whole-time worker in charge of every institution run by the Harijan Sevak Sangh, as schools, hostels, etc.

- (b) The sevaks should undertake to serve for at least five years.

- (c) They should be paid an allowance ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30 according to the needs of the individual and the circumstances of the locality.

- (d) The sevak shall be attached to any one of the centres allotted to him by the Provincial Board.

- (e) The qualifications of the sevak and the pledge to be given by him shall be the same as that of the Central Board sevaks, with this additional qualification that he should have passed at least the third form and must have been for at least three years in Harijan work, and should possess full faith and confidence in the ideals set forth by Mahatmaji and the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

- (f) The Provincial Board, though solely responsible for the salary of the sevaks, the institution to which he is attached will also undertake to pay at least half his allowance.

(g) The Provincial Board in consultation with the district or local committees shall select the sevaks under the scheme who will abide by the conditions laid down by the Provincial Board from time to time.

(h) The sevaks attached to each Provincial Board shall meet at least once a year.

3. Resolved that a short workers' training camp extending about a month be organized by the respective Provincial Boards in any of the following centres, viz., the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya of Coimbatore, the Vinayashram in Guntur and the Kengeri Gurukul in Mysore. Shri Avinasilingam, Ramachandran, Bapineedu and Gopalaswamy be requested to draft a scheme for their training and circulate the same to all the Provincial Boards.

The first is surprising and demands an answer from the Mysore authorities. I hope that there is some misunderstanding somewhere. A concession once given is not withdrawn lightly.

The second resolution is very important. The Conference has thereby taken a big step. The third is also a substantial resolution. Let us hope that whatever has been undertaken by the Conference will be duly carried out. Our resolutions often begin and end with being printed and advertised in the Press. They have value only if they are reduced to practice.

ABBOTTABAD, July 12, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

141. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

PYARELAL
BIRLA HOUSE
BOMBAY

MAY LEAVE KANAM¹.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ Kano, son of Nirmala and Ramdas Gandhi

142. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am much obliged to you for your letter¹ of 1st instant and the wires about Talcher.

I thank you, too, for your inquiry about my health. It continues to be good.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

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

143. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter is very good. Everything is plain. This is what a letter ought to be. You will learn something but teach much more. In a few days, your way will become clear. Only today I have a letter from Sardar Saheb². He wishes to send you to his bigger farm also. Keep cow's milk separate for removing butter. Conversion into curds hastens the process. With patience, everything will be all right.

I shall send your letter to Rajkumari who will send it to Ashram whence it will reach Surendra. I am not writing anything to Sardar Saheb. Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila will entrain from there on Friday. This letter will reach you after that.

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ *Vide* Appendix - "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 1-7-1939.

² Datar Singh

[PS.]

According to Sardar Saheb's estimate, you will need $2\frac{1}{2}$ months there. Let us wait and see.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1923

144. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Strange to have no letter from you for three days on end. I hope you are keeping well.

Here is a letter from Balvantsinha. Read it at leisure. It shows that all is not gold that glitters. But of course he might have to revise his first impressions. It cannot be quite as bad as he paints it. Of course I don't want you to say anything to Sardar Saheb. He has sent a sweet letter. I have written in reply. After all they did not meet at the station. Balvantsinha did not go by the Frontier Mail as it had no third class.

Mira has already reached Patna. She contemplates staying till the Congress is over.

Ba and company are expected to reach here on Friday. Everything is in order here. Mahadev has found an able dentist here, probably better than the expert in Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Please forward Balvantsinha's letter after use to Segaon.

From the original: C. W. 3927. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7236

145. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

See that the place where we take our meals is paved. Shankaran is improving. There has been no news at all of Balkrishna. Ba, Pyarelal

and Sushila will reach here the day after tomorrow. They will start today.

I got Munnalal's letter. I am not worrying. Tell Bhansalibhai not to eat more than one *tola* of garlic. The dose is only one ounce.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI CHIMANLALBHAI

SEGAON ASHRAM

SEGAON, WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10599

146. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,

July 12, 1939

CHI. LILA

I have your letter. By and by everything will be all right. Win over the girls through love. Persuade them gently not to be boisterous. They will certainly listen to you. Show this to them. Do not be impatient in your study. Take interest in it. The knowledge you gain will not go in vain. Passing the examination is only an excuse.. The main aim is that you should acquire knowledge, though examinations also are necessary for progress. Keep calm and go on studying. Never mind whether or not you pass.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9591. Also C. W. 6563. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

147. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. You never take care of your health. This is no good. If you wish to be treated by Vijaya's vaid¹, do so. You have to get well for the sake of your work.

Ba and others will arrive day after tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 424

148. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. Prison does not seem to agree with Jamnalal. But let things take their own course. He has to recover there and nowhere else. It would be all right if they release him on their own. You will see my article². I have nothing much to say about diet. He should take as much milk and fruits as he can easily digest and very little starch. He may add soda to as many things as he can. He can take as much as 60 grammes.

I have understood [what you say] about the Muslims.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9126

¹ Vallabhram Vaidya

² *Vide* "Jaipur", 8-7-1939.

149. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

BHAI SHAMLAL,

I have started action in respect of Lala Mohanlal's letter. If such a Bill is introduced we will be forced to oppose it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1180

150. A GOOD SAMARITAN

As will appear from the following letter received by me from Shri A.S. Wadia of Poona, he has been truly a good samaritan to the poor people who eke out a bare living by heaving up to the Mahabaleshwar Hill loads of wood from the plains below for the use of the summer visitors. Here is the extract from Shri Wadia's letter: ¹

I went to Mahabaleshwar to get that isolation and quiet I wanted to write my new book on Southern Rhodesia. But while there my mind and energies were unexpectedly diverted to looking into a grievance of the village people who came up to Mahabaleshwar from the valleys below with heavy loads of hay and firewood and sold them for a mere pittance in our bazaar. . . . Whenever I happened to talk to them, they invariably complained of the awful condition of the tracks by which they came up, as the pointed stones cut their toes and blistered their feet. . . . On inquiry I found that the tracks came to be made by constant use and were never touched by the hand of man ever since Mahabaleshwar was discovered by General Lodnick a hundred years ago.

Realizing that the grievance of the village people was just and needed immediate attention, I put away the writing of my Rhodesia and engaged a gang of coolies and systematically took to the smoothening and broadening of the tracks, breaking up obstructive stones and lopping off branches which came in the way of their long loads of firewood. Off and on the work was continued for eight weeks, during the course of which I must have employed altogether about a thousand coolies. Counting small and big, a dozen tracks must have been made, re-made and in some cases re-aligned. . . .

¹ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Now I come to the main purpose of my writing you these notes. It is to ask you if Government is not bound to keep in good condition these tracks that I have made for the use of the villagers just as much as they are bound to maintain in good condition the roads for vehicular traffic. . . .

While conversing with the villagers I gathered a few more facts which might interest you:

1. They all complained that the soil of their cultivated fields was deteriorating year after year so that their crops came to about half of what they used to have ten years ago.

2. The Congress Government, they said, had again imposed on them a tax of four annas on each head of cattle after exempting them from the tax for the last two years.

3. The waste lands round the villages should be given them for cultivation and small areas of forest reserve should be opened for grazing their cattle.

I wish you, Mahatmaji, would do something to help the 'Adijans', as I call these poor villagers of the valleys round Mahabaleshwar, in whose welfare and well-being I am personally interested.

I forwarded the letter to the Bombay Ministers, and I am happy to be able to inform the reader that the matter has been taken up by them. The Bombay Government will keep in good repair the foot-paths so considerably smoothed down and made safer than they were before by Shri Wadia. They will also attend to the other matters referred to by my correspondent. I wrote to him asking for further particulars of his enterprise. It appears that he laboured with the labourers himself and constituted himself their road engineer. He paid from his own pocket over Rs. 200 which were supplemented by two friends to the extent of Rs. 125. I am quite sure that Shri Wadia has lost nothing by suspending the writing of his book which it is highly probable will now bear the impress of his very practical philanthropy. It is fashionable to give something to charities out of one's superfluous cash. But not many give their labour as well as money. Those who do, ensure the best use possible of their donations. It is to be hoped that the other hill-goers will copy Shri Wadia's good example by studying and ameliorating the condition of the poor who uncomplainingly labour for them often on starvation wages.

ABBOTTABAD, July 13, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

151. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

I have read Subhas Babu's statement² on the Bombay prohibition with pain and sorrow. He had discussed the question with me when I was in Bombay. I had told him to confer with the Bombay Ministers. I do not know whether he did so. But I was unprepared for his public statement. He has used the arguments of the opponents of prohibition. He was President of the Congress last year, and having been duly elected for the second year he chose to resign³ owing to differences with his colleagues. He is still head of the Bengal Congress Executive. He is identified with the prohibition policy of the Congress. His responsibility has not ceased because he is no longer in the Working Committee. Had he been a member, he could not have spoken as he has done. His statement because of his position is calculated to discredit the Bombay Ministry in a manner the avowed opponents of prohibition could never hope to do. I can only hope that in this matter Subhas Babu does not reflect the opinion of any other responsible Congressman, and that the general public will continue to support the Bombay ministerial policy with as much enthusiasm as hitherto.

The Ministers' duty is plain. They have to pursue their programme undeterred by any opposition, if they have faith in it. Prohibition is the greatest moral reform in the Congress programme. Previous Governments too had given their lip assent to it, but having been irresponsible they had neither the courage nor the will to carry it out. They were not willing to forgo revenue which they could get without effort. They did not stay to examine its tainted source. The Congress Governments have the backing of public opinion. The Working Committee after very careful deliberation issued its mandate on prohibition. The Ministers have all over taken it up to the best of their ability. The manner of execution was naturally left to the respective

¹ This appeared under the title "A Dangerous Game". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 13-7-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 14-7-1939.

² Of July 10; for extracts, *vide* Appendix - "Statement By Subhas Chandra Bose", 11-7-1939.

³ On April 30, 1939

Ministries. The Bombay Ministers have been courageously pursuing their programme with every prospect of success. Theirs is a difficult position. They were bound to tackle Bombay some day or other. They would be faced with the same opposition as today from the interests directly affected by the prohibition policy. It is not open to any Congressman to embarrass the Ministers as Subhas Babu has done.

The communal question does not arise at all. Subhas Babu has rendered a great disservice to the Congress by raising the communal cry and the cry of minorities. Independence of India is impossible if causes great or small are to be discredited and ruined on the altar of the minority cry. Subhas Babu has played a most dangerous game by mixing up the communal question with such a purely moral reform as prohibition. It is as much the concern of a Muslim or a Parsi or a Christian as of a Hindu to look after his less fortunate countryman who happens to be a labourer and falls a victim to drink. The Bombay property-owners will pay one crore rupees as additional tax not because they are Parsis or Muslims but because they are property-owners. It is altogether misleading to suggest that the tax-payer, himself a non-drinker, will pay the tax for saving the drunkard. He will pay the tax for the education of his children whereas hitherto the drinker has been made by him to pay for that education. The additional tax will be a tardy but very small reparation for the wrong done by monied men to the poor. And the poor have no class. They irrespective of their caste and creed make by themselves a down-trodden class. Their enforced creed is wretched poverty.

Parsis are philanthropists of the world. Why should they be behind and in this the greatest philanthropy? And if theirs is the greatest contribution, it is but in accordance with their best tradition. And they will be thrice blessed. Many of them will be weaned from a trade which corrupts the morals of their countrymen less fortunately placed than they. They will themselves be weaned from the drink habit. However mild it may be for them, I know, from having lived in intimate contact with them, that the drink does leave an indelible mark on them. Thirdly, monied men amongst them will have paid for the long-delayed reform. The cry of minorities is a calumny. It is a Parsi Minister to whose lot has fallen the privilege of introducing prohibition. Dr. Gilder's is a job which brings him no money and it brings him drudgery and loss of a princely medical practice. Another

equally disinterested physician¹ is the Sheriff of Bombay. A third learned Parsi is Vice-Chancellor² of the University, and a fourth businessman is the Mayor³ of Bombay. I do not know that there has been such a happy conjunction before in the history of Bombay. If the Congressmen and the Congress Ministry of Bombay were communally minded and were indifferent to the minorities, this unique event would not have taken place.

And I suggest that without the willing co-operation of the Muslim population of Bombay the movement in Bombay could not have been introduced. I am quite sure that the best Muslim mind in all India is with the Congress in this Bombay project.

The piecemeal solution flung by Subhas Babu would not work. For one thing it would lack the psychological background. I therefore invite Subhas Babu to retrace his steps and join me in making an appeal to the great Parsi community and those others who may oppose the reform to help it to become the success which it deserves to be. It is his duty as Rajen Babu's immediate predecessor to help the Bombay Ministry which is bravely pursuing the policy laid down for it by the Congress.

Harijan, 22-7-1939.

152. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

DEAR TULPULE,

You have raised a very important question. My mind whirls when I try to find a solution. But it will come in its own time. Meanwhile let us hold ourselves in patience.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIC. A. TULPULE
TILAK ROAD, POONA

From a photostat: C. W. 2900. Courtesy: C. A. Tulpule

¹ Dr. Pheroze C. Bharucha.

² R. P. Masani.

³ Behram Naorosji Karanjia.

153. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

If your letter had not been received today, I would have wired. I was impatient to know the cause of the long silence—long for you. I am glad Dalip is on the mend. You will have to come to Segaon to get strong. I hope from here my way will be to Segaon without a break.

I do wish you will firmly cancel Sangli¹ no matter how insistent Tai is. You must tell her you are under treatment which must not be interrupted. You must give the doctor a chance.

Yes, you may go to Jaipur on your way to Segaon. That may be considered when my movement is fixed. Except Talcher there is nothing on the horizon to keep me from Segaon.

We wish systems to die, not their authors or victims. We must hope whilst there is life. If I suddenly lost my head, you won't wish for me to die but you will pray that I may regain my sanity and live. Does this answer your question? Recall what I said about Dyer.

The information you give me about the States and Travancore is interesting and instructive.

I sent you yesterday Balvantsinha's letter.² I have heard again from the Sardar Bahadur in reply to my own letter. He says the very fact of my sending Balvantsinha would [be] sufficient charge for his board and lodging. Is this Punjabi courtesy or Sikh courtesy or personal to him? This was in reply to my offer of payment.

Ba and company are due tomorrow. Ba was impatient to come. She was detained only because I would not bring out Sushila, leaving Pyarelal alone. And Ba could not be brought along without Sushila. I could not attend to her personally and she does need medical adjustment every now and then and she has taken to Sushila. Ba is not bringing Kanam this time. He will be left with his maternal uncle. Nirmala is likely to go to Wardha soon. In that case of course Kanam will join here. Now comes an interruption.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3928. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7237

¹ Where the All-India Women's Conference was to be held on July 29

² *Vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 12-7-1939.

154. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I must write for the sake of writing to you. Sometimes I must give myself this relaxation.

For Ceylon I instinctively thought of sending a Congressman and my mind at once rested on Jawaharlal Nehru. But South Africa is not Ceylon. Sarojini can't do the thing. You are perhaps the only person to do the thing if you can draw Mott and others. It is the Boer mind that has to be touched. You can be spared just now. Perhaps the voyage will do you good. And you might be able to bring the warring¹ Indians together. But you must not go, if you do not feel the inner call or if your health won't stand the strain.²

All this has come when I took up the pen, it was to be only a love letter. Mahadev is with me. Pyarelal and Sushila and Ba come tomorrow.

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G. N. 1298

155. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I am sorry your recovery is not so rapid as you had expected. Let this sickness teach you patience. I am here till the end of the month at least.

Love.

Yours
BAPU

¹ Vide "Message to Indians in South Africa", 23-5-1939.

² A handwritten note by the addressee at the bottom of the letter reads : "This clearly means I must go as soon as the monsoon is over."

[PS.]

Pyarelal, Ba and Sushila join me here tomorrow.

SHRIP. G. MATHEW

GRAM UDYOG LODGE

NATH MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a photostat: G. N. 1541

156. NOTES

VANDEMATARAM

Some students in Hyderabad complain that my note¹ on *Vandemataram* has created confusion in their minds. They read an extract from it in some local papers from which the words “at a mixed gathering” were omitted so as to leave the impression that it was not to be sung even in gatherings of their own, though such an interpretation was absurd. I was being quoted in support of the contention that the students should not be allowed to sing *Vandemataram* in their own rooms or the prayer hall set apart for their section who had not only no objection but who regarded it as part of their prayer to sing it. My note is quite plain. If at any mixed gathering any person objected to the singing of *Vandemataram* even with the Congress expurgations, the singing should be dropped. But it was never intended to apply to gatherings in which there was no objection raised. Such an objection would amount to interference, unlawful and intolerant. If objections could be carried to such lengths, even the performance of religious worship would become impossible. And I know that for many patriots the singing of *Vandemataram* amounts to a religious duty.

THAT OBSTINATE DISEASE

Thus writes Shri Tatachar who is an ardent lover of Harijans:

Some time ago there was a riot at Nallathur Cheri. Caste men attacked the Adi-dravida *bhajanai* and inflicted injuries on several members of the party. In this riot caste men received a few injuries. Adi-dravidas complained of the riot to the police. The police took no notice of their complaint. Caste men filed private complaints in court against five Adi-dravidas. These five Adi-dravidas

¹ Vide “The National Flag”, 27-6-1939.

were convicted and fined Rs. 25 each and one month's rigorous imprisonment in default. Appeals were filed and heard on May 26, 1939. Judgment was reserved and was pronounced today in favour of the appellant accused. In accordance with the directions of the appellate court, the appellants asked the trying court on May 27, 1939, to postpone the recovery of the fines, until judgments were pronounced in the appeals. The lower court refused to grant them time and sent them to jail. . . . This grave act of injustice must satisfy you that the problem of the removal of untouchability is not going to solve itself.

He has sent me also copious notes which I have read with painful interest. The letter from which I have quoted bare facts is filled with biting strictures of the police and the first court which is reported to have refused to stay execution although appeal was admitted and the appellate court is said to have recommended stay of execution.

I have asked Shri Tatachar for further particulars. Allegations that the police refused to register the complaints of the Harijans while private complaints against them were readily entertained and that the trying magistrate refused to suspend execution of sentences, are serious enough to warrant a departmental enquiry. There is no doubt that if the virus of untouchability is to be eradicated, ceaseless vigilance by the central authority is necessary.

ABBOTTABAD, July 14, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

157. *PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY OR PROVINCIAL JEALOUSY*

Shri Jamshedji Mehta writes:

After the introduction of provincial autonomy one is pained to observe the growth of provincial exclusiveness and jealousies in matters big or trivial. I often wonder if provincial autonomy has not come upon us as a curse rather than a blessing. Instead of the nationalistic spirit having increased, provincial exclusiveness seems to have flourished. Before autonomy 'my country' used to mean India. Now it means 'my province'. Will you not warn the country against the danger before it becomes too deep-rooted to be dealt with?

The letter is naturally in Gujarati. I have given a very free rendering of the thought and the grief running through the original.

Shri Jamshedji's complaint has justification for it. Provincialism of a healthy type there is, and always will be. There is no meaning in having separate provinces, if there were no differences, though healthy, between them. But our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts. They may be likened to tributaries of a mighty river. The tributaries promote its mightiness. Their strength and purity will be reflected in the majestic stream. It must be thus with the provinces. Everything that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole. If the great contribution of Rabindranath glorifies Bengal, it glorifies also India. Does not his influence pervade the whole of India? Dadabhai lived not merely for the Parsis, not merely for Bombay, but for the whole of India. There is no room for exclusiveness or jealousy between province and province, unless India is to be dismembered into warring countries each living for itself and if possible at the expense of the rest. The Congress will have lived in vain if such a calamity descends upon the country. Every attempt at dividing India into watertight compartments must be resisted. India's destiny is to become a strong, independent nation making her unique contribution to the world's progress. Our patriotism is at no stage exclusive. We do not desire prosperity at the expense of the other nations of the earth. A time must come when we will be able to say, 'We are no less citizens of the world than we are citizens of India'. But the time will never come unless we know the art of being citizens of an independent India. We cannot learn the art if we develop poisonous provincialisms. The right national life has to begin with the individual. I wish to be strong and free so that not only I but my neighbour also may benefit by my strength and freedom. We as individuals or provinces must bring our best fruit to the altar of the motherland.

ABBOTTABAD, July 14, 1939.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

158. TELEGRAM TO A. VAIDHYANATHA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

VAIDHYANATHA IYER
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
MADURA

RECEIVED HARROWING WIRE FROM NATESIER OF VARNA-
SHRAMA SANGH. WIRE HOW MATTERS STAND.¹

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

159. TELEGRAM TO NATESA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

PRESIDENT, VARNASHRAMA SANGH
MADURA

YOUR WIRE UNBELIEVABLE. HAVE UNHAPPY EXPERIENCES
OF VARNASHRAMA SANGH'S PREVIOUS EXAGGERATED UNPROV-
ABLE CHARGES. HINDU PUBLIC OPINION SEEMS WHOLLY
FAVOUR TEMPLE-ENTRY BY HARIJANS.² ASK YOU NOT
IMPEDE LONG OVERDUE REFORM.³

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* also the following item.

² The reference is to the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai; *vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

³ In his telegraphic reply dated July 15, the addressee asserted that every word of his wire was true and that Gandhiji could make enquiries from Minister Ramanathan and others; *vide* "Telegram to Ramanathan", 15-7-1939.

160. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I forgot to answer one question yesterday.¹ Yes, your Hindi is very good. The letters are perfectly formed. Why don't you continue? If you don't care to write wholly in Hindi, do it half and half.

The reply from Sir Mirza is an utter disappointment. However we must continue to appeal to the best in him. There is no doubt that the State Congress people have not behaved well with the Dewan.

The other letter is characteristic. I have not yet studied Sir S[ikandar Hyat Khan]'s scheme.² No time left after dealing with the day's work. I shall have to make time.

Rest from Mahadev.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Sir Gokul Chand just waiting to come in. I go to the 'library' and then see him. Herewith Sardar Datar Singh's letter for you to read and keep for me.

From the original: C. W. 3929. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7238

161. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR UMA,

You can come here whenever you like. You won't be a burden on anybody. But it is fairly hot here. And my stay is uncertain. I am likely to come to Kashmir after 23rd if not earlier.³ Now do as you like.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 13-7-1939.

² *Vide* "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939.

³ The visit was, however, "cancelled; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-7-1939.

You need not go to Poland. Security can be given regarding your mother by transferring your cash to me. Other ways also may be devised. These will be thought out when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1202 and 8056. Also C. W. 5097 Courtesy: Uma Devi

162. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR GLADYS,

You have taken long to get rid of your disease. Of course you are welcome to Segaon whenever you wish to come. I am not sure, however, whether the life there will satisfy your ambition. But you have a vast field. You will stay where you find greatest self-expression.

You will send your letter to Wardha. I hope to leave this part of India in the beginning of August.

Love to you and all the others.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev is with me quite restored.

From a photostat: G. N. 6195

163. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

DEAR GURJALE,

I was glad to hear from you. You must not give in. If the medical work progresses, well and good. Otherwise you must live on what the goodness of neighbours brings you. Have no hedge and no gardening. Let the people know that you do not resent their deprecations.

Yours,
BAPU

SWAMI NIRMALANANDA BHIKSHU
GANDHIKUPPAM
TIRUVENANALLUR P. O., INDIA

From a photostat: G. N. 1387

164. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter. I should say let well alone. Do the best you can.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND, M. L. A.
PUNJAB
LAHORE

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

165. NOTES ON NIRA

Shri I. S. Amin, Chief Chemist and Technical Superintendent of the Alembic Chemical Works of Baroda, has made important observations during the past two years and arrived at certain conclusions in the experiments on the collection and preservation of *nira*. He has

now furnished me with the results which are too technical for the reader. He has appended useful notes to the results which are given below.¹

Harijan, 15-7-1939.

166. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ²

ABBOTTABAD,

July 15, 1939

Some women are inundating me with wires and letters about the hunger-striking prisoners in Bengal. One telegram peremptorily asks me to discharge my responsibility by myself joining the hunger-strike. Another lays the whole burden on my shoulders of leading the agitation on the ground that the prisoners had suspended their hunger-strike on my assurance. I have returned suitable replies where necessary, but the matter is too important to be disposed of by personal replies. I fear my fair correspondents are damaging the cause they represent by expecting me to do what I cannot do. They are damaging it also by encouraging hunger-strikers. I have no doubt that the hunger-strike is wrong. No person should free himself from prison by refusing to take food. The women who are corresponding with me, and others who are agitating for their release, should persuade the hunger-strikers to give up their fast. The exercise of pressure of public opinion is a legitimate method and if it is wisely applied, it will become quite effective. No government nowadays can afford to be indifferent to popular opinion. Therefore, I implore those who are organizing public opinion to persuade the hunger-strikers to give up the hunger-strike, and not to mislead the public by expecting me to do the impossible.

At the same time I would urge the Bengal Government to put an end to this particular agitation by releasing the prisoners although, as I have admitted, the prisoners have put themselves in the wrong by resorting to hunger-strike. The release is long overdue. Rightly or wrongly, and I think rightly, the public had expected their release on the transfer of power to a responsible legislature. That expectation should have been fulfilled long ago. The Government will lose

¹ The notes are not reproduced here.

² This is extracted from "Notes". The statement also appeared in *The Hindu*, 16-7-1939.

nothing and will certainly gain much by yielding to popular pressure in this matter of release of political prisoners.¹

Harijan, 22-7-1939

167. TELEGRAM TO RAMANATHAN

ABBOTTABAD,

July 15, 1939

RAMANATHAN, MINISTER

SECRETARIAT

MADRAS

NATESIER MADURA SAYS² YOU WILL CONFIRM HIS
CHARGE MEENAKSHI TEMPLE ENTERED STEALTHILY AND
SAYS OPENING WAS IN DEFIANCE PUBLIC OPINION. WIRE
CORRECT POSITION.³

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

168. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,

July 15, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I got all the news about you. Without getting nervous try and overcome your difficulties. You should study only as much as you can digest. You should take proper rest. Take part in the girls' games. See that you don't get brain-fag. It is good that you go to school walking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9592. Also C. W. 6564. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

¹*Vide* also "Telegram to Secretary, Political Prisoners release Sub-Committee", on or before 9-7-1939.

² *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Telegram to Natesa Iyer", 14-7-1939.

³ In his reply, the Minister denied the charge; *vide* "Telegram to Natesa Iyer", 17-7-1939.

169. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD ¹

ABBOTTABAD,
July 16, 1939

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
RANCHI

SEE MY STATEMENT². WE MUST SAY UNEQUIVOCALLY FASTING FOR FREEDOM FROM IMPRISONMENT INDEFENSIBLE. MATTER REQUIRES SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. IF MY OPINION ACCEPTABLE GUIDE CORRESPONDENT ACCORDINGLY.³

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

170. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS ⁴

ABBOTABAD,
July 16, 1939

IMPLORE YOU PREVENT INDIAN TRAGEDY BY REFRAINING FROM NEEDLESS WOUNDING OF THEIR SELF-RESPECT. IT TAKES VERY LITTLE TO PLACATE THEM. YOU HAVE GREAT POWER. MUST YOU USE IT AGAINST A HANDFUL WHO HAVE DONE UNION NO INJURY.

GANDHI

South Africa's Freedom Struggle, p. 299

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: "... ninety hunger-striking political prisoners Bengal appealed to me as President for help. Much feeling their favour. Unable find any effective steps. Shall appreciate advice."

² Of July 15; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 15-7-1939 *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 19-7-1939.

³ The Prisoners agreed on August 3 to suspend their fast for two months in response to Subhas Chandra Bose's appeal; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 6-8-1939.

⁴ Gen. Smuts' cable in reply dated July 19, 1939, read: "...Government has whole question under careful consideration and will communicate in due course with Indian Government. I hope our proposal will remove causes of existing friction."

171. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 16, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter and the estimates of expenditure given by Bhai Sukhabhai¹. I see no profit at present from the investment of Rs. 1,645. The estimate does not mention either how much khadi is likely to be produced. Nevertheless we will let him try for this one year. The expenditure may be treated as part of the Ashram expenses. Get a *hund*² from Mahadev.

I hope the man who had lost his leg is all right now. Why does Parnerkar³ fall ill so often? He has not learnt the art of preserving his health. How much rain have you had there? What is the condition of the road? Is the temporary bridge ready? It is a matter for serious concern that the water of the well has not yet become pure.

You must be hearing from Sharda⁴. Does Lilavati⁵ write to you? Doesn't Bhansali⁶ show any effect, good or bad, of the garlic?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10600

172. TELEGRAM TO RAJARAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

RAJARAM RAJAH SAHEB⁷
TANJORE

CONGRATULATIONS ON BIG TEMPLE BEING OPENED TO
HARIJANS.⁸

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Sukhabhau Chaudhari of the Charkha Sangh

² Bill of exchange

³ Yeshwant Mahadev Parnerkar

⁴ Addressee's daughter, Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

⁵ Lilavati Asar

⁶ Jaikrishna P. Bhansali

⁷ A "senior Prince and hereditary trustee of the Tanjore palace Devasthanams"; *vide* also "Notes", sub-title, "More Temples Thrown Open", 29-7-1939.

⁸ The Brihadiswara Temple in Tanjore was thrown open to Harijans on July 16, 1939.

173. TELEGRAM TO NATESA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

NATESIER
VARNASHRAM SANGH
MADURA

MINISTER RAMANATHAN CATEGORICALLY DENIES YOUR CHARGES¹ SAYING
ALL CLASSES INCLUDING HARIJANS VISIT TEMPLE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*174. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, KARACHI DISTRICT
CONGRESS COMMITTEE*

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

PRESIDENT
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KARACHI

WISH SUCCESS PROHIBITION PROGRAMME.² HOPE PICKETING
PURELY EDUCATIVE PEACEFUL.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

175. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

THANU PILLAI
STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM

YOUR REPLY PERFECT.³

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Ramanathan", 15-7-1939.

² The Karachi District Congress Committee had begun its prohibition campaign by holding meetings to urge the Sind Government to introduce prohibition.

³ The addressee, President, Travancore State Congress, had a discussion with Gandhiji on Travancore Satyagraha; *vide* "Discussion with Travancore State Congress Deputation", 1-6-1939.

176. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS¹

ABBOTABAD,
July 17, 1939

GENERAL SMUTS
CAPETOWN (SOUTH AFRICA)

WHY IS AGREEMENT OF 1914 BEING VIOLATED WITH YOU AS WITNESS? IS THERE NO HELP FOR INDIANS EXCEPT TO PASS THROUGH FIRE?

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11354. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 299

177. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

Many thanks for your letter of 12th instant. You have forgotten to answer my question about separate electorates² for Harijans.

I have now carefully gone through your scheme and your remarks upon my draft³ about Hindu-Muslim unity.

The scheme is too complicated for me to form an opinion. I must own to you that I never studied the Government of India Act in the manner required for a proper evaluation of your scheme which I see is designed, so far as the Federal structure is concerned, to replace the Act.

I see that you contemplate zonal legislatures in between the provincial ones and the Federal legislature. The Government of India scheme itself is much too expensive and complicated for me. Yours seems to add to the expense and the complication.

Then you suggest that the composition of the army should not be disturbed except under the contingency mentioned therein. For an

¹ Who cabled his reply on July 19 thus: “. . . situation is being carefully examined and there is no intention to violate 1914 agreement. . .”

² This and other points raised by Gandhiji were met by the addressee in his letter dated July 20; *vide* Appendix- “Letter from Sikandar Hyat Khan”, 20-7-1939.

³ The Congress Working Committee which met at Bardoli on January 11, 1939, had discussed Gandhiji's new draft on the minorities question.

out and out believer in non-violence like me, I would disband the army altogether. An army and non-violence go ill together. But I am painfully conscious that in this extreme view of non-violence I have no partner. How far those who believe in the necessity of the country having an army even after it has come to its own will accept your proposition is more than I can say.

Then you have enunciated Dominion Status as an accepted fact. It is a bitter pill for Congressmen to swallow.

But I see that your solution of the communal tangle is your scheme including the proposal about the army. Yours is the only proposal of a constructive character on behalf of the league. I congratulate you on the great pains you have bestowed upon it. I am glad that you have decided to publish it in full.¹ I must thank you for having taken me into your confidence and asked me to give you my opinion upon it.

As to my draft solution, as I have already told you, it is in no sense adopted by the Working Committee. But it does still represent my views. I prize your criticism upon it. And if it ever formed a basis for the solution of our difficulties, I should adopt many of your suggestions.

Your solution for representation of minorities on services causes difficulty. What are the minorities? Is there a final list? I am therefore very uneasy about communal representation in the services. If we make much of the minorities question in the services, we shall not only endanger efficiency but we shall endanger purity and impartiality in the administration of affairs of the country. But I heartily endorse your suggestion that all the backward members of the nation should be levelled up to the forward ones.

I do not want to burden this letter with the other points arising out of your criticism. They are easy of adjustment, If we all make up our minds to meet with the determination not to part without reaching a settlement.

Yours sincerely,

SIR SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN
PRIME MINISTER
LAHORE

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ It was published on July 30, 1939.

178. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Of course you can come to Kashmir as Sir Kailash's¹ guest as I should also be his guest. Therefore you will naturally stay with me. The incongruity will be in my carting you from place to place. From your remembering the word I see that you do not see eye to eye with me in this matter.

I have heard today from Sir Kailash. I enclose his letter herewith. You will see he mentions your name. We leave here on 25th for Kashmir for a week's stay at the outside.² You will pick us up some-where on the route, I suppose, unless you go there in advance and receive the party. I am wiring to Sir Kailash just now.

I do hope you will cancel Sangli.³

Yes, we are Mrs. Parmanand's guests or fellow-inmates.

I do not want you to mention Balvantsinha's experiences to Datar Singh because it would be wrong to do so. I am sure things have righted themselves by now. It would be ungrateful to mention such things. I would not even have thought of the thing. Probably he has not even seen the house in which he was put.

Love.

TYRANT

Enclosure 1.

From the original: C. W. 3930. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7239

179. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 17, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have your booklet⁴ full of news. Of course the Biharis are lovable. I would not remove you from them if you will keep your health.

¹ Kailash Narain Haksar, Personal Adviser to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.

² The visit was, however, cancelled; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 21-7-1939.

³ Where the All-India Women's Conference was to be held on July 29.

⁴ In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, the addressee explains this as "long letter".

Don't deceive yourself that you are well when you are not. Watch yourself and do whatever comes your way.

Don't be hasty in your judgments. You jump to conclusions without enough data.

We leave for Kashmir on 25th and stay there seven days at the outside.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6447. Courtesy: Mirabeen. Also G. N. 10042.

180. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

DEAR SHAMLALJI,

Bapu has asked me to convey to you his remarks, on your letter of 13th inst. He was very glad that you had taken to spinning regularly and were feeling attached to it. He would like you to learn spinning on the takli. Once you become an expert, takli-spinning affords you pleasure which even the spinning-wheel cannot equal. Moreover you won't need to interrupt your spinning when you have mastered your takli and it is no exaggeration to say that takli is your best friend and helper when you are faced with the prospect of a long and tiresome argument. I wonder whether you know that at Nalwadi under Vinoba's supervision no youngster, after a month's training only, spins less than 100 rounds in half an hour on the takli. The maximum speed is over 350 rounds in half an hour and the average does not fall below 160 rounds.

Bapu's health is fair in spite of all the handicaps. We are here at least till the 25th instant, when we may go to Kashmir. But this is not for publication.

Yours sincerely,
PYARELAL

From a photostat: G. N. 1289

181. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 17, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

What shall I write to you? Are you not going to take care of your health so long as you are away from me? Does it mean I should

keep both of you with me or that you should take a divorce? It will not do for you to fall ill so often. Has there been any change in your diet?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10014. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawa.

182. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

ABBOTTABAD,
July 18, 1939

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
RANCHI

IF MEETING¹ NOT IN WARDHA MAY BE PATNA OR ALLAHABAD
WHATEVER SUITS BETTER. AM GOING KASHMIR TWENTY-FIFTH.
AFTER WEEK'S STAY RETURN WHERE REQUIRED.

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

183. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 18, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your years are flying like the wind. I cannot imagine that you have now entered the thirty fourth year. You look the same that you did when I saw you first. That also is good. May you keep young and go on doing service. It does not matter if Chandan's² improvement is slow. It is enough if ultimately she is completely cured. Vijaya³ must write to me in detail. Did she come away because she fell ill or for some other reason?

I do not understand the cause of Kakasaheb's despondency.

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha from August 9 to 12.

² Wife of Satish D. Kalelkar

³ Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[PS.]

We are going to Kashmir on the 25th. We shall stay there for seven days at the most and then return. Where we shall go thereafter is not yet decided.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10790

184. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ABBOTTABAD,

July 18, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I have your letter written in Urdu. You should improve your handwriting further. Write to Amtussalaam in Urdu. Her Urdu characters are excellent. Reading good handwriting helps one to improve one's own handwriting . . .¹ Kanam's letter is enclosed. He is not likely just now to come away from here . . .² He is dancing about. You may take charge of him when you come. It will certainly cost you more by way of fare to come to Wardha *via* Bombay. But that expense may be justifiable in your case. When will you be free from there?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

185. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 18, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have read your entire letter. What can I do if you do not get your post? I am writing regularly these days. It is difficult to find room in Harijan Ashram for those who come forward to work. Why insist on the Lal Bungalow³? There are other buildings too

¹ A few words at the two places are illegible in the source.

² *ibid*

³ Of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta, near the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati

nearby. If the work grows, we can build houses. But what could we do if you keep falling ill? You are the cause of your illness. Ba is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI AMTUL SALAAMBEHN¹

HARIJAN ASHRAM²

SABARMATI³

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 425

186. NOT GUILTY

Dr. Lohia has sent me a long, well-reasoned letter on the current controversy on the Congress resolution⁴ on Satyagraha. There is a portion in it which demands public discussion. Here it is:

You will not permit the slightest separation of the principle of Satyagraha from your own specific programme. Is it not possible to universalize the principles of Satyagraha, to make it the bed-rock of programmes other than your own? Perhaps, it is not; but I have this argument against you that you have not permitted and encouraged any such experiment. The people today do not regard your own programme of ministerial action and constructive activities as wholly adequate; they are experimenting with such programmes as those of peasant action. These newer programmes entail an amount of local and isolated action even during such times when there is no general satyagraha. Will you stop these little satyagrahas till you have found the formula for a general satyagraha? In such a course of action there is the danger of anarchy that arises out of suppression. Non-violent collective action is among the rarest and most precious gifts received by mankind in all history; we may not, however, know how to treasure it and continue it.

Not only have I not prohibited separation of the principle of Satyagraha from my own specific programme, I have often invited new programmes. But hitherto I have not known a single case of any new programme. I have never suggested that there can never be any departure from or addition to my programme. What, however, I have

¹ The source has these in Gujarati.

² *ibid*

³ The source has this in English.

⁴ *Vide* "A.I.C.C. Resolutions", 23-6-1939.

said and would like to repeat here is that I cannot bless or encourage a new programme that makes no appeal to me. My programme, I claim, is a deduction from the satyagraha of my conception. It is, therefore, likely that if there was any such vital activity favouring the growth of satyagraha, it would not escape me.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that my programme has not made a general appeal to the Congress intelligentsia. I have already pointed out that the reason for the apathy of Congressmen is not to be sought in any inherent defect in the programme, but that it is due to the want of a living faith in ahimsa. What can be more patent than that we should have complete communal harmony, eradication of untouchability, sacrifice of the drink revenue by the closing of liquor-shops and the replacement of mill-cloth by khadi? I suggest that non-violent Swaraj is impossible if Hindus, Muslims and others do not shed their mutual distrust and do not live as blood brothers, if Hindus do not purify themselves by removing the curse of untouchability and thus establish intimate contact with those whom they have for ages put beyond the pale of society, if the wealthy men and women of India will not tax themselves so that the poor who are helpless victims of the drink and drug habit may have the temptation removed from them by the closing of drink and drug shops, and, lastly, if we all will not identify ourselves with the semi-starved millions by giving up the taste for mill-cloth and revert to khadi produced by the many million hands in the cottages of India. In all that has been written against the constructive programme, I have not come across a single convincing argument against either its intrinsic merit or its merit in terms of non-violent Swaraj. I make bold to say that if all Congressmen concentrate themselves on this constructive programme, we shall soon have the requisite non-violent atmosphere throughout the length and breadth of the land for cent-per-cent satyagraha.

Take the peasant action suggested by Dr. Lohia as a possible new programme. I regret to have to say that in most cases the peasants are not being educated for non-violent action. They are being kept in a state of perpetual excitement and made to entertain hopes which can never be fulfilled without a violent conflict. The same may safely be said about labour. My own experience tells me that both the peasantry and labour can be organized for effective non-violent action, if Congressmen honestly work for it. But they cannot, if they have no faith in the ultimate success of non-violent action. All that is required is the proper education of the peasantry and labour. They

need to be informed that if they are properly organized they have more wealth and resources through their labour than the capitalists through their money. Only capitalists have control over the money market, labour has not over its labour market, although if labour had been well served by its chosen leaders it would have become conscious of the irresistible power that comes from proper instruction in non-violence. Instead, labour in many cases is being taught to rely on coercive methods to compel compliance with its demands. The kind of training that labour generally receives today leaves it in ignorance, and relies upon violence as the ultimate sanction. Thus it is not possible for me to regard the present peasant or labour activity as a new programme for the preparation of Satyagraha.

Indeed what I see around me is not preparation for a non-violent campaign but for an outbreak of violence, however unconscious or unintended it may be. If I was invited to hold myself responsible for this ending to the past twenty years' effort, I should have no hesitation in pleading guilty. Have I not said as much already in these columns? But my admission will not take us anywhere, unless it results in the retracing of our steps, the undoing of the wrong already done. This means having a reasoned faith in the non-violent method as the only means of gaining complete independence. When we have that faith, all bickerings within the Congress will cease, there will be no longer an ungainly scramble for power, and there will be mutual help instead of mutual mud-flinging. But it may be that Congressmen have come to believe that non-violence of my definition is played out or is not possible of attainment. In that case there should be a conference, formal or informal between all Congress groups or a special meeting of the A. I. C. C. to consider the question whether time has not come to revise the policy of non-violence and the consequent constructive programme, and to find out and frame a programme in consonance with and answering the present temper of Congressmen. It is up to every Congressman to carry on a fierce search inward and deal with this central problem. It is not safe or dignified for the Congress to follow the policy of drift. I would like such a meeting to forget that the members belong to different groups and to remember that they are first and last servants of the nation pledged to fight the nation's battle of freedom with one mind. The Congress today is a house divided against itself. It must not be.

ABBOTTABAD, *July 19, 1939*

Harijan, 29-7-1939

187. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ¹

ABBOTTABAD,
July 19, 1939

I observe from the Press that the hunger-striking prisoners² have sent me a letter and also made a public appeal. There is no doubt that they have public opinion solidly behind them. I would beseech them to be satisfied with this backing and to give up the hunger-strike. They are brave. I suggest to them that their hunger-strike is misplaced and is no part of their bravery. Let them bravely suffer till public opinion makes the Government release them. They may rely upon my doing all I can to secure their release in an honourable manner.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

188. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO

July 19, 1939

DR. DADOO

POSTPONE PASSIVE RESISTANCE TILL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.³
GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 11355. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 300

189. CABLE TO MANILAL GANDHI

July 19, 1939

[MANILAL] GANDHI

INDIAN OPINION

PHOENIX (NATAL)

SOUTH AFRICA

POSTPONE PASSIVE RESISTANCE TILL FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. CABLED
DADOO.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 11356. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 300

¹ The statement appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "Give up Hunger-strike". It was also published in *The Hindu*, 20-7-1939.

² In Bengal; *vide* "Telegram to Rajendra Prasad", 16-7-1939.

190. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 20, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your Hindi continues to be good.

I await your further letter about Dhami¹. How I wish you could find out the truth about this affair ! It is bad in every way.

I am sorry to have to tell you that I had to withdraw acceptance of state hospitality in Kashmir. The people won't tolerate any such thing. This is unfortunate. But I did not want to create bitterness. I therefore yielded. So I shall be the people's guest, whatever that may mean. Your programme need not suffer any alteration. You will be Haksar's guest though you will stay with me. Only I would like you to precede me if only by a day. All this, of course, if Dhami can spare you. That affair must occupy the first place with you.

Nirmala² Kanam's mother, comes here today to fetch Kanam.

Here is another letter from Balvantsinha. So you will see he is getting on. I am glad Sardarsaheb has taken everything in good part. You will send the letter as before to Segaon with instructions to pass on to Kishorelal and Surendra.

The weather continues to be hot although we had a good shower.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3931. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7240

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 29-7-1939.

¹ A hill State, 22 kilometres from Simla, where, on July 17, police had opened fire on a crowd that attempted to march into the Palace of Rana Saheb to present a petition seeking redress of their grievances. *Vide* also "Minority Administration", "Minority Administration", 22-7-1939, and "Lesson of Dhami", 30-7-1939.

² Ramdas Gandhi's wife; also called Nimu

191. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

ABBOTTABAD,
July 20, 1939

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND¹,

It is no want of time that prevents me from going to the Punjab. But I feel utterly powerless to do any good. In other words, it is lack of confidence that keeps me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 5585

192. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 21, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I don't like this persistent sadness about you. It is so inconsistent with faith in God, faith in human nature, faith in unbreakable friendship. However, enough of argument. The sadness will go in time.

The visit to Kashmir stands cancelled. I am not sorry. I hope to leave here on 26th for Wardha. The Working Committee will meet there. Hence I am likely to be a fixture in Segaoon for some time at least, I hope till the Congress time. Will you join the party or join me in August early?

Dhami is a bad thing. I hope you will reach the truth. Why not see the Rana yourself? Study and pursue this case to the end. I am writing on it. You will have a typed copy.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3932. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7241

¹ Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly

193. MINORITY ADMINISTRATION

The Chief of Chamba is a minor. The State is therefore under direct British administration. And the administrator acts virtually as the Chief and exercises all his powers. A correspondent from Chamba writes :

Ours is a minority-administered State being directly under the control of the

Paramount Power. We have been pressing for the repeal of the liberty-penalizing laws which have been enforced during the minority administration, and we do wish that popular element be introduced in the temporary administrative council at least during the minority of the Raja¹ In a case like ours the Paramount Power cannot say that it can't intervene. If it has to safeguard the rights of the Ruler, has it not any liability towards the people ? . . .² Will you throw some light on the question?

The question is pertinent. There is no reason whatsoever why the people of administered States should not enjoy all the liberty that those in British India enjoy. Indeed a wise and liberal-minded administrator of a State has within his jurisdiction greater opportunity for doing good than one in British India proper. A State administrator has much greater latitude than an official working under the routine of a Province. The latter is subject to a series of superiors and has only limited powers. An administrator of a State is much more than a Governor in his own little State. He is subject only to general supervision of the Resident of the Agency to which his State belongs. Therefore there is no excuse whatsoever for any misrule or failure of justice in administered States, if the Paramount Power's policy is declared in unambiguous terms and followed in its entirety. But if the administration is not all it should be, it shows that there is no well-defined policy of the Paramount Power so far as the people of the States are concerned. There is no insistence on the right being done by the States towards their people. There should be no such thing as policy of non-interference by the Paramount Power in so far as the elementary rights of the people are concerned. The policy of non-interference can remain unchallenged only so long as the States people are ignorant of their strength. But there is nowadays too much consciousness among the people of the States to permit of the policy

¹ Omissions as in the source

² *Ibdi*

of non-interference being successful any longer. Denial of justice in administered States should be unthinkable. Let the people of Chamba publish unvarnished facts about the state of things there. I have little doubt that if there is any injustice done there, force of public opinion will secure the needed redress.

Absence of declared policy by the Paramount Power about the rights of the people of the States is perhaps glaringly demonstrated by the happenings in the little hill State of Dhamsi. The shooting that took place there would have been impossible if the policy of the Paramount Power was known. The communique issued by the Political Agent should not be the last word on the tragedy. He had no material before him to enable him to form a correct judgment. Every such firing should be followed up by an open, quick, judicial inquiry. The Chiefs who get easily frightened and resort to firing ought not to possess the power they have today over the lives of their subjects. But the public who have to form an opinion do not have a fair chance of doing so. They cannot set up an authoritative inquiry. And a Political Agent's communique is no true guide. Take the Dhamsi communique. I need not challenge the statements made in it. For aught I know every word in it may be true. But it cannot command implicit confidence. In its very nature, it is a one-sided document. The Political Agent can produce no legal proof in support of his statements. He does not give the sources of his information. To inspire confidence there should be a judicial enquiry carrying necessary consequences for the wrongdoer or doers whether the wrong done is on the part of the State or the people. Thus, if the people sought to overwhelm the Rana, it was undoubtedly wrong as it was if there was defiance of the order against Shri Bhagmal. It was wrong too if outsiders joined the alleged demonstration. The lightning ultimatum, if it was that, was a preposterous thing deserving severe condemnation. Responsible government is made of sterner stuff. If the principality consists of only 5,000 persons and the revenue is Rs. 30,000, responsible government is a meaningless term. If people in every principality will take the law into their own hands, they will do irreparable damage to the cause. The All-India States Conference is there to guide them. Every Praja Mandal should put itself under its guidance in order to enable it to frame its case for freedom. There seems to be little doubt that there has been undue haste on the people's side.

But what about the Rana? Has he been dealing justly by his people? Was he really in danger of his life to warrant firing in self-

defence? Every crowd is not necessarily a hostile crowd. Firing ought not to be treated lightly. Human life should have the same value in a State as in British India. Every firing should be followed by the closest scrutiny and by suitable action both of a punitive and of a preventive character. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to deprive Chiefs of powers of which they do not know judicious use. The whole question regarding the place of the States in Greater India requires overhauling.

A new epoch has come replacing the old. With the change of the times there must be a change in the manners of all parties—the Paramount Power, the Princes, their people, and last but not least the Congress if it survives the internal crisis that has overtaken it. It will be a mistake for the Paramount Power or the Princes to ignore the Congress, a body under whose shadow the people of the States from the commencement have been accustomed to grow and flourish. The Congress must guide them. Any resenting by the Princes or the Paramount Power of guidance of the people by the Congress must result in an inevitable but wholly unnecessary clash. How can people who are one in blood and bound together by the closest social and economic ties be artificially kept apart for any length of time? Instead of suspecting or fearing the Congress, surely the proper thing for all concerned is to welcome the Congress aid whenever it is available for the common good of both the Princes and the people.

No doubt the Congress will have to recognize its own limitations. It can hope to work with effect only if its work is of a friendly and peaceful nature. It has to hold the scales evenly between parties. It must avoid all show of force or coercion. Thus the reported participation by non-Dhami-ites in the demonstration should have been impossible under the Congress aegis. The Congress influence can be effectively exercised only if it retains its non-violence. Its only capital is its moral authority. Any other position must lead to internecine feud and bloodshed. Dhami has a lesson which Congressmen have to take to heart. This I say quite apart from the admitted fact that we do not yet know exactly what happened and where the blame actually lay. In the absence of a proper judicial inquiry, right action becomes impossible.

ABBOTTABAD, July 20, 1939

Harijan, 29-7-1939

194. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

ABBOTTABAD,
July 22, 1939

I regret to say that for unavoidable reasons I have been obliged to cancel my Kashmir visit. I must apologize to those who were led to expect my visit to India's fairyland.¹

The Hindu, 22-7-1939

195. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 22, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter arrived here yesterday *via* Peshawar. It is all right that you wrote to Rajen Babu, but you must improve your health. Otherwise you will not be of any use at all. Why do you keep worrying? We are leaving this place on the 26th and shall reach Segaoon on the 28th. Could you not come to Segaoon by that time?

Rajkumari is in Simla. Her address is: Manorville, Simla. She will perhaps come to Segaoon when I go there. Amtul Salaam is at Sabarmati. Lilavati has joined New Era School, Bombay. Balkoba² is in Vadilal Sarabhai Sanatorium, Panchgani, and Krishnachandra is there with him. Sushila will stay on in Delhi and gain more experience in her old hospital for a month. After that she will go to Segaoon. Nimu came here two days ago. She will return to Dehra Dun tomorrow with Kanam. After that she too will go over to Segaoon. Balvantsinha is getting experience in a dairy near Lahore.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3534

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1939.

² Balkrishna Bhawe

196. MY NOTES

HOW TO ATTAIN TRUTH

Lab Bibando, Chashma Bando, Gosh Band

Gar Nabini Sirre Haq, Bar Ma Bikhhand

Keep your lips, eyes and ears closed and laugh at me then if you do not reach the heart of Truth.

This is a couplet by Maulana Rumi. Off and on Chaman Kavi of Kutch sends me such valuable verses. When I was at Rajkot, he sent me the above verse along with its meaning. I liked it so much that I wanted to place it before the readers of *Harijanbandhu*. At times when we talk nonsense, listen to falsehood or filth and look at objectionable things, this couplet ought to pierce our heart like a pointed arrow. The quest for Truth demands a heavy price. We may not actually close our lips, ears and eyes although we would lose nothing by closing them. We can, however, certainly do this much. Instead of uttering false or bitter words or hearing defamatory or useless things or watching lustful scenes, we may speak the truth at all costs, chant the name of God, hear His songs, observe the magic of His creation, have *darshan* of the saints and hear only such things as will help our progress. It is only he who does this that will attain the Truth. He alone can be a true satyagrahi and through his *tapascharya* we can get a glimpse of peaceful Swaraj. The rest is all in vain.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-7-1939

197. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY GOVERNMENT PROHIBITION BOARD¹

ABBOTTABAD,

July 23, 1939

I hope that good sense for which Bombay is famous will ultimately prevail and all will combine to make the brave reform under-

¹ This is extracted from "Notes" in *Harijan*, which reported that the message was "in connection with the introduction of prohibition in Bombay on August 1".

taken by the Bombay Ministry the success it deserves to be. I am quite sure that the removal of the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs will confer lasting benefit on the country.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 5-8-1939; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31-7-1939.

198. LETTER TO S. K. BOLE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I thank you for your letter of 20th instant. I understand your explanation. I had to deal with the memorial¹ as it was drawn up. The last paragraph was incapable of any other meaning. In the circumstances I imagine it is unnecessary to say anything further on my article. But if you think otherwise, I shall insert any explanation² you may think fit to send. It should be brief and to the point.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 4880

¹ The reference is to the Bhandaris' petition to the Bombay Premier; *vide* "Bhandaris and Prohibition", 7-7-1939.

² *Vide* "An Explanation", 7-8-1939.

199. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

DEAR DR. MOONJE¹,

I like your frank letter.² But I cannot make the response you desire, for our ways are so hopelessly different.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. B. S. MOONJE
19 ORTHODOX QUARTER
CARD ROAD, SIMLA

B. S. Moonje papers. File No. 24/1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

200. LETTER TO ADOLF HITLER³

AS AT WARDHA, C. P., INDIA,
July 23, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity. But I have resisted their request, because of the feeling that any letter from me would be an impertinence. Something tells me that I must not calculate and that I must make my appeal for whatever it may be worth.

It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state.

¹ Of the Hindu Maha Sabha

² Dated July 20, which read: “. . . owing to corruption and rise of violence in the Congress and the country generally and particularly owing to non-achievement of Hindu-Muslim unity, you do not feel justified in advising the Congress to start mass civil disobedience for exercising pressure on the Government to modify the present Federation according to your wishes . . . and yet the Congress is not prepared to accept this Federation. The Government on the other hand not being pressed or coerced to modify the Federation according to your wishes will remain indifferent in the matter, though it may be tempted to modify it to suit the conveniences of the Muslim League. The result will be that the Muslim communalism will be still further strengthened and the hope for Hindu-Muslim unity will disappear for ever . . . Will it not be wise to accept the present Federation in spite of all its defects and use it as a jumping-ground for further quarrels and gains ? . . .”

³ The Government did not permit this letter to go.

Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Anyway I anticipate your forgiveness, if I have erred in writing to you.¹

*I remain,
Your sincere friend,*

HERR HITLER
BERLIN
GERMANY

From a photostat: G. N. 1510

201. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Further contacts with Lord Linlithgow will come in their own time. I must hold myself in readiness but must not force the pace. There is nothing wrong with or in his letter. Only he thinks, he has gone as far as he could in the matters in which I am interested. I must not therefore tax him any longer on those matters. I am now trying to educate public opinion and showing all the parties how the new technique can work.

About Federation the position is absolutely clear so far as I am concerned. It is perfectly true that if my conditions were fulfilled, I would accept Federation and so would the Congress, I feel sure. But there is no atmosphere for the fulfilment of those conditions. There is no strength behind my 'demands'. And the British Government cannot give what cannot be taken and held by the grantee. I want you to believe that everything will come right in its own time. Herewith copy of my letter² to Hitler just going.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1509

¹ *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

202. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 23, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

You left and I got this wire in today's mail. So there is no cause to worry about Ramdas any more. I was not happy that you felt vexed here. But such things will happen. You should put up with them and not feel hurt. You should not in the least take them to heart. Kanam must be doing well. I had a comrade in him. I take it that you will meet me in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

203. SPEECH AT ABBOTTABAD

[July 23, 1939]¹

I hardly thought, when I came here, that you would present me with an address even this time too, on my third² visit to your province. I had thought I had sufficiently identified myself with your province to be entitled to be regarded as one of you and therefore above the need of such formalities as the presentation of an address. Should I suppose that I have still to win my spurs? Last time you gave me an address *and* a purse. But this time you have given me only an address and *no* purse. May I inquire how I have merited this 'fall from grace'?

I have more than once heard the complaint that the establishment of Hindu-Muslim unity is being delayed owing to lack of sufficient effort in its behalf on my part, that if only I would concentrate myself on it exclusively it could be realized today. May I assure you that if I do not *seem* to be doing that today, it is not because my passion for Hindu-Muslim unity has grown less. But I have realized, as I had never done before, my own imperfection as an instrument for this high mission and the inadequacy of mere external means for the attainment of big objects. I have learnt more and more to resign myself utterly to His grace.

¹ From *The Hindustan Times. Harijan*, however, has July 24.

² The two earlier visits were in May and October-November, 1938.

If you could dissect my heart, you would find that the prayer and spiritual striving for the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity goes on there unceasingly all the twenty-four hours without even a moment's interruption, whether I am awake or asleep. I want Hindu-Muslim unity if only because I know that without it there can be no Swaraj. Let no one imagine that because the Hindus constitute the majority community they can win Swaraj for India or even for themselves by organizing civil disobedience without the backing or support of the other communities. Civil disobedience of the purest type, as I have often repeated, can be effective even if it is confined to a few. But then these few must represent in their persons the united will and strength of the whole nation. Is it not the same in armed warfare? The fighting forces need the backing and co-operation of the entire civil population. Without it they would be crippled. I must be impatient for Hindu-Muslim unity because I am impatient for Swaraj. And I have full faith that true and lasting heart-unity between the Hindus and Mussalmans, not a merely patched-up political compromise, will come sooner or later, sooner perhaps than later. That dream has filled my being since my earliest childhood. I have the vividest recollection of my father's days, how the Hindus and Mussalmans of Rajkot used to mix together and participate in one another's domestic functions and ceremonies like blood brothers. I believe that those days will dawn once again over this country. The present bickerings and petty recriminations between the communities are an unnatural aberration. They cannot last for ever.

The greatest of things in this world are accomplished not through unaided human effort. They come in their own good time. God has his own way of choosing his instruments. Who knows, in spite of my incessant heart-prayer I may not be found worthy for this great work. We must all keep our loins girt and our lamps well trimmed; we do not know when or on whom his choice may fall. You may not shirk your responsibility by shoving it all on me. Pray for me that my dream may be fulfilled in my lifetime. We must never give way to despair or pessimism. God's ways are more than man's arithmetic.

It has grieved me to find that internal squabbles have begun to fill the Congress ranks in this province too. Yesterday I was closeted for over an hour with the members of your Provincial Congress Committee. They asked me to show them a way out. I suggest to you that the solution lies in your own hands. You have adopted Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan as your uncrowned chieftain. You have

given him the proud titles of 'Badshah Khan' and 'Fakhr-e-Afghan'. Let his word be law to you as it was before. He does not believe in argument. He speaks from his heart. You must learn to sink your individual differences and work together like a team under him if the titles that you have bestowed upon him are to be vindicated, and not remain as mere lip compliments.

Then there is the question of poverty among the Frontier masses. I am told that many of them hardly get enough to eat. It is a humiliating reflection that a sturdy race like the Pathans should be in that plight. But here again the remedy lies largely with you. You must teach the people to work with their hands and realize the dignity of labour. The Ministry can and will, of course, provide facilities. But the spade-work will have to be done by volunteers.

May God show you the right way. I know that even when we quarrel amongst ourselves it is only to hasten the advent of independence in the fond hope that independence will prove a solvent of all our ills. May our passion for independence prove a uniting bond stronger than all the differences that divide us.

Harijan, 5-8-1939; also *The Hindustan Times*, 24-7-1939

204. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 24, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA WEST

CAN YOU JOIN ME DELHI TWENTY-SEVENTH WAY WARDHA?
TELL HIMALAYAN PRAJA MANDAL¹ I CAN SEE THEM DELHI
TWENTY-SEVENTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3933. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7242

¹ Of Dhamsi; *vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 20-7-1939 and 21-7-1939.

205. TELEGRAM TO DR. D. D. GILDER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 24, 1939

DR. GILDER
EXCISE MINISTER
BOMBAY

MATTER REGARDING SABBATH WAS FORGOTTEN. WIRING¹
JEWISH TRIBUNE" TODAY. REGARDING DOLES YOU ARE
RIGHT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

206. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 24, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR²

I am quite clear in my mind that we need a strong volunteer organization. But I know that I cannot tackle the problem. You should consult Jawaharlal. He is the man to guide. I retain the opinion that before we can have a central body, we should have provincial bodies. We can't create a centre out of nothing. The tragedy is that we have not in any single province an organization that can be a pattern for the rest.

You must become well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The telegram sent by Mahadev Desai read: "Kindly supply Dr. Gilder, Excise Minister, religious directions about Sabbath use of wine by Jews with authorities." *Vide* also "Notes", 10-9-1939, sub-title, "Intoxicating Wines and Judaism."

² Organizing Secretary, Hindustani Seva Dal

207. LETTER TO HANNA LAZAR

[AS AT] WARDHA,
July 24, 1939

MY DEAR HANNA,

I was delighted to have your letter after so many months. I have gone through your old letter of which you have sent me a copy. Just at present you need no guidance. Your story is incomplete. But you will soon complete it. Whatever may be the story, the remedy is the same. As in the body so in the spirit though the diseases are various the cause is one and so is the remedy one, so in the spirit world, the cause of distemper is one and therefore the remedy also is one. Every spiritual distemper is a fleeing away from God. The surest remedy therefore is to seek the presence of God so much so that we see Him face to face. In the presence of God, there can be no sin, no sorrow, no anger, no malice, no falsehood. In His presence there is no fear, no external affliction can put us out. If this lesson of lessons is learnt there is no question, no doubt left.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

208. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

STAYING WITH ZOHRA ANSARI NEAR HARIJAN COLONY. PRAJA
MANDAL MAY MEET TWO. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3934. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7243

209. TELEGRAM TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA
LAHORE

LEAVING TWENTYSIXTH FRONTIER MAIL. JOIN US JHELUM.
GANDHI

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

210. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO ¹

July 25, 1939

DADOO
47 ENDSTREET
JOHANNESBURG (S. AFRICA)

POSTPONEMENT ADVISED BECAUSE DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS
PROCEEDING. RESULT EXPECTED SOON. ANNOUNCE POSTPONEMENT
DUE MY ADVICE IF PEOPLE IN EARNEST. NOTHING LOST BY SHORT
POSTPONEMENT. TREAT THIS CONFIDENTIAL.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 11357. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 301

211. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR,

Pray accept my thanks for your very clear letter² of 20th instant. I accept your suggestion that I may consult the Working Committee and give you its opinion. The Committee is likely to meet on the 9th

¹ This was in reply to a cable from Y. M. Dadoo and Manilal Gandhi, dated July 22, 1939, saying that unless there were "sound reasons for postponement our position with people will be precarious". They had further requested Gandhiji to give them full details of his reasons for postponement of the passive resistance campaign

² *Vide* Appendix-"Letter from Sikandar Hyat Khan", 20-7-1939.

proximo.

As to the Harijan electorates, I do hope that separate electorates will not be countenanced. It is one thing to have separate electorates for Muslims, but wholly different to have such divisions among the same community.

Yours sincerely,

SIR SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

212. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 25, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You are unnecessarily making yourself miserable. Mend the situation in which you are placed. You may as well spend your time in improving the living conditions of girls. I have told you that under the pretext of matriculation God is shaping you. Vyas¹ has been praising you no end. While you are there, do the work which the matron is not doing or is unable to do. Whenever you find the atmosphere dirty, try to change it. Clean up the filth with your own hands. Others will automatically follow you. Think that you are yourself the matron. Think that I have sent you there for reforming Vanita Vishram, and it is for that that you are going to get your certificate. In the same process, you will also pass your examination. Do not worry. Study only as much as you can. Everything will come out right. Let this conviction lighten your burden. Balwantsinha has passed through a similar condition. Now he is happy. He was put in charge of a place where even an animal would not have stayed. But having learnt to bear hardships, he has improved.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ M. T. Vyas, Acharya of New Era High School

213. DISCUSSION WITH CHARLES FABRI ¹

ABBOTTABAD,

[On or before *July 26, 1939*]²

GANDHIJI: It is a difficult thing to explain fully what I do when I pray. But I must try to answer your question. The Divine Mind is un-changeable, but that Divinity is in everyone and everything—animate and inanimate. The meaning of prayer is that I want to evoke that Divinity within me. Now I may have that intellectual conviction, but not a living touch. And so when I pray for Swaraj or independence for India I pray or wish for adequate power to gain that Swaraj or to make the largest contribution I can towards winning it, and I maintain that I can get that power in answer to prayer.

FABRI: Then you are not justified in calling it prayer. To pray means to beg or demand.

Yes, indeed. You may say I beg it of myself, of my Higher Self, the Real Self with which I have not yet achieved complete identification. You may therefore describe it as a continual longing to lose oneself in the Divinity which comprises all.

And you use an old form to evoke this?

I do. The habit of a lifetime persists, and I would allow it to be said that I pray to an outside Power. I am part of that Infinite, and yet such an infinitesimal part that I feel outside it. Though I give you the intellectual explanation, I feel, without identification with the Divinity, so small that I am nothing. Immediately I begin to say I do this thing and that thing, I begin to feel my unworthiness and nothingness, and feel that someone else, some Higher Power, has to help me.

Tolstoy says the same thing. Prayer really is complete meditation and melting into the Higher Self, though one occasionally does lapse in imploration like that of a child to his father.

¹ This appeared under the title "A Dialogue with a Buddhist" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: ". . . an archaeologist. . . Dr. Fabri . . . has been in India for many years. He was a pupil of Prof. Sylvain Levi and came out as assistant to the famous archaeologist, Sir Aurel Stein . . . He is a Hungarian and had in the past corresponded with Gandhiji and even sympathetically fasted with him. He had come to Abbottabad specially to see Gandhiji . . . He was particularly exercised about the form and content of prayer and would very much like to know what kind of prayer Gandhiji said. Could the Divine Mind be changed by prayer? Could one find it out by prayer?"

² Gandhiji left Abbottabad on July 26, 1939.

Pardon me, I would not call it a lapse. It is more in the fitness of things to say that I pray to God who exists somewhere up in the clouds, and the more distant He is, the greater is my longing for Him and [I] find myself in His presence in thought. And thought as you know has a greater velocity than light. Therefore the distance between me and Him, though so incalculably great, is obliterated. He is so far and yet so near.

It becomes a matter of belief, but some people like me are cursed with an acute critical faculty. For me there is nothing higher than what Buddha taught, and no great master. For Buddha alone among the teachers of the world said: 'Don't believe implicitly what I say. Don't accept any dogma or any book as infallible.' There is for me no infallible book in the world, inasmuch as all were made by men, however inspired they may have been. I cannot hence believe in a personal idea of God, a Maharaja sitting on the Great White Throne listening to our prayers. I am glad that your prayer is on different level.

Let me remind you that you are again only *partially* true when you say my prayer is on a different level. I told you that the intellectual conviction that I gave you is not eternally present with me. What is present is the intensity of faith whereby I lose myself in an Invisible Power. And so it is far truer to say that God has done a thing for me than that I did it. So many things have happened in my life for which I had intense longing, but which I could never have achieved myself. And I have always said to my co-workers it was in answer to my prayer. I did not say to them it was in answer to my intellectual effort to lose myself in the Divinity in me! The easiest and the correct thing for me was to say, 'God has seen me through my difficulty.'

But that you deserved by your karma. God is Justice and not Mercy. You are a good man and good things happen to you.

No fear. I am not good enough for things to happen like that. If I went about with that philosophical conception of karma, I should often come a cropper. My karma would not come to my help. Although I believe in the inexorable law of karma I am striving to do so many things; every moment of my life is a strenuous endeavour which is an attempt to build up more karma, to undo the past and add to the present. It is therefore wrong to say that because my past is good, good is happening at present. The past would be soon exhausted, and I have to build up the future with prayer. I tell you karma alone is powerless. 'Ignite this match,' I say to myself, and yet I cannot if there is no co-operation from without. Before I strike the

match my hand is paralysed or I have only one match and the wind blows it off. Is it an accident or God or Higher Power? Well, I prefer to use the language of my ancestors or of children. I am no better than a child. We may try to talk learnedly and of books, but when it comes to brass tacks—when we are face to face with a calamity—we behave like children and begin to cry and pray and our intellectual belief gives no satisfaction!

I know, very highly developed men to whom belief in God gives incredible comfort and help in the building of character. But there, are some great spirits that can do without it. That is what Buddhism has taught me.

But Buddhism is one long prayer.

Buddha asked everyone to find salvation from himself. He never prayed, he meditated.

Call it by whatever name you like, it is the same thing. Look at his statues.

But they are not true to life. They are 400 years later than his death. Well, give me your own history of Buddha as you may have discovered it. I will prove that he was a praying Buddha. The intellectual conception does not satisfy me. I have not given you a perfect and full definition as you cannot describe your own thought. The very effort to describe is a limitation. It defies analysis and you have nothing but scepticism as the residue.

What about the people who cannot pray?

‘Be humble,’ I would say to them, ‘and do not limit even the real Buddha by your own conception of Buddha.’ He could not have ruled the lives of millions of men that he did and does today if he was not humble enough to pray. There is something infinitely higher than intellect that rules us and even the sceptics. Their scepticism and philosophy does not help them in critical periods of their lives. They need something better, something outside them that can sustain them. And so if someone puts a conundrum before me, I say to him, ‘You are not going to know the meaning of God or prayer unless you reduce yourself to a cipher. You must be humble enough to see that in spite of your greatness and gigantic intellect you are but a speck in the universe. A merely intellectual conception of the things of life is not enough. It is the spiritual conception which eludes the intellect, and which alone can give one satisfaction. Even monied men have critical periods in their lives; though they are surrounded by everything that money can buy and affection can give, they find at certain

moments in their lives utterly distracted. It is in these moments that we have a glimpse of God, a vision of Him who is guiding every one of our steps in life. It is prayer.'

You mean what we might call a true religious experience which is stronger than intellectual conception. Twice in life I had that experience, but I have since lost it. But I now find great comfort in one or two sayings of Buddha: 'Selfishness is the cause of sorrow.' 'Remember, monks, everything is fleeting.' To think of these takes almost the place of belief.

That is prayer.

What would you say to the right of man to dispose of his life? Life as life I hold of very little importance.

I think that man has a perfect right to dispose of his life under certain circumstances. A co-worker¹, suffering from leprosy, knowing that his life was as much an agony for those who had to serve him as it was for him, recently decided to end his life abstaining from food and water. I blessed the idea. I said to him: 'If you really think you can stand the trial you may do so.' I said this to him for I knew how different it is to die by inches from, say, suddenly killing oneself by drowning or poisoning. And my warning was fully justified, for someone tempted him with the hope that there was one who could cure leprosy, and I now hear that he has resumed eating and put himself under his treatment!

The criticism seems to me to be that if one's mind is completely obscured by pain, the best thing for him would be to seek *nirvana*. A man may not be ill but he may be tired of the struggle.

No, no. My mind rejects this suicide. The criterion is not that one is tired of life, but that one feels that one has become a burden on others and therefore wants to leave the world. One does not want to fly from pain but from having to become an utter burden on others. Otherwise one suffers greater pain in a violent effort to end one's agony. But supposing I have a cancer, and it is only a question of time for me to pass away, I would even ask my doctor to give me a sleeping draught and thereby have the sleep that knows no waking²

Now according to you I should have no business to stay if I feel I have finished my task. And I do think I have finished mine!

¹ Parachure Shastri

² Here, Mahadev Desai explains: "Dr. Fabri got up to go with the parting wish that there may be many more years of helpful activity left for Gandhiji."

No. I am convinced that you can serve humanity for many years. Millions are praying for your life. And though I can neither pray nor desire anything—

Yes, the English language is so elastic that you can find another word to say the same thing.

Yes, I can unselfishly opine that you have many years before you.

Well, that's it. You have found the word! Here too let me tell you there is the purely intellectual conception of a man being unable to live. If he has not the desire to live, the body will perish for the mere absence of the desire to live.

Harijan, 19-8-1939

214. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

ON THE TRAIN,
July 26, 1939

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI¹

I got your wire last night. The decision to open 2,000 schools for basic education is indeed glorious. I feel that your effort will be crowned with success. I congratulate you on this enterprise.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C. W. 10259. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapeeth

215. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,
July 27, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
CARE CONGRESS
G[IRGAUM], B[OMBA]Y

YOU HAVE DONE BRAVELY AND SPIRITEDLY.²

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Education Minister, United Provinces

² The addressee had just returned from his Ceylon tour. *Vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1939.

216. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
July 27, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA, STUPID GIRL,

I shall be counting days. You will devote yourself to the work there with a steady mind. Devdas was asking me if you would talk to him. I said you certainly would. Now it would be nice if you took the initiative yourself. Listen calmly to all that he says and satisfy him. There must be no anger shown.

Do not worry about Pyarelal. I shall see about him. You must stay there cheerfully. You will not quarrel with Mother. You will write regularly to Vijaya, Prabha, Lilavati, A. S., etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

217. SPEECH AT HARIJAN INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, DELHI¹

July 27, 1939

I congratulate myself that I am here to give away the certificates to the first batch of students leaving the school which was established in 1936. But the fact that they have won the certificates throws a good deal of responsibility on their as well as my shoulders—mine because my blessings, which are being given from the depth of my heart, must bear fruit. That only time can show. Shri Viyogi Hari will have to maintain contact with the boys who are going out today. It will have to be a contact as close as that between parents and children. The parents' interest in the children is all the more when the children go away from them for work in distant places. He will keep me informed of your progress.

¹ This appeared under the title "Among Harijan Boys" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that Gandhiji presided over the first convocation of the school which imparted a system of education-cum-manual training comprising carpentry, tailoring, leather work and paper-making. *The Hindustan Times*, 28-7-1939, reported that Viyogi Hari, Superintendent of the school, read out the report, and that Gandhiji, before his speech, gave away certificates to all the 21 students and then presented some spinning-wheels made by the institution to those who had distinguished themselves in spinning.

The responsibility will be no less yours to be worthy of the training you have received, of the clean life you have lived, and of the uplifting contacts you have formed here. My blessings will be no use if you will not fulfil your trust. Your responsibility is enhanced by the fact that you will go out as representatives of Harijans and you will have to reflect in your life there the life you have lived here. Your contribution to the destruction of untouchability will be in proportion to the cleanness and purity of the life you live and the service you will render to your community. Hinduism, you will remember, cannot live if untouchability remains, and you will have to make yourselves volunteer workers in the sacred cause.

Shri Viyogi Hari said that it was difficult to make the tailoring department self-supporting. There must then be something wrong with the training given. Every craft is being taught, or ought to be taught, on a self-supporting basis. You students ought to ascertain from time to time from Viyogiji whether the work you turn out is paying enough and if not where in lies the defect. Only then will you be able to make your school an ideal industrial school. If you pay for your training through your work, you will never have difficulty in after life in earning your bread.

Those who leave the institution ought to get work wherever they go; and if those who are fully qualified fail to get work, it is the duty of the industrial school to find work for them. Let no one think that they get here an inferior kind of training fit only for the poorest people. The training they receive is in my opinion superior to what the most well-to-do boys receive elsewhere. It will depend on you to show by the work you do that it is in no way inferior to similar training imparted by any other institution. It is my firm opinion that useful as the other activities of the Harijan Sevak Sangh are, its educational activity in a home like this is the most useful. For if this institution throws up even a few boys of sterling worth who would give themselves to the service of the Harijans, they will solve the problem of untouchability in a most substantial manner.

May you live straight and clean lives, and thus be the representatives not only of the Harijans but of the millions of non-Harijans who want to serve the Harijans.

Harijan, 5-8-1939

218. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ON THE TRAIN,
July 27, 1939

CHI. RADHAKISAN¹,

I shall reach Wardha tomorrow. Write all details to that address.

Is it necessary to send Mahadev for a meeting with Jamnalal? Shankerlal² has sent a telegram. Mahadev has been sent to Calcutta in connection with the prisoners.³ On his return I can send him if necessary. How is Jamnalal's health now ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9127

219. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
AFTER ITARSI,
July 28, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

At Mathura yesterday I posted you a letter. You will have received it. I asked you to meet Devdas. You should not worry about anything. Keep writing to me. There have been many visitors every night.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Son of Jamnalal Bajaj's brother

² Shankerlal Banker

³ *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 19-7-1939.

220. SUMMARY OF INDUSTRIAL SURVEY COMMITTEE REPORT

An Industrial Survey Committee was appointed by the Central Provinces Government on 15th December last on the following terms :

1. To review the work done in the province by the Department of Industries since its establishment.

2. To supervise the collection of data relating to large, small and especially cottage industries from previous publications and reports by an officer appointed for the purpose.

3. To advise the officer-in-charge as regards the lines on which the industrial survey of the province should be undertaken and to review its progress from time to time.

4. To visit typical villages, study their economic condition and examine the possibility of reviving cottage industries, and in doing so to take the advice and guidance of the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association.

5. To report on the industrial possibilities of the raw materials available in the province, with special reference to the forest and mineral resources.

6. To report on the measures which Government can undertake to promote industrial development within the province, especially of cottage industries in the villages, and to suggest methods for financing the same or otherwise promoting them.

The Committee consists of the following ten members :

Chairman: Shri J. C. Kumarappa, Wardha.

Members: Shri Chaturbhujbhai Jasani, M. L. A, Gondia; Shri V. V. Subhedar, M. L. A., Saugar; Shri K. P. Ghaira, General Manager, Central Provinces Syndicate, Limited, Nagpur; Shri R. N. Jha, Secretary, Berar Chamber of Commerce, Akola; Shri K. P. Sagreiya, I. F. S., Sylviculturist, Central Provinces and Berar; Dr. A. N. Kapanna, Demonstrator of Chemistry, College of Science, Nagpur; Shri Walter Dutt, Bar-at-Law, Nagpur; the Director of Industries, Central Provinces and Berar; Dr. R. S. Thakur, Officer on Special Duty in connectio with Laxminarayan Institute of Technology, Nagpur University, Nagpur. He will also act as Secretary to the Committee.

The Committee is empowered to appoint sub-committees and to co-opt

¹ This appeared under the title "An Original Report" in six instalments. The item is placed here under the date of publication of the last instalment in the series. Only relevant portions from the extracts summarizing the report are reproduced here.

members for specific purposes.

To this number the following two more were added under the *Gazette* Notification of Resolution No. 175-89-A-VII, dated the 12th January, 1939:

Shrimati Sarahamma Ittyerah, M. A. Wardha (late Professor of Economics, Lahore); Shri E. R. Mahajani, Managing Director, Shri Laxmi Oil Mills Company, Limited, Akola.

The Proceedings of the Committee were inaugurated on 15th January last. The survey began on 21st January and was finished on 6th February. 207 students including eight women volunteered their services. 14 persons were co-opted to lead the survey party. The party was divided into groups of 10 students each. It surveyed 606 villages covering a population of 15 lakhs paying an annual revenue of over 11 lakhs. The survey cost was Rs. 3,000 in round numbers, i.e., Rs. 5 per village. The whole expense amounted to one tenth of the estimates.

The report covers 46 pages of hand-made paper, foolscap size.

The party travelled third class, but when some members saw during their survey that old women were picking grass seeds for food they declined to draw even the third-class fare. The party satisfied itself with such lodgings and food as the villagers had. Nothing was specially prepared for them.

Prof. Kumarappa says to me in a covering note :

1. Ours is not an academic survey where mathematical accuracy is the one goal.
2. Neither is it a propagandic survey to gather 'evidence' to prove pre-conceived theories.
3. Nor is it a clinical survey to further the knowledge of the science of economics.
4. It is a diagnostic survey done in a short time with the set purpose of saving the patient's life by a suitable prescription, and this is national planning—not planning for a whole country as such, but planning the economic activity of each individual in relation to the raw material available within the field of our operations.

One member of the staff, an M. A. in economics, argued that without detailed statistics it would be impossible to prove whether the villagers are poor and are getting poorer. I took him with me into the villages, showed him the houses in disrepair and one three-storeyed house, half fallen down, and the goldsmiths sitting idle.

This is no doubt a rough and ready argument. But if most of our villages contain ruins of well-built houses and artisans without occupation, surely the evidence of poverty is more complete and convincing than cold statistics which may prove everything or nothing.

The report which is Part I of Vol. 1 (Vol. 2 and Part II are to follow) contains six chapters and three short dissenting notes by Drs. Thakur and Kapanna and Shri Sagreiya. The dissenters chiefly emphasize the necessity of industrialization though they acknowledge that village industries need the help recommended by the main report.

Chapter two dealing with "General Considerations" stamps the report as an original document and shows that it is not to be pigeon-holed as most such reports are but should be given effect to without delay. The only way to do so is, as pointed out in the report, to invite the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. to help the Government to carry out the recommendations.

I give below a full summary¹ of the chapter on "General Considerations". . . .

The reader might have thought that my examination of the Kumarappa Committee's report on the Industrial Survey of the Central provinces was concluded. The fact is that constant travelling and preoccupations disabled me from pursuing the examination with the regularity I had intended. The long journey to the Frontier Province has provided the opportunity to continue and finish the examination.

The last instalment brought up the examination to the chapter two. The third is no less important. The survey of 606 villages revealed to the Committee the painful fact that the average income of the villager per head was no more than Rs. 12. This need not startle the arm-chair scientist who relies for his figures on books, and who has been taught to believe that it is anything between Rs. 60 to Rs. 80. Both are right from their own standpoints and data. The figure of 65 to 80 is an all-India average which includes the income of millionaires, middlemen and zamindars. The figure has a purpose of its own. But for the Kumarappa Committee the figure 65 would be wholly

¹ This appeared under eight sub-headings: "Functions of the State", "Taxes and Expenditure", "Capital and Labour Wealth", "Mercy and Barter Economics", "Barter and Government Funds", "Raw Materials, Production and Profit", "Administrative or Creative Efficiency" and "Impediment to Production".

false. The figure 12 is accurate and truly scientific. That Committee was concerned with the average income of the villagers only. The Committee says :

Our survey showed that most of the industries are tottering. There are hardly any which can be said to be even in a normal state. The taxable capacity of the people is rapidly going down and if the matter is not taken in hand immediately, the time is fast approaching when the Government will get nothing from the people

The meagreness of the income shows itself in the diet of the people. Thus the report says.

. . . Their food is largely rice or some other grain, sometimes taken as gruel to fill themselves up with water, but the tragedy of the situation is that even this little amount of rice that is available to them is polished rice making their diet even worse. They hardly get the chaff. This makes its incumbent on the Government to see that at least the rice is given to the poor people has all its nutritive elements left in it. . .

There are other valuable hints on the subject of diet for which I must refer the reader to the original.

There is a brief reference to agriculture. Here is an excerpt from it :

. . . We have, in a way, already touched upon the question of payment of revenues. In addition to this, the land tenure appears to us to require careful examination. . . . A great deal of harm has been done and is being done because of the unscientific dues taken without careful planning. During our survey we found that very little attention is being paid to renew the fertility of the soil. . . . It is time that the Agricultural Department took this function of re-fertilizing the soil on its own shoulders and supplied to the farmers manure from various depots in the villages at the proper season, getting back their return at the time of their harvest. Manufacture of artificial fertilizers should form a key industry. Seeds also may be given out

On the methods of production the Committee says:

. . . large-scale organized industries are rendered various services and are granted concessions by the Government which enable them to produce cheaply, while village and cottage units hardly get even the recognition of their existence, not to mention services and concessions. . . Cottage and village industries, as long as their natural tendency is to distribute wealth, have a definite unchallengeable place in the economy of a nation and more especially in that of our country. A careful examination will reveal that any cheapness in production in large-scale industries or any economies that may be effected are not necessarily inherent in the method of production. It is

largely due to expenditure which should be debited to this method of production being spread over the whole country.

Chapter four deals with the Department of Industries. The report has some trenchant remarks on it. Here is a summary :

. . . As it is organized today, the department is not equipped to direct industries, it is nothing but a glorified inspectorate. . . . The organization of a department of this kind should be such that every villager will turn to it naturally for help and advice. . . . This department should be the pivot round which the production of the masses should revolve. It should provide direct help in every way—scientific, financial and technical

The suggestion that has been made here is on the lines on which the All-India Village Industries Association and the All-India Spinners' Association are already working successfully. At the headquarters of the All-India Village Industries Association at Maganwadi, Wardha, various types of village industries are being carried on. Students are trained in the industries and for village work. A certain amount of scientific research is made. The goods produced are marketed in a shop organized by the Association. There is attached to it the Magan Sangrahalaya which is a museum of the type that is described herein after. The Spinners' Association has emphasized all these points and, in addition, has organized the village producers, and built up a network of shops all over the country to find outlets for the products of the organization in the villages

It is worthy of note that the Director of Industries who is a member of the Committee, has endorsed these remarks about his department. He deserves congratulation for his detached and impartial outlook.

The following instructive analysis of the distribution of expenditure deserves more than a passing attention :

Education	0-3-5 $\frac{1}{2}$
General Administration	0-3-0
Collection of Revenues	0-3-0
Police and Jails	0-3-0
Justice	0-1-3
Medical and Public Health	0-1-0
Agriculture, Veterinary, Civil Works	0-1-1
Co-operative Credit	0-0-1
Industries	0-0-1 $\frac{1}{2}$

Re	1-0-0

Where industries, i. e., village economy takes only $1\frac{1}{2}$ pies there is surely something rotten in the State of Denmark. And, as the Committee has truly observed, this money is spent largely on mere administrative work. If this department was run as it should be, the villages will be prosperous, and to that extent they would add to the prosperity of the State. It is wrong for the State to absorb three annas out of 16 for general administration and police and jails respectively.

The fifth chapter which deals with the survey is really introductory to the sixth and last which describes the village industries in detail. The condition of the villages is thus described :

. . . The primary needs of the people suggest that sanitary surroundings and fresh and wholesome water-supply must form a first charge on the revenues of the villages as it affects the health of the people. Unfortunately, water-supply has been neglected, especially the supply of water to the Harijan families. Whatever may be said against social customs, we cannot wait until these have been reformed to enable these downtrodden communities to get water. . . .

The report has the following remarks on the condition of the industries in the villages :

. . . In our survey we noticed everywhere all manner of industries interposed without any policy or plan. The result of it all is that today we find the villages disintegrating

This shows that the villages have been criminally neglected in the past. If the Congress Governments will carry out the professed intention of the Congress, they will reconstruct the lives of the villagers and make them utilize their time so as to supply most of their own wants. As the report points out, the Governments have to do two things: (1) to prevent interference with the village economy by preventing foreign goods from entering the villages, and by preventing our own merchants from introducing milled flour, rice, oil, etc. These impose idleness on the villagers, and the polished, devitalized food products undermine their health. Secondly and side by side with these preventive measures must go improvement in the methods of conducting the existing industries so as to make them more paying, and introduction of new industries in accordance with the condition of particular villages in regard to raw material. And if the venture is to succeed, the planning will have to include the taking up by the State of the goods produced by the villagers not for self-consumption but for sale outside the villages of production.

Among the village industries noted by the Committee are paddy-husking, flour-grinding, oil-pressing, *gur*-making, sugar manufacture, bee-keeping, pottery, glass-work, soap-making, cotton processes (i.e., picking, ginning, carding, spinning, weaving), washing, dyeing, wool-spinning, weaving, sheep-breeding, carpentry, smithy, sericulture, mat-weaving, rope-making, tanning, disposal of carcasses, pisciculture, poultry-breeding, dairy-farming, shoe-making, brass and metal wares, toy-making, goldsmithy, paper-making, transport, lac industry, bamboo, match manufacture, etc. Among the industries is *bidi*-making. This is what the Committee has to say on this industry :

Bidi manufacture is a very lucrative but a harmful industry in this province Naturally, as other industries are not available to those who are willing to work this industry attracts labour at very low rates considering the subsistence level of wages. At all events they are able to make two and a half annas to three annas a day which, as wages go in the villages today, is high. . . .

The Committee has made practical suggestions on all the industries. No summary can do justice to the hints given under each heading. The curious must procure the report and study it. The Government should issue a cheap and handy edition, and have a translation in Hindustani at least. The report is useful for other provinces also. The Government in the other provinces should therefore procure copies and instruct their Directors to study and act in the spirit of the report. I hope that the Central Provinces Government will carry out in full the recommendations made by the Committee.

Harijan, 20-5-1939,3-6-1939,15-7-1939, 22-7-1939 and 29-7-1939

221. NOTES

MORE TEMPLES THROWN OPEN

Raja Shri Rajaram Raja Saheb is the senior Prince and hereditary trustee of Tanjore Palace Devasthanams. He has 90 temples under his charge including the famous temple called Shri Brihadishwara. He has thrown open all these temples to Harijans as a purely voluntary act of reparation to Harijans and thus hastened the process of purification that Hinduism is going through. It is a great and good thing that the Raja Saheb has done. He deserves the congratulations of all those who believe that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. The accounts I have received from Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru of the enthusiasm she has

witnessed in the South in favour of opening temples to Harijans, show that the reform is genuine and is going to be lasting. She is a very careful observer. She says her meetings are attended by thousands of persons who follow every word of what she has to say. This is done through able interpretation. And she says that her listeners gladly endorse her sentiments. All this is a distinct improvement upon the past. Thus, though much has been done, much more remains to be done before Hindu reformers can rest on their oars. Temple reform has to go side by side with temple-entry. If the reform is not superficial but is an index of the desire for purification of Hinduism and Hindus, it must be accompanied by purification of the temples in every respect. Their sanctity and popularity should increase. The admission of Harijans to the temples should mean an automatic uplift in their lives. These things will not happen unless Harijan sevaks increase their vigilance, redouble their zeal and feel themselves uplifted by the reform they have helped to bring about. Reforms like the throwing open of temples to Harijans should bring with them a general levelling up in the lives of those who are engaged in and affected by them.¹

SEGAON, July 29, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

222. TELEGRAM TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

SEGAON,

July 29, 1939

SIR SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

SIMLA

THANKS WIRE² NO NEED APOLOGY SUCH THINGS
COMMON LOT OF PUBLIC MEN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* also "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939

² In this, dated July 27, the addressee expressed apology for the unseemly demonstration by the Shias at Lahore Railway Station on July 26.

223. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA

July 29, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Instead of guiding the Dhami people I have passed them on to you.¹ I feel that you should discharge this burden without any interference from me. The idea in the States seems to be to isolate and ignore the Congress and hence the States Conference. I have already suggested² in *Harijan* that no State Association or Mandal should act on its own without reference to your committee³. I should act, if at all, through you; i.e., when you refer to me, I should give my opinion as I do in respect of the Working Committee. I told the Gwalior people also likewise yesterday. You will have to reorganize your committee a bit, if it is to function properly.

After all I could not go to Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah and his friends won't tolerate the idea of my being State guest. Banking on my past experience, I had accepted State offer in anticipation of Sheikh Abdullah's approval. But I saw that I was mistaken. I therefore cancelled the acceptance of the State hospitality and accepted the Sheikh's. This embarrassed the State. So I cancelled the visit altogether. I was guilty of double stupidity—in daring to think of going there without you and in not getting Sheikh's permission before accepting the State offer. I had thought that I would serve the people by accepting the State offer. I must confess that I was not pleased with my contact [with] the Sheikh and his friends. They seemed to all of us to be most unreasonable. Khan Saheb reasoned with them. But it was to no purpose.

Your visit to Ceylon was glorious. I don't mind what the immediate outcome is. Saleh Tyabji asks me to send you to Burma and Andrews thinks of you in connection with South Africa. For Ceylon the idea of a Congress deputation came to me spontaneously, not so

¹ A deputation on behalf of the Himalayan States People's Conference met Gandhiji at Delhi on July 27, and apprised him of the firing in Dhami.

² *Vide* "Minority Administration", 22-7-1939.

³ Standing Committee of All-India States Peoples's Conference, of which Jawaharlal Nehru was President.

these two even after the promptings. But of these when we meet. I hope you are fresh and that Krishna¹ is enjoying herself.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 377-8.

224. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
July 29, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

I wrote to you twice during the train journey. Shankaran is well. He is not allowed to go up and down. He eats well. Mathew² is at Balkrishna's³ place. He appears well. He came walking all the way here.

You will have met Devdas. I am getting on well. Kanu gave me massage and I dozed off. It is difficult to stop Ba from working. You were able to stop her. Ba also was free from care, Now she has to tend me. Let us see what happens. There is no rain here. People are distressed.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

225. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON,
July 29, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

You hurt me and I hurt you. This is a good bargain, isn't it? A letter was dispatched to you every day. Yes, I used to show your letters to Sushila. It was my mistake. Please forgive me. Henceforth I shall destroy them as soon as I get them. But then how would I be able to reply?

¹ Krishna Hutheesing, addressee's sister

² P. G. Mathew

³ Balkrishna Bhawe

Yes, it will indeed be good if you visit Ramana Maharshi.

When you are free in August, will you go to Patiala or to Bombay?

I would probably stay here throughout August. But then God alone knows. Sushila has stayed back in Delhi and will remain there for a month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 426

226. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

SEGAON,

July 29, 1939

I have been in telegraphic correspondence with Dr. Dadoo, leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa. I have no hesitation in asking the Passive Resistance Committee to postpone, for a time, the proposed launching of the struggle² on 1st August. I do so because I have some hope of an honourable settlement. I know that the Government of India as well as the British Government are trying to obtain relief. I have put myself in touch with the Ministers. In the circumstances I think a brief postponement of the struggle to be necessary. I am fully aware of the enthusiasm of the resisters. They have proved their mettle before, and they will do so again if it becomes necessary. But it is a code with passive resisters to seize every opportunity of avoiding resistance, if it can be done honourably. Every cessation in search of peace adds strength to real fighters. Let them remember that the Cape Town Settlement of 1914 was the outcome of a cessation of struggle for the sake of peace. I hope that the proposed cessation will lead to a similar result. Should it unfortunately prove otherwise and should the struggle begin, let Dr. Dadoo and his fellow-resisters know that the whole of India will be at their back.

Harijan, 5-8-1939

¹ This appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "Postpone the Struggle". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 30-7-1939.

² The movement was proposed as a protest against the Asiatic (Transvaal) Land and Trading Act, 1939, which aimed at virtual economic extinction of the Indian community in the Transvaal. *Vide* also Vol. "A Letter", 7-4-1939. According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 31-7-1939, Dadoo had issued a statement acceding to Gandhiji's appeal to postpone the Passive Resistance movement, pending further advice from him.

227. *LESSON OF DHAMI*

We have not heard the last of Dhami. The truth is not yet out. The necessarily one-sided version of the Political Agent has been challenged by the Himalayan States Praja Mandal. Their statement shows how absolutely necessary it is to have an open judicial inquiry into the events that led to firing by the Rana of Dhami.

Some members of the Himalayan Mandal came to see me during my brief stay in Delhi. Dhami had made me think furiously. Was nothing possible to prevent such tragedy? I had much to say about it to the deputation, but I felt it would be wrong on my part to shoulder the burden of guiding the Himalayan States Praja Mandal. The responsibility was great. The issues at stake were equally great. I therefore felt that the matter should be handled not by me but by the Standing Committee of the All-India States People's Conference. The question of the States is daily assuming bigger and bigger proportions. The ruling Chiefs are becoming free with their rifles. They feel that they are safe so far as the Paramount Power is concerned. The Congress has not much prestige with them. Many of them are now evolving measures to crush the growing spirit of their people and make it impossible, if they can, for the Congress to give effective guidance to them, let alone to interfere. Nevertheless the Congress has a duty to perform. I do not exactly know the constitution of the Conference, but I presume that in some shape or other it is connected with the Congress. Anyway it is the only body which is specially designed for guiding the States people. It would be wrong for the States to resent such guidance. They should also realize that any resentment would be futile. The Congress cannot give up its duty of guiding the States people in the hour of their need. Time was when the Congress was guiding and protecting the rights of the States as against the Paramount Power. If the Congress friendship was desired and welcomed by the States in need, it hardly becomes them to demur at their people seeking Congress advice, guidance and protection. That the Congress may not always be able to give the people effective assistance is unfortunately too true. The Congress has to forge the necessary sanction by putting the organization on a firmer footing and by wise restraint to acquire credit for impartiality and strictest justice. If the Congress is to discharge its function in a becoming manner, it will

have to insist upon the workers learning to be more accurate than they have been hitherto in preparing their cases. In order to ensure accuracy, the Standing Committee will have to subject to strict scrutiny everything coming to it. If unchallengeable accounts of the doings in the States where even simple justice is denied are published, they will afford a foundation for action.

I have merely indicated a line of approach. The Standing Committee will no doubt lay down its own policy and method of dealing with problems as they arise from time to time. My object in writing these lines is to warn workers in the States against coming to me and expecting me to advise them. They should approach the Standing Committee. Even as I do not guide Congressmen on general matters falling within the function of the Working Committee but hold myself at the disposal of that body, so shall I henceforth act in respect of new State problems. I may not give up guiding those with whom I am already directly concerned. I need hardly add that I shall continue to do what my special aptitude in matters affecting States may enable me to do without being involved in the general direction of popular movements in them. I would ask workers in the States not to take up any forward movement without previous reference to any sanction of the Standing Committee. It must be the duty of the Congress acting through the States People's Conference to avoid, if at all possible, a quarrel with the States.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

228. NOTES

ONE SCRIPT FOR DAUGHTERS OF SANSKRIT

The question of having one script for the Indian languages which are daughters of Sanskrit by birth or adoption has been before the public for a number of years. Yet in these days of aggressive provincialism, perhaps, any plea for one script will be regarded as an impertinence. But the literacy campaigns raging all over the country should compel a hearing for the advocates of one script. I have been one such for years. I remember having even adopted in South Africa Devanagari script for my Indian correspondence with Gujaratis in select cases. Inter-provincial intercourse will be much facilitated by such adoption, and the learning of the various provincial languages

will be made infinitely easier than it is today. If the educated people of the land were to put their heads together and decide upon one script, its universal adoption should be an easy thing. To the millions who are illiterate it is a matter of indifference what script is prescribed to them. If the happy consummation comes to pass, there will be only two scripts in India—Devanagari and Urdu, and every nationalist will deem it his duty to master the two scripts. I am a lover of all Indian languages. I have tried to learn as many scripts as possible. And if only I had the time, even at the age of seventy I have energy enough to learn more Indian languages. That would be a recreation for me. But in spite of all my love for the languages I must confess that I have not learnt all the scripts. But if the sister languages were written in one script, I should pick up a workable knowledge of the principal languages of the provinces in very little time. And Devanagari has nothing to be ashamed of in point of symmetry or beauty. I hope that those who are engaged in the literacy campaigns will give a passing thought to my suggestion. If they will adopt Devanagari script, they will save for the future generations tons of labour and time and earn their blessings.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

229. A HARIJAN SEVAKS' CONFERENCE

There was held on 4th to 7th June last at Poona a conference of Western and Central India Harijan sevaks. Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, the Vice-President of the All-India Sangh, presided at the Conference. I am sorry that it was not possible to notice before now some of the important resolutions of the Conference. But they bear publication even though they were passed nearly two months ago. Here are the most important of them¹ :

It is to be hoped that the resolutions addressed to the Indore and Gwalior States will bear fruit. I have omitted similar ones about Devas and Kathiawar States in order to avoid repetition. Indeed if the Princes will do their duty by the despised portion of India's humanity, they should not need any reminder from the Sangh. They do not, like the sanatanists, defend untouchability. With

¹ *Vide* Appendix—"Harijan Sevaks' Conference Resolutions", 4/7-6-1939.

them the neglect to make provision for Harijans can only be ascribed to indifference. Let us hope that the appeal made by the Conference will not fall on deaf ears.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

230. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
July 30, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

A letter for Maganbhai¹ is enclosed. If you like it, send it on along with your comments.

I send herewith an article² about a single script. If you wish to suggest any changes in it, send your suggestions as soon as possible. If you do not like the article, I am ready to cancel it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10923

231. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 30, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. What should I say? If you can break your vow, then do what you like. I shall not give the money to anyone else. I cannot keep Akbar³ here without you and how will you come here without breaking the vow? Meet and talk to Shankerlalbhai and do what seems proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 427

¹ Maganbhai Prabhudas Desai

² *Vide* "Notes", 30-7-1939.

³ Akbarbhai Chawda

232. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA

July 31, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had no time to write earlier. I was immersed in Harijan work. The heap of correspondence still lies before me.

We had an exacting journey—crowds unusual everywhere. There was no rest till reaching Gwalior, i.e., 2 a. m. I have not got at the bottom of this sudden manifestation.

Mahadev is still in Calcutta.

Mira came in yesterday without notice. I knew that she was to return but did not know when. The place is filling up.

Aryasamajists occupy much of my attention.¹

We are all keeping well. Mira has a bad cough and constipation.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3935. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7244

233. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA

July 31, 1939

CHI.. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter, and also Sanyukta's². I am not writing separately to her. By God's grace Kasumba³ is improving. I cannot think of anything for you. You may write to Jamnalaji if you wish. Cases like yours deserve to be carefully considered. I do know what your

¹ The reference is to the 'Arya Satyagraha' against the anti-Hindu policy of the Nizam Government, which ultimately announced a scheme of reforms that conceded in substance their religious demands. *The Hindustan Times*, 28-7-1939, reported: "On July 27, a deputation consisting of Mr. Ghanshyamsingh Gupta, Speaker of Central Provinces Assembly, Mr. Vinayak Rao and Mr. Deshabandhu Gupta met Gandhiji and placed before him the correspondence which passed between Mr. Ghanshyamsingh Gupta and Sir Akbar Hydari, Prime Minister of Hyderabad State, regarding the doubts expressed by the Aryasamajists on Hyderabad reforms." *Vide* also "Notes", sub-title, "The Arya Samaj", 14-8-1939.

² Addressee's daughter

³ Addressee's wife

dharma is and it will always seem difficult to practise. So you may try all means of earning whatever you can there. Contact Vithaldas. Don't insist on a particular sum as salary. Think further about the matter after Kasumba has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
SIR HARKISONDAS HOSPITAL
NEW CHARNI ROAD, BOMBAY

Form a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

234. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA

July 31, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got both your letters. You will see in *Harijanbandhu* that I have acted upon your suggestion.¹ I have also made the correction² suggested by you. I am apt to commit such arithmetical errors. It could have been avoided if I had made the calculation on a sheet of paper. Mahadev had checked the figures, but he too failed to detect the error. He of course had some suspicion which was later on removed.

That statement³ about the resolve of a good man is correct. Your own resolve would work; my blessings in this regard are out of place. The resolution about seventy lakh [yards of yarn] is yours and there is strength of character in that resolution itself.

I do hope to supply you 700 yards at least. Ba also will give the same quantity.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ *Vide* "Threat of Famine", 2-8-1939.

² *Vide* "Notes", 6-8-1939.

³ *Vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

[PS.]

Bhagwanji's case is rather delicate. I think we shall have to pay him more. I will explain further if I get time. For the present make the payment.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8558. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

235. *LETTER TO DEVADAS GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1939

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. It did not upset me. The fact that a difference of opinion has arisen between us does pain me, but I hope that it will disappear in the course of time. You may take as much of my time as you wish. I meant well in asking you to get the opinion of Sardar and of others. Their opinions may perhaps have some effect on me. Do not forget one thing. You and I don't see eye to eye. You believe that my treatment kills the patient. I believe it keeps him alive. Now what shall we do about this difference of opinion? It is because of this that I am waiting patiently. One day one of us will be able to see who was in the wrong.

Meet Sushila and talk with her lovingly. I have of course told her the same thing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2049

236. *LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1939

CHI. JIVANJI,

When is the Devanagari edition of the *Autobiography* likely to be published?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9944. Also C. W. 6919. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

237. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 31, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

You have not done the correct thing if you have not eaten today. What adjective should be used for you for your not replying to Ba at all? It would be good if you ate even now.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

238. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,

July 31, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have written you three letters. I could not write yesterday. I have received your letter. It does not acknowledge receipt of my letters. I wrote from Mathura, Betul and Segaoon. You must stay there and give your whole heart to the work. It is good that you are finding some novelty in the atmosphere there. Kanu gives me massage every day. I also bathe regularly. The blood-pressure is not checked every day. Today Mahodaya checked it. The reading was 155/90.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

239. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,

July 31, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have received your letters. It is time for the post. I shall not write much today. I am thinking about you. There have been no rains here. People are anxious.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4323.

240. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW ¹

WARDHA,
August 1, 1939

HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

EXCEEDINGLY SORRY CANNOT REACH DELHI FIFTH INSTANT
ESPECIALLY AS THERE IS NO PARTICULAR PURPOSE FOR MEETING.
URGENT WORK DEMANDS. EXHAUSTING JOURNEY FROM
FRONTIER PROVINCE. ANY DATE AFTER TWENTIETH INSTANT
WILL SUIT.²

From a copy : C.W. 7830 a. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

241. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
August 1, 1939

NARANDAS GANDHI
RASHITRIYASHALA
RAJKOT

HOPE INAUGURATION RENTIA YAGNA³ SUCCESSFUL. IF DROUGHT
CONTINUES SEVENTY PER CENT SHOULD BE DEVOTED FAMINE RELIEF.
THEREFORE THERE SHOULD BE SPECIALLY EXTENSIVE RESPONSE IN
MONEY AND YARN.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8559. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated July 28, which, *inter alia*, read : "I write to say that it would give me very great pleasure to see you again if it was by any chance convenient for you to be in Delhi on Saturday, the 5th August. . . . There is no special subject which I want to raise with you but it is now some months since we have met and I would welcome an opportunity of seeing you again."

² For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix-"Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 2-8-1939.

³ Initiated by the addressee in honour of Gandhiji's birthday, also known as *Rentia Baras*, observed with non-stop sacrificial spinning from *Bhadarua Vad* 12 (Gandhiji's date of birth according to Vikram calendar, usually falling in the second half of September) to October 2; *vide* also "Notes", 10-9-1939, sub-title, "Surplus Khadi"; and "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

242. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
August 1, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am trying to send Shakaribehn or Kanchanbehn. Balkrishna should never be left alone. Today also I have no time for more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4324.

243. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 1, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

There was no letter from you yesterday. Your present address is not known, hence I am sending this letter with Lakshmidasbhai¹. I did not expect such behaviour from you. It only shows that no responsibility can be entrusted to you. Well, His will be done. This will teach a new lesson. I hope you will stay there till Mridulabehn² returns.

All are well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 428

244. THREAT OF FAMINE

There have been no rains yet at many places in Kathiawar. Shri Chhaganlal Joshi writes.³

This news is alarming. We do hope that Kathiawar will escape this calamity; but if it does not, my second hope is that those who have foodgrains and fodder, or can manage them, will not take advantage of the situation and make profit, and will sell them at cost

¹ Lakshmidas Asar

² Mridula Sarabhai

³ The letter is not translated here. It described how people and cattle were starving. Chhaganlal Joshi along with Narandas Gandhi thought that 70 percent of the amount collected during Gandhi Jayanti week should be spent on relief work.

price. My third hope is that the Rulers will fulfil their duty by rendering the people as much help as possible, and the fourth hope is that the volunteers will rush out to offer help at various places. The spinning *yajna* will be observed for seventy days with effect from 2nd August, under the auspices of the Rajkot Rashtriyashala. It has been suggested that during the *yajna* workers should increase their speed of spinning and from the produce 70 percent should be used for helping the famine-stricken people. In the meanwhile, if it rains and Kathiawar escapes the danger, the yarn may be utilized for its original objective¹. The main idea at this moment is to raise production. It can be raised by collecting funds and spinning more cotton. It is expected that those who did not normally participate in the spinning *yajna* would do so this time. If the atmosphere for spinning is created it will be easier to give the work to the famine-stricken. Thereby proper help will be given to them and their self-respect will also be preserved. In order to procure adequate help, the spinning work will have to be taken up on a large scale and for that the formation of a committee of right persons is essential.

My fifth and the last desire is that the khadi produced through the spinning *yajna* performed by the famine-stricken people will be disposed of easily. If the khadi is not sold immediately, the calamity cannot be met and overcome by the spinning-wheel.

SEGAON, August 2, 1939

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-8-1939

¹ That is, to use it equally for Kathiawar Harijan work, khadi work and Rajkot Rashtriyashala; *vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

245. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 2, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your two letters together. At least you received all my letters. I am keeping well. I have good sleep. I go to bed at 9.30 p. m. You must put on still more weight.

I am thinking about your hospital.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

246. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ¹

The hunger-striking prisoners of Dum Dum Jail have sent me some questions through Shri Mahadev Desai. It will serve the cause better if I give a public answer. I am sorry that I can fix no date for their release nor give any other undertaking. I would if I had the power. The only power I have is to plead their cause with all the force at my command. But they give me no chance whatever by continuing their hunger-strike. In so far as it was intended to rouse public attention it has served its purpose. Any prolongation of the fast will now defeat that purpose. There are many who would work actively for their release if the strike is given up. I do feel very strongly that this fast is not justified. The strikers are giving a bad lead to those who are similarly situated. Such hunger-striking, if they are largely copied, will break all discipline to pieces and make orderly government impossible. The prisoners' cause is essentially just, but they are weakening it by their persistence. I would ask them to live and listen to the advice of one who claims to be an expert in fasting and who claims also to know the science of political prisonership. Let them not hamper one whom they consider to be their best advocate. I make bold to say that had the fates not been against them and me, they would certainly have been discharged before 13th April last. But I do not propose to go into the past. Suffice it to add that their refusal to give up the strike

¹ This appeared under the title "To Bengal Prisoners". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 2-8-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 3-8-1939.

will embarrass the Working Committee in whatever effort it might wish to make to secure their release.

SEGAON, August 2, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

247. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 3, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have not had a moment for writing to you. I gave you a wire¹ about Dhami. Jawaharlal is already on the war path.

Of course, you will bring the cooker and everything else you may need. But why cooker? You are going to take your meals with me as before. The delay is unfortunate. It is not only the work for which you are coming. However don't delay any longer.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3936. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7245

248. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU CHETTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 3, 1939

MY DEAR SHRIRAMULU²,

I have your letter.

I must not write to Rajaji. You should go to the Kodambakkam Ashram³ and offer your services as a volunteer. They will accept you if you are a steady worker.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 112

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 24-7-1939.

² A Congressman of Nellore who fasted to death in 1953 for the formation of a separate Andhra State

³ Harijan Ashram

249. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 3, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

The letter for Maganbhai was posted promptly.

Come over at 3 o'clock today for giving me your report about Meher Ashram.

A bill for a fairly large sum has been sent by Wanless [Sanatorium] regarding that gentleman. Ask for it from me.

I have written¹ to Jivanji inquiring about the *Autobiography*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7971

250. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 3, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Since Rajendra Babu is so keen, take up the responsibility and do whatever you can. God will give you the needed strength. Sushila's address is: Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Lady Hardinge Hospital, New Delhi.

You can write to Uncle: Sheth Jamnalalji Bajaj, State Prisoner, Jaipur.

There is no cause for worry about Vidyavati² if there is no bleeding. The remedies for her are: mud packs, hip-bath, bland un-spiced food without oil, and plenty of greens like *bhaji*, cucumber, *turiya*, etc., also oranges, *mosambi*, pomegranates, grapes, etc. Fried things should be avoided. Very little rice. She may eat *khakhara* but no food at night. She should drink plenty of water.

I am here for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 31-7-1939.

² Addressee's sister, the eldest daughter-in-law of Rajendra Prasad

[PS.]

Give this letter to Sumangal¹ after reading it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3535

251. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Shankerlal tells me that you are not keeping well. You are suffering from indigestion and blood impurity. These can certainly be cured by hip-bath, mud treatment and change in the diet. If this regimen is not possible there then stay in Wardha. I would like to keep you in Segaoon but here I shouldn't be able to provide the amenities you would want. Everything will be done for you in Wardha and at the same time you will be under my care. You cannot but get well.

Pass on the enclosed letter to Gulzarilal. I hope Bhabhi is all right and is not fretting about the tumour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32819

252. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1939

CHI. SUMANGAL,

Would you like to marry Maitri, the daughter of Dal Bahadur Giri? She is a good girl. Prabha knows her. You have also seen her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Sumangal Prakash

253. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, TANZEEM-UL-MOMININ ¹

[Before August 4, 1939]²

DEAR FRIEND,

I have sufficient papers in front of me to enable me to formulate a tentative opinion upon the Shia and Sunni controversy. I have a long letter from Pantji³ and printed papers giving me what purports to be an unbiased version.

This much seems to stand out clearly. Whereas the *Madhe Saheba* is to praise the elected Caliphs, the *Tabarra* is a curse pronounced upon the first three Caliphs. Whilst one can understand the right of publicly praising people, is there such a thing as right of pronouncing a curse on dead men? The right of *Tabarra* cannot be derived from the holy Koran for the simple reason that the Caliphate came into being only after the death of the holy Prophet. I would like you, therefore, to enlighten me on the religious duty of saying the *Tabarra*.

I would also readily grant that there can be no religious duty in praising the Caliphs specially in public places and in the presence of those whom the recital is known to offend. Therefore, subject to what you might say to the contrary, I would advise you, for the sake of peace, to withdraw the civil resistance⁴ and stop the public recital of *Tabarra* unconditionally, leaving it to the good sense of the Sunnis so to act as not to wound the susceptibilities of their Shia brethren.

I have not written this letter for publication. You have been good enough to ask me to give my candid opinion and I have given it tentatively. If it helps you in announcing your decision in accordance with my advice, you are at liberty to publish this letter. I am not sending a copy of this opinion to anyone. It is simply meant for you and friends who accompanied you and on whose behalf you had come.

The Hindu, 5-8-1939

¹ The source reported that a deputation of Tanzeem-ul-Mominin “recently waited on Gandhiji to seek his advice regarding the Shia-Sunni dispute” on the right to recite, in public, *Madhe Saheba* by Sunnis and *Tabarra* by Shias. The agitation had started as early as March. *Vide* “Telegram to Tanzeem-Ul-Mominin”, on or after 19-5-1939 and “A Letter”, 23-5-1939.

² The letter was reported under the date-line “Lucknow, August 4”.

³ Govind Ballabh Pant, Premier and Minister of Home Affairs and Finance of the United Provinces

⁴ Started by the Shias in early June

254. INTERVIEW TO GOVERDHANLAL SHUKLA

[On or before *August 4, 1939*]¹

Gandhiji told Mr. Shukla² that he was not treating the question of the release of political prisoners, both of the Punjab and Bengal, lightly. He pointed out that the hunger-strike by the political prisoners in Bengal jails had been causing difficulties in finding a solution.

Gandhiji declared that the problem of the political prisoners was coming up before the Congress Working Committee.

Gandhiji pointed out that, with a solution found for the problem of political prisoners in Bengal, the question relating to the Punjab prisoners would be solved immediately and automatically.

Gandhiji, it is stated, then asked Mr. Shukla to furnish him with particulars about the prisoners belonging to the Punjab, and the attempts made for their release, on receipt of which he would do what lay in his power.

The Hindu, 5-8-1939

255. WELL DONE BOMBAY!

From all the accounts I have received it seems that Bombay surpassed itself on the 1st of August, the day of the inauguration of prohibition. An eye-witness of the demonstration tells me that the procession that took the mortal remains of the immortal Lokamanya to the Chowpaty sands, huge as it was, was far outdone by the crowds that gathered together on the Azad Maidan. He tells me that all Bombay was present there. The labourers, who were the chief persons to benefit by the measure and who were at the same time the most affected by prohibition, attended in their thousands with their wives. They rejoiced in the deliverance from the devil from whose grip they could not disengage themselves without external assistance. Had they gone to express their gratefulness to the Ministers for their courage in persisting in their benevolent measure in the teeth of the opposition of vested interests?

It was not a mere labour demonstration. All classes took part in it. At that huge meeting there was not a jarring note. Men and women had turned up in their thousands to take part in thanks-giving to God for the successful inauguration of prohibition.

The great Parsi community deserves congratulations for the

¹ The interview was reported under the date-line "Wardha, August 4".

² Of Kanpur

restraint it observed in spite of its bitter opposition to the measure. Evidently wiser counsel prevailed and no hostile demonstration appears to have been staged by them. My hope that Parsi philanthropy will get the better of the opposition, appears to have been justified. Is it too much to expect whole-hearted support from the Parsis in making the measure a complete success? Let them remember, the glory of the effort in Bombay will be reflected not only throughout the province but it will be reflected all over India. I make bold to say that although they feel that they have been unjustly dealt with, the future generation of Parsis will bless Dr. Gilder as their true representative and benefactor. Surely Parsis should be proud, as India is proud, that they have produced in Dr. Gilder a man who has stood firm as a rock in the midst of fiercest opposition including threats of boycott and worse.

Indeed the whole of the Ministry deserves hearty congratulations on the steadfastness with which they have pursued this great moral reform. The demonstration of 1st August shows that they had and have practically the whole of Bombay behind them. No constructive measure promoted by the Congress has had such enthusiastic support as this great moral reform.

It is a matter of regret that a Muslim procession of protest, not against the measure but against the property tax, was organized the same day and resulted in a clash with the police. But it only enhanced the value of the public meeting, for the procession had no effect whatsoever on the great and irresistible demonstration. Bombay had one mind at the Azad Maidan.

Let us hope the brilliant beginning has momentum enough in it to lead to a brilliant end. Much constructive effort will be required in order to consolidate the advantage gained by the closing of liquor-shops. It removes the temptation from the drinker but not the craving for drink. His mind has to be directed into the right channel. He must have healthy refreshment at a place where he can rest his tired mind and limbs. Workers among the labourers should deem it their duty to study their lives and help them to conquer the craving for drink. The Government alone won't be able to cope with this consolidation work. They could close the liquor-shops with a measure of popular goodwill. But they will need the active co-operation of a band of volunteer workers to supplement the official effort to help the drinker to lose his craving for drink.

SEGAON, August 4, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

256. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 4, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I am not sending you a telegram. What could I say? If you are determined to come, you will come. How could you do a job which you are unable to do? You had vowed that you would return when Mridula and Lakshmidasbhai let you go. Now Shankerbhai is there. Meet him and do what appears proper. I have, of course, written to Lakshmidasbhai about Akbar. I don't have the courage to keep him here. A Muslim lady doctor arrived here yesterday. She belongs to Central Provinces. Her father is also a doctor. She will stay for a month. She seems to be a good person. She is doing Sushila's work.

Nimu is of course here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 429

257. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 4, 1939

FOOLISH GIRL,

Your two letters have arrived together. I do write to you every alternate day. Shirin arrived here yesterday. She seems to be a good girl. It was she who checked my blood-pressure today. It was 135-88. Pyarelal's reading was the same. Then there is now a prisoner from Bengal. Nimu is there of course. I go to bed after 9.00 p. m. Right now it is 3.00 p. m. I am lying with a mud-pack on my stomach. I have been taking dates for the past three days. They are very nice. I remember you. People here are anxious because it has not rained. Do not worry about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

258. *DISCUSSION WITH V. V. SATHE*¹

SEGAON,
August 5, 1939

GANDHIJI: If you are a satyagrahi, I too am a satyagrahi, and as I have been told by many friends that you are a reasonable man and a man of restraint, I shall show you that you are wrong.

Well then, you ought to have exhausted all the constitutional means. You must remember that the Bombay Congress Ministry is under four Congress Committees—Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Bombay. You should have lodged your complaint before them. Failing satisfaction you should have gone to the Working Committee, failing there to the A.I.C.C., and then to the open session of the Congress. And if you accept my authority as an expert in satyagraha, then you should have come to me, but not with a decision to fast.

SATHE: I do not accept you as the final authority, but I would certainly take your advice. But let me ask you one question. Whether all these Congress Committees give an opinion in my favour or not, what if the Ministers say they have violated the Congress principles?

Do they say so?

Yes. But they will not resign, they say, unless they are asked to resign. But they have broken the promises given in election manifestos.

There is no rigidity about the manifestos. You may say many things but you may not be able to carry them all out.

My own Sadashiv Peth, which is one of the constituencies, did resolve that the Ministry had not fulfilled the promises.

Well then, let that committee approach the A.I.C.C. But why this fast? You must exhaust all the natural steps.

The natural steps take years. It is a cumbersome machinery.

Not years, but it may take a year. That should not matter.

¹ The discussion appeared under the title “A Satyagrahi v. A Satyagrahi” by Mahadev Desai, who explains: “Shri V. V. Sathe is a seasoned faster and a Congressman. He fasted in jail for the right of cooking his own food. . . remained without clothes. . . because he would not be allowed to wear khadi. He is a downright honest man but often it would seem his logic gets the better of his common sense. . . He came to Segaoon on the morning of the 5th, determined to go on a fourteen-day fast. . . He feels that the Bombay Ministry grievously erred in certain things, e.g., orders about processions, security demanded from Presses, and firing. He had come determined to fast in Gandhiji’s presence because he said, Gandhiji was ‘the God of the Congress’ and had the resignations of the Congress Ministries in his pocket. . .

I do propose to go to the open Congress, for the Congress is an authority above you.

I am no authority. I have a certain amount of moral influence.

But you do not exercise it.

How do you know? You must place all the facts before me and convince me that I have not done all in my power.¹

But you do not expect me to express my judgment on these matters?

I do.

How can I? Your reading out the texts of orders to me and placing all the facts in your possession before me does not take me further. I must hear the Ministers also.

But that you can easily do. You are the High Command.

How am I the High Command?

You have said that the Ministers' resignations are in your pocket.

When did I say so? Produce my statements.²

No, seriously, if I made any such preposterous statement, it would be bravado. You do not find my name mentioned anywhere in the constitution. I can exercise my moral authority certainly, but that only when I see that there is something which ought to be done (morally) by the Working Committee or the Ministry.

Then you will study the case while I go on with my fast.

How can you, when you have yet to convince me of the justifiability of your fast?

I am fasting only to arrest your attention.

You will if you do not fast. The moment you begin your fast you distract my attention, you paralyse my capacity for unbiased judgment. I could not enjoy my meals if I knew that someone was fasting without cause. And then you must know that this is a colony of fasters. There is Bhansali, the greatest faster I have known, Vinoba had fasted, and so has Kakasaheb. You had better see them, talk to them, and see if they approve of your going on fast.³

¹ Mahadev Desai says: "Shri Sathe now proceeded to give the details of his grievances on the three scores. . . the details of the orders about the processions and how people dodge them, and so on."

² Sathe laughed in reply.

³ Mahadev Desai explains: "Shri Sathe now turned to the second of his counts—the demand of security from the papers. The British Government may have done it, but for the Congress Government to do so was the height of injustice. Why

I do not take your view. If we have a national government, and we have papers that simply thrive on prosecutions, what are we to do? But that only means that there are fundamental differences between us. We have got to examine everything. If you want me to use my moral authority, I must have certain conviction that the Ministers have gravely erred in all the three matters you have mentioned. And if the conviction goes home, I would certainly like to speak to the Ministers and the Working Committee. But to do all this I must examine your allegation at leisure. And you may be sure that though I have very little time I would study the papers you send me, just for your sake.

But in the mean while I may fast.

No. You can place the whole case before the Working Committee if you like.

What right have I?

Everyone has a right. The Working Committee is there to listen to every Congressman and non-Congressman with a grievance. But now that you have asked me to study the case perhaps you may not want to put it before the Working Committee. After I have given my decision, you may reason with me, plead with me, and then if you find me obstinate, you can fast against me.

You are a student of the *Gita*?

I am.

Well then, I tell you your fast would be the third kind of *tapas* described in the seventeenth chapter¹—*tamasa tapas* born of ignorance and perverseness.

So I may fast a month hence, if I am not satisfied?

Yes, but if I want more time, you will give me.

Certainly.²

Harijan, 12-8-1939

should the editors not be prosecuted? No security should be demanded without prosecution.”

¹ Verse 19

² Mahadev Desai adds: “Shri Sathe is a man of simplest habits and very few wants. He was a head master of a national school for some time, and Gandhiji tried to persuade him to stay on here, study the various activities and give his time to whatever activity appealed to him. His few wants could be easily met here. But he was not to be so easily fished. He preferred to go back to Poona.”

259. LETTER TO RAKHAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 5, 1939

BHAI RAKHAL,

I was happy that you came to Segaon and stayed here for some days. I wish that the faith in truth and ahimsa, which has grown in you, may also grow in the hearts of all revolutionary brothers and sisters. Those whom I met gave me this assurance. I know that we will never be able to achieve independence without truth, ahimsa and so on.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4667

260. AM I ALL-POWERFUL?

Two Congressmen came to me during the week. One of them said :

We in the Central Provinces think that you can do everything you want. You can remove the Ministry at will and you can make them do what you like.

The other said :

You are the Working Committee. Every Congressman therefore blames you for the present corruption. You showed us that moral authority was the supreme authority. You taught us to think that the existing system was Satanic. You taught us that when the Congress reigned there would be no devilry, there would be purity in every walk of life. But we find today quite the reverse. The Congress reigns in many provinces and yet corruption is rampant. Congressmen quarrel among themselves. There is marked deterioration. Devilry is not gone. You do not rely upon numbers. You have often said that even a few true and good Congressman can, by their moral worth, represent the whole nation and real democracy can be evolved. But instead of quality the cry everywhere is for quantity. The amendments recently made are of no use. They won't remove the growing corruption nor reduce the unmanageable size of the Congress. If you say that you cannot have your way with the Working Committee, let us know it. As it is we believe you to be all-powerful and are therefore filled with wonder that you allow things to go from bad to worse. Look at your Khadi Clause. It is responsible for extensive hypocrisy in the Congress. Very few believe in Khadi and therefore use it only for show. Khadi therefore stands for falsehood and worse. You who brought the

country to a moral height are now bringing it down. Presently the Congress will become the laughing-stock of the country, if things go as they are doing. If you cannot mend the Congress, why don't you leave it alone?

This second critic is a well-known Congressman and organizer. He spoke feelingly. I promised to reproduce in these columns the substance of the answer I gave him.

I am not all-powerful whether with the Central Provinces Ministers or with the Working Committee. I know very little of the doings of the Ministers. I never interfere with their work. I have never regarded that as my function. Occasionally I have to correspond with them on matters such as the village industries, basic education or the like precisely as any citizen would do. I have invariably refused to interfere with their work. I would not have the time for it even if I had the wish. It would mean usurpation of the function of the Parliamentary Sub-committee of the Working Committee.

So far as the Working Committee is concerned, I do attend its meetings whenever I am required to do so. I do influence its decisions in the matters that may be referred to me and never in any others. Many sittings of the Committee I do not attend at all. Of many of its resolutions I have no knowledge except after they are passed and that through the Press. This was the arrangement when I first severed¹ my legal connection with the Congress. What hold I have on the Committee is purely moral. My opinion prevails only to the extent that I carry conviction. Let me give out the secret that often my advice makes no appeal to the members. For instance, if I had my way, the Congress would be reduced to the smallest compass possible. It would consist of a few chosen servants removable at the will of the nation but getting the willing co-operation of the millions in the programme they may put before the nation. But this is too drastic and too undemocratic for Congressmen.

I admit that the Khadi Clause has led to much falsehood and hypocrisy. If I had my way, it would have gone long ago. I sought to have the clause removed² even when I seceded from the Congress. I have repeated the attempt more than once but with no success. The argument has been that the Congressmen in general will not listen to the removal of the clause.

¹ In 1934; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-10-1934.

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934.

Similarly I have endeavoured¹ to have the words 'peaceful and legitimate' removed from the Constitution but again without success. I can multiply instances in which I have failed to carry the Working Committee with me. I do not mention these failures by way of complaint against the Working Committee. The members had weighty reasons for not listening to me. I have not felt called upon to sever the moral tie with the old colleagues. I do not arrogate to myself any superiority over them. It has been a privilege to work with them. They are as good and faithful servants of the nation as I claim to be myself. I cling to them because I have the hope that one day they will be converted to my point of view or that I shall be converted to theirs.

Nor do I subscribe to the charge that the old regime was purer than the present. Whilst I admit that much corruption has crept into the Congress organization, that there are many self-seekers in it, it is my conviction that the Congress administration is comparatively purer than the old one. It is also my conviction that the Congress administration is responsible for several measures for the amelioration of the condition of the masses. I regard prohibition as the greatest of them all. But there is no doubt that a vast deal still remains to be done. I hug the hope that some day the Augean stables of the Congress will be swept clean and that the fears of the second critic of the Congress will be dispelled. It is not to be denied that he has grounds for his fears. Being an irrepressible optimist, things do not dismay me to the extent that they dismay him. They are serious enough to rouse every Congressman to a sense of his duty. The Congress will surely be undone if it does not stand exclusively on the solid rock of its moral worth.

SEGAON, August 6, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

261. NOTES

SHETH JAMNALALJI

Sheth Jamnalalji is an extraordinary prisoner. He believes that as a prisoner he has not to care about his body beyond what the doctors provided for him do. And so I have only now come to know the true state of his health. Shri Shankerlal Banker, who happened to go to Jaipur to see Jamnalalji, got concerned about his health and told me how bad it was.

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-9-1934

For the moment I refrain from publishing the correspondence which has come into my hands. According to the Jaipur Civil Surgeon his is a case for special treatment. If it is, the onus is on the State to release him unconditionally, leaving it to Jamnalalji whether he will take special treatment within the State or without. It is futile to suggest to Jamnalalji that he should undertake to leave Jaipur if he is discharged. He will rather die in prison than be free under the very condition for the breach of which he has courted imprisonment. As I have already pointed out,¹ there is no fear of Jamnalalji promoting civil disobedience in the State. For it stands indefinitely suspended. The authorities know that Jamnalalji is essentially a non-violent man. They also know him to be a man of his word. To me his detention is a mystery and, in the present state of his health, a crime.

The public generally do not know that though the place where he is detained is good and accessible, it is a haunt of ferocious animals. Under what appear to me to be barbarous shikar laws of Jaipur State, these animals are protected under pain of heavy fines being inflicted on the persons killing them. Tigers and their brood, it is said, eat men and animals with impunity. My purpose here, however, is not to deal with these shikar laws, inhuman as they appear to me to be. My purpose is to protest against Jamnalalji being kept in a tiger-infested place. I understand that even his keepers are not very happy over their job. There is no fear of Jamnalalji running away. If he must be kept in prison, why should he not be kept in an unobjectionable place where medical and other assistance is easily available?

There is also another point which calls for notice. Though repeated requests have been made, he has not yet been permitted to keep a companion. He has been given no nurse. Instances are on record when he was badly in need of night attendance. That he himself has made no complaint is no reason for the authorities' negligence in not providing necessary attendance. Their attention has been drawn to the matter more than once by Shethji's secretary.²

IN IMITATION OF KATHIAWAR

Shri Sitaram Sastri, having read about the spinning programme³ of seventy days set up by Shri Narandas Gandhi of Rajkot Rashtriyaashala, has decided to imitate him and he has begun his pro-

¹ *Vide* "Jaipur", 8-7-1939.

² Jamnalal Bajaj was released on August 9.

³ *Vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939.

gramme of having from co-workers twenty-five lacs yards of yarn by the 2nd of October next. I wish him every success. Its secret lies in having previously the names of spinners and the quantity they would spin and having weekly reports of the work done. Naturally the spinners, being volunteers, will be expected to spin as strong, even and fine a yarn as they can with minimum waste. The idea behind all such effort should be that they will prove experts in their own localities and be an example to their neighbours.

A CORRECTION

Shri Sitaram Sastri points out an error that crept into my note¹ on the Kathiawar spinning programme. In it I mentioned that 700 spinners spinning 1,000 yards per day would be required to spin 70 lacs of yards in 70 days, and 7,000 spinners if they spun 100 yards per day. '700' should read 100, and '7,000' should read 1,000. Whilst I gladly correct the error, I may say that no harm will be done if 700 or 7,000 spinners take part in the sacrificial spinning. The more the better.

SEGAON, August 6, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

262. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 6, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

I got your letter yesterday. But I did not have time to reply immediately. I am of course writing to Chitre, but will he do your work? I am writing to Ramachandran² at the same address. You will get this letter before Chitre leaves. If, therefore, you approve of what I write, send a wire to Chitre to stay on. This is only a suggestion. You know Chitre much better. As he is greatly devoted to you, he may prove useful. How did your health break down? Have you been careless about your diet? I hope you will return after getting completely cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. V. DESAI

SANATORIUM

P. O. VANIVILAS MOHALLA, MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7485. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

¹ *Vide* "Meenakshi Temple Open", 12-7-1939

² G. Ramachandran

263. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your long letter full of news. It will be of help to me.

Here the work is going on at full speed. There has been some delay as your Prime Minister is away. I will keep you informed if there are any special developments. But what counts and will count is your strength. I had a cable from Nana saying that I did a good thing in advising postponement. I have not replied to the cable. Can't the differences there be patched up? Who are the persons behind the threat of murder? How did the matter reach that stage?¹

What makes you think it would be to your advantage if there was no Agent-General at all? It would be easy to withdraw him. However, as it will not be possible to post one again, we should decide after careful thinking.

I must be kept informed about developments there.

A letter from Ba is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4900

264. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 6, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You will be pleased to read the accompanying².

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10791

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 25-6-1939.

² A letter from Chandanbehn Parekh to Gandhiji thanking him for sending a kind and patient man like the addressee to take care of her

265. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON,
August 6, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM¹,

I got your two letters together. I have already written to you to do what you please. If you wish to come over here, do so. Discuss the matter with Shankerlalbhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 430

266. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I got your letter. Shakaribehn² had agreed but still she is a bit hesitant. I have therefore postponed sending her. I am on the look-out for some other person. I am making as much haste as possible. Why has the mattress been placed in that manner? The cot does not belong to [the sanatorium]. Give the enclosed letter to Bachharajbhai³. I hope [Balkrishna's] ear is properly cleaned. Give all details to Sushilabehn. Her address is : Lady Hardinge College Hospital, New Delhi. Balkrishna must get completely cured there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4325

¹ The superscription is in Gujarati.

² Wife of Chimanlal N. Shah

³ Bachharaj Seth, who had adopted Jamnalal Bajaj

267. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I have given to Ba your letter to her. Shirin checks my blood-pressure quite frequently. It is going a little high. It was 160/99 this afternoon. She herself must be writing. My weight is 103_ lb. It seems to have gone down a bit. I feel full of energy. I get good sleep.

Shankaran has been taken ill. He has fever. It was 102° yesterday. Shirin is looking after him. She is doing all the work with keen interest. She is even learning to spin.

I hope you are being careful about your food. Do you have to work at night?

Blessings from,

BAPU

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

268. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA
August 7, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

No doubt I want to build you a hospital. But it will be for the patients. I cannot have the hospital functioning without you. By your being here it may be possible to help the people in the neighbourhood and we may acquire some knowledge whereby we can provide cheap medicines to the villagers. It is with this idea in mind that I am thinking of building a hospital.

I am sending by book-post Shankaran's letter for you to read. He has no fever today. He was not given anything to eat. He was given only orange juice. Shirin of course gave him quinine.

There is a letter about Valjibhai. I am enclosing it. You can write to him direct. What has happened? You must also write to the doctor of the Sanatorium.¹

¹ The T. B. Sanatorium at Mysore where Valji G. Desai was being treated

You are all well educated. Then do you think Shakuntala will remain uneducated? Who values Hindi?

I am having sufficient sleep. There is only a difference of half an hour.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

269. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

SEGAON,

August 6, 1939

I congratulate Shri Subhas Babu on having succeeded in persuading the hunger-strikers to suspend their fast even for two months and on having undertaken to move the B.P.C.C. to take the necessary action for the release of the prisoners. I have also a wire from the prisoners in Alipore Jail informing me of the suspension and asking me to resume my effort. I need hardly assure them that what little I can do will be done to secure their release. I can say that the suspension gives me some hope that my effort will produce some effect. I hope too that the Bengal Government will use the occasion for a generous gesture and end the agony.

Harijan, 12-8-1939

270. MESSAGE ON INAUGURATION OF BASIC EDUCATION²

[On or before August 7, 1939]³

The decision to open 1,700 schools for the new system of education is a great undertaking. I hope this will be successful in every respect. My congratulations on this bold step.

The Hindu, 7-8-1939

¹ This appeared under the title "Bengal Prisoners". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on August 7.

² The message was reported under the date-line "Allahabad, August 7" with the following note: "A big educational experiment will begin in the United Provinces tomorrow with the inauguration of the basic scheme of education by the Premier, Pandit G. B. Pant. . . ."

³ *Ibid*

271. AN EXPLANATION

I gladly publish the foregoing letter¹ and accept the explanation. Without it the concluding paragraph of the petition could only be interpreted as a threat. Better than the explanation, however, will be the help the Bhandaris could render in the prosecution of the prohibition programme. Let them be true soldiers of the Congress Government and the nation as they were of the East India Company, who were foreigners come to exploit the country. If they will heartily assist the Government in their arduous task, they will find that they will also assist themselves in a manner they never otherwise could have done.

SEGAON, August 7, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

272. MILLS V. CHARKHA

The A.I.V.I.A. has been issuing for some time a monthly bulletin called *Gram Udyog Patrika* at Maganwadi, Wardha, for the annual subscription of 12 annas. The July number contains an interesting article on national planning. I must refer the curious to the *Patrika*. I wish here only to draw attention to the following² striking figures:

. . . we would need Rs. 300 crores of capital employing 33 lakhs of people if we supplied all our requirements by mill production, while we would require about Rs. 72 crores of investment employing 800 lakhs of people if our supply were to come from cottage units. The two methods have their undoubted advantages. . . . We are poor but we have an ocean of labour wealth. Therefore an intelligent plan will find the cottage method fit into the scheme for our country. . . . Any planning in our country that ignores the absorption of labour wealth will be misplaced. Our analysis has shown that centralized method of production, whatever may be its capacity to produce, is incapable of

¹ This was dated "Bombay, July 31, 1939" from S. K. Bole, who *inter alia*, said: "The signatories to that memorial acted *bona fide* and they never intended to offer any threat to the Bombay Ministry. The last paragraph of the said memorial was a frank expression of the Bhandari Committee of its apprehensions about the probabilities that might ensue from the enforcement of the prohibition policy under the circumstances then prevailing." *Vide* "Message to Bombay Government Prohibition Board", 23-7-1939.

² Only excerpts are reproduced here.

finding employment for as large a number of persons as we have to provide for. Therefore it stands condemned in this country.

The figures need no comment. If they cannot be challenged, they make an overwhelming case for the charkha and, by parity of reasoning, perhaps, for village production as against factory production. But I invite experts to examine the figures and challenge them if they can seriously do so.

SEGAON, August 7, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

273. ANOTHER TEMPLE OPENED TO HARIJANS

The Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Ilanji, informs me that the Courtallam Temple was thrown open to Harijans by the manager of 26th ultimo. He is to be congratulated on his having done his duty. The President of the local Sangh was responsible for inducing the manager to open the temple. I hope that the worshippers at the *mandir* had no objection to the opening.

SEGAON, August 7, 1939

Harijan, 12-8-1939

274. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 7, 1939

MY DEAR HINGORANI,

It gives me great joy to find that you are reconciled to Anand¹ and Vidya² and that they are near you to render you such filial service as you may need.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI TOTARAM HINGORANI
KARACHI

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

¹ Addressee's son and daughter-in-law

² *ibid*

275. *LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August, 7, 1939

CHI. ANAND,

I like your decision. It is not at all bad to do business to earn one's living. It is the duty of a son to fulfil the desire of his father unless it is impure. Father's desire that you do some business and stand on your own feet is proper. I believe that a person who earns his living and supports his family by honest means also renders service to the nation. Therefore I want you to do your business with interest. Make Father happy and while doing your business render service to Harijans as far as possible.

Whatever money you send to me I will digest. But if you are unable to send any, I shall not starve. Do as it suits you.

Give the enclosed¹ to Father.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

276. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

If you can relieve your tutor, you had better do so. If not, then complete one month and start working after that. Do only as much work as you can. Get yourself released from the work, if Rajendra Babu agrees, and continue your study. Who is the tutor, what does he teach and for how long?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3527

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

277. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your complaint. I have been writing regularly. You should complain to the postmaster. I have already written to you saying that you can do as you wish. Consult Shankerlalbai. That is why I am not sending a telegram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 431

278. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

SEGAON,
August 7, 1939

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Tell Vanu¹ what a timid girl she is! Doesn't Amtul Salaam stay with you?² Ba is all right though she is weak. There has been no rain here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 431

279. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1939

My attention has been drawn to the A. P. I. message purporting to report the conversations between Dr. Khan Saheb⁴ and Qazi Ataulla

¹ Vanamala N. Parikh

² Gandhiji had written this letter after writing to Amtussalaam; *vide* the preceding item.

³ This appeared under the title "A Denial". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 8-8-1939.

⁴ The Premier and the Minister of Education in the North-West Frontier Province

Saheb¹ whilst I was in Abbottabad. The conversations were confidential. I have no recollection whatsoever of Dr. Khan Saheb having complained of any conspiracy of Hindu members or of my having agreed about their expulsion. The thing is on the face of it impossible, for I could not endorse such a proposition without first seeing those against whom such serious complaints are made. Nor would Dr. Khan Saheb expect me to do such a dishonourable thing, nor have I any recollection of the Qazi Saheb having any discussion with me on the question of services. How I wish the newspaper reporters would have weighty matters confirmed by the parties concerned before giving them for publication. I understand that the Hindus of the Frontier Province are much perturbed over this report.

Harijan, 19-8-1939

280. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. It is good news that you are restored. Is any mark left behind? Here all the rooms are getting full. Durgabehn² arrived today. Dhebarbhai³ has come. Nanavati also is here today. Two more have come from Sojitra. They want to stay for some time. Bhansalibhai is at present busy teaching. Mathewji lives in Balkoba's hut. In place of Sushila, another lady doctor of the same college has come. She is a very good person. Nimu and others are of course here. Haven't I filled the letter with enough news now? I am quite well. Ba is all right.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10015. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

¹ The Premier and the Minister of Education in the North-West Frontier Province

² Wife of Mahadev Desai

³ U. N. Dhebar

281. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Now you will hear from me regularly.

It would only be a needless waste of time to file a suit against the Congress workers and it would also create bitterness. If, instead, all of you go on doing your work, your strength will increase and the Congress also will help you indirectly. Even if it does not help, it will not matter. You may not remember, but Christopher probably will, that I had deliberately kept the Congress and the British Indian Association separate. I established the Passi Resistance Association and it got the help of the Congress and the other bodies from time to time. The workers did not court imprisonment, they did not sacrifice their incomes and at the same time helped me with funds. The Agent will recognize your Association and respect it.

I may perhaps write¹ in *Harijan* about this. The enclosed will be useful to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are two letters² on the reverse.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4901

282. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 8, 1939

CHI. SITA,

I got your note. If you too go to jail, who will run the *Indian Opinion*!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4901

¹ *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Indian Struggle in South Africa", 14-8-1939.

² *Vide* the two following items.

283. *LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

SEGAON,
August 8, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Medh¹ writes and informs me that you also have decided to go to jail. But what if there is a settlement? Will you see that you keep fit enough to go to jail?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4901

284. *LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I have your letter. If you wish to borrow, when will you return the amount? What is the minimum you require? What will you do with the khadi produced? Is there enough demand? It would be fine if none of the women spinners were turned back. They must observe our rules. All the yarn you get spun there must also be woven there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If the weavers are too few, we can train some more.

DILKHUSH DIWANJI
GANDHI KUTIR
KARADI, *via* JALALPUR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 2642

¹ Surendra Medh

285. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHANA BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISAN,

I have your letter. Please read my article¹. Kamalnayan has given me some papers. They contain a fragment of a description of ferocious animals². The other part is missing. I want the whole story. How is Jamnalal's health now?

Kamalnayan³ has gone to Calcutta as Savitri's⁴ confinement is expected soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9128

286. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU CHAUDHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1939

BHAI GOPABABU⁵,

Read the enclosed letter⁶. Can something be done about it?
Were you indisposed?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2793

¹ *Vide* "Jaipur", 8-7-1939.

² *Vide* "Notes", 6-8-1939.

³ Son and daughter-in-law of Jamnalal Bajaj

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ President, Utkal Provincial Congress Committee

⁶ Dated August 4, 1939, from Mukunda Prasad Das, Speaker, Orissa Legislative Assembly. It read: "The quarrels amongst Congressmen of Orissa should be made up. . . Can you write to Shri Gopabandhu Chaudhari to intervene? He has the confidence of all groups."

287. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1939

BHAI JIVRAJ,

I wanted to write to you just at the time when you had a talk with Sushila¹ at Bardoli but it could not materialize because of the continuous rush of work and then I allowed the matter to drop. I am prompted to write this because of the criticism from you in Lilavati's presence. Your criticism has pained her. She ought to have promptly expressed her feelings and asked for clarification.² What is the use of fretting and fuming? I do believe that you are the guardian of my right conduct as well as of my bodily health. You would be pained if I were to commit something I ought not to. Also it is your duty to bring it to my notice. Hence if you have found anything in my conduct which deserves criticism or censure, please let me know, without hesitation. I will look upon it as true friendship. I know, these days the newspapers carry a lot of abusive references to me. I don't read them; I come to hear about them. All this abuse is not going to affect me in any way, although I should really want to know if anything weighs on the minds of friends like you. My life is an open book. I have never had any secrets, so you can ask me about anything you wish to. I hope to take a lot of work from friends like you which I might not be able to do if my life were veiled in secrecy.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Dr. Sushila Nayyar

² *Vide* also the following item, and letter to the addressee, "Letter to Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta", 15-8-1939.

288. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. I see no need for girls to go begging on the Balev¹ Day or on any other occasion. Their services should not be used in this manner. Collecting money is the work of the management.

Keep yourself fully absorbed in your study. Do not be restless. Do your best and be content with the outcome.

Why did you take quietly what Dr. Mehta told you? Suppose he had been only joking? If there was any sting in it, you could have removed it.² You could have asked whether a daughter sleeping by the side of her father and a girl in an institution lying on top of another were the same thing. I think your keeping quiet itself implies your admission of some guilt. Your previous letter, however, suggests some feeling of shame about what is happening. In that case you would of course not be able to say anything. How can you, then, blame Dr. Jivraj? Even if somebody makes an offensive remark about me, it produces no effect on me whatever. But if I ever do something blame-worthy, I would shrink into myself with shame even if nobody criticized me.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10091. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

289. LETTER TO TARA JASANI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
August 9, 1939

CHI. TARA,

I don't feel like going for walks without all my [walking-] sticks. Kanu³, Bablo⁴ are busy, and so they do not come out with me.

¹ Also known as *Rakshabandhan* celebrated on the full-moon day of *Shravana*, when a girl ties a string called *rakhi*, *rakhadi*, or *raksha* round the wrist of her brother and receives from him some gift as a token of his promise to protect her

² *Vide* also the preceding item.

³ Son of Narandas Gandhi

Instead of my giving you a description of the mountains, you may see them with your own eyes some day.

What work will you do if there is a drought? How much will you contribute to spinning *yajna*?

It is good that you attend Kanji Muni's¹ discourses. Your revered parents always used to listen to him with rapt attention.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9834, Courtesy: Tarabehn Pratap

290. LETTER TO R. L. HANDA

SEGAON,
August 10, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter² and the accompanying articles³ on Kathiawar States. Both are welcome. While your letter to me is appearing in the next issue of the *Harijan*, the articles will be published at a later date as soon as space is available. Your approach to the problem of States I consider, on the whole, as rational and workable.⁴

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Leaves from a Diary, p. 77

291. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1939

CHI. SURENDRA,

Isn't my writing to Manu the same as writing to you? I assume that you two are as warp and woof to each other that there is no need for me to write anything to cheer you both. Hence though you are

⁴ Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai

¹ A Shvetambar Jain *muni*

² *Vide* "Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939.

³ For extracts, *vide* Appendix-"Kathiawar States", 30-9-1939.

⁴ *Vide* also "Kathiawar States", 11-9-1939.

constantly in my thoughts, I save my time by not writing to you. As Manudi has stayed with me for a long time, she naturally expects letters from me and I, therefore, write to her and assume that it is as good as writing to you.

Manu told me that your work was progressing well. I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5049. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

292. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ¹

[August 11, 1939]²

The Working Committee has given the most anxious consideration to the action of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose³ the erstwhile President of the National Congress, in connection with two resolutions⁴ of the last meeting of the A. I. C. C. known as “Satyagraha in Provinces” and “Congress Ministries and the P. C. C.s”. The Working Committee has also considered the long letter⁵ of Shri Subhas Babu, appended hereto. The Working Committee with great sorrow and reluctance has come to the conclusion that Subhas Babu has wholly missed the main point raised by the President of the even though he differed from the ruling of the President. It was open to him, if he felt aggrieved by the ruling, to appeal to the Working Committee or the A. I. C. C. But he was bound, so long as the President’s instructions stood, to carry them out faithfully. This is the first condition of the proper functioning of any organization, much more so of a vast organization like the National Congress which is engaged in a life and death struggle with the world. If, what seems to be Subhas Babu’s contention in his letter, that every member is free to interpret the Congress Constitution as he likes, prevails, there will be perfect anarchy in the Congress and it must break to pieces in no time.

¹ Drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* “Statement to the Press”, 23-8-1939.

² From *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*

³ He had asked the people to observe July 9, 1939, as ‘Protest Day’.

⁴ *Vide* “A.I.C.C. Resolutions”, 23-6-1939.

⁵ Addressed to the Congress President; *vide* Appendix—“Letter from Subhas Chandra Bose to Congress President”, 7-8-1939.

The Working Committee has come to the painful conclusion that it will fail in its duty if it condones the deliberate and flagrant breach of discipline by Subhas Babu. The Working Committee therefore resolves that for his grave act of indiscipline Shri Subhas Babu is declared disqualified as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for three years as from August 1939. The Working Committee trusts that Shri Subhas Babu will see the error of his ways and loyally submit to this disciplinary action.

The Working Committee has taken note of the indiscipline of many other Congressmen including responsible officials. But it has refrained from taking any action as the members acted under the inspiration of Shri Subhas Babu. The Working Committee, however, leaves it open to Provincial Organizations to take action if they think it necessary for the proper observance of discipline and especially if the offending members do not express regret for their indiscipline.

The Committee further empowers the President to take disciplinary action against such members who, instead of expressing regret by their speech or conduct for the indiscipline, persist in it.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, pp. 212-3

293. TELEGRAM TO DR. DADOO ¹

August 11, 1939

PENDING FINAL DIRECTION RATHER DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS STILL
GOING. PLEAD FOR PATIENCE. WE MUST LOSE NO CHANCE SETTLEMENT.
WILL NOT WASTE TIME.

GANDHI

South Africa's Freedom Struggle, pp. 303-4

¹ This was in reply to a cable dated August 9, 1939 from the addressee, which *inter alia* read : “. . . Handful Indian anti-passive resisters misconstruing object postponement struggle. Desirable pray cable in detail, precise nature and basis negotiations and fix time limit for postponement. We are not informed what negotiations transpiring”.

294. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 11, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was half inclined to talk to you in the presence of the Working Committee (for want of other time) about the Planning Committee.¹ Shankerlal came this morning after his chat with you bringing with him copy of a letter written by him to Kripalani² in the matter. I sympathized with him in his objection. I have never been able to understand or appreciate the labours of the Committee. I do not know that it is working within the four corners of the resolution creating the Committee. I do not know that the Working Committee is being kept informed of its doings. I have not understood the purpose of the numerous sub-committees. It has appeared to me that much money and labour are being wasted on an effort which will bring forth little or no fruit. These are my doubts. I seek light. I know your mind is in China.³ If you think Shah⁴ can express your mind, I shall try to learn from him. Or I shall wait till you return from your great mission. May God protect you and bring you safe to the motherland.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 378-9

295. LETTER TO GHULAM RASUL QURESHI

SEGAON,
August 11, 1939

CHI. QURESHI¹,

I have your letter. I take it that the instalment of Rs. 100 has started. I am glad you got out of *Sugandhi*.

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 19-6-1939.

² J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary, A. I. C. C.

³ Jawaharlal Nehru was to go to China; he actually left on August 20.

⁴ K. T. Shah

¹ Also spelt Koreishi

[PS.]

If Amtul Salaam is still there, tell her that I have not written to her thinking she must have left.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10773. Courtesy: Ghulam Rasul Qureshi

296. *LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

WARDHA,
August 11, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I could not write to you for two days, Shirin may be going. She has to reach there on the 16th. She may come back if she gets a job here. I am doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR
LADY HARDINGE COLLEGE HOSPITAL
NEW DELHI

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

297. *HUNGER-STRIKE*

Hunger-strike has positively become a plague. On the slightest pretext some people want to resort to hunger-strikes. It is well, therefore, that the Working Committee¹ has condemned the practice in unequivocal terms, so far at least as hunger-strike for discharge from imprisonment is concerned. The Committee should have gone further and condemned also the practice of forcible feeding. I regard forcible feeding as an undue liberty with the human body which is too sacred to be trifled with, even though it belongs to a prisoner. No doubt the State has control over the bodies of its prisoners but never to the extent of killing their soul. That control has well-defined limits. If a prisoner decides to starve himself to death, he should, in my opinion, be allowed to do so. A hunger-strike loses its force and dignity, when it has any, if the striker is forcibly fed. It becomes a mockery if

¹ At its meeting held from August 9 to 12

somehow or other sufficient nourishment is poured down the throat, whether through the mouth or the nose. Of course, the mind instinctively revolts against feeding through the nose. But I understand that after a few day's practice the process ceases to offend the subject himself. Where a prisoner offers violent resistance, the matter becomes difficult. But cases of such resistance are rare. It is not possible to keep up effective resistance for any length of time. A determined resister will of course die at the very first attempt and thus frustrate it. But such resistance requires great daring and reckless defiance of death. In any case it is my firm conviction that the method of forcible feeding should be abandoned as a relic of barbarism. I know that some prisoners welcome forcible feeding for the empty glory of being regarded as hunger-strikers. Jailors have often told me that such prisoners would deplore stoppage of forcible feeding. I am told that under the existing law jail authorities are bound to resort to forcible feeding if reasoning fails. I would recommend amendment of such legislation if any.

It is also worthy of consideration whether a rule should not be passed by the Working Committee making a public and political hunger-strike without permission a breach of discipline. I do not like restraint on the liberty of the individual except for his own good and that of the society of which he is a member. Hunger-strike has, however, become such a nuisance that it will be as well for the Working Committee to adopt measures to check it before it assumes dangerous proportions. A Working Committee resolution in such matters means expression of considered public opinion and is likely to prove a deterrent against an abuse of the practice. It may never need to be enforced.

SEGAON, August 14, 1939

Harijan, 19-8-1939

298. *CONFEDERATION OF SMALL STATES*

May I take the liberty of writing to you with a view to draw your attention to the problem of Kathiawar States? A close study of the States comprising the Western India Agency will convince anyone that the real problem of Kathiawar is not that of responsible government in individual States. That, in fact, is a demand very much beyond the ken of economic possibility. None of these States, with the exception of five or six, can afford to be genuine, separate, self-government units. Economic considerations apart, their geographical contiguity, and cultural and linguistic unity positively point towards the desirability of grouping them all administratively. A

confederation of these States alone can bring their people on a par with the people of Bombay Province or, for that matter, any other province in British India.

As to the fear that the Princes might strongly dislike such a move, it might be said that one cannot hope to go through any scheme of reform embodying real transference of power to the people without being confronted by the most dogged opposition from those quarters. And when at all events a fight (of course a non-violent one) has got to be waged against that opposition, it is only prudent and politic on our part to fight on an issue which should be our main and ultimate demand. Whatever our immediate and minimum demands, the final objective must not be lost sight of. And may I suggest in the case of Kathiawar, as also some three-fourths of the States in India, the final goal of all political reformers must be a confederation on the lines roughly foreshadowed in the appended printed articles?

I hope you will see that this idea, though by no means new or original, deserves to be popularized. For, collective agitation by a group or cluster of States in favour of confederation has certain obvious advantages which agitation for reform in a single State cannot have. How much I wish you had worked for the propagation of this idea while you were actively engaged in the Rajkot struggle. Even now one word of support from you—of course, only if you generally agree with this view—will place this idea on a sound footing.

This important letter¹ was received by me in Abbottabad. The articles² appended are cuttings from *The Tribune* of Lahore specially dealing with the problem. The articles contain an interesting analysis of the Kathiawar States and corroborative quotations from the Butler Committee's Report³ and a recent pronouncement⁴ by the Viceroy. For the moment I must content myself with heartily supporting the proposal. I do not share the fear of my correspondent about much opposition from the smaller States if they are sympathetically approached. They will soon realize that their safety lies in some kind of confederation and sharing of power with the people. The chief thing is a dispassionate representation of the problem and creation of public opinion that cannot be answered or opposed.

SEGAON, WARDHA, August 14, 1939
Harijan, 19-8-1939

¹ From R. L. Handa, *vide* "Letter from R. L. Handa", 10-8-1939

² For extracts, *vide* Appendix—"Kathiawar States", 30-9-1939.

³ According to *India's Struggle for Freedom*, Vol. I, p. 459, the committee, under the chairmanship of Harcourt Butler, "recommended the setting up of special tribunals for adjusting a number of important matters which affect the Indian States and British India alike".

⁴ The reference, presumably, is to the Viceroy's address at the annual session of Chamber of Princes in New Delhi on March 13, 1939.

299. NOTES

THE ARYA SAMAJ

It was a happy ending¹ to the Arya Satyagraha. I have hitherto not written a word about this struggle. The matter seemed too delicate for public treatment by me. The country knows that I have a special way of dealing with things public or private. Some even call it quixotic. Thus my public silence over the Arya Satyagraha did not mean that I was not deeply interested in the struggle. I was keeping myself in touch² with both the Arya Samaj leaders and the Muslim friends who could have any thing to do with Hyderabad affairs. Of course I was acting in concert with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. My sympathies were with the Aryas so far as their demands were concerned. They seemed to me to be so simple and so elementary. But I was averse to their Satyagraha from my own standpoint which I had explained to them. I was, however, nonplussed when they suggested that it was no worse if it was no better than the satyagraha I had led. They must not be expected, they added, to appreciate and follow my new method or requirements. I saw that I had no right to put any pressure upon them beyond that of reason. Then I was anxious not to embarrass H. E. H. the Nizam's Government as long as I could help it. It is, therefore, a matter of great joy to me personally that the Arya struggle has ended in a friendly manner. Both the Nizam Government and the Arya Samaj³ deserve congratulations. Let me hope that the dignified statement issued by Shri Ghanshyamsingh Gupta will receive from the Aryas the response it deserves. There is no doubt that much bitterness has been engendered during the struggle. If the Aryas act in the spirit of Shri Gupta's appeal and the Nizam's Government in the spirit of their own communique⁴, the bitterness will die out and there never will be any occasion for resumption of the struggle so far as simple religious and cultural freedom is concerned.

¹ On August 8

² *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 31-7-1939.

³ "Sabha" in the source

⁴ According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. II. p. 14, the communique contained "clarification of certain points in the official communique of July 17, 1939, in which the Government's attitude regarding the religious liberties in the State was set out as well as of the points raised by the, *Government Gazette Extraordinary* on July 19, 1939, announcing the reforms."

THE PUNJAB CONGRESS

Dr. Satyapal¹ has needlessly quoted me in order to go out of public life. If it is an inner urge, the decision is sound. If it is due to my innocent postcard² to Lala Dunichand, the doctor is hopelessly wrong. In the first place the postcard has to do with the whole Congress atmosphere in the Punjab which has resulted in a distrust not of this or that individual but of myself. A critic may call it cowardice if he likes. But whether it is cowardice or want of self-confidence, I am useless as a mediator so long as my malady persists. So, when Sardar Mangal Singh and other friends from Ludhiana came to Wardha armed with authority from Dr. Satyapal, I told them that I was useless, but that Rajendra Babu as the head of the Congress organization was the proper person to go to the Punjab. He has consented to go as soon as his health and other engagements permit. But I have suggested to these friends that there is no help equal to self-help. They must, by their own exertion, put their house in order. If Dr. Satyapal has not gone out in obedience to the inner urge, he will not be able to keep himself out for any length of time. His nature will revolt against the artificial self-suppression. I therefore suggest a better course. Let him cease to be a party man. Let him forget old quarrels and let him be intent on producing real solidarity in the Punjab. I cannot say how this can be done. I have not even the data for laying down a plan of action. He must devise it himself. All I can say is that if he really wills it, he can do the thing. Everybody knows that he has a following in the Punjab, that he is an indefatigable worker and has sacrifice to his credit. If, therefore, anybody can bring about peace among Congressmen in the Punjab, it is certainly Dr. Satyapal. But whether it is he or anybody else, that one will have to efface himself and put the people's cause, which is the Congress cause, before his own or his party's. Behind my diffidence must be read an intense wish that the Congressmen in the Punjab should unite without mental reservations and act as one man.

INDIAN STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Whether our countrymen in South Africa have to take up passive resistance or not, there is no doubt that they will not be able to vindicate their position if they cannot close their ranks and act as one man and act unselfishly. Their corporate existence cannot be main-

¹ Member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly

² *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 20-7-1939.

tained with honour, if individuals in order to serve their selfish ends compromise the community's interest and honour. There is, at the time of writing these lines, a cleavage between the local Congress and the passive resisters. The resisters seem to have the bulk of the Indian population with them. But the name and prestige of the South African Congress is with the non-resisters. Now there is a prospect of a lawsuit over the possession of the Congress books, funds and offices. I would warn the resisters against falling into the legal trap. Let them follow my example. The equivalent to the Congress in my days was the British Indian Association. From the very commencement of passive resistance, I recognized that all Indians would not and could not join the struggle although all might be, as they actually were, in sympathy with it. Although it was open to me, being secretary, to utilize the name and prestige of the Association, I founded a separate organization¹ leaving the British Indian Association free to act as it might within constitutional limits. It was possible by this arrangement to protect the non-resisters from harm, retain their sympathy and save the resisters from the embarrassment that would undoubtedly be caused by non-resisters if they were members of the same body. Let the present passive resisters work along their own lines and rely upon getting more than prestige by their strength, sacrifice and capacity for suffering. A passive resister should have a generous heart and represent not only his own companions but even his opponents. Whatever rights he secures, he will secure for all. He is a friend of all and enemy of none. That is the first condition of successful passive or civil resistance.

KHADI AS FAMINE INSURANCE AND MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

There has been a full discussion among the khadi workers at the meeting of the A. I. S. A. held at Wardha on the 12th instant and thereafter. It has been claimed for khadi that it has at least three definite functions. It provides a supplementary occupation to the semi-starved and semi-employed millions of India on a scale unequalled by any other occupation. It provides, with the least possible loss, work in famine areas; and it is the best medium of instruction for the boys and girls of India in the primary stage.

But there is one definite condition for the success of khadi as famine insurance or medium of instruction in the primary stage.

¹ The Natal Indian Congress; *vide* Vol. I.

What is to be done with the khadi produced in famine areas and in the schools? If khadi cannot be sold, it is as useless as the stones broken in many parts of India during famine time. I have suggested often enough in these columns that all the khadi produced under the last two heads must be taken up by the State. This can be most easily done through the A. I. S. A., if the State guarantees the losses as it guarantees today railway dividends and many other things. Considering price, khadi is undoubtedly dearer than mill-cloth. Therefore it commands a market only among patriots and philanthropists. But those who have no spare cash will not be easily actuated by philanthropy or patriotism. They will go to the cheapest market. It is therefore the business of the State to shut out or tax heavily enough such goods as compete with those which, for the general good, should command a market. I think it can be taken as proved that khadi comes under such goods. The administration of eight provinces is virtually in Congress hands to an extent enough to protect khadi and the like. There is no reason why the other provinces should not follow the Congress provinces in matters like protection of khadi on which there is no difference of opinion. Hindu-Muslim unity may not come as early as many of us wish. But even as we breathe common air and drink the common water supplied by the rivers, wells or waterworks, surely we might agree on a common policy regarding other necessities of life, without in any way interfering with our differences, if we must unfortunately hug these and use them for warring against one another. But whether the other provinces fall in line or not, it is necessary for the Congress provinces to confer with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. and evolve a line of action whereby the difficulty I have pointed out can be solved without delay.

SEGAON, WARDHA, August 14, 1939

Harijan, 19-8-1939

300. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 14, 1939

BHAI JIVANJI,

What sort of an article do you expect from me? Hadn't you better leave me out? You should give me a reward even if I am able to

do all the other work you have given.

I understand about the *Autobiography*¹.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAIJIVANJI

P. O. BOX 105, AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9947. Also C. W. 6921. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai.

301. LETTER TO RAVI SHANKAR SHUKLA²

August 14, 1939

BHAI SHUKLAJI,

To this I have replied thus:³ “I have your ultimatum. Please know that your proper course is to ask the Prime Minister or the Parliamentary Board.”

Do you have anything to say?

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

302. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 14, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

You are really stupid. You sit there and are afraid. You even forget that time is doing its work. And why should you be scared when someone attributes to you a failing you do not have? Why do you not learn this much from me that we should not allow ourselves to be affected however much we may be criticised or condemned? May be when you come here, you will face neither criticism nor condemnation.

The reply to Dr. Young is enclosed, He used to accompany me to the Working Committee meetings. Once Pyarelal and Shirin came along.

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Jivanji D. Desai”, 31-7-1939.

² This was in reply to a letter from the addressee, Premier, Central Provinces, who had forwarded to Gandhiji a telegram from H. J. Khandekar, M. L. A., Secretary, Depressed Classes Satyagraha Committee, Nagpur. Khandekar had threatened to resume “Segaon Satyagraha” unless demand for a Harijan Minister in Central Provinces Ministry was conceded within a fortnight. *Vide* also Letter to H. J. Khandekar”, 7-8-1938 and “Discussion with Harijan Satyagrahis”, 27-8-1939.

³ In the source the following two sentences are in English.

It will not do to be careless about food and sleep. It would be good if you did not spoil your eyes by falling to the lure of films. But if the craving is too strong, go and see them.

Nimu left for Bombay yesterday Krishnachandra will be coming in a day or two. Kundar¹ has gone to Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

303. LETTER TO LAKSHMISWAR SINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1939

MY DEAR LAKSHMISWAR²,

I hope you will not take the final step without consultation with Aryanayakam³. I would like to see you with him, if that is at all possible.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. W. 1473. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

304. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1939

BHAI JIVRAJ,

I got your frank letter only today. I am immensely pleased. I had not expected anything different. I understand what you say. Maybe, I might not fully implement your advice. Would you object even if I had a massage in the nude at the hands of a man? Do you believe that it is injurious to health if people slept side by side even in the open air? Please examine this question independently of the

¹ Kundar Diwan

² Author of *Teachers' Handbook of Basic Education through Cardboard Mode-ling*. Sinha was working at the Basic Teachers' Training Centre, Wardha, and had requested Gandhiji to allow him to quit the Centre.

³ E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh. At Gandhiji's instance, he had invited the addressee to draft a syllabus in respect of basic crafts to be included in the Zakir Husain Committee's report.

supposed inpropriety of a woman sleeping by the side of a man.¹

I have developed the habit of reading, etc., in the latrine since many years ago. You can look upon it as a kind of addiction. It is a pitiable condition that my bowels move freely only if I have some worth-while reading material with me and that in its absence I am constipated. But I am only taking advantage of the fact that I have to rush along. It would be just as well if you could frighten me out of this bad habit.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

305. *LETTER TO ARORA SINGH*

August 16, 1939

I have come to know that what you fear about Hon'ble M. Y. Nurie is groundless.²

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. *LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR*

August 16, 1939

CHI. LILA,

You will see that the doctor's letter is very clear. He is not blaming me in any way. You had, therefore, no cause to be unhappy. Isn't his report of his conversation with you correct? How I shall tackle the problem³ is a different question. You need not worry about that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9593. Also C. W. 6565. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

¹ *Vide* also letter to the addressee, "Letter to Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta", 9-8-1939.

² The addressee had complained that Nurie, a Congress Minister, had amassed too much wealth.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 9-8-1939.

307. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 16, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Sit down for an hour and spin; join me on the walks. Then do whatever job falls to your lot. Anyone, including Tarabehn, may learn Hindi from you to their heart's content.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4326

308. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA GANJ,

August 18, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

MAY YOUR CHINESE MISSION BE CROWNED WITH SUCCESS. MAY GOD BE WITH YOU AND BRING YOU SAFE HOME. REGRET SRI PRAKASA. HE SHOULD SUSPEND ACTION TILL AFTER YOUR RETURN.¹ PROPOSE ISSUING A STATEMENT² ON CRISIS AND WAR RESOLUTION UNLESS YOU WISH OTHERWISE. SEND YOUR CHINESE ADDRESS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

309. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ³

August 18, 1939

TRANSFER FUND BANK OF NAGPUR WARDHA THROUGH
IMPERIAL BANK WARDHA.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Sri Prakasa wanted to resign from the Congress. *Vide* also "Telegram to Sri Prakasa", 26-8-1939.

² *Vide* "A Statement", 20-9-1939.

³ Secretary, Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund Committee; *vide* "Letter to Mulkrāj", 5-4-1939; "Telegram to Mulkrāj", 18-4-1939 and 22-4-1939.

310. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 18, 1939

MY DEAR C. R.,

What a sad letter to Mahadev Desai! What does it matter, what Srinivasa Iyengar says, when you have a clear conscience?¹ It is one and the same thing whether you are in or out. You have to labour in either case.

I hope Laxmi² and the children are doing well.

Mahadev is in Simla for the Punjab prisoners.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 2075

311. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 18, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I will write more if I get time. Tell Chhaganlal³ that I have not been able to write to him. I shall arrange to send somebody if the drought⁴ continues. Whom should I send on the *Rentia Baras* Day? How about Mirabehn?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8560. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

¹ On August 7, Rajagopalachari introduced in the Madras Legislative Council "The Temple-entry Authorization and Indemnity Bill" as passed by the Assembly. T. C. Srinivasa Iyengar, who expressed the view that it should not be left to the trustee to gauge public opinion, suggested that a representative commission might be set up to ascertain public opinion by means other than the ballot box.

² Addressee's daughter

³ Chhaganlal Joshi

⁴ In various parts of Kathiawar; *vide* also "Threat of Famine", 2-8-1939.

312. MESSAGE TO DEPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE ¹

[On or before *August 19, 1939*]²

I received the invitation to attend the Conference. I wish it all success.

The Hindu, 24-8-1939

313. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

You are having unnecessary trouble. We have landed on evil times. But, if we keep straight, the clouds will pass. I adhere to the statement signed by me. I am sorry for the distortions in the extracts sent by you. My advice is not to retort. You should contradict falsehoods where necessary and insist upon truth even though for the time being you have to incur unpopularity.

Yours Sincerely,

From a copy: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

314. LETTER TO ISWAR SARAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR MUNSHIJI,

Your letter is very interesting. I am glad you are making rapid progress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Form the original: C. W. 10200. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

¹ According to the source, the message was read out at the All-India Depressed Classes National League Conference, held in Delhi on August 19, with Karan Singh Kane, Parliamentary Secretary to the Education Minister, United Provinces, in the chair.

² *Ibid*

315. LETTER TO N. S. VENKATAKRISHNAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR FRIEND¹,

The portion you object to is inoffensive in terms of non-violence of the type the Congress has reached. Moreover Congress Governments have to represent both Congressmen and non Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10973. Courtesy: N.S. Venkatakrishnan

316. LETTER TO Y. M. DADOO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

MY DEAR DADOO,

It has stirred me to find you leading the Satyagraha band. Manilal and Medh have together given me a good account of you. It makes me glad to know that you are son of a valued client² of mine.

You know that I am watching your movements as closely as I can. You have done well in sending me the relevant literature. There is just a ray of hope that we shall reach a settlement. But you will not expect anything heroic nor will you promise great things. If you have to fight it will be a fight for honour. You won't get anything very substantial. Too much has already been surrendered during these years. You are engaged in a very hard struggle. And if as a result of the present effort, a handful of you make the mission of your life to serve the cause there, you will gradually build up a prestige that will stand you in good stead.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11346. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 305

¹A Congress worker who had objected to the last paragraph of the Congress Working Committee's War Resolution of August, 1939, on the ground that it breathed violence and was repugnant to the non-violent creed of the Congress: *vide* Appendix—"Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939

² Mahomed Mamuji Dadoo

317. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have your letter. It will make me very happy indeed if Chandan-behn¹ is completely cured. If you have the courage to treat Vijaya's² father³, go and visit him even without being sent for and examine him. Vijaya should be in Varad. There has been no letter from her for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
MANDVINI POLE, DEVNI SHERI
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2907. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

318. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 19, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. I think Vijaya is still in Varad. Again there has been no letter. I am forwarding the vaid's letter to Varad.⁴

She had not gone to Bombay at all. Naranbhai had gone to Bombay before she left.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10793

¹ Chandan Parekh who married Satish Kalelkar

² Vijayabehn Pancholi and Naranbhai Patel

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Vide* also the preceding item.

319. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have already given you the blessing that your operation may be successful. I satisfy myself by seeking news of you from anyone who comes and knows you. You know how much I respect you. But this letter is to convey my good wishes to Ambalalbhai. Your operation will certainly go off without any trouble. I am even praying that both of you should always be happy and go on doing public service. There is no need to answer this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11148. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

320. SPINNERS' WAGES

The following is the translation of the resolution adopted by the A. I. S. A. at its meeting on the 15th instant at Wardha:

The A. I. S. A. has for the past four years recognized the duty of making a progressive rise in the wages payable to the spinners. In the performance of this duty, the Maharashtra Branch of the Sangh has paid the highest rate of all the branches. But the result of this experiment of the Branch has been that khadi has proved unable to bear the burden and the sales have considerably gone down. The rise in wages should not result in a diminution in the capacity of khadi to provide work for the unemployed. It seems that in view of the existing circumstances it is necessary to postpone the insistence on giving the spinners more than three annas for eight hours' spinning. There is much unemployment. There is a sufficient number of spinners eager to work for less than one anna for eight hours' spinning. Other people are ready to give them work at such low wages to the detriment of the principle laid down by the Sangh. Apart from the Sangh providing them also with work, there seems to be no other way of combating the evil. Thus there are two duties before the Sangh: one that of raising the spinners' wages to eight annas for an eight-hour day, and the other of finding work for the unemployed sisters. There comes an interim period before reaching the simultaneous performance of the two duties.

Moreover there is a danger of famine overtaking some parts of the country. The spinning-wheel is being proved to be of the greatest help at such times. But

question arises whether it is necessary to make the scale of wages lower than even three annas. A third problem arises from the fact of the production of yarn in the schools conducted according to the Wardha scheme of education.

Taking all these things into consideration the Sangh has come to the following conclusion :

Generally the scale of three annas for eight hours' work of the fixed standard be not touched for the time being. But it should be open to any branch to rise higher than the scale, provided that it takes over the responsibility of sustaining its sales under the higher scale. In the event of the necessity being felt of lowering the wages of artisans in the famine areas, the decrease may be made with the previous permission of the Secretary. The Sangh should take over from the respective Governments the sales of khadi prepared in famine areas and in schools conducted under the Wardha scheme of education, provided that these Governments bear the losses sustained in the disposal of such khadi.

This is an important resolution. It marks a slowing down of the speed with which I was goading the Sangh to rise to eight annas wages for an eight-hour day for the spinners. I knew that the goal was not to be reached in one jump. I had, however, nursed the hope that every few months would show a progressive increase in the wages. But reports from the different branches and the partial failure of the experiment carried on under my nose by Shri Jajuji¹ under the guidance of Shri Vinoba with high hopes of going forward with the rise, have opened my eyes to the stern and grim reality that this country is so terribly poor that it cannot afford to pay a wage of eight annas per day of eight hours to millions of women. Generally nowhere in rural areas do village labourers or artisans earn eight annas for eight hours' work. Spinners could not earn eight annas without all the other classes doing likewise. And the purchasing classes simply have not the money to pay an all-round wage of eight annas per day unless conditions are radically altered. The crushing and unproductive military burden drains the country dry. Add to this the inordinately high salaries and correspondingly high pensions paid, and spent abroad. There are other internal causes also for this gnawing poverty. But I must not stray from the purpose of this article.

Be the cause or causes what they may, the painful fact has been brought home by khadi workers that in spite of all the will in the world the middle-class khadi buyer simply has not the money to buy khadi at the increased price necessitated by the rise in wages beyond the point

¹ Shri Krishnadas Jaju

of three annas. They report that for the time being at any rate that is the saturation point. The resolution is a recognition of this painful fact.

But even the scale of three annas cannot be sustained if the Provincial Governments do not come to the rescue. They can do so both through legislative and administrative effort. This they will only do if they will use the A.I.S.A., the A.I.V.I.A. and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh as their own expert, voluntary and honorary agencies. I present them with the prospect of putting several lakhs of rupees into the pockets of the famishing villagers by providing them with employment during leisure hours. But no progress can be made if the manufactures of the villagers do not become current coin.

SEGAON, August 20, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

321. NOTES

AMONG 'CRIMINAL TRIBES'

Shri H. S. Kaujalgi of the Karnataka Branch of the A.I.S.A. sends me beautiful slivers and equally good yarn prepared and spun by the women in the 'criminal tribes' settlement near Bijapur and writes :

The women are not criminals themselves, but they are the immediate dependants of the habitual criminals that are placed under certain restrictions in the settlement. The manager of the settlement asked the A.I.S.A. Karnataka Branch to try to introduce spinning in the settlement. As spinning was unknown to these women, they had no prejudices for any particular kind of spinning-wheels or carding process. So we thought it in the best interest of the spinners to introduce Andhra methods of spinning and carding. We began on the 19th of July. Five women are attending the class. They belong to the Bhat, Corvi and Waders communities. They are paid one anna and six pies per day as stipend during the course of spinning. They can now spin 500 yards in three hours. The cotton used is Jayawant and the yarn spun is between 30 and 40 counts. We are continuing the class till the end of August, after which time we shall be providing them with cotton and purchasing yarn from them. If the experiment succeeds, we are introducing spinning in other criminal settlements also. Shri Dhruva, the Backward Class Officer, Poona, is enthusiastic about it.

Towards the end of August we are holding a competition in spinning. We are giving a sari as a present to all those who spin more than three hundred yards of 30 counts yarn in one hour. As the women are quick and intelligent it is possible that every one of the five spinners will get a sari.

This is a good beginning. If the Provincial Governments will take the fullest advantage of the three expert constructive bodies, viz., A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A. and Hindustani Talimi Sangh, they will find the maximum amount of productive work with the minimum expenditure of money and energy. But of course they have to face the problem of the sale of goods manufactured through the activities of these three bodies. Such a question arises only in this unfortunate land. In other countries the State sees to it that the people use the goods that are manufactured by or under State supervision. The Provincial Governments have the opportunity, though to a limited extent, of putting things right.

SEGAON, August 20, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

322. LETTER TO VIJAYABHEN M. PANCHOLI

WARDHA,
August 20, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is very unkind of you not to write to me these days. I hope you received the letter sent yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7112. Also C.W. 4604. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

323. WANTED PURCHASERS

The following is taken from a letter from the Gandhi Ashram, Meerut :

The A.I.S.A. is giving work today to more than three lakhs of people. Its operations extend to 13,000 villages. 2,571 workers are engaged in this great nation-building activity. The quota of the United Provinces is no mean one. We have more than 40,000 spinners on our registers. The number of other artisans, weavers, washermen, carders, etc., is 4,780. Nearly 3,043 villages are covered by our activities, and 600 workers carry the message of khadi to different parts of the province. It brings all the creative forces of the nation into play. We learn to combine, plan, co-ordinate and build. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has been reported to have said in the Working Committee that the spinning-wheel cannot fulfil all

our needs of cloth today. I feel this statement underrates the possibility of the spinning-wheel. I can say from our experience that we have not been able to touch even the fringe of the problem. Production can be multiplied a thousand times within a very short period provided we have a ready market for the khadi we manufacture.

I have omitted the portion containing an appeal for sales. I hope that their effort will meet with the success it deserves. But what I wish to consider here is the reason for the sales not keeping pace with the production. Propaganda undoubtedly has its place. But more than propaganda is wanted scientific research. There is no doubt that our people use on an average 15 yards of cloth per head per year. There is no doubt that this cloth costs the country a figure approaching 100 crores of rupees, meaning less than three rupees per head, counting India's population at 35 crores. It is easy enough to say that the sales can be effected if the State protects khadi. That khadi deserves protection is in my opinion a self-proved proposition.¹ But have the khadi workers who have the qualifications found out whether we have done all we could to command sales even without protection? There are two obstacles. Mill-made cloth is said to be much cheaper than khadi, and has a variety of colour, design and finish which khadi does not possess. The second has been largely overcome, but more is perhaps required to be done. There must be a limit beyond which probably khadi cannot go. If there is, we must frankly confess it. But my fear is that sufficient research has not been made as to the prices. Professor Kumarappa has put forth a startling claim for the spinning-wheel. He has produced figures in support of it.² But the man in the street asks the questions: 'Then why is khadi dearer than mill-cloth?' This question has to be satisfactorily answered. The obvious answers I would not consider to be satisfactory. The answers themselves have to be thoroughly examined and the way to overcome the difficulties discovered and pursued till khadi comes to occupy its natural supremacy.

It is a shame that we who grow more cotton than we need should have to send it abroad for being turned into cloth for us. It is equally a shame for us that we who have in our villages unlimited unused labour, and can easily supply ourselves with village instruments of

¹ *Vide* also "Notes", sub-title, "Khadi as Famine Insurance and Medium of Instruction", "Letter to Jivanji D. Desai", 14-8-1939.

² *Vide* "Mills v. Charkha", 7-8-1939.

manufacture, should send our cotton to the mills of our cities for it to be manufactured into cloth for our use. We know the history of the shame. But we have not yet discovered the sure way to deal with the double shame beyond a patriotic appeal to the public. The latter have returned an encouraging response. But the recent resolution seems to show that we have reached the limit of the patronage. We may not be satisfied until khadi becomes an article of universal wear. It may be that in the prosecution of our search we may find, as some suggest we shall, that khadi can never become an economic pro-position. We should then have no hesitation in making the admission, however it may hurt our pride and demolish the proposition we have hitherto advanced with so much confidence. But the admission cannot be made till we have made every search that is possible for a human being to make so as to yield an unequivocal answer to the questions propounded by me.

SEGAON, August 21, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

324. NOTES

WHY ONLY PROHIBITION?

A correspondent thus twits me:

It was all very well for you to have insisted on prohibition. Do you suppose that the ‘*satta*’ in the share market, the ‘*ank farak*’, the dens of gambling, the races and the cinemas do less damage to the morals and the pockets of the people than the drink evil? I hear you have never gone to the cinema. Do go, if only once, and you will see things on the stage and among the spectators that will set you athinking. I assure you that the institutions I have mentioned demand your attention as much as the drink monster.

This is the substance of a fairly long indictment in Gujarati. There are other things packed into the letter. But I have given in my own words the relevant portions.

I have no difficulty in agreeing with the correspondent that the evils named by him are serious and should be dealt with. But who will bell the cat? If I could have, I should have dealt with the lady long ago. I have my limitations. I have only recently shown¹ that I am not so

¹ *Vide* “Am I All-Powerful”, 6-8-1939.

powerful as some people imagine. The drink evil has been recognized as such by the people of this land. But the other evils are more or less fashionable. If I led an agitation against the share gambling, I should be in danger of losing some of my willing and regular donors. If I incited people against the races and the infernal gamble that goes on there, all the high personages from the Viceroy downward would be up in arms against me. And those who patronize the race specials? If I led a raging campaign against the cinemas, I should lose caste among educationists and reformers. They have often sought to convert me by pleading that cinemas are a fine medium of education and that churches and reformers in the West give them their patronage in an ever-increasing measure. Therefore if I treated these evils as I have treated the drink evil and if I began to organize picketing in respect of them, I should lose caste, lose my mahatmaship, and even lose my head which of course has very little value at this time of my life. But as I do not wish to suffer the triple loss, I must allow my correspondent and others like him to think that I am shirking an obvious duty. I know the evils. I hope that greater reformers than I will deal with them. For me one step is enough.

A FRAUD ON KHADI

The Secretary, A.I.S.A., Punjab Branch, writes:

I am sending per separate parcel an advertisement of Butala khadi. They were our certified centre till the end of 1937. Some suspicion then arose regarding the purity of yarn used by them. The matter was investigated and the Ahmedabad Office decided that they must keep an A.I.S.A. inspector for their centre to watch that no mill-yarn was used. They refused to abide by that decision, on which their certificate was cancelled. They are now exploiting our certificate that was given to them while they were working as a certified centre. They do not say that their certificate has been cancelled since, but quote the old certificate giving a false impression to the public that they have still got the patronage of Mahatma Gandhi, Shri Jammalal Bajaj and other leaders of esteem. I feel something might be done to remove this impression.

I have omitted the advertisement. The action complained of in the letter is obviously a fraud on khadi. It is probably an actionable wrong. Though the A.I.S.A. has followed the policy of relying upon public opinion to protect khadi against fraud, the wrong-doers should know that the A.I.S.A. has taken no vow not to seek legal protection if it became necessary. I hope that the party making use of a cancelled certificate will wisely give up the practice, return the certificate to the Association, and refrain from dealing in khadi in contravention of the

rules of the A.I.S.A. The Secretary of the Branch should warn the wrong-doer against the wrongful use of the cancelled certificate and report the result to the Central Office.

SEGAON, August 21, 1939

Harijan, 26-8-1939

325. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August, 21, 1939

MY DEAR MUJEEB,

Have you read the pamphlet issued by the Jamiat-ul-Ulema? They sent a copy to the Working Committee. Rajen Babu read extracts from it. One of them attacked the Wardha Scheme by saying that it was wrong to say that non-violence was an integral part of Islam and that Islam taught equal respect for the known religions—it taught toleration. Another suggested that Hindustani was merely another word for Urdu.

If you have not seen the pamphlet please procure it and if you have it, please send me your reaction to these extracts which I have quoted in my own words. I have not the original before me.

What about your finances? How are you otherwise doing? Is there any effect being produced on the attendance at the Jamia? How is Zakir¹ progressing?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 1465

¹ Zakir Husain

326. LETTER TO KUNVAR SIR JAGDISH PRASAD¹

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

DEAR SIR JAGDISH,

I know you have been putting up a good fight on behalf of the Indians in S. A. I have been staying their hand. But they are getting restive. They won't be satisfied with any patch-work settlement. I know, too, that nothing brave is to be expected from here. It is therefore doubly necessary not to prolong the agony. If you can, you should tell Rama Rau² to keep himself in touch with the Passive Resisters. As you know there are two parties there. He should take the P. R. s into his confidence. They complain that he does not even recognize them. I can hardly believe this of Rama Rau. I am making inquiry. But I thought you should know what I am getting from S.A.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

327. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Kaka's letter is enclosed. Bear your burden well. Personally I am of the opinion that he should stop travelling. I can stop him only by ordering him, but you can reason and plead with him. What he writes is perfectly true. The only amendment needed is that he has always been like a child and has not become childish through senility. You should write to Vijaya as you have been doing. She had suggested that you should write the full name of Naranbhai. There has been no letter from her. This suggests that she is in a fix. But she will be able to manage. I

¹ Sir Jagdish Prasad wrote to Gandhiji on July 13 and 21, 1939. In the first letter, he suggested that the move by some Indians in South Africa to embark on passive resistance would be a grave mistake. In the second letter, he expressed gratitude to Gandhiji for asking Transvaal Indians to postpone passive resistance.

² Sir Benegal Rama Rau, Agent-General of India in South Africa

am sure I shall get a letter from her in a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10794

328. *LETTER TO SANYUKTA GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 21, 1939

CHI. SANYUKTA,

Why should I write to you? Are you not included in Jaisukhlal? Very well then; I won't include Jaisukhlal in you. You will certainly benefit from all the service you are rendering. Kasumba is getting a new lease of life. Let us see what other exploits you claim now.

Jaisukhlal should try to do only what he can there and rest content.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

329. *LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 21, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Now you will have no occasion to complain about the absence of letters from me. But that will be because of the struggle. Remember that both of you have to sacrifice your all there. Once the struggle starts it won't end soon. What will you do about the children? You must have thought about every contingency. If you cannot keep them there, then Sushila will perhaps have to keep out of the struggle and bring over the children here. Or, if she has the ability, she may single-handed run *Indian Opinion*. Thus think out your plans beforehand.

Here everything is all right. And, besides, what time can you get now to wonder about what is happening here?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4902

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", 31-7-1939.

330. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON,
August 21, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

What is to be done about what you say regarding the Punjab National Bank? I have already sent over the information regarding Nagpur [Bank].¹

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

331. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

August 21, 1939

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Do you know anything about this?² What is this talk about printing the Vedas? And what contributions is he³ talking about?

I hope you got my note of yesterday.

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please credit the enclosed cheque to my account. As for particulars, you can mention that it is from Magan Jerajani towards famine [relief] or some such cause.

BAPU

SHRI KISHORELALBHAI

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

¹ From *Bapu Smaran*; vide also "Draft Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-8-1939.

² The reference is to a quarterly work report, dated August 20, 1939, from Tummala Basavayya, a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, stating, *inter alia*, that he had spent eight days outside Vinayashram (where he lived) in order to collect funds for the publication of the Vedas. The letter is written at the back of the report.

³ *Ibid*

332. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 21, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

Every day I want to have a talk with you, but I have not been able to do so. There must be some hidden fear behind it. Otherwise the wish would be fulfilled somehow. I cannot bear your fasting at all. It does disturb my work. You may be endowed with indefatigable energy, but the very knowledge that you are fasting prevents me from freely taking work from you. How nice it would be if you would forget about fasts, etc., and give greater importance to your duty towards me! The adjectives Devdas employs may be inapt but there is some justification in what he says. I am tolerating your philosophy but I do not understand it and I burn within. You can quench the fire if you so wish. That would bring peace to me. It would bring peace to Sushila and it would be good for her. Write a brief letter to Devdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

333. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 21, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

I have been wanting to write to you every day but can find no time. Today I have sat down to write this after my morning meal though it is *Harijan* day. I did not like your last two letters. They were hysterical. Why are you so restless? Why are you so much afraid of Devdas and the people here? Why should you tremble at the thought of coming here? What has happened to your knowledge of the *Gita* and all the talks we have had? On the one hand you are proclaiming to the world what you plan to do here and on the other you have doubts about your continuing to stay here. What stupidity! Free your-self of it. Why are you dying before your death?

Your description of your talk with Devdas is good. your answers were also good. This dialogue has certainly done good. I hope you did not show any anger during the talk. The misunderstanding will be further cleared with more talks.

There is an Agrawal Eye Hospital at Daryaganj. Go and see it. I hope you are well and you observe rules in the matter of food.

There is always trouble from Pyarelal in the shape of fasts and so on. You are mischievous. Young wrote to me only because you gave him the occasion. If you had said you could not wait till after August, he surely would not have written? When the needs of the patients there are mentioned, how can I refuse? You yourself could not have refused. Now I am waiting for the 16th. What should I do? We shall see about your hospital after your arrival here. Shirin has not come.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

334. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[Before August 22, 1939]¹

You must of course go. Seeing the ways of Om I can only advise that she should be married off as quickly as possible. She is not old enough in years but physically and mentally she is quite mature. I doubt very much if she can restrain herself any more. Of course you must consider well before settling the marriage. You must then leave it to her. In the end she will do as her fate dictates. If a suitable young man comes along do not wait too long. Consult Om again and again. Tell her of my distrust of her. Take her a letter from me if you wish.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10990. Courtesy: Ramakrishna Bajaj

¹From the reference to Om who was betrothed on August 22, 1939

335. *LETTER TO POPATLAL CHUDGAR*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1939

CHI. CHUDGAR¹,

Sardar is in sole charge of everything. I will approve of whatever he decides, if at all my approval is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI POPATLAL CHUDGAR
BARRISTER
RAJKOT CITY
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9831. Courtesy: Popatlal Chudgar

336. *LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA*

August 22, 1939

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am writing to Lakshmidas. . . .² Do not enter [anything] concerning Jamnalal in the account books. Leave it for the present.

As I have not been able to digest what you say about forgive-ness, try to convince me. If not now, whenever you have the time. I shall understand even if you write a few words.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Gandhi Nidhi File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

¹ Barrister; legal adviser of the Rao Rana of Sikar

² Illegible in the source

337. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

SEGAON,
August 23, 1939

I continue to receive letters, mostly abusive, about what may be called the Subhas Babu resolution² of the Working Committee. I also saw a letter addressed to Rajendra Babu, which can hardly be sur-passed in the use of filthy language. I have seen some criticisms about the war resolution³.

I owe it to the public to make my position clear about both these resolutions. I must confess that the Subhas Babu resolution was drafted by me. I can say that the members of the Working Committee would have shirked the duty of taking action if they could have. They knew that there would be a storm of opposition against their action. It was easier for them to have a colourless resolution than to have one which was no respecter of persons. Not to take some action would have amounted to abdication of their primary function of preserving discipline among Congressmen. Subhas Babu had invited action. He had gallantly suggested that if any action was to be taken it should be taken against him as the prime mover. In my opinion the action taken by the Working Committee was the mildest possible. There was no desire to be vindictive. Surely the word vindictiveness loses all force and meaning when the position of Subhas Babu is considered. He knew that he could not be hurt by the Working Committee. His popularity had put him above being affected by any action that the Working Committee might take. He had pitted himself against the Working Committee, if not the Congress organization. The members of the Working Committee, therefore, had to perform their duty and leave the Congressmen and the public to judge between themselves and Subhas Babu. It has been suggested that Subhas Babu has done what I would have done under similar circumstances. I cannot recall a single instance in my life of having done what Subhas Babu has done, i.e., defied an organization to which I owed allegiance. I could understand rebellion after secession from such an organization. That was the meaning and secret of the non-

¹ This appeared under the title "The Two Resolutions". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 23-8-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 24-8-1939.

² *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

³ *Vide* Appendix-"Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939

violent non-co-operation of 1920.

But I am not penning these lines so much to justify the action of the Working Committee as to appeal to Subhas Babu and his supporters to take the decision of the Working Committee in the right spirit and submit to it while it lasts. He has every right to appeal to the A.I.C.C. against the decision. If he fails there, he can take the matter before the annual session of the Congress. All this can be done without bitterness and without imputing motives of the worst type to the members of the Working Committee. Why not be satisfied with the belief that the members have committed an error of judgement? I fancy that if a majority of the A.I.C.C. members signify in writing their disapproval of the action of the Working Committee, the latter will gladly resign. By imputing motives whenever there are differences of opinion, Congressmen pull down the structure that has been built up by the patient labour of half a century. Indeed, even if a bad motive is suspected, it is better to refrain from imputing it, unless it can be proved beyond doubt. It is necessary for the sake of healthy public education that leaders of public opinion should judge events and decisions on their merits.

On the war resolution I had a conclusive defeat. I was invited to draft a resolution, and so was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I was proud of my draft, but my pride went before destruction. I saw that I could not carry my resolution unless I argued and pressed for it. But I had no such desire. We then listened to Jawaharlal's. And I at once admitted that it represented more truly than mine the country's opinion and even the Working Committee's as a whole. Mine was based upon out-and-out non-violence. If the Congress heartily believed in non-violence in its fullness even as a policy, this was its testing time. But Congressmen, barring individual exceptions, do not believe in such non-violence. Those who do, believe that it is the right thing only for a fight against the Government for wresting power. But the Congress has no non-violent message for the world. I would fain believe that the Congress had such a message. The conclusion to both the resolutions need not have been radically different. But the motive power being different the same conclusion would bear a different meaning in a different setting. In the face of the violence going on in India itself and in the face of the fact that Congress Governments have been obliged to fall back upon

military and police assistance, a declaration to the world of non-violence would have seemed a mockery. It would have carried no weight in India or with the world. Yet, to be true to myself, I could not draft any other resolution than I did.

The fate, to which I was party, of my resolution proved the wisdom of my withdrawal of official connection with the Congress. I attend the Working Committee meetings not to identify myself with its resolutions or even its general policy. I attend in the pursuit of my mission of non-violence. So long as they want my attendance I go there to emphasize non-violence in their acts and through them in those of Congressmen. We pursue the same goal. They all of them would go the whole length with me if they could, but they want to be true to themselves and to the country which they represent for the time being, even as I want to be true to myself. I know that the progress of non-violence is seemingly a terribly slow process.¹ But experience has taught me that it is the surest way to the common goal. There is deliverance neither for India nor for the world through clash of arms. Violence, even for vindication of justice, is almost played out. With that belief I am content to plough a lonely furrow, if it is to be my lot that I have no co-sharer in the out-and-out belief in non-violence.

Harijan, 26-8-1939

338. *LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

I understand that Amtul Salaam's Hanif² is under your charge and that he is learning carding. If the man is promising, then it is our duty to turn him into a fine craftsman. It will be a fine thing if he becomes a good craftsman and an expert. I should like him to be trained to learn all processes up to weaving. We have with us very few who are experts in all the processes. A lot of work can be done if we can give such training to one or two Muslims. Just as in Godhra I wanted that a cobbler or carpenter should take the chair, similarly I do

¹ The source, however, has "progress".

² A khadi worker of the Punjab

believe that Hindu-Muslim unity can be achieved through ordinary Muslims. I would, therefore, be happy if persons like Hanif and Akbar also chance to come our way. However, you should be guided by your own experience and ability.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9115

339. *LETTER TO AZAM ABED*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 24, 1939

BHAI AZAM ABED,

I have your letter. I got the cuttings, including the one about the late Nawab Khan. I don't think anything can be done from here about Nawab Khan. I was sorry to read the news about him.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 815

340. *LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 24, 1939

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I see that your *yajna* is becoming a very great one. We will be able to solve the problem of disposing of khadi only if we go deep into the matter and study it carefully. This will require collection of figures.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9010

341. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

Pyarelal has gone to Nagpur with Krishnadas to visit David. Prakash arrived yesterday. He has taken her also with him to show her the clinic, etc. I have got two patients here—Durga and Asha Devi—for whose sake I do feel the need of your presence. Durga is afraid she may have appendicitis and Asha Devi has been suffering from fever for the past two months. But what can you do about this? However, I am so perturbed that twice in my dreams I spoke to you about it, telling you that you had neglected your duty by staying on there—had there not been work enough here? When I woke up I said to myself ‘after all what could you have done?’ Young compelled you and you passed the responsibility on to me! I could take only one decision. The dream was the expression of my anxiety. Why so much anxiety? That shows inadequate practice of the *Gita*! You must be free of all worry and complete your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

342. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[Before August 25, 1939]¹

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. You may come over whenever you can. There has again been no letter from Vijaya but I think she is in Varad. I enclose a postcard for her. There is some blank space in it. Utilize that for writing. I have forgotten the name of Naran Patel’s father. Send it. If the father’s name is not written, the letter miscarries.

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ From the reference to absence of any “letter from Vijaya”, and the enclosed “postcard for her” which had crossed her letter to Gandhiji; *vide* “Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi”, 25-8-1939.

[PS.]

Post the accompanying postcard after entering the complete address on it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10792

343. *PLEA FOR VOLUNTARY FEDERATION*

Imposed federation is likely to divide India more than it is today. It would be a great step if the British Government were to declare that they would not impose their federal structure on India. The Viceroy seems to be acting in that fashion if he is not saying so. If my surmise is correct, I suggest that a clear declaration will add grace to his action and will probably pave the way for real federation and therefore real unity. That federation can naturally never be of the Government of India Act brand. Whatever it is, it must be a product of the free choice of all India.

But before that political and legalized federation of free choice comes, there should be voluntary federation of parts, to begin with, if not of the whole. This reflection arises from famine conditions today in parts of lesser Gujarat and the whole of Kathiawar. I have received angry protests from correspondents drawing my attention to what they have termed the heartless policy of the Bombay Government in prohibiting the movement of fodder and grain. I could not believe my correspondents. I knew that the Sardar was moving heaven and earth to cope with the distress both in Gujarat and Kathiawar. But in order to make assurance doubly sure, I wired to the Prime Minister. Immediately on the same day came the following answer :

Removal of fodder from six districts not permitted without the permission of Collector as the necessities of our Province must be first considered. Excess will be permitted to be removed.

The wire was followed by a letter enclosing a copy of the Bill about to be introduced in the Bombay Assembly. It simply controls the movement and prices of grain and fodder during times of famine or scarcity. This is no policy of prohibition but it is one of control over and regulation of the movement of fodder and grain so as to prevent hoarding in speculators' hands or disposal to the extent of starving the places where it is grown and stored. The Premier's letter contemplates collection of grain and fodder from available sources outside the Province and its distribution in famine areas including Kathiawar. The Bombay measure I consider not only to be necessary but conducive to the interest as well of the whole of the States part of the Province as of

the British part. I call it an act of voluntary federation. The reader must not quarrel with the stretch of the meaning of the word.

This little act introduces the reader to what can become a big act of voluntary federation. I reproduced¹ the other day a letter from a correspondent suggesting a federation of the Kathiawar States in many matters of common interest. The correspondent's ultimate aim was political federation. What I contemplate has nothing to do with politics. My present and ultimate aim here is purely humanitarian.

If the Kathiawar States would voluntarily federate, say, for water, forests and roads, purely for saving life, there would be no danger of a water famine such as threatens the cluster of States. There are States rich enough who can provide water for the whole of Kathiawar. I know it cannot be done in a day. But the dog-in-the manger policy followed in Kathiawar has made impossible any scheme of big waterworks. Kathiawar has fairly good rivers and hills. There is no limit to the possibility of artesian wells. If only all the States will combine and the rich ones will use their riches for the common good, they will be saved the awful prospect of people and cattle having to die of thirst. I have faith that it is possible for Kathiawar to ensure a proper supply of water even in dry years. But no common waterworks will answer the purpose for all time unless there is a long-view scheme of afforestation. There are practically no forests in Kathiawar. The Princes and the people have to combine to plant trees on an extensive scale. This cannot be done unless the States and the people regard the whole of Kathiawar as their joint and common land and have wisdom enough to desire to live on their land without the perpetual dread of having to die of thirst when the god of rain stops supplies.

SEGAON, August 25, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

344. *MOTOR* v. *CART*

Gram Udyog Patrika for August examines the respective merits of motor-vans and carts for village propaganda. Those who will read the whole argument should send for the *Patrika*. I give below the most

¹ *Vide* "Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939.

important part of the argument.¹

We have been asked whether District Boards and such other local bodies, who wish to set apart a certain amount of money for village work, will do well to invest in motor-vans for propaganda work of various kinds in villages. . . .The question is whether speeding up matters by the use of motor-vans which can visit more than one village in a night will suit the purpose.

In all our expenditure, especially when that expenditure is undertaken expressly for the benefit of the village people, it is necessary to see that the money spent goes back to the villager. District and local Boards obtain their money from the people, and their purchases must be such as will help to circulate money among the people. . . .

What the villager needs above all is profitable employment. We steadily deprive him of employment by buying imported articles, and by way of compensation give him lectures, magic-lantern shows and tinned music all at his expense, and pat ourselves on the back that we are working for his welfare. Can anything be more absurd?

Compare with this what happens if in the place of the motor-van the much despised bullock-cart were used. . . . It can reach the most remote villages which a motor-lorry cannot do. It costs only a fraction of the money required for a van, so that many bullock-carts can be bought, if necessary, to serve groups of villages in the district. The money spent on them goes to the village carpenter, blacksmith and cart-driver. Not a pie of it need go out of the district. . . .

Rural work and motor-vans appear, therefore, to go ill together. What is required is steady, constructive effort, not lightning speed and empty show. We would commend to local Boards and public institutions genuinely interested in village welfare to start by using only village-made goods, to study the conditions which are steadily producing poverty in the villages, and concentrate on removing them one by one. When every side of village life needs intensive, well-considered effort, it seems a waste of public money to throw it away on methods which attempt to bring about village uplift overnight.

It is to be hoped that those who interest themselves in village welfare will take to heart the obvious argument advanced in favour of the cart. It will be cruel to destroy the village economy through the very agency designed for village welfare.

SEGAON, August 25, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

¹ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

345. LETTER TO SHIVJI DEVSHANKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1939

BHAI SHIVJI,

I got your letter. Since people attach excessive importance to my words, I write only what is absolutely necessary. Despite that if once in a while a mistake remains, should not people overlook it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

346. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have received the letter I wrote to you before I got yours. I am here for the present. If, therefore, you can free yourself from there, come over immediately. I hope you are keeping good health. Naranbhai must be improving.

Here owing to the rains everything is fine. The fear of drought has disappeared. I hope everything is all right there too.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
C/O NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
VARAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7113. Also C.W. 4605. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

347. MACHINE OIL AND "GHANI" OIL

The village *ghani*, the village *chakki*, the village loom and charkha, and the village sugar-cane-crusher were once inseparable parts of the village. The A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A. are trying to

revive some of them. We know fairly well how the loom and the charkha can be revived. Khadi has become a science to be mastered in all its aspects. Maganlal Gandhi laid the foundation of that science. The village *chakki* and the village sugar-cane-crusher have yet to discover their science men. But the *ghani* has. Shri Jhaverbhai Patel of Maganwadi is studying the *ghani* in all its aspects with the zeal and precision of a scientist. He has made improvements which he claims have lessened the labour of both men and animals who work at the *ghani* and have at the same time increased the output of oil. He has studied the oil market and the movement of seeds. The result is that he is today able to sell his oil at almost the bazaar rates and therefore commands a ready market. His oil is superior to the machine product which is, as a rule, adulterated and never fresh. But Shri Jhaverbhai is not satisfied merely because he competes successfully with the local market in Wardha. He has found out why the machine oil is at all cheaper than the *ghani* oil. He gives three reasons, two of which are unavoidable. They are capital and the ability of the machine to extract the last drop of oil and that too in a shorter time than the *ghani*. These advantages are neutralized by the commission. The owner of the mill has to pay to the middleman. But Shri Jhaverbhai cannot cope with the third reason, adulteration, unless he also takes to it. This naturally he will not do. He therefore suggests that adulteration should be dealt with by law. This can be done by enforcing the Anti-adulteration Act if there is one or by enacting it and by licensing oil mills.

Shri Jhaverbhai has also examined the cause of the decline of the village *ghani*. The most potent cause is the inability of the oilman to command a regular supply of seeds. The villages are practically denuded of seeds after the season. The oilman has no money to store the seeds, much less to buy them in the cities. Therefore he has disappeared or is fast disappearing. Lakhs of *ghanis* are today lying idle causing a tremendous waste of the country's resources. Surely it is the function of the State to resuscitate the existing *ghanis* by conserving seeds in the places of their origin and making them available to the village oilman at reasonable rates. The Government loses nothing by giving this aid. It can be given, so Shri Jhaverbhai contends, through co-operative societies or panchayats. If this is done, Shri Jhaverbhai is of opinion, based on research, that *ghani* oil can compete with the machine product and the villager can be spared the infliction of the adulterated oil he gets today. It should be borne in

mind that the only fat the villager gets, when he gets any, is what the oil can give him. To ghee he is generally a stranger.

SEGAON, August 26, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

348. A MAHARAJA'S THREAT

I received some weeks ago an important letter from Patiala. It contained such grave statements attributed to the Maharaja Saheb of Patiala that I referred them to him for confirmation or otherwise. It is now more than three weeks since I wrote to him. But I have no reply.¹ I therefore presume that the statements reported by my correspondent are substantially true. Here is the main part of the letter :

The Patiala State Praja Mandal launched satyagraha against the *Hidayat* of 1988², a lawless law curtailing the civil liberties of the people. On our advice the satyagraha was suspended unconditionally. The Publicity Officer, Patiala, on behalf of H.H.'s Government, stated in a Press communique dated 15th April that the Government would repeal or withdraw the aforesaid *Hidayat* within three to four weeks, and further stated that the Government had constituted a Committee to go into its provisions and submit an early report. But the announcement has remained up till now a dead letter. And instead, H.H. has by *Ijlas khas* orders dated 25th May ordered the strict enforcement of the *Hidayat* for a period of another six months. In view of this, no propaganda of any kind can be carried on by the Praja Mandal workers, the provisions of the *Hidayat* being very wide and sweeping. The workers arrested in connection with this agitation are still in jail and others are being tried. Apart from this there is at present another movement going on within the State, i.e., between landlords and tenants.

Some of the Praja Mandal workers were allowed an interview with H. H. on the 18th instant. During the interview H. H. addressed them as follows :

“My ancestors have won the State by the sword and I mean to keep it by the sword. I do not recognize any organization to represent my people or to speak on their behalf. I am their sole and only representative. No such organization such as Praja Mandal can be allowed to exist within the State. If

¹ For the Maharaja's reply, which was received subsequently and which appeared along with this, *vide* Appendix-“Letter from Yadavindra Singh”, 9-9-1939. Also for Gandhiji's note appended to these, *vide* “Remarks on ‘A Maharaja's Threat’”, 12-9-1939.

² Of Vikram calendar, corresponding to 1932 A.D.

you want to do Congress work, get out of the State. The Congress can terrify the British Government, but if it ever tries to interfere in my State it will find me a terrible resister. I cannot tolerate any flag other than my own to be flown within my boundaries. You stop your Praja Mandal activities, otherwise I shall resort to such repression that your generations to come will not forget it. When I see some of my dear subjects drifting away into another fold, it touches the very core of my heart. I advise you to get out of the Mandal and stop all kind of agitation; or else remember I am a military man; my talk is blunt and my bullet straight.”

It may be that my letter never reached the Maharaja Saheb, and that if it had, he would have disputed the correctness of my correspondent's letter. If any repudiation is received by me, I shall gladly publish it. But I must say that my correspondent is a responsible person.

Assuming then that the Maharaja did make the remarks quoted, it is a serious thing for any Prince, no matter how powerful he is, to use the threats the Maharaja is reported to have done. With due respect to him, I suggest that there is too much awakening among the people throughout India to be suppressed by threats and even corresponding action. The days of unadulterated autocracy are gone for ever. It is possible perhaps by intense frightfulness to suppress the rising spirit of the people for some time. But I am quite sure that it cannot be suppressed for all time.

I have no desire to eliminate the Princes. Friends have complained to me that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has, however, made such a statement although the Congress has enunciated no such policy. I have not had the opportunity of asking him about the alleged remark. But assuming that he did make the statement, it can only mean that some Princes are so acting as to bring about their own elimination. It is wrong to judge him by newspaper reports. His considered opinion is to be gathered from his statement on behalf of the Standing Committee of the All-India States People's Conference. Therein he has even warned people against hasty action. He is much too loyal a Congressman to contemplate any action in advance of known Congress policy. Therefore the fear and hatred of the Congress on the part of some Princes are misplaced and are calculated to injure rather than help them. The Congress is not seeking to interfere directly in the affairs of any State. But the Congress does guide the States people. They are part of the Congress organization. They derive strength and

inspiration from their connection with the Congress. I do not know how this organic relationship can be avoided. To wish its termination is like an attempt to make children disown their parents. For better or for worse it is well to recognize the fact that

just as the vast mass of people of British India look up more to the Congress than to the Government for the removal of their woes, even so do the people of the States look to the Congress for their deliverance. It is under the Congress advice and inspiration that the people of the States say that they want to grow to their full height under the aegis of their respective Princes. I hope, therefore, that the Maharaja Saheb of Patiala and those Princes who hold the opinion attributed to him will revise their views and welcome the movement of their people for liberty to grow to their full height and not regard the reformers in their States as their enemies. It will be well if they will seek Congress aid in the settlement of their people's demands. But they need not do so, if they distrust Congress friendship. It is enough if they will placate the advanced section of their people by granting substantial reforms.

What is worse in my opinion, however, than the alleged threat of the Maharaja is the breach of the promise referred to in my correspondent's letter. There is no doubt so far as I can see that the promise of withdrawal of the *Hidayat* of 1938 was made; there is equally no doubt that the promise has been broken. It is a dangerous thing even for a rich and powerful Prince to break his plighted word. Breach of a promise is no less an act of insolvency than a refusal to pay one's debt. I plead with the Maharaja Saheb to redeem the promise and hope that his counsellors will advise him to do so.

SEGAON, August 26, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

349. TELEGRAM TO SRI PRAKASA

SEGAON,
August 26, 1939

DELIGHTED. JUST LIKE YOU.¹ AWAITING YOUR LETTER.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The addressee had withdrawn his resignation from the Congress; *vide* also "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 18-8-1939.

350. LETTER TO MULKRAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 26, 1939

DEAR LALA MULKRAJ,

I had a wire from Shri Mookerjee about Punjab National. I have not replied as I have sent you the papers about the Nagpur Bank. There is now no question of banking the money elsewhere. I hope therefore that you have given effect to my instructions.¹

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

351. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 26, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Your letter is dated the 22nd. I wrote to you on the 24th. You must have received the letter. I am greatly rushed, of course I find comfort in the thought that Pyarelal writes to you every day.

My health of course is all right. Prakash and Pyarelal came from Nagpur yesterday. What Krishnadas has is not T.B. but pyorrhoea.

Prakash gave me news of Mother. Since you were with Mother, has something been done about her teeth? What is the diagnosis? Does it mean additional responsibility for you? Should I also give it a thought?

Mahadev reached here at 3 o'clock

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ *Vide* "Draft of Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-8-1939.

352. NOTES

BOMBAY CORPORATION AND HARIJANS

The following important resolutions were carried by the Bom-bay Municipal Corporation on 17th and 18th August respectively:

That the attention of the Commissioner be invited to the absence of bathing and washing facilities for the Municipal Labour Staff, particularly the Health Department sweepers and Drainage Department cleaners, after they finish their work on the streets, and he be requested to report as to whether it would not be desirable to construct a number of special bathrooms and washing places near their centre of work so that they can wash and clean themselves after finishing their day's duties and return home tidy and refreshed.

That the attention of the Commissioner be invited to the fact that the dress used by the municipal sweepers and similar other menial staff gets extremely dirty as a result of their condition of work, and that the continuous use of such dress by this class of employees even during off-duty hours presents a very shabby appearance and is harmful to their health, and he be requested to report whether it would not be desirable to provide these employees with working suits which they may put on just before starting their work and take out at the end of their duty.

The resolutions should have been carried long ago. Both the points covered by the resolutions are important as well for the employees as the citizens. Sanitation of a big city like Bombay is dependent largely upon the efficiency of the those who are employed to attend to it. And yet all over India they are the least looked after. I needed a Congress majority in the Corporation to pass these necessary resolutions. Let us hope that the Commissioner will report favourably without delay. There can be no objection to the reforms in principle. The objection so as I can see can only be on the score of finance. But in matters such as the sanitary welfare of the city, financial objection can have little weight. Assuming that the report is favourable and not delayed, there will still be another stage to be gone through before the reforms become accomplished facts, for the necessary sanction of the Corporation will be required. I hope the mover and the seconder of the resolutions will, therefore, not rest till they see washing places and working dresses provided for the sweepers, cleaners and the other members of the labour staff.

SEGAON, August 27, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

353. *STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*¹

SEGAON,

[August 27, 1939]²

A sister from London wired on the 24th instant :

Please act. World awaiting lead.

Another wire from another sister in London received today says:

Urge you consider immediate expression of your unshakable faith in reason not force to rulers and all peoples.

I have been hesitating to say anything on the impending world crisis which affects the welfare not of a few nations but of the whole of mankind. I have felt that my word can have no effect on those on whom depends the decision whether there is to be war or peace. I know that many in the West believe that my word does carry weight. I wish I shared their belief. Not having such belief I have been praying in secret that God may spare us the calamity of war. But I have no hesitation in redeclaring my faith in reason, which is another word for non-violence, rather than the arbitrament of war for the settlement of disputes or redress of wrongs. I cannot emphasize my belief more forcibly than by saying that I personally would not purchase my own country's freedom by violence even if such a thing were a possibility. My faith in the wise saying that what is gained by the sword will also be lost by the sword is imperishable. How I wish Herr Hitler would respond to the appeal of the President of the United States and allow his claim to be investigated by arbitrators in whose choice he will have as effective a voice as the disputants.

Harijan, 2-9-1939

¹ This appeared under "Notes", sub-title, "The Impending Crisis". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 29-8-1939.

² *Vide* the following item. The source, however, has "August 28"

354. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEAGON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Your illness disturbs me. I think this—the latest attack—is a warning from God that the South African visit should be given up altogether. The very fact of your brooding over it will retard your recovery. It really amounts to this that you should confine yourself to India, going to England for health's sake whenever necessary.

Dorothy Hogg and now Agatha have sent me cables¹ for a word on the situation. Here is a copy of what I am sending to the Press. Please thank Jesudasan for his letter. I am not writing to him separately.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1299

355. A LETTER ²

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You are hasty in your judgments. How can you identify the Ministers with what appears in the *Nagpur Times* even though it is a ministerial organ? Those who care to render public service have got to put up with criticism, both fair and unfair. Much of the writing you have sent me is simple banter.

I do not know what impropriety Shri Bhulabhai Desai committed. I undersand that his appointment³ was welcomed by the leaders of the

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² The addressee, presumably, was Anasuyabai Kale, Deputy Speaker, Central Provinces Legislative Assembly.

³ According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. II, pp. 215-6, Bhulabhai Desai was appointed by the Congress Working Committee to investigate into certain allegations made by some M.L.A.s against D. P. Mishra, Minister of Local Self-Government, Central Provinces. The enquiry had hardly lasted for two days when the complainant's representatives T. J. Kedar and others sought withdrawal from the enquiry "on the grounds that Bhulabhai Desai (1) shut out some evidence to which they attached

complaining group. But you must not expect me to interest myself in such matters which are for the Working Committee to deal with.

I know nothing about Dr. Sonak and you will not expect me to enquire into what is after all a purely private affair. If I were to undertake such a mission I should be of no public use. What little energy is left in me must be reserved for dealing with questions which have become my life-work. My withdrawal from the Congress was deliberate act to save myself, among other things, from attention to administrative details. All the three things you mention are matters of administrative detail.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 6902

356. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 27, 1939

CHI. INDU,

Is there no limit to your foolishness? If you would listen to me, get out of all this entanglement and plunge yourself in whatever little service you can do. This is the only way to come up. Your brothers will look after themselves. Tell Bapasaheb about the shortage. Of course you will certainly speak to the Sardar. Personally I should like you to free yourself at the earliest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6257

importance, and (2) did not admit official documents under the plea of the Official Secrets Act. . . .B. Desai reasoned. . . .as to the groundlessness of their apprehensions and urged them to proceed with the inquiry. . . . They, however, declined to do so. . . . Thereupon the inquiry was suspended.”

357. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I will respect your wishes regarding the *rakhadi*, even though it is of silver. Even if you apply a mud-pack on the throat, you will be able to take the steam through the mouth as Rajkumari used to do. For food, take only fruit juices. But you will not be able to do all this by yourself. If the vaidya takes the responsibility, follow his advice. Otherwise follow Bhaskar's¹. To get your ears pulled for getting angry come here as soon as you can. But so long as it is your duty to stay there, I don't want you to do anything else.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7114. Also C.W. 4606. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi.

358. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter after a long wait. I for one like your idea about Bhavnagar. It would be proper for you to settle down there only and let Ramdas return at his convenience. He will not willingly let you come here. He will be thinking of you all the time. And if he does let you come here, you will be able to profit by your stay only if he lets you remain for a year. If you can manage that, you may depend upon me to make the necessary arrangements for your stay. But surely you must agree to stay for at least a year, shouldn't you? It is possible Ramdas may not agree to such a long period.

Krishnadas has returned. He is being examined. He has no trace at all of consumption but he feels extremely weak. He is staying at the Mahila Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ Dr. Bhaskar Patel

359. KHADI IN TAMIL NADU

The extracts from the half-yearly report of khadi work in Tamil Nadu ending 30th June, published elsewhere in this issue, should be read with interest. The report was followed up by a personal letter from Shri Aiyamuthu, the indefatigable secretary of the Tamil Nadu Branch of the A.I.S.A. Relevant extracts from the letter being very instructive are given below:

Three years have passed since the first attempt was made for determining a minimum living wage for the spinners. The second step has also been taken since the 1st of this month. There has been a definite increase in the earnings of spinners, though it is not exactly the same as we aim at. A lot of spade-work has been done towards improving the spinning and carding efficiency of the spinner. Use of machine-ginned lint has been given up and *kapas* has been made the basis of all spinning. Improved implements have been distributed. The age-old village charkha has been rejuvenated by the addition of a transformer. The time has now come to pause and consider all the changes that have resulted from this step.

You have always visualized khadi only as part of the home economics of the villager. Our ancients gave us the small wheel and the spindle as their heritage for all posterity. In this their idea was that each home should spin enough for its own immediate requirements. They viewed production only from the viewpoint of the natural consumer, that is, the producer and his family or at the most the village. May be the village weaver took a few cloths to the *shandy*¹. But the commercial aspect of utilizing the spinning-wheel for catering to the needs of distant consumers never occurred to them.

Till 1935, when the first step towards increasing the wages of spinners was taken, the Association had been looking more to the interest of the consumer than to that of the spinner. The Association always aimed at bringing down the price of khadi, thereby enabling more and more people to purchase it. It acted as a check against individuals entering the field and trying to exploit the consumer. Very few persons were willing to take to khadi business and the few who entered the field fell back as soon as they found that khadi did not pay them up to their expectations.

The spinner till 1935 was able to earn on an average only four annas per lb. as spinning wages. Spinners who spun yarn above the average quality

¹ Market

were paid a little more, the maximum being six annas per lb. In those days when a spinner was fined a mere pice she felt the loss so keenly that sometimes she burst into tears. In the same way, the addition of a copper or two to her expectations brought forth a ray of smile on her face. A copper more or less made all the difference in her outlook. It appeared so big.

In 1936, without her asking for it, the spinning wage has been increased far beyond her wildest expectations. While in 1935 the average spinning wage per lb. of yarn was only four annas, in 1938 it is Re. 0-12-3, i.e., her wage has been increased by 200 per cent. This should naturally have resulted in inducing her to spin better, to spin more twisted and even yarn. But this has not been the case. The only reaction to our efforts at improving the standard of living of the spinner has been that in a vague way she feels that she is being paid more, vastly more, than is due to her labour. So much so that when she is penalized for spinning yarn of an inferior quality she does not feel it at all. We pay the full wages only for yarn that meets all our rigid tests. The spinner feels it is not a loss to her to be paid ten annas per lb. She is not sorry if she is paid only eight annas. She does not care even if it is only six annas since it is a 50-per-cent increase on her own estimate of her labour and there is always a man who is willing to purchase it at that price. He does not use the rigid tests of the Association. He is always glad to purchase it at that value. It is the uncertified dealer, who pays 50 per cent of the wages paid by us and markets the cloth produced of that yarn at 75 to 80 per cent of our standard rates. Since 1936 we have interested ourselves more in the spinner than in the consumer. We have aimed at getting the maximum out of the consumer and paying it to the spinner. And the uncertified dealer (his number is increasing day by day) is given a free hand to exploit both the spinner and the consumer. The result is that in spite of an increase in wages and that without her asking for it, we are not able to show a corresponding improvement in the quality.

The increase in spinning wages has resulted also in more women registering themselves as spinners. Till 1935 spinning wages were not attractive enough to make the spinner sit at the wheel as a full-time worker. But with the increase of wages she has found spinning a profitable whole-time work. The value of our production has risen from Rs. 6 lakhs in 1936 to Rs. 16 lakhs in 1938. With the capital resources we have, it is not possible to purchase all the yarn that is produced. Nor have the sales increased in corresponding degree. We are forced to reject yarn from many who naturally sell their yarn to the uncertified dealer on his own terms, thus enabling him to undersell us.

Since 1936 we have always held the view that the producer should be the prime consumer, and that what is produced in excess of the producers' needs should alone be marketed. With this end in view the spinners have been asked to deposit with us a portion of their output for their own use and the balance alone is being purchased. This deposit has increased from 13 per cent of the total production in 1936 to 31 per cent in 1938. This percentage can be raised to any limit but for the trouble with the uncertified dealer. Perhaps his activities are at its worst in this case. He is not above purchasing the cloth thus distributed by us at a low price and selling the same elsewhere at a profit. In this instance he is doing more harm than even the vendor of mill-cloth.

The remedy for all this lies perhaps in localizing khadi. Khadi must not be made a commercial product, produced in villages to be sold in distant towns. As at present the spinner thinks she is spinning not so much for her own requirements and that of her family as for selling the yarn for an unknown destination. As such she does not understand, nor does she want to, what quality of yarn she has to spin. We are not able to control the count of the yarn to suit our requirements. If we are to produce khadi only for sale, we are bound to study the requirements of the consumer. We have to study what is required and how much to produce and in what quality. In the case of an organized industry like the mill, it is possible to so regulate the production that only what is wanted is produced. The entire spinning is done in a limited space and the spindles are inanimate things working to a definite motion and spinning what is wanted. In the case of khadi it is not so. The spinner and her spindle are different entities. She lives and thinks independently of us. But if she is induced to spin only for her own immediate wants, she will understand what she needs, what quality of yarn to spin and how much of it to spin. And if there is any surplus, it can be collected by a central organization which will find a market for it. It may be that the village panchayat can be authorized to hold in deposit the surplus yarn produced in the village and to sell it at the price which will ensure the spinner a standard wage for the hours of work she has put in producing the same.

A workers' conference was held at Tirupur on 27th June when Shri Shankerlal Banker addressed the workers. The question of a further increase in spinning wages was raised. Of the 93 workers who had assembled only two were for an enhancement. The rest were opposed to it, not because they were averse to giving the spinner something more but because such enhancement does not bring the desired result. The increased wage does not improve the quality of production. Not only that. That uncertified dealer is given greater

scope to exploit both the spinner and the consumer. We feel helpless, not being able to control nefarious activities of the uncertified dealer. We were not able to clarify our position well to Shri Shankerlalji. We are not sure that we have fared any better now. We would only request you to view the problem from our point of view and realize our difficulties.

Perhaps the only remedy for this is for the Government to step in and give the spinner the protection that is her due. She must be saved in spite of herself. It may be that the price of hand-spun yarn should be determined by an act of legislation and it be made an offence against the State to purchase yarn at a lower rate. It may also be made an offence for anybody to purchase yarn from a spinner, when the spinner herself is in need of the same for her clothings. The village panchayat or on its behalf the A.I.S.A. may be authorised to hold in deposit the surplus yarn in the village for sale at the scheduled rates. With the Congress Ministries at the helm of affairs in the different provinces it is not impossible to bring in this piece of protective legislation. We only pray that you give the matter your consideration and advise the different Ministries to bring suitable legislation.

The secretary is an impatient enthusiast. Both enthusiasm and impatience are good up to a point in any great venture. Khadi is the greatest I have been able to conceive inasmuch as it conserves the simultaneous good of millions of human beings without regard to status or religion. It can therefore take in as many impatient enthusiasts as will come to it provided that they are honest, pure, incorruptible and unselfish. And impatient enthusiasts will have to remember that in the end only coolness, patience and tireless research will win.

Let me now examine Shri Aiyamuthu's difficulties.

1. Uncertified dealers are a curse; they are enemies of their own sisters which the spinners are; they are enemies of progress and ultimately of themselves. But the royal road to neutralize their mischievous activities is to buy all the yarn that the spinners produce. This is a matter of pure arithmetic. Shri Aiyamuthu is the sole controller of higher prices. He can pay even eight annas per day to the choicest spinners. They are useful for his laboratory work. He will regulate their number. He will buy up all the other yarn at the price lower, than under the increased scale, if the spinners are willing to sell their yarn. He will thus automatically eliminate the uncertified dealer, so far as yarn is concerned. I know that is a dangerous experiment, if the experimenter is not always, in all that he is doing, thinking solely of the spinners and the ideal wage he is anxious to pay to each one of them. If he fulfils this

condition, having got hold of every spinner and eliminated the uncertified dealer, he will educate the former in the art of getting a better wage for her work. In the end she will know with whom she should deal and she will be a willing pupil. Then the secret sale of khadi meant for the spinners' use will automatically stop.

2. I wholly endorse the proposition that khadi should be decentralized to the extent that each village produces its own cotton and manufactures its own cloth. If there is a surplus, it should be sold where it is wanted, e.g., in the cities or places where cotton is not grown and where it will be cheaper to take khadi from the nearest khadi centre. This deal will only be reached when each branch selects one village and attempts to carry out the experiment which will require the best expert. I settled in Segaoon in order to carry out this among other ideals, but I must confess that I seem to be as far from it as when I came here three years ago. They need not expect miracles to take place immediately they go to villages; and they should take heart from the fact that if I could show little or nothing after three years of stay in a village, they need not despair nor be ashamed if after *due* effort they cannot *show* results.

3. It will induce lethargy among workers if they expect Congress Governments to work wonders.

Unscrupulous men will run a coach and four through any legislation. Congress Governments have their limitations. At the same time some help is possible through legislation. I have already pointed out the direction in which legislation can help. Dealing in khadi by uncertified vendors should be penalized. Khadi can have protection through subsidy as was done in the case of the Tatas, and the subsidy can be raised by taxing the sales of mill manufactures. The fines collected from uncertified dealers may also, subject to deduction for expenses, be paid to the A.I.S.A.

4. The question of sales is undoubtedly a problem. I have discussed this question in a previous article¹. But there is no doubt that Congressmen should make all their purchases of cloth from khadi bhandars. By properly handling the whole question, Government—Congress and non-Congress—can help khadi and thus themselves in

¹ *Vide* "Wanted Purchasers", 21-8-1939

the shape of giving employment to the unemployed with the mini-mum of expenditure.

SEGAON, August 28, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

360. NOTES

WILL THEY LEARN ?

Hirdaynath Baijal was a medical student in Agra. Whenever I pass through big stations after a lapse of time there are as a rule wild demonstrations. For causes I have not been able to divine, there were wilder demonstrations during my recent journey to the Frontier Province and wilder still on return from there. Such a demonstration took place at Agra on the 27th ultimo. My ears cannot cope with the noises however affectionate they may be. Plugging with cotton wool does not answer. I have to plug them with my fingers as hard as I can in order to deaden the noise. The demonstrators are themselves so lost in their frenzy that they do not listen to the piteous appeals I and my companions make to them. It is not their fault. They do not know what is being said to them. And they cannot understand why persons in whose honour demonstrations are made should resent them. They make no distinction between night and day. This Agra demonstration took place at night. Among the demonstration was Hirdaynath. He boarded the train in order to reach me and get my autograph. Before he could come near my compartment he slipped and fell. The train moved and ran over him, and he had to lose his legs.

A correspondent suggests that the railway authorities could have or should have managed the crowd, that the train should have been stopped in time, and that first aid was not provided as it should have been. Be that as it may, the fact of the injury to Hirdaynath remains. Kind correspondents kept themselves in touch with me after the accident. Hirdaynath's father too wrote to me. I was thus able to write a word of cheer to the young man and give such consolation as I could to his father and his friends. Unfortunately in spite of the best treatment he breathed his last on the 22nd instant. My heart goes out to the deceased's father and his friends. The reason why I pen these lines is to warn the public against these demonstrations in which no order is kept. If demonstrations there must be, and I suppose there will be, they must

be regulated either by the demonstrators themselves or the police. This is the second accident within the past few months. One took place on my return from Brindaban¹. There also the injured party was a student. Fortunately he has lived, though without a leg. Hirdaynath seems to have been a student of exceptional qualities and a great favourite with the students. I suggest to the students that the very best way in which they can treasure the memory of their dear comrade is by organizing a discipline brigade whose mission would be to introduce order in demonstrations, meetings and other crowds. With ever-increasing mass awakening we need to know the laws governing the conduct and movement of crowds so as to enable vast masses to gather together without fuss, noise or disturbance.

SEGAON, August 28, 1939

Harijan, 2-9-1939

361. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
August 28, 1939

RASHTRAPATI RAJENDRA PRASAD
RAMGARH
(HAZARIBAGH)

MOST INCONVENIENT LEAVE WARDHA BUT WILL GO ANYWHERE
FOR YOUR HEALTH. WARDHA PERHAPS BEST FOR YOU BUT
LET DOCTORS DECIDE.

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India.

¹ Where Gandhiji attended the Gandhi Seva Sangh conference in May 1939.

362. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO ¹

August 28, 1939

MAKING EFFORT. HAVE INFORMATION SAYING UNION GOVERNMENT
WILL CONCILIATE INDIAN OPINION. NOTHING RELIABLE. WILL SOON
GIVE DEFINITE NEWS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 11351. Courtesy: E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's Freedom Struggle*, p. 307

363. LETTER TO JUGLAL CHOWDHARY

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 28, 1939

MY DEAR JUGLAL,

I have a copy of your letter to Kripalani. Three years is the limit. If Ministers can bring about prohibition in a year, they are expected to do so. Conversely, if in spite of great effort they cannot finish the programme within the prescribed period, they will not be blamed. Three years should be counted from the date of the Congress resolution. But of course the President's ruling should be your guide.

Yours sincerely,

HON. JUGLAL CHOWDHARY
MINISTER
PATNA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ In reply to the addressee's cable received on August 27 which read: "Reliable information that Union Government rejected Indian Government offer for Round Table Conference. Union Government intimated that advance copy contemplated legislation shall be forwarded to Indian Government. Appeal negotiations proceeding on future legislation. Concerned no mention Act 1939 on which we pledged struggle. Pray inform progress".

364. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 28, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I do not interpret it the way you do. Here, what Devdas said had nothing to do with Sushila. He only referred to the fact that you were causing worry to everyone. If you have any doubt about it, you must ask Devdas. However wrong his ideas may be, his letter is frank. Even I agree with his comment about the fast. Ba said that even Prakash was crying today over your fast. It irks me that you seem to derive some pleasure in making people cry like that. You have not even replied to my letter. To whom should I reveal my pain? Should I cry like Sushila and Prakash? What would I gain by crying? Who can measure the pain you are causing through this fast? I long for a solution to this affair. I am daily praying to God for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

365. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[After August 28, 1939]¹

CHI. PYARELAL,

What you have written about Sushila is not correct. If it is not her duty to remain in Delhi on account of Mother, she has to pass her test here. In that alone lies her good. Devdas says that there is no need to think about him. Ba is pining for her. That is sufficient for Sushila. She is asking me every now and then when Sushila will be coming. My saying that you find pleasure in making a person cry is to be understood in terms of popular expression. When we make someone cry through our action, it is said, and rightly, that we find pleasure in making them cry. Should it not be said that at Abbottabad I derived pleasure from making Sushila cry?² No matter how much I myself may have cried at heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ From the contents; *vide* preceding item

² Gandhiji was in Abbottabad from July 7 to 26, 1939.

366. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

August 29, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter¹ of 26th instant. I reciprocate your wish that the world will be spared the calamity of war. But if it comes and you think my presence necessary in Simla, of course I shall come.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

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

367. LETTER TO A. GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 29, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am entirely at one with you that imputation of motives is a frailty common to all. If you will re-read my statement² you will find that it is of a general character. I have just read in today's paper that there was a black-flag demonstration against Subhas Babu at Patna. I was sorry to learn of it.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIA. GUPTA

BENGALI ASSOCIATION

DINAPORE, BIHAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Which, *inter alia*, said: “. . . though I have no justification for thinking war inevitable, you will agree with me that international situation is very ominous and should war by any chance break out it has been in my mind to invite you to come to see me at once. . . . should wiser counsels not prevail and should we find ourselves in war, I hope that you will not misunderstand it if I send you a telegram . . . to come to see me.”

² Which, *inter alia*, said: “. . . though I have no justification for thinking war inevitable, you will agree with me that international situation is very ominous and should war by any chance break out it has been in my mind to invite you to come to see me at once. . . . should wiser counsels not prevail and should we find ourselves in war, I hope that you will not misunderstand it if I send you a telegram . . . to come to see me.”

368. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 29, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter only today. The *rakhadi* was tied by Amtul Salaam and now I am writing this letter.

First your question. Why don't you hand over the sum of Rs. 125 to Deo¹? There should be no objection to accepting anything which somebody might give for the book². You may hand over to Deo whatever you receive or a part of it.

I fully agree with Deo's argument, that his expenses should be met by Maharashtra itself. If Maharastra does not bear them, it means the province does not want his services.

Patwardhan³ may come and stay with me whenever he wants. It is always crowded here, of course.

Come over for a visit whenever you can. There is no question of overcrowding in your case. Rest assured that if you come over here you will get well. Yes, there is one risk, or course, that meanwhile I may have to go out. But what even if I have to? You will immediately know if that happens.

Kelkar⁴ and I alone know what efforts I have made to win him over. It was I who got him appointed on the Working Committee, the sole reason being that he was regarded as Lokamanya's heir. I thought it my duty to accommodate him as much as I could and do my best to win him over. I still think so. Despite my differences with Lokamanya, I regard myself as his devotee. I had the highest regard for his learning, patriotism and courage.

There is no truth at all in Swami Satyadev's statement. I could never say such a thing. If I did, my truth and ahimsa would stand disgraced. I do believe, of course, that he would resort to untruth and violence for the sake of the country. He himself told me so. We had some correspondence too about the matter. He had advocated *shatham prati shaathvam*⁵, against which I had asserted *shatham prat-yapi satyam*⁶. Didn't you know this?

¹ Shankarrao Deo

² *Kama ane Kamini*, a novel written by the addressee

³ P. H. Patwardhan

⁴ N. C. Kelkar

⁵ 'Roguary against a rogue' and 'Truth even against a rogue'; *vide* also "Speech on Satyagraha Movement", Trichinopoly", 25-3-1939.

⁶ *Ibid*

I think I have answered all your questions.

I was eagerly waiting for your letter. I have no comments to make on your activities which you have described. I don't believe that you should consult me in everything you do. What even if you make a mistake? I am confident that you bear in mind, and will always bear in mind, the Ashram vows in all that you do.

Yes, Rajen Babu did ask about you.¹ I told him that you were certainly capable of shouldering the responsibility and that if you agreed to do so I would not oppose. It would, I said take a heavy load off his shoulders, but I added that I would not press you and suggested that he should address the request for you to Deo, as you are working under him. Are you satisfied now?

The letter from Sushila is enclosed. I will use the dhoti² when I get it, no matter of what quality it is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10401. Also C.W. 6840. Courtesy: Premabehn Katak

369. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 29, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I am asking Kanu to send you Rs. 50. I had a talk with Rajen Babu. He said that he did not insist as you were ill. The choice has fallen on Prema from among all the names considered. It has been decided that you will help Prema as much as you can. There was a letter from Prema today saying that she would go there in October³. Kanti is studying in Mysore. He does not write to me. Nor does Saraswati. She is expecting. It is nearly five months now and she must have gone to her father's place. He is studying in the Medical College at

¹ It was about sending the addressee to Ramgarh, Bihar, to organize the women volunteers; *vide* also the following item.

² The addressee had resolved to send two hand-spun dhotis to Gandhiji every year specially on his birthday. She sent them in 1939 for the first time and kept her resolve till the end.

³ *Vide* also the preceding item.

Mysore. In my view he has fallen to a great extent. May God bless him. Sushila is in Delhi. The present arrangement is that she will stay there up to the 15th of September. Her address is: Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi. Amtul Salaam and Rajkumari are here. Krishnadas¹ and Manojna² have come here to stay for some time. Krishnadas is ill. I am fairly well. Ba also is all right. The Ashram is full. Amtul Salaam has brought a Muslim girl also.

Take proper care of your health. Send me a specimen lesson. Carry on study for the present. See that your brain is not overburdened.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3531

370. LETTER TO VIJAYABHEN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 29, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is not right on your part not to write to me regularly. What did you decide to do finally? Don't you wish to call in Vallabhram? I have written to him that, if he has the courage, he may go to Varad even uninvited and examine you. I am not particularly enthusiastic about your going to Patna, but if Father or you are, it would be your duty to go. I hope you are not worried [about Father].³

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7115. Also C.W. 4607. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ Younger son of Chhaganlal Gandhi, and his wife

² *Ibid*

³ *Vide* also "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 11-9-1939.

371. MESSAGE TO THE POLES

[Before August 30, 1939]¹

TO ALL THOSE IN POLAND WHO BELIEVE THAT ONLY TRUTH AND
LOVE CAN BE FOUNDATIONS OF BETTER DAYS FOR HUMANITY
AND WHO ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO SERVE THOSE IDEALS WITH
THEIR LIFE I SEND MY GOOD WISHES AND BLESSINGS.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-8-1939

372. LETTER TO A. VAIDYANATHA IYER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1939

DEAR VAIDYANATHA IYER,

Under separate cover I send you the papers received from Shri Prasada Rao. I would like you to give me your reply to his allegations. He seems to be a seasoned co-worker. Why is it difficult to win him over if his allegations are untrue? If they are true, there is something wrong about the whole affair. Have the Brahmins and the orthodox non-Brahmins boycotted the temple²?

Yours,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

373. LETTER TO V. M. PRASADA RAO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully read all the voluminous papers you have sent me. You won't expect me to express an opinion without knowing what those have to say against whom you have brought serious charges. I am

¹ The message was reported by the London correspondent on August 30, as "appearing in tonight's issue of *Wiedomosci Literackie*, a Polish newspaper from Warsaw". *Vide* also "Cable to Paderewski", 8-9-1939.

² The reference is to the Meenakshi Temple, Madura, which was thrown open to Harijans on July 8.

therefore sending the papers in the first instance to Shri Vaidyanatha Iyer.¹ But I observe that you have been a co-worker with all those against whom you feel aggrieved. I suggest, therefore, that it is your duty to see their viewpoint and discover a basis for common service. You can still adopt this course.

As for the Rao Bahadur, I asked the very parties to whom he had referred me and they point-blank repudiated his statements.

I took him at his word and naturally believed his referees.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI. V. M. PRASADA RAO
WEST AVANI MOOLA STREET
MADURA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C.P.),
August 30, 1939

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

You are a brick! I shall make wise use of your labours. You will, I know, continue to do the needful in the difficult times there. Keep well. And how about the old lady?

Love

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MUNZIL, RED HILLS
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

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

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

375. *LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI*

SEGAON,
August 30, 1939

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I received your gift. It is not good that you are not getting well. Write to me what Dr. Erulkar says. Bhabhi's fever should abate now. Is that doctor still there?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ANASUYABEHN
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD
BOMBAY

[PS.]

If Shankerlal is there, tell him that I have sent a message for Tirpur paper.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 3282

376. *LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

If you feel heavy after a meal, certainly reduce the amount. The doctor will not object. The patient should eat only as much as he can digest. Sometimes you may take only milk and fruit and see how you feel. I see some point in what Chitre says. Don't be careless about your health. The easiest remedy for stone is to get it removed. I feel there is nothing wrong if the sanatorium bears Chitre's expenses as regards food. If the sanatorium does not and if you can easily bear them, you may do so, but not at the cost of any hardship to yourself. I am not writing separately to Chitre.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. V. DESAI
SANATORIUM
P. O. VANI VILAS MOHALLA
MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7486. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

377. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON ASHRAM,
August 30, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I read your long letter last night. The scene at Abbottabad rose before my eyes when I had scolded you and you had cried. I cannot forget your face as it looked then. Now when I think of my heartlessness my heart cries. Your answer to D. was correct.

You are faced with three questions: coming to me, fear as to what would happen if you came and your duty towards Mother. Your fear is meaningless. If you can learn to be tolerant, what do you have to fear and why? Can you not be content with serving me, and looking after the sick and working in the mess?' The problem concerning Mother is very important. It is your duty as well as mine to thin about it independently. But I do not have anything on which to base a decision. Pyarelal can be of little help in the matter. You alone should think calmly over it. You must also assess your own strength. My feeling is that Mother will have to come here and be with you. Not now. Let your dispensary be ready; let me have a room built for you. Then, too, there will be the question whether Mother can leave Mohanlal. You have to carry a great burden. You can decide the matter even after coming here on the 16th. Do not be afraid. God will be your guide. You do not have to get away before the 15th. Com-plete what you have undertaken.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Why are you not writing to Ba? She is yearning for you.

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

378. NOTES

RURAL v. URBAN

An educationist writes :

If you do not take care, you will find that basic education in urban areas will take a different form from the rural areas. For instance English will be introduced to the injury of the mother tongue and a kind of superiority complex developed.

I must confess that my scheme was conceived in terms of the villages, and when I was developing it I did say that some variation will be necessary in applying the scheme to the cities. This had reference to the industries to be used as media of instruction. I never thought that English could ever find place in the primary stage. And the scheme has so far concerned itself only with the primary stage. No doubt the primary stage is made equivalent to the matriculation, less English. To inflict English on children is to stunt their natural growth and perhaps to kill originality in them. Learning of a language is primarily a training in developing memory. Learning of English from the beginning is an unnecessary tax on a child. He can only learn it at the expense of the mother tongue. I hold it to be as necessary for the urban child as for the rural to have the foundation of his development laid on the solid rock of the mother tongue. It is only in unfortunate India that such an obvious proposition needs to be proved.

SEGAON, August 31, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

379. LIMBDI

Though I have had protracted correspondence with the Limbdi people, I have refrained for a long time from saying anything about their woes. My silence was due to the hope that those who were trying to bring about peace between the Ruler and the people would succeed. But it was a vain hope. Much has happened since the beginning stages of that struggle. Perhaps nowhere has the policy of ruthlessness been pursued with so much precision and persistence as in Limbdi. If the reports received by me are to be believed, and I have no reason to disbelieve them, the peasants have been hunted out of their homes. The heaviest blow has been aimed at the hated Bania who was at one time the State's friend, favourite and main supporter. But he was to be crushed because he dared to think and talk of responsible government, dared to go amongst the peasantry and tell them what was due to them and how they could get it. The shops and houses of these merchants who have performed *hijrat*¹ are practically looted. I cannot use any other term. There has not even been, so far as I know, any legal formality observed. The will of the administrator of the policy of ruthlessness is the supreme law. The idea is to terrorize the people into

¹ That is, those who have migrated

subjection. No wonder some have weakened. I would advise those who are in charge of the movement not to try to keep them from surrendering. Of course they should be told what is in store for them. But there are people who prize possessions before honour. They can only be a burden on a freedom movement. Free-dom is always won by a few brave self-sacrificing souls who will stake everything for the sake of honour. Those who understand the value and the necessity of sacrifice, whether they are few or many, should feel glad that their possessions in Limbdi have been taken away. They should not live in suspense nor entertain any hope of immediate settlement. They should engage in healthy pursuits outside the State, always in the firm faith that a day must come when the people of Limbdi will come into their own. When that day comes, as it must, it will have come because of the sacrifice and the bravery of those who will have refused to bend before repression, however severe. Let them remember Thoreau's immortal words that possession is a vice and poverty a virtue in a tyrannical State.

So much on reliable evidence before me. But should Limbdi be a tyrannical State? If there is exaggeration in the statements made to me, let the State authorities send me a contradiction. I would gladly publish it. Better still will be an impartial judicial inquiry into the allegations made, if they are disputed. I wish to make a public appeal to the Thakore Saheb of Limbdi. I have the privilege of knowing him. I have enjoyed his hospitality. He has the reputation of being a pious, Godfearing man. It is not right that there should be this estrangement between him and his people, some of whom are well-known people with a reputation to lose and a stake in Limbdi. It would be wrong to regard them all as a discontented lot. They have no axes to grind. They have not earthly gain to make by ranging themselves against the State. They have incurred much material loss by becoming exiles from their own home. A wise ruler will think fifty times before facing the discontent of such people. He will conclude from it that there must be misrule and injustice on the part of his officials. He will summon the discontented people, listen to their complaints and pacify them. The Thakore Saheb has not adopted that course. It is not too late for him to do so even now.

SEGAON, August 31, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

380. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

August 31, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

MY FIRM ADVICE IS COMMERICAL COMMUNITY¹ SHOULD REMAIN
SILENT TILL ACTUAL RESULT IS KNOWN.

From a copy: C.W. 7833. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

381. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ²

August 31, 1939

IF TRUSTEE'S PERMISSION NECESSARY FOR TRANSFER,
CIRCULATE MEMORANDUM CONTAINING JAMNALALJI'S AND
MY OPINION NAGPUR BANK.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ In his letter dated August 26 to Mahadev Desai, G.D. Birla said: "I am enclosing herewith a manifesto which may be issued under the signature of various businessmen, in case war breaks out. I should like to know immediately, if necessary by wire, if Bapu has got any comments to make on the same. The contents of the manifesto express our own independent views, and our own feeling is that it is not incompatible with the attitude taken up by the Congress. However, we would not like to do anything in case Bapu thinks otherwise. . ." G. D. Birla made the same request in a telegram dated August 30 to Mahadev Desai.

² This is extracted from a letter of even date from Amrit Kaur to the addressee which read: "I am desired by Gandhiji to acknowledge your letter of the 27th instant. He wishes to tell you that all the points raised by you were duly considered." *Vide* also "Draft Telegram to Mulkrāj", 18-8-1939 and "Letter to Mulkrāj", 26-8-1939.

382. *LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM*

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

It is a great thing that Sir Radhakrishnan has become Vice-Chancellor¹. I hope you all will insist on Malaviyaji taking rest.²

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3185

383. *LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

MY DEAR THANU PILLAI,

I wish you had given me more time but I suppose you could not.

I do not like the Dewan's reply. I think that you should make your own position clear. You should see that the State Congress does not propose to do anything in secret. Whilst, therefore, its decisions will be its own and it will not bring any outsider inside the State, it will, whenever necessary, seek the advice and guidance of persons outside Travancore. You would also make it clear that whilst any scheme that might be hammered into shape by mutual consultation will be loyally worked by the Congress, the end in view in working the scheme will always be to make an advance, even through the scheme, towards responsible government.

If these two positions are in any way left in doubt negotiations should be dropped and you should do such work, constructive and other, as is possible to do.

In all your talks and writings offensive and highflown language should be scrupulously eschewed. And in season and out of season

¹ Of the Banaras Hindu University

² Madan Mohan Malaviya resigned from the Vice-Chancellorship on August 29, on health grounds.

you should reiterate the two conditions above made. They should be held good for all time.

You should cease to think of the prisoners. The fact of their being in jail is their unique contribution, provided that they appreciate the fact that being in jail as model prisoners is part of their struggle.

I hope the forthcoming meeting will be successful and that those who gather together at Kayankulam will more and more appreciate the efficacy of self-imposed restraint and quiet, silent, persistent constructive work, however small it may appear to be.¹

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10201. Courtesy: Government of Kerala. Also Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

384. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

CHI. MANUDI,

Your time for delivery is nearing. Where do you intend to go? What about Rajkot? Write to me and give me all details. Do you keep good health? What do you eat?

Ba is sitting by my side. She sends her blessing to you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2671. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

¹ This paragraph was published in *The Hindu*, 7-9-1939.

385. *LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS A. PATADIA*

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

BHAI PURSHOTTAMDAS,

I got your letter. You must have received the wire I sent you. Sardar also has made some arrangement. You must have got the required fodder. I don't think you need any more.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

DR. PURSHOTTAMDAS AMERSHI PATADIA
WADHWAN CAMP
KATHIAWAR

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2687. Courtesy: Dr. P. A. Patadia

386. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR*

SEGAON ASHRAM, WARDHA,
August 31, 1939

BAPA,

Before you write to me about your doings, I mostly get to know about them. Whatever may be the case with others, we have benefited by the Congress Raj. Harijan work has progressed fairly well. If they mean to, they can do a lot more. Shantilal has sent me Barve's letter. Instead of writing in *Harijan*, I am directly dealing with Kher¹ in order that the work may be done more expeditiously. Barve will meet me on the 7th. Won't you take some rest?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1184

¹ B. G. Kher, Premier of Bombay

387. *LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, 1939

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your wire. It was a deliverance for Kasumba. Even if she had lived on, she would have remained ill all the time. Thanks to the doctor's hard efforts, she lived a little longer. She took from you what you owed her and went her way. None of the girls should weep.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

388. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

SEGAON ASHRAM
WARDHA,
September 1, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Give my condolences to the relatives of the late Lakshmidas Tairsi. I only have sweet memories of his company. I had once written to him. I had also received a reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHETH MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

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

389. *THAT UNBECOMING DEMONSTRATION*

The first I heard of the black-flag demonstration against Subhas Babu on his visit to Patna was through a courteous letter received from the Secretary of the Bengali Association of Bankipore.¹ I then saw a

¹ *Vide* "Letter to A. Gupta", 29-8-1939.

notice of it in the Press. To make myself sure of what had happened I wired to Shri P. R. Das for an authentic and up-to-date account. He replied from Dhanbad saying he was away from the scene and knew nothing. The newspapers reported that there was stone-throwing and hurling of shoes resulting in injuries to Swami Sahajanand and others.

Allowing for exaggeration, if any, there seems to be little doubt that there was a hostile demonstration of an unseemly nature which brought no credit to the Congress.

I have read Rajendra Babu's eloquent statement on the unhappy incident. It is so true and so heart-stirring that it admits of no addition or embellishment. I endorse every word of that noble pronouncement. It is reproduced below this article.¹

The demonstrators showed an unworthy intolerance. Subhas Babu has a perfect right to agitate against the action² of the Working

Committee and canvass public opinion against it. The disciplinary action frees him from any liability for restraint save what every Congressman, pledged to the credal article of the Constitution, is bound to put on himself. That action should save him from any further demonstration of public displeasure. And those who disapprove of the action of the Working Committee are certainly entitled to join any demonstration in favour of Subhas Babu. Unless this simple rule is observed we shall never evolve democracy. In my opinion the black-flag demonstrators have rendered a disservice to the cause of freedom. It is to be hoped that the Patna demonstration will prove to be the last of such acts by Congressmen. The question may be asked, 'How are those who endorse the action of the Working Committee and disapprove of Subhas Babu's propaganda to show their disapproval?' Certainly not through black flags and disturbing of meetings in honour of Subhas Babu. They can express their disapproval by holding counter meetings, not at the same time as the others but either before or after them. These meetings, both for and against, should be regarded as a means of educating public opinion. Such education requires calm surroundings. Black flags, noisy slogans, and hurling of stones and shoes have no place in educative and instructive propaganda.

¹ The statement is not reproduced here

² *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

Apropos of the ugly demonstration I must refer to a complaint I have received that some Congress Committees have threatened action against those Congressmen who may take part in receptions to Subhas Babu. I hope that the complaint has no foundation in fact. Such action will betray intolerance and may even be a sign of vindictiveness. Congressmen who dislike the Working Committee's action are bound to take part in receptions to Subhas Babu. It is impossible to gag them by threats of disciplinary measures. Such action loses its value if it is resorted to on the slightest pretext. If it is true, as it is true, that no organization can do without such powers, it is equally true that no organization that makes free use of such powers has any right to exist. It cannot. It has then obviously lost the public backing.

SEGAON, SEPTEMBER 2, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

390. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHAGANJ,
September 2, 1939

RAJENDRA PRASAD
RAMGARH
(HAZARIBAGH)

YOUR WIRE. LEAVING FOR SIMLA TONIGHT VICEROY'S INVITATION.
PERHAPS BETTER HOLD MEETING¹ AFTER HEARING FROM ME
FROM SIMLA. VENUE ACCORDING YOUR HEALTH.

BAPU

From the original: Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ The reference is to an emergency meeting of the Congress Working Committee. It was ultimately held at Wardha from September 8 to 15.

391. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

WARDHAGANJ,
September 2, 1939

SORRY TERRIBLE NEWS.² TAKING EARLIEST TRAIN. ARRIVING SIMLA
FOURTH MORNING.

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

392. NOTES

TEXT BOOKS

The craze for ever-changing text books is hardly a healthy sign from the educational standpoint. If text books are treated as a vehicle for education, the living word of the teacher has very little value. A teacher who teaches from text books does not impart originality to his pupils. He himself becomes a slave of text books and has no opportunity or occasion to be original. It, therefore, seems that, the less text books there are the better it is for the teacher and his pupils. Text books seem to have become an article of commerce. Authors and publishers who make writing and publishing a means of making money are interested in frequent change of text books. In many cases teachers and examiners are themselves authors of text books. It is naturally to their interest to have their books sold. The selection board is again naturally composed of such people. And so the vicious circle becomes complete. And it becomes very difficult for parents to find money for new books every year. It is a pathetic sight to see boys and girls going to school loaded with books which they are ill able to carry. The whole system requires to be thoroughly examined. The commercial spirit needs to be entirely eliminated and the question approached solely in the interest of the scholars. It will then probably be found that 75 percent of the text books will have to be consigned to the scrap-heap. If I had my way, I would have books largely as aids to teachers rather than for the scholars. Such text books as are found to be absolutely necessary for the scholars should circulate among them for a number of years so that the cost can be easily

² Germany invaded Poland on September 1 and war was consequently declared by England and France on September 3.

borne by middle-class families. The first step in this direction is perhaps for the State to own and organize the printing and publishing of text books. This will act as an automatic check on their unnecessary multiplication.

DIVIDED LOYALTY?

Shri Appa Patwardhan writes :

The Bombay Government spend a large sum in helping weavers. They have appointed a marketing officer and salesmen. They give loans. Yet the weavers cannot compete with mills and in my opinion the expenses incurred do not bear fruit. Moreover the weavers use foreign yarn as well. Side by side with this fruitless help the Government render some help to khadi also. I do not know how far this divided loyalty is justified.

I have always held the opinion that help to the weavers who use foreign or Indian mill-yarn is a waste of money and effort. Experience has not changed the view. Nor does it change because in certain provinces the Congress rules. I hold this view because the disappearance of the weaver of mill-yarn is a question of time only. In the nature of things it cannot be otherwise. The weavers' only hope lies in a universal revival of hand-spinning. Hand-spinning and hand-weaving are interdependent, never hand-weaving and mill-spinning. I have, therefore, suggested that if hand-spinning cannot immediately supply the weavers' requirements, they should be induced to introduce hand-spinning, carding, etc., in their own families if they will not become spinners themselves. Now that in several provinces the Congress rules, the saving of the weaver becomes casier. Thus the Government can encourage spinning on a wide scale, guarantee the loss in khadi sales as the State guarantees the foreign railway companies. It is the primary duty of the State to guarantee employment of his choice to everyone in need of it. This includes the weavers also. If during the transition stage it is found impossible to guarantee weaving for every weaver, the State has to find him some other employment, profitable alike to the State and the individual. It should be borne in mind that the possibilities of hand-spinning have not yet been explored by any Government. I am of opinion that such investigation will yield startlingly encouraging results. My argument undoubtedly assumes the elimination of all mills from consideration. No industry, indigenous or foreign, can be allowed to increase unemployment and thus harm the true interest of the community as a whole.

WAYS OF FAMINE RELIEF

Though the most terrible distress that was feared has been averted by the falling of rains, however belated, some distress is bound to continue for a few months, and it will be unwise for relief agencies to go to sleep. What is more, time is now more propitious for devising measures for making permanent provisions for preventing distress caused by scarcity of water. I have already made some cardinal suggestions in this direction. The Secretary of the Saurashtra Seva Samiti sends me a business-like report of the elaborate steps taken by that body for enlisting helpers and providing relief. I need not detain the reader over them. He also suggests preventive methods. As these are still seasonable I give below the substance, the original being in Gujarati:

1. The States should refrain from auctioning their stock of grass but they should store it as a precaution against dry year. The store should be replaced when fresh store becomes available. There is nowadays danger of the stacks being destroyed by incendiaries. The States should have no difficulty in protecting them. They may even allow private collectors to deposit their stores in such areas.

2. The existing banks should be renovated and flood water should be banked.

3. In the places where cattle are moved during famine times, measures should be taken to ensure proper water supply for the cattle.

4. There should be control over the cultivation of money crops to the detriment of food crops. Thus people nowadays sow ground-nuts in the place of most valuable fodder and food crops, i.e., *jawari* and *bajri*.

5. Existing forests should be preserved, indiscriminate cutting of trees should be made punishable, and people should be encouraged to plant trees according to plan.

6. The management of pinjrapoles should be put on a sound basis and they should become efficient famine insurance agencies for cattle. They should become castration depots.

7. The State should encourage khadi as a famine insurance measure.

All these suggestions seem to be sound and deserve the collective consideration of the States and the people of Kathiawar. In this

humanitarian project all can and should combine in spite of political differences and struggles.

SACRIFICIAL SPINNING IN ANDHRA

Shri Shankerlal Banker sends me a letter he has received from the Andhra Branch of the A.I.S.A. I take the following from it :

On seeing Mahatmaji's note in *Harijan* dated July 22, 1939,¹ we conceived the idea of performing sacrificial spinning (*sutra yajna*) on the lines followed by Sjt. Narandas Gandhi of Rajkot Rashtriyashala. Accordingly we sent an appeal on July 29, 1939, to the local *Krishna Patrika*² and the *Andhra Patrika*³ for publication, calling for applications from khadi lovers who would participate in the *sutra yajna* performed under the auspices of the Andhra Branch in connection with the ensuing Gandhi Jayanti. All participants are requested to offer 14,000 (70 × 200) yards of self-spun yarn or 70 coppers (Rs. 1-1-6) in terms of his present age. We find a ready response to our call. Till now we have received 500 applications. Many applicants offer 14,000 yards of yarn or Rs. 1-1-6 in cash. But some poor spinners offer only 7,000 yards of yarn and we accept their offer in consideration of their poverty, though they fall short of the minimum fixed in our appeal. Now we are going to issue a special appeal to the spinners in the Andhra Desh to contribute 7,000 yards (nearly one warp) as a birthday gift to Mahatmaji on his 71st birthday. In our appeal all A.I.S.A. workers were requested to give yarn contributions only. In our central stores and central office sacrificial spinning has been going on for the last 15 days since August 2, 1939. Some have been spinning on the *takli* and some others on the improved charkha. The workers are asked to improve and note the quality and quantity of their yarn. We have requested the Andhra Povincial Congress Committee to help us in enlisting volunteers for *sutra yajna* and see that all members of Congress committees participate in it. In compliance with our request they issued a circular to all Congress members to enrol themselves as volunTERS for *sutra yajna* and help the khadi movement to the best of their ability. We hope to enlist at least 1,000 volunteers before Gandhi Jayanti.

I have letters from other quarters also showing that Shri Narandas Gandhi's example has caught on. I hope that the organizers are carrying out strictest economy in organizing sacrificial spinning. They may not, for instance, move the yarn spun from place to place resulting in the cost of postage being incurred. Yarn should be collected by appointed agents so that there can be hand to hand

¹ Vide "Notes", 12-7-1939.

² Telugu weekly published from Masulipatam

³ Telugu daily founded by K. Nageswara Rao and published from Madras

delivery. If an authentic account is kept and published, it should be accepted as completion of the *yajna*. Those who intend to account to Narandas Gandhi for their spinning need only send him certificates of their spinning. I suggest too that as far as possible yarn should be locally woven. It is against the spirit of the khadi movement to concentrate weaving in fixed places. As spinning has to be universal in every home, weaving should be universal in every village.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 3, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

393. CASE FOR INQUIRY

I published some time ago facts relating to Nallathur Harijans.¹ Shri K. Tatachar sent me some time ago the notes from his diary of the no less serious ill-treatment of the Harijans of Tenpatnam Cheri. I publish them² below in full.

This seems to be a case of gross failure of justice and the matter, though comparatively old, requires investigation. There has been no remissness on the part of the people or their friends to secure redress. But if Shri Tatachar's recital is accurate, justice was denied to the Harijans because they were Harijans. The police belonging to the lowest grade should be taught that they have to serve Harijans equally with the others. Harijans ought to be able to feel that during the Congress regime at least they can get justice.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 3, 1939

Harijan, 9-9-1939

394. NOTES

THE RICH ARE TRUSTEES

A friend writes :

You will be glad to know that your view about the trusteeship of the rich was anticipated 1,300 years ago. The following verse occurs in the sacred *Hadis* :

Whatever is possessed by people is my property, the poor are my family, the wealthy are the trustees of the riches they possess. Therefore the wealthy

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 14-7-1939.

² Not reproduced here

persons who will not spend on behalf of my poor children, will go to *Hadis*.
And I will not worry about them.

My correspondent's letter which is in Gujarati gives in Gujarati script the whole verse with its translation in Gujarati contained in a newspaper whose name he has not given. Here is the original text in Devanagari :

अल मालु माली वल फकराओ अयाली वल अग्रियाओ वक्लाई
फमन बखलाब माली अला अयाली उदखलुहुन्नार वला उबाली

The curious reader will observe that twenty-five per cent of the words are easily understood by a Gujarati reader. In other words, they have become current in the language.

September 3, 1939
Harijan, 23-9-1939

395. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
September 3, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Just a line to send love to you all.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABEHN
SEGAON, WARDHA

From the original: C.W. 6448. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10043

396. REPLY TO MEMBERS OF OXFORD GROUP ¹

[After September 3, 1939]²

It is no use dragging the Metropolitan to Wardha, but youths may come; for, for them I have no mercy.

Harijan, 7-10-1939

¹ This is extracted from "A Word to the Oxford Groupers" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "As soon as the war broke out, a wire was received by Gandhiji asking for an interview with him by several members headed by the very Rev. the Metropolitan Bishop of Calcutta." *Vide* also "Discussion with Members of Oxford Group", "Discussion with Members of Oxford Group", 23/24-9-1939.

² *Ibid*

397. TELEGRAM TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

September 5, 1939

SIR RAMASWAMI

TRIVANDRUM

RECEIVED STARTLING TELEGRAM SAYING YOU HAVE
PROHIBITED ALL MEETINGS PROCESSIONS AS PRECAUTIONARY
WAR MEASURE.¹ I UNDERSTAND PROJECTED STATES PEOPLES'
CONFERENCE BEING HELD WITH KNOWLEDGE AND YOUR
PERMISSION. DO HOPE CONFERENCE WILL BE EXCEPTED
FROM BAN.²

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 7-9-1939

¹ *The Hindu* reported: "It is officially stated, on September 4, the Travancore Government have called upon the organizers of the Karunagappalli Conference and other similar bodies to postpone, if not stop, all assemblages at the present juncture in view of the preparations that are reported to have been made for processions and demonstrations."

² According to *The Hindu* a "gist of the reply to Gandhiji" read: "Sorry, you are misinformed again. Meetings, processions not prohibited. No ban imposed. Suggestion made to leaders of the State Congress not to have processions, demonstrations and controversial resolutions especially as there is a strong local party antagonistic to the local organizers of the Conference. In the above circumstances and the possibility of controversial resolutions and possible disturbances, suggestion was made for postponing the Conference for the time being. Surprised that, in such a matter, you should be appealed to on inaccurate information and misleading data. Have issued a communique deprecating any occasion for giving room to public excitement in view of the present international situation." *Vide* also "Telegram to Pattom Thanu Pillai", 8-9-1939.

398. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ'

[September 5, 1939]²

IF EASILY POSSIBLE YOU SHOULD ATTEND MEETING
WARDHA EIGHTH.³

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 222

399. LETTER TO DR. JIVRAJ N. MEHTA

SIMLA,
September 5, 1939

BHAI JIVRAJ,

You are keeping good watch over my health from all that distance. Ramjibhai⁴ showed me your telegram. I was aware that I should not climb any heights and had therefore intended to swallow the bitter draught of riding in a rickshaw. Your wire put the seal on it.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning to Segaon today.

DR. JIVRAJ MEHTA
KHAMBHATTA HALL
ALTAMOUNT ROAD
BOMBAY

From the Gujarati original: Jivraj Mehta Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ In the source, quoting this in his "confidential" Hindi letter dated "Jaipur, September 5, 1939", the addressee says: "Today I tried to contact Simla through trunk call but was unable to get Rajkumaribehn's number. . . . So I have sent an express telegram: 'Arrange Mahadevbhai or Rajkumari phone tonight Jaipur 67 personal. Urge Viceroy if possible for Indian Minister for Jaipur. Inform programme phone number.' . . . I met Shri Maharaja Saheb twice. I will be seeing him again at 12.30 p. m. tomorrow. I hope the ban on the Praja Mandal will be lifted. It is likely that the question of releasing the *kisan* prisoners and removal of the ban on newspapers would also be settled tomorrow. If that is so, I will try and come over. Otherwise, there are good chances of settlement of many of the problems because of the mutual faith and love between us. Perhaps, my absence at this stage may cause some disturbance. So I feel that I should stay put. The help that I want from you for Jaipur is that if you are able to convince the Viceroy that an Indian Dewan should be appointed, then most of the problems can be solved by co-operating with him. . . ." *Vide* also "Jaipur Satyagraha", 17-9-1939.

² The telegram was received by the addressee on this date at 8.45 p. m.

³ *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 6-9-1939.

⁴ The source, however, has "Ramibhai".

400. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS'

SIMLA,

September 5, 1939

At Delhi, as I was entraining for Kalka, a big crowd sang in perfect good humour, to the worn-out refrain of "*Mahatma Gandhiki jai*". "We do not want any understanding". I had then my weekly silence. Therefore I merely smiled. And those who were standing on the footboard returned the smile with their smile, whilst they were admonishing me not to have any understanding with the Viceroy. I had also a letter from a Congress Committee giving me similar warning. Neither of these counsellors knew me. I did not need the warning to know my limitations. Apart from the Delhi demonstration and a Congress Committee's warning, it is my duty to tell the public what happened at the interview² with H. E. the Viceroy.

I knew that I had no authority to speak for any person except myself.³ I knew that I had no instructions whatsoever from the Working Committee in the matter. I had answered a telegraphic invitation and taken the first train I could catch. And what is more, with my irrepressible and out-and-out non-violence, I knew that I could not represent the national mind and I should cut a sorry figure if I tried to do so. I told His Excellency as much. Therefore there could be no question of any understanding or negotiation with me. Nor, I saw, had he sent for me to negotiate. I have returned from the Viceregal Lodge empty-handed and without any understanding, open or secret. If there is to be any understanding,⁴ it would be between the Congress and the Government.

Having, therefore, made my position vis-a-vis the Congress quite clear, I told His Excellency that my own sympathies were with England and France from the purely humanitarian standpoint. I told him that I could not contemplate without being stirred to the very depth the destruction of London which had hitherto been regarded as impregnable. And as I was picturing before him the Houses of Parliament and the Westminster Abbey and their possible destruction, I

¹ This appeared under the title "The Simla Visit". An A.P.I. report of the statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 5-9-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 6-9-1939, as released by Gandhiji in the "afternoon prior to his departure" from Simla.

² On September 4, 1939

³ This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

⁴ With reference to the war, which broke out on September 3

broke down. I have become disconsolate. In the secret of my heart I am in perpetual quarrel with God that He should allow such things to go on. My non-violence seems almost impotent. But the answer comes at the end of the daily quarrel that neither God nor non-violence is impotent. Impotence is in men. I must try on without losing faith even though I may break in the attempt.

And so, as though in anticipation of the agony that was awaiting me, I sent on the 23rd July from Abbottabad the following letter¹ to Herr Hitler.

How I wish that even now he would listen to reason and the appeal from almost the whole of thinking mankind, not excluding the German people themselves. I must refuse to believe that Germans contemplate with equanimity the evacuation of big cities like London for fear of destruction to be wrought by man's inhuman ingenuity. They cannot contemplate with equanimity such destruction of themselves and their own monuments. I am not therefore just now thinking of India's deliverance. It will come, but what will it be worth if England and France fall, or if they come out victorious over Germany ruined and humbled ?

Yet it almost seems as if Herr Hitler knows no God but brute force and, as Mr. Chamberlain says, he will listen to nothing else. It is in the midst of this catastrophe without parallel that Congressmen and all other responsible Indians individually and collectively have to decide what part India is to play in this terrible drama.²

Harijan, 9-9-1939

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939.

² *Vide* also "Source of My Sympathy", 11-9-1939.

401. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

DELHI,
September 6, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The Dewan affair is a little difficult. The matter was not mentioned at all in Simla. If you think that your stay there will prove more beneficial, do stay there. Come if you conveniently can.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3004

402. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,
September 7, 1939

What you said yesterday was not right. You have to understand your duty. You have to understand what Mother says. You must come only after pacifying her. I hope you are in good health. It pains me that you are unnecessarily making yourself unhappy. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

403. TELEGRAM TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

SEGAON,
September 8, 1939

RECEIVED LONG WIRE.² DEWAN SAYING NO PROHIBITORY ORDER ISSUED ONLY ADVICE GIVEN. POSTING TEXT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* also "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", 5-9-1939 and "Jaipur Satyagraha", pp17-9-1939.

² *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Telgram to C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar", 5-9-1939.

404. CABLE TO PADEREWSKI¹

SEGAON,
September 8, 1939

OF COURSE MY WHOLE HEART IS WITH THE POLES IN THE UNEQUAL STRUGGLE IN WHICH THEY ARE ENGAGED FOR THE SAKE OF SAVING THEIR FREEDOM. BUT I AM PAINFULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT MY WORD CARRIES NO POWER WITH IT. I WISH I HAD THE POWER TO STOP THIS MAD DESTRUCTION THAT IS GOING ON IN EUROPE. I BELONG TO A COUNTRY THAT HAS LOST ITS INDEPENDENCE AND IS STRUGGLING TO BE FREE FROM THE YOKE OF THE GREATEST IMPERIALIST POWER ON EARTH. IT HAS ADOPTED THE UNIQUE METHOD OF NON-VIOLENCE TO REGAIN ITS LOST FREEDOM. THOUGH THE METHOD HAS PROVED ITS EFFICACY TO AN EXTENT, THE GOAL SEEMS FAR OFF. ALL THAT I CAN THEREFORE SEND TO THE BRAVE POLES IS MY HEARTFELT PRAYER FOR THE EARLY TERMINATION OF THEIR FEARFUL TRIAL AND FOR THE GRANT OF THE REQUIRED STRENGTH TO BEAR THE SUFFERING WHOSE VERY CONTEMPLATION MAKES ONE SHUDDER. THEIR CAUSE IS JUST AND THEIR VICTORY CERTAIN. FOR GOD IS ALWAYS THE UPHOLDER OF JUSTICE..

Harijan, 16-9-1939

405. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
September 8, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You seem to have formed the habit of

¹ This appeared under the title "To the Brave Poles", as Gandhiji's reply to a "cable from Morges (Switzerland) from Paderewski, the aged ex-President of the Polish Republic and celebrated pianist", which read: "On behalf of a nation who is today defending the sacred right to remain free against a cruel and nameless tyranny, I appeal to you as one of the greatest moral authorities of the world to use your noble influence with your countrymen to gain for Poland their sympathy and friendship. Throughout the thousand years of its history, the Polish nation has always stood for the highest ideals of humanity, for faith, for justice, and peace. In this terrible hour when innumerable innocent women and children are massacred daily, a word of sympathy and encouragement from you, great teacher of your own nation, would profoundly move the heart of every Pole." *Vide* also "Message to the Poles", 30-8-1939.

whining and complaining. I was relieved after Mahadev had told me the facts about you. You have no difficulty even in Vanita Vishram. Overcrowding, etc., have got to be put up with. You have all the facilities for studying, the teachers take good care of you and you have plenty of scope for working hard. Despite all this, if you still remain unhappy, there is nothing for you and me to do but endure it. Never mind if you could not come. Come during the long vacation. Give the benefit of the short vacation to your brother and sister-in-law and spend the time in studying.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev has been sent to Ranchi. He is expected back tomorrow.

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN ASAR
C/O SHRI ACHARYA [M. T.] VYAS
NEW ERA SCHOOL
HUGHES ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10092. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

406. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You must have got my letter. You can go to the Delhi dairy in October. Ishwardas has written to me. If you want to try him for ten days or longer, please do so. He is a capable man. I met Sardarji¹ at Simla. Mahadev has gone to Ranchi to see Rajendra Babu. He may come here tomorrow. We are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1924

¹ Datar Singh

407. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

SEGAON ASHRAM,¹
September 9, 1939

MY DEAR DIWAKAR,

Of course ahimsa can be organized. But the method of organizing ahimsa is wholly different from that of organizing *himsa*. That I have failed badly shows my own unworthiness. My *sadhana*² is incomplete. This does not cause despair in me. I must have and do have infinite patience. Faith without patience is an empty thing.

What our conduct in terms of non-violence should be you will see developed in *Harijan*.

Yours,
BAPU

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. V, between pp. 200 and 201

408. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON ASHRAM,
September 9, 1939

STUPID GIRL,

I got up by 3.30 a. m. Then I could not sleep. Though invisible, you have been before me ever since we met in Delhi. You will have received my letter. Ba's first question was: Hasn't Sushila come? Last night she asked when you would come. Babudi Sharada writes to ask: Hasn't Sushilabehn come? When will she come? Lila asks the same thing in her letters. All this from this side. As for myself what shall I say? But you are not to concern yourself with thoughts of me or of this place. You must consider independently what your duty is. You will come only with Mother's blessings, not after quarrelling with her. It is your duty to please Mohanlal. I must not do anything to make you neglect their happiness on my account. Your first duty is towards them. The second point concerns your letter to Pyarelal. You have mentioned your doing M. D. You have praised the life there. There is nothing wrong in it. It is only natural. You are free to do M. D. Even if you want to take up the study today, you should not think of me. If your coming here does not give you contentment, you should not

¹ The source has this in Hindi.

² Effort, spiritual striving

come. It would be proper to come here when your duty compels you to do so. If you come I shall be very happy. If you cannot come, I shall understand that your duty is to be there, not here. It would be a shame if you got scared of the atmosphere here. Now it is prayer time.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

409. NOTES

SURPLUS KHADI¹

Under the impulse of the phenomenal rise in the spinners' wages, voluntarily made by the A. I. S. A., there has been a great output of yarn. It has been difficult everywhere to cope with the khadi thus produced. In Tamil Nadu alone khadi production shot up to nearly 15 lakhs from about five and a half lakhs and the sales increased to only 11 lakhs from nearly nine lakhs. I have already dealt with the difficulty in the U. P.² These are only typical instances. The difficulty is almost universal. I have suggested that khadi experts should study this aspect of it in a scientific manner and discover the remedy. This research work, like all other research work, will take time. Meanwhile the surplus stock must be cleared. It is up to the patriotic public to come to the assistance. I have no love for the celebration of my birthday. Any other day is as good or as bad as a birthday. My parents, so far as I recollect, never celebrated the birthdays of their children. I remember the date of my birthday only because I had to take the birth certificate for the London examination. But I never thought of the date until after the rebirth of khadi. Khadi-lovers made the date of my birth an occasion for pushing khadi sales. I did not mind such exploitation of my birthday but tried with more or less success to give it the name of *Rentia Jayanti* so far as the Gujarati-speaking public was concerned. For it was they who first set the vogue for celebrating the date. Ever since, the Khadi Week has been celebrated in many parts of India for popularizing khadi and

¹ In *The Hindustan Times*, 29-9-1939, this appeared as Gandhiji's "appeal", reported by the Assistant Secretary, A. I. S. A., "on the occasion of Gandhiji's 71st birthday".

² Vide "Wanted Purchasers", 21-8-1939.

village products. Khadi-lovers are setting much store by the forthcoming 2nd October according to the Christian calendar and the 10th October according to the Vikram Samvat. U. P., Tamil Nadu and other provinces have issued khadi *hundis* for which they expect a heavy demand in expectation of the coming celebration. Special fuss is being made because I shall have completed seventy years on those dates, assuming of course that I shall survive till then. But whether I do or not the dates will come unfailingly. And if it is of any value to the public to know it, let them know that my spirit, whether embodied or disembodied, will certainly rejoice to think that there are sufficient men and women in India who will combine always to take up, for the sake of *Daridranarayana*, all the khadi that can be produced by the semi-starved villagers. Let no one plead the war as an excuse for not buying khadi. War or no war, so long as there is life in us, we shall need to feed and clothe ourselves. What can be better than that we cover ourselves with cloth produced through the labours of the needy sisters and brothers of the villages?

PLEA FOR SELF-DENIAL

Shri Banker writes to say that the prices of foreign dyes have considerably gone up owing to the war. In order to make khadi attractive, the A. I. S. A. have allowed the use of foreign dyes for colouring khadi cloth. Now if the use of foreign dyes is continued, there will have to be an increase in the price of khadi. The best way of avoiding the increase is for khadi depots to drop the use of foreign dyes and restrict themselves to the use of indigenous dyes and be satisfied with such colours as can be produced therefrom. But this can be done only if the public will, by simplifying their taste, encourage the A. I. S. A. in the experiment. If they will, it is just possible that necessity will be the mother once more of many inventions in the matter of producing beautiful colours from indigenous dyes.

NOT AUTHORITATIVE

The Secretary of the A. I. S. A. draws my attention to my article "Spinners' Wages"¹ in *Harijan* of August 26th regarding the purchase of underpriced yarn of quality below standard. He says in effect:

Many people take your word as authoritative, more so in matters of khadi since you are President of the A. I. S. A. Will

¹ *Vide* "Spinners Wages", 20-8-1939.

you not therefore state clearly that your opinion, expressed in *Harijan*, does not in any way affect or alter the resolutions of the A. I. S. A., and that those who have occasion to take up your advice have to do so subject to the previous permission of the Secretary in accordance with the recent resolution of the A. I. S. A. on the subject of prices of yarn?

I need hardly say that I endorse every word of what is said by the Secretary. Whatever I write in *Harijan* has as much authority as any editorial writing has and no more. It must be treated as an individual opinion, always subject to the resolutions passed by competent authority on the subject in question.

INTOXICATING WINES IN JUDAISM

When I saw that a claim was registered, and accepted by Dr. Gilder,¹ for the use of spirituous liquors on behalf of Jews, I was much disturbed. For my experience of Jews among whom I had many friends in Johannesburg was wholly against the claim made in Bombay. I therefore wrote to my friend Herr H. Kallenbach to send me an authoritative opinion from the Chief Rabbi in Johannesburg. Here is Dr. Landau's opinion :

I beg to state that the orthodox Jew may use only specially prepared (*kasher*) wine for the sanctification of the Sabbath or holidays in the Synagogue after Divine Service and at home before meals, and on the two eves of the Passover Festival.

The wine need not be fermented.

I may state that the use of wine is not a law but a tradition which the orthodox Jew cherishes, as it is referred to both in the Talmud and in Jewish Codes of Law.

If the Jews of Bombay accept this opinion as authoritative, they should withdraw their claim and be satisfied with the juice of fresh grapes which I understand is the original meaning of the word wine. It is worthy of note, too, that even this use has the authority, not of the Jewish scriptures but of tradition only.

SEGAON, September 10, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. D. D. Gilder", 24-7-1939.

410. LETTER TO HARIVANSH SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 10, 1939

SIR,

I have your letter. I do not find anything alarming in the magazines that you have sent. I am trying my level best to see that there is no harassment by the *kisans*. But the landlords should be prepared to render full justice. I shall try to write on this in *Harijan*.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HARIVANSH SINGH
TIRWA

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

411. SOURCE OF MY SYMPATHY

The statement¹ made by me just after my interview with H. E. the Viceroy has had a mixed reception. It has been described as sentimental twaddle by one critic and as a statesman-like pronouncement by another. There are variations between the two extremes. I suppose all the critics are right from their own standpoint and all are wrong from the absolute standpoint which in this instance is that of the author. He wrote for no-body's satisfaction but his own. I abide by every word I have said in it. It has no political value, except what every humanitarian opinion may possess. Interrelation of ideas cannot be prevented.

I have a spirited protest from a correspondent. It calls for a reply. I do not reproduce the letter as parts of it I do not understand myself. But there is no difficulty in catching its drift. The main argument is this :

If you shed tears over the possible destruction of the English Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey, have you no tears for the possible destruction of the monuments of Germany? And why do you sympathize with England and France and not with Germany? Is not Hitler an answer to the ravishing of Germany by the Allied Powers during the last war? If you were

¹ *Vide* "statement to the Press", 5-9-1939.

a German, had the resourcefulness of Hitler and were a believer in the doctrine of retaliation as the whole world is, you would have done what Hitler is doing. Nazism may be bad. We do not know what it really is. The literature we get is one-sided. But I suggest to you that there is no difference between Chamberlain and Hitler. In Hitler's place Chamberlain would not have acted otherwise. You have done an injustice to Hitler by comparing him with Chamberlain, to the former's disadvantage. Is England's record in India any better than Hitler's in another part of the world in similar circumstances? Hitler is but an infant pupil of the old imperialist England and France. I fancy that your emotion at the Viceregal Lodge had the better of your judgment.

No one perhaps has described English misdeeds more forcibly, subject to truth, than I have. No one has resisted England more effectively, perhaps, than I have. And my desire for and power of resistance remain unabated. But there are seasons for speech and action, as there are seasons for silence and inaction.

In the dictionary of satyagraha there is no enemy. But as I have no desire to prepare a new dictionary for satyagrahis, I use the old words giving them a new meaning. A satyagrahi loves his so-called enemy even as his friend. He owns no enemy. As a satyagrahi, i.e., votary of ahimsa, I must wish well to England. My wishes regarding Germany were, and they still are, irrelevant for the moment. But I have said in a few words in my statement that I would not care to erect the freedom of my country on the remains of despoiled Germany, I should be as much moved by a contemplation of the possible destruction of Germany's monuments. Herr Hitler stands in no need of my sympathy. In assessing the present merits, the past misdeeds of England and the good deeds of Germany are irrelevant. Rightly or wrongly, and irrespective of what the other Powers have done before under similar circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that Herr Hitler is responsible for the war. I do not judge his claim. It is highly probable that his right to incorporate Danzig in Germany is beyond question, if the Danzig Germans desire to give up their independent status. It may be that his claim to appropriate the Polish Corridor is a just claim. My complaint is that he will not let the claim be examined by an independent tribunal. It is no answer to the rejection of the appeal for submission to arbitration that it came from interested quarters. Even a thief may conceivably make a correct appeal to his

fellow-thief. I think I am right in saying that the whole world was anxious that Herr Hitler should allow his demand to be examined by an impartial tribunal. If he succeeds in his design, his success will be no proof of the justness of his claim. It will be proof that the Law of the Jungle is still a great force in human affairs. It will be one more proof that though we humans have changed the form we have not changed the manners of the beast.

I hope it is now clear to my critics that my sympathy for England and France is not a result of momentary emotion or, in cruder language, of hysteria. It is derived from the never-drying fountain of non-violence which my breast has nursed for fifty years. I claim no infallibility for my judgment. All I claim is that my sympathy for England and France is reasoned. I invite those who accept the premises on which my sympathy is based to join me. What shape it should take is another matter. Alone I can but pray. And so I told His Excellency that my sympathy had no concrete value in the face of the concrete destruction that is facing those who are directly engaged in the war.

SEGAON, September 11, 1939
Harijan, 16-9-1939

412. KATHIAWAR STATES

The other day I referred¹ to the series of articles in *The Tribune* suggesting a scheme of confederation of States with special reference to Kathiawar. I had kept the cuttings containing the articles by R. L. H.² for the purpose of giving, when the pressure on *Harijan* columns admitted it, a reproduction of the most important extracts from the articles which appeared in *The Tribune* dated 5th and 7th July. The extracts³, published elsewhere in this issue, should interest both the Princes and the people of Kathiawar. The writer is evidently a friend of the States. He desires reform, not destruction. His scheme is worthy of serious consideration by all who are interested in the question of the administration of the States.

SEGAON, September 11, 1939
Harijan, 30-9-1939

¹ *Vide* "Confederation of Small States", 14-8-1939.

² R. L. Handa, *vide* 10-8-1939.

³ *Vide* Appendix "Kathiawar States", 30-9-1939.

413. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1939

DEAR BALUKAKA¹,

I excuse you for sending me your long letter and you should excuse me for my inability to follow you. Show the public some tangible result and you will have success. In the days of yore you were doing something even though it was² Now you are propounding schemes and delivering lectures.

What a fall !

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI BALUKAKA KANITKAR
HIND MATA MANDIR
341 SADASHIV, POONA 2

From a photostat: C. W. 968. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

414. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I note what you say regarding your birthday. Give the enclosed letters to the persons concerned.

Soon you will have come to the end of your *vanavasa*³ Time is flying. Since you keep an account of every moment of your time and are spending it well, you have no problem how to pass it. You still have a lot of work to do. God will grant you a long life for that.

It is enough that you have followed my point about the *Praveshika*⁴. I am in no great hurry about it.

¹ Also known as Sevananda

² A word is illegible here.

³ Literally, 'life in the forest'; here, being away from Gandhiji and doing his duty sincerely.

⁴ The reference seems to be to a booklet on the science of khadi which Gandhiji had asked the addressee to write; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-8-1939.

Kanaiya¹ is really keeping good health. He is always engrossed in some work or other. Pyarelal also entrusts a good deal of work to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8561. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

415. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Now our only wish should be that Father should be released from his suffering. My advice is that he should be given no food. Let him drink as much water as he can. If he likes, he may take *mosambi* juice, but not milk. This will reduce his suffering to the minimum. See that he sleeps in a properly ventilated room. Encourage him to keep repeating Ramanama. You should sing *bhajans* to him. Persuade Mother to be patient. If you do not lose courage, the others will automatically gain courage. Keep up a smiling face till the end. He who has faith in God never cries. Ba and I are all right. I had been waiting for you. But now I give up that hope.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN OF SEGAON
C/O NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
VARAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7116. Also C. W. 4608. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

416. REMARKS ON 'A MAHARAJA'S THREAT'²

As doubt was raised whether my letter to His Highness the Maharajadhiraja was received or not, I sent a telegram to inquire

¹ Addressee's son, Kanu

² Vide "A Maharaja's Threat", 26-8-1939.

whether it was received. As the reply¹ came saying that the letter was not received, I recalled the foregoing article which had already been sent to the manager of *Harijan*. Owing to great pressure under which all who are assisting me are working, the article sent for *Harijan Sevak* (Hindustani) was not recalled. Hence I thought that the ends of truth would be served by publishing both my English article and His Highness's reply to my letter. The reply speaks for itself. It substantially confirms what my correspondent said about the *Hidayat* of 1932. It is to be hoped that the *Hidayat* will be repealed at an early date. When the very war which is going on is claimed to be fought for democracy, it ill becomes any prince to curtail the liberty of the people without just cause.

SEGAON, September 12, 1939

Harijan, 16-9-1939

417. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

What a silly girl you are! You must have received my letter² and stopped crying. If you lose heart, then all the others in the family will keep crying and there will be no peace in the house. Thus it depends entirely on you whether or not peace prevails. You have faith in God. For such a person, to die, to live or to be born, all these things are the same. All the three things are momentary. If you understand this much, you will dance with joy all the time. As for Father I have sent a wire. You must have received it. Tell him not to lose courage and to prove himself worthy of the name he bears. Let him return Home with Narayana's—Rama's—name on his lips. Whatever state he attains after death he will have nothing but peace. Ask him not to worry in the least about those whom he would be leaving behind. Water is the food for him and Ramanama the best medicine. For the present write to me daily.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7117. Also C. W. 4609. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Yadavindra Singh", 9-9-1939.

² *Vide* "Letter to Vijayabehn M. Pancholi", 11-9-1939.

418. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

Ba is becoming impatient. Everybody is asking: "Is Sushila-behn coming on the 16th?" I therefore advise you to come within the stipulated time, But if Mother feels unhappy you should do what you consider to be your duty. Maybe you can make your final decision after coming here. I have great need of you for Krishnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

419. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

SEGAON,
September 15, 1939

The Working Committee's statement on the world crisis took four days² before it received final shape. Every member expressed his opinion freely on the draft that was, at the Committee's invitation, prepared by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. I was sorry to find myself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British should be given unconditionally. This could only be done on a purely non-violent basis. But the Committee had a tremendous responsibility to discharge. It could not take the purely non-violent attitude. It felt that the nation had not imbibed the non-violent spirit requisite for the possession of the strength which disdains to take advantage of the

¹ This appeared under the title "Gandhiji's Comment on the Manifesto". *The Hindu*, 16-9-1939, reported: "When the *Hindu* representative and other Pressmen approached Gandhiji for his views on the Working Committee's statement, Gandhiji agreed to make a statement and invited them to Segaoon for the purpose. Sitting down soon after evening prayers, Gandhiji began drafting his statement. . . .After an hour the statement was ready and as Mr. Mahadev Desai began reading it out, a little party gathered round the hurricane lantern. Gandhiji also joined and, as Mr. Desai proceeded, touched up and corrected the language of the statement here and there. . . .When Mr. Desai had finished reading, one of the Pressmen asked, 'Is that all?' 'Is that not enough?' replied Gandhiji with a smile and retired." For the text of the Manifesto, *vide* Appendix "Working Committee's Manifesto", 23-9-1939.

² From September 10 to 14

difficulty of the opponent. But in stating the reasons for its conclusion the Committee desired to show the greatest consideration for the English.

The author of the statement is an artist. Though he cannot be surpassed in his implacable opposition to imperialism in any shape or form, he is a friend of the English people. Indeed he is more English than Indian in his thoughts and make-up. He is often more at home with Englishmen than with his own countrymen. And he is a humanitarian in the sense that he reacts to every wrong, no matter where perpetrated.¹ Though, therefore, he is an ardent nationalist his nationalism is enriched by his fine internationalism. Hence the statement is a manifesto addressed not only to his own countrymen, not only to the British Government and the British people, but it is addressed also to the nations of the world including those that are exploited like India. He has compelled India, through the Working Committee, to think not merely of her own freedom, but of the freedom of all the exploited nations of the world.

The same time that the Committee passed the statement, it appointed a Board² of his choice with himself as Chairman to deal with the situation as it may develop from time to time.

I hope that the statement will receive the unanimous support of all the parties among Congressmen. The strongest among them will not find any lack of strength in it. And at this supreme hour in the history of the nation the Congress should believe that there will be no lack of strength in action, if action becomes necessary. It will be a pity if Congressmen engage in petty squabbles and party strife. If anything big or worthy is to come out of the Committee's action, the undivided and unquestioned loyalty of every Congressman is absolutely necessary. I hope too that all other political parties and all communities will join the Committee's demand for a clear declaration of their policy from the British Government with such corresponding action as is possible amidst martial conditions. Recognition of India, and for that matter of all those who are under the British Crown, as free and independent nations seems to me to be the natural corollary of British professions about democracy. If the war means anything less, the co-operation of dependent nations can never be honestly voluntary, unless it were based on non-violence.

¹ The source, however, has "perpetuated" .

² With Abul Kalam Azad and Vallabhbai Patel as members

All that is required is a mental revolution on the part of British statesmen. To put it still more plainly, all that is required is honest action to implement the declaration of faith in democracy made on the eve of the war, and still being repeated from British platforms. Will Great Britain have an unwilling India dragged into the war or a willing ally co-operating with her in the prosecution of a defence of true democracy? The Congress support will mean the greatest moral asset in favour of England and France. For the Congress has no soldiers to offer. The Congress fights not with violent but with non-violent means, however imperfect, however crude the non-violence may be.

Harijan, 23-9-1939

420. LETTER TO DUDABHAI DAFDA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1939

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I got your letter. I was pained to hear that you married a woman who had already been married once. Try to do whatever you can from there. I am helpless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3246

421. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 16, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I was distressed to read your letter. You say that it was not part of your duty to send for the medicines, that you only had to instruct Krishnadas ! If it was not your duty why did you not entrust the task to me? Why did you not ask me who should fetch the medicine or have it fetched? Why did you not immediately entrust it to Mahadev? Why did you wait for three days? Other people accusing you is one thing; what I myself observe is something else. You may as well say that you are neither willing nor able to undertake any responsible job. If this was made clear, then I would consider my wrath out of place. I would consider it proper to say that I should never get angry under any circumstances at all. But it is impossible to stop being angry with

one's dear ones. Thus the images of people who provoke my anger are always present before me. Let us see when this can be remedied. I accept, the implied meaning of your letter that I am facing the consequences of my own unfair actions. Hence I am just watching much of it and I know I have to go through it. On occasion I lose in a moment whatever I have gained.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

422. JAIPUR SATYAGRAHA

Jaipur satyagraha has ended satisfactorily as announced in Sheth Jamnalalji's public statement. He had had several interviews with the Maharaja Saheb. The result has been that the regulation regarding public meetings and processions has been withdrawn. So has the ban on newspapers. Amelioration in several other matters has been assured.¹ For this happy result both the Maharaja and Sheth Jamnalalji deserve to be congratulated—the Maharaja for his just-mindedness and Shethji for his wisdom and moderation in conducting the negotiations on behalf of the Jaipur Praja Mandal. It is a happy ending to a struggle which was conducted with great restraint and calmness. It is a triumph of non-violence. From the very beginning the demands were restricted to the barest minimum necessary for self-expression and political education. The goal of responsible government has been always kept in view, but it has never been offensively or aggressively advanced as if the insistence was on an immediate grant of full responsibility. The Praja Mandal has wisely recognized its own limitations and the backward state of the people. Practically no political education has been hitherto allowed in many of the Rajputana States. It will be solid gain if civil liberty in its real sense is assured to the people of Jaipur. For this, as much will depend upon the wisdom with which it is used by the people as upon the restraint of the Jaipur authorities.

¹ According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. II, pp. 229-30, the main terms of the settlement were: (1) the release of political prisoners, (2) the lifting of the ban on all newspapers, and (3) satisfactory amendment of the Public Societies Act so as to render unnecessary for a society to get itself registered.

In this connection Sheth Jamnalalji has raised a most important question. He insists that no European should be appointed Dewan. I have had to perform the painful duty of criticizing the administration of the State by one of its English Dewans¹. I have no doubt that an English Dewan is any day a misfit in an Indian State. He has to serve an Indian Chief. But retired English officials from whom Dewans are chosen are not by habit used to take orders from Indian Chiefs. They cannot understand the caprices of Indian Princes and will not accommodate themselves to them. The Chiefs themselves never feel at home with English Dewans. Moreover no matter how conscientious they are, Englishmen can never understand the people of the States or have patience with them. And the people can never take the same liberty with them that they can and will with men who are drawn from among themselves. Thus an English Dewan is a double handicap in an Indian State and robs it of what little scope there is left in it for indigenous development. Add to this the fact that the appointment of English Dewans in States is a cruel encroachment upon the very narrow field left for the expression of Indian administrative talent. Supposing Dewanships had been a preserve of retired English officials, we would have missed Sir T. Madhao Rao or Sir Salar Jung, to mention only two among the well-known Dewans of Indian States.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that if H. H. the Maharaja has really a free choice, he will select an Indian known for his integrity, ability and sympathy for popular aspirations. It is to be hoped further that if the choice has to be made by the British Government, they will not impose a European Dewan on the Maharaja.

SEGAON, September 17, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

423. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 17, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

I have read through the correspondence between you and Bhai Lakshmidas Naye Gandhi². It seems you have not replied to him. Do

¹ =Sir W. Beauchamp St. John.

² In *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, p. 399, Lakshmidas Gandhi, a

send your reply if you can. Why did the person who copied it write only on one side? That involves wastage of paper and additional postage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10857. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

424. NOTES

SIROHI

Sirohi is a Rajputana State with a population of 1,86,639 and revenue of Rs. 9,70,000. It has figured in the Press for its lathi charge said to be wholly unprovoked. I have authentic information of the event from Shri Gokulbhai Bhatt who belongs to Sirohi. He has gained a reputation as an efficient teacher and a devoted Congress worker. He is saturated with the spirit of non-violence. He has been recently staying in Sirohi attempting to gain elementary rights for the people. He thus writes about the lathi charge to Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala :

The events of the 8th instant in Sirohi make it a memorable day for its people. The police swooped down upon a meeting all of a sudden, began to pull down the Praja Mandal flag and delivered a lathi charge. This was not the national flag. When the Hon. Resident, Mr. Lothian, was in Sirohi last February he suggested that we could use the Praja Mandal flag in our office, in our processions and at our meetings. And we were acting accordingly.

On the 3rd instant the Dewan Saheb prohibited its use in our processions. In order to avoid a breach of the order, we discontinued the procession. There was no prohibition against its use at meetings, so we had it at our meeting. Suddenly appeared the police in great style and, without warning, without any order, began to pull down the flag. Some of the workers held on to it. They could not, however, keep their hold for long against the superior police force. They were separated. I had

co-inmate of Chhaganlal Joshi in Thana Jail, has been described as "a satyagrahi of Bombay known as 'Naye Gandhi'".

somehow retained my hold. So they dragged me with the flag. They caught me by the neck and beat me. Then began an indiscriminate lathi charge on the audience. Some notabilities are said to have been inciting the police not to spare the people who said, "You may beat us as much as you like. We will not leave the meeting." Women were also bravely taking part in this struggle. The charge must have lasted about seven minutes. The meeting continued to the end. The event has not demoralized the people. It has put heart into them.

Knowing Shri Gokulbhai as I do, I have no reason to disbelieve his account which is in Gujarati. It reflects no credit upon the Sirohi authorities. I have before me a long list of the grievances of the people. They are trying, in a perfectly constitutional manner, to seek redress. But instead of granting redress the authorities are evidently trying to crush their spirit. If, however, the people have imbibed the right spirit of non-violent resistance, they are bound to gain their end, lathi charges notwithstanding.

A POLISH SISTER'S¹ AGONY

In spite of all I am going to try to reach Poland, sailing tonight to Basra in Iraq, then through Turkey and Rumania. The inner call is irresistible. It may seem madness from the ordinary human point of view. Now I am not going for my mother's sake nor for my dearest friends who are now on the battle-fields—ready to die at any moment—it is for Poland itself. I believe countries have also souls. Souls of nations are a reality, not a theory, for me. If I reach the soil of Poland I will feel satisfied, even if I do not find those whom I love. It is the soul (and body) of the nation itself that is in its supreme hour of martyrdom. I believe Poland bleeds and struggles not only for her own rights but for the right, the just, the true; for the freedom of all nations, India including. I feel Hindu to the bottom of my heart; Indian as much as Pole, both Motherlands are to be in my soul to the last day of my life. But I could not live if I would not do what is humanly possible to reach the feet of the Mother who is now bleeding in agony of pain. I shall write from the way, but not when I reach the war zone; I shall only think often about you and send mental messages as well as I can. Bapuji, do pray in all fervour of your great loving heart for those thousands of innocent people who suffer incredible pain and misery in Poland. It is these that need most sympathy and blessings and tender thoughts.

¹ Wanda Dynowska, also known as Uma

This is the letter a Polish sister wrote from Bombay harbour. I have known her for some years. She has become as much Indian as she is Polish. She had decided to work at Maganwadi in the Magan Museum.¹ But the rumours of war upset her. She has an aged mother in Poland whom she could not bring out owing to passport difficulties. When the war actually broke out, she calmed down so far as her mother was concerned. But her highly strung nature would not let her rest whilst her nearest and dearest were in peril of their lives for no offence of theirs. She is herself a believer through and through in non-violence. But her very non-violence made her restless. Her whole soul has rebelled against the wrong, as she thinks, that is being perpetrated against her motherland. So she has gone to find the Poland of her imagination fighting to the last ditch, not for merely preserving her own freedom but for the freedom of all those nations who have lost it. And in this she naturally includes her second love, India. May her dream prove true. If Poland has that measure of uttermost bravery and an equal measure of selflessness, history will forget that she defended herself with violence. Her violence will be counted almost as non-violence.

SEGAON, September 18, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

425. *TEMPLE-ENTRY*

I had a complaint from a sanatanist in Madura regarding the manner in which the celebrated Meenakshi temple was opened. I had forwarded the complaint to Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar and sent it to another friend too. I got a categorical refutation from the latter.² He added in his letter that Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar was so persecuted by the sanatanists that his nerves were shattered. Thereupon I sent him a long wire urging him not to take to heart what his persecutors may say or do, and that as a religious reformer he had to work with perfect detachment keeping himself unruffled in the midst of persecution and worse. To my wire he sent the following consoling reply :

¹ The Magan Museum of khadi and other village crafts was opened by Gandhiji on December 30, 1938, in memory of Maganlal Gandhi. Besides khadi, there were *gur*-making, paper-making, soap-making, oil-pressing and tanning sections in the museum.

² *Vide* "Letter to V. M. Prasada Rao", 30-8-1939.

With Shri Meenakshi's grace and your blessings acquired usual calmness. Continuing work. Expecting other big temples will follow shortly. Your love and blessings my strongest support.

The reply is characteristic of this great reformer. He is one of the humblest and the most silent among the workers in the cause of removal of untouchability. He is a godfearing man. This is what Shri Brijkrishna Chandiwala of Delhi, who had gone on a pilgrimage to the South, writes of his experience in Madura :

I stopped seven days in Pondicherry, five in Ramanashram and went as far as Rameshwar. I had a great desire to visit the temples of the South. But I would not enter those that were closed to Harijans. I did, however, see the temples in Madura and Tanjore. The others I contemplated from without. I tarried awhile in front of many of them—and for the first time I realized what the bar sinister must mean to the tens of thousands of Harijans who, though eager for *darshan*¹ could never cross the precincts of the great temples. We who have the right to visit them never think of entering. But this time I was overwhelmed. I felt a longing to visit them and prayed from the depth of my heart that God might move the sanatanists to open the other temples to Harijans so that I too could visit them. I saw, too, at Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar's house, what temple-entry costs reformers like him. Had I not seen with my own eyes what has been happening to Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar, I could never have believed that human nature could descend so low as I discovered in Madura. The conduct of the sanatanists towards him has been most unseemly. One of the ways adopted by them is to spread lies about Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar. But both he and his wife are bearing this persecution bravely.

Only four days ago I had a letter from some ladies of Kumbakonam complaining of the treatment meted out to them by reformers. They asked for an appointment. In the midst of my work I sent them an early appointment, warning them of my views on untouchability. They repented of their wire and said that since I had taken no notice of their complaint, they did not propose to come. I have since read the report in *The Hindu* of the happenings in Shrirangam. Dr. Rajan has given a graphic account of the disgraceful behaviour of the so-called sanatanists there. I have no reason to doubt Dr. Rajan's account. It is a shame that innocent women are being exploited for supporting a wrong. I have a vivid recollection of what used to happen to me during my Harijan tour. No lie was too bad to be spread about me or

¹ Sight of a person or thing considered to be holy

my tour. So far as I could see, the opposition was confined to a handful only. I never opened a temple until I was satisfied that there was no opposition worth the name from the temple-goers. But the organizers of the opposition resented the very propaganda I was conducting. No doubt their opposition proved fruitless. My point, however, is that it was unscrupulous and violent. If I survived the year's tour, it was no fault of theirs; it was God's grace. Sixty-four charges were recorded against me. Not one of them was true. I am therefore loath to believe the complaints now made about the campaign in the South. I have not found any of them substantiated. Untouchability is itself a lie. Lies are not known to have been supported by truth, even as truth cannot be supported by lies. If it is, it becomes itself a lie. There is no wonder, therefore, that from everywhere evidence continues to pour in that the sanataniist opposition is confined to a few and that the few do not hesitate to resort to any method, however unscrupulous it may be.

Nevertheless the case against untouchability is not to be sustained by the weaknesses of opponents. It has to be supported by purity of character, industry and strictest honesty of reformers and a limitless capacity for sacrifice. For I should not wonder if the wrath of the opponents takes a heavy toll of the lives of reformers. No sacrifice, however great, will deter the reformers from pursuing the God-given mission of ridding Hinduism of the curse of untouchability. For I must repeat for the thousandth time that Hinduism dies, as it will deserve to die, if untouchability lives. Only let the reformers know that impatience will be fatal to success. They must not open a single temple where a clear majority of temple-goers to a particular temple are demonstrably opposed to its opening. Untouchability will not be removed by the force even of law. It can only be removed when the majority of Hindus realize that it is a crime against God and man and are ashamed of it. In other words, it is a process of conversion, i. e., purification of the Hindu heart. The aid of law has to be invoked when it hinders or interferes with the progress of the reform as when, in spite of the willingness of the trustees and the temple-going public, the law prohibits the opening of a particular temple.

SEGAON, September 18, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

426. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
C/O MINISTER HAFIZ IBRAHIM
LUCKNOW

HOPE BY GOD'S GRACE AND YOUR EFFORT SHIA-SUNNI QUARREL
WILL BE AMICABLY SETTLED.¹

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

427. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is my letter to Chiang Kai-shek. The letter became longer than I had wanted it to be. Perhaps it will be well to send a typed copy with the original.

Mahadev went to Madras yesterday.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 380

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to President, Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", 4-8-1939.

428. *LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA DHOOT*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

MY DEAR RAMAKRISHNA,

The analysis is not what I wanted. It is argumentative. I want an unvarnished examination showing categorically on one sheet of paper what is bad. Your analysis does not absolve me from having to read the original ponderous papers. But need anything be done now? Will not everything be hung up during the war?

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI RAMKISHEN DHOOT
HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS
SULTAN BAZAR
HYDERABAD DECCAN

From the original: C. W. 10155

429. *LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM*

SEGAON,
September 18, 1939

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Please see that I get a car for Gosibehn at the latest at 1.30 p. m. She has to transact business at Maganwadi and then entrain for Bombay. I hope Devi and Premi have arrived safe and sound.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 11046. courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

430. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C. P.),
September 18, 1939

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

I have your beautiful letter in front of me unanswered. Well, you are playing the game. But don't overwork yourself nor be overstrung. Take things calmly. Don't take them to the breaking point.

Love.

PLAYMATE

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
ZAHEER MUNZIL
RED HILLS
HYDERABAD, DECCAN

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

431. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 18, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You must have got Vijaya's and Uttamchand's letters which I sent with Shriman¹ yesterday.

It is time for Sushila to arrive but one cannot say when she will come. There is no news from her.

Bisen² should take hip-baths as also sun-baths. He is sure to benefit from them. I would certainly try and see how far they are helpful to him if he comes here some time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10795

¹ Shriman Narayan

² Shiv Balak Bisen, who later became Gandhiji's private secretary for some time.

432. *LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1939

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I hope to be here for the present. I cannot say when and where I may be required to go.

I understand what you say about Brother¹.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2473

433. *LETTER TO Y. M. DADOO*

SEGAON,
September 19, 1939

MY DEAR DADOO,

I was glad to have your reply. Of course there is no absolute reason why passive resistance should be stopped because war has broken out in Europe. But wisdom may dictate that course. Of this you should be the best judges. I am trying my best to have the enforcement of the obnoxious law postponed. As the letters are delayed, you will use the cable when necessary.²

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 4903. Also C. W. 1316. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

¹ Addressee's brother, who was ailing

² *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 29-7-1939.

434. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

SEGAON,
September 19, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

My blessings on your birthday. You seem to be making fairly rapid progress. The girls also seem to be doing good work. If, however, the people are tempted to pay money only by the sight of the girls, you should consider how far it is desirable to send them out. You can know more by asking the girls themselves. This is only for you. Satish Babu will certainly come. But not Ba. I will think about Mirabehn. Rajkumari is not enthusiastic. I shall consider how the money should be used¹.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Is Shambhu Shankar still in prison? What did he do? What is the state of affairs in Palitana? Dhebarbhai may be able to tell you.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8562. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

435. *LETTER TO RAMASINHA*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 19, 1939

BHAI RAMASINHAJI,

Only today I could reach your letter of August 28. The letter is excellent. If the Garasia brethren really take up the work which you

¹ *Vide* also "Notes", 12-7-1939 .

have described, both they and Kathiawar would forge ahead.

Vandemataram from

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5228

436. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MEDH

SEGAON,

September 19, 1939

CHI. MEDH,

I have your letter. You will see [for yourself] from the letter¹ to Bhai Dadoo that I understand what you say. I am doing all that I can. Manilal must be getting these letters, so I won't be particular in writing to him. What is this about somebody in Boksberg having been killed? There seems to have been some report to that effect in *The Rand Daily Mail*. It seems there too a terrorist gang has come into existence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4904

¹ *Vide* Letter to Y. M. Dadoo", 19-9-1939.

437. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES ¹

[September 20, 1939]²

This Assembly regrets that the British Government have

¹ K. M. Munshi explains: "With the declaration of war, Central encroachment on Provincial autonomy was inevitable. Sardar Patel, therefore, issued a circular letter to all the Congress Prime Ministers advising them on the attitude they should adopt, pending a decision by the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee. . . . The Working Committee met on September 9 and continued their deliberations till September 15. . . . Gandhiji, at first, was for supporting the British unconditionally, but ultimately he yielded to Jawaharlal Nehru. . . . The Congress Ministries in the Provinces simply could not continue in office for a long period during which they were bound to accept the direction of a Central Government with which they felt no sense of identity. . . . During the time. . . my relations with Sir Roger Lumley, the Governor, had become friendly. . . I tried to prevail upon Sir Roger Lumley to convey to Lord Linlithgow that there should not be any difficulty in meeting the Congress demands, viz., (1) clarification of war aims, (2) assurance as to India's future, and (3) the immediate steps to ensure Congress participation at the Centre. . . . The outlook became gloomy when, on September 18, Kher, like other Congress premiers, received a letter from Sardar Patel intimating that the Working Committee's statement [Appendix X] should be taken as the background for the time being; that the Ministries should do nothing inconsistent with it and, in particular, should not allow their responsibility as Provincial Governments to be overridden. . . . The more important part of the letter was a directive: Provincial legislatures, or, in default of legislatures, Provincial Governments, should as early as possible pass a resolution, a draft of which was appended. . . . Sir Roger realized the grave implications of the resolution and told me that a resolution of this character would create the impression that the Congress had given up the intention to co-operate in the war. He, therefore, strongly urged that I should point out to Sardar the implication of the course advocated in the letter. I gave Sir Roger's message to Sardar Patel. He, however, told me that the letter had been drawn up by the Congress War Sub-committee and that he could not cancel it without the consent of the other members of the Sub-committee, namely, Nehru and Maulana Azad. He, therefore, advised me to go at once to Wardha and see Gandhiji and Rajendra Prasad who was still there. I left for Wardha the same evening and returned on September 21. Gandhiji gave me a patient hearing, spinning the charkha all the time. I remember to have argued the case at length. When I finished, he told me: 'Munshi, you have presented your case well, but the country will not accept the course of action recommended by you'. He was, however, prepared to modify the peremptory attitude reflected in the resolution. He gave me a statement defining his views on the situation. . . Gandhiji also gave me a draft of the resolution which he passed by the Provincial legislatures if a satisfactory solution on the lines indicated was not acceptable to the British Government. . . .As a result of my interview with Gandhiji on September 20 . . . instructions were issued to the Congress Ministries postponing action on the proposed resolution for a week."

² *Ibid*

declared India as a participant in the war between Great Britain and Germany, without the consent of the Indian people and without consulting this Assembly. The Assembly considers this declaration, made in complete disregard of the opposition from Indian opinion, a contravention of the spirit of Provincial autonomy, as also further measures adopted and laws passed in England and India limiting the powers and activities of Provincial Governments.

The British Government have stated that the war is for the preservation of democracy, but their policy in India militates against this profession. While this Assembly has the fullest sympathy for the cause of democracy and freedom, and condemns the aggression of the Nazi Government on Poland, it cannot offer co-operation in the war, unless the principles of democracy are applied to India and her policy is guided by her people. The Assembly invites the British Government to make a clear declaration that they have decided to regard India as an independent nation entitled to frame her own Charter of Freedom, and to accompany this declaration by suitable action, in so far as this is possible, even in the prevailing war conditions. The Assembly is further of opinion that no war measure or other activity should be undertaken in this Province except with the consent and through the medium of the Provincial Government.

Pilgrimage to Freedom (1902-1950), p. 58

438. A STATEMENT¹

[September 20, 1939]²

1. I (Gandhi) know that my views in regard to unconditional co-operation are not shared by the country. The resolution of the Working Committee reflects the Congress opinion properly.

2. Since the Congress is unable, owing to past experience, to give unconditional co-operation, it can only co-operate if it is able to convince the country that it has in substance achieved its purpose and that therefore there is a complete understanding about it between the British Government and the Congress.

3. If there is a real understanding between the British Government and the Congress, it follows that there must be corresponding action even during the war. Thus Ministries must not be mere regis-

¹ Foot note no. 1 of draft resolution for provincial legislatures, 20-9-1939.

² *Ibid*

tering agencies of the measures coming from the Centre. Hence there must be some method at the Centre of having a Congress representation sufficient to give it a majority.

4. The only constitutional way in which the Ministries can declare their position is to obtain the necessary authority of their respective legislatures by getting them to adopt this resolution¹, unless in the mean time they can convince their legislatures that circumstances in terms of 2 and 3 have come into existence which render such resolution unnecessary.

5. If the British Government are serious in their profession that they are fighting for democracy, they cannot marshal the moral opinion of the world in their favour except by declaring that India will be a free and democratic country at the end of the war and that in the mean time it has taken steps to implement the assurances so far as it is practicable under martial conditions.

6. If for some reason, the British Government takes a different view, the Ministries will find it impossible to function.

7. The resolution may be kept back for a week if the members of the War Sub-committee agree. But it must be clearly understood that before the A. I. C. C. meets, the Working Committee which meets on the 4th (October) must have definite material to enable it to give the lead to the A. I. C. C. and the country.

Pilgrimage to Freedom (1902-1905), p. 57

439. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

WARDHA,
September 20, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

A friend unconnected with politics writes to me to say that the labouring population living near the sea and the back-waters are suffering great privations due to want of employment. The writer thinks that if I drew your attention to the matter, relief was likely to be given to these people.

Yours sincerely,

SIR C. P.
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

440. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

WARDHA,
September 20, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

There is Krishna Sharma of the State Congress under a ban. Should not the ban be now removed? He is suffering distress.

Yours sincerely,

SIR AKBAR HYDARI
HYDERABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

441. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 20, 1939

MY DEAR THANU,

I drop 'Pillay' a bit for brevity. I have gone through all your papers. I am filled with admiration and amazement. You are keeping calm in the midst of the gravest provocation. It is all to the good. It is the most solid progress towards the goal. Therefore go on as you are doing. Make sure that you have no dross in your gold. It does not matter if you are only a few. Rely only on quality. You will quicken the pace of progress. Keep me informed.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 10202. Courtesy: Government of Kerala. Also Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

442. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON,
September 20, 1939

CHI. MRIDU,

I have your letter. Come whenever you want. I was under the impression that I had explained the situation to you. I have no money. Amtussalaam was to collect the money but she was to use it in my name. Rs. 600/- belonging to her was lying with me. Now that she has

abandoned the work, she has also lost the ability to collect funds. Now tell me what I should do. Surely, it was not as though I trusted A S. and did not trust you or Lakshmidas? How could that be? But you should not give up the work you have undertaken. Shankerlal is here. I will consult him. I will discuss the matter with you if you come. I was very happy to read about Mummy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11210. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

443. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 21, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I get your letters regularly. You must be growing calmer day by day. Think and realize that birth and death are one and the same thing. This is the normal thing. Death follows birth—birth follows death. In this manner the two ever keep changing places. Why then should we rejoice at one and grieve over the other? The coming of night is the death of day, but we know that day comes after night and so we are not surprised by the way it goes on. Our grief, therefore, is only on account of the separation. But separation is only one member of a pair. Union and separation—separation and union, go hand in hand. This is only an intellectual statement. But it is worth understanding. It will strengthen your faith. What I want to say, is that your presence there should have this effect, and no one should grieve and Father should leave with a smile on his face. He had better take only water. I hope Manubhai¹ will not be permitted to come there. Nanabhai² cannot spare him even for a second. What will he do even if he comes?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7118. Also C. W. 4610. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ Manubhai Pancholi, the addressee's husband who was himself ill

² Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

444. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
September 22, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

See the telegram about Rajkot. Please forward it. I think you should stay here, so that your burden may be lightened and we may be able to meet every day and exchange views.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BIRLA HOUSE
5 ALBUQUERQUE ROAD, NEW DELHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 235

445. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEGAON,
September 22, 1939

CHI. RAMAKRISHNA,

May you live long and bring credit to Father's¹ name.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3063

¹ Jamnalal Bajaj

446. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF OXFORD GROUP¹

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 23/24, 1939

How I wish I had the same enthusiasm that fires you. Of course I have the experience of listening² not merely of trying to listen. The more I listen, the more I discover that I am still far away from God. While I can lay down rules, the observance of which is essential for proper listening, the reality still escapes me. When we say we are listening to God and getting answers, though we say it truthfully, there is every possibility there of self-deception. I do not know that I am myself altogether free from self-deception. People sometimes ask me if I may not be mistaken, and I say to them, 'Yes, very likely, what I say may be just a picture of my elongated self before you.'

And then see how one may claim to be God-guided in taking a particular course of action, and another may make the same claim in taking an opposite course of action. I will give you a good illustration. Rajaji, whom you know, at any rate whose name you have heard, is I think unsurpassed in godliness or God-mindedness. Now when I took the 21 days' purificatory fast in the Yeravda Jail in 1933³ and proclaimed that it was in answer to a call from God, Rajagopalachari came all the way from Madras to dissuade me. He felt sure that I was deluding myself and that I should probably die and, if I did not, I should certainly be demented. Well, you see that I am still alive and of

¹ This is extracted from "A Word to the Oxford Groupers"; *vide* footnotes 1 and 2 of "Reply to Members of Oxford Group", 3-9-1939. Mahadev Desai explains: ". . . six friends came to Wardha on the 23rd of last month. These included a barrister and his wife, an American journalist, a European who was a railway official, and a gifted lady, daughter of a one-time army officer. . . ."

² The word 'listening' had special meaning in the language of the Oxford Group. Mahadev Desai says: "Their mission may be described in common parlance as one of thinking aloud and, in their language, of 'spiritual sharing'. 'There is good somewhere in all', said one of the members, 'and there are different ways of finding that out. For us it is by sharing. . . .' Another member said: 'You have always been listening to God. We feel that the solution of those problems for which you have worked would be reached if all the millions of India would start listening to God. We feel we have a place in this plan and have therefore come to you in joy.' Some of the members described their experiences of changes having come over the lives of men and women by this 'listening in'. . . . 'Whereas people of old used to use the word 'prayer', 'listening in' is the modern word. . . . There was a discussion and Gandhiji spoke out his mind to them."

³ *Vide* 23-4-1933 to 21-8-1933.

a sound mind. And yet perhaps Rajaji still thinks I was deluded and it was by an accident that I was saved, and I continue to think that I fasted in answer to the still small voice within.

I say this in order to warn you how unwise it may be to believe that you are always listening to God. I am not at all against the endeavour, but I warn you against thinking that this is a kind of 'open sesame' which has just to be shown to the millions. No one will contradict me when I say I have tried my very best to make India listen to the way of God. I have had some success but I am still far away from the goal. When I listen to the testimonies you have given I become cautious and even suspicious. In South Africa a preacher came who after his sermon got people to sign their names under a pledge, which was published in a book, binding them not to drink. Well, I have been witness to numerous of these promises being broken. It was no fault of these people. They signed the pledge under the temporary influence of the preacher's moving eloquence.

This I know that all that glitters is not gold, and also that if a man has really heard the voice of God, there is no sliding back, just as there is no forgetting it by one who has learnt to swim. The listening in must make people's lives daily richer and richer.

Let me not appear to damp your enthusiasm; but if it is to be built on solid rock, it is better that listening in is also based on solid rock.

This listening in presupposes the fitness to listen, and the fitness is acquired after constant and patient striving and waiting on God. Shanka-racharya has likened the process to the attempt to empty the sea by means of a drainer small as the point of a blade of grass. This process thus necessarily is endless being carried through birth after birth.

And yet the effort has to be as natural as breathing or the winking of the eyes, which processes happen without our knowing them. The effort coincides with the process of living. I commend to you this process of eternal striving which alone can take us face to face with God¹.

What is India as a nation to do at this juncture? What would you want her to do? How is she to repent? India may say she has committed many sins for which she is suffering and would pray to be

¹ According to Mahadev Desai, the members of the Oxford group returned the next day and "produced another word begging the same rigorous definition and spiritual striving as 'listening in', viz., 'repentance'."

given the strength to wipe them out. Or is there anything else at the back of your minds?¹

Harijan, 7-10-1939

447. *HORIZONTAL v. VERTICAL*

Prof. J. C. Kumarappa has contributed a thought-provoking article to the *Gram Udyog Patrika* for September. I take from it the following extracts² with slight unimportant alterations.

According to the conception of the economic organization on which the A. I. V. I. A. is based, the villager is taken as the centre around whom the universe revolves. What contributes to his welfare is primary and everything else is secondary. Whatever the merits of a plan may be, if it fails to give employment and thereby direct a due share of the wealth produced towards the villager, it will stand condemned. The result or end of economic activity is wealth production for consumption by the producers. Wealth is usually produced by the intelligent use of the means of production and the application or employment of human talent or power. Planning, in the first instance, consists in the rational coordination of these three factors. We may express this mathematically thus: $W = E + M$.

Here W stands for wealth, E for employment of human talent and M for means in the shape of tools, equipment or capital. In this equation, keeping W constant, if M is large, E will have to be small, and *vice versa*, that is, E and M vary inversely. Therefore, in planning, our first step will have to be the ascertaining of the availability of E and M. . . .

When we look around our country we find E in abundance while M is very scarce and, therefore, if our planning is to be effective, we have to lay our foundation-stone on labour and not on capital. . . .

Most people seem to think that all will be well as long as we produce large quantities of standardized goods. They cannot see that the method of large-scale production can only be employed as a hand-maiden of the cottage and village industries, the former supplying the basic needs of the latter on a service basis. . . .

Properly conceived, the State should serve the citizen. The citizen may work for his profit but not so the State. Similarly, the decentralized units may work for profit but not so the centralized units. . . .

¹ Mahadev Desai adds: "There was no satisfactory reply. 'We should begin listening to God as a whole,' was their reply . . ."

² Only excerpts are reproduced here.

It does not do to plan vertically, i. e., emphasizing the functions and thus making them into separate industries, e. g., banking, insurance, etc., which is the way of capitalism. The other way is to take the industries horizontally and study their processes and apply the functional aid at suitable points. The plan of work of the All-India Spinners' Association is a good example of a horizontal system of planning, while a spinning mill is an example of vertical planning. There can be no compromise between these two methods. . . .

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 24, 1939

Harijan, 18-11-1939

448. AN INTERESTING STUDY

Shri Shankerlal Banker has sent me the following figures :

DAILY PRODUCTION 38,400 SQ. YDS., ABOUT 11,000 LB.

MILL		KHADI	
Cost at 8.5 as. Per lb. (3½ sq. yds.)	Rs. 5,843	Cost at 30 as. per lb. (3½ sq. yds.)	Rs. 20,625 ¹
Note. Cotton including 16% wastage	4 as.	Note. Cotton	4 as.
All-inclusive charges : spinning	2 as.	Spinning and carding wages	15 as.
All-inclusive charges : weaving	2.5 as.	Weaving wages	8 as.
		Washing, etc.	1 a.
		Establishment charges	2 as.
	Total		Total
	8.5 as.		30 as.
DETAILS RE. COST			
Cotton including 16% wastage	Rs. 2,750	Cotton	Rs. 2,750
All-inclusive charges : spinning	Rs. 1,375	Spinning and carding wages	Rs. 10,313
All-inclusive charges : weaving	Rs. 1,718	Weaving wages	Rs. 5,500
		Washing wages, etc.	Rs. 687
		Establishment charges	Rs. 1,375
	Rs. 5,843		Rs. 20,625 ²
Wage at 2 as. per lb.	Rs. 1,375	Wages	Rs. 16,500
Interest on Rs. 23.1 lacs at 3% for one day	Rs. 190	Interest on Rs. 13.5 lacs	Rs. 111

¹ The source, however, has "20,575".

² *ibid*

$$\text{Ratio in the case of wages} = \frac{\text{K } 16,500}{\text{M } 1,375} = 12 \text{ K: } 1 \text{ M}$$

$$\text{Ratio in the case of interest} = \frac{\text{M } 190}{\text{K } 111} = 1 \text{ K: } 1.7 \text{ M}$$

This is a most revealing study. The cost of converting one lb. of cotton into calico in a mill is 8.5 as. whereas that of converting it into khadi is 30 as. In the one case the spinner and the weaver get between them 4.5 as.; in the other, i. e., khadi, they get 24 as. Which is better to buy—khadi though it seems dear, or the calico though it seems cheap?

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 24, 1939
Harijan, 2-12-1939

449. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The enclosed wire for you to dispose of. It is your special department.

I am off to Simla again.¹ I go only to act as intermediary. You will send me instructions if any. I do hope you will be ready to answer invitation, if it comes.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

450. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

My blessings are always there for as many khadi bhandars as are opened and for as much khadi as is sold. Moreover Sardar is opening your bhandar. So it is bound to be a success.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: C. W. 10842. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

¹ The Viceroy had invited Gandhiji for a second round of talks.

451. LETTER TO PYARELAL

MAGANWADI,
NAGPUR,
WARDHA,

September 24, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

I was considerably disturbed to leave you behind. I could not decide whether I should leave you or take you along. I am not at all happy about your mental condition. But what can I do? It seems I am suffering the consequences of my own actions. What request can I make to you? Do I have the right to request you any more? May God grant you peace. It would suffice even if He inspires you to think about Sushila. Look after Ba, Krishnadas, Prithvisingh.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

452. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NAGPUR,
September 24, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Don't ask Lilavati¹ or Hansabehn² yet about Rajkot.³ I have written to Perinbehn⁴ and asked her to go. I felt I must write to her. Wadia has not refused so far. I have written to Perinbehn that if Wadia refuses I should like her to go. I will write to you and let you know after I hear from her. I have asked for a telegram at Simla.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 235

¹ Lilavati Munshi

² Hansabehn Mehta

³ To go to Rajkot Rashtriyashala during *Rentia Baras*

⁴ Perinbehn Captain

453. *IS INDIA A MILITARY COUNTRY?*

In the interesting broadcast delivered by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces in India on the 5th instant there occurs this passage :

India is a military country and I am a soldier. It will, therefore, perhaps not be amiss if I give you some personal impressions of what the effect of modernization will be on the personnel of the future army in India. They are not just guess-work but based on what has already been done. With new scientific weapons and with modern vehicles, there will inevitably come new ideas and a new outlook. Modernization is likely to give increased impetus to the already high rate of education in the Indian Army; and when nearly every soldier on discharge returns to his home with a knowledge of motor-cars and machinery, there may well be a perceptible effect upon the age-old methods of agriculture and ways of living. Modernization in the army may therefore have a considerable indirect effect upon the life of India. Many of those who hear me will regret the passing of the horse. No one regrets it more than myself. But as a soldier who knows the fate which awaits the horse in modern warfare, I rejoice for its sake, that one of the greatest and best of friends of man is in future to be spared the horrors of war.

I must wholly, though respectfully, dissent from the view that India is a military country. And I thank God that it is not. It may be that the Commander-in-Chief has a special meaning for the term which I do not know. Or is it that his India is composed of only the Defence Forces under his command? For me the Defence Forces are of the least importance in the make-up of the nation. I need not be reminded that life would be in constant peril if the forces were withdrawn. The forces notwithstanding, life is not free from peril. There are riots, there are murders, there are dacoities, there are raids. The Defence Forces avail little in all these perils. They generally act after the mischief is done. But the gallant Commander-in-Chief looks at things as a soldier. I and, with me the millions are untouched by the military spirit. From ages past India has had a military caste in numbers wholly insignificant. That caste has had little to do with the millions. This, however, is not the occasion for examining its contribution to the making of India. All I want to state, with the utmost emphasis at my command, is that the description of India as a military country is wrong. Of all the countries in the world India is the least military. Though I have failed with the Working Committee in persuading them, at this supreme moment, to declare their undying

faith in non-violence as the only sovereign remedy for saving mankind from destruction, I have not lost the hope that the masses will refuse to bow to the Moloch of war but will rely upon their capacity for suffering to save the country's honour. How has the undoubted military valour of Poland served her against the superior forces of Germany and Russia? Would Poland unarmed have fared worse if she had met the challenge of these combined forces with the resolution to face death without retaliation? Would the invading forces have taken a heavier toll from an infinitely more valorous Poland? It is highly probable that their essential nature would have made them desist from a wholesale slaughter of innocents.

Of all the organizations of the world the Congress is the best fitted to show it the better way, indeed the only way, to the true life. Its non-violent experiment will have been in vain if, when India wakes up from the present fear, she does not show to the world the way of deliverance from the blood-bath. The criminal waste of life and wealth that is now going on will not be the last if India does not play her natural part by showing that human dignity is best preserved not by developing the capacity to deal destruction but by refusing to retaliate. I have no manner of doubt that if it is possible to train millions in the black art of violence which is the law of the beast, it is more possible to train them in the white art of non-violence which is the law of regenerate man. Anyway if the Commander-in-Chief will look beyond the Defence Forces, he will discover that the real India is not military but peace-loving.

Nor do I contemplate without uneasiness the prospect of Indian soldiers, trained after the modern manner, taking the motor spirit to their homes. Speed is not the end of life. Man sees more and lives more truly by walking to his duty.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

454. CONUNDRUMS

Thus asks a well-known Congressman :

1. What is your personal attitude towards this war consistent with non-violence?
2. Is it the same as or different from your attitude during the last war?

3. How could you with your non-violence actively associate with and help the Congress whose policy is based on violence in the present crisis?

4. What is your concrete plan based on non-violence to oppose or prevent this war?

The questions conclude a long friendly complaint about my seeming inconsistencies or my inscrutability. Both are old complaints, perfectly justified from the standpoint of the complainants, wholly unjustified from my own. Therefore my complainants and I must agree to differ. Only this let me say. At the time of writing I never think of what I have said before. My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth; I have saved my memory an undue strain; and what is more, whenever I have been obliged to compare my writing even of fifty years ago with the latest, I have discovered no inconsistency between the two. But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writing may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making the choice they should try to see if there is not an underlying and abiding consistency between the two seeming inconsistencies.

So far as my inscrutability is concerned, friends should take my assurance that there is never any attempt on my part to suppress my thought when it is relevant. Sometimes it arises from my desire to be brief. And sometimes it must be due to my own ignorance of the subject on which I may be called upon to give an opinion.

To give a typical instance, a friend¹ between whom and me there never is any mental reservation, thus writes² in anguish rather than anger :

In the not-improbable event of India being a theatre of war, is Gandhiji prepared to advise his countrymen to bare their breasts to the enemy's sword? A little while ago I would have pledged my word he would do so, but I am not confident any more.

I can only assure him that, notwithstanding my recent writings, he can retain his confidence that I would give the same advice as he expects I would have given before, or as I gave to the Czechs³ or the

¹ V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

² In a letter dated September 22, addressed to Mahadev Desai

³ *Vide* "If I were a Czech", 6-10-1938.

Abyssinians¹. My non-violence is made of stern stuff. It is firmer than the firmest metal known to the scientists. Yet, alas, I am painfully conscious of the fact that it has still not attained its native firmness. If it had, God would have shown me the way to deal with the many local cases of violence that I helplessly witness daily. This is said not in arrogance but in the certain knowledge of the power of perfect non-violence. I will not have the power of non-violence to be underestimated in order to cover my limitations or weaknesses.

Now for a few lines in answer to the questions :

1. My personal reaction towards this war is one of greater horror than ever before. I was not so disconsolate before as I am today. But the greater horror would prevent me today from becoming the self-appointed recruiting sergeant that I had become during the last war. And yet, strange as it may appear, my sympathies are wholly with the Allies. Willy-nilly this war is resolving itself into one between such democracy as the West has evolved and totalitarianism as it is typified in Herr Hitler. Though the part that Russia is playing is painful, let us hope that the unnatural combination will result in a happy though unintended fusion whose shape no one can foretell. Unless the Allies suffer demoralization, of which there is not the slightest indication, this war may be used to end all wars, at any rate of the virulent type that we see today. I have the hope that India, distraught though it is with internal dissensions, will play an effective part in ensuring the desired end and the spread of cleaner democracy than hitherto. This will undoubtedly depend upon how the Working Committee will ultimately act in the real tragedy that is being played on the world stage. We are both actors in and spectators of the drama. My line is cast. Whether I act as a humble guide of the Working Committee or, if I may use the same expression, without offence, of the Government, my guidance will be for the deliberate purpose of taking either or both along the path of non-violence, be the step ever so imperceptible. It is plain that I cannot force the pace either way. I can only use such power as God may endow my head or heart with for the moment.

2. I think I have covered the second question in answering the first.

3. There are degrees of violence as of non-violence. The

¹Vide "Message on Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", on or before 1-8-1935; "Statement on Italo-Abyssinian Crisis", on or before 1-8-1935.

Working Committee has not wilfully departed from the policy of non-violence. It could not honestly accept the real implications of non-violence. I felt that the vast mass of Congressmen had never clearly understood that in the event of danger from without they were to defend the country by non-violent means. All that they had learnt truly was that they could put up a successful fight, on the whole non-violent, against the British Government. Congressmen have had no training in the use of non-violence in other fields. Thus, for example, they had not yet discovered a sure method of dealing successfully in a non-violent manner with communal riots or goondaism. The argument is final inasmuch as it is based on actual experience.

I would not serve the cause of non-violence, if I deserted my best co-workers because they could not follow me in an extended application of non-violence. I therefore remain with them in the faith that their departure from the non-violent method will be confined to the narrowest field and will be temporary.

4. I have no ready-made concrete plan. For me too this is a new field. Only I have no choice as to the means. It must always be purely non-violent, whether I am closeted with the members of the Working Committee or with the Viceroy. Therefore what I am doing is itself part of the concrete plan. More will be revealed to me from day to day, as all my plans always have been. The famous non-co-operation resolution¹ came to me within less than 24 hours of the meeting of the A.I.C.C. at which it was moved in Calcutta in 1920; and so did practically the Dandi March.² The foundation of the first civil resistance under the then known name of passive resistance was laid by accident at a meeting of Indians in Johannesburg in 1906³ convened for the purpose of finding the means of combating the anti-Asiatic measure of those days. I had gone to the meeting with no preconceived resolution. It was born at the meeting. The creation is still expanding. But assuming that God had endowed me with full powers (which He never does), I would at once ask the English to lay down arms, free all their vassals, take pride in being called "Little Englanders" and defy all the totalitarians of the world to do their worst. Englishmen will then die unresistingly and go down to history as heroes of non-violence. I would further invite Indians to co-operate with Englishmen in this

¹ *Vide* "The Non-Co-Operation Resolution", 5-9-1920.

² On March 12, 1930.

³ *Vide* "The Mass Meeting", 11-9-1906.

godly martyrdom. It will be an indissoluble partnership drawn up in letters of the blood of their own bodies, not of their so-called enemies. But I have no such general power. Non-violence is a plant of slow growth. It grows imperceptibly but surely. And even at the risk of being misunderstood, I must act in obedience to "*the still small voice*"

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

455. *THE OLD REVOLUTIONARY*

Readers of *Harijan* know that after twenty-five years, part of which was spent in jail and sixteen in hiding as an absconder, Sardar Prithvi Singh finds himself a free man. He cannot call a life of freedom those sixteen years of dodging the C. I. D., assuming new names and new dresses as circumstances demanded. The reader will recall that Prithvi Singh made up his mind to discover himself to me last year when I was convalescing in Juhu, to confess his past sins and regulate his future under my guidance. I advised him to surrender himself to the police and purge his past by becoming a prisoner amenable to prison discipline by choice. I had told him that though I would try to secure his discharge, he must not bank upon my success but should be content, if necessary, to pass the rest of his life in prison. Quite cheerfully and light-heartedly he showed his preparedness to face life imprisonment. With sincere conviction he accepted the truth that voluntary imprisonment might be as good service of the country as life outside.

I am glad to be able to say that he was true to his word. The readers know from Mahadev Desai's description of him after his visit to the Sardar in Rawalpindi prison that he was a cent percent model prisoner. He endeared himself to his jailors who never found misplaced the trust that they had reposed in him. He learnt wool-spinning and cotton-spinning and worked at the first so assiduously that even his powerfully built body had to take relaxation from strenuous labour. First Pyarelal's and then Mahadev Desai's enthusiastic testimony in favour of Sardar Prithvi Singh's exemplary conduct in the jail decided me. Mahadev Desai felt confident that he could plead the cause successfully before Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan. I let him go. Sir Sikander made a generous response. He was impressed with the truth of Mahadev's description, fortified as it was by the uniformly good reports from the officials in charge of Sardar Prithvi Singh. Mahadev knocked also at the Viceregal gates. The result was

that Sardar Prithvi Singh was delivered to me by the authorities on the 22nd instant.

I greeted him with the remark that he had transferred himself from one jail to another and harder. He smiled a hearty assent. He knows that he is on his trial. He has been a staunch believer in violence as the only way to the deliverance of his country. He has to his credit examples of daring which may be equalled by some but surpassed by no revolutionary. His life is rich in romance. But by patient introspection he discovered that fundamentally his was a life of falsity, and that true deliverance could never come out of falsity. In spite of the glamour that surrounded his life of hiding and the adoration of his companions who marvelled at his exploits, he had wearied of the false life and the hiding. The gymnastic lessons he gave to hundreds of young men had given him no satisfaction. Fortunately he had companions like Nanabhai of Dakshinamurti. They guided his footsteps towards me. I have told him I will not be satisfied unless he becomes a better example of ahimsa in action than I could ever be. I was never full of *himsa* in action except the *himsa* of a coward. He was *himsa* in action personified. If now he has assimilated ahimsa, his non-violence should be infinitely richer in romance than his past violence. He should by God's grace be a modern exemplar of the proverb: "The greater the sinner the greater the saint." He has shown me authenticated leaves from his diary in which he describes his first night as a voluntary prisoner as death. I pick up the following striking passage from it:

Today is the day of my surrender when under divine guidance I surrender everything I can call my own. For a period of 25 years I had faced all perils and worked hard to acquire the light which could guide me in the field of service. As a revolutionary of good experience I used to look upon my achievements with pride. 19th May is an eventful day in my life—the day when I realized that by treading the trodden path I would not enrich my nation nor make any contribution to the uplift of humanity. This 19th May is the day of the greatest adventure of my life. The present life has no charm, no meaning for me. I must have a new life. How can I have it without embracing death? But to embrace death is not the objective. A new life is the objective. But how could I come to it except through death? There was not much room for reason. It was faith which led me to make my choice.

May the freedom the Sardar now enjoys prove that his notes were no creation of a heated imagination but were an expression of a yearning soul.

ON THE TRAIN TO SIMLA, September 25, 1939

Harijan, 30-9-1939

456. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI AND LAKSHMI

Unrevised

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I reach your letter of 31st ultimo only today.

Much of your argument perhaps now needs no reply.

You are unnecessarily perturbed about Jawaharlal. In spite of his limitations he is as good as gold. Have we all not our own limitations? You do not know how much members of the Working Committee need him. I cannot impose myself on anyone. My services are ungrudgingly given when they are needed.

I am with you for the most part in the matter of the Parliamentary programmes. But there are great difficulties. Let us see.

I hope you are steadily improving.

Love to Lakshmi¹ .

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI²

CHI. LAKSHMI,

Hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Satyamurti's daughter

² What follows is in Hindi.

457. *LETTER TO P. KODANDA RAO*

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

MY DEAR KODANDA RAO,

I have your and your partner's letters of good wishes. I know you too well to underrate your affection. I treasure it. About non-violence, I work in faith and I hope with the detachment prescribed in *Gita*.

My love to you both.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KODANDA RAO
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA 4

From a photostat: G.N. 6285

458. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I have read the accompanying. We should get help. I have assured Margarete.¹ You should write in detail. Remind me when we meet. Shankar must have met you. Wake up Chandan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7970

459. *LETTER TO PYARELAL*

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. PYARELAL,

You will have received the letter I wrote you from Nagpur. This is another. I find your absence irksome. Why am I afraid of you? Why this fear of writing or saying anything? Do you know the

¹ Margarete Spiegel

reason? I think I know it. Having frightened you many times I have myself become frightened. Perhaps I have no remedy for this fear. Is it that you too do not have the remedy? In that case the situation is doubly tragic. What has happened to my non-violence? What can non-violence have to do with fear? Think about it and send me a telegram if you can calm down and are able to forget my remarks.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

460. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ON THE TRAIN,

September 25, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Hope you are calm. Keep cheerful and take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 678

461. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ON THE TRAIN,

September 25, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I didn't like going away from you. I will try to return soon. Let God's will be done. Keep cheerful. Serve everyone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10016. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

462. *LETTER TO KANCHANBEHN M. SHAH*

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

I am sorry that I was not able to talk with you. After I return I will find time at the first opportunity. Try to befriend Amtul Salaam. I hope Munnalal is calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8291. Also C.W. 7055. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

463. *LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA*

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I got your letter. It is good. Sardarji has also written. We shall talk when we meet. The story of the Muslim brothers is interesting. By the time you return from Asafpur, you will know about [the] Delhi [dairy]. You will return home only after finishing the job. I am going to Simla. I shall be there for two or three days. I hope Ishwardas is doing good work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1925

464. *LETTER TO Y. M. DADOO*

ON THE TRAIN [TO WARDHA],
September 27, 1939

MY DEAR DADOO,

Haji Ismail Bhabha writes complaining that satyagrahis are acting violently, that they had gone to the June meeting taking lethal weapons with them, that they were exploiting Muslim women, etc. I have written to him saying that I am writing to you. I suggest your seeing him. Our duty is to see even the opponent's viewpoint and

meet him wherever we can.

I hope things are shaping and proceeding well there.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 4905. Also C.W. 1318. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

465. LETTER TO LADY RAZA ALI

[AS AT] SEGAON,

September 27, 1939

MY DEAR POORVI,

I am writing this on a moving train. Sir Raza¹ told me that you were ailing. I promised to write to you and in order that I may not forget I am writing this now. I hope this will find you fully restored.

Love to you all.

BAPU

LADY RAZA ALI
78 JONES STREET
KIMBERLEY, S. AFRICA

From a photostat: G.N. 7749

466. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 27, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

I arrived this morning. I am leaving for Wardha this evening. You will come, won't you? The car is coming to take you. Come with your luggage. You can keep the car waiting for a while. You will have the opportunity to see Mother and others, won't you?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ Syed Raza Ali, who was the Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, 1935-38; Member, Central Legislative Assembly, since 1939

467. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

During my last journey to Simla my attention was drawn to the bitterness with which, it was alleged, the Muslim League and its doings were being criticized in some Congress organs. I have not seen any such criticism for the simple reason that I do not see the papers except for a few moments daily. But if there is any ground for such complaint, it should certainly be removed. The Muslim League is a great organization. Its President was at one time an ardent Congressman. He was the rising hope of the Congress. His battles with Lord Willingdon cannot be forgotten. The Jinnah Hall of the Bombay Congress is a standing monument of the President's labours for the Congress and a mark of Congressmen's generous appreciation of his services. The League contains many members who were wholeheartedly with the Congress during the memorable Khilafat days. I refuse to think that these erstwhile comrades can be as bitter in their hearts towards their fellow-workers of yesterday as their speeches and writings of today will show. It is, therefore, wrong of Congressmen and Congress organs if they are bitter against the League or its individual members. The Congress policy of non-violence should put an easy restraint upon the speech, writings and actions of Congressmen in their dealings with the League and its members. They must resolutely believe and hope that sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, there is to be communal unity, not superficial but real and lasting.

Zahid, the late Big Brother's¹ son, who met me in Simla said, "We must not quarrel. Blood is thicker than water. We are of the same blood. You must work for unity." Other Muslim friends who met me during the journey said: "You must bring about unity. You alone can do it. Heaven help us if unity is not achieved in your lifetime." I have a similar message from a great Muslim.

All this may flatter my vanity. But I know that it does humble me. I wish God had given me the power to realize the hope genuinely expressed by so many Muslim friends. I assure them that not a day passes but I think of and pray for the unity. It is neither for want of will nor effort that I have to be a helpless witness of so much bitterness and quarrelling between the two. I have not lost hope that I shall live to see real unity established between not only Hindus and Muslims but

¹ Shaukat Ali, who died on November 27, 1938

all the communities that make India a nation. If I knew the way to achieve it today, I know that I have the will and the strength to take it, however difficult or thorny it may be. I know too that the shortest and the surest way lies through non-violence. Some Muslim friends tell me that Muslims will never subscribe to unadulterated non-violence. With them, they say, violence is as lawful and necessary as non-violence. The use of either depends upon circumstances. It does not need Koranic authority to justify the lawfulness of both. That is the well-known path the world has traversed through the ages. There is no such thing as unadulterated violence in the world. But I have heard it from many Muslim friends that the Koran teaches the use of non-violence.

It regards forbearance as superior to vengeance. The very word Islam means peace, which is non-violence. Badshah Kha¹ a staunch Muslim who never misses his *namaz* and Ramzan, has accepted out-and-out non-violence as his creed. It would be no answer to say that he does not live up to his creed, even as I know to my shame that I do not. If there is difference in our actions, the difference is not one of kind, it is of degree. But argument about non-violence in the holy Koran is an interpolation, not necessary for my thesis.

I hold that for the full play of non-violence only one party need believe in it. Indeed if both believe in it and live up to it, there is no appreciation or demonstration of it. To live at peace with one another is the most natural thing to do. But neither party gains the merit that the exercise of non-violence carries with it. Unfortunately, at the present moment, those Hindus who do not know the use of violence, though they have it in their hearts, are sorry for their incapacity and would fain learn the trick—I won't call it the art—of violence, so as to be able to match what they describe as Muslim violence. And if peace is to be brought about by both parties being equally matched in the use of violence both offensive and defensive, I know that peace will not come in my lifetime and, if it came, I should not care to be witness of it. It will be an armed peace to be broken at any moment. Such has been the peace in Europe. Is not the present war enough to make one sick of such peace?

Muslim friends who hope much from me will perhaps now recognize my agony for the unattainment of peace in spite of the travail that I have gone through and am still going through. They

¹ Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

should also see that my principal work lies through teaching at least the Hindus to learn the art of non-violence unless I can bring the Muslims to the position the Ali Brothers and their associates took up during the Khilafat days. They used to say: "Even if our Hindu brethren cut us to pieces, yet will we love them. They are our kith and kin." The late Maulana Abdul Bari used to say: "Muslims of India will never forget the ungrudging and unconditional support that Hindus have given to us at this critical period of our history." I am sure that both Hindus and Muslims of those days are the same today that they were then. But times have changed and with them have changed our manners. I have no shadow of a doubt that our hearts will meet some day. What seems impossible today for us God will make possible tomorrow. For that day I work, live and pray.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, September 28, 1939

Harijan, 7-10-1939

468. NOTES

A STRIKING THOUGHT

A Pathan friend who met me during the journey, talking about violent deeds, said: "You know the Government is strong enough to put down any violence however organized it may be in our country, but your non-violence is uncanny. You have given our country a wonderful weapon. No Government in the world can put down non-violence." I complimented my visitor on the striking thought he gave me. In one sentence he presented the matchless beauty of non-violence. If only India can understand the full implications of the remark so naturally, so effortlessly made by the Pathan friend, she will become unconquerable in the face of any combination of invaders. Ten to one there will be no raid on a people trained in non-violence. Indeed the weakest State can render itself immune from attack if it learns the art of non-violence. But a small State, no matter how powerfully armed it is, cannot exist in the midst of a powerful combination of well-armed States. It has to be absorbed by or be under the protection of one of the members of such a combination. Well does Badshah Khan say, as reported by Pyarelal during my last tour in his province :

We would have fared ill if we had not learnt the lesson of non-violence. We have taken it up quite selfishly. We are born fighters and we keep up the

tradition by fighting amongst ourselves. Once a murder takes place in a family or a clan it becomes a point of honour to avenge it. There is no such thing generally as forgiveness among us. And so there is avenging and re-avenging and re-re-avenging. And thus the vicious circle never ends. This non-violence has come to us as a positive deliverance.

What is true of the Frontier Province is true of all of us. Without knowing it we move in the vicious circle of violence. A little reflection and corresponding practice should enable us to get out of the circle.

NARSINGHGARH

The reader knows that at the invitation of the Dewan of Narsinghgarh and with the consent of the Secretary of the Central India States Conference I had sent Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to inquire into certain allegations made against the State. The Rajkumari was given every facility by the State to make what inquiry she liked. Shri Kanhaiyalal Vaidya was present during the enquiry. The Rajkumari's way was made easy by the State giving her every facility. The immediate cause of complaint was soon settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. The Maharaja has given cautious assurances of civil liberty. The people of these States have hitherto been strangers to civil liberty and all it means. I hope the Maharaja and his advisers will remember that civil liberty means the fullest liberty, consistent with non-violence, to speak, write and do what the people like, even though it may mean strong criticism of the acts of the State. He has, however given full permission to Shri Vaidya to do khadi, Harijan and other constructive work. He has also requested the Rajkumari to send Shri Shankerlal Banker or a representative of the A.I.S.A. to the State in order to explore the possibilities of khadi work in the State which grows plenty of cotton. He has also shown interest in other village industries and basic education. I hope that the beginning so well made will continue uninterrupted, and that the people of Narsinghgarh will show political, economic, social and moral progress on an ever-increasing scale. From the correspondence I had with the Dewan, I have reason to hope for the best. Much will depend upon the sympathy of the Maharaja and his advisers towards all-round progress and the restrained manner in which the workers use the liberty given by the State. I must congratulate the Maharaja and the Dewan on having shown wisdom and courage in calling in the Congress aid (for my aid is virtually Congress aid) for settling their domestic difficulty. This is perhaps the second instance of its kind.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA, September 28, 1939

Harijan, 7-10-1939

469. ANSWER TO QUESTION¹

September 28, 1939

I am an optimist, I have pinned my faith in hope. The world lives on hope and so do I.

I am sure that I shall get something.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-9-1939

470. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS²

SEGAON,

September 28, 1939

An advance copy of Reuter's summary of the Lords' debate on Indian affairs has been shown to me. Perhaps silence on my part at this juncture would be a distinct disservice both to India and England. I was unprepared for the old familiar flavour in the debate in the shape of drawing comparisons unflattering to the Congress. I maintain that the Congress is an all-inclusive body. Without offence to anybody it can be said of it that it is the one body that has represented for over half a century, without a rival, the vast masses of India irrespective of class or creed. It has not a single interest opposed to that of the Mussalmans or that of the people of the States. Recent years have shown unmistakably that the Congress represents beyond doubt the interests of the people of the States. It is that organization which has asked³ for a clear definition of the British intentions. If the British are fighting for the freedom of all, then their representatives have to state in the clearest possible terms that the freedom of India is necessarily included in the war aim. The content of such freedom can only be decided by Indians and them alone. Surely it is wrong for Lord Zetland to complain as he does, though in gentle terms, that the Congress should, at this juncture when Britain is engaged in a life-and-death struggle, ask for a clear declaration of British intentions. I suggest that the Congress has done nothing strange or less than

¹ The source reported that "when Gandhiji passed through Nagpur *en route* to Wardha", he was asked by some people "about his interview with H.E. the Viceroy".

² This appeared under the title "Open a New Chapter". The statement was also published by the *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* on September 29.

³ *Vide* Appendices "Congress Working Committee Resolution", after 18-7-1939; "Working Committee's Manifesto", 14-9-1939; and "A.I.C.C. Resolution", 14-10-1939.

honourable in asking for such a declaration. Only a free India's help is of value. And the Congress has every right to know that it can go to the people and tell them that at the end of the war India's status as an independent country is as much assured as that of Great Britain. As a friend of the British I, therefore, appeal to English statesmen that they will forget the old language of imperialists and open a new chapter for all those who have been held under imperial bondage.

Harijan, 7-10-1939

471. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
September 29, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter after I had sent you the wire. However, I intend to send Rajkumari as I informed you in the wire. She will certainly be of some use. She will see Mr. Gibson and Virawala Saheb, do the work which I have suggested from a humanitarian point of view and such other things. She will visit other places if she likes. Please arrange about her stay, etc. She will not like to run about very much, and, therefore, don't make her do that. Arrange to send her back on the 10th or the 11th.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got Chhaganlal's letter. I will make arrangements for the money only after consulting you. I will send with Rajkumari whatever yarn I have spun. The rest with anybody who happens go to that side later.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8563. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

472. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEGAON,
September 29, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI¹,

How are you? I had made inquiries regarding Dharampur. Nobody recommends it. The climate of Dharampur is certainly good, but the sanatorium is not reputed to be good. It would be difficult to get accommodation at Almora. It is reserved only for patients from the United Provinces. If you don't feel comfortable there, we can arrange something in Nagpur. Show this to Jugatram² and then write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9728

473. LETTER TO MANUBEHN AND SURENDRA
MASHRUWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 29, 1939

CHI. MANUDI, SURENDRA,

Ba gave me the news about Surendra's illness. How is he now? I could not reply to your letter. I am enclosing a letter¹ to Kunvarji. You will forward it to him, won't you? I will be going again to Delhi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1575. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

¹ Husband of Rami, Harilal Gandhi's daughter

² Jugatram Vaidya

¹ *Vide* the preceding item

474. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 29, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There can be no post from Simla today. I therefore, do not know what the position is. There is no letter from Vijaya. Shankar was to come. Why didn't he? Let him have his meal here tomorrow. I will talk with him at 11.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10796

475. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON,

September 29, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I get no time to write to you. Ramdevji came to see me. He could not speak and broke down. Vidyavati too was present. All of them asked after you. I arrived here yesterday. I will be going to Delhi again on Sunday. Are the children all right? Ba told me that you had fallen ill. You ought to use a mosquito-net—you, Ramdas and the children, all of you. Mosquito-nets manufactured by the Calico Mills are good. Have you taken away the Gujarati 'General Knowledge about Health'? If you have, return it to me. I have made some changes in it. If you want another copy, I will send it on.

I am not writing separately to Ramdas. Take this letter to be for both of you. Write to me. Ramdas also should write. How are things with you ?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

476. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 30, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There may or may not be any sin in touch, but violation of a pledge is a very great sin indeed. If, however, the pledge is violated

again, you and Kanchan should quietly leave the Ashram. To enable you to keep the vow, you should not talk with each other, nor work together or take service from each other. I would advise you to go away for some time to Ramana Maharshi's Ashram. If you think that the self-control suggested above is beyond your capacity, you should give up ambition to cultivate it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8560. Also C.W. 7054. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

477. NOTE TO PYARELAL

September 30, 1939

You cannot write an article without knowing anything about the kind of paper for which you intend to write. You can write one thing for the *Modern Review*, another thing for the *Chronicle* and yet another for the *Harijan*. You do not even know where the paper is. Is it some obscure print-out or a reputed paper? The article in question can only be for a paper like the *Statesman*. It is good as an article. But it is not accurate. It is only in praise of the experiment at Segaoon. Mentally I decry it every day. I will not support what you write. There is exaggeration in the article and, in avoiding the mention of the shortcomings of the people living at Segaoon, it has become wholly false. Anyone coming here with the impression gathered from that article would go back disappointed. Hence, so long as the other side too is not presented it would be mere untruth.

BAPU

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

478. TELEGRAM TO G. V. GURJALE¹

[September 1939]²

RECEIVED LETTER, WIRE. NO RIGHT INTERFERE YOUR RESOLVE.³ MAY
GOD GUIDE YOU KEEP YOUR HEART FREE FROM ANGER.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

479. NOTES

THANKS

Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has made much of my seventy-first birthday. He has sent me his book⁴ of praises from friends, known and unknown to me. With it he has been good enough to send also a covering letter of further appreciation. I do not know when I shall have the time to go through all the tributes collected in the volume. I can only pray that God may give me the capacity to live up to the contributors' picture of me whatever it may be. To Sir Sarvepalli and all those who have sent me their blessings and greetings, I return my thanks hereby. It is impossible for me to send personal acknowledgements.

One warning I should like to issue to my admirers. Some would like to erect my statues in public places, some others would have portraits, yet others would proclaim my birthday as a public holiday. C. Rajagopalachari knows me well and so he has wisely vetoed the proposal to declare my birthday a public holiday. These are days of dissensions and discord. I should feel deeply humiliated if my name became in any way an occasion for accentuating them. Avoidance of such opportunity is a real service to the country and me. Statues, photographs and the like have no place today. The only praise I would like and treasure is promotion of the activities to which my life is dedicated. He or she who does a single act to produce communal harmony or to destroy the demon of untouchability or to advance the cause of the villages, brings me real joy and peace. Workers are

¹ Also known as Bhikshu Nirmalananda

² In the source the telegram is kept among the September 1939 items; *vide also* "Letter to G. V. Gurjale", 18-10-1939.

³ According to Pyarelal, the addressee had decided to go on an indefinite fast unless the trustees of the Sri Kripapuriswarar temple allowed Harijans to enter the temple in accordance with the public wish.

⁴ *Mahatma Gandhi—Essays and Reflections on Mahatma Gandhi*

striving during these days to dispose of the khadi stock that has accumulated in various khadi bhandars. I can conceive no greater or more tangible blessing to me than to know that the whole of the surplus khadi stock was taken up by the people during the khadi week or fortnight mis-named after me. I am nothing without or apart from my activities.

FURTHER FALSEHOODS

I had the misfortune to remark the other day¹ on the sanatanist propaganda being supported by falsehoods. I have the following wires from Madura and Kumbakonam respectively :

Srirangam temple being forcibly entered today. Armed Madura temple peons dispersing opposing orthodox worshippers. This is waging war during world war. Pray issue immediate instructions suspending such high-handedness. We have after all to live together. K. R. VENKATARAMA IYER.

Minister Rajan threatening Harijan-entry Srirangam with police. Pray interference to avoid bloodshed. Inform Rajaji. KUPPUSAMI.

Rajaji happened to be in Wardha when these wires were received. He gave the following reply :

There is no Harijan-entry being tried in Srirangam. This is impossible without Government consent, and the Government has not yet given any such consent.

In the face of this flat denial I can only regard the wires as figments of imagination. It is noteworthy that there is no complaint from Srirangam itself. Madura and Kumbakonam are too far from Srirangam to know first-hand what may happen there. Trichy is the only town near enough to Srirangam to know events there, if the people interested themselves in the happenings in that temple town. An opposition that requires palpable falsehoods to support it, must be on its last legs. I have seen correspondence which shows that Meenakshi temple has not been boycotted by anybody except a few orthodox Brahmins. It is as popular as ever with the vast mass of temple-going population.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, October 1, 1939

Harijan, 7-10-1939

¹ *Vide* "Temple Entry", 18-9-1939.

480. LACK OF SENSE OF HUMOUR

I cannot resist publishing the following very frank and well-meaning letter addressed to the Editor :

I earnestly request you to be kind enough to give me a few minutes to clear some of my doubts. I write this letter not as a critic. I am an ardent seeker after truth and one of the many 'Ekalavyas' of Bapuji.

I am rather very much pained to read the following in this week's *Harijan* in the course of a note under the caption "Why Only Prohibition"¹ written by Bapuji: "Therefore if I treated these evils as I have treated the drink evil and if I begin to organize picketing in respect of them, I should lose my caste, lose my mahatmaship and even lose my head which of course has very little value at this time of my life. But as I do not wish to suffer the triple loss, I must allow my correspondent and others like him to think that I am shirking an obvious duty."

I was not prepared for the above note, especially the portion quoted by me, along with his previous writings and my reading of his life. For, I was, and am still, of the opinion that Bapuji stands for 'Truth' and he would be ready to lose any donation whatever it may be, his mahatmaship, his caste and, if necessary, even his head for the sake of Truth, i. e., God.

Now let us examine some of his writings. In his *Autobiography* (Part V, Ch. X) he says when he accepted Dudabhai, an untouchable, and his family, "All monetary help, however, was stopped. . . . With the stopping of monetary help came rumours of proposed social boycott. We were prepared for all this."²

This clearly indicates that he was not ready to accept donations or maintain his caste at the cost of his principle, i. e., Truth.

In an article "Truth v. *Brahmacharya*" (*Young India*, February 25, 1926) he says: "My mahatmaship is worthless. It is due to my outward activities, due to my politics, which is the least part of me and is therefore evanescent. What is of abiding worth is my insistence on truth, non-violence and *brahmacharya*."³ In yet another article he has tried to show the "Handicap of Mahatmaship"⁴ (*Young India*, Nov. 8, 1928).

What else is necessary to show that he cares naught for his mahatmaship?

¹ Vide "Notes", 21-8-1939.

² Vide "An Autobiography-Part V, On The Anvil", Chapter X.,

³ Vide "Truth v. *Brahmacharya*", 25-2-1926.

⁴ Vide "Handicap of Mahatmaship", 8-11-1928.

Moreover he says in the course of a conversation reported in *Harijan*, August 29, 1936: "I am here to serve no one else but myself, to find my own realization. . . . Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political religious have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God."¹ In another place (*Young India*, October 11, 1928) he says: "I know too that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself."²

I hope that these are enough to prove that he stands for Truth and not for anything else. It may be perhaps that he does not recognize these evils, viz., gambling, race, cinema, etc., as such or so dangerous as the evil of drink or untouchability to lead an agitation against them, "to wrestle with and against them at the cost of life itself".

Anyhow I am sure that there will be a number of readers of *Harijan* like me who will not be prepared to read a statement like this from the pen of Bapuji. Now I ask you what does he stand for? For donations, caste, mahatmaship, etc., at the cost of Truth, or for Truth at the cost of all these? Will you kindly refer this to Bapuji and correct the misunderstanding created by the above note ?

If the writer, who is manifestly a close student of my writings and is himself a schoolmaster, took seriously my note in *Harijan* about gambling, etc., there must be quite a number of other readers who too had the same doubts as the correspondent. The correspondent has quoted enough from my writings to enable him to know that the note was written in a humorous vein. But unfortunately many of us have no sense of humour. Therefore, in order to secure appreciation, humour evidently has to be boldly labelled as such. The reader should have known that by writing the note I had expressed my disapproval of cinemas, races, share market, gambling and the like. I had tried to show also that these vices were fashionable and therefore were not capable of being dealt with like prohibition. I claim to be a practical reformer. I know almost instinctively what vices are ripe for being publicly dealt with. Of course it may be that I lack the courage to tackle the others and cover my cowardice by pleading untimeliness. No man can get over his limitations beyond a point.

But my correspondent has shown from my writings that at the time I had the courage to the face unpopularity and loss of everything. Let those who might have been disturbed by my innocent note

¹ Vide "A Discussion with Maurice Frydman", on or before 25-8-1936.

² Vide "God Is" 11-10-1928.

reassure themselves that I retain the same spirit as before to face difficulties and trials in the prosecution of public causes. Time has not weakened it in any way; it has, if possible, strengthened it. But I am humble enough to restrain my ambition and to feel thankful to God for what capacity He has vouchsafed to me for the service of the country and humanity.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, October 1, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

481. LETTER TO GOBIND DAS CONSUL

ON THE TRAIN,
October 1, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just glanced through your production for five minutes. I have nothing whatsoever to say against the front page or the contents. You have every right to express your views in the manner that may seem best to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: Mahatma Gandhi—The Great Rogue of India, between pp. 4 and 5

482. UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE OF TRAVANCORE

An evil fate seems to dog the career of the people of Travancore in so far as they are represented by the State Congress. The Congress is composed of some of its bravest and most self-sacrificing men. But unfortunately there never have been happy relations between them and the able Dewan of the State. The charges brought against him by the Congress in the preliminary stages of the movement for responsible government somehow or other acerbated the relations. The framers of the charges, as I happen to know from personal conversations with them, honestly believed in them. But when I reasoned with them that they were bound to withdraw them if their cause was the attainment of responsible government, and not the removal of the Dewan—a case in which India could not be interested—they saw the wisdom of my advice and promptly acted upon it. This cleared the

ground for them and made their case unassailable. But I feel that the estrangement created by the charges between the Dewan and the leaders has persisted. I wish it has been otherwise. Though civil disobedience has been discontinued and personal talks between the Dewan and the leaders have taken place, cordiality between them has been lacking. On the contrary there has been a ring of distrust about their talks. The Dewan has kept himself at a safe distance from the leaders. Negotiations after a struggle are generally preceded by discharge of prisoners and withdrawal of prosecutions and removal of other disabilities. In Travancore these things have not happened. Cancellations of lawyers' *sanads* and suspension of elected members of the Assembly remain. In fact there is not much sign of an advance by the State towards the leaders. And now comes like a bombshell suspension of negotiations for political reform. These are the words of the Travancore communique¹ :

For reasons which must be obvious and which have, for instance, influenced the Government of India in their decision² regarding the Federal negotiations, no conversations can possibly take place regarding any constitutional reforms until normal conditions are restored and the position is stabilized.

This is followed by the following minatory warning :

With reference to the statement to the Press issued by the President of the Travancore State Congress and his letter to the Dewan, Government wish to point out while they do not intend to curb or put a check upon ordinary activities of political organizations and while their ideas are unaltered as to consultations with political organizations and leaders as soon as conditions permit, they cannot possibly allow an organized scheme of agitation to be conducted at this juncture, in view of the present situation and especially the likelihood of increased unemployment owing to war conditions and the public excitement that may be caused by the situation regarding foodstuffs and other commodities. Such a scheme of agitation is bound to give rise to serious repercussions and results, and the Government, who have a duty to protect the law-abiding inhabitants of the State, cannot possibly take the risks involved thereby nor can they at present devote any attention to questions relating to constitutional demands. Government desire to warn the Travancore State

¹ Dated September 23, 1939

² Addressing a joint session of both the Houses of the Central Legislature on September 11, the Viceroy had announced that the work in connection with the preparations for Federation were held in suspense in view of the war.

Congress and other organizations with similar programme that they will be forced to take steps both under the ordinary law and under the Defence of Travancore Proclamation and Rules for maintaining normal conditions and a peaceful atmosphere in the State.

The reason for suspension of contemplated reform is wholly unconvincing. So far as I know in no State has such suspension been thought necessary. Indeed I venture to suggest that the offer of the States to the British Government lacks the spirit assumed to be behind the aims of the Allies, viz., the saving of democracy for the world. The States' offer to be consistent with the time spirit has to carry with it the will and the co-operation of their people. This is clearly impossible if the people of the States do not feel that they are partners with the Princes in the administration of the States. Viewed in this light, the grant to the people of the greatest measures of responsibility consistent with their own safety becomes a first and first-class war measure so far as the States are concerned. And who will say that the people of Travancore, where education has for years been given to the people on a liberal scale, are ready for shouldering the burden of managing their own affairs? The responsibility in large States can mean no more than that of a big corporation in the Provinces. This suspension of political advance in Travancore on the ground of war comes as a shock and a surprise. What connection political reform in the States has with the suspension of Federation is not easy to understand. But for the opposition of the Princes, the Muslim League and the Congress, Federation would have come long ago; and I make bold to say that the British Government would gladly bring it in today if the three parties desire it. Political reform in the States is overdue and has to come irrespective of Federation.

I mean no offence to the Princes when I say that generally speaking they may in a sense be compared to Herr Hitler. The difference is that they have not his dash, energy, resourcefulness and capacity. Every one of the Princes has the powers of absolute autocrats, and they have times without number exercised such powers. In their own sphere they enjoy powers which the British monarchs have not possessed for centuries. The present British King is merely the first citizen of his country. He cannot arrest a single person at his mere wish. He cannot administer corporal punishment to a single person without coming like any other citizen under the law of the State. This severe limitation on the British monarchy is rightly the envy of the world. But every Indian Prince is a Hitler in his own State.

He can shoot his people without coming under any law. Hitler enjoys no greater powers. If I am not mistaken, the German Constitution does impose some limits on the Fuhrer. Great Britain's position as the self-constituted guardian of democracy is compromised so long as it has more than 500 autocrats as its allies. The Princes will render Great Britain a real service when they can offer their services not as so many autocrats but as true representatives of their people. I venture, therefore, to suggest to Sir C. P. Rama-swami Aiyar, the distinguished constitutional lawyer that he is, that he has ill served the people and the Prince of Travancore and the British Government by suspending political reform and threatening the State Congress with dire consequences if it dares to carry on the contemplated agitation for political advance during these times.

NEW DELHI, October 2, 1939

Harijan, 7-10-1939

483. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,
NEW DELHI,

October 2, 1939

CHI. AMRIT,

This is just to send you love. We had a boisterous journey—crowds throughout. The Gwalior crowd was the worst. I was calm. I had to take care of my silence. You must not overstrain yourself. I have gone through most of the letters in the file.¹

Majid must have come. I trust the other files are being looked into. The mail received up to Monday, i. e., of two days, could have been despatched.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3937. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7246

¹ The rest of the letter is in Hindi.

484. MESSAGE TO BRITISH PEOPLE

October 3, 1939

It will be a very serious tragedy in this tragic war if Britain is found to fail in the very first test of sincerity of her professions about democracy. Do those declarations, or do they not, include the full freedom of India according to the wishes of her people? This is a very simple and elementary question asked by the Congress. The Congress has the right to ask that question. I hope that the answer will be as it is expected by the Congress and, let me say, all those who wish well by Great Britain.

The Hindu, 4-10-1939

485. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

NEW DELHI,

October 5, 1939

AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT, ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD
LONDON

RECEIVED². HAVE WRITTEN REGULARLY AIRMAIL.
UNHOPEFUL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1512

486. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,

October 6, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have Sushila's letter. No matter what happens and how it happens, we must patiently and cheerfully bear it and do our duty. The letter for Medh is enclosed. Knowing that my Diwali greetings may not reach you with this, I intend to send a few words by cable.

¹ This was sent through *The Manchester Guardian* correspondent in India.

² The reference is to the addressee's cable (G.N. 1511) of September 30, which read: "My birthday wish is increased strength your peace work for India and world. Hampered by lack direct information from you."

Have the two organizations there come together? Manilal and the children must be well now. We shall reach Wardha this evening.

The accompanying is for Medh.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4906

487. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,

October 6, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

I agree with what Chitre writes about [your] diet. I see you have gained nothing special by staying there. If you come over to Wardha, we can try some other ways. You must get all right. If my suggestion appeals to you, start immediately. If you have no money, borrow some from someone there. I could not understand Chitre's question regarding money.

Blessings from

BAPU

PROF. V. G. DESAI

T. B. SANATORIUM

P. O. VANIVILAS MOHALLA

MYSORE

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7488. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

488. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. Where do I have the time to write to my heart's content? You should complete what you have taken in hand. Do not think of coming before the long vacation. I may not be able to write, but you should keep on writing. Dwarkadas, Damayanti and the children will be well. We shall be reaching Wardha today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN ASAR
NEW ERA SCHOOL
HUGHES ROAD
BOMBAY-7

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

489. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

CHI. SURU,

I have your letter, but only one. No matter how displeased I may be, I do expect a letter from you both. Is not my displeasure born of my love? There has been no letter from Kanti. That is just like him and so I do not mind. All I want is that both of you remain happy, healthy and pure. May God help you rise.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SARASWATI GANDHI
C/O SHRI PILLAY
NEYATINKARA
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6177. Also C.W. 3451. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

490. LETTER TO KUNDAR DIWAN

ON THE TRAIN,
October 6, 1939

BHAI KUNDAR,

I do not write to you because Krishnachandra has been writing. Balkrishna will certainly gain strength. Rest and diet are normal prescription. He complains about lack of sleep. I am thinking of doing something about it. I may ask him to come over to Segaon during the cold season. I shall consult the doctor.

What suggestions can I give you regarding the *takli*? We are reaching Wardha this evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 215

491. AN EYE-OPENER

The following note on the development of khadi work in the Ernad taluk up to the end of June 1939 should open the eyes of sceptics as to the possibilities of khadi as a ready-made means of giving remunerative employment to the needy millions :¹

Hand-spinning was started by the A.I.S.A. in Ernad taluk as an experimental measure at Pulickal in June 1937. The area has had no tradition for hand-spinning. Therefore, all those who took to hand-spinning had to be taught the art of spinning and carding afresh. . . .

This successful experiment conducted at Pulickal encouraged the A.I.S.A. to include in the Government grant for khadi for 1938-39 a scheme for starting four more centres in the taluk, viz., Nediyruppu, Pandikkad, Randhani and Tirurangadi. . . By the end of June 1939 there were 1,233 spinners trained up in the taluk. . . .

The total expenditure. . . has come to Rs. 5,830-8-10. . . The cost of implements itself comes to Rs. 3,482-0-6, the whole of which was met out of the Government grant. . . Rs. 488-15-9 was spent out of A.I.S.A. funds in the initial stages at Pulickal and other centres. . . .

Due to . . . proper training to spinners, the quality of yarn produced is of a very high standard. . .

¹ Only extracts from the note by C.K. Karth, Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ernad, are reproduced here.

From February 1939, while we insisted on quality, we also increased the spinning wages by 17.19 per cent of the cost of yarn. . . .

Efforts are being made to induce the spinners to be habitual wearers of khadi. To facilitate this work yarn deposits are collected from each spinner. . . .

. . . Khadi. . . . at nearly cost price is being issued to spinners in exchange for yarn thus deposited. . . .

A khadi weaving centre is being started at Tirurangadi. . . . There is still a demand from different places for introduction of hand-spinning. A separate scheme for further development of khadi work in the taluk has been submitted as part of the scheme of utilization of the Government grant for 1939-40.

Harijan, 7-10-1939

492. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
October 7, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I missed you last night. But I was glad to learn that you had gone to fulfil your mission.¹ You will keep your health in proper order and condition. I found the papers in extraordinarily good condition. You will leave there on 11th instant and report yourself in Segaon on 13th. Of course a car will await you at the station.

More from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3660. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6469

¹ The reference seems to be to her visit to Morvi; *vide* "Famine Work in Morvi", 16-10-1939; also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-9-1939.

493. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

October 7, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope the *Rentia Baras* programme will pass off well under Rajkumari Amrit Kaurbehn's chairmanship. I very much like your decision to make the spinning *yajna* a permanent feature, and I hope large numbers of men and women will welcome it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8567. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

494. *LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

October 7, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. Do not be so slack again. It is all right if you have gone to Varad. As long as one breathes, one should not lose hope. Both the views are correct. The best thing is to rely on Ramanama. And it is also good to put in best efforts. I am sending your letter to Amritlal. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7119. Also C.W. 4611. Courtesy: Vijaybehn M. Pancholi

495. *LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 7, 1939

CHI. JAMNADAS,

What have you been doing? Why don't you make enough effort to build up your body? How can you afford to feel old at this age? Now stay there and take rest and leave Rajkot only after you have fully recovered your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8565. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

496. *LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I got your postcard. I had made arrangements for you at Nagpur. But since you went to Miraj, I wired to you not to come away in haste. The poor have but to put up with common hardships. I, therefore, encouraged you to stay on. Now patiently overcome the other difficulties that may arise and see if you derive any benefit. If you do not improve write to me immediately. Keep me informed about your progress. Do not send for the children. The best plan would be for Bali¹ to take them to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Surendra will write more from Bombay.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9729

497. *INDIA'S ATTITUDE*

On the 27th August last, i.e., just before the senseless war broke out, Shrimati Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya wrote to me as follows :

¹ Balibehn M. Adalaja, sister of the addressee's mother-in-law

I have sent you an appeal through *The Bombay Chronicle*, asking you to voice the attitude of India and of the exploited peoples of the East on the present situation. What I meant was not mere reiteration of our old position that we can have nothing to do with this imperialist war, but something more than that. The present conflict is mainly centred round the usual scramble for colonies, or spheres of influence as they are now called in polite phraseology. On this question the world thinks there are only two opinions, for it hears only two views: one which believes in the maintaining of the *status quo*; the other which wants a change but on the same basis, in other words, a redistribution of the loot and the right to exploit, which of course means war. It is in the very nature of things that such a redistribution can never come about without an armed conflict. Whether there will be anyone or anything left to enjoy, of course, is another question. But the world is mainly torn between these two. If the thesis of the one is accepted, then that of the other should also be. For, if England and France have the right to rule over large tracts and big nations, then Germany and Italy have an equal right. There is as little moral justification in the former countries crying halt to Hitler as there is in his what he calls his rightful claims.

That there is a third view the world hardly seems to think, for it rarely hears it. And it is so essential that it should find expression: the voice of the people who are mere pawns in the game. Neither Danzig nor the Polish corridor is the issue. The issue is the principle on which the whole of this present Western civilization is based; the right of the strong to rule and exploit the weak. Therefore it is centered round the whole colonial question, and Hitler and Mussolini are never tired of reminding the world of that. And that is exactly the reason why England has raised the cry of the Empire in danger. This question therefore vitally concerns all of us.

We are against the *status quo*. We are fighting against it for we want a change in it. But our alternative is not war for we know that the real solution does not lie there. We have an alternative to offer which is the only solution of this horrible muddle and the key to future world peace. It is this which I would like to be placed before the world. It may seem today like a cry in the wilderness; still we know that it is the voice which will ultimately prevail; and it is those hands which seem so feeble before these mailed fists that will finally reshape a battered humanity.

You are eminently fitted to give voice to it. India has, I think, a peculiar place today in the colonies of the world. It has both a moral prestige and organizational strength enjoyed by few colonies. The others look to it for a lead in many matters. It has already shown to the world a superior technique

of struggle whose moral value the world is bound to appreciate some day. India has therefore to tell a very distraught and maddened world that there is another path humanity must tread if it would save itself from these periodical disasters and bring peace and harmony to a bleeding world. It is only those who have suffered so much against this system and who are bravely struggling to change it that can speak with all the conviction and moral basis necessary, speak not only for themselves but all the exploited peoples of the world.

I am sorry I had not seen Shrimati Kamaladevi's letter to the *Chronicle*. Try as I will, I simply cannot do adequate justice to the reading of newspapers. The letter then remained on my file for want of time to deal with it. But I think delay has not affected the object of her letter. Perhaps this is the psychological moment for me to express what is or should be India's attitude. I agree with Kamaladevi's analysis of the motives of the parties to the war. Both are fighting for their existence and for the furtherance of their policies. There is, however, this great difference between the two; however incomplete or equivocal the declarations of the Allies are, the world has interpreted them to mean that they are fighting for saving democracy. Herr Hitler is fighting for the extension of the German boundaries, although he was told that he should allow his claims to be submitted to an impartial tribunal for examination. He contemptuously rejected the way of peace or persuasion and chose that of the sword. Hence my sympathy for the cause of the Allies. But my sympathy must not be interpreted to mean endorsement, in any shape or form, of the doctrine of the sword for the defence even of proved right. Proved right should be capable of being vindicated by right means as against the rude, i.e., sanguinary, means. Man may and should shed his own blood for establishing what he considers to be his 'right'. He may not shed the blood of his opponent who disputes his 'right' India as represented by the Congress has been fighting in order to prove her 'right', not by the sword but by the non-violent method. And she has carved out for herself a unique place and prestige in the world although she is yet far—let us hope, not very far—from the independence of her dream. Her novel method has evidently struck the imagination of the world. It has the right to expect India to play a decisive part in this war, which no people of the world have wanted, by insisting that the peace this time is not to be a mockery designed to share among the victors the spoils of war and to humiliate the vanquished. Jawaharlal Nehru, who has a right to speak for the Congress, has said in stately language that the peace must mean freedom for those who are held in bondage by

the imperialist powers of the world. I have every hope that the Congress will also be able to show the world that the power the armaments give to defend right is nothing compared to the power that non-violence gives to do the same thing and that too with better show of reason. Armaments can show no reason, they can make only a pretence of it.

SEGAON, OCTOBER 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

498. *TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE*

In dealing with the situation in Travancore last week¹ I omitted to refer to the controversy between the Dewan and the State Congress as to the source of the information on the basis of which I had wired² to the Dewan hoping that his notice did not ban the conference that was to be held in Travancore by the State Congress. Shri Thanu Pillai had said that neither he nor any other member of the State Congress was responsible for suggesting that there was any ban. He could not, therefore, say that my telegram to the Dewan was based on such information. In saying this he was quite correct. As a matter of fact, however, my wire was certainly based upon the information contained in Shri Verghese's wire³. But there was no suppression of fact by Shri Verghese. Shri Thanu Pillai made his position clear in his letter to the Dewan dated the 23rd ultimo thus :

In the letter under reference, Government seem to disbelieve my statement that no one from the State Congress informed Gandhiji that there was a ban on the conference. Your contention is at best an inference from a telegram from Gandhiji while my assertion is confined to facts within my knowledge. The following is the substance of the Government communique as communicated by wire to Gandhiji by the Chairman of the Reception Committee: 'Government sprung surprise in issuing Press note this noon in view outbreak war state of emergency arisen necessitating measures safeguarding public peace and avoiding incidents likely creating public excitement or large concourses. Regarding conference preparations being made for processions and demonstrations and as large crowd may gather at conference, Government in public interest call upon conference organizers and

¹ *Vide* "Umfortunate People of Travancore", 2-10-1939.

² *Vide* "Telegram to C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar", 5-9-1939.

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-4-1939.

all political or other organizations in the State to postpone or stop assemblages at present juncture and until further notice.' Gandhiji might have taken the Government communique calling upon the organizers of the conference and all political or other organizations to postpone or stop such assemblages at the present juncture and until further notice as virtually amounting to prohibiting all meetings and processions. If Government still persists in their contention that the State Congress misled Gandhiji, they should in fairness substantiate it.

The language according to the Travancore legal form may not mean a ban. I could give it no other meaning. Whether it was technically a ban or not, its effects was that the Congress authorities felt obliged to cancel processions and the other demonstrative part of their programme. If, therefore, there is any difference between the language used by the Dewan in the Government communique and a ban, it is the same that exists between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. It is also suggested that the communique had to be issued because of objections taken to the holding of the conference. Why should a big organization be prevented from functioning properly merely because somebody objects to its so doing? I can only appeal to the Dewan not to harass the leaders of the State Congress beyond the point of endurance. They should not be made useless even for constructive constitutional activities. This is their humble programme :

This conference resolves that the immediate programme of the State Congress will be :

1. Intense, systematic and countrywide propaganda for educating the people on the issue of responsible government.
2. The strengthening of the State Congress organization throughout the State and putting the same on self-reliant and permanent foundations.
3. Real and effective mass contact through a carefully planned programme, emphasizing a mass literacy campaign, khadi and swadeshi and prohibition.
4. Establishment of a permanent volunteer and *desh-sevika* service.
5. Opening of centres or camps for a minimum period of training for workers in the various programmes outlined above.

In order to leave no room for doubt, this conference has to point out that the above programme will be wholly constitutional, and that the State Congress has no intention of creating a conflict with Government in the prosecuting of the above programme. The object of the above programme is to make the constitutional demand of the people irresistible.

They do not ask for immediate responsible government. Surely they have every right to educate the people along the lines of

responsible government. It should be a proud day for the Travancore Maharaja and for his people when it can be said of the latter that by patient and quiet training they made themselves fit to shoulder the responsibility of managing the affairs of their State.

SEGAON, October 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

499. A MINISTER'S DREAM

If you can give a message or direction to the Provincial Governments and the people to see that spinning and weaving are made compulsory for boys and girls in all the schools, I have no doubt that within a short time the children of schools will be wearing cloth made by themselves. This will be the first step. I have not lost faith in your ideals and I am hoping to see that each home will make its own cloth and each village will become self-sufficient not only with regard to cloth but also every other article of necessity under your village industries scheme and education scheme. I believe with you that real swaraj in this land can be established only when the budget of the villager is balanced alongside of the budget of the Provincial Government or that of the Government of India which is brought about by artificial adjustments and manipulations generally.

Thus writes a Congress Minister. If I had the powers of an autocrat, I would certainly make hand-spinning compulsory in at least the primary schools. A Minister who has the faith should do so. There are several useless things made compulsory in our schools. Why should not this most useful art be made compulsory? But nothing can be made compulsory in a democratic system, if it is not widely popular. Thus compulsion in democracy is only so called. It removes laziness, it does not force will. Such compulsion is an educative process. I suggest a milder preliminary course. Let there be prizes given to the best spinner. This competition will induce many if not all to take part in it. No plan will succeed if the schoolmasters themselves have no faith in it. If basic education is accepted by the Provincial Governments, hand-spinning and the like is not merely part of the curriculum, it is the vehicle of education. If basic education takes root, khadi surely becomes universal and comparatively cheap in this afflicted land of ours.

SEGAON, October 9, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

500. THE UNBRIDGEABLE GULF

The following letter comes from a friend :

In the *Harijan* dated 30-9-1939, on page 1 at the end of your article¹, you write: "Speed is not the end of life. Man sees more and lives more truly by walking to his duty."

And then you subscribe: "On the train to Simla". I am surprised that, with all the fund of humour you possess, you could not see how the words "On the *train* to Simla" pointed the finger of ridicule to the statement "Man sees more and lives more truly by *walking* to his duty."

Time was when this friend used to believe in my method and was a valuable supporter. Somehow or other I have now fallen from grace. He should have had no difficulty in following the rich humour behind the writing which he exposes to ridicule. But I must deprive the ridicule of its sting by informing my friend that I was in my senses when I wrote the note referred to. I might easily have avoided the exact place where it was penned. But I wanted to add point to my remark and to discover to the reader the vast gulf that separates me from my ideal. Let the waverers take heart from the fact that though my note containing the flat contradiction of the ideal has provided my friend with mirth, I have got the credit for trying my best to live up to the ideals, I may profess. If I am to make an ever-increasing approach to my ideal, I must let the world see my weaknesses and failures so that I may be saved from hypocrisy and so that even for very shame I would try my utmost to realize the ideal. The contradiction pointed out by the friend also shows that between the ideal and practice there always must be an unbridgeable gulf. The ideal will cease to be one if it becomes possible to realize it. The pleasure lies in making the effort, not in its fulfilment. For, in our progress towards the goal we ever see more and more enchanting scenery.

Coming, however, to the friend's gibe let me tell him and the reader that I could pen those lines because it is never a pleasure to me to travel by motor or rail or even a cart. It is always a pleasure to walk. Nor should I mind in the least if every rail was removed and men, except the sick and the maimed, had to walk to their businesses. I can not only imagine but am working for a civilization in which possession of a car will be considered no merit and railways will find no place. It would not be for me an unhappy event if the world

¹ *Vide* "Is India a Military Country", 25-9-1939.

became once more as large as it used to be at one time. *Hind Swaraj* was written in 1909¹. Since then it has undergone many editions and has been translated in many languages of the world. I was asked last year by Shrimati Sophia Wadia to write a foreword² for the edition that she was bringing out. I had the pleasure, therefore, of having to re-read it carefully. The reader may know that I could not revise a single idea. I had no desire to revise the language. It is a fair translation of the original in Gujarati. The key to understand that incredibly simple (so simple as to be regarded foolish) booklet is to realize that it is not an attempt to go back to the so-called ignorant, dark ages. But it is an attempt to see beauty in voluntary simplicity, poverty and slowness. I have pictured that as my ideal. I shall never reach it myself and hence cannot expect the nation to do so. But the modern rage for variety, for flying through the air, for multiplicity of wants, etc., have no fascination for me. They deaden the inner being in us. The giddy heights which man's ingenuity is attempting, take us away from our Maker who is nearer to us than the nails are to the flesh which they cover.

Therefore even whilst I am travelling at the rate of 40 miles per hour, I am conscious that it is a necessary evil, and that my best work is to be done in little Segaon containing 700 souls, and in the neighbouring villages to which I can walk. But being a highly practical man I do not avoid railway travelling or motoring for the mere sake of looking foolishly consistent.³ Let the reader know that during the hurricane Harijan tours⁴ that Thakkar Bapa had arranged for me I had gently suggested to him that I would like to do the whole of the years' tour on foot. He would not listen. And we had violent demonstrations during the tour. Twice or oftener we escaped serious injury and it might have been even death. When we reached Puri⁵, there was fear of bloodshed. So I put my foot down and insisted on performing the remaining pilgrimage on foot. Thakkar Bapa readily consented.⁶ Well, the demonstrators who were prepared only for

¹ The source, however, has "1908".

² Vide "A Message to *The Aryan Path*", 14-7-1938.

³ In "Self-reliance", R. W. Emerson says: "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do."

⁴ From November 7, 1933 to August 2, 1934

⁵ On May 7, 1934.

⁶ Gandhiji commenced his walking tour from May 9, 1934.

demonstrations by rail and motor could not overtake the pilgrims who covered only 8 to 10 miles per day in two stages. This was the most effective part of our tour. The awakening was solid. Our experiences were rich. And the demonstrators had no excitement left for them. They had no desire to kill me in cold blood. They were out for sensations. Sensations are not to be had with non-violent men and women walking to their mission without any fear of man and in the certain knowledge of having God as their infallible Guide and Protector.

SEGAON, October 10, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

501. *ON TRIAL*

In the course of the conversation with the members of the Working Committee, I discovered that their non-violence had never gone beyond fighting the British Government with that weapon. I had hugged the belief that Congressmen had appreciated the logical result of the practice of non-violence for the past twenty years in fighting the biggest imperialist power in the world. But in great experiments like that of non-violence, hypothetical questions have hardly any play. I myself used to say in answer to questions that when we had actually acquired independence we would know whether we could defend ourselves non-violently or not. But today the question is no longer hypothetical. Whether there is on the part of the British Government a favourable declaration or not, the Congress has to decide upon the course it would adopt in the event of an invasion of India. For, though there may be no settlement with the Government, the Congress has to declare its policy and say whether it would fight the invading host violently or non-violently.

So far as I can read the Working Committee's mind after a fairly full discussion, the members think the Congressmen are unprepared for non-violent defence against armed invasion.

This is tragic. Surely the means adopted for driving an enemy from one's house must, more or less, coincide with those to be adopted for keeping him out of the house. If anything, the latter process must be easier. The fact, however, is that our fight has not been one of non-violent resistance of the strong. It has been one of passive resistance of the weak. Therefore there is no spontaneous response in

our hearts, at this supreme moment, to an undying faith in the efficacy of non- violence. The Working Committee, therefore, wisely said that they were not ready for the logical step. The tragedy of the situation is that, if the Congress is to throw in its lot with those who believe in the necessity of armed defence of India, the past twenty years will have been years of gross neglect of the primary duty of Congressmen to learn the science of armed warfare. And I fear that history will hold me, as the general of the fight, responsible for the tragedy. The future historian will say that I should have perceived that the nation was learning not non-violence of the strong but merely passivity of the weak and I should have, therefore, provided for Congressmen's military training.

Being obsessed with the idea that somehow or other India will learn true non-violence, it would not occur to me to invite my co-workers to train themselves for armed defence. On the contrary, I used to discountenance all sword-play and the display of stout lathis. Nor am I even now repentant for the past. I have the unquenchable faith that, of all the countries in the world, India is the one country which can learn the art of non-violence, that if the test were applied even now, there would be found, perhaps, thousands of men and women who would be willing to die without harbouring malice against their persecutors. I have harangued crowds and told them repeatedly that they might have to suffer much including death by shooting. Did not thousands of men and women brave hardships during the salt campaign equal to any that soldiers are called upon to bear? No different capacity is required from what has been already evinced, if India has to contend against an invader. Only it will have to be on a vaster scale.

One thing ought not to be forgotten. India unarmed would not require to be destroyed through poison gas or bombardment. It is the Maginot line that has made the Siegfried line necessary, and *vice versa*. Defence of India by the present methods has been necessary because she is an appendage of Britain. Free India can have no enemy. And if her people have learnt the art of saying resolutely 'No' and acting up to it. I dare say, no one would want to invade her. Our economy would be so modelled as to prove no temptation for the exploiter.

But some Congressmen will say: 'Apart from the British, India has so many martial races within her border that they will want to put up a fight for the country which is as much theirs as ours'. This is perfectly true. I am, therefore, talking for the moment only of

Congressmen. How would they act in the event of an invasion? We shall never convert the whole of India to our creed unless we are prepared to die for it.

The opposite course appals me. Already the bulk of the army is manned by the Mussalmans of the North, Sikhs and Gurkhas. If the masses of the South and the Centre wish to become militarized, the Congress, which is supposed to represent them, will have to enter into competition with them. The Congress will then have to be party to an enormous military budget. There may be all these things without the Congress consent. It will make all the difference in the world whether the Congress is party to them or not. The world is looking for something new and unique from India. The Congress will be lost in the crowd if it wears the same old outworn armour that the world is wearing today. The Congress has a name because it represents non-violence as a political weapon *par excellence*. If the Congress helps the Allies as a representative of non-violence, it will give to the Allied cause a prestige and a power which will be invaluable in deciding the ultimate fate of the war. But the members of the Working Committee have honestly and bravely not made the profession of such non-violence.

My position is, therefore, confined to myself alone. I have to find out whether I have any fellow-traveller along the lonely path. If I am in the minority of one, I must try to make converts. Whether one or many, I must declare my faith that it is better for India to discard violence altogether even for defending her borders. For India to enter into the race for armaments is to court suicide. With the loss of India to non-violence that last hope of the world will be gone. I must live up to the creed I have professed for the last half a century and hope to the last breath that India will make non-violence her creed, preserve man's dignity, and prevent him from reverting to the type from which he is supposed to have raised himself.

SEGAON, October 10, 1939

Harijan, 14-10-1939

502. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1939

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. You seem to have done good work.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Ashrami Kelavani, p. 70

503. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 10, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

All the way through I kept thinking of you. Why am I not able to make you understand my point? Maybe my love is imperfect or, which is the same thing, impure. It is acceptable to me that you have come to me for my sake and you are going to stay also for the same reason. But those who come only for my sake also do my work and at times there is separation. But that is only for the sake of my work, not otherwise. This much in brief. Your interpretation of it has no place in it. You will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

504. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Tuesday [October 10, 1939]¹

I am observing silence today. I may break it at 3 o'clock. But it is impossible to find time today. Tomorrow is the meeting of the Working Committee. It would depend on how much time it takes. Mahadev will find out and tell you. Bharati can certainly meet me on Thursday. You will of course stay on till we can meet.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11209. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

¹ From the contents it appears that the letter belongs to October, 1939. It is written on the back of a letter from the addressee to Gandhiji dated October 9, 1939, a Monday

505. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND¹

SEGAON,

[On or after *October 10, 1939*]²

FRIEND: We have been out-and-out Gandhji-ites for several years and we do not know what we are to do at this juncture. The Working Committee's resolution has puzzled us.

GANDHIJI: But let me know what you mean by 'out-and-out Gandhji-ites'.

Those who are prepared to follow your principles through thick and thin.

Well, then let me tell you, I am not one myself, for in my practice I am far from what I have conceived as the ideals of truth and non-violence.

I quite see what you mean. I simply wanted to say that in our humble way we were trying to do constructive work as shown by you. What are we to do if civil disobedience comes? We voted for the A.I.C.C. resolution³ because it was the official resolution sponsored by Rajendra Babu, Sardar and others. But when we think of non-violence we do not see how we could have voted for it.

There was nothing against non-violence in voting for the resolution. What you will do is of consequence. And, as you will see from the next *Harijan*, I am writing⁴ for friends like you. You will see the position developed from week to week. But I can sum it up for you. There is no question of civil disobedience for there is no atmosphere for it—at any rate there is no question of civil disobedience in the aggressive sense as we launched in 1930 and 1932. We might have to offer it if all constructive work was made impossible, that is to say, if grave irritation was given by Government. I fear no such thing. At any rate I will not keep 'Gandhji-ites' in the dark. You should make a point of following carefully what I write every week.

But my difficulty is this. We believe implicitly in developing strength through constructive work which is non-violence in action. But as we are part and parcel of the Congress, they may come down with a heavy hand on our ashrams and

¹ The discussion is extracted from "Out-and-Out Gandhji-ite" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "A friend who is running a rural work centre for some years, and who having come for the A.I.C.C., had come to Segaoon to see Gandhiji." The A.I.C.C. session was held in Wardha on October 9 and 10.

² *Ibid*

³ *Vide* Appendix "A. I.C.C. Resolution", 18-10-1939.

⁴ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-10-1939.

take possession of them as they did in 1930.

It will depend on what the Congress will do. Supposing what is unlikely happens and the Congress decides upon a course of aggressive civil disobedience, for which as I have said there is no atmosphere, you will have to isolate your ashram from the Congress, that is to say, you may have to secede from the Congress even at the risk of being labelled as 'cowards'.

I see, I see. There is one thing more about which I wanted to ask you. We have quarrels in the course of our day-to-day work in the ashram.

Therefore, you see, you are far from being 'out-and-out Gandhi-ites'.

No, but we have implicit faith in your teachings, and it is only in that sense that I used that term.

But if in spite of that faith they quarrel, then they have not understood even the A.B.C. of 'Gandhism'. What is faith worth if it is not translated into action.

We may not go about parroting truth and non-violence and steering clear of them in daily life. Take the law of gravitation. The discovery of the law led to numerous other discoveries based on the law. Even so unless you go on discovering new applications of the law of non-violence you do not profit by it. You have to reduce it to a science. To say that you have bickerings in the ashram which make smooth work impossible or difficult, is to say that non-violence is not being practised. Don't you go away with the impression that we have no bickerings here in Segaon. We have them, and that is why I said that I was not an 'out-and-out Gandhi-ite'. But if I seriously thought that these bickerings would make communal life impossible, I might close down the institution. It is not an improbability. I should not shirk that duty if the idea possessed me. Well, that is only to say that the difficulties are enormous everywhere. Let God guide you and me and us all.

Harijan, 28-10-1939

506. LETTER TO HARIBHAU G. PHATAK

SEGAON,
October 12, 1939

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

You have done well in writing as you have. What Tatyaji¹ told you is an old complaint. There is no arrogance in me. I do not plead guilty. I do not even understand his allusions. What is this about parties given to me? I have tried to woo him and his friends. I have walked to Savarkar's house. I have gone out of my way to win him over. But I have failed. Having heard me, it is now for you to tell me what I should do to conquer them.²

I shall glance through your book as soon as I receive it.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 2802. Courtesy: Haribhau G. Phatak

507. LETTER TO DR. B.C. ROY

October 12, 1939

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I know your partiality for me. But I feel utterly unable to shoulder the burden.³ Jawaharlal is the only man with drive to take my place. His difference of outlook will be softened. But what does it matter, if he carries your minds with him in his new ideas? We shall not get a more open and sincere man than Jawaharlal with his driving power. Make therefore what use you can of me through him. I have hitherto influenced the country through the Committee. Now I must do so to the extent that I influence Jawaharlal. Don't you agree?

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

¹ Presumably N. C. Kelkar. This honorific was also given to V. D. Savarkar, President of the Hindu Mahasabha.

² V. D. Savarkar, Chimanlal Setalvad, Cowasji Jehangir, V. N. Chandavarkar (Liberals), N. C. Kelkar and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had issued a statement from Bombay on October 2, expressing the view that the Congress and the Muslim League did not represent the whole or even the bulk of India and that any constitutional or administrative arrangement arrived at between the Government and the Congress and the Muslim League could not be binding on the Indian people.

³ The addressee had insisted that Gandhiji himself should take over the command of the Congress.

508. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 12, 1939

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. If you are feeling better there, it is certainly advisable to stay on. If you ask Rami to leave you, what will you do about your meals? If you can make some arrangement for that, you may let her go. There is no sanatorium in Nagpur. But the T. B. specialist is a competent, experienced and philanthropic doctor. Balkoba and Mathew were treated by him. You will stay at Wardha, i.e., in Segaoon, or wherever else I arrange. Hence if you do not feel better, come over. Let the doctor there examine you. If you come here, Rami need not accompany you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9730

509. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 12, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

You are not unhappy about what you said about massage at the time of bathing? Would you feel happy? Did you like the telegram that was sent to Delhi? Are you calm?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

510. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

SEGAON,

October 13, 1939

I regard the recent resolution² of the A.I.C.C. on the situation as moderate and wise. It was bound to reiterate the Congress demand for an unequivocal declaration. Its merit lies in not fixing any time-limit for the declaration. It is noteworthy that the resolution was carried by a majority of three to one. It is to be hoped that the British Government will appreciate the friendly spirit in which the Congress is approaching the situation. It is to be hoped also that the Europeans of India will range themselves alongside of the Congress. But the greatest help can only come from Congressmen themselves. If they do not act on the square, no external sympathy and even help will be of any avail. I see that impatience has seized some Congressmen who want to be doing something to signify their opposition to a war which they believe to be for defending imperialism. I suggest to them that they will be defeating the common purpose by acting in opposition to the Congress decision expressed in the only way open to a democratic organization. They had their say at the A.I.C.C. meeting. They are in honour bound to defer direct action till the Working Committee or the A.I.C.C. decides otherwise. No reliance can be placed upon an organization which is not able to exercise effective control over its members. Imagine an army whose soldiers, under the false belief that they are advancing the common cause, adopt measures in defiance of those taken by the head-quarters. Such action may well spell defeat. Therefore I beseech Congressmen at this critical juncture to desist from any action that would savour of indiscipline or defiance. They should surely see that by such action they undermine Congress prestige and weaken its influence.

Harijan, 21-10-1939

¹ This appeared under the title "Notes", sub-title, "The A. I. C. C. Resolution". The statement was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* on October 14.

² *Vide* Appendix "A.I.C.C. Resolution", 14-10-1939.

511. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

October 13, 1939

CHI. SUSHILA,

If Prithvi Singh can do the massage, you must tell him. Kr[ishna] Ch[andra] must be told about bathing. Both of them have to be seen on the first day. If I have to do all that myself, it would be a great burden on my silence. It would be difficult to write down the instructions for them every time. Hence, in these modifications I need your complete co-operation.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

512. FALLACY ABOUT SUGAR

The following article by Shri Gajanan Naik on the superiority of palms over cane and beetroot for the purpose of yielding sugar is presented for the criticism of sugar experts:¹

Sugar in its pure form is composed of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen (C₁₂ H₂₂ O₁₁). As such it does not take anything from the soil, but the crops now mainly cultivated for extracting sugar, viz., the beet and the cane, require for their development a number of substances from the soil in which they grow. Therefore their culture exhausts the soil. What is worse still is that the space now occupied by the beet in Europe and the cane in the tropics, might and ought to serve for the culture of food and fodder crops. . . .

But people must have sugar. Is there a way of getting it without encroaching on the soil fit for superior crops? Yes—according to the opinion expressed by Mr. Devry at the Congress of Giessen. (Watt's *Dictionary of the Economic Products of India*, Vol. I, pp. 301-4.) He says that palms can supply the required sugar for they can be grown on inferior soil where even to try to grow cereals would be a vain endeavour.

The statement throws much light on the place of the palm for the *gur* industry. It would be wrong to take it only as a philanthropic proposition for exploring avenues of employment for the toddy-tappers who will be rendered idle through prohibition. . . . It has immense potentialities in the economics of national agriculture. . . .

¹ Only extracts from the article by Gajanan Naik, Head of the Gur Department, A.I.V.I.A., are reproduced here.

Sugarcane cannot be grown with profit in the same field year after year. It has to be rotated with some cereal. . . . Cane has to be cultivated year after year while palms once planted yield sugar for 20 to 50 years. Heavy manuring and regular watering are required for cane while palms require neither. . . . Palm plantations are not affected by wind, flood or shortage of rain. Moreover, and this is very important, factory-made apparatus, such as crushers are indispensable in cane *gur* making while the accessories necessary for palm *gur* manufacture are procurable locally in villages, and their cost is negligible as compared with those used for cane *gur*.

Harijan, 14-10-1939

513. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

SEGAON, WARDHA,

October 14, 1939

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

We must declare our policy in this matter¹ or do something.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ The reference is to a letter dated October 9 from Mahomed Yunus, leader of the Muslim Independent Party in the Bihar Legislative Assembly who had said: "In continuation of my previous correspondence of the subject of Hindu-Muslim unity, may I again draw your attention to what I have been writing and if you settle the following questions, I think, the time is now ripe for us to immediately come to an agreement: (1.) Recognition of the right of every individual to exercise his civil rights unhampered and uninterfered with, provided he does not do anything in a manner which may offend his neighbour. (This will include right of every community to take out processions on roads, to kill any animal for sacrificial or other purposes and right of every community to offer prayers in any manner that community likes). (2.) Now that the total number of Muslim population has increased to almost one-third in the whole of India, a representation of one-third in all Central Legislatures and allotment of similar proportion of seats under the Government of India. These are some of the suggestions which I am making, and I am requesting you to kindly take up this question now in all seriousness for immediate solution. I have been writing to you for nearly two years and I hope you will not think it impatient on my part if I earnestly beseech you to kindly expedite matters specially in the present situation." *Vide* also the following item.

514. LETTER TO MAHOMED YUNUS

[October 14, 1939]¹

DEAR FRIEND,

You will never tire me. Only I have no powers of an autocrat, whatever may be said to the contrary. The question is no one man's job. I am forwarding your letter to Maulana A. K. Azad.

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

515. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA (C. P.)

October 14, 1939

DEAR DR. HARDIKER,

I have seen the Mysore friends. I am in correspondence with the Dewan. If anything comes out of it, I shall let you know.²

Please tell Diwakar not to go to Mysore at the present moment. I hope you are better.³

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ From the reference to the addressee's letter, which was forwarded to Abul Kalam Azad on this date; *vide* the preceding item.

² According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. II, p. 277, the State Government failed to fulfil the promises made by the agreement arrived at in 1938 between the Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail and Vallabhbai Patel and J. B. Kripalani. The State Congress was not prepared to acquiesce. However, in order to explore all means of avoiding struggle, they sought interviews with the Dewan but with no response from him. The time limit fixed for launching civil resistance, viz. September 1, 1939, having expired without any response from Government, the fight was launched. *vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardikar", 21-10-1939.

³ *Vide* also "Letter to N. S. Hardikar", 21-10-1939, and "Fragment of Letter to People of Mysore", 24-11-1939.

516. LETTER TO A. EASWARAN¹

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

The best use I can think of is for basic education.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 778

517. LETTER TO TATACHAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

MY DEAR TATACHAR,

C. R. says: "Why does not Tatachar see me?" Do go and see him but don't take his time. What he cannot do no one else can. I know I cannot, in the matter of Harijans² at least. There are certain things we must put up with. I shall take up the next step in *Harijan* when the spirit moves me. This is in answer to yours of 9th.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Treasurer, Cochin Teachers' Association, Chittur

² *Vide* "Case for Inquiry", 3-9-1939.

518. LETTER TO SYED FAIZUL HASSAN

SEGAON,
October 14, 1939

DEAR SYED SAHIB,

You have done well in writing to me. But I would suggest your writing to the Minister in charge of the Department. I can do nothing without referring¹ the matter to him. This I can do through the Parliamentary Board. This means waste of time. Will you take up my suggestion?

Yours sincerely,

SYED FAIZUL HASSAN SAHIB
PRESIDENT, DISTRICT MUSLIM LEAGUE
BALAGHAT, C. P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

October 14, 1939

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

In the present state of communal feeling it is impossible to do anything.²

Yours,
BAPU

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

520. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Please read the accompanying letter³ and after inquiring into the matter reply to the writer. I have sent him a very brief reply asking

¹ *Vide* the following item.

² The addressee in his letter dated October 11 had requested Gandhiji, on behalf of some eminent persons, to give a concrete shape to the proposal for a Jallianwala Bagh Memorial.

³ From Syed Faizul Hassan

him to write to the Minister. But that is not enough. We should look into such matters in great detail.

Kishorelal told me yesterday that you said I had handed over all of you to Jawaharlal and that, therefore, you would have to obey him now. I suppose you were joking. I have not handed over any of you. I had a long discussion yesterday and the day before with the people living here. It will not do if all of you refrain from using your freedom and then hold me responsible for that.

Did Rajendra Babu leave yesterday?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 236

521. LETTER TO REHMAN JIVABHAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

October 14, 1939

BHAI REHMANJI,

I have your letter. I am pained but not surprised by what you write. Nowadays there is so much mutual distrust that a Hindu is afraid to employ a Muslim who is a stranger. That fear is bound to disappear. Please do not lose heart.

Meet Mridulabehn. Show her this letter.

Regards from

M. K. GANDHI

DRIVER REHMAN JIVABHAI
TOY MARKET, PANKORE NAKA
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9654. Courtesy: Mulubhai Nautamlal

522. *LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

October 14, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have perhaps not understood your words. Your place is secure.
What more?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4328

523. *LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU*

SEGAON,

October 15, 1939

MY DEAR INDU,

I had thought that you had forgotten me altogether. Your letter has belied the fear, thank God. I hope you are keeping well. In a way, I envy you for the experiences you are having there¹.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 9802. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ In Europe

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM SARAT CHANDRA BOSE ¹

May 31, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

You have probably learnt from the papers that I and Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das, M. L. C., my colleague on the Prisoners' Release Advisory Committee, felt compelled to resign from this Committee. The reason we gave the Home Minister for doing so was that our approach to the question of release of the convicted prisoners differed fundamentally from that of most of the other members of the Committee. This became clear to us during the last few weeks, more particularly in course of the discussions following the interviews with a number of prisoners which took place on May 6, 7, 8 and 9. Those discussions showed that the attitude of the majority of the members of the Committee was very stiff in the case of prisoners convicted in the more serious cases, and that they were not prepared to release them either on the assurance contained in your letter of the 13th April 1938 or on the reiteration by the prisoners of what they had told you when you met them. It became apparent to us that the majority of those prisoners stood no chance of being released until they had served or practically served out their term. As regards the rest it became apparent that the most that the majority of the members of the Committee were prepared to do was to recommend reduction of sentences in some cases and conditional release or release on giving specific undertakings in some other cases.

To the Home Minister we gave our reasons for our resignation in general terms only. But I feel I ought to give you more details as well as a resume of what we did during the time we served on the Committee.

You probably remember that when the proposal for an Advisory Committee for the release of political prisoners was put forward and I was requested by Sir Nazimuddin to suggest names from the Congress Party, I was not quite sure in my mind as to what we should do. I asked Subhas to seek your advice and he discussed the matter with you when he met you at Delhi towards the end of September or beginning of October last. You were of opinion that I should accept membership of the Committee. Accordingly, I made the position of the Congress Party in regard to the question of releasing political prisoners perfectly clear to Sir Nazimuddin, and communicated to him our decision to serve on the Committee in the hope that

¹ Vide "Statement to the Press", 14-6-1939.

the Government would release the prisoners within a short time. Copy of my letter to Sir Nazimuddin (dated October 23, 1938) is set forth below :

Kindly refer to D. O. No. 3810 dated the 26th September from Mr. R. H. Hutchings to me, in which he asked me on your behalf to suggest the name of a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and also that of a member of the Bengal Legislative Council from the Congress Party who might be invited by Government to serve on the Advisory Committee regarding release of political prisoners.

You are well aware as a result of the conversations you had with Mahatma Gandhi and with the President of the Congress that the Congress Party cannot identify itself or agree with the Government policy in respect to political prisoners. Mahatma Gandhi's letter¹ of the 13th September to you has also made that clear.

At the same time, I feel that we should not obstruct any endeavour to bring about the release of these prisoners. It is out of this feeling that I am responding to your request for assistance. I earnestly hope that Government will see their way to set at liberty all the political prisoners at a very early date.

I would suggest the name of Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das, M. L. C., from the Congress Council Party. As regards the Congress Assembly Party, I am prepared to represent it on the Committee. You may issue invitations to Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das and myself.

After this the work of the Committee began and we made some progress. Naturally, the less difficult cases came up for consideration first, and we were able to bring round our objecting or hesitating colleagues to our point of view, so that recommendation for unconditional release were sent to Government, resulting in the release of 112 prisoners, including all the women prisoners. But as we proceeded with our work, a cleavage of opinion made itself distinctly felt. It became obvious that the Government were not prepared to follow the recommendations of the Committee in all cases. The unanimous recommendation of the Committee, in which the initiative was taken by the Chairman himself (who, I may tell you, had always been over-cautious rather than under-cautious) was referred back to the Committee. It also came to my ears that in some cases the Government were imposing conditions (not recommended by the Committee) when it was perfectly well known that prisoners were not prepared to submit to any conditions or give any assurance except the one they had given to you.

This attitude of the Government had its reaction on the members of the Committee. In the first place, they shrank from making recommendations even when they were satisfied about the attitude of the prisoners. Of this, the case of Sjt. Purnananda Das Gupta, who was convicted in connection with

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 13-9-1938.

the Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, is a good example. There was a consensus of opinion among the members of the Committee that he had made a perfectly frank statement disavowing faith in terrorism. Yet the majority of the Committee did not venture to make the necessary recommendation for his release but accepted the suggestion of the official member on the Committee that a further report be called for from Government about him. Secondly, there was insistence on individual declarations which amounted to a specific undertaking for good behaviour. While most of the prisoners were prepared to reiterate their declaration to you, and actually did so, they resented fresh individual undertakings and were not prepared to give them. I and Lalit Babu considered that the prisoners had said enough in their statements to you and, by reiterating their adherence to those statements, had given convincing indication of a change of heart. After the interview I told the Committee that I was perfectly satisfied that the prisoners had abjured violence for good and all of them should be released. But my views did not find favour with the majority of the Committee. They were not prepared to accept that kind of declaration as satisfactory.

I also noticed an increasing restiveness among the prisoners in respect of the interviews as well as the assurances required. This restiveness and impatience had been present in greater or lesser degree from the very first. But we had been able by tactful management to keep it from becoming obtrusive. It was, however, impossible to overcome the reluctance of the prisoners when they found that guarantees of a more hard and fast character were required of them. In such circumstances, their hostility to the procedure of the Committee came to the surface, and we became convinced that sooner or later its work was bound to come to something like a deadlock.

This is in short what we saw and thought as members of the Committee. Besides this, the general attitude of the Government in regard to the remaining convicted prisoners had also to be taken into account. It was clear to us that the Government were not prepared to release all the prisoners, no matter how favourable the atmosphere was. In these circumstances I did not think it advisable for us to remain on the Committee any longer.

After our resignation, the Government issued a communique, copy of which is set out below :

The Committee appointed by Government to advise on the release of terrorist convicts has considered 183 cases. Government have passed orders on the recommendations of the Committee in 112 cases and in 68 the recommendations of the Committee are about to be submitted to Government. Three cases are under consideration by Government, and 56 cases remain to be examined by the Committee. The Committee have recently interviewed a large number of prisoners individually before disposing of their cases in particular. All the female prisoners appeared before the Committee and were recommended

for release after giving satisfactory assurance as to their future conduct. They have since been released. Government regret to have to announce that two members of the Committee, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and Mr. Lalit Chandra Das, have tendered their resignations which have been accepted. The two members gave as the reason for their resignation that their approach to the question of release of the convicted prisoners differed fundamentally from that of most of the other members of the Committee.

The question now is, what should be done to procure the release of the remaining prisoners. I would very much like to have your advice as to how we should proceed. What I am apprehensive of is that the prisoners may commence a hunger-strike. If they do so, the situation will become extremely complicated. At the same time, I do not know what hopes I can hold out to them.

I hope you are better now. My health is still below par.

With *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,

SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

Harijan, 24-6-1939

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW¹

VICEREGAL LODGE, SIMLA

July 1, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI

Thank you very much for your letter of 22nd June. It raises one or two points on which I should like to touch in my reply.

2. As regards Jaipur, the Durbar have, I am quite sure, no desire to detain Seth Jammalal Bajaj any longer than is necessary. Indeed, as you will remember, they were at considerable pains to avoid detaining him in the first instance. Seth Jammalal has been made fully aware of the conditions on which the Durbar are ready to take the desired action now in regard to him and the other prisoners, and to the best of my knowledge the position has not altered since the departure of H. H. the Maharaja.

3. I have read with close attention what you say in the last paragraph of your letter, and I am very grateful to you for letting me know your views. I think it is fair to say that the Political Department have given no more encouragement to "anti-Congress personalities", to use, if I may, your own phrase, than to pro-Congress personalities to establish contacts with Rulers and their subjects.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 22-6-1939, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 6-7-1939 and Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 12-7-1939.

I hope you keep well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

BOMBAY

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a copy: C. W. 7828. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

APPENDIX III

STATEMENT BY SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

Prohibition by stages is a feasible scheme. It will make both the public as well as the Excise Department experienced in the task of handling problems out of the enforcement of prohibition. Moreover, it will be financially a success and it will release for the nation-building activities that portion of the revenue derived from extra taxes like property tax, sales tax, etc.

Speaking generally, I may say that the motives actuating the Bombay Government are quite laudable, but the methods they have been hitherto following or intend following in future in connection with the problems of the property tax and the sales tax are neither scientific nor conducive to the end they have in view. . . .

The defects in the Prohibition Scheme are more than one Illicit distillation will increase and there will be a rush of men to the wet zone every evening and particularly during every week-end.

Prohibition is a measure of social reform and no social reform can be successfully brought about without winning. . . . the goodwill of the people. . . . The fact that consistent opposition is being offered by some influential sections of the community shows that the Government have not yet been able to carry with them the approval and goodwill of the people in general.

Mahatma Gandhi did the right thing when he opined that prohibition should not be forced on Europeans in India because they did not believe in it and it would amount to coercion to force it on them. The same principle of non-violence should be applied to Asiatics and Indian people as well both in theory and in practice. Why should we force prohibition on non-Indian Asiatics who do not believe in it, if we do not force it on Europeans? It would be wrong to make a distinction between Europeans and Asiatics in this respect either in law or in actual administration.

Now turning to the economic side of the question, I may say that it is difficult to approve of a method which involves the sudden imposition of an additional tax over a crore of rupees on Bombay alone in order to make good the loss of excise revenue. With millions of half-filled stomachs, with hundreds of thousands dying every year of preventible diseases and with 92 percent of our people still unable to read or write. I

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-7-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

consider it no part of statemanship to raise additional money by heavy taxation, not one rupee of which would go towards the better fulfilment of stomachs or saving human lives or making our people more literate. I am, therefore, inclined to think that the introduction of prohibition by stages is the more appropriate and scientific method. This would not involve heavy taxation for financing prohibition, would save a portion of the taxable capacity of the people for future requirements and would not involve a sudden change in our national economy.

Nobody who has eyes to see in Bombay can fail to be impressed with one important aspect of the Government policy. It unfortunately happens that one small community in Bombay which for many years past has been extensively engaged in the liquor trade is being directly affected by this policy. The Parsis are a small but influential community. Who does not know of the many beneficial institutions and activities which have been brought into existence and conducted by them? The overwhelming majority of the community have been opposing this policy and as a minority community the Parsis are entitled to be heard. I understand that the Parsis are apprehensive that the sudden launching of immediate and total prohibition in Bombay will throw into the streets a large number of families and would prejudicially affect the income of the charity trusts many of which are for the benefit not of Parsis alone but of the Indian community in general.

Besides the Parsis, the Muslims of Bombay are also affected by the programme. While they are not opposed to prohibition on principle, they have objection to the 10 percent property tax, which is required for financing prohibition. It is urged on their behalf that the 10 percent property tax subjects them to exorbitant taxation as compared with their population and they resent being taxed in order to force non-Muslims to abstain from drink.

The effect of prohibition on our general economy is of greater consequence than even its effect on the Parsis or Muslim community. To give a small instance, a large number of hotels and restaurants will be badly hit and may have to close down. Not only will their owners suffer loss but the employees will also be thrown out of employment. It is not impossible that migration from the prohibited area to outside places may take place and the importance of the port of Bombay may also be affected. The fact is that while piecemeal introduction of partial prohibition is possible, piecemeal introduction of total prohibition is next to impossible. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-7-1939

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN¹

SIMLA,
July 20, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Many thanks for your letter of the 17th July which I received this morning. This has crossed my letter of the 18th July.

I am sorry I overlooked to answer your query about the representation of Harijans in the proposed Lahore Corporation. I have made enquiries from the Minister concerned and am informed that no provision has been made in the bill to provide separate electorates for Harijans. The method of election and representation is at present embodied in the rules and it is proposed to leave this matter to the rules in the new measure also. I am almost certain that the question of separate representation for Harijans will be raised in the Assembly when the bill is under consideration as several representations have been received from Harijan organizations. So far as Government is concerned, they do not contemplate at the moment to make a departure from the existing practice unless the Harijan representatives in the Assembly press for a revision and, if so, it would largely depend upon what view the Assembly takes regarding this matter. Personally, as you are aware, I am not averse to joint electorates; but unfortunately the trend of events during the past few years has made it even more difficult to achieve this ideal in the absence of genuine *rapprochement* between the two major communities.

I am grateful to you for careful consideration to my alternative scheme of Federation. Allow me to remove one or two misapprehensions which seem to have arisen due to the reason that you have not had time to make a comparative study of my scheme with the one embodied in the Government of India Act. My proposals do not contemplate a wholesale rejection of the scheme adumbrated in the Government of India Act. At the most it would necessitate modification of about half a dozen sections in the Act and the addition of perhaps two or three new sections. It would of course involve a revision of the Federal, Provincial and the concurrent lists as you will have noticed from the revised list which I sent with my letter of the 18th July. As regards the 'Zonal' Legislatures contemplated in my scheme, there again seems to be some misapprehension. You must have noticed that I do not contemplate any executive authority for the 'zones', and the legislative powers delegated to the Regional Legislatures are meant only to bring the various units in a 'zone' closer together in order to bring about mutual confidence and trust between the various units. It would

¹ Vide "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939 and 25-7-1939.

not involve any additional expenditure since the members of a Regional Legislature would also be members of the Federal Legislature and will collectively constitute the Federal Legislature. No separate building or organization will be required. If and when necessary, they will meet together to ratify or pass a measure on which the units in a particular 'zone' are agreed. As a matter of fact, my scheme would be comparatively less expensive as I have suggested a unicameral instead of a bicameral Federal Legislature.

As regards the composition of the Army, I have suggested no more than retention of the *status quo* so far as the peace-time strength of the Army is concerned. As I explained to you in the course of our conversation, my insistence on this provision is actuated by a desire to create mutual confidence, and in the interests of national harmony and solidarity.

I appreciate your remarks regarding acceptance of Dominion Status. I am aware that all the important political organizations in the country have now adopted 'complete independence' as their final goal. But I am sure you will agree with me that in the circumstances it would be inadvisable to clutch at a shadow and discard the substance if it happens to be within our grasp. After all, what we want is complete control over the administration and affairs of our country and this will be obtained if we get Dominion Status. I am fully aware of the fact that some of our fellow-countrymen would prefer to chase a will-o'-the-wisp rather than give up their demand for complete independence; but it would be for an eminent patriot and leader like you to persuade them to accept the substance and leave alone the shadow.

You mention in your letter that "Yours is the only proposal of a constructive character on behalf of the League." Let me hasten to make it quite clear that my scheme has got nothing to do with the League. It has been formulated by me alone and without consultation with any member of the League or for that matter of any other party in the country. It has been conceived with the intention of providing a solution of our communal and political problems and I trust it will be examined and studied by all concerned in the spirit in which it has been conceived.

As regards your draft solution of the communal problem and my comments thereon, I shall be grateful if you would kindly give me some more definite indications of your views, if you desire me to¹ proceed with the matter further. I quite realize that the draft represents only *your* views; but that is quite sufficient for my purpose provided you approve of my suggestions with reference to the various items of the draft. I can then proceed to sound important Muslim leaders and the Working Committee of the League and let you know their reactions. It would be no use my trying to bring them round to my point of view unless I am assured of your whole-

¹ The source, however, has "or".

hearted approval and support in regard to the points mentioned in my note which I handed over to you at Bombay. I need hardly assure you that the correspondence between us will be treated as strictly confidential. Perhaps, you would like to consult the Working Committee of the League and other prominent Muslims. If there is agreement on these points, then we could bring the representatives of the two Working Committees together to approve and ratify them informally.

As regards services, I do not think we need worry about the number of communities which would fall under the category of 'minorities'. The obvious course would be to fix the share of the majority community in each province and leave the balance to be distributed amongst the minorities. This is what we have done in the Punjab. We have given 50 per cent to the Muslims and 50 per cent to non-Muslims. The proportion (7 per cent) surrendered by the the majority community was added on to the share of the smaller minorities in the shape of weightage. So the problem is not so complex as it appears to be at first sight. What we need is a genuine change of heart and once this is achieved there should be no difficulty in adjusting differences. I am afraid my letter has become somewhat lengthy; but in view of the issues involved I have taken the liberty of encroaching on your time by answering the points raised in your letter in some detail.

With best wishes and kind regards,

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX V

HARIJAN SEVAKS' CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS¹

June 4/7, 1939

1. This Conference of Harijan sevaks resolves that Harijan sevaks should not visit those temples which Harijans are not allowed to enter. It should be clearly understood that Harijan sevaks are not to enter such temples, not only for the purpose of worship but also for sight-seeing, provided that this rule is not intended to come in the way of doing service to Harijans. Similarly Harijan sevaks are not to attend public meetings which are not open to Harijans.

2. The Western and Central India Harijan Sevaks' Conference held at Poona very much appreciates the organization of Harijan welfare work in Holkar State as explained by Prof. R. K. Yardye, Hon. Secretary of the Indore H. S. S., but considers that the grant of Rs. 7,000 is too low for the purpose and therefore requests His Highness the Maharaja Holkar and his Government to raise the grant considerably to enable the work to be organized efficiently. This Conference is also of the opinion that the object of the State regarding Harijan emancipation will be better served by

¹*Vide* "A Harijan Sevaks' Conference", 30-7-1939.

the appointment of a special officer, as is done in Bombay, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin, to look after Harijan interests.

3. The report of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, Gwalior State, submitted by the Secretary to this Conference, shows that the cause of Harijans suffers on account of the utter lack of practical support by the Government of Gwalior. Considering the views of His Highness the Maharaja Saheb as expressed repeatedly in his public speeches, it is most regrettable that such indifference should exist. This Conference respectfully draws the attention of the Administration and the Ruler of the Gwalior State to the necessity of taking an active part in the work of the amelioration of the conditions of Harijans, as well as the removal of untouchability. For this purpose this conference requests the appointment of a special officer or that of a Committee with an annual grant of a substantial sum of money in the annual budget. This Conference is also of opinion that a public declaration of the State policy granting civic rights to Harijans for the use of public wells, tanks, temples, conveyances and schools should be issued forthwith.

4. The universal disinclination to do physical work, particularly work involving the handling of dirt, is one of the causes that are responsible for the custom of untouchability. For example, scavenging, flaying of dead cattle, tanning, leather work, barber's work and similar duties are regarded as causing pollution. Similarly personal service and hospitality rendered to a member of a so-called lower caste is forbidden.

To achieve total eradication of untouchability, it is necessary to remove as early as possible this false feeling of detestation towards socially beneficial occupations. This Conference therefore appeals to all Harijan sevak and persons interested in the cause of Harijan uplift that they should feel no hesitation in doing with their own hands the aforesaid duties and thereby demonstrate to the world that they involve no indignity or pollution.

This Conference further appeals to all Hindu sisters and brothers to remain absolutely certain that no individual loses his caste by virtue of personal service of any description. Bearing this religious principle in mind they should extend to guests of whatsoever caste coming under their roof the same cordial hospitality that they render to their own caste people. One need not have a guilty conscience in rendering service to such guests.

A growing tendency is to be noticed among self-respecting Harijans to abandon their hereditary occupations because these are socially despised. Although this Conference does not regard any honest occupation as low, it fully appreciates the feelings of Harijans and declares that they have every right to give up these occupations if they so choose, and that it would be unjust on the part of caste Hindus to coerce them into doing such tasks.

5. With a view to remove untouchability and bring about a speedy uplift of Harijans, this Conference requests all Provincial Boards of the H.S.S. concerned to take necessary steps in order that elementary education is made free and compulsory at least for Harijan children in those places where there are already schools of a District School Board or a Municipal School Board.

6. This Conference takes this opportunity to point out to the managers of Harijan students' hostels of the H.S.S. that segregation is not the object of conducting Harijan hostels, and that therefore an endeavour should be made to secure the admission of Harijan boys and girls of all Harijan sub-castes and also of a few caste Hindu boys and girls in the Harijan hostels, provided that no monetary burden is thrown on the resources of the Sangh in respect of caste-Hindu pupils.

7. This Conference is of opinion that it is necessary to afford legal protection to Harijans who are subjected to social boycott on account of their enjoying a common civic right, and recommends to the Bombay Government, as a measure of partial protection, that the Government should undertake, along with other legislation contemplated by Government, suitable legislation to provide that refusal on the part of a shopkeeper or a regular dealer in articles which are necessities of life, to sell such articles to a Harijan or his servants or his family dependants as an item of social boycott on the ground of such Harijans trying to enjoy or having enjoyed any common civic rights, should be made a punishable offence.

8. It is resolved by this Conference that the various Provincial Boards should request the Municipalities in their jurisdiction to start welfare work for their Harijan employees on the lines of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, and the Municipalities may be requested to use at least the Fine Funds for this purpose.

The line of work can be suggested on the following fundamental points: recreational, educational, social, economical. And the welfare work will also include the work of a labour officer, i. e., to receive complaints about the working conditions of the employees and to redress them.

9. This Conference urges the Provincial Boards and the Local Committee of the H.S.S. to make concerted and special efforts for securing to Harijans the enjoyment of civic rights in respect of wells, hotels, etc.

10. This Conference is of opinion that the Government of Bombay should take necessary steps to provide for free studentships to all deserving Harijan students in the secondary grant-in-aid schools in the Bombay Presidency as soon as possible.

11. Whereas in various Harijan localities, there are no grocery shops and the Harijans have to purchase corn and other provisions from shops belonging to other people at a very high price, this Conference requests the Harijan Sevak Sanghs to endeavour to open such shops on a co-operative basis in those villages where the Harijan population is sufficiently numerous.

12. This Conference requests all Harijan sevaks that they should try their best to enlist active co-operation of women workers in the cause of service to Harijans.

13. Whereas it has been found by experience that in multi-member constituencies for legislatures and local bodies where seats are reserved for Harijans, votes are not, as a rule, mutually given by caste-Hindu voters and Harijan voters, and whereas it is necessary with a view to foster brotherly feelings and to fulfil the real purpose of the Poona Pact¹ that the votes should be mutually given, this Conference calls upon all caste-Hindu voters to exercise at least one vote in favour of Harijan candidates, and Harijan voters to exercise at least one vote in favour of caste-Hindu candidates. This Conference is further of opinion that the distributive system of voting is better suited than the cumulative system to achieve the end in view.

SEGAON, July 30, 1939

Harijan, 5-8-1939

APPENDIX VI
*LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW*²

VICEROY'S CAMP, INDIA (PURI),

August 2, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your telegram which I have just received. I quite realize your difficulty in getting away at this moment, and I had indeed been a little afraid that it might, as has happened, be impossible for you to do so. I should be most reluctant to impose the least strain on you, and I hope that you will never hesitate to let me know if you feel that any suggestion of mine for a meeting is likely to have that effect; and I shall not in the least misunderstand your doing so.

2. It is very kind of you to suggest that we might meet later this month. I have in fact, as I said, nothing very special to talk about, and my invitation to you to meet me at Delhi was merely in pursuance of my desire to keep in touch with you and maintain contact from time to time. Nor do I want to give you the trouble of the tiring journey to Simla. I think therefore that we might leave matters as they are for the moment, and I will look forward to seeing you a little later in the year when I am again back from the hills.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI, Esq.

SEGAON

From a copy: C. W. 7831. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ Of September 1932, *vide* Appendix "Agreement between Depressed Classes Leaders and Caste Hindu Leaders", 26-9-1932.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Lord Linlithgow", 1-8-1939.

APPENDIX VII *KATHIAWAR STATES*¹

The Western India States Agency, comprising all the 284 States in Kathiawar, is, numerically, by far the biggest Agency under the administrative control of the Political Department. The Kathiawar States, Between themselves account for just half the number of States in India, the total being computed at 562. These States present the greatest possible variety in size and government. At one end of the scale are Cutch with an area of 8,250 square miles and Bhavnagar with an annual income of about Rs. 15 million; at the other end of the scale. . . Vejanoness which has an area of 0.29 square mile, a population of 206 souls and an income of Rs. 500 a year. . . . Sir George Macmunn must have had these statelets in mind while writing his famous book *The Indian States and Princes*. In the very first chapter he says:

The Ruling Princes of India number between five and six hundred, and their principalities vary from that of the Nizam, as large as a third of France, to others no larger than Battersea Park.

The real demand of the States subjects, it must be presumed, is self-government or responsible government and not merely good government. Nothing short of extensive democratization of the administrative machinery is likely to satisfy them. As democratization must of necessity involve certain financial commitments, it is neither helpful nor politic to demand it from Rulers of States whose annual income is less than, say, Rs. 50 lakhs. Joint administration is, therefore, the only alternative to the existing arrangement for such States.

Joint administration for small States is no novel or visionary suggestion. His Excellency the Viceroy himself, than whom none can claim to be more solicitous for the welfare of the Princes, is responsible for propagating this view. The germs of this theory, however, are traceable in the Butler Committee Report, 1928-29. Dealing with the classification of States, the Report says:

The petty States of Kathiawar and Gujarat, numbering 286 of the total of 327 in the third class, are organized in groups called *thanas* under officers appointed by local representatives of the Paramount Power, who exercise various kinds and degrees of criminal, revenue and civil jurisdiction. As the cost of administration rises, the States find it necessary to distribute it over larger areas by appointing officials to work for several States. Already there is talk in some of the larger States in Kathiawar of appointing a High Court with powers over a group of such States.

¹ *Vide* Letter to R. L. Handa”, 10-8-1939; “Confederation of Small States”, 14-8-1939 and “Kathiawar States”, 11-9-1939. Only extracts are reproduced here.

He Excellency's views on this question may be gathered from the following extract from his address delivered on the occasion of inaugurating the session of the Chamber of Princes in March last:

In no case is the need for co-operation and combination more patent, more pronounced and more immediate than in the case of the smaller States. Those States whose resources are so limited as virtually to preclude them individually from providing for the requirements of their people in accordance with modern standard, have indeed no other practical alternative before them. I would take this opportunity to impress upon the Rulers of such States, with all the emphasis at my command, the wisdom of taking the earliest possible steps to combine with their neighbours in the matter of administrative services so far as this is practicable.

Though the principle of combination enunciated by the Viceroy can apply to smaller States all over India, it is particularly suitable in the case of Kathiawar States. One peculiar feature of these States is that, unlike their neighbours, the Gujarat States or the Central India States, they are geographically one compact province. . . . The process of combination or grouping or to be a little bolder, of confederation, is immensely facilitated by this continuity. The total area of all these States is just over 40,000 square miles and the total population is 42,29,494. The total annual income is estimated at about Rs. six crores.

During the last three months the Kathiawar Princes have met a number of times and . . . they were reported to have discussed the feasibility of having a combined police force, common Excise, Medical, Public Health, Public Works and Forest Departments and a common High Court. . . . It is so easy to see the futility of combined administration in these important spheres without providing for a combined legislature. For, the question arises, to whom will these common administrations be responsible? Certainly not to all one score Princes and their Governments. You cannot earnestly be responsible to twenty authorities unless confusion is their aim and to bungle your wish.

Harijan, 30-9-1939

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE TO CONGRESS PRESIDENT¹

August 7, 1939

I am exceedingly sorry for the delay in replying to your letter of the 18th July, from Ranchi. You have asked me for an explanation of my action in protesting against certain resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee passed at Bombay.

¹ *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

In the first place, one has to distinguish between protesting against a certain resolution and actually defying it or violating it. What has so far happened is that I have only protested against two resolutions of the A.I.C.C.

It is my constitutional right to give expression to my opinion regarding any resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. You will perhaps admit that it is customary with a large number of Congressman to express their views on resolutions passed by the A.I.C.C. when a particular session of that body comes to a close. If you grant Congressmen the right to express their views on resolutions passed by the A.I.C.C., you cannot draw a line and say that only favourable opinions will be allowed expression and unfavourable opinions will be banned. If we have the constitutional right to express our views then it does not matter if those views are favourable or unfavourable. Your letter seems to suggest that only expression of unfavourable views is to be banned.

We have so long been fighting the British Government among other things for our civil liberty. Civil liberty, I take it, includes freedom of speech. According to your point of view we are not to claim freedom of speech when we do not see eye to eye with the majority in the A.I.C.C. or in the Congress. It would be a strange situation if we are to have the right of freedom of speech as against the British Government but not as against the Congress or any body subordinate to it. If we are denied the right to adversely criticize resolutions of the A.I.C.C. which in our view are harmful to the country's cause then it would amount to denial of a democratic right. May I ask you in all seriousness if democratic rights are to be exercised only outside the Congress but not inside it ?

I hope you will agree that when a resolution is once passed by the A.I.C.C., it is open to us to have it reviewed or amended or altered or rescinded at a subsequent meeting of that body. I hope you will also agree that it is open to us to appeal against the A.I.C.C. to the higher court of appeal, namely, the open session of the Congress. You will agree further, I hope, that it is open to a minority to carry on a propaganda with a view to converting the majority to its point of view. Now how can we do this except by appealing to Congressmen through public meetings and through writings in the Press? The Congress today is not an organization of a handful of men. Its membership has, I believe, reached the neighbourhood of 45 lakhs. We can hope to appeal to the rank and file of the Congress and to convert them to our point of view only if we are allowed to write in the Press and also to hold meetings. If you maintain that once a resolution is passed in the A.I.C.C. it is sacrosanct and must hold good forever, then you may have some justification for banning criticism of it. But if you

grant us the right to review or amend or alter or rescind a particular resolution of the A.I.C.C. either through that body or through the open session of the Congress, then I do not see how you can gag criticism, as you have been trying to do.

I am afraid you are giving an interpretation to the word 'discipline' which I cannot accept. I consider myself to be a stern disciplinarian and I am afraid that in the name of discipline you are trying to check healthy criticism. Discipline does not mean denying a person his constitutional and democratic right.

Apart from the fact that it is our constitutional and democratic right to protest against resolutions which in our view are harmful to the country's cause, a consideration of the merits of the two resolutions will show that such protests were really called for. In our view these two resolutions, if given effect to, will serve to accentuate the drift towards constitutionalism, to increase the influence, power and authority of the Provincial Ministries at the cost of the Congress organizations, to isolate artificially the Congress from the general public as also the A.I.C.C. from the rank and file of the Congress. Moreover, they will serve to undermine the revolutionary spirit of the Congress. Consequently, in the best interests of the country, these two resolutions should be immediately held in abeyance and ultimately altered suitably or withdrawn.

In this connection I cannot help drawing your attention to certain incidents at the time of the Gaya Congress in 1922 and after. Please do not forget what the Swaraj Party did in those days. Please do not forget either that when the A.I.C.C. amended the resolution of the Gaya Congress, the Gujarat P.C.C. resolved to defy it.

Lastly, please do not forget that Mahatma Gandhi wrote¹ in *Young India*, if my recollection is correct, that the minority has the right to rebel. We have not gone so far yet as to actually rebel against the decision of the majority. We have simply taken the liberty of criticizing certain resolutions passed by the majority in the teeth of our opposition.

I am really surprised that you have made so much of what we regard as our inherent right. I hope you will accept my explanation as satisfactory. But if you do not do so, and if you decide to resort to disciplinary action, I shall gladly face it for the sake of what I regard as a just cause. In conclusion, I have to request that if any Congressman is penalized in connection with the events of the 9th July, then you will also take action against me. If the observance of an All-India Day of the 9th is a crime then I confess, I am the arch-criminal.

With kindest regards,

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, pp. 219-20

¹ *Vide* "Notes - Congress A Fetish", 2-3-1922.

APPENDIX IX
*CONGRESS PRESIDENT'S DECLARATION*¹

July 6, 1939

I have been much surprised to read in the papers Shri Subhas Chandra Bose's statement fixing the 9th July for protesting against resolutions passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay. It is well known that the resolution was passed after prolonged debate by a very large majority against the opposition of Shri Subhas Chandra Bose. If Committees subordinate to the All-India Congress Committee and office-bearers of such Committees or minorities within the Congress begin to defy such resolution and organize and hold protest meetings against decisions arrived at after full deliberation by the All-India Congress Committee or the Congress, there will be an end to all discipline within the Congress and a complete disruption of the organization. I therefore desire to impress on all Congress Committees and their office-bearers that the policy and practice of the Congress no less than loyalty to the Congress organization require that they should carry out and give effect to the resolutions passed by the All-India Congress Committee, and participation in and organizing of protests and condemnation against such resolution will be a breach of discipline. I trust the Congress Committees and their office-bearers will desist from organizing or participating in such protests and demonstrations.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 219

APPENDIX X
*LETTER FROM CONGRESS PRESIDENT TO SUBHAS CHANDRA
BOSE*²

July 18, 1939

A delicate and difficult situation has been created by your action in organizing protests against certain resolutions of the All-India Congress Committee, passed at Bombay. As I made clear in the statements which I issued before the meetings of the 9th July were held, it appears to me that it will be impossible for the Congress organization to function if subordinate Committees and office-bearers of the Congress, whose duty it is to carry out and give effect to the resolution of the A.I.C.C. and the Congress, were, instead of doing that, to organize protests and

¹ *Vide* "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 11-8-1939.

² *ibid*

demonstrations against these resolutions. I personally look upon any such action on their part as not only destructive of all discipline but fraught with the gravest consequences for the future of the Congress organization. I shall therefore place the whole matter before the Working Committee for consideration and such action, disciplinary or otherwise, as it may think fit to take. But in order that the Committee may have your explanation of your action and your point of view also before it. I shall be obliged if you will let me have it at an early date.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol. II, p. 219

APPENDIX XI

*CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION*¹

The Working Committee have given their earnest consideration to the critical international situation and to the danger of war that overhangs the world. In this world crisis the sympathies of the Working Committee are entirely with the people who stand for democracy and freedom, and the Congress has repeatedly condemned Fascist aggression in Europe, Africa and the Far East of Asia as well as the betrayal of democracy by British imperialism in Czechoslovakia and Spain. The Congress has further clearly enunciated its policy in the event of war and declared its determination to oppose all attempts to impose a war on India. The Committee are bound by this policy of the Congress and will give effect to it so as to prevent the exploitation of Indian resources for imperialist ends. The past policy of the British Government as well as the recent developments demonstrate abundantly that this Government does not stand for freedom and democracy and may at any time betray these ideals. India cannot associate herself with such a Government or be asked to give her resources for democratic freedom which is denied to her and which is likely to be betrayed.

At its meeting held in Calcutta on May 1, 1939, the All-India Congress Committee reiterated this policy of the Congress and expressed its disapproval of the despatch of Indian troops to foreign countries. In spite of this clear expression of opinion, the British Government has sent, or is sending Indian troops to Egypt and Singapore against the declared will of the Indian people. Even apart from the war situation, the Central Legislative Assembly has previously declared that no Indian troops should be sent abroad without the consent of the Legislature. The British Government has thus flouted the declaration of the Congress and the Assembly and

¹*Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-9-1939; 28-9-1939; 18-10-1939; "A Statement", 20-9-1939; "Unconditional Support?", 30-10-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-11-1939.

has taken steps which might inevitably lead to India's entanglement in a war. It has further prolonged the life of the Central Assembly by another year. The Working Committee cannot accept these decisions of the British Government and must not only dissociate themselves from them but also take such steps as may be necessary to give effect to the Congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly to refrain from attending the next session of the Assembly.

The Committee further remind Provincial Governments to assist in no way the war preparations of the British Government and to keep in mind the policy laid down by the Congress, to which they must adhere. If the carrying out of this policy leads to the resignations or removal of the Congress Ministers they must be prepared for this contingency.

In the event of a war crisis leading to danger to any part of India from the air or otherwise it may be necessary for protective measures to be taken. The Committee will be prepared to encourage such measures if they are within the control of the popular Ministries in the Provinces. The Committee are however not agreeable to such protective measures being used as a cloak for war preparations under the control of the Imperial Government.

The Indian Annual Register, 1939, Vol, II, pp. 214-5

APPENDIX XII *LETTER FROM YADAVINDRA SINGH*¹

RANBIR VILLA, CHAIL,

September 9, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I thank you for your letter dated the 30th ultimo enclosing a copy of the letter reported to have been despatched to me on the 3rd August which, as I intimated you in my telegram dated 28th ultimo, was never received by me. I was somewhat surprised to learn of the publication in the vernacular Press of the letter from your correspondent together with your comments and was inclined to think that since you did not consider it worthwhile to await my reply before releasing to the Press your correspondent's letter, it was unnecessary for me to reply to your letter. However, I have since received your message conveyed through my wakil at Simla informing that whereas an intimation had been given in time to the English Press to withhold publication of this matter, owing to rush of work similar instructions could not be conveyed to the vernacular Press. I am, indeed, thankful to you for intimating me that the comments that have already appeared in the vernacular Press will be revised or withdrawn in case it was considered necessary on receipt of my reply.

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 23-9-1939 and "Remarks on *A Maharaja's Threat*", 12-9-1939. Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Your correspondent's letter deals with two issues, namely, (a) the *Hidayat* of 1988 and (b) the threatening language alleged to have been used by me during the course of an interview I gave to the deputation that waited upon me on the 18th July. .

The main criticism against the *Hidayat* has been that since it was intended to meet a special situation, its retention as a permanent law of the land was not justifiable. The communal disturbances, as you will agree, were precisely the kind of special situation to meet which the Government have to keep themselves armed with such special legislation. It will appear, therefore, that it is the abuse, by those who were responsible for disturbing intercommunal harmony, of the liberty conferred on them, which was responsible for the subsequent order enjoining the enforcement of the provisions of the *Hidayat*. The fact that this unfortunate occurrence rendered it necessary for me to invoke the provisions of the *Hidayat*, was appreciated even by those who had earlier organized agitation against this enactment, as is evident from their voluntary decision to abide by the order issued by me on the 25th of May. The period for which the enforcement of the *Hidayat* was enjoined is not yet over; however, as the communal situation has since eased considerably and I have exercised clemency and withdrawn cases against those involved in this communal clash. I would have considered the desirability of revising the provisions of the *Hidayat*, but as you are aware, war has since broken out and while for the successful prosecution thereof emergency measures curtailing civic rights and liberties are being enforced, this emergency legislation has of necessity to be retained on the statute-book. I have not the least intention of going back over the assurance that was given by the District Nazim, Sunam, but I am obliged to await more favourable circumstances to do the needful.

As regards the version of what transpired at the interview I gave to the deputation on the 18th July, I am sorry your correspondent has twisted what I told the deputationists and his letter contains several half-truths and mis-statements. I had assured them that while I was most anxious to redress the genuine grievances of my subjects, I did not approve of their being misled by those who were actuated by motives not wholly impersonal. I do not precisely remember the words I used, but I think I told them that I would readily respond to all legitimate wishes of my people but would not be intimidated by any agitation engineered by those not directly interested in the points at issue nor would I accept any dictation from any outside agency.

In view of what I have stated above, I feel your comments that have appeared in the vernacular Press do not seem to be called for and I trust you will be good enough to withdraw them. I thank you for the courtesy you have shown me in inviting my comments on your correspondent's letter.

Yours sincerely,
YADAVINDRA SINGH

Harijan, 16-9-1939

APPENDIX XIII

WORKING COMMITTEE'S MANIFESTO¹

1. The Working Committee have given their earnest consideration to the grave crisis that has developed owing to the declaration of war in Europe. The principles which should guide the nation in the event of war have been repeatedly laid down by the Congress, and only a month ago this Committee reiterated them and expressed their displeasure at the flouting of Indian opinion by the British Government in India. As a first step to dissociate themselves from this policy of the British Government, the Committee called upon the congress members of the Central Legislative Assembly to refrain from attending the next session. Since then the British Government have declared India as a belligerent country, promulgated ordinances, passed the Government of India Act Amending Bill, and taken other far-reaching measures which affect the Indian people vitally, and circumscribe and limit the powers and the activities of the Provincial Governments. This has been done without the consent of the Indian people whose declared wishes in such matters have been deliberately ignored by the British Government. The Working Committee must take the gravest view of these developments.

2. The Congress has repeatedly declared its entire disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism and their glorification of war and violence and the suppression of the human spirit. It has condemned the aggression in which they have repeatedly indulged and their sweeping away of well-established principles and recognized standards of civilized behaviour. It has seen in Fascism and Nazism the intensification of the principle of imperialism against which the Indian people have struggled for many years. The Working Committee must therefore unhesitatingly condemn the latest aggression of the Nazi Government in Germany against Poland and sympathize with those who resist it.

3. The Congress has further laid down that the issue of war and peace for India must be decided by the Indian people, and no outside authority can impose this decision upon them nor can the Indian people permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends. Any imposed decision, or attempt to use Indian resources, for purposes not approved by them, will necessarily have to be opposed by them. If co-operation is desired in a worthy cause, this cannot be obtained by compulsion and imposition, and the Committee cannot agree to the carrying out by the Indian people of orders issued by external authority. Co-operation must be between equals by mutual

¹ *Vide* "A Statement", 20-9-1939; Statement to the Press", 15-9-1939; 28-9-1939; 18-10-1939; "The Only Way", 19-11-1939 and "Congress Working Committee Resolution", 22-11-1939.

consent for a cause which both consider to be worthy. The people of India have in the recent past, faced great risks and willingly made great sacrifices to secure their own freedom and establish a free democratic State in India, and their sympathy is entirely on the side of democracy and freedom. But India cannot associate herself in a war said to be for democratic freedom when that very freedom is denied to her, and such limited freedom as she possesses taken away from her.

4. The Committee are aware that the Governments of Great Britain and France have declared that they are fighting for democracy and freedom and to put an end to aggression. But the history of the recent past is full of examples showing the constant divergence between the spoken word, the ideals proclaimed and the real motives and objectives. During the war of 1914-18, the declared war aims were the preservation of democracy, self-determination and the freedom of small nations, and yet the very Governments which solemnly proclaimed these aims entered into secret treaties embodying imperialist designs for the carving up of the Ottoman Empire. While stating that they did not want any acquisition of territory, the victorious Powers added largely to their colonial domains. The present European war itself signifies the abject failure of the Treaty of Versailles and of its makers, who broke their pledged word and imposed an imperialist peace on the defeated nations. The one hopeful outcome of that Treaty, the League of Nations, was muzzled and strangled at the outset and later killed by its parent States.

5. Subsequent history has demonstrated afresh how even a seemingly fervent declaration of faith may be followed by an ignoble desertion. In Manchuria the British Government connived at aggression; in Abyssinia they acquiesced in it. In Czechoslovakia and Spain democracy was in peril and it was deliberately betrayed, and the whole system of collective security was sabotaged by the very Powers who had previously declared their firm faith in it.

6. Again it is asserted that democracy is in danger and must be defended, and with this statement the Committee are in entire agreement. The Committee believe that the peoples of the West are moved by this ideal and objective and for these they are prepared to make sacrifices. But again and again the ideals and sentiments of the people and of those who have sacrificed themselves in the struggle have been ignored and faith has not been kept with them.

7. If the war is to defend the status quo—imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privileges—then India can have nothing to do with it. If, however, the issue is democracy and a world order based on democracy, then India is intensely interested in it. The Committee are convinced that the interests of Indian democracy do not conflict with the interests of British democracy or of world democracy. But there is an inherent and ineradicable conflict between democracy for India or elsewhere and imperialism and Fascism. If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end imperialism in her own possessions, establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must

have the right of self-determination by framing their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external interference, and must guide their own policy. A free, democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilizing the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity.

8. The crisis that has overtaken Europe is not of Europe only but of humanity and will not pass like other crises or wars leaving the essential structure of the present-day world intact. It is likely to refashion the world for good or ill, politically, socially and economically. This crisis is the inevitable consequence of the social and political conflicts and contradictions which have grown alarmingly since the last great war, and it will not be finally resolved till these conflicts and contradictions are removed and a new equilibrium established. That equilibrium can only be based on the ending of the domination and exploitation of one country by another, and on a reorganization of economic relations on a juster basis for the common good of all. India is the crux of the problem, for India has been the outstanding example of modern imperialism, and no refashioning of the world can succeed which ignores this vital problem. With her vast resources she must play an important part in any scheme of world recognition. But she can only do so as a free nation whose energies have been released to work for this great end. Freedom today is indivisible and every attempt to retain imperialist domination in any part of the world will lead inevitably to fresh disaster.

9. The Working Committee have noted that many Rulers of Indian States have offered their services and resources and expressed their desire to support the cause of democracy in Europe. If they must make their professions in favour of democracy abroad, the Committee would suggest that their first concern should be the introduction of democracy within their own States in which today undiluted autocracy reigns supreme. The British Government in India is more responsible for this autocracy than even the Rulers themselves, as has been made painfully evident during the past year. This policy is the very negation of democracy and of the new world order for which Great Britain claims to be fighting in Europe.

10. As the Working Committee view past events in Europe, Africa and Asia, and more particularly past and present occurrences in India, they fail to find any attempt to advance the cause of democracy or self-determination, or any evidence that the present war declarations of the British Government are being, or are going to be, acted upon. The true measure of democracy is the ending of imperialism and Fascism alike and the aggression that has accompanied them in the past and the present. Only on that basis can a new order be built up. In the struggle for that new world order, the Committee are eager and desirous to help in every way. But the Committee cannot associate themselves or offer any co-operation in a war which is conducted on

imperialist lines and which is meant to consolidate imperialism in India and elsewhere.

11. In view, however, of the gravity of the occasion and the fact that the pace of events during the last few days has often been swifter than the working of men's minds, the Committee desire to take no final decision at this stage, so as to allow for the full elucidation of the issues at stake, the real objectives aimed at, and the position of India in the present and in the future. But the decision cannot long be delayed as India is being committed from day to day to a policy to which she is not a party and of which she disapproves.

12. The Working Committee therefore invite the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that is envisaged, in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and to be given effect to in the present. Do they include the elimination of imperialism and the treatment of India as a free nation whose policy will be guided in accordance with the wishes of her people? A clear declaration about the future, pledging the Government to the ending of imperialism and Fascism alike, will be welcomed by the people of all countries, but it is far more important to give immediate effect to it, to the largest possible extent, for only this will convince the people that the declaration is meant to be honoured. The real test of any declaration is its application in the present, for it is the present that will govern action today and give shape to the future.

13. War has broken out in Europe and the prospect is terrible to contemplate. But war has been taking its heavy toll of human life during the past year in Abyssinia, Spain and China. Innumerable innocent men, women and children have been bombed to death from the air in open cities, cold-blooded massacres, torture and utmost humiliation have followed each other in quick succession during these years of horror. That horror grows, and violence and the threat of violence shadow the world, unless checked and ended, will destroy the precious inheritance of past ages. That horror has to be checked in Europe and China, but it will not end till its root causes of Fascism and imperialism are removed. To that end, the Working Committee are prepared to give their co-operation. But it will be infinite tragedy if even this terrible war is carried on in the spirit of imperialism and for the purpose of retaining this structure which is itself the cause of war and human degradation.

14. The Working Committee wish to declare that the Indian people have no quarrel with the German people or the Japanese people or any other people. But they have a deep-rooted quarrel with systems which deny freedom and are based on violence and aggression. They do not look forward to a victory of one people over another or to a dictated peace, but to a victory of real democracy for all the people of all countries and a world freed from the nightmare of violence and imperialist oppression.

15. The Committee earnestly appeal to the Indian people to end all internal conflict and controversy and, in this grave hour of peril, to keep in readiness and hold

together as a united nation, calm of purpose and determined to achieve the freedom of India within the larger freedom of the world.

WARDHA, September 14, 1939

Harijan, 23-9-1939

APPENDIX XIV

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTION¹

The declaration of war in Europe has created an international situation of the gravest import to the world and to India, and the A. I. C. C., charged with the heavy responsibility of guiding the people of India in this moment of world crisis, has sought guidance from the principles and declarations of the Congress in considering this grave situation. The Congress has been guided throughout by its objective of achieving the independence of the Indian people and the establishment of a free democratic State in India wherein the rights and interests of all minorities are preserved and safeguarded. The means it has adopted in its struggles and activities have been peaceful and legitimate, and it has looked upon war and violence with horror and as opposed to progress and civilization. In particular, the Congress has declared itself opposed to all imperialist wars and to the domination of one country over another.

In spite of the repeated declarations of the Congress in regard to war, the British Government have declared India a belligerent country without the consent of the Indian people and various far-reaching measures have been hurried through the legislatures and promulgated in the form of ordinances, vitally affecting them and circumscribing and limiting the powers of the Provincial Governments.

The A. I. C. C., however, does not wish to take any final decision precipitately and without giving every opportunity for the war and peace aims of the British Government to be clarified, with particular reference to India. The committee approves of and endorses the statement issued by the Working Committee on September 14, 1939, on the war crisis, and repeats the invitation contained therein to the British Government to state their war and peace aims.

While the Committee condemns Fascism and Nazi aggression, it is convinced that peace and freedom can only be established and preserved by an extension of democracy to all colonial countries and by the application of the principle of self-determination to them so as to eliminate imperialist control. In particular, India must

¹ *Vide* "Discussion with a Friend", on or after 10-10-1939; "Statement to the Press", 28-9-1939; 13-10-1939; and 18-10-1939.

be declared an independent nation, and at present application must be given to this status to the largest possible extent. The A. I. C. C. earnestly trusts that this declaration will be made by the British Government in any statement that it may make in regard to its war and peace aims.

The Committee desires to declare afresh that Indian freedom must be based on democracy and unity and the full recognition and protection of the rights of all minorities to which the Congress has always pledged itself.

The Committee approves of the formation by the Working Committee of the War Emergency Sub-Committee and authorizes the Working Committee to take such steps as may be necessary to give effect to this resolution and to their statement on the war crisis.

Harijan, 14-10-1939