

1. COMPENSATION FOR MURDER¹

I have been asked whether the brother or other relatives of the late Rajabali should demand compensation from the Government for his murder. The deceased himself would not have considered such a death a loss. He would have held that such a murder, if allowed to go unavenged, would ultimately put an end to further murders and was therefore beneficial. To demand even the smallest compensation for the death of such a man is bound to wash away to some extent the good that it might do. How can the spirit of the deceased tolerate this? I find much substance in this argument. Murder cannot be avenged by accepting compensation for it. The proper way to avenge murder is not to answer murder with murder. Those who hold this view will not demand money for murder or commit murder in retaliation. Avenging murder with murder will only lead to an increase in murders. We can see it clearly today. It may satisfy the individual but I am certain that it can never bring peace to society or advance it.

The question can certainly arise what an individual can do in a society where murder for murder is the rule. The answer would lie not in precept but in setting an example. And only those have a right to set an example who have the right to avenge, namely, the relatives of Rajabali. In the end the decision has to be theirs. I have only pointed out the way of ahimsa as I have understood it.

SEVAGRAM, August 9, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

2. WHAT A CHILD CAN GIVE²

In Madras there is a little girl of five years called Aruna.³ Last January when I was in Madras she watched me spin and was seized with the desire to do so herself. The atmosphere in which she is being reared has a spinning bias, but her cultured parents have been averse to forcing anything on her. They were content with what they were

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946.

² A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946, under the title "what a Child Can Teach Us".

³ Vide "Letter to Vinodini", 9-8-1946

able to make her do by suggestion and example. When Aruna evinced enthusiasm for spinning they were very pleased to give her encouragement. The result was that in a single day Aruna had prepared a sliver and brought it to me. Then when she saw me spin that sliver her joy knew no bounds. I explained to her the defects of the sliver and her parents helped her to remove them. Since then she has been making slivers and spinning quite well. Thus this five-year-old girl learnt two things at the same time : to clean and card cotton and make slivers and also to give to others the produce of her labour. When children take money from their parents to give it to others all the merit goes to the parents. A child truly gives when it gives what it has earned with its own labour, be it slivers or some other thing.

SEVAGRAM, August 9, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

3. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C.P.,

August 9, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I am acknowledging your letter to Bapuji on his behalf. He hopes it will not be necessary for Shri Shriramulu to fast again.

I hope Shrimati Parvati will have an interesting and successful time in Switzerland.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat : G. N. 3231

4. LETTER TO VINODINI

SEVAGRAM,

August 9, 1947

CHI. VINODINI,

I preserved your article *Arunani Puni* till today. My first reading of it was cursory but interesting at it is, I do not consider it fit for publication. I see a mother's love in every single line, yet I would not call it literature. I cannot claim to know much about literature.

Besides, your article is, however unconsciously, laden with praise for me; no one is likely to gain from the publication of such an article. I therefore refrained from publishing it but preserved it because I had a mind to draw a lesson from it— how much a child can accomplish if it is led along the right way. You will find it in *Harijan*.¹ You might not have a copy and I can understand that as a mother you would value it, hence I am returning the article.

Blessings from

BAPU

VINODINIBEHN

MADRAS

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

5. *SPEECH AT SEKSARIA COLLEGE OF COMMERCE*²

WARDHA,

August 9, 1946

Giving a severe castigation to the unruly crowd that had indulged in window smashing and would have smashed in the roof too if they could, in the afternoon, Gandhiji remarked that it augured ill for the independence to come.³ The Working Committee which was holding its meeting in their city was considering how to win Independence for the people of India in the shortest time. It was not labouring for a change of masters. If the masses wanted to enjoy independence, they had first to learn the secret of observing voluntary discipline. Otherwise discipline would have to be imposed upon them by the powers that be. That would not be independence but its negation. Every people got the Government they deserved. If they indulged in hooliganism, so would the Government and its officials in the name of law and order. The result would not be freedom or independence but a balancing of anarchies, each trying to keep the other in check. Voluntary discipline was the first requisite of corporate freedom. If the people were well-behaved the Government officials would

¹ *Vide* "What a Child Can Give", 18-8-1946

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The occasion was the inauguration of the change from English to Marathi as the medium of instruction. Those attending included Ravi Shanker Shukla, Premier of C.P., and the Vice-Chancellor of the Nagpur University.

³ According to the source nearly ten thousand people had come to Wardha from outside and the crowd was so unmanageable and undisciplined that the time and venue of the function had to be shifted and it was held in the open instead of in the College hall.

become their true servants. Otherwise they would ride on their necks, not without a semblance of justification. During the Boer War he had seen thousands of soldiers perform a noiseless march through a dense, tropical jungle in the middle of the night, in pitch darkness for not even match-stick was to be struck to light a cigarette, lest it should betray their movements to the enemy. The whole troop formation moved like one man in perfect silence and harmony. The need for discipline for a nation on its march towards independence was infinitely greater. Without it, *Ramarajya* which meant the kingdom of God on earth would remain an empty dream.

The principal and the Management of the Seksaria College had taken a big step in deciding to make the mother tongue the medium of instruction in their college. But the reform would be still-born if they were lazy or if the public did not co-operate.

A fear had been expressed, observed Gandhiji, that the propagation of *Rashtrabhasha* or the national tongue would prove inimical to the provincial languages. That fear was rooted in ignorance. The present step of the Seksaria college was a living refutation of that suspicion. Provincial tongues provided the sure foundation on which the edifice of the national tongue should rest. The two were intended to complement, not supplant each other.

He deprecated the suggestion that it would need a lot of research and preparation to enable them to impart technical education through the medium of the mother tongue. Those who argued like that were unaware of the rich treasure of expressions and idioms that were buried in the dialects of our villages. In Gandhiji's opinion there was no need to go to Sanskrit or Persian in search for many expressions. He had been in Champaran and he had found that the village folk there could fully express themselves with ease and without the help of a single foreign expression or idiom. As an illustration of their resourcefulness, he mentioned the word *have gadi* which they had coined to denote a motor car. He challenged university scholars to coin a more poetic expression than that for a motor car.

One of the speakers had remarked that the reform would mean a saving of at least three years to the alumni of the College. But Gandhiji was of opinion that the saving in time and labour would be even greater.

Moreover, what they learnt through the mother tongue, they would easily be able to communicate to their mothers and sisters at home and thereby bring the latter into line with themselves. Woman had been described as man's better half. Today there was a hiatus between the thought world of men and women respectively in India, thanks to the intrusion of the foreign medium. Our womenfolk were backward and ignorant with the result that India was today like a patient with paralysis of the better side. India could not realize her full

stature unless that handicap was removed.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

6. HOW TO THINK OF GOD

A correspondent writes:

You say that the rule should be that during prayer, everyone should sit with closed eyes and think of nothing but God. The question arises as to how and in what form we have to think of God ?

True meditation consists in closing the eyes and ears of the mind to all else except the object of one's devotion. Hence the closing of eyes during prayers is an aid to such concentration. Man's conception of God is naturally limited, Each one has, therefore, to think of Him as best appeals to him, provided that the conception is pure and uplifting.

SEVAGRAM, August 10, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

7. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEVAGRAM,
August 10, 1946

BHAI PAKVASA,

I am sending you the draft of the Trust Deed of the Panchgani property and all the details of the auction sale carried through the High Court. The rest you will be able to obtain from the High Court itself. And whatever you cannot get now, you will be able to get from there when it is available. If, however, I can supply anything, please let me know. The Trust Deed must be in Gujarati or Marathi or Hindustani and if it is in Hindustani, It should be in Nagari and Urdu scripts. But not in English. We have adopted this as our policy. Afterwards you will have to show to Mavalankar the final draft which emerges. Shantilal insists that this should be done.

I hope you are keeping good health. Observe the rules.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 4785. Courtesy : Mangaldas Pakvasa

8. LETTER TO ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 10, 1946

BHAI ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI,

Gandhiji has received both your letters. He does not send any messages. It is good that Raja Mahendra Pratap is coming back. You will all be pleased.

About South Africa Gandhiji feels that none of us should go there. They won't allow the party to land at all.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 805

9. TALK WITH A FRIEND¹

[Before *August 11, 1946*]²

FRIEND : You have called mine a negative attitude. But I am quite clear in my mind. I do not mind the Congress High Command carrying on negotiations with the Cabinet Mission. But suppose the negotiations fail. What then? The British Government is prepared with its plan of action in that case. But we are not. It is my belief that we shall have to go through another struggle before freedom can be won. I find that you have a revolutionary mentality. I do not like *himsa* any more than you do. It is bad. My goal is the same as yours. Show a sure non-violent way of achieving our goal of Independence within a definite period and I shall most willingly follow you. In a way I do believe in ahimsa. A repetition of the 1933-37 pattern of struggle won't do. The leaders are put behind the bars at the very commencement of the struggle and then all contact between them and the masses ceases. It is not fair that we should sit in jails in comparative comfort and safety and expect the people to face the fire. The leaders should bear the brunt. Let there be, say, a hundred people with your name on the top followed by those of other front-rank Congress leaders to start a chain fast unto death, after giving due notice to the Government, and I am sure before the list is exhausted India will be free.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated 11-8-1946

² *ibid*

The interviewer added that he himself would in that event, be prepared to abandon his own programme and join the fast. His complaint was that no top-ranking Congressman with the exception of Jairamdas Daulatram had yet received a bullet, although perhaps hundreds had died in recent years of bullets and lathi charges at the hands of the police and the military.

G. If and when the call comes to fast unto death, I will do so irrespective of others joining or not. Fasting unto death is the last and the most potent weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. It is a sacred thing. But it must be accepted with all its implications. It is not the fast itself but what it implies that matters. Have not even hypocrites been known to make a pretence of fasting ? Such fasts are a plague and a nuisance. They do not count. If I fast and you send a hundred or even ten men who would undertake it with a pure heart, I shall be happy. But such a fast should not be undertaken inside the prison.

F. What I mean is that mere jail-going is not enough. People should remain outside and face repression. Nine young boys faced the bullets and died before the Secretariat at Patna. Think how it would have electrified the masses if it had been Rajendra Babu instead of these poor boys.

G. I agree with you there. I have said before that merely filling the prisons is not enough. It is only the jail-going of the pure in heart that can bring swaraj. In fact in 1922, my instructions were that no one was to follow me in jail and that all should spin and carry out in full the constructive programme. The eighteen-fold constructive programme, if carried out in its entirety will, in my opinion, render civil disobedience unnecessary. The people of Bardoli in 1922 solemnly promised to carry out the constructive programme, to banish untouchability and liquor from their midst and to make khadi universal to the exclusion of mill cloth, imported or Indian. They have failed to fulfil their pledge up till now.

F. You say jail-going does not end the fight. We wanted to agitate for the abolition of the classification of political prisoners by the upper class prisoners voluntarily reducing themselves to 'C' class by refusing to accept privileged treatment. But some said that it was against your ideology. You wanted people to remain in the class in which they were placed.

G. That is hardly correct. In fact I do not want even the distinction between the political and non-political prisoners. I stand for fair and humane treatment of all prisoners. But mine has been a lonely voice. Even when power was in our hands, we failed to abolish

classification. I am the originator or jail-going as part of satyagraha. My jail-going was born out of ahimsa and ahimsa and privilege go ill together. I have fought the Government from inside the jail. As it is, today all sorts of people go to jail. Inside the jail, they behave anyhow, even apologize and come out. Jail-going has become a farce.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

10. A DISCUSSION¹

[Before August 11, 1946]²

QUESTION : What should be done about the strikes ?³

ANSWER : Does it mean that the Congress has lost its hold on the people ?

Q. No, but the Congress has not spoken with one voice and that has created confusion in the public mind.

A. If the strike is unjustified on merits, it should be unequivocally denounced.

Q. By whom?

A. By the Congress, of course.

Q. What do you mean by the Congress? The Working Committee might have. It has not.

A. By Congress, I mean the 400 millions of India speaking through the Working Committee.

A militant suffragette who happened to be present here joined in : “But the Working Committee no longer speaks with one voice, thanks to your choice which you have imposed upon the country. You have stifled democracy.”

Gandhiji explained that the present Working Committee was not his choice but that of the Congress President who had been democratically elected. His part consisted mainly in persuading the Congress President to exercise his choice unfettered by consideration of personalities or the old tradition. The present Working Committee could not stay there for a day if it did not reflect the mind of democracy. The only condition was that democracy should be wide awake and functioning. As an illustration, he mentioned the case of Mr. Churchill, who, in spite of his unique victories and achievements, had been set aside by the British people the moment he

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “Weekly Letter” dated 11-8-1946

² *ibid*

³ The questioner was the Premier of one of the Congress-ruled Provinces.

ceased to reflect the nation's mind.

The return of labour to power in such overwhelming strength is a great event in the history of political democracy. It has a lesson which we would do well to take to heart.

Another in the company suggested that some sinister influence was at the back of the present strike fever. The motive was not economic but political. What was the remedy ?

A. You should reason with the strikers, warn them of the danger and resign if they or the people at large do not listen to you.

Q. But we owe a responsibility to the country. Shall we be justified in abandoning the country to sinister influences, who in fact want the Congress to go out of office and want to create chaos?

A. That is the only way in which democracy can function. It will educate the people. Sinister influences will not flourish if popular support is lacking. Once the people realize that the Congress won't carry on its rule by force, they will cease to act thoughtlessly or in an irresponsible manner and the sinister influence will be sterilized.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

11. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 11, 1946

DEAR SIR M. ISMAIL,

Representatives from Hyderabad have seen me. They are Shri Kashinath Vaidya and Swami Ramanand Tirth. They have discussed with me the so-called reforms contemplated in the State. I have studied them somewhat as they appeared in the Press. The reforms seem to be only so-called. To me they appear to be a step backward rather than forward. I do not know that you can do much to alter them but I wonder why you cannot scrap them altogether. The least that any State can do at this time is to recognize the status and influence of the States' Peoples' Conference, of which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the President, and secure its endorsement before proceeding with any popular measure. This ensures smooth passage for any such thing.

Rajkumari has already drawn your attention to Shrimati Padmaja Naidu's pamphlet on police atrocities in some of the Hyderabad villages. I would like you to enlighten me on these two

points. I am sorry to have to worry you when you have just begun your new career.

The Hindu, 31-12-1946

12. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Shyamlal has sent me the letter regarding Kamalabehn. This seems a rather difficult case but our course is clear. Let her deliver the child and if when it is three years old, she still has her heart in the work of service we can make full use of her. In the meanwhile she will have a lot of spare time which she should utilize to increase her knowledge of the art of service, serve women wherever she happens to be and adapt her own life to village ways and make it becoming of a village woman. And in order to do this she should maintain close contact with the activities of the Association.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SARALADEVI SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

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

13. TESTIMONIAL TO MUKUL CHANDRA DE

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1946

Shri Mukul De is extremely keen on the development of Indian art. It is man's prerogative to desire that which is good. But God has kept the fulfilment of man's desires in His own hands. Therefore, prayerful reliance on God must be Shri Mukul De's sole support.

M. K. GANDHI

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

14. HIS GREATEST CHARACTERISTIC

The greatest characteristic I can think of about Mahadev Desai was his ability to reduce himself to zero, whenever occasion demanded it.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

15. NOTES

SOUTH AFRICA

The heroic struggle of the Indian settlers in South Africa continues with unabated zeal. It promises to be prolonged. The longer the resisters are made to suffer, the greater will be their glory and reward. It is true of all long suffering. What the Government of the Union of South Africa has done so deliberately of the going to be changed suddenly, even for the suffering of the brave men and women. This is said not to damp the zeal of the fighters but to steel them for greater and longer suffering. Their spokesman, when they were in India, were told in plain language that they must not expect the struggle to close quickly. Time runs always in favour of the sufferer, for the simple reason that tyranny becomes more and more exposed as it is continued. In reality it is never long. Sufferers need never lose hope whether their struggle appears to have a longer lease of life or shorter, when the result is a certainty.

GOA

The Goan authorities are going on merrily with their 'humanizing' activities by gagging the people of Goa. The latest instance is that of their 'court martial' sentencing Shri Braganza Cunha to eight years and deporting him to a far off Portuguese settlement in Africa for the crime of daring to assert his elementary right of civil liberty.¹ Well has the Working Committee passed a resolution in condemnation of the policy of the Goan authorities which stands in striking contrast to the action of the French Governor

¹ *Vide* "Letter to The Governor-General of Portuguese India", 2-8-1946

who has encouraged the people to throw in their lot with the people in British India.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

16. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1946

DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Your p. c. is interesting. You should give me the solution to your triangles. I admit my failure. I thought I knew geometry fairly well. You have demolished my pride. Having performed the act of destruction, you should now instruct by teaching me in small doses. Nothing of your correspondence is destroyed. Indeed I preserve it for days in the hope of giving time to the study of the problems set by you. And then it is destroyed.

Yours,
BAPU

UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

17. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I have your letter. If you cannot get [money] from Jayantilal, tell Sumatibehn about it. She will either give you the money or get you the book. If there is any difficulty, do let me know. If necessary, you may show her this letter.

I hope your studies are progressing will.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10241. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

18. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Yours of the 3rd instant (No. 624/3) has only arrived here today, having gone to Panchgani first.

The position in Goa has not improved from the news that comes to Gandhiji. I enclose a copy of a note¹ he has written for the coming *Harijan*. While “intervention in the affairs of a friendly foreign country” may not be possible, surely a friendly remonstrance against harsh and unjust treatment of Indians should not be an impossibility.

At Gandhiji’s suggestion I also enclose a copy of the Archbishop of Bombay’s letter.² It will give you an insight into the way things are happening in Goa. Is it not an unfriendly act to regard Indians from this part as strangers going to Goa?

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

ENCL: 2

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji’s Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 100-1

¹ *Vide* “Notes”, sub-title “Goa”

² Gandhiji had received a complaint against the Roman Catholic Bishop of Goa to the effect that the Bishop was party to the lawlessness there. Gandhiji wrote to the Archbishop of Bombay that the matter called for investigation by him. The Archbishop’s reply was to the effect that “the Patriarch of Goa is responsible to the Holy See alone” and that “with all countries of the world the universal Catholic Church has to live on working compromise as to all non-essentials”.

19. LETTER TO MADHUSOODAN C. PAREKH

[August 13, 1946]¹

CHI. MADHUSOODAN,

I have your letter. Having known your father as intimately as I did, the news naturally came as a shock. But who can prevail against death? It will be enough if you all preserve the good name he has left behind and bring glory to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MADHUSOODAN CHAMANLAL PAREKH

P. B. NO. 40

AHMEDABAD

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

20. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL (GADHADAWALA),

I think we should all be content with whatever Shantilal can do. But if Sir Chunnilal wishes to offer something, I would say let us have the estate known as Preston and the bungalow so that we can also open a sanatorium for the poor. Shantilal's plot cannot accommodate two projects. Therefore, please consider this matter.

Blessing from
BAPU

SJT. MOHANLAL MOTICHAND SHAH

GADHADA, *via* BHAVNAGAR

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

¹ The source has this letter among those dated August 13, 1946.

21. LETTER TO MOHANLAL RUPANI

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I got your letter and Rs. 51. The amount has been credited to the Harijan account. Vrajlal's brother is bound to be like him. I can therefore understand your not introducing him. Still, if he had come to see me I would have spoken to him. I infer from your letter-head that you are quite well off. Is there some rule that letter-heads must only be printed in English ? Vrajlal has lived his life in such a way that we remember him every moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOHANLAL RUPANI
MANEKIA CHAMBER
1ST MARINE STREET
DHOBI TALAO, BOMBAY

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

22. LETTER TO DR. S. R. U. SAVUR

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI DR. SAVUR,

I got your letter. I am sorry I cannot accept the use of the Roman script for learning or teaching Hindustani. I have explained the reason in *Harijan*.¹ If we have occasion to meet I shall be able to explain to you how the Roman script would be disastrous for us.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. R. U. SAVUR
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
MADRAS

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

¹ *Vide*, "Roman Urdu", 15-4-1946- "My Advice", 15-4-1946.

23. LETTER TO SHAFaat AHMED KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI SHAFaat AHMED KHAN SAHEB,

I was very glad to have your letter. I see that you still take a keen interest in the affairs of our people in South Africa.¹

You have made many useful suggestions. Can't they be made public with the permission of the viceroy? You may be aware that from 1890 till the Boer War the British Government had an Agent-General in the Transvaal, and the correspondence he carried on with the Transvaal Government was published. That is the general practice.

May I make public use of any part of your letter?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

24. LETTER TO RATANBEHN

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1946

CHI. RATANBEHN,

I have your letter to Chhaganlal. I have received Rs. 51 which you sent for distributing food-grains among the Harijans.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. RATANBEHN
C/O HASMUKHLAL FAUJDAR
15 LILY COURT
CHURCHGATE, BOMBAY

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

¹ The addressee had been Indian High Commissioner in South Africa in 1941-43.

25. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1946

BHAI MAHTAB,

I got your letter in English. Why in English ? In the letter I had sent to you, one of the complaints was that you yourself were going to start a mill. If it is so, do you need to ask for my opinion? In any case I would hardly have appreciated your reasoning that Orissa, because it is poor, needs a mill. For, that would mean that every poor region or village should have mills to remove its poverty. And if such is your view, I can hardly say anything.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
CHIEF MINISTER
ORISSA

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

26. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have been planning to write to you but could neither write nor dictate a letter till the pressure of the Working Committee [meeting] was over. Today all the [members] of the Working Committee have left as also the Congress President, hence I am dictating this letter early in the morning. I have been thinking all these days about what you mentioned to me last time. I don't feel like making for you such arrangements as you desire in connection with the work I expected from you. Since you want to serve the villages you should appreciate the position and learn to live among and become one with all the others in the institution. And if you cannot learn this in my company it is going to be very difficult for you to learn it in any other place. If I were to create for you the facilities that you desire it would only mean that after all you can practise nature cure only under certain conditions, which means only in the towns or where urban conditions can be created. I don't suggest it is a failing on your part. I have

many friends whose habits are similar to yours. I content myself with whatever I can get out of them but you have yourself said that you want to give me much more and accordingly I hope to take from you a great deal. I shall persuade myself to be content even if I don't get as much as I hope. In that case both of us, or rather all three of us, will have to understand this. And I for my part do believe that under the present circumstances it does not seem as though you would be able to work here comfortably. But then only after I stay with you for some time and you get more used to me will you be in full flood.

In case the Gujarati language of this letter is incomprehensible and if you often come in contact with Valjibhai you may consult him or the boys at his house and they will be able to correctly interpret the letter to you. I would recommend that you should be in frequent contact with him. He is very cultured and is also a man of erudition. It is worth paying a visit to his house. It will not be surprising if I happen to go to Delhi from here. But I don't know.

Read out this letter to Gulbai. It will be good if Jehangirji is also made familiar with the ideas expressed herein.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

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

27. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Your sweet letter. Your report is a good and great document. And I am making of it the wisest use I know. Have already written to Sir Mirza.¹ Hope to make still better use if it is necessary.

You should take care of the obstinate old (with apologies) Singer².

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mirza Ismail", 11-8-1946 and 20-9-1946.

² Sarojini Naidu, the addressee's mother

28. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

I have your letter. I should very much prefer your hybrid Gujarati to your chaste English. Had you written hybrid Gujarati I could have had some fun at the cost of the man of letters that you are and would have gloated over the fact that I would not write such hybrid Gujarati. Besides, the practice of writing in Gujarati, however hybrid, is likely to result in the writing of chaste Gujarati.

For my part I like your scheme. But I think it cannot be implemented under the present circumstances. The Working Committee has received many such suggestions. Among them are some like yours. But in history there is no such thing as writing on a clean slate.

I hope you are all right.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

29. LETTER TO HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE,

I am glad you sent me a copy of your letter to Panditji. You will have to go deeper into it. The youngsters who threaten violence if a particular thing is not done will either have to conform to discipline or go ahead with the violence and face the consequences. If you will not show this firmness, I am afraid even those who wish to help you will not be able to help you fully.

Blessings from
BAPU

HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE
NAVASARI BUILDING
HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

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

30. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. I am sorry that nothing materialized at Baroda. If you leave India you not likely to earn more elsewhere. Nor can you say that you know Gujarati. Besides, in a city like Bombay private tuitions should be easily available. My advice therefore is that you should not attempt go abroad in a vain bid to earn more but be content with whatever you can get in India. Your Semitic origin will be least resented in India. You know that the Sassoons have earned millions in India and are still going strong. And this is only one instance.

AMALABEHN

31 WODEHOUSE ROAD

FORT

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

31. LETTER TO BEGUM LATIF SYED

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

DEAR BEGUM SAHIBA,

I learnt about Dr. Latif only through Sarojini Devi. I was grieved. May God grant you courage and may you always serve the country as Doctor Saheb did.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BEGUM LATIF SYED

HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

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

32. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1946

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. It is good that at last you wrote. I am glad to learn that you have recovered. How can you ask for my blessings for a trip to America? I did not know you had so much feminine obstinacy. But I also understand that Tendulkar too wants you to benefit from the American trip. It both of you are inclined that way who am I to say no? But if you ask me, my only answer will be: first accomplish something here and then go out. I know how little Tendulkar has gained from going abroad. I think he has gained nothing, but that is my own assessment. Others may not agree with me on this point.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10949. Courtesy : Indumati Tendulkar

33. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI RANGA,

Your letters continue to be written English. I will however, write only in the national language. If you are unable to read or understand the national language you may enlist Bharatibehn's help.

It is not in my hands to hold or not to hold the Kisan Conference in Wardha. It is in the hands of Kamalnayan and Sardar. Besides, in the present conditions of scarcity of food, holding a large conference anywhere is a difficult matter. This, however, is not the only purpose of my writing this letter. I hear that there is much ostentation about your work and much impropriety, too. If it is so, it needs thinking over. No one had sad so before. It is only recently that someone casually mentioned the matter to me and I ought not to keep

it from you.

The continued scarcity of food in Mysore and Rayalaseema regions is a sad affair. If people have to starve I shall blame none but ourselves. If we can survive only by importing food we deserve to perish. Besides, we now have our own government in many provinces. Can't we do something? It is not big conferences that we want. What is required is understanding, hard work and purity. In the absence of these qualities, the poor must die.

PROF. RANGA

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

34. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

Friends and admirers of Mahadev Desai have been following the practice of observing his death anniversary by occupying themselves with something dear to him. His was a rich, gifted hand. He had many loves. Among these the spinning-wheel held the first place. He spun regularly and beautifully like the artist that he was. No matter how fatigued or over-worked he was, he always found time for spinning. It refreshed him.

Among his many accomplishments, not the least was his peerless handwriting. There he was master. Ramadas Swami in one of his couplets has likened beautiful handwriting to a lustrous pearl. The characters which Mahadev's pen traced were like pearls without a flaw.

His third quality which all should emulate and copy was his love of the Indian tongues. He was a linguist. He attained proficiency in Bengali, Marathi and Hindi and he learnt Urdu. In jail he attempted to learn Persian and Arabic under Khwaja Sahib M. A. Majid, who was a fellow prisoner.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The occasion was the fourth death anniversary of Mahadev Desai. The programme of the day included mass spinning in the Mahadev Desai Bal Bhavan, reciting from the *Bhagavad Gita* and singing of songs.

The song which you have just heard was one of Mahadev's favourite songs. He has rendered it into Gujarati verse too.

When the heart is hard and parched up, come upon me with a shower of mercy,

When grace is lost from life, come with a burst of song.

When tumultuous work raises its din on all sides shutting me out from beyond, come to me, my Lord of silence, with Thy peace and rest.

When my beggarly heart sits crouched, shut up in a corner, break open the door of my mind, and come with ceremony of a king.

When desire blinds the mind with delusion and lust, O Thou Holy One, Thou wakeful, come with the light and Thy thunder.

—*Gitanjali*

That summed up the innermost yearning of the deceased's soul. May it do yours too. Mahadev's life was an inexhaustible well of virtues which you can all share. The sharing won't diminish its volume. That is the beauty of spiritual treasures. As the Upanishad says :

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

Harijan, 1-9-1946

35. *PREACHING TO EMPTINESS*

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

Downes was a Seventh Day Adventist. He was a quack like me. He was my guest years ago in Durban. One day he said he must the preach the simple life to those who cared to listen to him. He succeeded in borrowing a chapel hall for one hour in Mercury Lane and asked me to preside. I warned him that with me as chairman in the very early days of my life in South Africa, probably in 1894, he must not expect an audience. He would not heed the warning. Precisely at the advertised time Downes began his address to an audience of one. I asked him in vain to wait a few minutes for other comers. He would not be party to stealing God's time and unconcerned, he went on with his speech. So far as I remember, a few stragglers, under ten, came in during the speech. I happened to relate this experience to Horace Alexander whilst I was in Delhi. He gave me in return the stranger story of Stephen Grellet, a Quaker, preaching to emptiness. I asked him to give me the authentic version for the readers of *Harijan*, it being a rich experience of living faith in God. I reproduce below the story as sent by Horace Alexander.¹

Harijan, 8-9-1946

36. *DO NOT FORGET HARIJANS*²

A correspondent writes :

Shri Ganesh-utsava started by the late Lokamanya is coming near; most of our ministers and leaders will be invited by various associations to speak on this occasion. I desire to suggest to the speakers that they should accept such invitations, provided that the management would allow Harijans to take part in the function; they should also make it a point to take at least one

¹ Not reproduced here. It told of how Stephen Grellet, a quaker preacher, instructed by the Lord to preach to woodcutters in some backwoods of America, preached in an empty building and how a woodcutter, hiding there had heard the sermon and in turn preached to other woodcutters and brought into the fold at least a thousand of them.

² This appeared as a "Note". The translation is based on the English version published in *Harijan*, 25-8-1946.

Harijan with them when they go to address the congregation.

The above suggestion is reasonable and apt. If caste Hindus really want to stamp out untouchability they should have the company of Harijans in their gatherings, and especially on such occasions as the celebration of Hindu festivals they should not fail to do so.

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 25-8-1946

37. MASS MURDER

A friend writes :

The food famine situation in Mysore and Rayalaseema is daily growing more serious. Unless imports pour in sufficient quantities, the local co-operative stores will fail to supply rations—starvation rations as they are, since only 8. oz. of rice is being given to peasants who need 24 oz. to keep them fit—to the peasant masses and I am afraid that we may have to be prepared to face deaths due to starvation in November and December.

If even half of what he says is true, it is a sad reflection on our capacity to cope with food famine in a vast country like India where there is land lying waste or ill-used and water running rapidly into the sea for want of human ingenuity to dam and store it. The writer says that unless imports “pour in sufficient quantities”, meaning undoubtedly from outside India, “mass deaths due to starvation in November and December” are a certainty. I suggest to everyone concerned that if this happens, the Government of the country will be guilty of mass murder.

To look to outside sources for food supply is to invite starvation. Has it ever been made clear that India has no capacity for growing sufficient food between now and November? Need a vast country like India with its teeming millions starve, even if the whole world were to declare a blockade against it?¹

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

¹ *Vide also* “Letter to N.G. Ranga”, 15-8-1946.

38. *MOVE ON*¹

On reading about my persistent darkness, a correspondent sends me the following lines of comfort:

The path may be clouded;
Move on, for the orbit is fixed for your soul;
And though it may lead into darkness of night,
The torch of the Builder shall give it new light.
SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

39. *LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT*

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

Can we say that your problem has been solved? Dr. Bhagavat is a saintly man. Each time [I see him] he impresses me more and more. One can gain a lot from him provided one has the faith. I have no doubt about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DHIRUBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

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

40. *LETTER TO GANGABEHN BHATT*

[*August 16, 1946*]²

CHI. GANGA,

I am glad that you and Purushottam have gone there³. An undertaking is incomplete as long as there is no women worker. Kanchan has set up a separate household and Zohra has gone to study nursing. Abha too has set up a separate household.

¹ This was published under "Notes".

² The source has this letter among those dated August 16, 1946.

³ Uruli Kanchan

And Amtussalaam looks after my food and other things. Write to me how you both fare there.

Blessing from

BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN BHATT'

URULI KANCHAN

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

41. LETTER TO MAGANLAL

SEVAGRAM,

August 16, 1946

BHAI MAGANBHAI,

Chi. Paramanand saw me last night and gave me your cheque for Rs. 5,000. I am having the cheque sent to Uruli Kanchan. It will be utilized for the land purchased at Uruli Kanchan for a like amount. Chi. Paramanand informs me that if I agree you are willing to become one of the trustees of the Uruli Kanchan trust. Jehangir Patel and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta are my co-trustees. A local gentlemen has also been taken on the trust. I shall have to obtain these gentlemen's consent. However, before I initiate the process I must let you know that this trust has no merely ornamental names. All the trustees must mean business. This has been the tacit understanding among the original trustees. Hence, unless you can stay at Uruli Kanchan from time to time and participate in its activities I would consider your becoming a trustee as having no meaning. I know you are a hard-working man. Hence if you mean it you can be of much use. Moreover, you must have faith in nature cure. If you do not have it, your being a trustee would be a mockery. And how can I place you in such an embarrassing position? I understand from Chi. Paramanand that you will also want to build a house in Uruli Kanchan for your residence. This I shall certainly welcome, on the understanding that the ownership of the property will go to the Trust. The premises will be utilized under the provisions of the Trust and the trustees will make use of it for the Trust's business when you are not using it yourself. If Chi. Paramanand marries your daughter the couple will naturally use

the house. You of course will be there.

SJT. MAGANLAL
CHOPDA

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

42. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Chi. Paramanand has given me all the news from there. He has brought a cheque for Rs. 5,000. This can be credited only there. I have written¹ to Maganlal regarding the problems that will have to be tackled in connection with his appointment as a trustee. Paramanand will tell you. I also learn that Gangabehn has arrived. That is a good thing. I hope Purushottam is better there. I expect you have had enough rainfall. Have you started implementing the suggestions I had left? How is Gokhale getting along? Balkrishna should write to me. Blessings to all the friends there.

SJT. MANILAL
URULI KANCHAN

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

43. LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. RAMKRISHNA,

You are going West.² I do not quite see its benefit. But when a strong wind is blowing who can remain unaffected? Think what you will be taking from here and what you will be bringing from there. The student days are for the development of thought.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 3067

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² The addressee was a delegate of the All-India Students' Congress to the International Student' Congress which was being held at Prague, Czechoslovakia.

44. MESSAGE TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

The goodness of a good man is itself his true jubilee. Dr. Zakir Husain's great work itself is his true greatness.

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

45. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND²

[Before August 17, 1946]³

GANDHIJI : To appreciate fully the present policy of the A. I. S. A. you have to take in its etiology. In the initial stages emphasis was on bringing relief to the poor. Incidentally it provided a living link between the classes and the masses and assumed a political significance. . . We cannot make further headway on those lines. We cannot, for instance, further increase the wages. Khadi won't bear it. So far it was spun and woven by the masses. Now it must still be by the masses, but for their own use. The new policy of the A. I. S. A. has not failed. The latest figures show that it is steadily though slowly making headway.

There are difficulties. Weaving constitutes the bottleneck. We have not established a sufficient hold on the weavers. The fault, again, is mine. If I had from the very beginning insisted on all learning weaving along with spinning things would have been different today. The working capital of the A. I. S. A. now stands at twenty-five lakhs. It has taken twenty-five years to reach that figure. During that period it distributed over seven crores of rupees as wages among four and a half lakhs of the poor spinners and weavers, principally spread over twenty thousand villages of India. I do not know of another instance of such a huge turn-over with so little capital in such a wide area.

FRIEND : That is good but by no means unique. The Chinese Indusco did better.

G. That is not a fair comparison. I studied in detention Nym

¹ This was sent to Dr. K. G. Saiyidain on the occasion of the University's Silver Jubilee.

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Khadi On Trial", 17-8-1946

³ *ibid*

Wales' book which was recommended to me. Indusco's activities were carried on under abnormal circumstances with the backing of the Chinese National Government. Besides, all its production was war-time production. You need not have gone as far as China for your illustration. The work of the Calicut Mission in South India would have provided a more apt instance. In each case the field was restricted. In the case of khadi it is trying to serve the whole of India.

F. We cannot today attract more artisans by offering better wages. The general level of wages in the country is already so high.

G. We do not want to.

F. You mean to say you want them to produce for self.

G. Yes.

F. How can that be made practicable?

G. I explained that to Mr. Casey¹ last year. I told him that by adopting my scheme, not only could we solve the cloth problem for Bengal, but for the whole of India. The essence of that scheme was that, instead of supplying textiles to the people, they should be taught how to make cloth for themselves and provided the necessary means—instruments, raw materials, etc.,—for the same. A reasonable time limit should be fixed after which no textiles would be rationed in the area covered by the scheme. In German East Africa, I am told, cloth shortage during World War I was actually met by the Negroes being induced to manufacture their own cloth. Whether that is so or not, if India made full use of her spinning and weaving tradition which is universal and the matchless hereditary skill of her artisans, she could not only solve her own difficulty but even help the world to meet the present crisis by releasing her mill production, for countries less favourable placed in the matter of cloth manufacture.

F. The fact, however, remains that in spite of there being such an acute cloth scarcity, khadi has failed to step into the breach. It has missed the bus.

G. Thanks to Government interference. They arrested khadi workers, burnt stocks of khadi and put khadi production under every conceivable handicap.

¹ R. G. Casey, Governor of Bengal in 1945, whom Gandhiji met in Calcutta on December 1, 2 and 3, 1945. *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-12-1945 and "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 7-12-1945.

F. The vacuum is growing. Production charges have already touched the ceiling and yet the wages that we can offer are not adequate to attract even the unemployed.

G. Where are these unemployed?

F. Well, there are one lakh of I. N. A. men.

G. I made an offer to them. It has yet evoked no response. You can take the horse to the trough but you cannot make it drink.

F. Cannot Government formulate a scheme?

G. It has been done in Madras. It is under examination. Nothing can be imposed from above. Everything has to be worked from below. And those who work them should have faith and conviction and spirit of service. A Government ukase won't do the trick. Government can assist. As I told Mr. Casey, I am prepared to work out my scheme if it is left to me and the Government accord necessary facilities. That offer still stands.

F. The danger is that, if we stop the supply of textiles to any area, as envisaged in your scheme, it may accentuate the present discontent and even cause an upheaval. There are elements ready to pounce upon and exploit any excuse to foment discontent. Restriction on cloth supply might even be enumerated as an 'atrocious' as prohibition was by a certain section in Bombay. How can we contemplate or invite a disturbance like that? This is not a constructive approach to the question. It smacks of compulsion.

G. Where is the question of compulsion? As it is, there is not enough cloth to go round. The stocks of cloth available for distribution being short of the demand, rationing becomes a necessity. The question is only of wise distribution. No stocks may be expected from outside for some time. America and England are making strenuous efforts to increase their cloth production. But it is all needed there. If we nationalize our textile industry and work it on a double shift basis, it would probably solve the problem of cloth shortage, but not of mass poverty. I won't then be able to press the case for khadi, not because there would be no case but because I won't be able to carry conviction.

F. That is not my point. An element of compulsion there is in all governmental measures. . . . If a fundamentally unsound and unstable economic situation is sought to be propped up by governmental compulsion, there is danger that it will crash one day and spread ruin all around. I am wondering if the

organization of khadi production on the present lines is not an instance of that type, whether pure theory does not need to be tempered with a measure of practical realism to suit the changed conditions. For instance, the woollen manufactures in Kashmir are not self-use. They cater for the market for fancy goods outside Kashmir. They are extremely popular. Now, if we introduce machine carding, they can hold their own against all competition. But that would be against the fundamental khadi principles. I have been thinking whether a compromise cannot be effected. To run cottage industries with man-power exclusively, has not much prospect of survival in this age of machinery. We may try to canalize economic trends, we may not run against them in a head-on collision. If we could run cottage industries with the help of cheap electricity, for instance, they would be able to hold their own without losing their essential character. After all, decentralized production is what we want. We might have projects for the development of cheap hydraulic power as an aid to irrigation schemes. They can be in operation in from six to ten years. It will then be possible to take electricity to every village. Shall we under those circumstances be able to work khadi on the present lines? Normally speaking, supply should balance demand. But instead of establishing khadi on a permanent basis, we are crippling it by artificial restrictions with the result that a lot of corruption and dishonesty has crept in. . . .

G. It is open to all those who cannot or do not want to spin to go in for mill cloth, whether Indian or foreign. I am walking with my eyes open. This is not first time in the history of khadi that demand has outstripped supply and *vice versa*. Each time heroic measures were adopted and the crisis was overcome. I do not expect a different result this time. Only, we must have faith and patience and the courage to apply the right remedy which is what I am doing at present. If in the process khadi dies, I must be prepared to take even that risk.

F. That is begging the question. It won't go down with people. We have got to adjust our policy to the popular need.

G. I cannot do that. Having discovered the error, I must correct it. That may take time. Therefore, I have suggested the removal of the khadi clause from the Congress constitution. When it was sought to be removed unsuccessfully at the Assam Congress, it gave me satisfaction. Now I will encourage and welcome abolition. If it has intrinsic merit, khadi will survive the Congress abolition. If it has not, it will deserve to go under.

F. That, however, would not solve our fundamental problem.

G. I am afraid I won't be able to convince you by argument. Time alone will show who was right.

F. You said weaving was the bottleneck. A weaver mill yarn, can today earn as much as Rs. 3 a day. The spinner and the weaver of the hand-spun won't work for lower wages.

G. I don't want him to. That is why I have recommended doubling of hand-spun yarn. If he depends on the supply of mill yarn, he is doomed. Mill-owners are not philanthropists to go on providing yarn to the handloom weaver when he enters into effective competition with them. But a weaver working on doubling hand-spun yarn will, in the end, be better off than the mill yarn weaver, for the former will find steady employment all the year round.

F. The very basis of textile industry has been revolutionized. Now they are preparing synthetic textile fibres from coal, air and water. Felting of cotton fibres with the help of resins is taking the place of weaving. Unless we make sure that our khadi policy rests on a sound practicable basis and fits into the over-all picture, khadi is bound to fail.

G. It may, but the labour expended on it won't have been wasted.

F. No good effort is ever wasted. But the latest orientation of your khadi policy continues to perplex many a sincere khadi lover and worker. Their perplexity ought to be removed. Some of them even talk of going in for uncertified khadi.

G. The perplexity won't be removed if they have no faith in khadi.

F. So long as there is demand for khadi, it ought to be fulfilled even if prices of khadi have to be raised.

G. That means that khadi will become fancy goods. It won't be right to use a vast organization for such a purpose. Our duty is to find out and remedy if there is any fundamental defect in our khadi policy and if in the process it is found that khadi is not basically a sound proposition, it should be given a decent burial. Today khadi is on its trial. It will successfully emerge from it only by virtue of its inherent strength and if it lacks that strength, all bother about it will be love's labour lost.

F. All I know is that where there is widespread and genuine demand for a commodity and the supply falls short, it should be possible to devise ways and means to adjust the economic balance and satisfy the demand in question.

G. I can only warn you of the danger. There was a time when we used machine-carded slivers for spinning. We might as well have used mill yarn. If we had not broken away from it and had not introduced hand-carding, khadi would have been defunct by now.

The late Sir Gangaram said to me : “Only give up the spinning-wheel, concentrate on the handloom and I am with you.” He did not realize what we know today, that the use of mill yarn is the principal stranglehold on the handloom industry. In hand-spun yarn lies its only salvation. If the spinning-wheel goes, the handloom is bound to follow suit. Khadi will cease to have any value in my eyes if it does not usefully employ the millions. Many of the “compromises” that have been suggested are such as to take away from it its essential character. The late Sir Fazalbai prophesied to me when I saw him thirty years ago that khadi was ultimately bound to fail. He is gone but khadi has remained. Maybe a new era has now opened and khadi is an anachronism in it. Only, I do not feel so.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

46. CONFUSION ABOUT RAMANAMA

A friend writes :

Regarding your suggested cure of malaria by Ramanama,¹ my problem is that I do not understand how to rely on a spiritual force for my physical ailments. I am also not sure if I deserve to be cured and if I am justified in praying for my salvation, when there is so much misery amongst my countrymen. The day I understand Ramanama, I shall pray for their salvation. Otherwise I would feel more selfish than I do today.

This is from a friend whom I believe to be an earnest seeker of truth. I take public notice of his difficulty, as it is typical of that of many like him.

Spiritual force is like any other force at the service of man. Apart from the fact that it has been used for physical ailments for ages with more or less success, it would be intrinsically wrong not to use it, if it can be successfully used for the cure of physical ailments. For, man is both matter and spirit, each acting on and affecting the other. If you get rid of malaria by taking quinine, without thinking of the millions who do not get it, why should you refuse to use the remedy which is within you, because millions will not use it through their ignorance? May you not be clean and well because millions of others will not be so, ignorantly or maybe even cursedly? If you will not be

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Dr. B.S. Moonje”, 8-8-1946 and “Letter to Jahangir Patel”, 17-8-1946.

clean out of false notions of philanthropy, you will deny yourself the duty of serving the very millions by remaining dirty and ill. Surely refusal to be spiritually well or clean is worse than the refusal to be physically clean and well.

Salvation is nothing more and nothing less than being well in every way. Why should you deny it for yourself, if thereby you show the way to others and beyond showing it, actually serve them in addition by reason of your fitness? But you are wholly selfish when you take penicillin in order to get well although you have the certain knowledge that the others cannot get it.

The confusion lying behind my correspondent's argument is obvious.

What, however, is true is that the taking of a pill or pills of quinine is much easier than gaining the knowledge of the use of Ramanama. It involves much effort as against the mere cost of buying quinine pills. The effort is worth making for the sake of the millions, in whose name and on whose behalf my correspondent will shut Rama out of his heart.

SEVAGRAM, August 17, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

47. TELEGRAM TO KUNJUKRISHNA MENON

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

KUNJUKRISHNA MENON
TEACHER, MALAYALAM SCHOOL
PATTOM, TRIVANDRUM

VELUKUTTY NAIR MUST NOT FAST.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

48. TELEGRAM TO KAMTA PRASAD

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

KAMTA PRASAD
CHAKRATA

DO NOT KNOW MERITS CASE

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

49. TELEGRAM TO MADARNAHAK VIRAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

MADARNAHAK VIRAM
AJMER

PLANS UNCERTAIN. DO NOT COME NOW.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

50. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am instructed by Gandhiji to send you a copy of a wire¹ just received by him. It needs no comment. Things in Goa seem to be in a bad way.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 101-2

¹ This was about ill-treatment in jail of Purushottam Kakodkar, Secretary, Goa National Congress; *vide* also Goa, 18-8-1946 and Goa, 1-9-1946.

51. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your English letter. Do you have my letters read out to you? If you could tell me whether you read my letters yourself and can follow them fully or have to have someone explain them to you, I could do something about it. If Ramprasad's case is likely to take long I shall have to think about the matter a little. I thought you needed a man urgently, and that obtaining sanction was only a formality. But what you say is right. Consider it only after having consulted your association. It would be better if you could tell me how much time it will take. But this you ought to bear in mind that Ramprasad is not unoccupied here. All I wish to convey is that I can spare him without inconvenience to me.

You will find in *Harijan* the answer to the question you have raised regarding Ramanama.¹ Nevertheless you will please ask me again if you do not understand it or are not satisfied with it. I think it is another matter whether you put it into practice or not. However, as a trustee you ought to have a correct understanding of it. And if I am making a mistake you should correct me. I note that Dinshaw has been seeing you. Write to me if you have anything to say regarding the views I have expressed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JEHANGIR PATEL
PATEL HOUSE
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT BOMBAY

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

¹Vide "Confusion about Ramanama", 17-8-1946.

52. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter. I am happy to know that there is no law against the Harijans in the State. Though, personally, I don't like gold ornaments being worn whether on the feet or any other part of the body, forbidding this by law is irksome. Poor Harijans can enjoy the sight of gold only on other people's persons. How can they own any gold? But what is the difficulty in getting rid of old ideas of prestige?

Blessings from
BAPU

DIWAN
BIKANER STATE

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

53. LETTER TO MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI MANGHARAM,

I got your letter. Why should you grieve over your mother's death? We are all destined to go the same way—some now, some later. Our dharma is to go on doing our duty.

The money will be used for Harijan work.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS
HYDERABAD (SIND)

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

54. GOA¹

The following telegrams have been received regarding Shri Kakodkar's arrest and imprisonment :

Purushottam Kakodkar arrested in connection recent Satyagraha movement Goa. In spite being political prisoner imprisoned dingy ill-ventilated cell in company criminals awaiting trial for murder robberies. Food supplied most ordinary insufficient being half normal meal. Expressed willingness to work for his meal. Also pleaded on behalf his other unfortunate companions in cell for better treatment. In respect food authorities turned deaf ear. He is on hunger strike since last three days. Authorities' attitude arrogant offensive.

Purushottam Kakodkar fifth day hunger strike. Condition precarious. Allowed see persons under guard. Attitude authorities unconcerned.

If the charges attributed to the Goan authorities are true, they reflect great discredit on them. It is to be hoped that the civil resisters of Goa will not be cowed down by any ill-treatment, however grave it may be.

I am not sure about the wisdom of the hunger-strike resorted to. Let me hope that it will produce the desired effect. In any case, having been undertaken, it must be prosecuted to the end.

SEVAGRAM, August 18, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

55. DISLOYALTY TO KHADI

A correspondent writes :

On 31st July 1946, at 6 p. m., 13 college students (khadi wearers) headed by a prominent Congressman, who is also a councilor, came in the Khadi Bhandar. The sale was closed due to shortage of khadi. Only a few pieces of khadi were kept in the cupboard upstairs, as it was not possible to satisfy about 1500 khadi wearers from these few pieces. They at once went up, took thirteen full pieces forcibly, asked the Manager to take money, and also without yarn, and on refusal of accepting money in protest by the Manager, they went away with the cloth.

Was it not the duty of the Manager to lodge a complaint against them in the police, or what action should he have taken in preventing them from

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

taking away the cloth?

The manager should really have resisted the looting, non-violently, even at the risk of losing his life. He is entitled to lodge a complaint against the miscreants, provided that all other avenues of voluntary return of the loot have been explored and have failed.

Rowdyism by students has become a byword. If “a prominent Congressman” encouraged them, it was a matter of shame. The use of looted khadi betrays woeful ignorance of the elements of swaraj and makes khadi such a mockery.

SEVAGRAM, August 18, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

56. LETTER TO JAYAKUNVAR DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. JAYA¹,

There is a letter from Manu saying that Bihari² has typhoid. Don't let typhoid scare you or Bihari and don't let anyone scare him. It has been my unfailing experience that if one leaves it alone it disappears after it has run its course. You may daily give him enema. I know from experience that if the patient is given fruit juices, his intestines heal up on their own. The doctors have other theories. What can I write to you about Ramanama? Trust everything to God. Keep me informed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIJAYABEHN
HARSHAD VILLA
NEHRU ROAD
VILLE PARLE

From microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIII

¹ Daughter of Amritlal Tulsidas Gandhi, Gandhi's cousin

² Addressee's son

57. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is good, but there is still room for improvement. Try and see what you can do. It is not proper that you give me no news about Sumi¹. Learn Urdu by your own efforts. In my view, you will be receiving more useful education if you start going among the villagers and propagate spinning, etc.

Why do you write “majah” instead of “Maja”.

Blessings from
BAPU

KU. SITA GANDHI
BENARES HINDU VIDYAPITH
WOMENS' HOSTEL
BENARES, U. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4988

58. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. VANU,

I have your letter. I had also got the letter which you sent with Dada. At that time I thought that since you would be soon meeting me it was pointless to reply. Besides, even if I had written I could not have done so in detail. We shall have a little talk when we meet. I am not at all happy about Narahari's illness. He may consult a homeopath if he wishes. I wish him, even for selfish reasons to get well somehow. From your letter I assume that all of you will arrive here around the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

KR. VANAMALA PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5798. Also C. W. 3021. Courtesy :
Vanamala M. Desai

¹ Sumitra Gandhi, daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

59. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

I keep forgetting to write to you. I am glad to learn that you are taking so much interest in coaching the children. Make them develop the habit of writing. They should cultivate good handwriting; they should learn the three scripts, Gujarati, Devanagari and Persian. Those who are not Gujaratis should learn the last two. If they line the paper they will not fumble. There should be no mugging. If they follow everything intelligently they can make great progress.

Let me know if what I have written is wrong.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

60. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1940

BROTHER BHAGAWAT,

Chi. Paramanand has come here. He has given all the news. Your work is going on well and everybody has got the impression that you are a silent worker. I want to know three things from you. (1) What about the shoes? (2) Why the indifference in regard to the rules of cleanliness? (3) And why the growing of long hair? The experiment in balanced diet I have liked very much. I want to do it for myself. It saves us from many difficulties. But I am sorry that I have not yet been able to start on it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2741. Courtesy : Manilal B. Desai

61. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

BHAI GOPALASWAMI,

This is in reply to your letter of 19th June. It is not good that you felt tired. You should first discuss the matter with Bapa as well as with me. Whatever step has to be taken should be taken only after that. I have had a talk with Rajaji and you will have got my message. You should not give any importance to the statements made by the Harijan M.L.A. Taking notice of such a thing in *Harijan* would only lend it unmerited prestige.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

62. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DOCTORS¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

Gandhiji while thanking them all for the trouble they had taken, said he was afraid elaborate schemes costing large sums of money would not do. He wanted Sevagram to serve as a model and therefore he wanted nothing there which could not be multiplied in the 700,000 villages. If they could do that satisfactorily even in one village, it might solve the problem of the other villages of India. Otherwise progress would be at a snail's pace and ambitious planning in a few villages would only stand out as a monument of costly futility.

D.D.T. spraying was already being carried on. Gandhiji suggested that it should be intensified. The Government could use the place as a centre for experimental survey and malaria control. They could build a few septic tanks as an experiment, but he felt sure that trending, properly carried out, must remain the solution in the vast majority of cases. Shri Aryanayakum of the Talimi Sangh had

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting had been called by Dr. Sushila Nayyar with a view to devising ways to rid Sevagram of malaria and improving the sanitation.

offered to make an experiment to see if trenching could not be done without fly-breeding.

Harijan, 1-9-1946

63. WHAT CAN VIOLENCE DO?

If newspaper reports are to be believe, responsible ministers in Sindh and other equally responsible Leaguers almost all over, are preaching violence in naked language. Nakedness is itself a virtue as distinguished from hypocrisy. But when it is a hymn of obscenity, it is a vice to be shunned, whether it resides in a Leaguer or any other person. Any Muslim who is not in the League is a traitor, says one. The Hindu is a *kafir* deserving the fate of such, says another.

Calcutta had given an ocular demonstration of what direct action is and how it is to be done.¹

Who is the gainer? Certainly not the Muslim masses nor the sober followers of Islam which itself means sobriety and peace. The very salute *salaam alaikum* means 'peace be unto you'.

Violence may have its place in life but not that which we have witnessed in Calcutta, assuming of course that newspaper accounts are to be trusted. Pakistan of whatever hue does not lie through senseless violence. When I write of senseless violence, I naturally assume the possibility of sensible violence, whatever the latter may be. The Calcutta demonstration was not an illustration of sensible violence.

What senseless violence does is to prolong the lease of the life of British or foreign rule. I believe that the authors of the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission desire peaceful transfer of power to representative Indian hands. But if *we* need the use of the British gun and bayonet, the British will not go or, if they do, some other foreign power will take their place. We will make a serious mistake, if, everytime the British bayonet is used, we trot out the agent provocateur. No doubt he has been at work. Let us not ride that horse to death.

Calcutta has earned a bad repute of late. It has seen too many wild demonstrations during the past few months. If the evil reputation

¹ On August 16, which the Muslim League had declared "Direct Action Day", savage riots broke out in Calcutta. During four days of rioting, according to official estimates, some five thousand were killed and fifteen thousand wounded.

is sustained for some time longer, it will cease to be the City of Palaces, it will become the city of the dead.

Would that the violence of Calcutta were sterilized and did not become a signal for its spread all over. It depends upon the leaders of the Muslim League of course, but the rest will not be free from responsibility. They can retaliate or refrain. Refraining is easy and simple, if there is the will. Retaliation is complicated. Will it be tooth against or many against one?

SEVAGRAM, August 19, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

64. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

This is merely to ask you how you would arrange the latrines for the Ashram and the village. Subsoil water being so near the surface, medical men who gathered here yesterday voted for septic tanks. I know you are averse to the idea. Send me your own opinion and a description of the preparation of compost. I forget if you include night-soil also as they do in Indore. Anyway give me an accurate description for me to print or show to medical friends.

Don't recommence work unless you are quite fit. You have ample to do in Mussoorie.

It is raining as I write.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

R. K. reminds me that I have already published your writings¹ on the thing. If they are enough don't trouble.

From the original : C. W. 6581. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9913

¹ In *Harijan*, 10-3-1946 under the title "From Rubbish to Gold"

65. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I could reach your letter of the 10th today. I have already dictated a postcard to Jaya.¹ Let us hope that Bihari will get well.

Who can convince Jaisukhlal? The description you give me of the conditions there has shocked me. I have seen Mahua. But from what you say it would appear, it is worse than what I had thought it to be. I remember that I stayed there only for a day.

If you can stay right near the seashore, things will be better. Why does Jaisukhlal fall ill so often, in spite of all his careful observance of dietary restrictions. There must be some reason. He must look for it and get will.

Your work seems to be progressing well. The important thing is that you are at peace there and have got independent social work. You should take up sanitation work. If you succeed in cleaning up Mahua, you will deserve a medal.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

66. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 19, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

Meet Prabhudayal and find out what he says about [my] Hindustani. Don't my Hindustani speeches go direct as they are?

Blessings from
BAPU

PYARELALJI

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

¹Vide "Letter to Jayakunvar Desai", 18-8-1946.

67. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I learn from Prabhudayal's diary that in Nalwadi, the place from which milk is distributed is very dirty. How far is the complaint true? If there is truth in it, study the rules of dairy hygiene and follow them. Our *goseva* must be ideal.

Blessings from
BAPU

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

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

68. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

Read the enclosed letter and send me your comments. Can we today produce khadi for the market? Can we render any other service? The other questions are also there. Think over them too.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

69. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I cannot quite understand why you had to undertake the fast. Who made the complaint? And have I not said that no one may undertake a fast without asking me? This is the best course.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DHIRUBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

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

70. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1946

CHI. KASHINATH,

I had thought of writing to Father. But then for the first two days I forgot all about it. Later when I suddenly remembered it no one could tell me his name. I think I had asked you to leave me his name and address and you had said I should ask someone or the other. No one however could give me the name. It is possible that you left it with Krishnachandra, but he stays in Paunar. I could not get it from the Mahila Ashram either. Now that I have to reply to your letter I shall say here what I want to write to Father. Tell him it is only natural for a father to be grieved by the passing away of a young son. But if one takes a dispassionate and broad view, why should one grieve? Everyone who is born must die, the only difference being whether death comes soon or late. Why grieve over it then? And one who looks upon all children as his own—and Father must adopt such an attitude—over whom can such a person grieve? Thus I would suggest that if the cause of this death has been found we should try and remove the possibility of its recurrence in respect of others. The main cause of typhoid is believed to be contaminated water. Wherever this cause has been removed casualties from typhoid have been reduced almost to nil.

Now the reply to your letter. Wherever there is a clash between groups of workers it should be understood that neither party seeks Government help. If this is assured the conflict tends to stop. And if they do not accept Government help one of the parties should wisely and courageously stay calm. The conflict will then dissolve. Everyone does not readily realize this. Hence, one should acquire enough strength for self-defence. Detecting and removing the cause of conflict is the universally accepted remedy. But where one party is determined to secure power by resorting to conflict, then there is nothing one can do. It is very clear and also painful. And the remedy lies either in the violent or the non-violent way described above.

SHRI KASHINATH TRIVEDI

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

71. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I got the *rakhi* today. May you and Shankerlal get well and render service. I am getting along well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI
MAJOUR MAHAJAN
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

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

72. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

I went through your draft law about ill-matched couples early this morning after the prayers. It seems to me that enacting such a law will bring no immediate gain. I think for the desired reform to come about a good deal of public opinion will have to be built up. There is every chance of a law not backed by public opinion remaining confined to the statute book. Have you not had such experience? Hence, if nothing has yet been done I would suggest your systematically cultivating public opinion in this regard. A few armchair reformers expressing a pious desire should not be mistaken for public opinion. In fact these reformers, at least some of them, do not hesitate to offer themselves as eligible candidates when opportunity arises.

I have your reply regarding the matter at Worli. And let me know if you come to know anything more. At the moment I do not wish to write anything to the Ministers.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATI MUNSHI
BOMBAY

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

73. ADDRESS TO HINDUSTANI PRACHAR TRAINEES¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

We are slaves of the English language but we should overthrow its domination and use our language. If you want to be good Hindustani propagandists you must also learn to be good Bhangis like me.

You must try to grow your food, at least green vegetables, and cook for yourself and not depend on others or on servants as you are now doing.

Gandhiji recalled how he used green vegetables which tribesmen brought him during his satyagraha march in South Africa and advised students to grow some vegetables for their daily needs as it required little labour. He laid stress on dignity of labour which occupied a prominent place in Naye Talim and asked students to realize its significance.

The Hindu, 23-8-1946

74. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have received a reply to my letter to Vaikunthbhai from which it appears that khadi is not likely to face any difficulty in the Bombay Presidency. All the same we shall see if any difficulty does crop up.

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

¹ The students of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha's training college had assembled in Gandhiji's cottage to hear him. A meeting of the Sabha also decided during the day to bring out Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu-Hindustani dictionaries.

75. *LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA*

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I got your beautiful letter written in as shabby a hand as mine. But can the pot call the kettle black? It would not be wrong if you engaged a clerk instead of sparing the Government the expenditure. Now that you have supplied me all the details, I shall be able to write something.

I take it that the articles that have been exempted include khadi.

To

VAIKUNTHBHAI MEHTA

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

76. *LETTER TO V. T. KRISHNAMACHARI*

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI KRISHNAMACHARI,

The Rajasthan branch of the Charkha Sangh informs me that the Jaipur State does not give khadi full exemption from tax or license fee, etc. Can't poor khadi be exempted?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR KRISHNAMACHARI, DIWAN

JAIPUR

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

77. ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI

What English-knowing Indian has not felt the shame and sorrow at his failure to discover an equivalent for an English word in either his mother tongue or the national language? A Gujarati lad has an English-Gujarati dictionary in such a case to help him; similarly a Urdu or Hindi knowing lad has his dictionary to fall back upon. But for Hindustani, which is neither Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi and which is the tongue of the common folk of the North, whether Hindu or Mussalman, a writer has no dictionary to fall back upon. An attempt will be made through a column at least of the *Harijan* each week to furnish for English a Hindustani word or two, spelt in both Nagari and Urdu script. An endeavour will be made to give the names of those who will contribute their labour to this fascinating task. This is pioneer work and therefore will, like all pioneer work, have defects. Those who detect them, will confer a favour by drawing the attention to them of the Editor. I would suggest to students that they copy out these words week by week in a note-book and add to or amend the attempt. They will find that the labour will combine recreation with instruction.

Only those English words which are in common use have been selected from a standard English dictionary. In reading the following¹, the reader should also know that no claim is made that the equivalents are the best possible or that they are exhaustive. They are a help to the searcher. The plan for this week is that those who are helping me to conduct the *Harijan* have prepared the first list. Kakasaheb and Acharya Shrimannarayan looked at the selection. The first letters of their names “Ka” or “Shri” have been given in parenthesis after the addition.

SEVAGRAM, August 23, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

¹ Not reproduced here

78. WE ARE ALL INDIANS

A Roman Catholic student from Goa had the sad experience of being told by some of his fellow students in Bombay that he was a Portuguese and therefore a foreigner. When he told them that the Roman Catholics of Goa had castes just like the Hindus, he was not believed. These transitory lapses will take place whilst we are shedding our narrownesses and claiming all to be free Indians, slaves neither of the British, nor of the Portuguese nor any other foreign rule. If the same students were wisely handled, they would be proud to know their friend as an Indian and not as a Goan and be known themselves as Indians, not Bombayites. Everyone's religion is his own concern but his nationality is a corporate thing, carrying with it important and far-reaching consequences. That even among converts there are castes is a reflection upon Hinduism and should set every Hindu thinking and make him become, with me, a Bhangi.

SEVAGRAM, August 23, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

79. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

Express

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

DOCTOR DINSHAW
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

YOUR WIRE. NATURE CURE FORBIDS DESPAIR NOT-
WITHSTANDING ODDS. WROTE ON FIFTEENTH.¹ GOING
DELHI SUNDAY. HOPE MOTHER BETTER YOU ALSO.
LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ This was not received by the addressee; *vide* "Letter to D.V. Ramaswami", 29-8-1946.

80. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Express

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

RASHTRAPATI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
18 HARDINGE AVENUE
NEW DELHI

WIRE RECEIVED. LEAVING SUNDAY. STAYING BHANGI
QUARTERS. INFORM BIRLA BRIJKRISHEN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

81. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
THYAGARAYANAGAR

YOUR LETTER. HOPE YOU WELL ENOUGH. ATTEND DELHI
MEETING¹

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

82. TELEGRAM TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

KASHINATH TRIVEDI
RANIPURA
BARWANI

TARAMANIBEHN CAN BE SENT PROVIDED YOU HAVE
FIXED MAHILASHRAM. SHE CAN STAY SEVAGRAM FOR
A TIME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Of the Congress Working Committee which was held from 27th to 30th July 1946

83. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I have your letter. One too much crushed by debts feels not debts; one too much crushed by suffering feels not suffering. What are you afraid of? I have told you that you have neither relatives nor friends till you have passed your examination. Your studies are your relatives. I leave for Delhi on Sunday.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. LILAVATIBEHN
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10242. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

84. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. Chi. Lilavati in her letter told me that you were busy day and night with the Constituent Assembly work. I feel no pity for you on that score, provided of course that you are not working at the cost of your health.

I am glad that the Sharma-Gadodia case is over. I did feel hesitant about burdening you with that work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7700. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

85. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

BHAI UTTIMCHAND,

I have your letter. I was delighted to see your Hindustani. I read the Urdu also. I am sending the cheque to Sardar. I like the analogy from geometry and I got the answer too by drawing the figure.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD (SIND)

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

86. ADDRESS TO TRAINEES OF BASIC TEACHERS' CAMP¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

One of the complaints that has been made by one of you is that too much emphasis is laid here on manual work. I am a firm believer in the educative value of manual work.. Our present educational system is meant for strengthening and perpetuating the imperialist power in India. Those of you who have been brought up under it have naturally developed a taste for it and so find labour irksome. No one in Government schools or college bothers to teach the students how to clean the roads or latrines. Here cleanliness and sanitation form the very Alpha and Omega of your training. Scavenging is a fine art you should take pains to learn. Persistent questioning and healthy inquisitiveness are the first requisite for acquiring learning of any kind. Inquisitiveness should be tempered by humility and

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". There were 79 trainees sent by various Congress-ruled provinces and by the Kasturba Trust. The meeting was held in the Talimi Sangh Hall.

respectful regard for the teacher. It must not degenerate into impudence. The latter is the enemy of receptivity of mind. There can be no knowledge without humility and the will to learn.

Useful manual labour, intelligently performed, is the means *par excellence* for developing the intellect. One may develop a sharp intellect otherwise too. But then it will not be a balanced growth but an unbalanced distorted abortion. It might easily make of one a rogue and a rascal. A balanced intellect presupposes a harmonious growth of body, mind and soul. That is why we give to manual labour the central place in our curriculum of training here. An intellect that is developed through the medium of socially useful labour will be an instrument for service and will not easily be led astray or fall into devious paths. The latter can well be a scourge. If you grasp that essential point, the money spent by your respective government in sending you here for training will have been well-spent.

Harijan, 8-9-1946

87. COCHIN¹

I have read all that has appeared in *The Hindu* of 30th July about the announcement² made by the Maharaja of Cochin. It is good as far as it goes. His Highness deserves congratulations for his courage. But good words do not carry us much further, unless they are accompanied by present action. It would certainly be a tremendous advance if the Maharaja were to make the beginning today, irrespective of what Travancore or other States do or do not do. Will Cochin become a part of what is called British Malabar today, the Maharaja keeping for himself no status other than what the free vote of the adult population of Cochin gives him?

SEVAGRAM, August 24, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

¹ This appeared under the heading 'Notes'.

² The Maharaja of Cochin in a statement had declared that he was prepared to discuss the unification of his State with Malabar and Travancore to form a State of Kerala.

88. LETTER TO MADALASA

Not revised

August 24, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I feel pity for you. I am also angry with you. What you have told me fills me with pity. But I am angry because you kept it to yourself all this time.

We should blame no one except ourselves. That is the only way to be happy in life and remain clean. I have told you that you should find some work which will leave you no time to think about yourself. Mahila Ashram work was one such activity, but it did not suit you. You should, then, find some work which you can do alone or with a friend you will choose. If you can think of nothing, you could learn all the processes of spinning. Read books on nature cure. There are some in Gujarati, and in Hindi, too.

Do write to me every Tuesday, and that at length. Do not lose your temper with anybody, not even with yourself. Learn to sing the *bhajans* aloud.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 327-8

89. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter.

Next week the dictionary must be published.¹ We can only try, however. Please send me what you can. That will satisfy me. How can we pass imperfect material in order to finish the work? After all it is only a beginning. It was not possible to send for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10973

90. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 24, 1946

I had long talks with Kanchan. I only pity her. She can take no decision just now. She certainly desires conjugal pleasure and to bear children. This wish on her part cannot be despised. You are a married man. No one can find fault with you if you beget progeny. It is only right for you to satisfy her and find satisfaction yourself. It is another matter if, seeing your ascetic disposition and out of love and compassion for you, she herself releases you. But at present this is beyond you both. You have not the necessary firmness of mind. Kanchan certainly wants to taste of the worldly pleasure. The two of you should therefore stay there for the present. When I arrive there it will not be necessary for you to visit the Ashram too often. You may come whenever you conveniently can. It will not matter if you don't. If in the meanwhile my plans have crystallized, we shall know how matters stand with regard to you. Kanchan has suffered much. She must not suffer more. She will explain the rest if she can. I have given you quite enough in this letter. I am not revising this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10239. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

¹ English-Hindustani dictionary which was to be serialized in *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* from September 1, 1946.

91. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1946

When the Ashram was first started in Kochrab we set before us certain ideals. The same ideals are before us today. What is our duty in terms of these ideals in the face of the conflagration that is raging in the country today? Let us be humble and confess that we have not got the strength today to meet all the expectations that the people entertain of us. But we are sincerely striving for it. If we had fully realized the principles for which we stand, we should have rushed into the blaze and offered the purest sacrifice which might have conceivably quenched the flames.

He then proceeded to give his definition of 'pure sacrifice'. It was not the thoughtless annihilation of the moth in the flame. Sacrifice to be effective must be backed by the uttermost external and internal purity. There is nothing that such sacrifice cannot achieve. Without the requisite purity, sacrifice is no better than a desperate self-annihilation devoid of any merit. Sacrifice must, further, be willing and it should be made in faith and hope, without a trace of hatred or ill-will in the heart.

Although we have fallen short of the ideal, we have never been found wanting in honest endeavour. The art of jail-going we have learnt with the rest. But jail-going is only the beginning, not the end of satyagraha. The acme of satyagraha for us would be to lay down our lives for the defence of India's just cause. Let us then pray to God to give us the requisite purity and fearlessness in the true sense of the term, to make our sacrifice worthy of the altar. Then alone shall we be worthy of the name of the Ashram.

Harijan, 8-9-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's 'Weekly Letter', 3-9-1946

92. *HINDUSTANI v. URDU AND HINDI*

A Bombay Government circular of 16-8-1939 reads :

It has been observed that the word "Hindustani" is being used indifferently for Hindi or Hindustani. Please note that Hindustani is different and distinct from both HINDI and URDU, and when a reference to that language is to be made, it should be made as "Hindustani" only.

On 9th October 1940 a press note was issued :

In September 1938 the Government of Bombay announced their decision to introduce the study of Hindustani in the schools of the Province. Steps were accordingly taken to implement that decision and the language is being taught in the primary schools, secondary schools and in the training institutions. In actual practice the teaching of the language in the schools has raised certain difficulties which have to be considered. The chief of them are lack of literature in the language, as it has yet to develop, and the absence of suitable text-books for use in schools. The Hindustani text-books now in use have been found to be defective, both in regard to the language used in them which is said to contain too many words of Hindi origin and in regard to the subject matter of the lessons included in them, some of which are stated to be unsuitable for Muslim pupils. Besides, both Urdu and Hindustani have so much of a common vocabulary that it has been suggested that it is unnecessary to insist on the teaching of Hindustani in Urdu schools. The Government having carefully considered the whole question have now directed teaching of Hindustani in other institutions. Urdu educational institutions in the Province, i. e., the primary and secondary schools and training institutions where the medium of instruction is Urdu, should be exempted from the inclusion of such teaching in the curriculum.

Another circular issued in 1941 exempts Hindi schools from the teaching of Hindustani, thus leaving Hindu schools where the medium is other than Hindi or Urdu for teaching Hindustani. What is the present Government of the Province, which is based on popular will, to do?

The answer is contained in the admission that the present Provincial Government is based on popular will. If the Hindi schools wish to have Hindustani, the national language, taught in the primary and secondary schools, it should be taught. Naturally the question has to be decided by the parents of the children learning in these schools. If they do not want it and an attempt is made to impose it by force, the

claim for being a popular Government cannot be sustained. I should certainly advise the parents to want their children to be taught it. It should never be forgotten that Hindustani is essentially a cross between Hindi and Urdu and written in both the scripts. If the parents want either only Hindi or Urdu and only one script, they cannot impose it on an unbelieving or unwilling Government. Either party has freedom of action.

The question whether Hindustani is or can be a national form of speech is irrelevant at this stage. The argument has, moreover, been examined often enough in previous issues of the *Harijan*.

SEVAGRAM, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

93. *ADVICE TO AN ASHRAM INMATE*¹

SEVAGRAM,

August 25, 1946

Why should you want to touch my feet? Millions cannot do that and what millions cannot afford, we should voluntarily renounce. I go so far as to say that if ahimsa cannot be practised by the millions, I have no use for it for myself. But if they did not want to, although they could, I would hold on to it, even if I were all alone. People say that ahimsa is only for the saint and the seer. I think otherwise. If what they say is right, it ceases to have any value in my eyes. Similarly, if it were open to me alone to desire and strive to live for 125 years, I would not entertain that desire. But everybody can and should desire to live for 125 years, for the service of God and His creation. Self-interest too demands that. For what would life be worth in a world in which I am the sole survivor of all those I have worked with and known?

Harijan, 1-9-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The inmate had wanted to touch Gandhiji's feet as Gandhiji was leaving Sevagram. According to the source this incident took place on the 25th morning.

94. *ALTERNATIVE TO INDUSTRIALISM*

A correspondent writes :

Do you then believe that industrialization of India—to the extent of India producing her own ships, locomotives, aeroplanes, etc., —is necessary? If not, will you kindly suggest the alternative means by which India shall discharge her responsibilities as a free and independent nation?

If you believe in the establishment of such industries, who should, in your opinion, exercise control over the management and the profits that will accrue?

I do not believe that industrialization is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so for India. Indeed, I believe that Independent India can only discharge her duty towards a groaning world by adopting a simple but ennobled life by developing her thousands of cottage [industries] and living at peace with the world. High thinking is inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on us by Mammon worship. All the graces of life are possible only when we learn the art of living nobly.

There may be sensation in living dangerously. We must draw the distinction between living in the face of danger and living dangerously. A man who dares to live alone in a forest infested by wild beasts and wilder men without a gun and with God as his only Help, lives in the face of danger. A man who lives perpetually in mid-air and dives to the earth below to the admiration of a gaping world lives dangerously. One is a purposeful, the other a purposeless, life.

Whether such plain living is possible for an isolated nation, however large geographically and numerically in the face of a world armed to the teeth and in the midst of pomp and circumstance, is a question open to the doubt of a sceptic. The answer is straight and simple. If plain life is worth living, then the attempt is worth making even though only an individual or a group makes the effort.

At the same time I believe that some key industries are necessary. I do not believe in armchair or armed socialism. I believe in action according to my belief, without waiting for wholesale conversion. Hence, without having to enumerate key industries, I would have State ownership where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour,

whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the State. But as I can conceive such a State only based on non-violence, I would not dispossess monied men by force but would invite their co-operation in the process of conversion to State ownership. There are no *pariahs* of society, whether they are millionaires or paupers. The two are sores of the same disease. And all are men “for a’ that”.

And I avow this belief in the face of the inhumanities we have witnessed and may still have to witness in India as elsewhere. Let us live in the face of danger.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

95. ENGLISH NOTICES¹

You and Congress Government advocate immediate discontinuance of English as the medium of instruction in this country. Will you not exert your influence through the *Harijan* to get all sign and direction boards, plates of offices, names of roads, streets, lanes, villages, schools, colleges, hospitals, etc., written in the regional language of the district? A change in Government or semi-Government institutions will be a lesson to private shops, stores, saloons, etc., to follow suit. Articles in the Company’s and other Acts requiring a name-board in English must go.

I believe that nowadays the tendency is towards the use of the regional language on signboards, etc. The correspondent is right regarding Government institutions and offices. Now that there are national Governments, the change should be introduced.

If any such rule exists in Company’s or other Acts as referred to by the correspondent, it should certainly go.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

96. HINDUSTANI PRACHAR EXAMINATIONS

The examinations for the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, had been announced to take place on September 15th. But owing to the postal strike, letters were not delivered regularly for nearly a month, nor did the centres receive the examination books in time. In the circumstances, the time for examinations has

¹ This and the following item were published under ‘Notes’.

been postponed to November 17th (Sunday). In view of the extra time afforded, it is hoped that advantage will be taken to open more centres and more examinees will be forthcoming. The last day for receiving applications for the examinations at the Wardha office is 30th September.

I endorse the hope that the extra two months gained by the postponement will mean more entrants for the examinations.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

97. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,

August 25, 1946

MY DEAR KU,

I am told that Zaverbhai has accepted a post under the Government on a fat salary. If this is so, it is a backward step.

In my opinion no responsible person belonging to our organization can accept any pay for services. Our advice and service should be rendered gratis. Rent and conveyance expenses actually incurred may be charged. We get money from the well-to-do, the government get from the starved masses. The less we have to do with Government money, the better.

Love.

[PS.]

I am sorry. I have to run away. Hope to be back in about a week.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 10183

98. *LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL*

ON THE TRAIN
FROM SEVAGRAM TO DELHI,
August 25, 1946

BHAI SATYAPAL,

I got your letter. I am glad to know that you are happy.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYAPAL (OF LAHORE)

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

99. *LETTER TO DR. SHEIKH MUHAMMED ALAM*

ON THE TRAIN,
August 25, 1946

BROTHER ALAM,

I have your letter. I do remember the Begum and your daughter. I hope you are all well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 33

100. *GOA*¹

The game of hunting lovers of civil liberty is going on merrily in Goa. A small power because of its smallness often acts with impunity where a great power cannot. If the facts are as they have come to me, Shri Purushottam Kakodkar is fasting in his prison and may soon join the majority. As a believer unto death in satyagraha, neither I nor any satyagrahi should deplore the death. In such deaths of spotless victims lies the seed of true liberty.

But what of the Portuguese power which boasts of philanthropy and alliance with the Roman Catholic Church? That power will have

¹ This appeared under the heading 'Notes'.

to justify itself man and God. The blood of the innocents (assuming the innocence of the victims) will cry out from their tombs or their ashes. It is more potent than the voice of the living, however powerful and eloquent.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

101. IF I WERE THE MINISTER

The talks with the Ministers concerned at Poona on 29th to 31st July on village crafts and basic education have given rise to a lot of correspondence and private discussion. For the guidance of the Provincial Governments and others interested in the question of khadi which has naturally occasioned the bulk of the correspondence and discussion, I set forth below my thoughts on the subject.

I refer the reader to my note in the *Harijan* of 28th April last. My views, then expressed, remain unaltered. One thing has created a misunderstanding. Some friends have read compulsion in that note. I am sorry for the obscurity. In it I had answered the question as to what representative governments could do if they wished. I had, I hope pardonably, assumed that such governments' notices too could not be interpreted as compulsion. For every act of a *bona-fide* representative government would assume consent of the voters represented. The voters would mean the whole populace, whether registered as voters or not. With that background, I wrote that the Government should notify to the villagers that mill cloth would not be supplied to the villagers after a certain fixed date, so as to enable them to wear khadi prepared by themselves.

Whatever the meaning of my article of 28th April last, I want to state that any scheme adopted about khadi without the willing co-operation of those concerned must mean death to khadi as a means for attaining swaraj. Then the taunt that khadi was a return to the darkness and slavery of the Middle Ages would be true. But I have held the contrary view. Whilst khadi under compulsion was a badge of slavery, khadi intelligently and voluntarily prepared, primarily for one's own use, was easily the badge of our freedom. Freedom is nothing if it is not all-round self-help. I for one would have nothing

to do with khadi, if it were not a free man's privilege as well as duty.

A friendly critic asks whether khadi thus prepared could also and at the same time be for sale. Yes, if sale is its secondary use; not, if manufacture for sale is its only or even primary use. That we began with sale of khadi shows temporary necessity as well as our limited vision. Experience is a great teacher. It has taught us many things. Not the least is its primary use. But it is by no means the last. But I must leave this fascinating field of speculation and proceed definitely to answer the question put in the heading.

My first business, as the minister in charge of revival of the villages as the centre of all governmental activity, would be to find out from among the Permanent Service honest and incorruptible men capable for the work. I would put the best among them in touch with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A., creations of the Congress, and bring in a scheme for giving the village crafts the greatest encouragement. I would stipulate there should be no compulsion on the villagers, that they must not slave for others and that they should be taught to help themselves and rely upon their own labour and skill for the production of articles of food, cloth and other necessaries. The scheme would thus have to be comprehensive. I would instruct my first man, therefore, to see the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and see what it has to say.

Let us assume that the scheme, thus produced, contains a clause saying that the villagers themselves declare that they would not want mill cloth, say, after one year from a fixed date, that they require cotton, wool and necessary implements and instruction, not as a gift but to be paid for on the easiest terms. The scheme provides too that it will not apply at once to the whole of any province but only to a part to begin with. The scheme further tells one that the A. I. S. A. will guide and assist the working of the scheme.

Being convinced of its soundness, I would give it legal form in consultation with the law department and issue a notification, fully describing the genesis of the scheme. The villagers as well as the mill-owners and others would have been party to it. The notification will show clearly that it is the people's measure, though bearing the Government stamp. The Government money will be used for the benefit of the poorest villagers, making the largest return possible to

the people concerned. It will, therefore, be probably the most profitable investment in which expert assistance will be voluntary and overhead charges the least item. The notification will give in detail the whole cost to the country and the return to the people.

The only question for me as minister is whether the A. I. S. A. has the conviction and capacity to shoulder the burden of creating and guiding a khadi scheme to success. If it has, I would put my little barque to sea with all confidence.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

102. *THE PLACE OF MEDICINE IN NAYEE TALIM*¹

Shrimati Asha Devi does her own work and is considerate of my time. However, one day she asked me to give her five minutes. Her contention was that Nayee Talim should provide for some elementary instruction in medicine and she wondered whether, to make this possible, she herself should undergo training in medicine for four or five years.

I realized at once that with the best efforts on her part she had not been able to free herself wholly from the hold of the old system of education. Asha Devi, after all, has taken an M.A. degree from a University which was created by the British. I myself possess no degree, and I ceased long ago to attach any value to the little knowledge I acquired at High School. I have besides taken in deeply the system of nature cure. So I said to her: "You say the first lesson our children have to learn is how to keep fit and how to keep themselves and their surroundings clean. I say this covers all the medical knowledge we need. Nayee Talim is intended for the millions in villages. It is for their good. They live close to nature and yet do not know the laws of natural living. Those who know those laws do not follow them. It is from observing their way of living that we conceived the need for Nayee Talim. The knowledge that Nayee Talim imparts is scarcely to be had from books. It is from the book of nature that this knowledge is to be had. We must similarly seek what medical knowledge we need from the same book of nature. This means that if we know the laws of hygiene and follow them and take

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 1-9-1946.

the right nutrition we can become our own doctors. The man who eats in order to live, who lives in friendship with the five basic substances, namely, earth, water, ether, sun and air, who is a servant of God who has created these, can never fall ill. And if he does, he will surrender himself to God's care and calmly meet his end. He will be content to use such medicinal herbs and remedies as the grounds and fields of his village yield. Tens of millions of people live and die thus. They have not so much as heard of a doctor, let alone seeing one. We must make ourselves just like these villagers and teach village boys and adults who come to us also to live in that way. Doctors say that 99 per cent of all diseases are caused by insanitation, by eating things not fit to eat and by lack of proper nutrition. If we can teach 99 per cent of the people the art of living, we can forget the remaining one per cent. They will find some doctors like Sushila Nayar. We need not bother too much about them. Today pure water, pure earth and pure air are not available. We live sheltered from the sun. If we pay attention to these and take proper nourishment we shall have done the work of ages. Acquiring knowledge of this requires neither degrees nor money in crores of rupees. All that is needed is faith in God, the spirit of service, an acquaintance with the five basic substances and knowledge of proper diet. We can acquire all this with our own effort and in very little time without going to schools and colleges.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-9-1946

103. TELEGRAM TO SHAFAT AHMED KHAN

NEW DELHI,
August 26, 1946

SIR SHAFAT AHMED KHAN
CLARENDON COTTAGE
SIMLA

THANK GOD YOU ARE SAFE.¹ HOPE RECOVERY WILL BE
RAPID.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

104. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. D. D. GILDER

Express

NEW DELHI,
August 27, 1946

DR. GILDER
MINISTER
POONA

PLEASE CONVEY WISHES DOCTOR VISHWANATHAN FOR
SUCCESS ANTI-MALARIA CAMPAIGN.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The addressee had resigned from the Muslim League to join the Interim Government. On August 24, he was waylaid in Simla and stabbed seven times. He was sworn in on September 11.

*105. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION
BUREAU, GOA*

[August 28, 1946]¹

HEAD

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU

NOVA GOA

HAVE JUST SEEN YOUR OFFICIAL CONTRADICTION ABOUT
TREATMENT OF PRISONER KAKODKAR. PLEASE WIRE
WHETHER YOU WILL LET A REPRESENTATIVE OF
WEEKLY "HARIJAN" INTERVIEW PRISONER AND REPORT ON
FACTS.²

The Hindu, 3-9-1946. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*106. MESSAGE REGARDING PARSİ RUSTOMJI HALL AND
LIBRARY*

NEW DELHI,

August 28, 1946

WISH PARSİ RUSTOMJI HALL AND LIBRARY SILVER JUBILEE FUNCTION EVERY
SUCCESS AND HOPE THAT LIBRARY HAS SERVED AND WILL
CONTINUE TO SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE. HOPE SORABJEE HAIL AND
HEARTY AND WILL PROVE WORTHY SON OF WORTHY FATHER. IF
RESISTERS CONTINUE CIVIL RESISTANCE UP TO END WITH PERFECT
DIGNITY SUCCESS CERTAIN.

GANDHI

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

¹ The source has "August 18" which appears to be a slip; *vide* "Telegram to Government Information Bureau", Goa, 28-8-1946, ;26-8-1946 and; 29-8-1946. However, Pyarelal Papers have "August 29".

² The Goan authorities refused to "accept in a purely internal matter the interference of a newspaper man".

107. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this as a friend and after deep thought.

Several times last evening you repeated that you were a “plain man and a soldier” and that you did not know the law.¹ We are all plain men though we may not all be soldiers and even though some of us may know the law. It is our purpose, I take it, to devise methods to prevent a repetition of the recent terrible happenings in Calcutta.² The question before us is how best to do it.

Your language last evening was minatory. As representative of the King you cannot afford to be a military man only, nor to ignore the law, much less the law of your own making. You should be assisted, if necessary, by a legal mind enjoying your full confidence. You threatened not to convene the Constituent Assembly if the formula you placed before Pandit Nehru and me was not acted upon by the Congress.³ If such be really the case then you should not have made the announcement⁴ you did on 12th August. But having made it you should recall the action and form another ministry enjoying your full confidence. If British arms are kept here for internal peace and order, your Interim Government would be reduced to a farce. The Congress cannot afford to impose its will on warring elements in

¹ For Wavell’s version of the interview, *vide* Appendix “Lord Wavell’s Note on Interview with Gandhiji and Nehru”, 27-8-1946.

² The reference is to the riots that had occurred in Calcutta.

³ Gandhiji had found Wavell’s attitude so unhelpful that he caused a cable to be sent to Sudhir Ghosh in London to the following effect : “Gandhi says Viceroy unnerved Bengal tragedy. Please tell friends he should be assisted by abler and legal mind. Otherwise repetition of tragedy a certainty.” Sudhir Ghosh accordingly met Pethick-Lawrence and Attlee to convey to them Gandhiji’s feelings. For Sudhir Ghosh’s letter to Gandhiji on the subject, *vide* Appendix “Letter from Sudhir Ghosh to Gandhiji”, 7-9-1946

⁴ This was to the effect that the Viceroy had invited the President of the Congress to make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government and that the Congress President had accepted the invitation.

India through the use of British arms. Nor can the Congress be expected to bend itself and adopt what it considers a wrong course because of the brutal exhibition recently witnessed in Bengal. Such submission would itself lead to an encouragement and repetition of such tragedies. The vindictive spirit on either side would go deeper, biding for an opportunity to exhibit itself more fiercely and more disgracefully when occasion occurs. And all this will be chiefly due to the continued presence in India of a foreign power strong in and proud of its arms.

I say this neither as a Hindu nor as a Muslim. I write only as an Indian. In so far as I am aware, the Congress claims to know both the Hindu and Muslim mind more than you or any Britisher can do. Unless, therefore, you can wholly trust the Congress Government which you have announced, you should reconsider your decision, as I have already suggested.

You will please convey the whole of this letter to the British Cabinet.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, p. 322; also Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 221-2

108. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letters. The letter to Sushila I have given to Kishorelal and told him to forward it to her. You are in a proper quandary. Your duty, it seems clear, is to court imprisonment. There is no doubt at all that a fight has to be given. It is difficult for me to advise what should be done about the Press. You alone can decide. I should like Sushila being with you. But it appears that her duty is to be here. I cannot think of sending Arun and Ila there and I could not

countenance Sushila leaving them and going. This is the difficulty. You must consider and decide. In coming to a decision please give no thought to what I might want or other elders might want. Or course you have to consider what Sushila would want.

Here everything is in confusion. No one can tell what will happen. I do not even know how long I shall have to be in Delhi. My heart is in the Ashram of course. I shall see where He takes me. Devdas already cabled to you, so you will see that no compromising step has been taken here and you may rest assured that none will be taken. I shall not be surprised if the newspapers there publish fabrications to harm the cause. Wasn't I similarly attacked in 1896?¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4989

109. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

August 28, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter here. I am glad that Ila has recovered. All that I could write to you is covered by my letter to Manilal, a copy of which is attached.² For the present I am camping here. I cannot say when I move out.

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI

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

¹ The reference is to be the assault on Gandhiji in Durban on January 13, 1897 following a distorted summary of a pamphlet of Gandhiji by Reuter.

²*Vide* the preceding item.

110. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

August 28, 1946

CHI. ARUN (GANDHI),

I am sorry that you and your friend told a lie. We are apt to fall into the habit. I regard this as the worst among all bad habits. It will be good if in future you keep away from it.

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

111. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,¹

August 28, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have given you quite a lot of work. Take care of your health, only doing what you can. This applies to Shakaribehn too. She must not ruin her health. See about Anna² and Kamala. If they both work well, they can do a lot of work.

Please tell Govind Reddy that I was not able to have a talk with him. I cannot say definitely when I shall be arriving there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10641

¹ This is a slip. Gandhiji was in Delhi on this date.

² Harihar Sharma

112. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

You were in my thoughts on Monday, but how was I to write? Yesterday also passed in the same way. Today I am writing at 6.30 in the morning. This is the last day of Ramzan. Remember what true Ramzan is. Be firm of resolve and make your body as strong as steel. How is Jajuji? How is Kishorelal? How is your finger? I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 526

113. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

[August 28, 1946]¹

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I expect you have started going to the Khadi Vidyalaya. You should have a healthy body and healthy mind.

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

114. LETTER TO KAMALA SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. KAMALA,

If you have really become what you say, you will be able to render a lot of service. When the mind has been thoroughly cleansed, the body also will be all right. There is a saying that if the mind is pure the Ganga flows at one's door-step. In other words, if the mind

¹ In the source this letter is placed among the letters of this date.

is steady and *sattvic* the body too must become so.

I am not writing to Anna¹ separately.

SHRIMATI KAMALABEHN SHARMA

SEVAGRAM

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

115. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

NEW DELHI,

August 28, 1946

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYAN,

I got your letter and was sorry to read about Chi. Saraswati. You have both been tested. I hope she will get completely cured by naturopathy. Munshiji has written to me about your case. Sharma² came and saw me. I still do not have his opinion. Both of you will be informed when I have it.

LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

DELHI

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

116. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

August 28, 1946

Even today I cannot tell you how long I may have to stay in Delhi. I am certainly here till the day after tomorrow because the Working Committee meeting will be held then instead of tomorrow. I hope to be able to speak to you day after tomorrow.

We run away from fear. We should not. Those who do have no faith in God. When God resides in our hearts, where is the need to get scared? If one loses one's life, it is because God wills it so. We do not matter at all. If we are beaten, it is God who has to put up with the beatings. How can one who always thinks of God get scared?

Referring to the Calcutta riots Gandhiji said :

I am not able to say what I want to say. Words fail me. Over

¹ Addressee's husband Harihar Sharma

² H. L. Sharma

such an outrage happening in India it is better to remain silent. Very often silence is the most effective communication because silence is filled with truth.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 29-8-1946

117. SALES TAX¹

I have received many letters in regard to the Sales Tax Act of the Bombay Presidency. Many arguments advanced against it are, in my opinion, thoughtless. Nevertheless, I placed some of the complaints before the Finance Minister. Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta is a cautious and conscientious Minister. He has sent me a full reply.

It appears that this Act was framed before the popular Government came in. The present Ministry have made some essential changes in it. The letters received by me were full of criticism giving the impression that the present Government was wilful, indifferent to public opinion and the tax was already in vogue. As a matter of fact, not only has the collection of the Sales Tax not begun, but it has been postponed till October 1st and may be delayed still further if need be. Moreover, many articles of necessary use have been exempted, thereby showing that the Government has paid due attention to public objections and inconvenience. I am aware that there are people who hold that there should be no Sales Tax at all. A great deal has been said in favour of this view. But no government could exist if it were to listen to abstract objections. In other words, it is wisdom, in such cases, not to raise basic issues.

The Sales Tax is in vogue in many provinces. The main criterion in judging any tax should be that it does not hit the poor. It should also be seen that the money raised thereby is used for the public good.

A popular ministry is responsible to the legislature, and cannot do anything without their consent. Every elected member in a popular legislature is responsible to his voters. Therefore the voter who represents the public should ponder well before embarking on any criticism of the government of his creation. Moreover, one bad habit of the people should be borne in mind. They do not like

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-9-1946.

any tax whatsoever. Where there is good government, the tax-payer gets full return for his money as, for example, the water tax in cities. No tax-payer could get water on his own for the same payment. But even so, and in spite of the fact that the tax is levied by the popular will, tax-payers always resent even paying such taxes. It is, of course, true that one cannot prove the benefit of all taxes as easily as the one I have cited as an example. But as society grows in size and complexity and the field of service also grows, it is difficult to explain to the individual tax-payer how he gets his return for any particular tax. This much, however, is clear that taxes as a whole should stand for the general benefit of society. If this were not so, the argument that taxes were levied by popular will would not hold. To the extent that we are still under foreign rule, the Government is not wholly responsible to the people. But in the Provinces today the Government are popular to a large extent and we must judge the Sales Tax accordingly.

NEW DELHI, August 29, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

118. GOA

With reference to Mr. Gandhi's short commentary on Goa in the *Harijan* of the 18th instant,¹ where he gives the so-called "contrast" between French and Portuguese authorities, we have to state the following for your knowledge and publicity purposes :

There is nothing more out of place as a comparison between French India and Portuguese India. The objects, administrative methods and the goal are absolutely dissimilar in their essence. The recent integration (1816) of the French possessions in India in the French Colonial Empire and its setbacks, have nothing in common with Portuguese India which for more than 400 years, has been benefited by the Portuguese administration, completely identifying its destinies with the Motherland.

If the inhabitants of French India wish to identify their destinies with Free India (what has yet to be ascertained), the same does not happen in Portuguese India where the totality of the inhabitants wish to continue under the beneficial action of Portuguese administration which has been the cause of its material and moral progress to the point of Goa being the pride of the Portuguese colonizing effort and part and parcel of the

¹ *Vide* "Goa", 18-8-1946.

Motherland.

These being the facts based on historical data, we trust you will publish the relevant corrections in your paper :

This letter to the Editor of the *Harijan* from the Head of the Government Information Bureau, Nova Goa, makes sorry reading. It is an example of the truth of the proverb, "Comparisons are odious." Surely there is not much to choose between French and Portuguese imperialism. The hands of imperialism are always dyed red. The sooner imperialistic powers shed their imperialism like Ashoka the Good, the better it will be for the groaning world. One may be pardoned for giving credit to France where credit is deserved, as it is in the case of French India, assuming, of course, the truth of the newspaper version of the statement of the Governor of French India. Moreover, it is ridiculous for the Head of the Government Information Bureau to write of Portugal as the motherland of the Indians of Goa. Their mother country is as much India as mine. Goa is outside British India but it is within geographical India as a whole. And there is very little, if anything, in common between the Portuguese and the Indians of Goa.

I have read also the contradiction of my statement about Shri Purushottam Kakodkar. I must adhere to it in spite of the contradiction of the Portuguese authorities in Goa. Here is what his wife says in her letter dated 24-8-1946 :

Shri Purushottam Kakodkar, Secretary of the Goa National Congress, was arrested while talking to a friend on 9-8-1946 by the Portuguese authorities. On the 10th he was removed to Panjim (Nova Goa). On the 11th and 12th, he was kept on half rations. When he learnt that the authorities were deliberately underfeeding him, he went on hunger strike on the 13th and was still fasting on 20th.

The Portuguese Government is undeterred in its policy and up till now (24-8-1946) no attention has been paid to the written request sent in by Shri Kakodkar for adequate food supply to himself and other prisoners.

I ask the Portuguese authorities whether they would allow a representative from the *Harijan* to meet Prisoner Kakodkar and ascertain facts for himself?

NEW DELHI, August 29, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

119. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

RAJAJI
BAZLULLAH ROAD
THYAGARAYANAGAR

YOUR WIRE. YOU MUST NOT OVERSTRAIN YOURSELF BUT
BE COMPLETELY WELL FOR TASK AHEAD.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

120. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

DR. DINSHAW
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

REGRET MY LETTER NOT RECEIVED. NOW POSTING COPY.
DESPONDENCY NOT PERMISSIBLE. HOPE MOTHER BETTER.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. The news of Mother's death has only brought me relief. Of what use can life be for a person ridden by disease. Besides, she was also advanced in age.

It is good that Hanumantha Rao's widow is looking after the

Kasturba Trust work in Sithanagaram.

Your work of service should now pick up momentum.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI D. V. RAMASWAMI

VIZAGAPATTAM, ANDHRA

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

122. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

NEW DELHI,

August 29, 1946

BHAI PANTJI,

I see that Mirabehn is unable to do any work these days. She has shown me the correspondence she carried on. Now that the Ministry too has changed, is it advisable to have her even as an honorary adviser? She is, of course, a devoted worker and does not crave for office as such. Besides, her health, too, has suffered from incessant travelling. Please let me know what in the present circumstances would be the right thing to do. I wanted to talk it over with you, but could not do so.

In my opinion, Mirabehn may not be able to do much work for about two months. The fever still persists. Perhaps it is better to spare her.

G. B. PANT

LUCKNOW

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

123. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

HARIJAN COLONY,

NEW DELHI,

August 29, 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

We never have a moment to ourselves. I do not ask for it. You never have any time to spare. Nor do I have any. So a good many matters remain untouched.

I have before me your letter of the 20th. It came to me yesterday *via* Wardha. It dwells on the question of who should be the Congress President in view of the fact that you will be the Prime Minister. You incline in favour of Maulana Saheb. This I do not understand and cannot understand. In my view, Maulana Saheb should not accept nomination. Maulana Saheb hesitates to accept ministership. The responsibilities of the President, especially in the present juncture, are I feel arduous. But in my view it is not the only reason why he should not be president. I cannot accept, too, that other than Maulana Saheb, Sardar Patel and Rajendra Babu, no suitable person can be found.

I cannot definitely say who else will be suitable because I am not any more in very close with the Congress organization.

One thing more. It is also a question as to who should be the President of the Constituent Assembly. I shall not write anything more about it now, because it is not certain whether the Constituent Assembly will meet. Once the Working Committee meeting is over I do not think it is necessary for me to stay on here or at Mussoorie. This hardly needs to be discussed at the Working Committee. Please consider and tell me what I should do. I shall do as you say.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have a great deal of work to do at Wardha. You may show this whole letter to Maulana Saheb.

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

124. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

MANAGER

ASHRAM SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

RAMPRASAD SHOULD REPORT HIMSELF TO JEHANGIRJI PATEL
ON THIRD FOR DISCUSSION AND SETTLEMENT.¹

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

125. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have not been able to write to you two. However I often think of you. I shall therefore only express the hope in this letter that both of you are calm. Whatever you do, do as a part of your duty. I hope that you will make each other happy, spending the least time in idle talk, and enjoy dreamless and sound sleep at night. Your daily activities must be going on as regularly as clock-work. You will also be improving your Urdu. I am not in a position yet to say when I shall be free from here. I am trying to make it as early as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8392. Also C. W. 7216. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

¹Vide also "Telegram to Manager", Sevagram Ashram, 30-8-1946.

126. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

Be composed. Therein lies your good. Remember what I have told you. Your physical condition depends entirely on your mental condition. I do feel pity for you, and that is why I also feel irritated with you. Why do you make yourself an object of pity? I look upon you as a child. But considering your age, you ought not to be a child in mind. You should learn to think systematically. You should find your own path in life. Your day should be spent in service of some kind; your night should be given to sleep.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8254. Also C. W. 6978. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

127. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say¹. I shall write in English whenever I have anything special to say. But I do want you to get used to reading and writing Gujarati.

I have wired Ramprasad to see you on the 3rd.² I have also written to Bhai Bhise. Your committee can now do as they like. I hope Khurshedbehn is well. It will be more than enough if she maintains her health. I am glad that Dinshaw will be going with you. Please comfort him.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL

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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jahangir Patel", 30-8-1946.

² *Vide* "Letter to Jahangir Patel", 30-8-1946.

128. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

You have to go and see Jehangirji Patel on the 3rd. I think you will benefit by going to him. At present he has called you only for an interview. I should like you to see him and have a frank talk with him and try to join him if you find the work good.

Enclosed is a letter from Jehangirji¹

Blessings from
BAPU

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

129. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

Your resolve to present yarn on the occasion of Charkha Jayanti is indeed commendable and I hope it will succeed. My faith has ever been increasing that if we all take to spinning with the right understanding we can make greater headway along the path of freedom.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

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

¹Vide also the preceding item.

130. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

August 30, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

Thinking over the talks I had with Dada¹ and with you and the letter that is in front of me, I have come to the conclusion that your work in the U. P. should be wholly independent of the Charkha Sangh work and should be complementary to it. You have many workers. They are capable. Though we all work for the same cause, there still remains a difference of outlook between the Charkha Sangh and the Gandhi Ashram. I feel that if Gandhi Ashram grows independently, the khadi activity will probably develop faster. I am taking the step in this hope.

You would still be under the debt of the Charkha Sangh. I think it is indeed difficult, if not impossible, for you to pay off the whole sum right now. Therefore, I would advise you to return the sum in ten annual instalments. In case of failure to send the yarn or the instalment as promised or in case of khadi work being given up, the whole amount must be returned forthwith. The first instalment—cash as well as yarn—will be payable one year after the date of this letter.

If your work does not succeed in any part of U. P., the Charkha Sangh will have the right to work there independently. The step is being taken in the hope that it will promote decentralization and help the Gandhi Ashram to develop independently.

If you want any modification, please let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN BABU
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

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

¹ J. B. Kripalani

131. TELEGRAM TO MURIEL LESTER

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

MURIEL LESTER
22 CLUB BACK ROAD
BYCULLA

WELCOME. CAN COME HERE. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter dated August 1, 1946. There is nothing wrong in your spending your life there [in Bochasan]. What you write about the Muslim boy makes interesting reading. I take it you have arranged for his education. If he is a Gujarati boy it is desirable that he knows Gujarati very well. And since he is a Muslim he ought to be taught to read the Koran. It is our duty to see to that.

Blessings from
BAPU

GANGABEHN VAIDYA
BOCHASAN

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

133. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have received Shri M[unshi]'s award. From what you told me I had thought it was in your favour. Now I find that it is not in your favour but against you. When I receive fair copies of the document I shall send one to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 364

134. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter as also the draft of your award. I have gone through the note you wrote for my information. I see that you have taken great pains over it. I agree with most of what you say in the note. You suggest that I should keep it confidential. I would rather show it to Sharma, if you would permit me. Your verdict is clear and concise. You had better write it in either Gujarati or Hindi. It need not be on stamped paper. The thing is not at all meant for a court of law. Of course it will be a different matter if such an action will involve any infringement of the Stamp Act. In that case we must affix the stamps. It will suffice to send your verdict only to me, and I shall forward it to both the parties, although it will be all right if you send a copy direct to each party. Of course you will send one copy to me. Do as you think right. I am required to stay here till the 7th. Please mind your health and if possible become as strong as steel. You have to render much service. I have sent the gist of your verdict to Sharma.

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

135. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

Congress leaders were going into the Interim Government to make the path of freedom somewhat easy for the people, declared Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the prayer meeting on Saturday evening.

On September 2, Mahatma Gandhi said, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad and others were going to wear crowns. But they were not going to be crowns of gold. They were to be crowns made of thorns which would try them sorely. They were going there—they whose whole life had been one of sacrifice—not to enjoy themselves or lead lives of ease but to serve the masses the more.

Gandhiji said he did not want the people to imagine that India was going to be free on September 2. Freedom he said, was not bought easily, nor was it a cheap commodity. It demanded its full price always. The leaders were going there to make the path of freedom somewhat easy for them. It was up to the people to help the leaders by being ready for sacrifices and willing to wear a crown of thorns themselves.

The A. I. C. C., Mahatma Gandhi said, was going to be held shortly in Delhi. Residents of Delhi would then be on trial. He hoped they would be sober, disciplined and peaceful and make such arrangements as to ensure the safety of the smallest child. They could only maintain their honour, as did Draupadi of old, by relying on God who alone could sustain them. He would not speak to them on the recent holocaust in Calcutta. Silence, he said, was his best friend.

He drew the attention of the congregation to a 'bhajan' sung during the prayer and said that it was a hymn which had been sung in his ears even before he went to jail in India for the first time in 1922. At that time he was sentenced to six years and for the first part of his prison life was kept by himself with two prisoner wardens to look after him. Since prayer had become part of his very being even while he was in South Africa, he used to sing the daily 'bhajan' however indifferently himself.

Out of the many who went to prison, Mahatma Gandhi said, there were those who looked out for every opportunity to escape, every opportunity to deceive and cheat. But he had long since decided that the ideal of a true satyagrahi was to make the prison a palace, and this could only be done by faith and prayer. The 'bhajan' (sung at the prayer meeting on Saturday) used to sustain him. It taught them that they could only be true to their resolution if they relied on God. He alone could keep them on the straight path. What could be the ideal of each one of those present except to make India free and keep themselves pure?

The Hindustan Times, 1-9-1946

*136. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION
BUREAU, GOA*

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

HEAD

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU

NOVA GOA

ALL OVER WORLD I HAVE HEARD OF FOREIGNERS
AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS BEING ADMITTED BY COUNTRIES
CARING FOR WORLD SYMPATHY AND OPINION EVEN IN
DOMESTIC SCANDALS.¹ SHOULD NOT HAVE THOUGHT THAT
PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT WAS INDIFFERENT TO CRITICISM OF
OUTSIDERS.²

The Hindu, 3-9-1946. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

*137. TELEGRAM TO HANDLOOM CLOTH
MANUFACTURERS AND MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION*

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

HANDLOOM CLOTH MANUFACTURERS AND

MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

HOSHIARPUR

APPROACH GOVERNMENT.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Government Information Bureau, Goa, 1-9-1946.

² The Goan Government's reply to this was : "There are no domestic scandals in this country. That is why I don't find your point of view either correct or sound."

138. LETTER TO MADALASA

BHANGI NIWAS,
NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I got your letter. Keep up the spirit which that letter reveals. Never miss a Tuesday in writing to me, whether you receive my reply or not. Only one thing is required for keeping up your cheerfulness, namely, a living faith in God. Have a frank talk with Shriman, calmly and courteously. Similarly with Mother. You should be generous towards everybody and never take amiss what they say.

I shall have to stay here up to the 10th at any rate.

Kisses to Rasagulla.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 328

139. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

A cutting from the *Indian Opinion* sent by Sushila has reached me here in Delhi. If what it says is true it is a very serious matter. If the whole of the Negro population enters into a bloody conflict with the whole of the Indian population, there is not the least doubt that both will perish. One must have the capacity to fight to win in a bloody conflict. Neither party has this. Any help from the whites will be quite out of the question. You will lose even such help as you are now getting. I cannot therefore believe that except for a few crazy individuals there are any Indian groups who would wish to oppose the ghettos through violence. There is only one sure way and everyone knows it. Your path, therefore, is clear. Even if you are alone you must clearly and courteously state your views and if they put you in prison you must go to prison. I am

becoming more and more convinced each day that Sushila should not go there for the present. If she takes care of the children as a good mother should, she will be doing her duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4990

140. ANTIDOTE

After giving a graphic description of the recent unfortunate and disgraceful happenings in Calcutta, a writer asks :

What is our duty in such circumstances? The Congress gives no clear instructions to the rank and file in such crises. Sermons on non-violence from afar are of little use. To have offered non-violent resistance would have meant allowing all property to be destroyed and every Hindu to be killed.

The Congress Working Committee has given the clearest possible lead in the last sentence of its resolution published in the newspapers.¹ Fratricide will not abate by “intimidation and violence but by mutual understanding, friendly discussion and, if necessary, by agreed arbitration.” One does not need to believe in non-violence as a creed to perceive the truth of this practical proposition. If through deliberate courage the Hindus had died to a man, that would have been deliverance of Hinduism and India and purification of Islam in this land.

As it was, a third party had to intervene in order to still mutual savagery. Neither the Muslims nor the Hindus concerned have gained by the intervention. Supposing that the Calcutta virus extends to the whole of India and British gunpowder keeps the two from stabbing one another, the British power or its substitute will be in possession of India for a long time to come. The length will be measured by the period required by the parties coming to sanity. It will come either by an exhausting mutual fight, independent of the foreign element or by one party eschewing violence in spite of the heaviest odds. Successful mutual strife is obviously impossible in the present state of general igno-rance of the use of modern weapons and their inaccessibility. Non-violence does not require any outside or outward training. It

¹ The Working Committee met in Delhi from August 27 to August 30.

simply requires the will not to kill even in retaliation and the courage to face death without revenge. This is no sermon on ahimsa but cold reason and the statement of a universal law. Given the unquenchable faith in the law, no provocation should prove too great for the exercise of forbearance. This I have described as non-violence of the brave.

Unfortunately for us, we are strangers to the non-violence of the brave on a mass scale. Some even doubt the possibility of the exercise of non-violence by groups, much less by masses of people. They restrict its exercise to exceptional individuals. Only, mankind can have no use for it if it is always reserved only for individuals.

Be that as it may, this much is clear that if the people are probably not ready for the exercise of non-violence of the brave, they must be ready for the use of force in self-defence. There should be no camouflage. Self-defence must be pure and simple. Then too it must never be cowardly or crude. It must, therefore, never be secret. Such is stabbing in the back and evading detection. I am conscious of the fact that we are a people unarmed and untrained in the use of arms. Opinions will differ as to whether it is good that we are in that position. There can be no denying the fact that no one needs training in the use of arms in self-defence. What is wanted for the purpose is strong arms and stronger will.

Doing injury to another is obviously violence but harbouring injury to another and yet unwillingness from cowardice to defend oneself or one's neighbour is also violence and probably worse than the first.

What then are the leaders to do? What are the new Ministers to do? They must ever seek to attain communal harmony—never under threats, ever for its own sake. I regard a Muslim or any non-Hindu as my blood brother, not in order to please him but because he is born of the same mother Hind as I am. He does not cease to be my brother because he may hate or disown me. I must woo him even, it may be, in spite of himself. The new Ministers must resolve never to use British troops, no matter what their hue is, not even the police trained by them. They are not our enemies. But they have been hitherto used not to help the people but to keep them under the foreign yoke. They should now, as they can, be used for constructive purposes. The military are specially qualified for such work. They are trained and expected to bring into being canvas cities in a moment. They know what it is to procure and keep clean water and

make perfect sanitary arrangements. No doubt, they know how to kill and be killed in the act. The public knows this part of their work only too well. But it is by no means the most substantial part of their work. It is the background which should be prized, advertised and followed. The animal part of it is unhuman, the other part is essentially human and clean. Let us copy it and humanize the troops if we can. The attempt is worth making. It can only be made by those who are not deceived by the glamour that hangs round them and the awe they inspire. This is possible only when we have the courage to face death without revenge or retaliation in mind or deed.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

141. FOR READERS

The 'Question Box' has become a regular feature of the *Harijan*. It tries to resolve the doubts of questioners as far as possible. But the post often contains questions which have been answered in one form or the other on more than one occasion. Readers should study the contents of 'Question Box' carefully.

Then there are letters asking for medical advice for sick people. The desire is there to answer such questions. But the fulfilment must take time. It is difficult too to satisfy incomplete postal inquiries. Ailing correspondents should wait awhile.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

142. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION:

WHAT IT SHOULD BE LIKE¹

The Congress session is in the offing. The question arises what it should be like, considered from the villagers' point of view, for only the villagers' point of view can be relevant in India. If we want the villages to survive and become strong and prosperous the exhibition should be free from all pomp and ostentation characteristic of the cities. There should be no place for city games and entertainments. The exhibition should not under any circumstances be reduced

¹ The Hindi original of this was published in *Gramodyog Patrika*.

to a show or a source of revenue. It should not become an attraction for traders. No goods should be sold, not even khadi or other products of village industry. The exhibition should become a place of education. It should be interesting and should be such that, having seen it, a villager should be inspired to learn some craft or other. There should be people to explain to the visitors the shortcomings of the villages in general and how to remove them. They should be shown what progress has been made since the work for the uplift of villages was first taken up. There should also be someone to instruct the villagers in the ways in which village life can be made artistic. Let us now see how the exhibition can be made to conform to these requirements.

(1) There should be two models of villages: one showing an average village as it is today and the other showing the village as it will look after the reform. The reformed village will be clean, with dwellings, village paths, general surroundings, fields and the condition of the livestock greatly improved. There should be maps and charts and books to show how different industries are carried on and developed.

(2) Guidance should be provided on how the various village industries are run and where the necessary tools for them are to be had or manufactured. There should also be demonstrations of the working of the various industries. Along with this we should show the following things :

- (a) Ideal village diet
- (b) The difference between cottage industry and machine industry
- (c) An object lesson in animal husbandry
- (d) A model latrine
- (e) An art section
- (f) Organic manure *v.* chemical fertilizers
- (g) The utilization of hides and bones of dead cattle
- (h) Folk music and folk dances
- (i) Village sports, gymnastics and wrestling
- (j) Nayee Talim
- (k) Village herbs
- (l) Village maternity home

If further things can be added keeping in view the guide-

lines enunciated above, this may be done. The things I have enumerated should be taken only as illustrations. I have not included here the various village crafts, of which the charkha is the first. Without them the exhibition should be considered as of no value.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 2-9-1946

143. WHY GO ABROAD?

An Indian doctor went to America in order to learn neurosurgery, so that he might return and serve his people here. He has with difficulty secured a seat in the Columbia University and is working as a house surgeon.

He writes to ask me to influence students not to go abroad for the following reasons :

(a) The amount our poor country spends on sending and training ten students abroad could be better utilized by securing the services of a first rate professor who could train 40 students as well as equip a laboratory.

(b) Students who come here acquire basic knowledge in research but do not know how to equip a laboratory on their return home.

(c) They have no chance of continued work.

(d) If we have experts brought out, our laboratories will also get perfected.

I have never been an advocate of our students going abroad. My experience tells me that such, on return, find themselves to be square pegs in round holes. That experience is the richest and contributes most to growth which springs from the soil. But today the craze for going abroad has gripped students. May the extract quoted serve as a warning!

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

144. NOTES

THE DEVADASI SYSTEM

A correspondent writes :

It is a well-known fact that you are trying your best to uplift the Harijan community and even spending your most precious time in the Harijan Colony. But may I assure you that there are thousands of Devadasi girls of the Harijan community residing in Poona and Bombay and are leading a life of public prostitution. Why should this be so? Is it because these girls belong to low caste community and are induced to lose their moral character that they are neglected by the public and put to the shameful life of prostitution?

May I be justified in stating that this is a most important and urgent problem. Is it not possible to stop this illegal practice in the Bombay province as in Madura and Madras by the Madras Government under the ruling of Section 366A, 366B, 372 and 373 of the Indian Penal Code, page No. 574?

I have, on more than one occasion, written about the shame attached to the Devadasi system, whether in temples or in other places. "Prostitutes" is commonly supposed to apply to women of lewd character. But the men who indulge in vice are just as much, if not more, prostitutes as the women who, in many instances, have to sell their bodies for the sake of earning a livelihood. The evil practice should be declared illegal. But the law can only help up to a point. The evil exists clandestinely in every country in spite of the law. Vigorous public opinion can help the law as it also hinders.

UNTOUCHABILITY AND THE FLUSH SYSTEM

Q. Do you consider that the adoption of the flush system is one way of eradicating untouchability? If so, you would not presumably oppose its introduction on the basis of your dislike of machinery.

A. Where there is ample supply of water and modern sanitation can be introduced without any hardship on the poor, I have no objection to it. In fact, it should be welcomed as a means of improving the health of the city concerned. At the moment, it can only be introduced in towns. My opposition to machinery is much misunderstood. I am not opposed to machinery as such. I am opposed to machinery which displaces labour and leaves it idle. Whether the

flush system will remove the curse of untouchability is open to grave doubt. This latter has to go from our hearts. It will not disappear through such means as has been suggested. Not until we all become bhangis and realize the dignity of the labour of scavenging and latrine-cleaning, will untouchability really be exorcized.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

145. ADVICE TO THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT

NEW DELHI,

September 2, 1946

All credit to the Madras Government for being the first in the field, among the Provincial Ministries, to put forward a definite Scheme¹ for the reconstruction of our sadly neglected villages including, as the most vital and fundamental part of it, a large-scale scheme for the development of khadi. I appreciate the completely sincere faith in khadi which has prompted the Madras Government to offer their resources, on a scale without precedent, for the rapid development of khadi, but I am afraid they have not realized that the conditions necessary for securing the success of such a large-scale venture probably do not exist now, and that they have yet to be created by extensive propaganda by all genuine lovers of khadi, including the Provincial Ministers and members of the Provincial Legislatures. I am quite clear in my own mind that it would be extremely unwise to force the pace in regard to a matter like khadi, until the proper atmosphere has been created and has borne fruit in the form of a strong public demand from the villagers themselves, thus guaranteeing immediate success and giving lasting benefit from large-scale expenditure of the money and energy such as is involved in the Madras Government's scheme. The Madras Government seems to have underestimated the difficulties of securing enduring success in a field, steady progress in which has not been found too easy even by experts, namely, the All-India Spinners' Association. I am naturally most anxious that Shri Prakasam should not embark upon any Khadi Scheme, the success of which is not assured. If we try to move too fast,

¹ The Khadi Scheme of the Madras Government which envisaged making villages as far as possible self-sufficient in cloth; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting, 25-9-1946.

I have no doubt that we shall fail, and fail badly, and such failure will not only reflect discredit on the Government which has embarked upon such a venture without sufficient consideration, but will also do great harm to khadi work in general. It is, therefore, necessary, especially as expenditure of funds allotted from Provincial Revenues is involved, that we should be very careful before undertaking the work on a large scale.

2. I would accordingly advise the Madras Government to be guided in this matter by the only expert body in India which can claim intimate and long experience of khadi work, namely, the All-India Spinners' Association. Subject to my approval, the Association will select a group or compact groups of villages in which khadi has made some progress already, and which will, therefore, be a hopeful field for intensive work of the kind contemplated by the Madras Government. The khadi work in these areas should be done in accordance with a plan prepared by the Association, which the Madras Government should announce after finalising it in consultation with the Association. The plan will provide for allotment of the necessary funds by the Government, and also for the appointment, by them, of the necessary wholtime staff in consultation with the Association. The staff so appointed will execute the Scheme under the instructions and guidance of the Association.

If, as we all hope, this modest scheme succeeds, I shall gladly support proposals for its extension, with modifications if any suggested by our experience of its actual working, to other and larger areas.

3. I am requesting Shri Jajuji to prepare immediately, a scheme on the lines indicated above, in consultation with the Provincial Textile Commissioner, Madras, who will be meeting him at Sevagram for the purpose, on his way back to Madras. I shall ask Shri Jajuji to forward the scheme to Shri Prakasam after I have approved it.

4. I not only agree, but I am most anxious, that in these areas selected for the khadi work, all other items of rural reconstruction, as envisaged in Shri Prakasam's note dated 22-5-46 should also be tried simultaneously in consultation with the A.I.V.I.A. and the A.I.T.S.

5. In any event, and in order to create the proper khadi spirit, all schools and colleges under the Government should be instructed to devote at least half an hour per day to spinning together with the anterior processes, the charkhas or *taklis*, as the case may be, to be

supplied by the Government, and khadi training schools be immediately established by them in consultation with and under the guidance of the A.I.S.A.

6. It should be remembered that the scheme I have in view does not contemplate any workshop for the manufacture of spinning-wheels, these being already in existence in the villages to be selected. The scheme also contemplates the manufacture of wheels and the like by the local village carpenters and blacksmiths.

M. K. GANDHI¹

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

*146. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL,
RAJENDRA PRASAD AND JAGJIVAN RAM²*

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

Since after the prayer I have been thinking only about you people. Abolish salt tax, remember Dandi March, bring together Hindus and Muslims, remove untouchability, adopt khadi.

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 324

¹ This is in Devanagari.

² The addressees had gone to seek Gandhiji's blessings before they went to the Viceroy's House for the swearing-in ceremony. It being Gandhiji's Silence Day he wrote this note.

147. LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. JHAVERBHAI,

I have your letter. If I had met you, I would have told you in person.¹ But on receiving the complaint, I took the first opportunity, and thereby no harm has been done. In Nagpur, the Government must provide the accommodation. It must at any rate give you the travelling expenses. I am of opinion that we should not demand expenses for boarding and lodging, and that is what I have stated. Only thus can we remain clean. But we will talk further about it when I arrive there.

I fear I shall have to stay on here till the end of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1360

148. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have written to Manilal. A copy is enclosed. You will have all the news from it. Stay there quietly and look after the children. You may render any other extra service if you can. I shall have to stay on here till the 10th, or even till later; I can't say. We live from moment to moment.

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI
AKOLA

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

¹ The addressee had taken up a job in the Government; *vide* "Letter to Jhaverbhai patel", 2-9-1946.

149. LETTER TO DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

Mataji wished you were here today. For no particular reason. She just expressed a fond wish since today a popular government is assuming office.

I have no doubt that your place is there till Vijaya arrives. I shall be here certainly till the 10th. Maybe I shall have to spend the whole month here. Let us see what God wills. Bal must have gone to Calcutta.

I hope you are well and the work of the clinic is progressing well. There is no letter from you. Chand has gone to Amritsar.

The weather cannot be said to be too warm.

SUSHILA NAYYAR
SEVAGRAM

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

150. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

You must have got one letter I wrote from here. Of course you are always in my thoughts. I had a talk with Khan Saheb, too. For the present he does not ask for you. Later we shall see. He went back the day before yesterday.

I have a lot of work to do here. Still I am well. You should become strong. What do you do? I may have to be here the whole of September. I am certainly here till the 10th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 529

151. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have your letter. I continue to write the “Thought for the Day”. It does not look good Mahadev being ill. I hope he has recovered by now.

Your foot will be all right. I have not received the album yet.

Blessings to all three from
BAPU

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

152. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

At last the way to purna swaraj has been opened. The whole of India has waited for this day for years and years and made innumerable sacrifices. Whatever our quarrels with the British Government in the past, we must thank it today, for it has voluntarily arrived at a settlement with our leaders.

A correspondent asks me, now that the Government is in the hands of Indians, when the Viceroy’s House will be turned into a hospital for the poor. My answer is that this will be done when people have all the power in their hands. So far we have not secured full independence. There was no exaggeration in what I had said on the subject at the Round Table Conference. Undoubtedly Harijans are amongst the poorest of the Poor. The Viceroy is still there in the Viceroy’s House. And so long as he occupies his office as Viceroy, it will be discourteous to tell him to vacate it.

We shall have full freedom only when our uncrowned king Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues in the Interim Government devote themselves to the service of the poor as people expect them to do.

This is a memorable day in the history of India. There is no

occasion, however, for illuminations and jubilation. We must remember that today our ministers are putting on the crown of thorns.

The Muslim League, which is the second most important organization after the Congress and represents the Muslims of India, has not joined the Interim Government. Muslims are related to us by blood, for they are the children of the same land. They are angry with the Hindus. The Muslim League contends that the Hindus have betrayed them. The followers of the League are observing this day as a day of mourning. But the Hindus should not answer anger with anger and blow with blow. Time was when the Ali Brothers were with the Hindus. So, even though the Hindus cannot join the Muslim Leagues in observing the day as a day of mourning they should avoid illuminations, feasting and other forms of rejoicing. They should be patient. They should ask themselves for what failing of theirs the Muslims have come to regard them as enemies.

The Muslim League wants to launch direct action both against the British Government and the Hindus. But it cannot ride two horses at the same time. If it wants to non-co-operate with the British it must co-operate with its Hindu brethren. Then I really do not understand why it wants to non-co-operate with the latter. This is not in keeping with the teaching of Islam. I too claim to understand Islam a little. In South Africa I have lived and worked with Muslims.

The Congress cannot enter into a pact with the British against Muslims. The Congress agreed to join the Interim Government solely in order to secure freedom for the whole of India. This means that it wants freedom for the Muslim League too, and that is what wisdom, democracy and humanity demand. Nevertheless if the Muslim League continues to regard the Interim Government as its enemy, the latter should, by its actions, prove it wrong.

The question has been asked what the Congress Ministers should do as a first step. Here, my mind goes back to the days of the Dandi March. Our women played a great part at that time. The heroism and sacrifice they displayed then was unprecedented. The Dandi March symbolized the resolve of the Congress to secure freedom for the poor. The cry was raised that salt tax be abolished. Therefore the very first step of the Interim Government should be to abolish that tax, so that the poorest villager can have the feeling that the dawn of freedom has arrived. The poor include Hindus as well as Muslims of India.

I have said a good deal about communal unity. Unlike the

abolition of salt tax this cannot be achieved by a stroke of the pen. The Ministers will have to stake their lives for it. If I had my way I would not let them seek military or police help. Well, if Hindus and Muslims must fight each other it is better that they bravely do their fighting themselves. So long as we depend on the British for protecting us, true freedom will not be ours.

We are also committed to eradicating untouchability and to promote khadi. Being a Bhangi myself I have been pleading with the Viceroy, as the representative of the British Government, to improve the lot of the Bhangis. Now I shall go to the Interim Government for this. They must do something about the living quarters of the Bhangis.

They must encourage khadi activity to clothe the naked poor of the country. By promoting hand-spinning and hand-weaving villages should be made self-sufficient in cloth. Some people object to the condition that khadi may be bought only on tendering yarn. But why should anyone, I ask, expect to have anything without working for it?

If members of the Interim Government want khadi for furnishing their houses or offices they should come to me as friends. I shall give them the yarn for getting the khadi. There is no doubt a shortage of khadi in the country today. Still I shall try to secure for them as much khadi as they order. I cannot of course promise them the fine khadi produced in Andhra.

I hope the Interim Government will provide the right leadership to the country and take it forward on the path of truth, purity and genuine swaraj. Every Indian must whole-heartedly support this Government.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 3-9-1946

153. KHADI SCHEME OF MADRAS

[On or after *September 2, 1946*]¹

In my opinion the Madras Government would be well advised if they asked the Charkha Sangh as to how many *firkas* or how many villages and what area they are willing to take up at once and make self-sufficient as far as khadi is concerned. Government should only

¹*Vide* the preceding item.

be responsible for finance and such other help as the A.I.S.A. may ask for.

The present scheme may sound well on paper but will become the usual top-heavy official scheme which will fail as it will not be of the people. The word compulsion may have been eliminated but there will be compulsion.

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

154. SOUTH AFRICA

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan who, but for the recent murderous assault on him, would have joined the Interim Government¹ yesterday wrote on August 6th to me an interesting letter from which I quote as follows :

My study of the Indian community while I was in South Africa convinced me that but for your heroic work in the Union, the Indian race in that country would not have survived as a self-respecting community. You built up, cell by cell, the power of resistance in a highly gifted race and your work in that country is the inspiration of the Indian race in South Africa at the present time.

My sole aim in South Africa was to lay the foundation of Indian unity in Natal. I do not think I succeeded completely in my aim but I am inclined to think that the heroic struggle which our race is carrying on at the present time would have been impossible but for the dissolution of the Natal Indian Association and A. I. Kajeé's Natal Indian Congress and the revival of the Natal Indian Congress, which you had founded in 1894. This was accomplished on August 29th 1943 and since that time, there has been only one political organization of Indians in Natal.

The South African situation is complicated and owing to conventions of diplomacy, my lips are sealed. My despatches from South Africa which give a complete picture of the political situation for three years and are very exhaustive, cannot be published owing to conventions of international intercourse. . . .

I came to the conclusion that no redress of our grievances in South Africa is possible unless we are masters in our own homeland and India is free.

¹ *Vide* "South Africa", 3-9-1946

In reply to my letter¹ acknowledging receipt of the above, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan further writes :

You will be glad to hear that since my return from South Africa, I have been busy preparing my speeches in South Africa and have added a section in my book, shortly to be published, on the history of the Indian community in South Africa. In this I have made bold to give a brief account of your work there and followed with the greatest interest your march to Volksrust, etc. . . .

For more than three years—1942-45, I wrote lengthy despatches to the Government of India on the South African problem and in April 1943 I warned them against General Smuts' policy and told them to take the strongest measures against the Union Government in connection with the Pegging Act. . . . Strong measures have been taken now, but I am afraid it is too late. If the Congress forms a National Government soon and the new member in charge of the Department decides to publish these despatches, particularly from April 1943 onwards, they will clear up numerous points for the next session of U. N. O. I am bound to say that the convention is that such despatches are not published unless and until there is rupture of relations between two countries. I offer no opinion as to whether they should be published at all. This is a matter which the new Government should decide.

NEW DELHI, September 3, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

155. LETTER TO S. V. VENKATESWARAN

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

DEAR SHRI VENKATESWARAN²,

There is one thing which got inadvertently left out in the note you prepared and which Gandhiji amended and added to and signed for you to take to Shri Prakasam. Both Gandhiji and you forgot to mention the fact that in the former's opinion khadi and textile mills cannot go hand in hand. As you may have noticed I took notes of your conversation with Gandhiji and on referring to them I find he said as follows: "Prakasam, if he swears by khadi, cannot work hand in hand with mills. If Madrasis are satisfied with khadi, mills must go. No new ones must be allowed." As this is a very important item Gandhiji wants you to add it to the note especially as Prakasam

¹ *Vide* "South Africa", 3-9-1946

² Textile Commissioner, Madras

has a scheme before him of allowing new mills to be started in Madras.

I am sending this to Shri Jajuji and asking him to hand it over to you if you are still in Wardha. Otherwise, he will send it on to you by post.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

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

156. LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI

NEW DELHI,

September 3, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. You may by all means join Nayee Talim. Sushilabehn tells me that you could do a lot of good work if you became a village nurse. Meet her also and then make your choice. Anything that makes of you a calm, steady and devoted worker will be welcome to me. "Live as you like, but attain Hari anyhow." This is what Akha said. Had I not been so far away, we could have talked more. Bhansalibhai's decision and . . .¹ are for your good.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you receive any reply from your father? . . .² is at peace.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9273

157. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,

September 3, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

Guide Pushpa as you think fit. Let us hope that she becomes a sincere and dedicated worker. Sushilabehn has written suggesting that

¹ A few words are illegible in the source.

² The letter is damaged here.

she should become a nurse. Discuss the matter with her also, and then guide Pushpa as you think best. I shall approve of either ideal. Pushpa alone can say what would interest her more. It is difficult to say whether she knows what is best for her. That she is a simple girl we have observed ever since she first arrived.

Please eat regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9274

158. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I saw the dictionary. I feel that we should go a little faster.¹ I therefore suggest that you regularly give four columns. That will make one leaf. If one whole leaf can be given, one can tear it off and preserve it. That was Kakasaheb's idea, but I was afraid that I might not be able to cope with the work. But now I have gained confidence. So I shall be able to send 120 words. This time if you can give four columns do so. You have enough material for it. Pyarelal has already written to you about sending the Muslim gentleman here. If you can spare him, please send him here immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9968. Also C. W. 6942. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

¹ The first instalment of the dictionary covered only half a column containing thirteen words.

159. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You say, "You and your circle have separated me from Father and so thrashing my arms and legs I try to swim on my own." Now is that true? When did I separate you? Who is my circle? You too are my circle. I have written to you that you may come whenever you wish. Yes I have asked for Jaisukhlal also to come with you. If you can find the strength to face the world by yourself I am ready to keep you here by yourself. But you alone know that. I do miss you of course. Many people ask me when you will be coming. The field of service is wide and the means of learning the work are many. Sushila tells me that if I were to send for you, she would make of you an excellent nurse. Chand has passed the examination. Zohra has joined the hospital. If you were to come three would get trained. Now the hospital is quite separate. I suppose you know that it is in the Birla Dharmashala?

Your problem is difficult. But if you are going to stay there be patient. The fruits of patience are sweet. Wait for a message from me. For you it is already there.

The talk about my going abroad is quite unfounded. Or are you referring to India? In India of course I have to travel from place to place. If you accompany me your routine of studies will be disrupted.

Jaisukhlal must improve his health. Everything has been fixed about Umia and Pratap. All the expenses on Vilas will be paid by Birla.

There is a separate letter for Atmaram.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

160. LETTER TO ATMARAM

NEW DELHI
September 3, 1946

BHAI ATMARAM,

I have your letter. You should put up everything to Nanabhai and do as he says.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. ATMARAM
C/O JAISUKHLAL HATHI
MAHUVA

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

161. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I have your letter. I understand about your fast and I am happy. Tamarind-water cannot be the cause of eczema because tamarind cures eczema and such other ailments. That is to say tamarind possesses the same properties that are found in lime. But the tamarind that is offered for sale is treated with chilli-water. Moreover, much of the tamarind available in the market contains dirt and is far from clean. I would say water mixed with such tamarind ought to be shunned. But the fault does not lie with the tamarind. It is due to the chilli the salt and the other impurities mixed with it. Tamarind sold in the market is also mixed liberal quantities of salt, in the absence of which it cannot be preserved for long. I have myself consumed tamarind in fair quantities and also persuaded others to do likewise. I do not remember anybody having come to harm on account of it. But I took dry pods of fresh tamarind and dispensed their juice or pulp. Please read out all this to Dr. Bhagawat, so that he will avoid buying the tamarind sold in the bazaar. Tamarind can be had almost

free if it is stocked during the season for it, because tamarind trees are found everywhere and I have never heard of their being leased out.

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

162. LETTER TO SHRILAL BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI SHRILAL,

I got your letter of the 29th on the 31st. The names of Vithaldas and others are not to be found on the Exhibition Committee. Have you consulted Jajuji and Kumarappa? I am glad that you have stopped the sale of khadi. I am of the opinion that products of other village industries ought to be sold as usual. This covers the answer for you.

SHRILAL BHATT
GANESHBAG
DADISHETH AGYARI LINE
BOMBAY

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

163. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB,

I have your letter of August 23. I could not reply earlier as I was tied up with the work here.

I have received a note which I pass on to you. You will find that it is unsigned. Why, I do not know. If the note is a concoction and the statements contained therein are false, I shall have nothing to say. But it is my firm conviction that the absence of big mills is the cause of Orissa's poverty. And if, to set up four mills, one lac and nine thousand spindles have to be procured, the Orissa Government may as well forget about khadi. I conveyed the same opinion to Prakasam. His Textile Commissioner had come to see me on his behalf and left only yesterday. Big mills are not going to revitalize the Orissa villages,

and the real India lives in its villages. Now that the Government is in the hands of the people, it is the duty of people's representatives to turn their full attention to the villages and see that the wheel hums in every home and all the local industries are revived everywhere. This is my cherished dream and, I assume, yours too.

Supposing the members of the Orissa Assembly are not of this opinion, you should resign as Premier and let the reins of Government pass into the hands of those who favour setting up of big mills in Orissa.

I send you the letter I have received regarding the Sambalpur scheme. I shall certainly write on the scheme after I fully understand it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

164. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
September 3 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Dr. Shaukatullah Ansari¹, who was here yesterday, tells me that your health is deteriorating and that there is fear of a nervous breakdown. People say that you keep working till past midnight. I am certain this is not at all good. For the work ahead of you, you need great care. This becomes impossible if you overstrain your mental resources.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Son-in-law of Dr. M. A. Ansari

165. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter regarding reforms in Bikaner State. I do not wish to write anything on the matter yet. I had advised the Maharaja Saheb that whatever is to be done should be done in consultation with Pandit Jawaharlal's All-India States People's Conference. If that were done the work would progress more smoothly.

Why is the Maharaja Saheb's appeal in English? How many among the Bikaner subjects know English? Why, again, is the Bikaner seal on documents in English? In my opinion you ought to learn Hindustani. Should this not be possible, it would be better to have the help of secretary to carry on your work in Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

DIWAN, BIKANER

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

166. LETTER TO LADORANI ZUTSHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Doing work of service among the coolies of Mussoorie is not an easy job. I am afraid you will not be able to do it. Consult Jawaharlalji and others.

I did not get your previous letter of 15-8-1946. Besides, in Africa people hardly get to know things.

SMT. LADORANI ZUTSHI
22 HAMILTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

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

167. LETTER TO RAM NARESH TRIPATHI

NEW DELHI

[September 3, 1946]

BHAI RAM NARESH,

I was sorry to learn of your illness. You must be getting the *Harijan Sevak*. I have started a new feature¹ in it. You may contribute to it whatever you can. You may suggest any additions or alterations to the terms already included. You may include as many village expressions as you can. If you can suggest any idiomatic expressions, well let me have a whole lot of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHI

VASANT NIWAS

SULTANPUR

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

168. LETTER TO A ZAMINDAR

[September 3, 1946]²

RAJASAHEB,

I have your two letters. Why do you sign in English? I have written a lot about the Zamindars; I cannot remember in which particular issues. A good many collections of my articles have been published. With a little effort one of your secretaries will be able to look these up and tell you. My opinion, in brief, is that no zamindar or rich man should perish. The greatest need is to bring about a change of heart in them. If every zamindar, every Rajah and every millionaire lives as servant of the people there will be no problem. In the final analysis land belongs to the man who has worked on it. The present system which divides people into capitalists or landlords on the one hand and the have-nots or serfs on the other, should not be tolerated. All this I have explained in my articles a number of times.

¹ A glossary of English-Hindustani words in Devanagari and Urdu scripts, started from September 1, 1946.

² In the source this letter is placed among the papers of 3-9-1946.

As to religion, I feel our country, and indeed the world, should have room for all religions. I consider no one high and no one low. The duties enjoined on a Brahmin or Kshatriya are for all. Only, some have these in greater measure than others. But these are duties, never rights. One who claims a right to Brahminhood is not a Brahmin. Similarly, the claimant to the prerogatives of a Kshatriya ceases to be one. I have shown the easiest way to save Hinduism and that is that we should all become Bhangis voluntarily. For a Bhangi can have knowledge, valour and business acumen, while the spirit of service will always be there. In my own view all these are for service.

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

169. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

The Viceroy's House is kept very neat and clean.¹ Not a scrap of waste paper, not a piece of rag can be spotted anywhere. The houses occupied by former members of the Viceroy's Executive Council were equally clean and well appointed. There is no gainsaying that we have not learnt the art of external sanitation to the degree that the English have. What is so distressing is that the living quarters of the menials and sweepers employed in the Viceroy's House are extremely dirty. This is a state of affairs the ministers of our new Government will not tolerate. Although they will occupy the same well-kept bungalows, they will see to it that the lodgings of their servants are kept as clean as their own. They will also have to pay attention to the cleanliness of the wives and children of the staff. Jawaharlal and Sardar have no objection to cleaning their own lavatories. How can they have any in having the living quarters of their attendants cleaned? A one-time Harijan servant of Jawaharlal is now a member of the U. P. Assembly. I shall be satisfied only when the lodgings of the ministers' staff are as neat and tidy as their own.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 4-9-1946

¹ Gandhiji was commenting on the fear expressed by some Englishmen that with the departure of the British the gardens of the house occupied by the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council would suffer neglect, the furniture would be ruined by oil and grease, lavatories would be left uncleaned, and so on.

170. NOTES¹

THE LOWLY COW

A knowledgeable sister writes :

Q. 1. With the exception of those cows or buffaloes that are in calf, cannot all others, whether in milk or not, be used to plough the land? This would be of immense help to the farmer but the general public is averse to the idea. What is your opinion?

Q. 2. There is a great dearth of pasture land in our country. It is difficult for the farmer to provide fodder even for useful cattle. Are you then in favour of the slaughter of all such animals as cannot be made use of or do you think this slaughter should be forbidden by law?

A. 1. The first question was put to me as long ago as 1915. I felt then as now, that if the cows referred to were used for purposes of ploughing the land, it would not hurt them. On the contrary it would make them strong and increase their yield of milk. But this benefit could only come about provided the cow was treated as a friend and not cruelly as cattle in our land so often are. This friendly treatment should of course be insisted on for animals from whom we take service. Every living being has to work within or its limitations. Such work uplifts, never lowers either man or beast.

A. 2. The second question also has long since been answered by me. Cow-slaughter can never be stopped by law. Knowledge, education, and the spirit of kindness towards her alone can put an end to it. It will not be possible to save those animals that are a burden on the land or perhaps even man if he is a burden.

KHADDAR

Readers of the *Harijan* may well say that in the present atmosphere of mad frenzy any talk of khadi is meaningless, because many khadi-loving persons live in cities and so far, the trouble is, by the grace of God, confined to cities. As a matter of fact, all city-dwellers are by no means party to the senseless strife, and those who truly love khadi must always be actuated by thoughts of peace. We have either to make khadi universal among the masses or give up all dreams of non-violent swaraj. Therefore, all who love and believe in peace, however fiercely the storm of communal strife may rage

¹ The Hindi original was published in *Harijan Sevak* 15-9-1946.

around them, will forget neither the spinning-wheel nor khadi. They may omit their meals but not the charkha.

The request given below on behalf of the Charkha Sangh is thus quite proper. Such requests have been made by other khadi-loving organizations too. Those who look upon khadi in the above light will act on the resolution passed by the A. I. S. A. as referred to below :

1. The Trustees of the Charkha Sangh hereby appeal to all Khadi Bhandars and all khadi-lovers to try their utmost to secure 78,000 ordinary co-operators for the coming seventy-eighth Khadi Jayanti, of which number, at least half shall be self-sufficient.

2. By an ordinary co-operator is meant one who is a habitual khadi-wearer and will donate at least 6 hanks of self-spun yarn annually to the Charkha Sangh.

3. By 'self-sufficient' is meant one who, unless prevented by illness or other sufficient and unavoidable cause, regularly produces whether spun by himself or through his family members or friends, at least $7\frac{1}{2}$ hanks yarn, per month or 5 hanks, if he has done his own ginning, carding and slivering.

4. The Charkha Sangh has also passed a resolution to the effect that in all khadi producing centres, at least one square yard per person, according to the population, must be used by the people in the area. This much at least must be accomplished.

NEW DELHI, September 4, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

171. CABLE TO SUDHIR GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

SUDHIR GHOSH
18 GROSVENOR PLACE
LONDON

YOU MUST BE SOLE JUDGE. I HAVE NO OBJECTION. AM HERE FOR SOME TIME.

GANDHI

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

172. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters. You have completed sixty. You should aspire to live to 125 and serve till the end.

Tell Gokibehn¹ not to worry about me. What was accomplished on the 2nd was nothing very great.² A great deal more still remains to be done. I shall indeed be happy if you keep her with you. It is good that you send her milk. Read this out to her with my humble *pranams*.

What you wrote to Kamalabehn Nimbkar was right. She has met me often. She is very talkative, and as obstinate. If she writes to me, I shall see what can be done.

I hope Jamna³ is well. With me are Kanu, Abha, Sushila Pyarelal and R. K. A gentleman named Prabhudas has arrived from Bardoli. As typist we have Parasram. Muriel and Gladys have just arrived.

I hope Purushottam⁴ and Vijaya⁵ are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8635. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

¹ Gandhiji's sister

² The reference is to the formation of the Interim Government

³ Addressee's wife

⁴ Addressee's son

⁵ Addressee's daughter-in-law

173. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I understand about the Hindustani. Do what you can. I am getting the translation from English into Hindustani done by Rajkumari as best as I can. What will of it I do not know. In the end I have had to accept your suggestion of giving two pages. You believe it can be managed. I do realize that it is not advisable to go to Madras at present. Everywhere there is chaos. We have to make our way through it. I have been feeling that to ensure regular progress in our work, all of us must stay in one place for some time. I don't know when that will be possible.

Now, about Goa. I cannot understand how you can go to Belgaum, for I feel that if you go you will have to stay there for a long time. If you do not stay on, the work will suffer. I therefore feel that it might be better if you would be content with whatever you can do from Wardha.

I understand about Konkani. I am confident that you will be able to attend to such activities from Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10974

174. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

Gandhiji said that they had a right to hope that their country would soon become a country where there was no sorrow and sighing. That country, however, of the poet's imagination, Gandhiji reminded them, was in their hearts and they all knew the conditions necessary for bringing about that peace and happiness. If everyone made room in his heart for God, there could be no sorrow and no sighing. But today, alas! the people were filled with fear and anger. Brother quarrelled with brother and returned anger for anger and blow for blow. What could their Ministers do? Were they expected to send military and police to protect them? The whole atmosphere was

rotten. Offices and staff had been multiplied a hundredfold. No wonder bribery and corruption were rampant.

On Tuesday, Gandhiji said, he had spoken to them of the duty of proper attention to hygiene and sanitation. It was an essential factor for health and the duty of every citizen. But inward cleanliness was even more necessary and much more difficult. Nevertheless, if they did not purify themselves they would make Government impossible for their Ministers and displace the very men whom they had put in power.

Gandhiji again referred to the evil of untouchability. It pained him to hear and read of the persecution of Harijans in villages. If there was an epidemic they were beaten. They could not draw water from wells. They lived in hovels. This state of affairs, Gandhiji said, may not exist in the country of our dreams. All human beings are one in the sight of God and they must look upon Harijans as no less members of the great human family than they themselves were.

Gandhiji then said a word to the Bhangis whose first servant he said he was. It pained him to hear of the bribery and corruption among them. He did not want their so-called leaders to oppress them. He did not want Bhangis to look upon themselves as beggars at anyone's door. They must demand justice and fight for it but with clean hands. And now with their own Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others as Ministers they need have no fear that justice would not be meted out to them.

The Hindustan Times, 5-9-1946

175. TELEGRAM TO J. P. BHANSALI

Express

NEW DELHI,

September 5, 1946

BHANSALIBHAI

ASHRAM SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

YOU MAY GO TO RAJNANDGAON IF YOU CAN SPARE YOURSELF.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

176. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. It is quite frank. May your twelve-year vow be a complete success. Never mind that you forgot to mention it to me beforehand or to obtain my prior permission. The work there will proceed but slowly. There are three Harijan settlements in Uruli Kanchan. In which of these three do you conduct the prayers? I think it is not proper for us to go for prayers where we are not wanted by the people. We cannot impose our dharma on others. Hence, if you have gone there after consulting the Harijans of the settlement you don't have to quit now. However, I would not consider it wrong to go to each Harijan settlement by turns. All of you should consult each other and then do what you think right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

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

177. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. By all means take the Preston land if you can. Sir Chunilal can certainly put up a building on the site if he wants. The final ownership should be the Trust's. It should also be used in a manner that the Trust can afford. The plot is so large that Sir Chunilal can have a piece of it for himself. Only Dr. Dinshaw Mehta can say where such a piece can be carved out. He knows every nook of the land. I have been there only once.

I am writing to Kumarappa and suggesting to him that he should pay a visit. I am not writing separately to Bachhraj.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MOHANLAL, GADHADAWALA

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

*178. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BHATT
AND GANGA BHATT*

NEW DELHI,

September 5, 1946

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM AND GANGA,

I have your letter. It is a pleasure to read the letters from you both. Mix with everyone as much as you can. You must do nothing beyond your capacity. Why don't you ask Rama also to write? What does she do?

You must not force yourself to take any food that you cannot digest or that does not agree with you. This rule should be strictly followed. And you should regard as medicine whatever food you take; you should never eat anything only to indulge the palate.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN BHATT

URULI KANCHAN

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

179. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

NEW DELHI,

September 5, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

I have your letter. It is lucid, though it leaves me with something to say. But you are right. We shall be able to decide something only when we meet.

I hold that soap is not necessary for cleanliness. I gave up the use of soap many years ago. I only use it to wash my hands after a

visit to the toilet, which means that one cake lasts me a year. As compared to soap, I consider the use of soap-nut more beneficial. However, letting dirt collect in the hair or the eyes or the teeth or the ears, I regard as a crime. I have noticed that we are very careless in observing the laws of hygiene. The rest when we meet.

DR. BHAGAWAT

URULIKANCHAN

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

180. HARIJANS AND WELLS¹

Shri Hardev Sahay writes :

Last evening (4-9-'46) in your address to the prayer gathering, you drew the attention of the public to the disability attached to Harijans in the matter of drawing water public wells. After 25 years of incessant effort on their behalf, we have not yet succeeded in removing this disability. No one knows of their sufferings more than you.

It is my humble opinion that now that Congress Government are in power, they should forthwith proclaim their policy towards the Harijans and remove all such of their disabilities as they can by law. In this connection I should like to draw your attention to conditions in the Punjab. Leave aside the question of drawing water from wells, Harijans are not even permitted to obtain land for sinking a well for themselves. I would beg of you to appeal to the Punjab Government to provide wells for Harijans at State expense, wherever there are no facilities of drawing water or at least provide them with land for sinking wells for themselves. There are ever so many villages in the Punjab where, even if the Harijans are willing to spend their own money, they are not given the requisite land.

There are a few places where the Government has started making wells for the Harijans; but they are wholly insufficient. It is surely the duty of the State to see that a proper supply of drinking water is available to all its citizens.

The writer is perfectly right in what he says. It is the duty of the Government to provide wells for the Harijans. It is not enough only to give the land; the Government should be responsible for sinking the wells.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

¹ The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan Sevak*, 15-9-1946

181. QUESTION BOX

NATURE CURE A PANACEA

Q. It has been said that nature cure can be applied to every disease. If so, can it cure short or long-sightedness, cataract and other eye diseases? Can one avoid spectacles? Can hernia, tonsils etc., which need the surgeon's knife be cured by nature cure?

A. I know that the claim attributed to nature cure has been made by its exponents. I do not count myself among them. This much, however, can be safely claimed. Disease springs from a wilful or ignorant breach of the laws of nature. It follows, therefore, that timely return to those laws should mean restoration. A person who has tried nature beyond endurance, must either suffer the punishment inflicted by nature or, in order to avoid it, seek the assistance of the physician or the surgeon as the case may be. Every submission to merited punishment strengthens the mind of man, every avoidance saps it.

FORCED MARRIAGE

A sister writes :

What is an unwilling girl to do when her parents insist either upon her marriage or leaving the parental home? Where is she to go if she has not been educated enough to earn her own living? Whose protection is she to seek?

A. The question makes sad reading. It is wholly wrong of parents to force marriage on their daughters. It is also wrong to keep their daughters unfit for earning their living. No parent has a right to turn a daughter out on the streets for refusal to marry. Let us hope that such cruel specimens are rare. To the girl concerned, my advice would be not to look on any labour with her hands, down to scavenging, as beneath her dignity. Women may not look for protection to men. They must rely on their own strength and purity of character and on God as did Draupadi of old.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

182. CHARKHA JAYANTI AND HINDUSTANI

Shri Giriraj informs me that some examinees resent the holding of the Hindustani examination of the Gujarati Vidyapith on 22nd because that date falls on Charkha Jayanti, i. e., *Bhadarva Vad 12*. According to me, those who sit for the Rashtrabhasha examination are doing pure work. Khadi is the highest symbol of ahimsa. The same is true of all the other constructive activities of the nation. Khadi is the nucleus of all the activities. I therefore hope that on that day the number of examinees will go up and not go down. *Bhadarva Vad 12* should never be a holiday. It is certainly not a day of enjoyment. On that day we should become more alive to the cause of service. And to sit for Hindustani examination is as much a matter of glory as it is a work of service.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-9-1946

183. CONGRESS MINISTRIES AND AHIMSA¹

Shri Shankarrao Deo writes :²

People find it strange that men who once called themselves satyagrahis should, on becoming Ministers, resort to the use of the army and the police. They feel it is a violation of ahimsa, whether accepted as a creed or as a policy. It would seem they are right. This contradiction between the belief and the practice of Congress Ministers confuses our workers and they find it difficult to face the critics, inside the Congress and those outside the Congress who want to make capital out of it.

By and large the ahimsa of the Congress has been the ahimsa of the weak. This was the only thing possible under the prevailing conditions in India. . . . I admit that there can be no objection to people who accept ahimsa only as a policy accepting positions of power. Thus many Congressmen have accepted positions in the Government and you have permitted them to do so. . . . But having won power through ahimsa, how should we practise ahimsa in such a way government becomes redundant? If you do not suggest a way satyagraha

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 15-9-1946.

² Only extracts from the letter are translated here.

will be deemed to be an insufficient means for the end we seek.

I think the answer is easy. For some time now I have been saying that the words “truth and non-violence” should be removed from the Congress constitution. If we proceed on the assumption that whether these words are removed from the Congress constitution or not we certainly have become removed from truth and ahimsa, we shall be able to judge independently whether a certain action is right or wrong.

I am convinced that so long as the army or the police continues to be used for conducting the administration we shall remain subservient to the British or some other foreign power, irrespective of whether the power is in the hands of the Congress or others. Let us suppose that Congress ministries do not have faith in ahimsa. Let us suppose further that Hindus, Muslims and others seek protection from the army or the police. In that case they will continue to get such protection. Then these Congress Ministers who are votaries of ahimsa and do not like to seek help the army or the police may resign. This means that so long as people have not learnt to settle their quarrels themselves, goondaism will continue and we shall never be able to generate the true strength of ahimsa in us.

Now the question is how to generate such strength. I answered this question [in the *Harijan* of] August 4¹ in my reply to a letter from Ahmedabad. So long as we do not develop the strength to die bravely, with love in our hearts, we cannot develop in us the non-violence of the brave.

Would there be State power in an ideal society or would such a society be Stateless? I think the question is futile. If we continue to work towards the building of such a society, to some extent it is bound to be realized and to that extent people will benefit by it. Euclid has defined a straight line as having no breadth, but no one has yet succeeded in drawing such a line and no one ever will. Still we can progress in geometry only by postulating such a line. This is true of every ideal.

We might remember though that a Stateless society does not exist anywhere in the world. If such a society is possible it can be established first only in India. For attempts have been made in India

¹ *Vide* “Congress Ministries and Ahimsa”, 6-9-1946.

towards bringing about such a society. We have not so far shown that supreme heroism. The only way is for those who believe in it to set the example.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-9-1946

*184. LETTER TO INDIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION,
LAURENCO MARQUIS*

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter and the demand draft for Rs. 3,425. Thanks for the same. I think you did not write the letter yourself, nor have you signed it. It should not be so.

I would like it even if you wrote an [indifferent] handsome day it would improve. I am utilizing your gift for khadi work, because you have left the decision to me. This is one of the many welfare activities carried on by me which badly needs funds.

HINDI MAHILA MANDAL

POST BOX 393

LAURENCO MARQUIS

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

185. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. You are right about the examination. I am writing in *Harijanbandhu*.¹

You are in somewhat of a dilemma over the dictionary. If there is need for another dictionary, it will also be prepared. Our misfortune

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Giriraj Kishore", 6-9-1946.

is that the English-knowing people are unable to render even common English words into Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8776

186. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi criticized the public for sending hundreds of telegrams daily to the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He considered them a foolish waste of public money and at the same time waste of the Viceroy's and Pandit Nehru's precious time. Time was when the Viceroy was all-powerful and could do everything. But now he had of his own free will relegated his powers to the Cabinet of which, like the King of England, he was constitutional head. The King of England could not do anything without the consent of his Ministers. The people of England even beheaded one monarch because he went against their will. Gandhiji hoped that the people's Ministers here would never do anything of the kind because they had in their possession the matchless weapon of satyagraha, should occasion ever arise for its use. In any case, the people who sent these wires should realize that apart from burdening the recipients and the telegraph offices they were also wasting the people's money. The well-to-do imagined that it was their money, but it really belonged to the starving masses whom they exploited.

Gandhiji then turned with a heavy heart to the continued strife in Bombay. He did not know who killed whom. But it was tragic that some people even rejoiced that Hindus were enough to kill in return those who tried to kill them. Such revenge was folly. He would far rather that Hindus died without retaliation, for that was the only way to quench the fire of hatred. He did not want the people to ask the Government anywhere for military and police protection. They must generate their own strength and not rely on anyone else. Even if they demanded this help the Ministers should refuse it. The Ministers and leaders should be willing to go into the fray themselves and lay down their lives for the sake of Hindu and Muslim honour. As for military, they should be harnessed to all kinds of constructive work at which they were adepts. Let them grow more food for the starving millions and all kinds of other work that

¹ The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with Pyarelal's report in his "Weekly Letter" appearing in *Harijan*.

was waiting to be done.⁸

Some members of the Delhi Municipality and businessmen had come and complained, said Gandhiji, that in Delhi it was the Chief Commissioner's and Deputy Commissioner's raj. He had told them in reply that the remedy lay in their own hands. They should go to the Municipality for service only, with no personal end to serve. He was afraid they would not be able to stand that test. They had many sins of omission and commission to answer for. As elected representatives in the Municipality, they were responsible for the Harijan hovels and the dirt and squalor of Delhi. Businessmen and contractors exploited the poor. If communal strife occurs in Delhi, it is the citizens who are responsible. The day for the Commissioner's raj is over. It must now be the people's raj, but the people must be alive to their responsibilities.

Gandhiji brought his discourse to an end by expressing sorrow at the Qaid-e-Azam's recent utterances. He was the leader of a powerful organization and it behoved him to weigh every word he spoke. If he did, it would redound to his credit; it would be for the good of Islam, for the benefit of Hinduism, too, and for the welfare of India as a whole. But, said Gandhiji, each one was responsible for his own correct action and correct action on the part of everyone would make the Qaid-e-Azam act a right too.

The Hindustan Times, 7-9-1946, and *Harijan*, 15-9-1946

187. PROHIBITION

The following extracts from Rev. E. Gordon's writing provoke thoughts on total prohibition :

With famine facing the country, we cannot very well quarrel with sincere efforts for combating the menace, but why prohibition of food-stuffs such as pastries, ice cream, etc., which have real good value, and why talk of prohibition or severe reduction of supply of sugar to aerated water and other mineral water manufactures and yet keep absolutely silent about the prohibition or severe reduction of cereals and sugar to the distilleries and breweries? Is the drinking of alcoholic liquors any less of a luxury than the eating of pies, pastries and cakes? Can even the most astute and ardent lovers of alcoholic beverages argue that these drinks are so essential to life that no reduction can be made in the amount of cereals and sugar required to make whisky, beer, etc.?

Granted that there is a certain amount of food value in beer, is it equal in value to the barley that could be used in making bread or cakes?

The President of the United States has ordered a drastic cut in the quota of wheat

¹ What follows is from the *Harijan* report.

to be issued to distilleries in the U.S.A. How can we from India plead with America to send us large quantities of grain to save millions from death by starvation, when no published statements assure us that grains, whether imported or grown in this country, will be used for intoxicating drinks?

We give our whole-hearted approval to the Congress Ministry of Madras in their desire to introduce prohibition as soon as possible. Notwithstanding all that anti-prohibitionists say about the failure of prohibition in the United States, if they would honestly look at the other side of the picture, they would find that the drinking is far worse now than it was then and the amount of spirituous liquors is increasing year by year. Other things being equal, we sincerely believe that under prohibition, honestly tried courageously and indefatigably enforced, India will forge ahead much quicker and more rapidly than she could without prohibition. She will prove to the world the extent to which liquor has dragged and is dragging down the nations of the world.

The Reverend gentleman is right. India has the capacity and the opportunity to lead the world in the matter of prohibition. Can she forgo the revenue derived from this degrading traffic? She must, if she is to live. I have a hideous tale from South Africa, related to me by satyagrahi Cachalia Junior, a worthy son of the deceased father who was a hero of the first Satyagraha campaign in that country. He tells me that a thoughtless agitation has brought to the Indian community the freedom to drink, with the result that it is sapping their moral strength. I know what this deadly freedom means. On this issue there is no difference of opinion between Hindus, Mussalmans and, shall I say, others in India save the liquor interest.

I have no doubt that the loss of revenue which drains the moral and material means of the poor drinkers will be more than balanced by the gain accruing to them from prohibition. Moreover, the military burden, in defence of which the argument for the maintenance of the excise revenue has so far been used, cannot hold water in the New India, where that burden will not longer exist. The excise revenue must, therefore, be sacrificed without delay and without hesitation. No thought of the loss of this revenue, should interfere with the progress of this much-needed reform. Whether the happy conjunction between the Congress and the League takes place or not, the Congress Provinces should dare to do the right.

The positive side of prohibition must run side by side with the

negative. The positive consists in providing the drinker with counter-attractions giving him health and innocent amusement.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

188. HARIJAN WORK IN KISTNA DISTRICT

Shri G. Ramachandra Rao writes a letter giving an account of his Harijan work. The following is a precis of it :

We have taken up the problem of the use of public wells by Harijans. Section 126A of the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920 provides for the use, by persons of whatever caste or creed, of wells, tanks, reservoirs, water-ways, etc., maintained by a *Panchayat*. It even imposes a fine of Rs. 100 on anyone who obstructs its operation. But the law is honoured in the breach where the Harijans are concerned. It is pathetic to see the latter often waiting in long queues for hours at a time in front of a public well for some generous non-Harijan to fill their pots with water. We chose Kankipadu village where a public well is maintained by the local *Panchayat* and explained to the leaders, not only the implications of the law but also their moral obligations. The response, after about three weeks of propaganda, being heartening, we called a public meeting where, owing to overwhelming support for the proposition, it was announced that in future Harijans would be allowed to use the well in question without molestation.

The next morning, however, the Harijans themselves were found to be too timid to take advantage of the decision. It was a sad commentary on their mentality and we had to work hard to bring them to the well. As soon as they began drawing water, a reaction set in among the caste Hindus, the vast majority of whom, even at personal inconvenience, refrained from coming to the well. A few, however, remained staunch to their resolve and gradually the opposition was worn down. I had also to appeal to the Deputy Inspector of Local Board to explain to the people the implications of section 126A.

This experience has encouraged us to take up similar work in other villages too, where Harijans have no facilities for obtaining water. I am of opinion that for the removal of such disabilities, moral persuasion and legal provision should go hand in hand. Absence of one renders the other inefficient. The existing Government acts dealing with social disabilities are vague and weak. This defect must be remedied and the Government of Madras, who have set aside one crore of rupees for Harijan work, might well utilize a certain sum for publicity of the provisions of the relevant laws already on the

statute-book. Execution of the law is as important as its passing.

Professor Rao deserves hearty congratulations for his assiduous work on behalf of the oppressed Harijans. His effort ought to be supported by the public.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

189. ABOUT HINDUSTANI¹

A gentleman from Bihar writes :

The great and commendable work that is going on under your leadership for Hindustani-Prachar is of immense help for the country's progress and freedom. A nation that has no language of its own has hardly any right to exist. And that is our misfortune today. Yet our leaders are not fully aware of the problem. In spite of your efforts, Congress workers are not whole-hearted in this regard. You will also be aware that at Congress Committee meetings as also in our legislatures, most people, including even whose mother tongue is either Hindi or Urdu, prefer to speak in English. Is it not possible to make it obligatory for Congressmen to speak, whether at meetings or in legislatures, in Hindustani, as it is obligatory for them to wear khadi? Some concession can be allowed in regard to those who cannot at all speak Hindustani, but a time-limit should be set for them also to learn Hindustani. My experience is that responsible Congressmen who know Hindustani prefer to speak in English. This must be stopped. Unless this is done no transformation is possible in the country. The Congress is assuming the responsibility of office. Here too Congressmen should carry on their work in Hindustani.

The correspondent is quite right. The lure of English has not left us. And until it goes, our own languages will remain impoverished. Would that the people's Government everywhere would do their work either in the national or provincial languages! But to attain this, they must have people representing all languages in their offices and the public should be encouraged to address the Government in the provincial or the national language. We shall not only be saved much expense by adopting our own languages but it will also make

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 15-9-1946, under the title "Regarding Hindustani".

things much easier for the general public.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-9-1946

190. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT MEHTA

NEW DELHI,

September 7, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAKANT,

I have your letter addressed to Bapa dated July 24, 1946. The number of English words you use betrays your imperfect and inadequate knowledge of Gujarati. I wonder how, being what you are, you can marry a Harijan girl and be happy or make her happy. Moreover, I should like to know what it is that you call revolutionary in such acts of service. Strange that a revolutionary though I am I fail to understand what you want to say.

I certainly have a Harijan girl in view but I cannot afford to let her marry just anybody. I can only give such an alliance a religious character and hence indulgence can have no place in it. My advice therefore is that you should come and see me when I settle down at Sevagram.

SJT. CHANDRAKANT MEHTA

MORVI HOSTEL

[BANARAS] HINDU UNIVERSITY

BANARAS

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

191. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

NEW DELHI,

September 7, 1946

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

You are too simple. God has not yet opened fully through my instrumentality the portal of swaraj for India. We are yet to enter it. I take it that you are not regretting that you gave up cereals. Anyone who can take milk and milk products does not need what are known as cereals. If we can eat fruit, sweet and sour, and various kinds of

leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, then there will be no need for cereals. This is my experience through many years. Now that you have resumed taking cereals I must warn you to guard against diseases caused by grain. So far as we are concerned, nothing needs to be celebrated. Following dharma is imperative for all of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

GOKULBHAI BHATT
SIROHI, RAJPUTANA

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

192. LETTER TO KISANLAL C. TEJPAL

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI KISANLAL,

I have your letter. I agree with what you say. What is there is to celebrate so long as we have not achieved complete independence? At the most we can say that we have got a glimpse of independence. But it would be a sign of stupidity to rest content with that. At present Hindus and Muslims in the towns are fighting each other. At such a time overseas Indians will have helped in bringing independence nearer if they effectively display unity. Since you live in Egypt you can contribute much in this regard.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KISANLAL CHHOTALAL TEJPAL
C/O N. CHHOTALAL & BROTHERS
SAQUARA EL GIZA
CAIRO

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *Harijanbandhu*, 15-9-1946

193. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I was distressed to see your letter. Yesterday I heard the purport of your letter. This morning is went through Krishnamurti's article. I could not follow it fully so I asked to see your letter. What a messy handwriting! It is unbecoming for you to write such a hand. You are a teacher, your handwriting should be a model, as should be all your work.

Krishnamurti's article is good, but it is unnecessary to publish it. The English handwriting is also not good, and the letters are too small.

Do everything neatly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8777

194. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

The speeches being made by the Qaid-e-Azam and his followers cause me much pain. They say that they will take what they want by force. It is true that the reins of the Government are now in the hands of the Congress, but this only adds to their responsibilities and duties. During the struggle for freedom Congressmen were arrested, beaten and persecuted. They were even killed. These are now things of the past. Had the Congress taken to the path of violence it would have come to a bad end. In true suffering there is no room for revenge. Then alone can success be assured. The 40 crores of Indian people, that is to say the teeming millions in the villages, do not think of violence. They are slaves. Violence is lodged only in the hearts of a handful of men in the cities.

I am a villager. I belong with the villagers. The Congress has accepted power for the sake of these downtrodden villages. I had taken up the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity long before I joined the Congress. I had a number of Muslim friends when I was at school. I went to South Africa to plead the case of some Muslim friends of my brother. I had gone there to gain my livelihood, but soon after my arrival there I gave the first place to service. As a coolie-barrister I served my friends of the labouring class. I had gone as an employee of a Muslim firm and I served the Hindus through them. My memory of those days is a happy one. It is a matter of deep regret that even in South Africa communal differences have arisen. Nevertheless they are unitedly fighting for the rights of Indians. I still remember those hefty Muslims, and especially Seth Cachalia, who participated in the satyagraha and who said they would rather die than live as slaves. When the Qaid-e-Azam and his followers describe Hindus as their enemies I am surprised and pained. I am not a Muslim but I venture to say that Islam does not preach enmity towards anyone. I think I am as much a Christian, a Sikh and a Jain as I am a Hindu. Religion does not teach one to kill brother however different his belief. No one can treat another as his enemy until the latter has become his own enemy. Muslim League leaders were not right when they said that they would compel the Congress, the Hindus and the British to accede to their demand.

I am reminded of an incident during the Khilafat days. I was speaking at a meeting of Hindus. I said to them: "If you want to protect the cow then protect Khilafat. If required even lay down your lives for it." When I said this it brought tears of joy to the eyes of the Ali Brothers. But what a tragic change we see today. I wish the day may again come when Hindus and Muslims will do nothing without mutual consultation. I am day and night tormented by the question what I can do to hasten the coming of that day. I appeal to the League not to regard any Indian as its enemy. I appeal to the English not to nurse the thought that they can divide Hindus and Muslims. If they do they will be betraying India and betraying themselves. Hindus and Muslims are both born of the same soil. They have the same blood, eat the same food, drink the same water and speak the same language. The Qaid-e-Azam says that all the Muslims will be safe in Pakistan. In

Punjab, Sind and Bengal we have Muslim League Governments. Can one say that what is happening in those provinces augurs well for the peace of the country? Does the Muslim League believe that it can sustain Islam by the sword? If it does it is committing a great error. The very meaning of the word 'Islam' is peace and I am certain that no religion worth the name can be kept alive except through peace.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 8-9-1946

195. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

NEW DELHI,
September 8, 1946

MANAGER
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
TELL SANKARAN TO COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

196. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 8, 1946

BHAI JIVANJI,

From the difficulty you mention it would appear that only as much English matter can go in as we can send from here. The same, we may take it, applies to the Hindustani. Only what we send from here will be published, and that just as it is. I take it that you have the necessary resources and facilities for having the Devanagari transcribed into Persian. But if you cannot do even this much you must tell me and we shall have the Urdu also sent from here. That of course would be too much. All our people should know both the scripts. That includes the compositors.

I understand what you say about Hunner. But I am thinking of sending all the Hindustani matter from here. Would you still want to engage him? I have sent to you the long letter he wrote to me. If you

return it to me I shall send Hanner the necessary reply.

You will have started giving four columns of the English-Hindustani. I don't think it is necessary to give it in *Harijan Sevak*. We proceed on the assumption that those who read *Harijan Sevak* do not know English. Since these will be four columns now it will make one whole leaf. It should go to the readers of *Harijan* free of cost. Those who ask for it separately should be charged 2 pice in cash.

If the prayer book is printed here on behalf of Navajivan and if it is printed quickly, what objection can we have? There is a great demand for it here. My feeling is that it cannot be printed in Ahmedabad as quickly as it can here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9969. Also C. W. 6943. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

197. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

[*September 8, 1946*]

Though she could never swim in plenty, India could grow enough food for her requirement, chances of wastage being eliminated, said Mahatma Gandhi in his after-prayer speech on Sunday evening. Talking of cloth shortage, he said that if only the country took to the khadi scheme, no Indian need be in want.

Gandhiji said that their President Jawaharlalji had also referred to these two primary needs in his broadcast on Saturday evening. He had appealed to those countries abroad who could spare food also to send it to India. Gandhiji had no objection to anyone who could spare anything and felt like sending out foodstuffs. But he was quite certain that India could not live if she was going to depend on outside aid for her food. He had maintained from the beginning that India could grow enough food for her requirement.

An English sister who was like a relation of his, was with him just now on her way to China. She was a woman who had chosen to make her home among the poor in London and when he went there for the (second) R. T. C. she had invited him to stay with her which he gladly did and looked upon Kingsley Hall as a palace. She had told him how strictly rationed they were for everything in England, how rationing included everyone from the King and Prime Minister downwards and how proud everyone was to share the burden. These people were disciplined and war had taught

them to suffer willingly. If one goes further into the war-devastated countries of Europe, the suffering was much worse and would be still greater with the approaching winter.

Today the whole world was starving, and why should India look for relief from outside. Gandhiji maintained that if everyone put his shoulder to the wheel all would be well with them. No one must eat a morsel more than he required and everyone who had any little piece of land should at once grow vegetables or cereals on it. In the U. P. he had been told that 75,000 bighas of uncultivated land was waiting to be ploughed. All this meant that they could produce much more food if they directed their energies to it.

Gandhiji said it hurt him to hear it said that Travancore had food only for 15 days more. This was a land of plenty and yet the poor lived in perpetual want because of exploitation by a foreign power and the city folk. Gandhiji explained that when he said that enough food could be grown he did not mean that they could afford to waste anything. They would never be swimming in an ocean of milk. That was possible only for God. But for the absolute lack of any milk or ghee or even oil for the poor the city folk must hang their heads in shame.

Gandhiji next turned to India's nakedness. The answer to this was, in his opinion, quite simple. People talked glibly of starting more textile mills. But they needed none of these. The mills existed today in their villages in the shape of hands, spindles, wheels and looms. The art was an old one and was alive. He knew, as President of the Spinners' Association what wonders could be worked if only everyone would take to the wheel. It was a crying shame that we who had plenty of cotton to export should have to depend upon mills. He appealed to each one to spin and send the yarn to him. He would have it woven and given to the poor or sold to the giver of enough yarn. It was up to the public to be true to themselves and help to the utmost to solve the problem. The solution lay in their own hands, not in those of the few members of the Cabinet.

The Hindustan Times, 9-9-1946

198. WHAT TO DO?

A friend sends the following questions :

Q. 1. You have all along held and expressed the view that persons should observe strict non-violence even when attacked by hooligans or others. Does this hold good when women are attacked or outraged? If people are unable to follow your lead regarding non-violence would you advise them to die as cowards or resist aggression with violence?

Q. 2. Should you not unequivocally condemn the dual role that the Muslim

League is playing today? While, on the one hand, its leaders are openly preaching violence and *jehad* against Hindus, the same men continue, on the other hand, to hold office as Ministers having a controlling hand on all the threads of administration, including police and justice.

Q. 3. Is there no constituted authority in India which can put a stop to this grave anomaly which is unprecedented in history?

Q. 4. Do you realize that if the present happenings are allowed to continue, civil war will become inevitable? How would you advise your countrymen to face such a catastrophe, if it comes?

A. 1. In a society of my imagination, outrage posited by the questioner cannot take place. But in the society in the midst of which we are living, such outrages do take place. My answer is unequivocal. A non-violent man or woman will and should die without retaliation, anger or malice, in self-defence or in defending the honour of his womenfolk. This is the highest form of bravery.

If an individual or a group of people are unable or unwilling to follow this great law of life, which is miscalled my lead, retaliation or resistance unto death is the second best, though a long way off from the first. Cowardice is impotence worse than violence. The coward desires revenge but being afraid to die, he looks to others may be the Government of the day, to do the work of defence for him. A coward is less than man. He does not deserve to be a member of a society of men and women. Lastly, let me add that if women had followed or would now follow my advice, every woman would protect herself without caring or waiting for aid from her brother or sister.

A. 2. Of course, the dual role adverted to is unequivocally bad. It is a sad chapter in our national life. My condemnation is of universal application. Fortunately it is so bad that it cannot last long.

A. 3. The only constituted authority is the British. We are all puppets in their hands. But it would be wrong and foolish to blame that authority. It acts according to its nature. That authority does not compel us to be puppets. We voluntarily run into their camp. It is, therefore, open to any and every one of us to refuse to play the British game.

Let us also admit frankly that the British authority is struggling to quit India. It does not know how. It honestly wants to leave India but wants before leaving to undo the wrong it has been doing for so

long. Being in the position of 'the toad under the harrow', I must know where it hurts. I have been telling the authority, if it will undo the wrong quickly, to leave India to her fate. But those who compose the British service cannot realize this obvious fact. They flatter themselves with the belief that they know India better than we do ourselves. Having successfully kept us under subjection for over a century, they claim the right to constitute themselves judges of our destiny. We may not grumble, if we are to come into our own through the way of peace. Satyagraha is never vindictive. It believes not in destruction but in conversion. Its failures are due to the weaknesses of the satyagrahi, not to any defect in the law itself. The British authority having decided to quit, (whatever the reason), will show growing defects and weaknesses. Parties will find that it is more and more a broken reed. And, when parties quarrel as Hindus and Muslims do let one or the other or both realize that, if India is to be an independent nation, one or both must deliberately cease to look to British authority for protection.

A. 4. This brings me to the last question. We are not yet in the midst of civil war. But we are nearing it. At present we are playing at it. War is a respectable term for goondaism practised on a mass or national scale. If the British are wise, they will keep clear of it. Appearances are to the contrary. Even the English members in the Provincial Assemblies refuse to see that they were given seats by the Act of 1935, not because it was right but in order that they might protect British interest and keep Hindus and Muslims apart. But they do not see this. It is a small matter. Nevertheless it is a straw showing the way the wind is blowing. Lovers and makers of swaraj must not be dismayed by these omens. My advice is satyagraha first and satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom. Whoever wants to drink the ozone of freedom must steel himself against seeking military or police aid. He or they must ever rely upon their own strong arms or, what is infinitely better, their strong mind and will which are independent of arms, their own or other.

NEW DELHI, September 9, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

199. TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHIMANLALBHAI
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

REGRET NOT RETURNING BEFORE TWENTYFIFTH. INFORM ALL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

200. LETTER TO SIBNATH BANNERJI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

DEAR SIBNATH (BANNERJI)¹,

I am silent. I dislike this craze for the West. What this army of men and women will bring, I shall watch. Only do not seek my blessings for what I dislike. My opinion you know.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

201. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 9, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. God has granted your wish, for I cannot leave here before the 24th.

If you work only as much as your health permits, both your body and mind will become as strong as steel. You will then be able to do as much work as I want you to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 528

¹ Vice-President, E. I. Railwaymen's Union

202. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

FOOLISH KUSUM,

Manibehn gave me the news of Jadavbehn's demise. I said I wouldn't write anything till Kusum wrote to me. I do not wish to offer you condolences. I have looked upon you as a wise woman. Should I say now that you are ignorant? Jadavbehn led a very happy life. Both of you sisters have rendered valuable services. She had to depart, as you and I and all of us have to. You should have asked me to cheer you up and prayed that you might cultivate total dedication to service. From what you say I understand that Jadavbehn also expected the same from you . . .¹ Has my wish yet been fulfilled?

It is still far off. I wish to live for 125 years, whereas you are wishing me only a hundred years. This is another instance of your stupidity. What is Pushpa's² age? Give my blessings to Manibhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarat: G. N. 1855

203. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have received your two letters. Perhaps Anantram will have arrived there by now. I am glad that Krishnachandra is convinced by Vinoba's persuasion. Balvantsinha and Om Prakash came here and have now proceeded to Khurja. I would consider Hoshiari's problem to have been solved if Gajraj goes to you. It would be excellent if Madhu's shortcomings are overcome. You will be receiving twenty-five tents. They have been dispatched from there along with poles and

¹ Some three lines are illegible here.

² Addressee's younger sister

pegs. I hope all the mosquito-nets have been got ready and there is no shortage now.

Manmohan Choudhari, I hope, has recovered by now. How did he get fever? I hope Prabhu Dayal and Arjun have also recovered and Sinharaj is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10651

204. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI
September 9, 1946

CHI. GAJANAN,

Your letter does not show impartiality. However, if the information contained in it is correct it is startling. I must show your letter to Jhaverbhai. Or I would say that there is no substance in your complaint. About the salary I have already taken steps. I will proceed after I get reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. GAJANAN NAIK
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

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

205. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

Herewith a letter from Jagannath. Read it and return it with your comments. I am postponing any further action until I have your reply.

SJT. GOKULBHAI BHATT

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

206. *LETTER TO MRS. HARILAL DESAI*

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your joint letter. I have certainly tried to do *tapashcharya*. It can be said to have borne fruit when we get rid of what Akha Bhagat has described as the “excess growth” and when Hindus and Muslims live as one. Will the Doctor undertake this surgery?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

[C/O] DR. HARILAL DESAI
AHMEDABAD

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

207. *LETTER TO JAGANNATH JANI*

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I have your letter, which I have passed on to Gokulbhai. After I have his reply I shall make further inquiries if necessary.

SJT. JAGANNATH JANI
ROHIRA, SIROHI STATE

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

208. *LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS*

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter giving me full and detailed information. I shall be able to reach there only after the 24th, when we shall have a long talk. I hope Kanta was able to manage during your absence.

I expect you could observe things in Bombay too. Perfect you Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMPRASAD VYAS
SEVAGRAM

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

209. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

M[unshi] is here today. He has sent you a copy of his award. The stamped one he has sent to Gadodiaji. He has also made a deposition. If you want I can send you a copy, but it is not necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 368

210. LETTER TO VITHALDAS KOTHARI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. I cannot regard the Hindustani translation as accurate but I see no misinterpretation in it. Since there is a question-mark I cannot see the possibility of any frightful interpretation of it. But I might understand what you want to say if you throw more light. I cannot revise what I have written regarding Kakodkar's case. Please remember that I have not said it in regard to fasting in general. I had only Kakodkar's fast in mind. The only untoward outcome of the fast would have been that he might have died and I would not have regarded it as a terrible consequence. I would have regarded it as wrong if the fast had been given up owing to fear hunger, or a false notion of morality.

Uncertified khadi means khadi that does not come up to the standard, but is it not khadi all the same? I for one would regard it as wrong to use mill cloth in place of such khadi. The fact is it is wrong to expect at present khadi for book-binding and so on.

SJT. VITHALDAS KOTHARI
GUJARATI VIDYAPITH

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

211. LETTER TO PRABHU

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI PRABHU,

Sushilabehn has given me your two cheques. The beginning has been good. The receipt, etc., will be sent by Kanu Gandhi. It will go along with this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Both the cheques will be utilized only for the work that was dear to Mahadev.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9229

212. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I have your long letter. Isn't there a Gujarati proverb saying that suspicion is a demon and ambition a witch? This applies in your case. Whatever I did only out of love. It is true that I do not have confidence in your capacity for thought or your non-violence and I have said as much in my letters to you. When you accepted my advice to give up your fast and vacate the Congress House I was very happy and realized that you were as loyal as ever.

As regards prayer I see no need to say anything. I believe you totally when you say that you pray every day and that you have faith in prayer. And this makes me happy. One who has sincere faith in prayer is saved from many sins. I have no faith and no interest in going to Western countries. I try to dissuade those wanting to go. Only today I wrote to Sibnath Bannerjee along these lines.¹ Yesterday I spoke to Ruikar. That they may not stay back at my behest is beside the point. I gave them the advice I considered right and my duty was done. I think now I have answered all your points. I shall have to be in Delhi till the 24th. I would prefer your coming to Sevagram rather than Delhi to see me. But if there is something urgent you want to ask that you cannot put down in a letter, you may come over to Delhi. I was sorry that nothing had yet been done about arbitration.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABIDALI JAFARBHAI
BOMBAY

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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Abidali Jafarbhaji", 9-9-1946.

213. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. What shall I say to you? What can I do? I consider it a great crime to let one's health deteriorate to such an extent. You are now wasting time, causing anxiety to your parents and others you hold dear. Well, what has happened has happened. Observe henceforth the rules of health and get well. I shall be here till the 24th. Sushila's wedding is to take place at Wardha on 2nd October. After that I shall be there. Don't worry. Cheer up.

Blessing from
BAPU

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

214. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAJI,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to Mirabehn. I am well. There is nothing to worry about. We are all in God's hands.

Blessing from
BAPU

GOVIND BALLABH PANT

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

215. LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. I am carrying on correspondence. Now you are coming on the 15th. I shall be here. We shall have a talk.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

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

216. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

Both your letters came into my hands only yesterday. I shall now be here till the 24th but I think it is pointless for you to come here to see me. Stick on there and do whatever work Sushilabehn gives you.

Your chief task is to bring about a change in your diet. You should set about this. If you maintain good health under all circumstances, I shall feel that at least in your own case nature cure has been of benefit. Chimanlalbhai does not take medicines. It would be a great thing if he, too, showed some improvement. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN

SEVAGRAM

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

217. LETTER TO SHIVAJI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI SHIVAJI,

I have your letter. I was indeed sorry that even though Kakodkar was consuming fruit and milk he was considered to be fasting. At least you could have said that he was fasting on milk and fruit. When we utter what is untruth or very near to it it is our duty to correct ourselves even though this should cause us temporary harm. My experience is that this never causes harm. I am confessing my error through the Press and to the Goan Government.¹

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

218. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

I am asked when the salt tax will be removed; and why it has not been removed already. The question implies impatience. The Cabinet has only been in office for eight days. The Finance Member has not yet taken charge of his office. We must wait. The Cabinet must do everything after full deliberation. It is I who should be impatient, for it was I who initiated the fight for the abolition of this tax. I also know how the loss of revenue can be made up for. Nevertheless I think we should not be impatient. We should not hustle the Cabinet. The Cabinet is of the people and works under their mandate. We must have faith that the salt tax will go and he who has faith can afford to be patient. There are many other things that the Cabinet has to do for the people as quickly as possible. If we continue to give it our support it will surely do all that should be done for the good of the masses.

Yesterday I told you that if we would learn to make our cloth ourselves there would be no need for anyone to go naked. Many people do not know how to spin. It is therefore proposed to start

¹*Vide* "Letter to Shivaji", 9-9-1946.

classes in the Bhangi Colony from September 11 to 22 for all wanting to learn the various processes from ginning to spinning. Morning classes will be held from 7 to 11 a. m., afternoon classes from 2 p. m. to 6 p. m. Only Re. 1 per head will be charged. Those who wish to join may send their names either to Shri Kanu Gandhi or to Gandhi Ashram, Chandni Chowk, by the morning of September 11. I hope as many persons as can will take advantage of this opportunity.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 10-9-1946

219 TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION
BUREAU, GOA¹

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

I HAVE NOW LEARNT FROM MY ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENT THAT BY THE HUNGER-STRIKE OF SHRI KAKODKAR HE MEANT EXCLUSION OF ALL FOOD EXCEPT MILK AND FRUIT. HE ADDS TOO THAT THIS PARTIAL FAST IS DISCONTINUED. I REGRET THE ERROR INTO WHICH I WAS LED.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-9-1946, and *The Hindustan Times*, 12-9-1946

220. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

MY DEAR HORACE,

Muriel read your letter and gave it to me last evening. I am glad you have frankly given me your reaction to the situation in Calcutta.² I wholly endorse your first reaction. It is in every way undesirable for the Congress to rely upon British troops or even police for upholding authority and keeping law and order. It is tantamount to suicide.

I wholly dissent from the second. One can waive a right. Can

¹ *Vide* "Bureau Goa", 10-9-1946 and "Telegram to Government Information Bureau, Goa", 10-9-1946.

² On August 16, which the Muslim League had declared "Direct Action Day", savage riots had broken out in Calcutta; *vide* "What Can Violence Do", 19-8-1946.

one waive a duty? And I regard it as a duty not to sacrifice a principle, here a nationalist Muslim. Surely it should be enough in all conscience that Congress accommodates a nationalist or rather a non-League Muslim without encroaching upon the Muslim quota or any minority interest. Nor can Congress be party to the recognition of the League claim that it is the only body that can represent Muslim interests and that the Congress is a communal organization representing only caste Hindus.

Your question is quite good. Congress is more than willing so far as I know to form coalitions in provinces as also at the centre.

Your thought of running to me even for a day was quite sound. You can fly to me in a few hours from Madras, assuming of course, that you have no objection to flying.

Love.

BAPU

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

221. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I kept the enclosed letter for two days. I am sending it now. See from it the love Sushila has for you and if you can come do so before the 2nd October. I would be glad if Jaisukhlal came too. I have not invited anyone. Need I invite you?

You must have got my previous letter. I am here till the 24th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXIV

222. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I am quite certain that a Provincial Government which goes about setting up new mills should formulate no schemes for khadi. No Government is obliged to start a new mill. Prakasam's wire has arrived only today. I enclose a copy of it. I was under the impression that there would be no khadi exhibition at the Congress session. We have still not received any invitation. When the Gandhi Ashram workers consulted me, I told them that they could do so independently but they said they did not want to do anything without my consent and that it would be desirable that the Charkha Sangh itself took the initiative. I then asked them to consult you. In my opinion, we should not take the responsibility but should give whatever help they ask for. I have advised the Gandhi Ashram workers not to incur any expenditure. All the expenses should be borne by the Reception Committee. No khadi should be sent. The Khadi Vidyalaya may offer training in all the processes of khadi-making such as carding, making slivers, weaving, etc. They should sell all village industry products except khadi. They should demonstrate the techniques employed in the various village industries. For this they should seek help, though not monetary, from the A. I. V. I. A., the Talimi Sangh and the Goseva Sangh. Now you may write to them as you think best.

I hope you are keeping good health.

I forgot to send you a copy of the letter I wrote to Vichitra.¹

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

¹ Presumably of August 30, 1946; *vide* "Letter to Vichitra Narayan Sharma", 30-8-1946.

223. *LEPROSY AND CONTAMINATION*

Dr. R. G. Cochrane, Principal of the Missionary Medical College for Women in Vellore, writes :¹

My good friend Mr. Jagadisan has brought to my attention a paragraph in the *Hindu* of Madras of August the 26th. It reads: 'Bihar is going to have a separate jail for the leper prisoners, it is learnt, to save other prisoners from contamination. Arrangements are being made in the first instance, it is understood, to segregate about 100 such prisoners at Govindpur in the District of Manbhum. I was so pained by the news that I could not resist the urge to write to you, for you have been a consistent champion of those who suffer from leprosy and indeed, of all persons in society who are undeservedly stigmatized. I feel that I should write to you and say that it will be a great pity if the Bihar Government were to build a separate jail for prisoners with leprosy. It is a gratuitous measure whose only effect will be the strengthening of the public's prejudice against leprosy. On examination, it is likely to be found that 80 per cent at least of the prisoners with leprosy are non-infective, and therefore there is absolutely no reason why these should be separated from the other prisoners. With regard to the prisoners who suffer from infective leprosy, the main precautions are that the prisoner should not come into contact with healthy persons during night and should avoid direct close contact during the day. As leprosy is a mildly contagious disease, even its infective types, a prisoner with infective leprosy could be more easily dealt with than prisoners with other infective diseases. And yet, if the report is true, the Bihar Government is going to act on the fear of 'contamination'. The very use of this word indicates a mediaeval attitude to leprosy. It is a great pity that statements are being continually published to suggest that leprosy patients are contaminated in some way or other.

We in Madras, enthusiastically supported by Mr. Jagadisan, are doing all we can to protest against the discrimination of the patient suffering from leprosy on the grounds of social stigma. It is no more of a disgrace to get leprosy than to get measles, and not until the general public realize that it is not a rapidly spreading plague, as it is commonly believed to be, shall we make any advance in the control of leprosy. I am very grateful to hear from Mr. Jagadisan that you have now put leprosy work as an integral part of the nation's Constructive Programme. Your remark that the leprosy patient is as

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Dr. R.G. Cochrane". 11-9-1946.

much a part of society as the tallest of us moves me deeply. May I hope that India's leave will follow your footsteps and do the right thing by the leprosy patient?

It is to be hoped that the information about Bihar is not true and that, if it is, this letter of his will dissipate the fear of leprosy. "Superstitions die hard." In this land of faith and superstitions, both flourish abundantly. Hence, they often intermingle and the contamination of superstitions—a multitude—seems to have overlaid faith, so much so that it is hard to distinguish between the two. But my faith, which burns too bright for the army of superstitions to touch it, tells me that leprosy is no contamination. We must learn the laws governing infectious and contagious diseases and obey them.

Dr. Cochrane is, I believe, a medical philanthropist. He knows a great deal about leprosy and lepers. I what that the National Governments will not be wrong in accepting his judgment that, of all the diseases of the kind, leprosy is the least among them. In its virulent form, it deprives a patient of his limbs and defies ordinary medical treatment. What nature does is yet unknown. But the ordinary man does not need to bother about this difficult matter. Enough if he realizes that a leper is as much his brother as any other, and he is on no account to be shunned.

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

224. TIRED OF SATYAGRAHA?¹

News comes from Durban that a group of Indians has sprung up in South Africa who have lost faith in satyagraha. They cherish the dream that they can overthrow the rule of the White man there only by joining forces with the Negroes the coloured people, other Asiatics and European sympathizers and adopting violent means. The rumour, if there is any truth in it, is disturbing and a definite fly in the ointment. All, whether they believe in non-violence or not, should realize that Indians in South Africa gained world-wide esteem simply because, in spite of being a handful, they showed infinite capacity for suffering and did not, through losing their patience, resort to sabotage and violence. They learnt the wholesome lesson that true well-being

¹ The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-9-1946.

springs from suffering and that victory lies in unity. From my own experience, my firm advice to Indians in South Africa is that they should, on no account, be lured away into throwing aside the matchless weapon of satyagraha.

This does not, however, imply that they are not to accept the help of the coloured people, Negroes and any other sympathizers or that they will not help them in their need, should occasion arise. The only condition is that satyagraha should be their one and only weapon. If they go astray from the path of non-violence, they will conform to the description of the poor woman who as an Indian proverb goes, went in search of a son and succeeded in losing her husband!

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

225. *TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, SRI NARAYANA
DHARMA PARIPALANA*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

SECRETARY

WALLUVANAD SNDP

OTTAPALAM

EVERY GOOD ACT CARRIES ITS OWN BLESSINGS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

226. *TELEGRAM TO GANESH TRIPATHI*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

GANESH TRIPATHI
SECRETARY STEEL EMPLOYEES UNION
CAWNPORE
NO INTERVENTION FOR UNAUTHORIZED FAST.¹

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

227. *TELEGRAM TO MEHR CHAND KHANNA*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

MEHR CHAND KHANNA
MINISTER
PESHAWAR
MISS LESTER ARRIVING FRONTIER MAIL FRIDAY. INFORM DOCTOR
KHANSAHEB AND BADSHAH KHAN.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Ganesh Dutt, a worker of J. K. Iron and Steel Mills, had gone on a fast from September 1 to press his demand for increased bonus. He gave up the fast on September 12 on the persuasion of Congress workers.

228. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

DR. SUSHILABEHN
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

NO NOTICE HERE. EVERY THING THERE.

BAPU

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

229. LETTER TO DR. R. G. COCHRANE

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

DEAR DR. COCHRANE,

I have just read your letter which I am publishing in *Harijan*¹ and a copy of which I am sending to the Bihar Minister concerned. I suggest that you should send me a well-considered medical opinion, signed by as many medical men as possible. I have been carrying on correspondence with the Sind Ministers also with whom I have not been able to make much headway. Hence my suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

MISSIONARY MEDICAL COLLEGE
VELLORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹*Vide* "Leprosy and Contamination", 11-9-1946.

230. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. MADU

If you see only the faults in yourself and only the virtues in others you will advance fast, be happy and never experience sorrow. We have no right to expect anything from anyone. We are debtors and that is why we have been born. We are not creditors. Let this sink in your heart and the whole world will appear good to you. This is not mere pious advice but the surest way of making the stream of life flow smoothly.

Many kisses to Rasagulla.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 329

231. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter just now. I have already sent a wire informing everybody about the date of my arrival. It would be strange if you did not receive it. I cannot reach there before the 25th.

I have not so far been able to share the dictionary work with others. All the work is being done by Rajkumari and myself. She has to give to it 6 to 7 hours every week. It would be good if you could go on sending the words you select. For the present of course we can do even if you send nothing. We are managing somehow. But the words you can send without too much trouble can certainly be useful. But you should not take this to mean that you must send them at any cost.

As for Tarachand, ask him to send only what he can. I think

you won't get any help from him about the dictionary.

Sushila had written to me about Chandan's¹ illness. There has been no news since.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10975

232. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter before me. I like your suggestion, but who can have it implemented? The Ministers did meet but God knows what the outcome was. For my part, I am at the moment pursuing the Madras scheme because the Minister there tells me that he will do what I ask him to do. Let me see how things shape. I take it that you would have come for the A. I. S. A. meeting.

I hope you are in good health. Enclosed please find a letter for Lakshmi which you should read before passing it on to her. I am sending a copy of my letter to Narandas.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS ASAR
SABARMATI

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

233. LETTER TO LAKSHMI SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have preserved your letter of July 14. You ask me to show you the way but I don't think I can. Do as you think right. Go ahead

¹ Addressee's daughter-in-law, wife of Satish Kalelkar

along your own way. You have the land, you have the money and still you ask for help. This is something I don't like. I should like you not to take money from anybody and to preserve your self-respect. In my view a person who has money of his own and expects money from other places has bartered away his self-respect. I learnt this lesson when I was even younger than you are. I have conducted myself accordingly, and this is a thing that those who are regarded as my children as well as others should learn from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMIBEHN MARUTI
SABARMATI ASHRAM

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

234. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. What you think is correct. I shall write if I can think of something on the basis of what you say. I have the feeling that now is not the time for this kind of writing. However, if after thinking over it I feel that something can be written, I shall do so.

You yourself never say anything about your health. Dr. Jivaraj tells me that you are somewhat better. The rest you must be seeing in the papers.

Blessings from
BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
BOMBAY

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

235. *LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had your letter and the newspaper cuttings. You will see that I have made use of them. I shall be here till the 24th. Then off to Sevagram. Arun, Ila will be well. I also have your letter of 3-9-1946. You are not to worry about what will happen to Ila.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

AKOLA

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

236. *LETTER TO HARGOVIND GUPTA*

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

BHAI HARGOVIND GUPTA,

I had and still have a great regard for Ganesh Shankarji. Since Maithilisharanji is associated with the work it will be a literary accomplishment. But the true memorial to him will be if we generate in us a spirit of self-sacrifice even to the extent of laying down our lives.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARGOVIND GUPTA

GANESH SHANKAR HRIDAYATIRTH

CHIRGAON (JHANSI)

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

237. *UNCERTIFIED KHADI v. MILL CLOTH*¹

A Gujarati friend² asks :

Ever so many national organizations insist that not only should their staff be dressed in khadi, but that even books should be khadi-bound. Since certified khadi can only be had from the recognized bhandars on payment of a certain quota of yarn, they naturally resort to uncertified khadi. Is this right? Is not mill cloth preferable to uncertified khadi? Is not insistence on khadi that results in buying it from uncertified shops really a false pretence?

When, among other things, there is a dearth of khadi, it is improper to insist on its use for purposes of bookbinding, etc. When there was an abundance of khadi, it was I who recommended its use for all such purposes. The entire Congress Camp in Ahmedabad in 1921 was bedecked in khadi. Today it would be madness to attempt such a thing. Time and circumstances alter methods.

But I do not understand the writer's plea for mill cloth as opposed to uncertified khadi. What is uncertified khadi? Is it not hand-spun and hand-woven cloth though uncertified? That there may be fraud about it is another matter. The Charkha Sangh cannot guarantee cent per cent purity in even certified khadi. That nothing in this world is proof against deceit has been true throughout the ages. Drawbacks in uncertified khadi are well known. In it there is no fixity of wages to the spinners and the weavers. Those who sell it make what profits they like. Often do persons set up shops, merely to spite the Charkha Sangh Bhandars. Nevertheless, where there is no fraud, all cloth which is hand-spun and hand-woven must be called khadi. What a person spins and has woven into cloth for himself, is not certified in the legal sense and yet it is khadi in the highest and purest sense of the term. It would be a crime on that person's part to use mill cloth instead of the cloth made from the labour of his own hands.

The upshot is that exclusion of mill cloth must be maintained. Uncertified khadi should be avoided as far as possible, but where certified khadi is not available and the choice lies between mill cloth and uncertified home-spun preference should be given to the latter,

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-9-1946.

² Presumably Vithaldas Kothari; *vide* "Letter to Vithaldas Kothari", 9-9-1946.

assuming of course that it is pure khadi. You may condemn, if you like, as uncertified, cloth made out of the labour of one's own hands; but the fact remains that it is a purer production than certified khadi. And, if all span enough to have cloth woven for their requirements, what need would there then be for the Charkha Sangh? Heaven and earth would then ring with cries of victory to the Charkha Sangh.

NEW DELHI, September 12, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

238. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,

September 12, 1946

BHAI JIVANJI,

I glanced through *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* today. I was a little unhappy to see that, while *Harijanbandhu* has sixteen columns, *Harijan Sevak* has only eight. I don't understand the reason behind this. Maybe you were not able to cope with the Hindustani articles. If I go a little deeper into this, I can find out whether or not this guess is correct. But I don't propose to do so. I will say only this: that as I have already informed you, you should print only as much Hindustani matter as I send from here and whatever translations you require for *Harijanbandhu* should be made from Hindustani, never from English. Though you have capable translators there to translate from English into Gujarati, I do receive complaints from time to time. Hence the best course would be that I should send from here Hindustani and Gujarati translations from English. Or I shall send Hindustani from here and Gujarati you can do there. It should be child's play to translate from Hindustani into Gujarati. If, however, there are any complications even in this, let me know. We should receive no complaints about translation. If we follow this policy there will be no difference in size between *Harijan Sevak* and *Harijanbandhu*. Our ideal should be to have the same size for all the three. It will take us some time to reach this ideal, for many things have to be put across to foreign readers and that can be done only through English.

I have already written to you about the dictionary and, therefore,

I don't repeat it here. It will be all right if you give four pages every fortnight. One column contains nearly forty words, which means 320 words for eight columns. I shall be satisfied with that. I shall not keep you waiting for it till the last. I hope to supply it in good time.

When I had dictated the above I looked again at Pyarelal's suggestion and found that the Urdu and Hindi editions of *Harijan Sevak* are not identical word for word. I must of course admit my negligence, namely, that I don't go through all the issues. Certainly I don't compare them. I did so today out of curiosity and discovered this. Pyarelal tried to put up some defence for this difference but he has not so far been able to justify it. Let us see if he can. He told me, however, that the Persian script occupies more space. This I knew and, therefore, I started looking into the issues and inspected the issues of September 1. On doing so, I found that the Hindi edition had eight pages whereas Urdu had sixteen and also that Urdu had nineteen articles and Hindi had thirteen. I will be glad if you explain to me the reason for this difference. If I go further into it, I may discover something more. I shall see what I myself can do. But I do expect it of you that you will not attempt anything beyond your capacity. You will then be able to do full justice to what you do.

You did very well in sending me the two complaints regarding the dictionary. If there are any other complaints, send them too. If there are any mistakes, it won't be difficult to rectify them. I will procure a copy of the dictionary which you have mentioned. I have told Brijkrishna about it.

Not revised.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9970. Also C. W. 6944. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

239. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am inclined to think that the cost of the stamp was borne by M[unshi]. He is a lawyer of the first rank and at present he earns maybe 15 to 20 thousand rupees a month. Be that as it may, he is of a generous nature. Perhaps Gadodiaji will remit the cost of the stamp. I have not met him. You are at liberty to feel that the award is against you. But I do not feel so. I had written to you that all that should have been in your petition was not there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 368-9

240. *LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI*

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAISHRI MORARJI,

Nagadi Sheth of South Africa brings you this note. This gentleman was an active participant in the struggle that I carried on in South Africa. Please see him.

BAPU

SJT. MORARJI DESAI
MINISTER

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

241. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter. I understand your point. That your boys and girls will learn to read, write and correctly understand Hindi and Urdu—even this will be good.

But I cannot understand why, even in Bikaner, you cannot get all the work done in Hindustani. We shall talk about it if we have occasion to meet. I appreciate English in its own place.

BAPU

DEWAN, BIKANER

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

242. LETTER TO MOHAMMED YUNUS

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. There was nothing the matter with me except for a mild cold, which too has now gone. Do not worry. Who can harm a person as long as he is protected by God or keep him when He wants to take him away ?

All that you have written about Calcutta is shameful. Joint electorates are a noble solution, I agree, but how to bring it about remains to be seen.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB MOHAMMED YUNUS
(OF BIHAR)

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

243. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI MOTI BABU,

I could not reply to you earlier owing to pressure of work. Do please forgive me. If the Prabartak Sangh would go along with the A. I. S. A. you should strictly follow the rules of the latter. That would please me very much. But so long as the Sangh's views on khadi are at variance with mine it would be best to work separately, though in a spirit of friendship.

I appreciate the sentiments you have expressed with regard to khadi. The policy of the A. I. S. A. is inspired by the same sentiments and its experience in the field is extensive and, if one may say so, unique. I would therefore urge that you or some other representative of the Sangh should have a talk with a representative of the Bengal branch of the A. I. S. A. and do as seems proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHITTAGONG

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

244. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH MITTAL

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI OM PRAKASH MITTAL,

Swamiji gave me your letter. It would be wrong on the part of the Chamars to refuse to remove dead animals. In my view we should all do the work. We cannot oblige anyone to do a job.

A rise in wages is always to be welcomed. But what I say is of no significance. The right decision can be arrived at only after

hearing both the sides. All the committees can jointly decide on the right course.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI OM PRAKASH MITTAL
MOREGANJ
SAHARANPUR

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

245. *LETTER TO RANDHIR SINGH*

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

KUMARSHRI RANDHIR SINGH,

I have your letter. I do not think what you say about the existing condition is correct. Yes, I would certainly say that if zamindars and jagirdars devoted themselves to the service of their people no one would be able to touch them. After all, Maharana Pratap Became what he was because he always was a servant of his people.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

246. *A NOTE*

[On or after *September 12, 1946*]¹

It has been reported from Durban that your name is being freely used in support of a violent struggle in place of the present non-violent campaign being carried on in S.A. and the association of the Negroes, coloureds, other Asiatics and presently some Europeans in the violent effort is being sought. I would like you to give your reaction to the rumour about yourself.

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

¹ The note is scribbled on a sheet bearing the date September 12, 1946.

247. DISCONTINUE IT

Actionary that *Harijan* has been publishing already exists and asks why there should be another. If the question has substance I should think that *Harijan's* labour is wasted. If such a work exists it will cause me surprise and pain that none of my co-workers told me about it or themselves knew of its existence. I am making enquiries and have asked for a copy of the dictionary that has been mentioned. If I find I have made a mistake I shall set it right and save the labour.

Another friend, writing in English, has said the same thing and added that my Hindustani is in fact Urdu and it is making me more and more unpopular in the Hindi world. The same is true of the Urdu world, only for the opposite reason. The charge here is that in the name of Hindustani I am introducing into Urdu words from Hindi, that is Sanskrit. I welcome both charges. My Hindustani is neither Urdu nor Hindi. It is the mingling of the two. The Saraswati that is to flow from the confluence of these two is still invisible. Scholars tell me that at one time it had become visible and then it disappeared. Be that as it may. The idea behind Hindustani Prachar is that the two languages, which have the same grammar but derive their vocabulary from two different sources should not remain separate but should mingle and flow as one stream. Whether the effort will succeed or not will depend upon the zeal of those working for it. If they put some vigour in their efforts they will not go in vain. In the end of course success is in the hands of God. And where He is the Doer and the Destroyer, what cause is there for grief and sorrow?

And is the purpose of the effort to gain popularity? A public servant is not flattered by praise nor frightened by censure. He who swells with applause and droops with criticism cannot render service. The reward of the worker lies in the work he does. I would therefore request my critics that, rather than criticize me, they should help in this noble cause and enlarge and enrich the language written and spoken by the masses of such a vast country as India. Then both the sister languages Hindi and Urdu will shine and India will advance. It will not offend God if I call Him Khuda or Ishwar and my knowledge of that Supreme Power will increase. What quarrel can one have with

a person who respects both the languages and wants to unite the two?

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

248. GUJARAT—PROUD OR INSANE?¹

Who would not like Gujarat to be described as proud? One might in jest also describe Gujarat as insane. At the time of writing Gujarat appears not to be proud but insane in the proper sense of the word. Shri Parikshitlal is a servant of Harijans but how can he cope with the mad Gujarat? Those who are untouchables while alive remain untouchables when dead. On the cremation ground at any rate all should be one. Once the dead body is reduced to ashes any impurity in it is also burnt up. Nevertheless Harijans have not the right to burn their dead on the cremation ground. It required much effort to persuade the mahajan of Navasari to let an old Harijan be cremated on the common cremation ground. How could it be called a favour? What is there in it to be pleased about? "In a treeless country the castor-oil plant is honoured." Similarly when a Harijan body was allowed to be cremated on the cremationground, the event was eulogized. It was justified. The result was good.

Then there is another case, which is wholly tragic. Shri Parikshitlal has furnished me the name and other particulars of the village which I shall not give here.² The reprehensible part of it is that when cattle die of an epidemic the Harijans are held responsible. The so-called *savarna* Hindus do not even bother to see the obvious cause of the mortality among the livestock. When there are rains grass comes up. It is infested with insects. The starved cattle go mad at the sight of the grass and devour it, insects and all. Then they sicken and die. The cause is thus obvious and Harijans' cattle suffer no less. And yet the Harijans are held responsible and they are subjected to abuses and beatings by the caste Hindus. Such is the woeful tale the letter before me contains. I wish my words could reach the villagers concerned.

Now that the reformers hold the reins of the Government, the

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946, under the title "Proud or Insane".

² *Vide* however "Persecution of Harijans", 6-3-1946

villages can be rid of much of the ignorance if the officials will make the effort. If the mahajans shed their superstition, if the Harijans wake up and the Government and Harijan Sevaks do their duty their is a chance that Gujarat can be freed of this evil.

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1946
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

249. *TELEGRAM TO K. S. DESHPANDE*

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

DESHPANDE¹

74 NARAYAN PETH

POONA

CONTEMPLATED OPENING OF TEMPLE GOOD WORK DESERVING
IMITATION WIDE SCALE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

250. *TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM*²

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

JAIRAMDASJI

CARE HINDUSTAN

KARACHI

SEPARATE ELECTORATES IMPOSSIBLE. BUT RESERVATION CERTAIN SEATS
SUBJECT TO MERIT DESIRABLE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Krishnaji Shivaram Deshpande of Sri Ram Mandir, Thakurdwar, Bombay

² Presumably this was in connection with the memorandum submitted by the Sind Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation demanding representation for Scheduled Castes on the local bodies. A similar telegram was also sent to the Sind Harijan Sevak Sangh.

251. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,¹

I send this letter to you in English. So far as I am aware you are a bankrupt concern if what Ramprasad has told me is true. And it is altogether wrong to get a good worker and to expect him to be a collector of funds. I should like to talk to Balasahib² about this. I take it that Bapa also is in this concern. Ramprasad tells me that your Association is under debt. He cannot be of any use in wiping it off. He can be of inestimable use so far as management of the Association is concerned and that too among the Adivasis. All other difficulties that he has mentioned can be easily waived. He has said so to me but I know that he must not be used for collecting funds. And please know that neither you nor members of your Association are in any way obliged to entertain Ramprasad's services.

As to Ramanama, we must talk about it. You cannot have it mechanically. It is not like a quinine pill or sun-bath. It stands on its own and by itself. I can understand and appreciate your objection to Ahuramazda because of the bad associations. Hence it is that we describe God as long suffering and patient beyond human endurance. Just now you must swear by your injections and pills although you are a trustee for nature cure.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

² B. G. Kher

252. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I will write and send something for the *Rentiabaras*.¹ It will be published in the *Harijanbandhu* of the 22nd². I will, therefore, send you a copy of what I write.

You must meet the demand for the equipment. There are two ways of securing the wood. You should collect or buy up old and disused furniture from people. The other way is to use the minimum quantity of wood in making the equipment. The box-charkha is a development of the Gandiva, and the latter can be set up on anywhere if you have but the two wheels. For instance, it can be set up a desk or on a parapet and one can easily spin on it standing. At any rate one can spin sitting. I had tried all these methods in Yeravda jail and found them suitable. In some jails there are cement platforms, covered with wooden boards, to sleep on. I used to place the Gandiva on the board. Then I had tried and made a charkha from deodar strips obtained from packing cases. I think I had even brought it to Sabarmati. Ultimately we have to work in the villages for the poor and should, as far as possible, acquire even in cities only such things as can be introduced in villages. Think over the matter from this point of view.

I have written to Kishorelal about a man. I have received about five names. We cannot trouble Mavalankar. And Saralabehn is ill.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

² Vide "Charkha Jayanti", 14-9-1946.

253. *LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA*

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

As usual Narandas has asked for someone in connection with Charkha Jayanti. He is asking for Saraladevi Ambalal. The other is Mavalankar. I think Mavalankar cannot go, nor should he be bothered with such functions. You should therefore find someone and send him. Dada Dharmadhikari, Gopalrao, Shriman, Janakibehn, Kaka—send any of these. These names are not in any order of preference or otherwise. I have dictated them as they have occurred to me.

Chimanlal writes that your health continues to be weak. But what is the point of lamenting over it? I get letters from Parikshitlal now and then. Both the incidents that he has narrated are painful. That we have to launch an agitation even for cremating the body of a Harijan in the cremation ground is a matter of shame.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM

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

254. *LETTER TO ANANTRAM*

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. Have a good time in the hospital. Do some service as well. Go to the Ashram only when you are fully calm. Ramanama can work wonders. You have to prove it. Who will believe one's just saying it?

What if I did not come to the jail? How can I find time for such things?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi: S. G. 134

255. LETTER TO K. S. DESHPANDE

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

BHAI DESHPANDE,

Sushilabehn told me about your father's death. I will not express grief. He was a very virtuous and devout man. He has left behind a great legacy for you. You must add to it and bring glory to your work of service.

A wire has been sent regarding the Harijan temple.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TATYA DESHPANDE
74 NARAYAN PETH
POONA

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

256. COLLECTIVE PRAYER

Q. You believe in mass prayer. It congregational worship as practised today a true prayer? In my opinion, it is a degrading thing and therefore dangerous. Jesus said: "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, but enter into thine inner chamber and having shut thy door pray to the Father which is in secret." Most people in a crowd are inattentive and unable to concentrate. Prayer then becomes hypocrisy. The *yogi* is aware of this. Should not the masses, therefore, be taught self-examination which is the true prayer?

A. I hold that congregational worship held by me is true prayer for a collection of men. The convener is a believer and no hypocrite. If he were one, the prayer would be tainted at the source. The men and women who attend do not go to any orthodox prayer house from which they might have to gain an earthly end. The bulk of them have no contact with the convener. Hence it is presumed, they do not come for show. They join in because they believe that they somehow or other, acquire merit by having common prayer. That most or some persons are inattentive or unable to concentrate is very true. That merely shows that they are beginners. Neither inattention nor inability to concentrate are any proof of hypocrisy or falsity. It would be, if

they pretended to be attentive when they were not. On the contrary, many have often asked me what they should do, when they are unable to concentrate.

The saying of Jesus quoted in the question is wholly inapplicable. Jesus was referring to individual prayer and to hypocrisy underlying it. There is nothing in the verse quoted against collective prayer. I have remarked often enough that without individual prayer collective prayer is not of much use. I hold that individual prayer is a prelude to collective, as the latter, when it is effective, must lead to the individual. In other words, when a man has got to the stage of heart prayer, he prays always, whether in the secret or in the multitude.

I do not know what the questioner's *yogi* does or does not. I know that the masses when they are in tune with the Infinite, naturally resort to self-examination. All real prayer must have that end.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

257. NOTES

BLANK MINUTE BOOKS

A student writes :

It has become a fashion for all to pose as political workers. And politics consist in speeches and participation in election campaigns. You would be pained to know that the minute books of Congress Committees are entirely blank, except for proceedings of annual sittings. It is all power politics. Students also get drawn into its vortex. What is your ideal of a political worker?

I have all along stressed the need for constructive work and to that end, I drew up a list of items for the guidance of all workers. I hold that if the constructive programme were worked with vigour and understanding, the result would be far more than mere political swaraj. Speeches and election campaigns would be almost unnecessary if our workers established the Congress in the hearts of the people through service. Then there will be more service than power and the weekly or fortnightly meetings of Congress committees will be filled with a recital of the activities and achievements of committees in the wide field of work.

IS IT NOT COWARDICE ?

Q. Non-violence in your opinion is not cowardice, but it is a form of resistance to injustice. You have admitted that it is wrong to arrest and imprison innocent persons which civil resisters are. And you have cheerfully courted arrest and imprisonment. Is this not inconsistent and cowardly?

A. Evidently you do not know the working of non-violence. An unjust law is itself a species of violence. Arrest for its breach is more so. Now the law of non-violence says that violence should be resisted not by counter-violence but by non-violence. Any breach of a law carries with it a penalty. It does not become unjust merely because I say so. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is unjust. The State has the right to enforce it, whilst it is on the statute-book. I must resist it non-violently. This I do by breaking the law and by peacefully submitting to arrest and imprisonment. I call such behaviour an act of bravery to the extent required. That imprisonment for a man like me today carries no suffering with it is irrelevant, if it may be assumed that ordinary prison-treatment would make no difference in my mental condition. Thus non-resistance in the case under discussion is an essential condition of non-violence, not a symptom of cowardice. Resistance in the shape of refusing to be arrested etc., on the other hand, will in this case be certainly blustering, thoughtless violence and might be classified as cowardly brag.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

258. CHARKHA JAYANTI¹

What is known as Charkha Jayanti is not Gandhi Jayanti. It is true it has become linked with my birthday, but the reason for this is clear. Formerly the charkha bore no relation to freedom. If anything it stood for the slavery that lay behind it. For a crust of bread our women had to go through the drudgery of spinning. They span and a few cowries or pies were thrown to them each day. I remember watching, in my childhood, the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot throw to the

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946.

poor on the *Shili Satam*¹ day. I considered this throwing of money a game and it was fun to watch the game. I can imagine how, much in the same way, cowries must have been thrown to women spinners for their yarn and how greedily they must have pounced on them.

It was in 1908, in South Africa, that the idea came to me that if the poor of India were to be delivered from serfdom, we would have to learn to look upon the charkha, and the yarn produced on the charkha, not as a symbol of slavery but as a symbol of freedom and plenty. The person who to my knowledge understood this most fully was Narandas Gandhi. From this he understood the significance of the Charkha Jayanti. Before the date *Bhadarva Vad 12* became associated with the charkha neither he nor anyone else, to my knowledge, had celebrated that day as my birthday. I was well known among the people in South Africa but I do not recollect anyone there celebrating my birthday. It was only here that the charkha was associated with it and Charkha Jayanti began to be observed on the day. It was then thought that my birthday according to the Western Calendar should also be observed and so two days, namely *Bhadarva Vad 12* and October 2, came to be observed as Charkha Jayanti. Narandas took, as he still does, a leading part in all this. As I write this I can remember the observances in Rajkot on *Bhadarva Vad 12* and October 2. But Charkha Jayanti will be truly observed when the charkha, which is the symbol of freedom and ahimsa, hums in every home. What can the observance signify if a few poor women, or even a million poor women, spin to earn a pittance? What great work will have been accomplished? This is possible even under a tyrannical regime and is indeed the normal thing in the capitalist system. The doles given to the poor help in sustaining the affluence of the millionaires, even if such doles be in the form of wages.

The observance will have meaning only when both the rich and the poor understand that all created alike by God, that all must work to attain glory and that the freedom of all will be protected not by guns but by the ball of yarn, not by violence but by non-violence.

If we consider the atmosphere of the world today, what I have

¹ The seventh day of the moon in the month of *Shravan*, observed as the day of *Shitala*, the goddess of smallpox

said above will sound ludicrous. But if we think deeply, this alone is right; this alone is true for all time. For the present it is only devotees of the charkha like Narandas who show this faith. Let us all observe Charkha Jayanti and October 2 in a similar spirit.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

259. AN APPEAL TO CORRESPONDENTS¹

Some good people waste money on sending wires, asking me to secure seats on the Interim Government, others regarding strikes in various places, yet others on matters of fasting. To all these I would say that they not only take unnecessary trouble and waste money but pile work on an over-worked group of co-workers and helpers, without securing needed help from me. I have no wish to influence the National Cabinet in the choice of co-ministers and I hold that it would be wrong on my part or anybody else's to do so. The members of the Cabinet should be left undisturbed in their choice if they are to render national service in an efficient and honest manner. In matters of strikes and fasts, my views are well known. These should give sufficient guidance when and where required. It is impossible and improper for me to give opinion on incomplete and one-sided data. And I have no time for studying individual cases. I have only limited capacity left in me. I assure correspondents that it is being exercised to the full extent without needing further additions.

NEW DELHI, September 15, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

260. VILLAGE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Kini has been a secretary in the education department in Mysore. He has sent a very long article for *Harijan*. His contention is that India is poor and has remained so because the Government has kept the poor of the villages away from right education. He believes that the existing colleges and universities in our cities cannot serve our

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

villages because the education imparted in these is designed to advance western influence and it is difficult to introduce education that will be of use to the villages.

Dr. Kini is of the opinion that there should be village universities for the villagers where adults also can study.

Dr. Kini writes to say that the village universities should provide instruction in agriculture, horticulture, village sericulture, animal husbandry, poultry farming, bee-keeping, fishery, khadi industry, rural sanitation and hygiene, rural electrical engineering, rural roads and transport, rural home economics, rural pottery, rural economics, rural sociology, rural reconstruction, rural trade, rural bullion and banking, etc. If all these subjects were taught in the villages as sciences, the writer feels that the face of rural India would be changed. The villages then would not have to look to the cities for help but on the contrary the cities would have to look to the villages for help.

I have just given a gist of Dr. Kini's article. If the Central and the Provincial cabinets accept his suggestions a great thing can be achieved. To give his proposals a concrete shape, Dr. Kini should consult Dr. Zakir Husain and the Aryanayakums. I personally believe that even urban universities can be changed.

NEW DELHI, September 15, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

261. LETTER TO JOHN MATTHAI¹

NEW DELHI,

September 15, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith my file as it is. I see that some papers are missing. But what I send would give you what you need.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOHN MATTHAI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ An economist, then Minister for Transport and Railways in the Interim Government

262. *LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI*

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

DEAR SISTER,¹

Your letter. You have done well to join the C. S. P.²

Who suggested that you showed off or did anything to please anybody? If you did, you [would] not be a *dandi* that you are. Cheer up!

Love.

KHURSHED NAOROJI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

263. *LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI*

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I approve of the idea of giving eight columns of the dictionary every fortnight. You may, therefore, do whatever is convenient for you. The readers will probably find eight columns more convenient because it will be easier to preserve and bind them. It is for you to consider and decide what to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9971. Also C. W. 6945. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

¹ The source has "Vahala Behn" in Hindi.

² Congress Socialist Party

264. *LETTER TO ANNADA SHANKER CHAUDHARY*

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI ANNADA,

I got your letter. Since we now expect the salt tax to be lifted, I shall not publish your article. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANNADA BABU
924 COLLEGE STREET MARKET
CALCUTTA

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

265. *LETTER TO DHARMANAND KOSAMBI*

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI DHARMANANDJI,

Swami Satyanandji says that you are almost fasting. Please do not do so. It would be good to take four times a day as much of cow's milk as you easily can with half as much juice of some fruit mixed with it. If you wish to take some vegetable with it, such as lettuce, radish, gourd or carrot, it should be taken in boiled form. This too would be a kind of fast. You may do what work of service you can. I shall be glad to have a wire that you have accepted my advice.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹*Vide* "Telegram to Satyanand", 18-9-1946.

266. *LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI*

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

We do not lend glitter to gold; similarly the name *gurukul*¹ also does not need any embellishment. Forget about the name and such other things. All noble deeds carry their own blessings. Remember this and stop begging for blessings from others.

ASHOK ASHRAM

P. O. KALSI (DIST. DEHRA DUN)

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

267. *LETTER TO HUNNAR*

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI HUNNAR,

I had your letter. There has been some delay in replying as I was in correspondence with Jivanji². I should indeed like to have you with me as I do not have many Urdu hands who can work with speed. Moreover, Pandit Sunderlal has spoken to me about you at length. However, Jivanji says that these days he is short of Urdu help. Therefore as long as you are required there you should keep quiet and so will I.

SHRI HUNNAR

NAVAJIVAN OFFICE

AHMEDABAD

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

¹ A residential school run on traditional lines

² Jivanji D. Desai

268. LETTER TO SYED RAZA ALI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. Thanks. It was a misunderstanding on your part. It was wrongly reported in the papers. I shall not bother you with arguments. And I don't have the time.

RAZA ALI
RAZA LODGE
MORADABAD

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

269. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

Gandhiji said that the sight of 144 of them attending the spinning classes² daily in the fullness of faith, made him hug the hope that one day the whole of India would be clad in khadi. When he started the spinning revival in 1918, India was buying 60 crores worth of foreign cloth excluding Indian mill cloth. This was the largest single import. Next came sugar with 18 crores and then hardware with 7 crores. Today, with the inflated prices the price of all mill cloth, indigenous and foreign, was probably 300 crores. Gandhiji asked his audience to ponder and realize what wealth this would mean to India, if 300 crores worth of cloth was produced by their own hands in the villages. There was a veritable mint of gold for them and if khadi became universal, the villages would rise to unknown heights. Today our masses were poverty-stricken, without the lustre of hope or intelligence in their eyes. The pure hands of the spinners could create this miracle for them and everyone could help. They should have understanding hearts and seeing eyes to detect the beauty in khaddar even if it is coarse and not be allured by mill finery which could never clothe their nakedness in the true sense of the term. The only way to clothe their nakedness and drive away hunger was for them to grow their own food and make their own cloth.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly letter". A report of the speech was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 16-9-1946.

² Under the eleven-day spinning course organized by Kanu Gandhi

If this happy consummation could be achieved, the eyes of the whole world would be turned towards India. Today everything seemed to be going wrong in this land. He referred to the story that had appeared in the Press of the mad gunmen in Bombay who caused death of several innocent people. This shameful news must have been flashed over the radio to the world and they must hang their heads in sorrow. But, said Gandhiji, if they would only listen to him, all would be well with India. If all purified themselves and all thought of themselves as Indians, then they would have succeeded in learning the true lesson of the charkha.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

270. TALK WITH A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY¹

NEW DELHI,

[Before *September 16, 1946*]

If I were a dictator, religion and State would be separate. I swear by my religion. I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The State has nothing to do with it.² The State would look after your secular welfare, health, communications, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody's personal concern!

You must watch my life, how I live, eat, sit, talk, behave in general. The sum total of all those in me is my religion.

Asked which movement, e. g., women's, political, scientific or religious, would have had the most far-reaching influence in the world of tomorrow and would be considered 50 years hence as having had the greatest impact on world affairs as a whole and for the greatest good of mankind, he said it was wrong to bracket religious movement with the rest. He said :

It is the religious movement that will dominate the future. It would do so today but it does not, for religion has been reduced to a Saturday or a Sunday affair; it has to be lived every moment of one's life. Such religion, when it comes, will dominate the world.

Q. Do you feel there is any special significance in the increasing number and magnitude of labour strikes, especially in India of late? What do you think will be the outcome of this labour trouble in India?

A. Strikes have today become a universal plague. there are

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 16-9-1946

² The missionary had asked whether in free India religion would be separate from the State.

strikes everywhere, America and England not excepted. But in India they have a special significance. We are living under an unnatural condition. As soon as the lid is removed and there is a crevice letting in the fresh air of freedom, there will be an increasing number of strikes. The fundamental reason for this spreading strike fever is that life here as elsewhere is today uprooted from its basis, the basis of religion, and what an English writer has called 'cash nexus' has taken its place. And that is a precarious bond. But even when the religious basis is there, there will be strikes, because it is scarcely conceivable that religion will have become for all the basis of life. So there will be attempts at exploitation on the one hand and strikes on the other. But these strikes will then be of a purely non-violent character. Such strikes never do harm to anyone. It was such a strike perhaps that brought General Smuts to his knees. "If you had hurt an Englishman," said Jan Smuts, "I would have shot you, even deported your people. As it is, I have put you in prison and tried to subdue you and your people in every way. But how long can I go on like this when you do not retaliate?" And so he had to come to terms with a mere coolie on behalf of coolies as all Indians were then called in South Africa.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

271. POOR OR SMALL COUNTRIES

Shri Chandrashankar, basing himself on well-known English writers, has very ably described for *Harijan* the plight of the small countries during war time.¹ I give here the gist of it. The Gujarati readers are not going to benefit much by its translation. What will they gain by knowing the names of English writers? It will be enough if we know what views eminent writers of contemporary Europe hold on war.

They say that a time has come when only big and wealthy countries can fight a war. They have the money and the armed forces. The big nations either swallow up the small nations or wipe them out. Besides, the small nations are not able to manufacture armaments. They buy them from big nations and have to procure even spare parts from them. In the result small nations end up by becoming

¹ Chandrashankar Shukla's article "What Can Poor Nations Do?" appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-46.

subservient to big nations.

Very often, whether they wish it or not, small nations are forced to buy arms from big nations. For example, when a big nation owes money to a small nation, it repays neither in cash nor in goods but in arms. Accepting such arms has only one implication for a small nation, namely, that it has become a vassal of the big nation.

The writers conclude that the time has come when small nations cannot have independent existence. They may well believe that triumph will not be of truth but of those who have the arms, the money and the bombs. But if we have faith, we will proclaim that in the end truth will prevail, never untruth. Experience also teaches this.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

272. CATTLE WEALTH¹

Mirabehn writes that India cannot survive without cows and bullocks. In the war vast numbers perished and vast sums of money went down the drain. But the greatest loss was the destruction of the cattle wealth. Lakhs of cows and bullocks were slaughtered by the army for food. Breeding cattle requires about five years. Something can be done about it if the country wakes up right now. This work requires knowledge, incessant effort and assistance from the Central and Provincial governments. Can we hope for it?

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

¹ According to the source this was written in Hindi, but the Hindi version is not available. This appeared under the heading "Notes".

273. RAMA THE SON OF DASHARATHA¹

An Arya Samajist writes :

How can the Rama whom you believe to be undying, be the Rama who is the son of Dasharatha and the husband of Sita? Tormented by the doubt, I do join your prayers but take no part in singing the *Ramdhun*. This irks me for you say that everyone should join in singing and you are right. Could you not so modify the *Ramdhun* that all can join in it.

I have already explained what I mean by everyone. It means everyone who can join heartily and sing in unison. The others should remain silent. But this is of small importance. The more important question is how Dasharatha's son can be imagined as undying. Tulsidas himself has raised the question and answered it. Such questions cannot be answered by the intellect or to the satisfaction of the intellect. This is a matter of the heart and the heart alone knows the ways of the heart. I first worshipped Rama as Sita's Lord but, as realization and experience grew, my Rama became undying and all-pervasive. This means that He continued to be Sita's Lord but the content of that description was enlarged. This is how the world goes on. The Rama of the man who conceives him merely as Dasharatha's son cannot be all-pervasive. But to the man for whom Rama is all-pervasive, Dasharatha also becomes all-pervasive. It may be said that this is all arbitrary, "to each man according to his faith". But I see no other way. If all religions are essentially one, we have to harmonize them. Today they are kept separate and that is why we kill each other. When we are tired of religion, we become atheists and then our ego alone is left and nothing else, not even God. But when we acquire true understanding, the ego perishes and God alone remains. Rama then is and is not the son of Dasharatha, the Lord of Sita, the brother of Bharata and Lakshmana. All honour then to those who not believing in Rama, the son of Dasharatha, still join the prayers. This is not rationalism. I have merely outlined what I do and what I believe.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 22-9-1946

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946.

274. TRACTORS v. BULLOCKS¹

Under this heading Mirabehn has written an article for *Harijan*. Since it merits consideration I give a gist of it below :

Some people say that there should be no mechanical ploughs or tractors. They require large fields. In the long run the soil is ruined as it does not get cow-dung manure and also the cattle are rendered useless. Mirabehn admits that there is substance in the argument.

But in reply she says that in U. P. alone there are 79 lakh acres of fallow land. Almost all the provinces have such fallow land. It is difficult to plough such land with the help of bullocks and even if it was done it would take years to bring it under cultivation. So she says that to start with such land should be broken with tractors. This can be done immediately. For the rest bullocks should be used. We would thus be making a legitimate and limited use of tractors and this would cause no harm. She agrees that using tractors permanently would be harmful. Also she says the tractors are imported from abroad and trained personnel are needed to operate them. Besides tractors require other implements. At the moment our country is not ready for that and it should never be.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 29-9-1946

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

275. *LETTER TO RUKMINI ARUNDALE*

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. What would you have me write? Basantibehn¹ had excelled me in many fields not one. I had become her devotee before you were born. Isn't it 60 years now? Wouldn't it suffice to publish just this?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI RUKMINIDEVI
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR

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

276. *LETTER TO JAMES HENRY COUSINS*

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

DEAR COUSINS,

In the midst of my preoccupations I mistook your letter for Rukmini Devi's and this I did in spite of the fact that you had mentioned Mrs. Cousins. My love to you both. Please take my P. C. to Rukmini Devi² as the contribution of a humble devotee of the late Dr. Annie Besant. That we had political differences as well as perhaps others did not affect my devotion to her many gifts.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Dr. Annie Besant

² *Vide* the preceding item.

277. LETTER TO S. A. WAIZ

September 16, 1946

BHAI WAIZ,¹

I have your letter. Indians abroad—*Pardesvasi Hindi. Pravasi* is not correct. It means travelling or traveller. “Abroad” is not given in the *Harijan* Dict., because perhaps it is common.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. A. WAIZ

I. I. C. A.

SOHRAB HOUSE

235 HORNBY R[OA]D

BOMBAY FORT

From a photostat: G. N. 7940

278. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,

September 16, 1946

CHI. SILLY MADU,

I got your silly letter. Even so I find it sweet. You are as silly as ever. With Shriman looking after all your affairs, how are you ever going to be wise? Kamalnayan has immersed himself in business running into lakhs. The sisters are busy with their families. What is so strange about his going his own way? Don't mind Savitri leaving. Enjoy yourself and be happy. Leave all to Rama—even Kamalnayan. Nothing is going to happen to him as long as God protects him. Don't worry about anything.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 329

¹ The superscription is in Hindi. So are the first sentence and the words italicized in the text.

279. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur read out to me the report of your speech published in yesterday's *Dawn*. If it is true I am sorry that a competent *maulvi* like you should spread such false rumours. I have never, even in my thoughts, been inimical to Urdu. In South Africa as well as here I have always tried and am still trying to blend Hindi and Urdu. That it may be regarded as a mistake on my part is a different matter. But I am no one's enemy. It was I who first raised the issue of Urdu in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

I am not writing this for the sake of argument but to remove the misunderstanding if possible.

Your letter has come but I have not yet been able to reach it.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI ABDUL HAQ

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

280. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

When the charkha class is in progress, all else appears insignificant to me. For in every thread drawn I see Rama. I see swaraj in it. The thought of 20 crores of our people spinning fills me with boundless joy. How long it will be before that number of people take to spinning is another matter. But not to believe this possible will only show our ignorance and lack of faith. Is it impossible for the whole or even half of the population of the country to spin for half an hour everyday? If we cannot make even this small sacrifice for the country, what can we be worth? Is it so very much to ask? From the yarn that

will be spun we can have enough khadi to clothe ourselves. I appeal to all to spin.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 17-9-1946

281. TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI

September 17, 1946

J. C. KUMARAPPA

AIVIA, WARDHA

YOU MAY ARRANGE ANY DATE FROM THIRD TO SEVENTH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

282. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

September 17, 1946

KRISHNADAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

WARDHA

YOU CAN ARRANGE ANY DATE BETWEEN SEVEN AND THIRTEEN CONSULTATION KASTURBA TRUST.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

283. *LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH*

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,¹

I am in the Harijan Colony today. It is 3 a. m. As I have woken up, I have started writing letters. I am writing to Sharda. She has fallen ill again. Never mind if Shakaribehn has gone away. There was no alternative. It seems now her time will be divided between Surat and Sevagram. Do only that which can be done well. It will be good if you do not over-burden yourself. I hope Pushpa is doing well.

A good many persons seem to be ill there. They should all get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10652

284. *LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA*

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I am writing this at 3 a. m. I woke up early and so I am writing important letters. You never quite recover fully. I do not like it. Neither Sevagram nor Surat suits you. It is good that Shakaribehn has gone there. Keep her as long as you wish. I want that all three of you² should get well. I am here till the 24th at least.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10069. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

¹ This is in Devanagari script.

² Addressee's husband and their son

285. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I am glad you have written a long full letter after many days.

I agree with your view as regards students. But who is to bell the cat? Lilavati Munshi has discussed at length the question whether they should give one year or more for public work. But who will persuade the students! You yourself are weak. Besides, you think too much and hence nothing tangible is achieved by you. Others do not think, nor do they influence students. Those who can influence students believe in the kind of work you write about and all of them honestly hold the opinions they express. Such is the prevailing confusion. And it is not confined to this country but prevails throughout the world as one can see from the papers. Now tell me, what we should do.

What you write about the happenings in Bombay and other places is correct. But the idea you have expressed appears to me to be rather immature. If there were two parties, one calm and the other agitated, I have no doubt that the former would stand to gain in the absence of the police and the military. This you can say, that no one barring me would carry on without the police or the military. Mine is a voice in the wilderness. Indeed I need and I yearn for clearer vision, greater penance and greater courage. But can it all come for the yearning? Isn't it a fact that "the fifth and the last factor is the Unseen"¹? This is the truth. Let us therefore cling to devout faith and hope for human effort and Divine grace. The effort should be sincere. I can elaborate further. But where do I have the time? Sushila will write about what she was given to read. I don't let her have much time either. If I can organize things better or if they settle down themselves, I shall get some more time. There is much work to do. God's will be done.

Are you keeping well? How are Santok and Radha?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ *Bhagavad Gita* xviii, 14; the other four being the field, the doer, the various means and several different operations

286. *LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

You must be well. It will not do to fall ill. There is a letter from Manudi. I have kept it for you. She will be coming. Jaisukhlal will be coming too. Do not fall to the temptation of abandoning your work there and coming here. I would certainly be happy if you could come. Jivraj has examined me. I felt fine. The blood-pressure is 160/98.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRISUSHILABEHN
KASTURBA HOSPITAL
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

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

287. *LETTER TO GANGA A. HINGORANI*

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. GANGI,

It is good you wrote a long letter. I am making inquiries. I shall write to you later. You are serving Anand and Mahadev so well. God will prosper everybody. I am writing this quite early in the morning. I shall not write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

288. *LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI*

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I also got the notebook you have sent for the daily thoughts. This I am writing in the morning at 3 o'clock. Your toe must be all right now. However many troubles you may have, you must be happy.

What can I write about Mahadev? God will give him back his strength. I am writing to him. Also to Gangi.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

289. *LETTER TO MAHADEVA. HINGORANI*

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. MAHADEV,

You should not have written when you were so weak. Write when you are fully recovered. Quietly, slowly get strong and then write.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

290. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. MALKANI,

I have received several letters about the Karachi Khadi Bhandar. Please write to me what the facts are.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 950

291. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your letter. How did you fall? Were you not careful?

Ramanama is the cure for sleeplessness. I know of no better remedy. One should have faith in Ramanama. There are no doubt external remedies, such as that there should not be too much of fatigue, laziness, heat or cold. One should neither be too full nor hungry, that is to say everything should be even. The mind should be healthy. I wish your body to become as strong as steel. And may you have equanimity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 11667

292. TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND¹

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1946

SATYANANDJI
DEHRIGHAT

PLEASE TELL KOSAMBIJI NOT TO BE OBSTINATE. HE SHOULD TAKE MILK AND FRUIT.² WIRE RESULT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1946

A U. S. Army general came to visit me a little before the prayer this evening. I was spinning at the time. As you all know the charkha to me is an inseparable companion. Whether I went to jail or journeyed to England, the charkha went with me. I laughingly told the American friend that since he would soon be going back to the U. S. A. he should tell his compatriots that Gandhi intended to defeat them with his puny spindles. The general laughed heartily at this but he understood the economic necessity of everyone producing to satisfy his own wants.

This is what I meant by defeating the U. S. A. Today India has to import cloth because, for our own fault, we do not have enough cloth in India. It will be a real victory for us when we can, without depending on mills, produce enough cloth to meet our requirements. This cannot be done through use of force. People should be able to look after their primary needs.

If it is folly to look to others for the foodgrains we need, it is equally folly to depend on others for our requirements of cloth. In doing this we go against the principles of natural living and that because we are too lazy. Laziness is a sin that makes us stray from

¹ Name assumed by Baldev Chaube, a village worker who had founded a Harijan Gurukul in Dehrighat, Distt. Azamgarh, U. P.

² *Vide* "Letter to Dharmanand Kosambi", 15-9-1946.

our purpose. He alone is a wise man who makes full use of every minute of every day of his time. If we can but be self-reliant in food and clothing we shall be at peace with the whole world.

It is thus in the charkha that genuine freedom is to be found. The charkha is necessary for villages as well as towns. I have not the slightest doubt that if the inhabitants of Delhi take up spinning they can produce enough cloth for their needs.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 19-9-1946

294. QUESTION BOX¹

WHAT USE AHIMSA?

Q. In whichever direction in the world one looks today one sees only violence, onslaughts on people's rights and power politics. This is true even of America and England where it is said the voice of the people is the sole arbiter. Have you considered what your ahimsa can do in such a situation?

A. It is true there is power politics everywhere. But you are mistaken in thinking that in America and England the voice of the people is the sole arbiter. The voice of the people should be the voice of God. That is why we say that the *Pancha* are *Parameshwar*. But where people themselves feed on other people, how can one say that the voice of the people is the voice of God? We see how America and England live on the coloured races, exploit other peoples. It needs no proving. Exploiters are seen to co-operate with exploiters but that does not make their voice the voice of the people. Where the voice of the people is the voice of God the people do not want to live on others. They have truth on one scale of the balance and ahimsa on the other, both always having equal weight. This covers my whole reply. For me ahimsa is not disabled; it is not weak; it is supreme. Where there is ahimsa there is Truth and, Truth is God. How that God manifests Himself I do not know. All I know is that He is all-pervading and where He is all is well. There is therefore one law for all. Wherever in the world truth and ahimsa reign there is perfect peace and perfect happiness. If they are not to be found anywhere we must understand that they are hidden from view. But they cannot totally disappear. Those who possess the barque of this faith will

¹ The sub-titles are from *Harijan*, 29-9-1946, in which a translation of this appeared.

safely go across in it and carry others across.

SHOULD FOREIGNERS BE WELCOME ?

Q. You say that foreigners who decide to live in free India as Indians will have no cause for fear. You will admit that such has not been the case in any other country. Where emphasis is on self others are not disliked but even so some suspicion of them always remains. Can free India escape this?

A. I am firmly of the view that free India will escape this. I can cite striking evidence for it. But it is not necessary. Only this much must be remembered: foreigners have to live here as Indians. If a foreigner staying here wants to protect his rights as a foreigner it can become difficult. It will mean that he wants to stay in free India as a superior person. This must lead to friction. The present quarrel with the British Government cannot go on when India is free. If it does, India cannot be said to be free.

NEW DELHI, September 19, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

295. TELEGRAM TO BAL D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,

September 19, 1946

BAL KALELKAR

Y.M.C.A.

25 CHOWRANGEE ROAD

CALCUTTA

SUSHILA JUST ARRIVED. CEREMONY WARDHA. WE REACH WARDHA BEFORE FIRST OCTOBER.

BAPU

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

296. *LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ*

NEW DELHI,
September 19, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. I could go through it only today. I have no knowledge of what you write about. If you kindly send me the minutes of the proceedings, I shall be able to understand and also to suggest what ought to be done.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI ABDUL HAQ
DELHI

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

297. *CONGRESS MINISTERS, NOT SAHIB LOG*¹

A Congress worker asks :

Should the Congress Ministers live in great State like their English predecessors? Will it be right for them to use Government cars for private work?

From my point of view there can be only one reply to both the questions. If the Congress wants to continue as a people's organization, the Ministers cannot live as *sahib log* nor use for private work facilities provided by Government for official duties.

NEW DELHI, September 20, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

¹ This was published under the heading "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 29-9-1946.

298. *LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL*

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR SIR M. ISMAIL,

Much as I should like to I may not write to you in Urdu.

I have now talked to Swami Ramanand Tirth and Shri Kashinath Vaidya. As I have already told you the contemplated reforms are no reforms.¹ The more I think of them the more I feel that they are not worthy of you. You may not seek to impose them on the inhabitants of Hyderabad. If you are sure that the States Peoples' Conference does not represent them, then of course I am out of court.

Maulana Sahib wants to help you. Sarojini Devi likewise. I count myself among them. But you know my limitations. I am a born satyagrahi and hope to die as such and that is my limitation as it is my strength. Strength has got to be proved. The limitation stares all my friends in the face.

If you cannot scrap the reforms and if you will not impose them you should postpone them and see whether they admit of amendments. Of course, their real guide is the States Peoples' Conference. But they have not yet learnt to forget me as I would like them to do. And since you and I know and like each other I must write this for what it is worth.

The Hindu, 31-12-1946

299. *LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI*

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

This is only about the *Bhajanavali*. This is going by airmail instead of by wire. Devdas will not be able to print 25,000 copies in four days. So the question is about the Congress. He says it will be

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Mirza Ismail", 11-8-1946.

in the third week of November. If, therefore, you can print it before that, please reply immediately so that I can send the book to you or make some other arrangement—if, that is, you so desire. If you cannot print it by November, do write or wire to me and say also when you can print it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9972. Also C. W. 6946. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

300. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter about Urdu. We shall have to think a little more about it and since I shall be there in a few days I should like to meet you and discuss the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10976

301. *LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have posted Jajuji's letter after reading. I think it should be enough if the exhibition is not run in the name of the A. I. S. A. I am of the opinion that if they ask for any help we may give it without going out of our way and without incurring any expenditure. I think since we intend to hand over everything to Gandhi Ashram they had better undertake this work as their own and carry it through as best as they can.

I regard the work of handing over everything to Gandhi Ashram

as incomplete so long as I do not have a reply to my letter on the subject, a copy of which I have forwarded.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

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

302. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

NEW DELHI,

September 20, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

A portion of the Sabarmati Ashram has been rented out for a camp of the sisters of the Kasturba Trust. The tenancy expires on December 10. I think it would be helpful at this critical time if these people could somehow be accommodated for a longer period. You should therefore start some new activities. I feel it will be worthwhile retaining them even if you have to put up some huts. But consider the matter only on its merit and if after examining the pros and cons you find that they cannot be accommodated, please don't hesitate to write to me.

We shall discuss your scheme about khadi when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI

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

303. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,

September 20, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I could have your letter read out to me only today. Yesterday Mridula came and gave me a copy of your letter. The original also reached me yesterday. I arrived here on the 16th. The stock of mail is

so large that I hardly ever manage to read any letter the day it arrives. In other words, with the co-workers I have I cannot hope ever to cope with my correspondence. And increasing the number of co-workers is something I would not like. Although I wish to live for 125 years I regard my life as ephemeral. I do not therefore like to increase my commitments. I do not know if there is now any need for you to hurry because as you say you have permission to stay on in Sabarmati till the 10th of December. I think many changes can take place in the meanwhile. Hence it would be better if you stayed on till we meet. For my part I am making arrangements to secure the Sabarmati accommodation for a longer period. Hence you had better stay on till we hear about it. I am sending this by airmail instead of sending you a wire. I need not write more at the moment. I hope you are well.

Do not work beyond your capacity.

How is Nirmalabehn's health?

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SARALADEVI SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

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

304. LETTER TO ANJANA CHOWDHARY

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR ANJANA,

I have your letter. I must thank you for the account you have sent me. How long does it take you to spin four hanks (of 640 rounds each) every day? How much time does Subhadra spend on spinning?

What does Sita do?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samajha, p. 186

305. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

I have your letter. Now I can reach there any time after the 25th. I shall explain then. Meanwhile, do whatever is possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

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

306. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

I think the substance of Jajuji's letter to you is that the exhibition which I have allowed to be put up in the name of the Gandhi Ashram and on their own responsibility should be a training camp

and not a money-making business. It would be better to leave out woollens also. Whoever needs these can get them from the Gandhi Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

GANDHI ASHRAM

MEERUT

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

307. *FOOD SHORTAGE*

There is nothing so depressing as when fear pervades the atmosphere. I remember an occasion when the waters of the Sabarmati were rising fairly high and a message said to be from Sardar Patel was received after midnight to the effect that inside of an hour the Ashram would be covered with the rising waters and that we were likely to be drowned in them if we did not vacate. It was a most anxious time for all of us—men, women and children. A sigh of relief went up to heaven when it was discovered that after causing some loss to property, the angry waters had begun to subside and that no loss of life need be feared.

Precisely in the same manner the danger of shortage reported from authoritative quarters bids fair to demoralize us into a panic which would be more fatal than real starvation. Such was my plight when a paragraph in the papers was read to me that of all the places in the world its intrepid Diwan had seriously contended that Travancore had a storage of foodgrain only for a fortnight. Knowing Travancore so well I imagined all sorts of calamities not merely for Travancore but for all India. Travancore with its luxuriant growth of edible tubers, coconut and fish had no need to starve for a single day, even though it might have no other supply from the other parts of India. My faith in Travancore kept me whole. And to my joy I discovered that the shortage was not of food but of wheat and rice only. Travancore can grow rice, not wheat. So far as the cereals are concerned the inhabitants of Travancore are rice-eaters. They take to wheat with difficulty and under stress. Would that the present distress could make us shed our provincialism and induce all India habits so as to make us feel fully at home, no matter which part of India we happened to find ourselves in.

For the moment, however, my object would be fully served if all responsible men in India would definitely tell the people in their respective provinces, districts and States, not to look beyond India for supply of food but to grow what they can themselves and learn to eke out a living from their own produce. And, if the numerous authentic letters I receive are an indication of things as they are or should be, we need fear no starvation for want of life-giving vegetables plus a little milk for vegetarians and fish, flesh or fowl for non-vegetarians.

Let India realize that as yet we have no appreciable quantity of food from outside our shores. Many are willing to help but they are themselves for the most part sufferers or have more calls on them than they are able to cope with. The transport difficulty is very real for all of them and our own will commence when the food-stuff reaches our shores. Internal transport and distribution constitute a problem by themselves. It is, therefore, practical wisdom to brace ourselves for the struggle and declare with one voice our resolve that we shall grow our eatables for ourselves and perish bravely in the attempt if we must.

This is the only way and no other.

NEW DELHI, September 21, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

308. DO NOT ELIMINATE TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE'

A correspondent who sends his name and describes himself as devoted to service writes :

I read *Harijanbandhu* regularly. Recently in your reply to Shri Shankarrao Deo you said: "I have been saying for some time that the words 'truth and non-violence' should be removed from the Congress constitution."

If this happens in the existing circumstances, people will lose their faith in the Congress because they will feel that so long as it was not in power it was thought best to adhere to truth and non-violence but now that power has come it contemplates removing these words from the constitution. They might even infer that the removal is being resorted to in order to counter the Muslim League's threat of direct action.

If these words are eliminated from the constitution Congress will fall from the high pedestal which these means alone have secured for it. It will lose in

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-9-1946. The *Harijan* translation reproduced here has been revised to bring it into conformity with the original.

prestige. You have always said that you yourself cannot go forward one step without truth and non-violence and is it not their adherence to these that makes the public think of Congressmen as trustworthy, merciful, full of the spirit of service and bravery ? The tree must perish if its roots are destroyed. You must see to it that the roots go deeper and deeper and are not eradicated.

Therefore I feel that you should compel every Congressman to follow these principles and if he refuses, he must leave the Congress.

How can I, a champion of ahimsa, compel anyone to perform even a good act ? A well-known Englishman has said that he would rather be free and make mistakes than be unfree and avoid them. I agree with him. The reason is obvious. The mind of a man who is good under compulsion cannot be good; in fact it gets worse. And when compulsion is removed all the defects well up to the surface with even greater force.

Besides, no individual should have the power to force others. Even the Congress cannot force its members to follow truth and non-violence. These have to be accepted willingly from the heart.

I have been recommending the elimination of these words from the constitution for over a year, long before the Muslim League contemplated direct action. Thus my recommendation has no connection with the League's resolution. But I have no help for those who invariably attribute sinister motives to my words.

I have strong grounds for my recommendation. The Congress may not hide untruth and violence under the guise of truth and non-violence. Is not this an all-sufficing reason ? If Congressmen would not be hypocrites, nothing could be better than that Congress should adhere to these two pillars.

It could never be my wish that the Congress, the moment it comes to power, should discard the very ladder by which it has climbed so high. I believe that if Congressmen, while in power, renounce truth and non-violence, the lustre surrounding the Congress will grow dim.

We must all guard against one mistake. There is no rule against following what is not in the constitution. Indeed my hope is that when these words are removed, all, or a large majority of Congressmen, will heartily follow truth and non-violence even to the point of death.

The writer has forgotten to mention one thing which I should like to clarify. The words in the Constitution are 'peaceful and legitimate'. I have no right to interpret them as truthful and non-violent, if

they don't bear that meaning. Congress has adopted them as a policy, not as a creed. The question of my right to retain or eliminate them does not arise. But whilst it lasts, policy is tantamount to creed and hence becomes obligatory. Of course, my recommendation has no meaning if 'peaceful' can be interpreted as violent and 'legitimate' as untruthful.

NEW DELHI, September 21, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

309. LETTER TO INDRAVADAN MEHTA

NEW DELHI,

September 21, 1946

BHAI INDRAVADAN MEHTA,

I have your letter. You do admit that you are full of anger. Do you know anger is half way to insanity? How can one deal with insanity? However, if you are a regular reader of *Harijan* you will see that I have said much the same thing that you suggest.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

310. LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA¹

NEW DELHI,

September 21, 1946

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. Last night I had a talk with Sushilabehn. She says that you should take up some Kasturba Trust work. However, you can work wherever you want after you have finished your training, whether in Samau or in the Frontier Province, as Akbar may desire. But the condition will also be that wherever you are you will work for the Trust for three years. I think under the circumstances I should like you to join. In this way you will be bound down to one place, which will be better.

I do not like your constipation persisting. Sushilabehn says that you are not careful enough about your diet and sleep. This is not

¹ The letter is in the Devanagari script.

right. You must make your body strong as steel. As for night work, it is difficult but if you accustom yourself to having complete rest there may not be any difficulty.

We shall now meet in a few days. Manu too might reach in time for the wedding.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

311. NOT SENTIMENT BUT REASON

Prof. Brij Narain has devoted two columns of the *Lahore Tribune* in support of the salt tax. I dare not combat his arguments though they make little appeal to my lay mind. He has come to the gratuitous conclusion that I ask for repeal on grounds of sentiment rather than reason. He reminds me of armchair politics and philosophy. Salt tax hits not only men, women and children, but also fish and cattle. Reason demands its immediate repeal. It is not the amount of the tax that kills, it is the monopoly and all it means that kills the poor villager and his cattle. Imagine what would happen if the poor were prohibited from breathing air or drinking water without permission of the Government. The condition as to salt is not radically different. The scientist has not taken the trouble to study what this prohibition to prepare salt even for one's own consumption has cost India.

Prof. Brij Narain will not allow the Congress to be nationalistic enough even to warrant its abolishing a monopoly which presses heavily upon all the poor people without distinction, unless the Professor ignorantly imagines that the Muslims have no poor to think of.

NEW DELHI, September 22, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

312. ABOUT KHADI BHANDARS¹

Since I wrote on happenings in the Karachi Khadi Bhandar, I have received several letters about other bhandars also. The gist of

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-9-1946.

these is given below :

1. Khadi in bhandars is available only to friends of those in charge or to those who have influence.

2. Even if the bhandar is replete with khadi the reply the ordinary customer often gets is that there is none.

3. Some bhandars have no facilities for having yarn woven into khadi, while others cannot supply charkhas and their accessories.

4. In the circumstances khadi workers in many bhandars earn wages for doing no work. Time and again one's yarn is not accepted on the plea that it is too coarse.

It would not be right to console oneself by saying that all these complaints are untrue. Such conduct as described is unwise, callous and disloyal. None of these defects should obtain in any bhandar, much less in khadi bhandars. How can khadi command respect, if its servants behave in the manner described ? It is to be hoped that every khadi bhandar will become a model of service and thereby not only raise itself but also maintain the honour that khadi carries.

NEW DELHI, September 22, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

313. ENTRY IN DIARY¹

NEW DELHI,

September 22, 1946

The inwardness of the spinning-wheel seems to have been forgotten. I was angry. I have to consider what my duty under the circumstances is. It seems to be so very hard to maintain detachment of mind in the midst of this raging fire. My heart-searching continues.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

314. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The treasurer of the A. I. C. C. asks me to say that he has received Rs. 2,400 on behalf of the President of the Congress from the Indian community in Manila, Philippine Islands, for the purpose of famine relief.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

315. KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR¹

Numerous letters have been received with reference to the note in the *Harijan* of 25-8-'46 entitled "Disloyalty to Khadi".² I am making inquiries and hope to announce the result as soon as they are completed.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

316. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I have your letter. I liked this one. If it is true that so long you have only been receiving, then you have to pay twice the amount in debt. You should therefore go on paying it and be happy. Will you be able to come to Wardha about the time that I arrive there ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 329-30

317. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 22, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I am wearing today all the things you have given. They are good.

If we are not worthy of sacrifice and still die it won't be called a sacrifice. You have still to make yourself deserving. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 529

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

² *Vide* "Disloyalty to Khadi", 18-8-1946

318. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

Isn't it good I received your letter ? Would it not be better if you, as also Anand were at Sevagram while you were in indifferent health ? Maybe you will recover there; Anand also will recover and Gordhandas's worry will be lessened. You are of no help to him. Under the circumstances it is your duty to leave Surat. Both of you should think over this. Do not think of your bitter experiences in Sevagram. I will see only your foolishness in harbouring such thoughts. I have always considered you a generous person. We ourselves should commit no mistakes, but if others find fault with us we should not worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10070. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

319. LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

SWAMIJI,

The following is my suggestion regarding the trouble that has arisen in Hyderabad State in the name of 'Reform'¹ :

If the desired changes cannot be brought about by the Reform, it should be completely boycotted. By boycott I do not mean that we should resort to picketing or take out processions or hold meetings. Our job would be to have peaceful volunteers go from house to house and explain to the voters that the Reform is only so in name, not in substance. We may distribute leaflets in the language of the masses. The strength of the people will grow if they abide by all the restrictions that might be enforced by law, and if the boycott is successful it will be a big victory for the State Congress. There must not be the slightest exaggeration in the language of the leaflets and the facts

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mirza Ismail ", 11-8-1946; 20-9-1946

should be absolutely correct. The reason why I offer this suggestion is that there is yet no awakening in the State's subjects in general. If my opinion is not warranted by the actual position and Pandit Jawa-harlal advises otherwise his advice should be accepted.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

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

320. LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. HEMANT KUMAR,

I got your letter about Nanalal Kavi. I had written something to his son about the matter. I got the news late; it is not that I omitted to write for want of courtesy. I shall now see what I can write.¹ Have you now recovered fully ?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. HEMANT KUMAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI

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

321. THE LATE POET NANALAL²

A friend reproaches me as follows :³

One or two others also wrote in a similar vein. I kept silent. I shall be silent no more. If I thought it proper not to write in *Harijanbandhu* it was not because of any personal grudge. I had none of that. The readers should know that I notice someone's death when there is something special about it. Thus I did not notice the deaths of

¹ *Vide* the following item.

² Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi (1877-1946), eminent Gujarati poet

³ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should have noticed poet Nanalal's death in *Harijanbandhu*; *vide* the preceding item.

many friends in *Harijanbandhu*. Poet Nanalal sometimes praised me and sometimes censured me as he felt disposed. He had the right to do both. I never felt hurt by his criticism. A man may speak as he feels. Why should one be hurt by it ? It would not do simply for this reason to refrain from noticing his death. The fact is, I have very little understanding of poets and poetry. I remember reading only one of his books, *Jaya-Jayant*. I could not understand the poetry in it but I liked the subject-matter. I could not even read fully what he wrote about me.¹ The reason is that my life has been spent in working amidst storms. Such reading as I was able to do was done in jails. What should I do reading words in my praise: should I be flattered or should I weep? I hardly read anything for its literary worth. Should I relate anecdotes from my pleasant association with him? I kept silent because of this dilemma. It is recognized that Gujarat has suffered a loss in his death. What difference would my words make? Besides, I hold that good deeds are their own reward. Good and wicked deeds have their own laws, and only they are valid. Praise and blame are passing things and have no value. That is my belief.

NEW DELHI, 23-9-1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

322. TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND

NEW DELHI,

September 23, 1946

SATYANANDJI

DEHRIGHAT

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND THIS OBSTINACY ON KOSAMBI'S
PART.² PLEASE PLEAD WITH HIM AGAIN DESIST. GET
WELL AND COME TO ME.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Nanalal wrote "Gujaratno Tapasvi", eulogizing Gandhiji on his fiftieth birthday in 1919. He turned into a critic of Gandhiji after the Congress session at Ahmedabad in December 1921.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Satyanand", 18-9-1946.

323. LETTER TO RENUKA RAY

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. RENUKA,

Your long letter written after so many years revived old and pleasant memories. You and your husband¹ seem to have risen to the occasion during the terrible crisis thro' which Calcutta passed on and after the fateful 16th.² Who knows what is in store for Bengal and the rest of the country in the near future ? We have not gone through the worst yet. My views I have set forth as accurately as was possible in my article in *Harijan* of 15th inst³. Read it again and again and follow one of the two ways described therein, never the third.

Do write again when you feel like it.

*Blessings from*⁴

BAPU

RENUKA RAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

324. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Your explanation is correct. It is false to assert that there would have been no need for the police or the military if the Hindus had been helpless. The fact is that if the two communities fight each other, under whatever conditions, and both find themselves in a desperate situation, then in their own interest they are likely to behave. Such a situation will offer an opportunity to the person who wants to bring about amity. Today there is no such opportunity. Animosity and venom are growing. But the plain fact is that in the face of the

¹ Satyendra Nath Ray

² The reference is to the riots on August 16, which the Muslim League had observed as Direct Action Day.

³ *Vide* "What can Violence do", 19-8-1946

⁴ This is in Hindi.

intervention by the police and the military, no one can do anything. Just now both the parties need them. So the question of their not being called in does not arise. However, it is our duty to draw attention to the matter whenever there is opportunity.

I understand what you say about students. You should persevere. Let me have your suggestions with detailed information that I can use.

We shall leave for Wardha in a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. JAMNADAS GANDHI
BOMBAY

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

325. *LETTER TO CHANDRANI*

NEW DELHI,

September 23, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. How did you get malaria? Do you use a mosquito-net? It is good that your blood is improving. Don't be in a hurry. Come to Sevagram when you have completely recovered. I plan to leave here for Wardha the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. CHANDRANI
C/O SARDAR KARMA SINGH
RTD. S.D.O.
KATRA JALLIANWALA
AMRITSAR, PUNJAB

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

326. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,

September 23, 1946

The music of the charkha murmurs sweetly that we are all one, born to be equal sharers in the goods of the earth with no one higher or wealthier than the other. Yet the world is today full of inequalities of wealth and invidious distinctions of high and low. This is folly. In our arrogance we forget that we are all one day going to be levelled with the dust by death that knows no distinctions. The second lesson is that we are to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow—what a Russian savant has called “bread labour”, and the third is that if we are one of and with the people, we should refuse to give food to those who are not in need or to take more than we need for health. If we all did that there would be no scarcity of food in this land and we would refuse to look across the seas for food-stuffs.

Yet his nearest comrades were about to make the mistake of serving refreshments, after the *Jhanda-vandan* by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, to volunteers and Harijans who were not in need of such.² Was it not criminal to fritter away food-stuff that would serve to keep alive twenty men, to provide titbits to Harijans and volunteers who were certainly not suffering pangs of hunger? They were deceiving themselves if they thought that thereby they served the Harijans. The real hunger of the Harijans which needed to be satisfied was not for morsels of food but for decent living as self-respecting equal citizens, for a square deal as human beings, for freedom from fear, inculcation of clean and sanitary habits, thrift, industry, education. That required perseverance, self-sacrifice and patient intelligent labour on our part. If they gave him money to feed Harijans he would refuse to accept it. For he did not want to make beggars and idlers of them. He pointedly referred to the fact that Dr. Rajendra Prasad was their Food Member who wanted to save for the famishing every morsel of food. In the circumstances he very much questioned whether the oversight of his comrades was not due to his being lax with himself. Was he not allowing himself to partake rather too freely of the fruits that were placed before him? The lesson of yesterday, he remarked, was a grave warning for all, if we are to learn truly the lesson of the charkha.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's “Weekly Letter”. *The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1946, also reports the speech.

² This was to be in celebration of Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar.

327. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS¹

NEW DELHI,

[On or after *September 23, 1946*]

Q. Wrangling and corrupt practices have today become a common feature of our elections. What should be the attitude of Congressmen with regard to the elections?

A. What you say only shows that we seek leadership instead of being servants of the nation. There can be no room for wrangles when service is the ideal. Congressmen should realize that only a few can become leaders, the goal for all Congressmen to set before themselves can only be to qualify as true servants of the nation. An institution that suffers from a plethora of leaders is surely in a bad way. For instance, if every Khudai Khidmatgar aspired to become the chief, it would make the life of Badshah Khan hell besides disrupting the Khudai Khidmatgar organization itself.

If Congressmen lived up to the creed which they professed, viz., the attainment of swaraj through truthful and non-violent means, paraphrased in the Congress constitution by the words “peaceful and legitimate”, there should be no wrangling and no corruption. The existence of election wrangles and irregular practices is thus only a proof that the Congress policy of “attainment of swaraj through ‘peaceful and legitimate’ means” is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. I have, therefore, suggested that it should be dropped in the amended constitution that is to come into being. Pending the setting up of the new constitution I have suggested a plan of work which does away with further elections for the time being and which requires all Congressmen to be active servants. If it is adopted it should cut across all our difficulties and troubles.

Q. Very few minorities’ representatives have been returned at the elections. What remedy do you suggest ?

A. Minorities being a minority, their representation in the Congress organization will naturally be proportionately less. If they feel dissatisfied, they can keep out of the Congress without ceasing to be Congressmen as I have done. It is my claim that I am not less a Congressman but more by reason of my ceasing to be even a four-

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s report under the title “Some Posers”. The questions were asked by the Presidents and Secretaries of various Provincial Congress Committees who had assembled in Delhi for the A. I. C. C. session held on September 23 and 24.

anna member of the Congress. At Faizpur Congress the question was raised by Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale at a gathering at which I was present. On interrogation it was found that the number of those who were four-anna members was very small. But in reply to the question as to how many in the gathering were not four-anna members, a forest of hands went up. These are real Congressmen seeking no reward but seeking ever to serve it. Bereft of them it would dwindle into a parlour show. The only worthy aim of a Congressman can be to belong wholly to the Congress, never to capture and dominate the Congress. If everybody took up the correct attitude there would be no minorities and majorities. To try to 'capture' the Congress would be to kill the Congress. And a Congressman who is worthy of his salt would die rather than be guilty of the murder.

Q. The policy of the Interim Government is to keep down the prices of foodgrains. Would it not adversely affect the production of foodgrains?

A. I want to reduce the prices of foodgrains still further. I claim to be a peasant myself and I know that only a fraction of the price paid by the consumer actually reaches the grower of food. It should be the business of the Interim Government to see that the tiller of the soil gets full value of his produce and that every pie paid by the consumer reaches the peasant's pocket or else it should get out. The Interim Government can never be guilty of wishing to provide cheap grains to the consumer at the expense of the grower of food. The trouble with the cultivator is not low prices but the middleman.

Even in khadi production I set the target of 8 as. a day for the spinners. We actually reached the rate of 4 as. in spite of the objection that dear khadi would spell the ruin of khadi production that illustrates my attitude towards the producer. I would eliminate the middleman altogether. It is he who today sponges upon the agriculturist. Otherwise, there is no reason why the peasant should starve. At the same time a peasant who profiteers or exploits the black market belies his calling. He is no less an exploiter than the zamindar.

Q. The growth of parties in the Congress is having a very adverse effect on the Congress organization. What is the remedy?

A. There can be only one party in the Congress, i.e., that of Congressmen and no other. That is not to say that there is no room in the Congress for individuals or groups holding different opinions. I do not believe in dead uniformity. "All men are born equal and

free” is not Nature’s law in the literal sense. All men are not born equal in intellect, for instance, but the doctrine of equality will be vindicated if those who have superior intellect will use it not for self-advancement at the expense of others, but for the service of those who are less forward in that respect than they. Today there are all sorts in the Congress. That is why I have suggested the removal of the words “peaceful and legitimate” from the Congress objective. That need not mean abandonment of truth and non-violence by Congressmen. The object is only to purge out hypocrisy. It jars. Let those who believe in the doctrine of the sword openly avow it. To take the name of non-violence when there is sword in your heart is not only hypocritical and dishonest but cowardly. Our non-violence vis-a-vis the British Government has been the non-violence of the weak. Otherwise, why should there be all these wrangles among ourselves? We try to justify the disorganization and chaos in our midst by pointing to the example of “squatters” in England, forgetting that blind imitation would not help us. There is nothing more demoralizing than fake non-violence of the weak and impotent. If we had the requisite non-violence in us, our public life would be characterized by utmost toleration. There will then be room for as many parties as there are opinions. Differences of opinion would be an indication of healthy independence of mind which is the law of life, not party intrigues and party strife. The latter are incompatible with independence.

Q. How should the Hindu-Muslim questions be tackled?

A. I must own defeat on that point. I know that mine is today a voice in the wilderness and yet I claim that mine is the only practicable solution. I can never subscribe to the view that because certain members of a particular community have indulged in inhuman acts, therefore the whole community may be condemned outright and put beyond the pale. The Muslim League may call Hindus names and declare India to be *Dar-ul-Harb*, where the law of *jehad* operates and all Muslims who co-operate with the Congress are Quislings fit only to be exterminated. But we must not cease to aspire, in spite of this wild talk, to befriend all Mussalmans and hold them fast as prisoners of our love. It would be a present possibility if Hindus in their lakhs offered themselves to be cut to pieces without retaliation or anger in their hearts. Non-violence is today rightly laughed out of court as Utopian. Nevertheless, I maintain that it is the only way to keep Hinduism alive

and India undivided. The history of the Congress non-violence for the last twenty-five years has taught us nothing if it has not taught us that.

Q. How can we counteract the activities of the Communists, who are openly opposing the Congress ?

A. The principle which I have laid down vis-a-vis the Hindu-Muslim question also holds good in respect of the Communists. By "Muslim" I mean the Muslim League. For, not all the Muslims are Muslim Leaguers. The Muslim Leaguers have today raised the slogan that ten crores of Indian Muslims are in danger of being submerged and swept out of existence unless they constitute themselves into a separate State. I call that slogan scare-mongering pure and simple. It is nonsense to say that any people can permanently crush or swamp out of existence one fourth of its population, which the Mussalmans are in India. But I would have no hesitation in conceding the demand of Pakistan if I could be convinced of its righteousness or that it is good for Islam. But I am firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand as put forth by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful. Islam stands for the unity and brotherhood of mankind, not for disrupting the oneness of the human family. Therefore, those who want to divide India into possibly warring groups are enemies alike of India and Islam. They may cut me to pieces but they cannot make me subscribe to something which I consider to be wrong.

The question of the Communists stands on a slightly different footing. They seem to have made trouble-making their profession. I have friends among them. Some of them are like sons to me. But it seems they do not make any distinction between fair and foul, truth and falsehood. They deny the charge. But their reported acts seem to sustain it. Moreover, they seem to take their instructions from Russia, whom they regard as their spiritual home rather than India. I cannot countenance this dependence on an outside power. I have even said that we should not depend even on Russian wheat in our present food crisis. We must have the ability and courage to subsist on what our soil can give us rather than depend on foreign charity. Otherwise, we shall not deserve to exist as an independent country. The same applies to foreign ideologies. I would accept them only to the extent that I

can assimilate them and adapt them to the Indian scene. But I must refuse to go under them.

My formula for the Communists, therefore, is that I would prefer to die at their hands, but I will not retaliate.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

328. TALK WITH AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST¹

NEW DELHI,

[Before *September 24, 1946*]²

Q. Are you full of the joy of life ? Why do you want to live for 125 years?

A. Gandhiji told him that his desire to live up to 125 years was not for enjoyment but service. He explained that both were not the same and proceeded to explain to the puzzled interviewer the doctrine of “enjoyment through renunciation” as set forth in the *Ishopanishad*.

Q. When did your real enjoyment of life begin?

A. When I was born.

Q. No, I mean when did that pattern of life begin when service became a joy for ever ?

A. When I understood the inner meaning of life.

Q. Is that India’s speciality?

A. The only speciality of India is her poverty as America’s is her glamour of riches.

Q. May not there be occasions when one may have to compromise ideals with expediency?

A. No, never. I do not believe that the end justifies the means.

Q. Is it possible that your activities may some day be removed from the political field ?

A. Perhaps you do not know that I felt compelled to come into the political field because I found that I could not do even social work

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “Weekly Letter”

² Pyarelal explains that the talk took place about the same time as the “Talk with an English Journalist”, which was before September 24.

without touching politics. I feel that political work must be looked upon in terms of social and moral progress. In democracy no part of life is untouched by politics. Under the British you cannot escape politics in the good sense. It embraces the whole life. All who breathe must pay a tax. That is British rule in India. Take the salt tax for instance. It concern everybody. The collector of revenue and the policeman are the only symbols by which millions in India's villages know British rule. One cannot sit still while the people are being ravaged.

Q. Then your job will never be finished?

A. It will be finished only with my death. I must be watchful, whether it is the foreign government that is in power or indigenous, if I am a social reformer in the true sense of the term. This is applicable to all.

Q. When people attain power they grow away from the people. What about here?

A. Let us hope and pray that this will never happen here. I have likened our people's office-acceptance to wearing a crown of thorns and pretty sharp thorns at that.

Q. What do you think of the students' strikes?

A. It seems to be a universal malady, an epidemic.

Q. Do you ever feel depressed?

A. I believe in an over-ruling Power as I believe I am talking to you just now. This may be unreal, but that *is* real. It dominates me and enables me to remain calm even in the midst of storm.

Q. Gandhiji's questioner next asked his opinion about predestination.

A. It is a much-abused word. It is true that we are not quite as free as we imagine. Our past holds us. But like all other doctrines this may well be ridden to death.

Q. This provoked the question as to how one could overcome the unpleasant effects of one's predestination since predestination was a reality.

A. By taking the pleasant with the unpleasant in perfect detachment and thereby sterilizing the unpleasantness of its sting, even as you have tackled the problem of the prickly pear by removing its thorns through judicious selection and cultivation and converting it

into edible fodder for cattle.

Q. How to prevent the next war?

A. By doing the right thing, irrespective of what the world will do. Each individual must act according to his ability without waiting for others if he wants to move them to act. There comes a time when an individual becomes irresistible and his action becomes all-pervasive in its effect. This comes when he reduces himself to zero.

If the third war comes, it will be the end of the world. The world cannot stand a third war. For me the second war has not stopped, it still goes on.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

329. TALK WITH A FRIEND¹

NEW DELHI,

[Before *September 24, 1946*]

I am filled with agitation; why could not I suffer this inner anguish with unruffled calmness of spirit? I am afraid I have not the detachment required for living up to 125 years. That also explains why charkha and khadi are making such slow progress. Success of khadi is impossible without infinite patience. A burning passion coupled with absolute detachment is the key to all success.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 24-9-1946

330. TALK WITH AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST¹

NEW DELHI,

[Before September 24, 1946]

India is on the march to Independence, it is coming whether there is an agreement between the Muslim League and the Congress or not. No one can stop it. It is her destiny. She has bled enough for it. Of course, if there is heart-co-operation between the two, the progress will be quicker and smoother. But it must be real heart unity—not a make-believe.

Gandhiji, who claims kinship with Pressmen and therefore their friendship began by telling this friend what he considered to be the function of journalism.

There are occasions when a journalist serves his profession best by his silence.

Did not Gandhiji believe in the capacity of the average man to judge correctly provided he had enough knowledge of facts?

Not knowledge of facts. What passes for facts is only impressions or estimate of things and estimates vary. Hence one gets different versions of the same event. What is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts but right education. And the true function of journalism is to educate the public mind, not to stock the public mind with wanted and unwanted impressions. A journalist has, therefore, to use his discretion as to what to report and when. As it is, journalists are not content to stick to facts alone. Journalism has become the art of 'intelligent anticipation of events'.

As a public man and a social reformer, it is for me to judge when to say something and when to hold my tongue. What the world needs is not words but action. Actions and thoughts tell far more than speech. And this applies to all men both great and small.

Q. What do you think of Russia ?

A. Russia is an enigma to me. It hurts me to think (if the reports are true) that a country which stood for the people has turned into an imperialist power. But I may not pass judgment on a great people and a great man like Stalin. I lack the data.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 24-9-1946. The talk took place in the course of Gandhiji's morning walk.

Q. Is the world progressing? Has the making of life and struggle for existence easier in the modern world resulted in the dulling of man's instincts and sensibilities?

A. If that is your comment, I will subscribe to it.

Q. And the atom bomb?

A. Oh, on that point you can proclaim to the whole world without hesitation that I am beyond repair. I regard the employment of the atom bomb for the wholesale destruction of men, women and children as the most diabolical use of science.

Q. What is the antidote? Has it antiquated non-violence?

A. No. It is the only thing the atom bomb cannot destroy. I did not move a muscle when I first heard that the atom bomb had wiped out Hiroshima. On the contrary, I said to myself, 'Unless now the world adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind.'

Q. What would be your fatherly advice to a young man about to launch into the world?

A. To hold his tongue. Was it not Shakespeare who said, 'Lend everybody thine ear, thy voice to none?'

Q. You followed that policy fairly in your own case.

A. Yes, I used to think in my early days that I was a dunce and an idiot, that I should never be able to speak. Now I feel thankful for that disability.

Q. You have been a fighter all your life. What has fighting done for you?

A. It has braced me for the next struggle. Fighting has done me good. What it has done to others, I do not know.

Q. Considering that the difference between the Muslim League and the Congress has narrowed down to one or two basic issues would it not be better to make a little sacrifice to secure agreement?

A. You can not sacrifice a principle to gain a doubtful advantage.

Q. After hearing both sides of the controversy, an outsider feels at sea. The only course, it seems, is to suspend judgment under the circumstances.

A. When two parties cannot agree and both are sincere in their convictions it is clear one of them must be wrong. Both cannot be right. The world must be the arbiter in that case. It dare not withhold judgment. It has often been found in the progress of non-violence

that even people who want to be perfectly just come to wrong judgment.

Before taking leave the friend tendered Gandhiji congratulations in advance on his coming birthday.

I attach no importance to it. Every day one is reborn. I, at any rate, am.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

331. ELEVEN-DAY CHARKHA CLASS¹

The class was held in the Bhangi Colony. Shri Kanu Gandhi has given me an account of it. I give below some noteworthy parts² of it.

In my opinion, this class has been of great value. The numbers of the learners, the class from which they came and the perseverance with which they worked are worthy of note. Thousands turned up to see the small exhibition. Leaders joined in the collective spinning, which is a good sign. It is good to see what perseverance can achieve.

NEW DELHI, September 24, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

332. LETTER TO M.W. H. DE SILVA

BHANGI COLONY,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Please do not think of a garden party for anyone, much less for the charkha class people. They do not come here now. Moreover, I am averse to encouraging entertainment being provided to anyone at this time of scarcity. Every morsel of

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 29-9-1946.

² Not translated here. Kanu Gandhi had said that 156 adults and 3 children attended the class, which was held from September 11 to 21, and that to encourage people an exhibition was held on the 22nd demonstrating the various processes of spinning.

food saved is so much food gained. Nevertheless, your good wishes I shall always treasure.

M. W. H. DE SILVA

CEYLON GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

333. *LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI*

DELHI,

September 24, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have both your letters. I got the cheque with the second one. I hope to be in Wardha on the 2nd October. I am glad that you and Manu will be going there. It is good news that you have got well.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

334. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*

NEW DELHI,

September 24, 1946¹

Being awarded prizes should not fill the recipients with pride.² Many feel, and I am one of them, that people should not be given prizes for doing good work. Good work should be its own reward. I find it most annoying that when we do something worth while newspapers are filled with our praise.

Playing the charkha means doing body labour for the sake of India. By spinning we lend dignity to labour. The charkha teaches simplicity and strengthens our faith in God. The charkha is not a small thing. If we spin with full realization of the secret of the charkha, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians are seen as children of the same God. God comes to pervade the whole world. Let us partake

¹*The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1946, which also reported the speech, assigns to this the date September 23, probably wrongly.

² Earlier Gandhiji had distributed prizes to three women and two men for the best performance at the examination held for the charkha class.

of the goods of the world only as trustees. Then we shall see that India has become much stronger and risen much higher. India does not want to rise higher at the cost of others.

If India rises all rise with it. This is the message of India and this is the message of the charkha too.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-9-1946

335. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE¹

[On or before *September 25, 1946*]²

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then President of the I[ndian] N[ational] C[ongress], had with the consent of the W[orking] C[ommittee] assured Pandit J[awaharlal] N[ehru] that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir their own and that the Pundit should come back from Kashmir in order to continue the valuable work he was doing for the Congress. The Pundit willingly returned though not without misgivings. The W. C. regret to find that his misgivings were true. From all accounts received by the W. C. things are not going on as they should in that State. Repression of a subtle type is going on. Reforms though promising-looking on paper are reported to be so only in name. The W. C. cannot conceive the possibility of substantial reforms whilst unchecked repression is going on in Kashmir. The W. C. therefore earnestly recommend to the Kashmir State they should invite the Congress to send a deputation of reputable men of unquestioned ability and impartiality to find whether there is repression of liberty in Kashmir, whether there is tampering with the voters and whether reforms promised are substantial enough to secure contentment and prosperity of the people of the State. In this recommendation the W. C. invite the co-operation of all the enlightened States of India and the people residing in the States.

¹ The National Conference under Sheikh Abdulla had launched in May, 1946, "Quit Kashmir" movement. The Sheikh and his supporters were arrested. Jawaharlal Nehru, when he attempted to enter the State was arrested. He returned from there after Azad gave him the assurance that the Working Committee would take up the cause of Kashmir. For the Working Committee resolution as passed, *vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution on Kashmir", 25-9-1946.

² The Working Committee met on September 25, 1946.

The W. C. have noted with regret the sentence on Sheikh Abdulla, the President of the Kashmir People's Congress, but they would consider his incarceration as a worthy sacrifice if it results in the achievement of the freedom for which he was labouring.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

336. TELEGRAM TO BAL D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

BAL KALELKAR
Y.M.C.A.
25 CHOWRANGEE ROAD
CALCUTTA

POSTPONEMENT MARRIAGE INEVITABLE OWING SUSHILA'S HEALTH
OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. COME DELHI IF IMPATIENT KNOW
CIRCUMSTANCES.

BAPU

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

337. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

KAKASAHEB KALELKAR
KAKAWADI
WARDHA

POSTPONEMENT MARRIAGE INEVITABLE FOR SUSHILA'S HEALTH OTHER
CIRCUMSTANCES. HAVE WIRED BAL ACCORDINGLY.

BAPU

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

338. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

You have been good enough to send me your good wishes on my so-called birthday.¹ Thereby hangs a tale. The Indian calendar date is observed only in Gujarat, Bombay, never outside. Everywhere else in India and outside it is the Roman calendar date. And the birthday began to be observed only when it became identified with the revival of the spinning-wheel in its modern form, making it the symbol of freedom of the masses through constructive means. Can you in any way identify yourself with the rebirth of the wheel ?

In any case I repeat my thanks for your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 219

339. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

Herewith is my proposal as promised. In it I have endeavoured to minimize all dislocation and loss to the Government save what abolition of the tax must involve. But while salt will no longer be a dutiable article, as a source of national instruction, refining a vital food adjunct of all dirt and increasing its output for man and beast will continue and make increasing progress from day to day. I hug the hope that loss of revenue as a burdensome tax will be more than made up by increase in the consumption of salt.

¹ Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar fell on September 22.

If you discover any flaw in this presentation, please tell me without the slightest hesitation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.

[ENCLOSURE]

Salt monopoly shall cease as from the first day of October 1946, and the duty on salt as from the first day of January 1947, subject to the exceptions and conditions hereinafter set forth.

The humanitarian clause on salt of the agreement popularly known as Irwin-Gandhi Pact shall be in full operation and all inspection of and interference with private manufacture of salt for evasion of duty shall forthwith cease.

Government control of salt works and factories hitherto maintained shall continue unabated till complete nationalization of salt industry is attained. These factories and works unlike private manufacture for sale shall carry duty up to 31st December.

In order to give full effect to the foregoing notification, any change in the Salt Act or rules or notices issued thereunder and required in law shall be made as soon as practicable but without interference with full effect being given to the foregoing notification.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 162-3

340. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 25, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter is full of ignorance and sentimentality.

What I am doing I am not doing in anger. The error you people committed became merely the means. I was awakened. I sensed luxury in my food. The changes I have made are natural to me. It is not at all an atonement. You should rather pray that it may become natural to me. If it does not, I shall revert to my old diet. I have not given up leafy vegetables. I take their juice. There is more of jaggery than fruit. If it becomes necessary to take wheat I shall take it. Your atonement does not lie in feeling distressed, but in being awake and alert. Nor does it lie in fasting or imposing hardships on

yourself. It lies rather in overcoming ignorance and sentimentality and giving yourself up to work with carefulness and detachment. Do not worry about me at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2497

341. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi spoke to the prayer audience on two matters, on Wednesday evening. First, he related how Shri Prakasam, Prime Minister of Madras, had undertaken to carry out three big schemes in that province, viz., the production of khadi with a view to clothe the entire province with it in time, the encouragement of village industries and the introduction of Nayee Talim in the villages.

Mr. Prakasam and his Ministry were also determined to root out the evil of untouchability, which was a special blot on the fair name of Madras, as also to bring in the much-needed reform of Prohibition. All these schemes had for many years been part and parcel of the Congress programme. To bring them into active existence, Gandhiji said, needed not to much intelligence as faith and determination, the faith and determination that enable man to die for a cause.

Congress leaders had to be true to their word and pure of heart. They must not be tempted by crores. They must be willing to go smiling to the gallows, if need be, for the sake of their principles. Textile mills had been started everywhere even before the last war. The provinces were being asked to start new ones. The machinery for them would be costly, but the money that was supposed to follow in their wake was the lure. Gandhiji explained how he thought textile mills were like poison for village India and therefore to be avoided.

People might wonder, Gandhiji explained, how he lived as a guest of a mill-owner—but these mill-owners had, in spite of his views, taken him in as one of their family, and non-violence demanded tolerance and love for all even if they differed from one. Shri Prakasam had promised Gandhiji that he would not be tempted with new textile mills for Madras and he would even hope to eliminate the existing ones as soon as enough khadi became available. For as Gandhiji said, mills and khadi could not go hand in hand. Khadi clothed everyone and put crores worth of cloth into the hands of the poor. The crores accruing from mills went into a few hands.

The second topic which Gandhiji referred to was food. Gandhiji said that Shri Rajendra Prasad had the heart of a king. He would share his last crust of bread with the

poor. The moment he heard a cry of distress from the South he got rice from wherever he could and promised them supplies. Gandhiji asked Shri Prakasam how his province could ever starve. He knew well the people of South India. His first introduction to the latter was in South Africa through a poor indentured labourer Balasundaram whose case he had sponsored. The poor man had his teeth knocked out. Later, when indentured Indians joined the Satyagraha movement he saw how clever and self-reliant they were. They only got a pound of bread and an ounce of sugar and during the resistance march he heard them singing and cooking a vegetable meal for themselves from soft edible leaves on the ground. There was a land which produced the banana, the coconut, the yam, tamarind, greens and chillies. What more did they want?

They with their intelligence and resourcefulness could easily learn to do without rice if they were asked to do so. Gandhiji said he had asked Shri Prakasam not to worry. Shri Rajen Babu and he (Mr. Prakasam) had promised he would not. It remained to be seen what strength he was given by God to make Madras self-sufficient. It behoved everyone today, wherever they were, to be self-reliant and resourceful, brave and willing, with intelligence and determination to face the food crisis. If all joined forces it would be well with India.

The Hindustan Times, 26-9-1946

342. TELEGRAM TO S. V. VENKATESWARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

VENKATESWARAN¹

TEXCOM

MADRAS

GANDHIJI APPROVES YOUR SCHEME² SUBJECT ANNOUNCE-
MENT THAT NO NEW MILLS WILL BE CREATED AS
EXPLAINED.

PYARELAL

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ S. V. Venkateswaran, Textile Commissioner, Madras

² The khadi scheme of the Madras Government which envisaged making villages as far as possible self-sufficient in cloth.

343. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

JAJUJI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA
WIRED APPROVAL VENKATESWARAN.¹

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. TELEGRAM TO BABA ANANDRAO DESHMUKH²

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

DESHMUKH
MINISTER
NAGPUR

SUCCESS PIECEMEAL PROHIBITION DOUBTFUL NEVERTHE-
LESS WISH SUCCESS. HOPE YOU ARE ATTENDING
EDUCATIONAL SIDE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 26, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have only today been able to go through your papers concerning Ratlam. It seems you had no choice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7701. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

¹Vide the preceding item.

² Minister for Excise in the Central Provinces

346. *LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN*

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI APPA,

I am ashamed to read about your illness. If we workers keep falling ill, the service that we render will also be sickly; and how can any illness come to a nature cure worker? Now, get well soon, and write to me in detail. For the sake of people like you Dr. Bhagawat's retirement from the profession would be interrupted, wouldn't it?

Blessings from
BAPU

APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN
P. O. LANJE
DT. RATNAGIRI

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

347. *LETTER TO POTTISRIRAMULU*

BHANGI NIVAS,
NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI SHRIRAMULU,

Bapuji got your letter. He says that for a Hindu to fast when Muslims are killed and thus to give up his life is quite wrong. One should not do this. About the temple of Nellore, Bapuji was under the impression that it had been thrown open to the Harijans. Do not be hasty. The Madras Government say that they are going to have the temple opened to Harijans.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 46

348. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI MAITHILISHARAN,

I got your curious letter and also the four lengths of khadi from the two friends. May I thank you?

I have lost quite a lot for the sake of the charkha, but I do not feel the loss. I have gained more. It can be a true gain only when I feel perfect non-attachment. But that appears to be remote. When my own people err I lose my patience. That must not happen. That is the message of the charkha. Let us see when this comes about. If I wish to live up to 125 years I must achieve this state [or non-attachment] soon.

You must introduce weaving too in the household; it is not difficult. I should have laid stress on it from the very beginning; I did not. Well, morning is when we wake up. Kabir was a weaver, yet he left behind immortal poetry. If all of you turn weavers your poetry will have much greater power.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

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

349. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi asked the prayer audience on Thursday evening to ponder over the fact that all was not well with them. News of stabbing affrays came daily whether from Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Dacca or elsewhere. This showed that they were not making any real progress. The latter could only be if they made God witness to every action of theirs. Mirabai's hymn that they had listened to during the prayer told them that God was the only one who could rid them of their woes and heal their pain. The devotee called God "Thou"—the most familiar of epithets—because all contact with Him was through love. It was up to man to own his own weakness. He was nothing without God's grace. If they leant on Him, then alone would one or the other party drop the sword.

A brave Bengali had put some questions to him, Gandhiji said, as to how they should act at such times as Calcutta had recently been through. His advice was that the highest duty would be for Hindu or Muslim to lay down his life without retaliation. Gandhiji said he was daily receiving letters from friends to say that some relative or other had died. He wrote to all that they should not mourn nor should they expect him to sorrow with them. Man is born to die. Death is the natural corollary to physical birth. It is the soul alone that is immortal. So, whether God sent them a natural death or whether they were killed by the assassin's knife, they must go smiling to their end.

Man cannot really kill anyone, said Gandhiji. That power rests in God's hands. If they realized this, there would not be knives and sticks seen all over the place, as they were today. Gandhiji, therefore, asked all to pray to God to rid this land of the present trial and give them the strength to live and die without killing.

The Hindustan Times, 27-9-1946

350. DISCUSSION WITH LORD WAVELL¹

September 26, 1946

Lord wavell left the Interim Government not a moment's respite. On the 26th September, he invited Gandhiji to meet him. In the course of their meeting he again returned to his pet theme :

VICEROY: The League must be brought in somehow.

GANDHIJI: The Congress is ready provided the League is willing to come in a straight way. Let Jinnah seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and come to an honourable understanding. It will be a great day if and when the Congress and the League come together in the Interim Government after a mutual understanding, without any mental reservations, and not to non-co-operate and fight.

V. The only stumbling-block is the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Interim Government. The Congress has undoubted right to nominate a nationalist Muslim. But in view of the fact that Jinnah is obstinate on that point, where is the harm in waiving it?

G. One may waive a right, one cannot waive a duty.

V. But if the League refuses to come in, what happens to the Constituent Assembly?

G. I admit that in that event the Constituent Assembl cannot properly meet. I must, however, make it clear that in this I represent nobody but myself.

¹ For Wavell's version of the discussion, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 26-9-1946.

V. Let us pursue this line of thinking a little further. If the Constituent Assembly is not called, what happens next?

G. The National Interim Government will carry on administration as it is doing at present. If you do not allow it to continue, you will expose your *bona fides* to suspicion.

V. How can we do that?

G. Then, do you want to retain power for yourself under this excuse? If you do that the whole world will condemn you. All you may insist on is that the Interim Government should include the Muslim League representatives. The Congress is prepared to do that.

V. For that I shall need a mandate from the British Cabinet. I can only act according to my instructions. I admit that my sympathies are with the League. My endeavour to bring in the League will continue.

Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase, Vol. I, p. 261

351. THE RIGHTS OF HARIJANS¹

I have received letters from Harijan friends and some have been to see me too. They feel that now that power is in the hands of the people, there should be more than one Harijanminister. According to the population ratio the number should be at least three, and they should be similarly represented in every department. They hold that it would be erroneous to argue that there are not enough able persons among them. Besides, it is not as if only able persons were taken in every province. Numerous instances of nepotism could be cited.

I am not ready to admit the correctness of all they say. My ideas in this regard are different. Man must pursue his duty, his dharma. Rights spring only from duties well done. Such rights alone are becoming and lasting. There are vast numbers of non-Harijans possessing ability. If they all claimed their right society would be disrupted. Performance of duty is open to every one. The field of service is immense. Only a few can become leaders and those who try to do so do fall behind. I know, however, that people do not act as I have suggested. There is generally a scramble for power and many have to be disappointed.

Holding the views I do, and having acted on them and made others act on them over the last fifty years, I have no interest left in

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 6-10-1946

fighting for personal rights. I shall therefore advise Harijan brethren that they should think only of their duties. They may be sure that rights will follow fast on the heels of duties done.

NEW DELHI, September 27, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 6-10-1946

352. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It occurs to me that I should reduce to writing my impressions of our talk of yesterday.¹

You were good enough to explain to me at length the result so far of your effort at peace-making between the Congress and the Muslim League. In the course of our conversation you told me that your leanings were towards the League. In your opinion there was left only one point of difference between the two parties, viz., the question of representation of a non-League Muslim out of the Congress quota. You recognized fully the reasonableness of the Congress position but you held that it would be an act of high statesmanship if the Congress waived the right for the sake of peace. I urged that if it was a question of waiving a right it would be a simple thing. It was a question of non-performance of a duty which the Congress owed to non-League Muslims. I entirely agreed with you on the proposition that it would be a great day if and when the Congress and the Muslim League came to a mutual understanding without reservations, mental or otherwise, and that it would be worse than useless if the two came together only with a view to fight each other. Moreover, I stressed the point that Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah should seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and try to come to an honourable understanding. If, however, the worst happened and the Muslim League boycott of the Constituent Assembly persisted and the British Government decided to discontinue the Constituent Assembly, I would hold it to be perfectly honourable. For,

¹*Vide* "Discussion with Lord Waveli", 26-9-1946 and Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji", 26-9-1946.

even though the Cabinet Mission had led one to suppose that they would continue the Constituent Assembly, I did not expect that they would or could continue it in spite of the successful boycott by one of the major parties. You then interpolated the remark that there were three parties, not only two. The States were the third party. You added that if the boycott persisted you had grave doubts as to whether the States would come in.

Though I might be alone to hold the view, I said that I could not envisage the framing of a workable constitution if one of the two parties withheld co-operation and force had to be used to keep the boycotters under restraint.

You then asked me to work out the logical conclusion of the discontinuance of the Constituent Assembly and asked me what I thought of the Interim Government. I told you that I had little doubt that no matter what happened, the National Government, having been once summoned, should continue to function unless they themselves felt unable, owing to their own incompetence or inability, to do so. I added that the Congress had put up its very best men, not at all in the spirit of gaining power for a party but in the spirit of selfless service of the whole nation. They were so considerate towards you and the League that they had hesitated to fill in the two Muslim seats in the hope of the League coming into the Interim Government. You doubted if you could contemplate the continuance of the Interim Government and that in any case you were only a servant of the Crown and that you would have to take your order from His Majesty's Government. Whilst I appreciated your stand, I said the continuance of a *bona-fide* National Government at the Centre was a vital necessity and that any departure from it would lay the British people open to the gravest suspicion on the part of the people of India and would be a tragedy of the first magnitude.

At the conclusion of our cordial talk, encouraged by you to say anything further if I wished to, I mentioned the Kashmir case about which the Working Committee had passed a very just resolution which, in the event of Kashmir State's obstinacy or notions of false prestige, might lead to far-reaching consequences and I asked for your friendly, as distinguished from legal, assistance to smooth out rough edges.

I had a talk last night with Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel and as a result I have decided to stay on here for some days, maybe even a month.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, pp. 604-6; also Gandhi's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 223-5

353. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,

September 27, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

Whilst I thank you for your letter I shall await your promised counter-proposal if any.¹ Our agreed idea, I thought, was that the Finance Minister should not be troubled until you and I had either come to an agreement or had unfortunately agreed to differ. This was in order to save him unnecessary labour.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., I.C.S.
SECRETARY, FINANCE DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI

Gandhi's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 164

¹Vide "Letter to H. Greenfield", 25-9-1946.

354. *LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR*

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. May you be happy in marriage and do great service. Come to Sevagram when you can. For the present I shall be here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 6258

355. *LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN*

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. APPA,

I have your postcard. In my opinion milk and fruit-juice is the diet for you, and of course rest. Maybe even a single day's fast without water will prove efficacious. If the bowels don't move having an enema might be necessary. But since Dr. Bhagawat has arrived there is no need for me to say anything more. Ramanama is of course there. I hope you have received the postcard I wrote yesterday.¹ It would be easier to guide you if the cause of the pain could be detected.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. APPA PATWARDHAN

P. O. LANJE

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

¹*Vide* "Letter to S.P. Patwardhan", 26-9-1946.

356. *LETTER TO HUSSEINBHAI*

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

BHAI HUSSEINBHAI,

I have your letter. I understand that you had to rush back owing to the demise of your aunt who was also your mother-in-law. Is there any need for condolence? Birth and death are companions. One follows the other. Then what is there to grieve over? Let us live as God ordains.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

357. *LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have given me really painful news. I hope Tara is all right now. Arun's fever is likely to be as you say. I can understand you being upset by the news of the death¹. But this is a common occurrence; it is inescapable. Whoever is born must also die. Vijayabehn has shown great courage and fortitude.

I am writing to Manilal and enclosing a copy of the letter with this.

I had a letter from Sita. Ask Ila to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Of Narayanbhai Patel, Vijaya M. Pancholi's father

358. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi at his after-prayer speech on Friday evening, narrated a curious incident of a magistrate resorting to hunger-strike in order to persuade people in his area to obey his orders.

This story had come to Gandhiji from an Indian State. Briefly, some goondas had looted some shops and even beaten some persons. The inhabitants were frightened and the shopkeepers closed their shops. A special magistrate was sent to restore order. He could not prevail upon the shop-keepers to open their shops in spite of the assurances he gave them. As the people were put to great inconvenience the magistrate, instead of resorting to the law and forcibly having the shops opened, undertook a fast. The effect on the populace was almost immediate and calm was restored and the culprits caught.

Gandhiji said he had never heard of such action by a magistrate. As a rule, officials were hard and rigid. It was, however, possible for the Viceroy or a Prince to act as this magistrate did. Officials differed only in rank. Perhaps people would say that it would be madness for them to do so. But Gandhiji did not think so. Many people today resorted to hunger-strike for all sorts of demands. Those were not proper fasts. This fast was undertaken to allay the sufferings of the poor people and melt the hearts of those who were putting them to trouble. It was, therefore, a big act if the story was true. It should be a matter of pride and joy that there was such a magistrate in India. He hoped there were many more.

Shri Suchetabehn having sung one of Gurudev's Bengali hymns at the prayer that day (Friday), Gandhiji referred to the desirability of having such gems translated into Hindustani. Mahadev Desai, who was a worshipper at the shrine of Gurudev's poetry, had done a translation of this particular 'bhajan' into Gujarati. There were few among them, but there ought to be many more, who should be familiar with Indian languages so that they could easily make translations of what was worth while. Gandhiji hoped to give them a Hindustani translation of the 'bhajan' the next day and to continue the practice when a non-Hindustani 'bhajan' was sung. He would not promise them printed translations. A servant of the people was a jealous trustee of the money he might raise.

The Hindustan Times, 28-9-1946

359. A DEED OF MERCY¹

A Pathan, an ex-I. N. A. man, now employed by a firm, tried to defend a lad of 10 years. His entreaty was in vain. The assailants stabbed both the boy and the Pathan. The boy died. The Pathan lives. The deceased boy's father offered Rs. 4,000 as a reward for his bravery. He refused saying he tried to do his duty and would not take the reward offered. Would that such instances were multiplied!

NEW DELHI, September 28, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

360. RIDING TWO HORSES²

There are a fair number of Tantis in Orissa. In law they are classed as Harijans and are known as Pan-Tantis. Many of them earn their living in Kolhan in Singbhum District. They do not call themselves Pan-Tantis but only Tantis. As a result they are not classed with Harijans in Bihar. Their leaders also, when entering office, do not identify themselves as Harijans. In my view what they do is right. Why should one desire to be classed as a Harijan? What is to be gained by it, unless it is the votes, Governmental assistance and scholarship from the Harijan Sevak Sangh for education? Why should one demean oneself for this? The very idea is debasing. Is one to debase oneself for bread?

Tantis do not have to be Pan-Tantis. Today we have popular governments. It is their duty to see that backward classes get the same deal as Harijans in the matter of education, etc.

It was the British Government that constituted the Harijans into a separate class. To the popular government all poor and illiterate people are one, or should be. It cannot distinguish between high and low, between this religion and that, for all are Indian.

The Tantis should not try to become Harijans. They should also not hanker after Government jobs. What will happen to the crores of other Indians will happen to them and others like them. I shall there-

¹ This appeared under the heading "Notes".

² A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 6-10-1946.

fore advise the Tantis that they should themselves work to improve their condition. Others also should help them.

NEW DELHI, September 28, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 6-10-1946

361. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

ALL MEETINGS STAND BUT AT DELHI.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of yesterday's date for which I thank you. As the conversation between us turned out to be important as I conceived it, I thought I would let you have my impressions so that you could correct me if I had erred. For I had to report the purport of our conversation to Pandit Nehru and other friends. Even during the Cabinet Mission's negotiations I had sent to Lord Pethick-Lawrence or Sir Stafford Cripps, as the case may be, my impressions of our talks and this was beneficial. As for your correction,¹ of course I accept it unhesitatingly. But my impression definitely was that at the very outset of your description of what had happened between you and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I understood you to say that although in some of his presentations he was unreasonable, your leanings were towards the Muslim League. But after your correction my impression loses all its value.

¹ The Viceroy in his letter of September 27 had said : "I definitely did not say that my leanings were towards the Muslim League."

I would like to have your other corrections also if you have the time. Although we may never make public use of our conversations, I have found, throughout my 55 years' stormy public life, written records of inestimable value for promoting mutual understanding and further conversation. But, of course, I am in your hands in this matter and your wishes shall prevail for I want to fulfil your "hope" that I "should use" my "influence for a settlement". For this cause, which I have at heart, I would naturally ever want to understand you correctly and fully if only because, of all the persons in India, you enjoy a unique position.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, pp. 618-9; also Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 226-7

363. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

DELHI,

September 28, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have both your letters. I have already taken such action as they indicated. You will have seen it from the newspapers. Only I have not been able to find time to write to you.

I keep getting heaps of cables from there. Some of them are contradictory. The situation there would appear to have changed further. If, though alone, you remain unconcerned and do not swerve from your duty because many do not join you, I shall consider your contribution to have been ample. Jawaharlalji directly deals with the questions concerning South Africa. We often meet. The Indian delegation to the U. N. O. will include the best people available. My going is ruled out. Jawaharlal may go if he can be spared. Rajaji's name also deserves to be considered. You should not worry on this score either. Ultimately everything will depend on what you people there are able to do. Have no doubts about that.

For the next fifteen days or more I shall be in Delhi. The massacres here are very painful. The outcome is in God's hands.

Sushila is intelligent and therefore must be giving you all the news. I could write pages, but do not have the time.

Medh has not met me yet. Nor has he met Sushila. Do not at all worry about Sushila and the children. Devdas is engrossed in his work. He meets me only occasionally.

I have replied to your question in *Harijan*.¹ You must have read it.

Cachhalia had come to see me. He left a favourable impression on me. He seems to be an able man. I think he is good enough to be made even a trustee. But you alone can be the ultimate judge. Nagadi also came and spent a fairly long time with me.

I am well. There is no cause for worry. The heat here has gone down considerably.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4991

364. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

September 28, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You must have seen from the newspapers that my going to Sevagram has been put off for the present, and the marriage also has been postponed. I shall, however, be happy if you and Jaisukhlal come over. Jaisukhlal writes that he will meet you in Bombay and then both of you will come here. I am here. I am heavily occupied with work.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹*Vide* "Tired of Satyagraha", 11-9-1946.

365. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR*

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

BAPA,

I have both your letters. I am dictating this in the midst of a great rush. I have been going through some literature about the Mahanadi. I have discussed the subject with many people, including Dr. Khosla.

Work among the Bihar Adivasis is complicated. At the moment I am held up in Delhi. I have already sent a circular wire calling for the meetings of all the Sanghs¹ in Delhi. You will be getting it too. So I take it you will shortly be coming here. We can then talk about the Adivasis. I would not so soon put you on the giant wheel of embarrassment, lest the old man that you are should reel!

I have gone through your letter about Tata. I have asked the Tata people a few questions in this regard.

SJT. AMRITLAL THAKKAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
KALI GALI
CUTTACK

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

366. *LETTER TO SHEELA*

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. SHEELA,

Your letter. Everyone did well. Do you ever observe silence during daytime while you are awake? You should do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHEELABEHN
NAWABHARATI
MEERUT

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

¹ Presumably the Khadi Gramodyog Sangh, Sarva Seva Sangh, Talimi Sangh, Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Adim Jati Seva Sangh, etc.

367. CRIMINAL WASTE¹

All the suggestions made by the writer can and should be adopted at once if a major disaster is to be averted.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

368. THOU TOO, BIHAR !

It is a grim irony of fate that Bihar, which did so well during the golden days of satyagraha should now disgrace itself by criminal lawlessness. If the news published is authentic, chain-pulling and stopping trains without cause has become a common occurrence in Bihar, with the result that the trains rarely run to time. Passengers consider it superfluous to buy tickets for train journeys. Under a national government, they argue, payment should be unnecessary. *Jai Hind* is regarded as a cry for loot and murder.

I do not know what truth there is in these charges which are as wild as they well can be. I know some parts of Bihar where persons do not distinguish between things lawful and unlawful. I have even heard the argument that I am largely responsible for the prevailing lawlessness, not only in Bihar but throughout India. I need hardly say that it is a thoughtless charge. The lawlessness, if it can be so described, that I have advocated is like prescribing wholesome and necessary food for the body. Behind my 'lawlessness' there is discipline, construction and well-being of society. It is an effective protest against unjust and injurious law or act. It can never take the form of selfish evasion of a duty. It is a duty never to pull the alarm chain except in well-defined and rare emergencies and never to travel without due payment for the class in which we travel. Loot, arson and murder have never been part of my programme of so-called lawlessness. The answer to the argument that whilst my programme may be good enough for a select few, it can never be for the masses, lies in the question whether I am expected to starve the masses of good food for fear of their taking bad or poisonous food.

I have purposely entered upon what appears to be a personal

¹ The article under this title by Amrit Kaur described the inefficiency with which stocks of foodgrains were handled and suggested ways of saving food.

note, not at all in self-defence, but in order to drive the point home that what is said to be going on in Bihar is administration of rank poison. That way lies not self-rule but licentiousness, not independence but helpless dependence, not life but suicide. Is Bihar of Brijkishore Prasad and Rajendra Prasad that I have known and lived in come to the pass described above? Let the public workers of Bihar not permit the senseless destruction of the fair work construction done with patient toil. Bihar, beware!

NEW DELHI, September 29, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

369. NOTES

CO-OPERATIVES IN KERALA

Sjt. Kelappan came to see me two days ago and informed me that co-operative movement was going strong and had become very popular in Kerala. If the societies are sound, it was heartening news that Sjt. Kelappan gave me. I, however, expressed my serious doubts. The secret of successful co-operative effort is that the members must be honest and know the great merit of co-operation and it must have a definite progressive goal. Thus holding a certain sum of money in co-operation for the sake of making more money by charging exorbitant rates of interest is a bad goal. But co-operative farming or dairying is undoubtedly a good goal promoting a national interest. Such instances can be multiplied. I wonder what these numerous Kerala societies are. Have they honest inspectors who know their work? It may be mentioned that such movements have often proved disastrous when the management has been dishonest and the goal questionable.

GURUVAYUR

Who does not know this historic struggle? Sjt. Kelappan had threatened to fast for the opening of this temple to Harijans.¹ He suspended it on my strong advice and assurance that I would fight for it. Then followed a successfully carried out referendum which resulted in an overwhelming vote of caste Hindus in favour of the opening.

¹*Vide* Vol. LI

But the Zamorin protested helplessness. Later, I went to Guruvayur and a great public meeting signified its decided opinion in favour. I had the pleasure too of meeting the Zamorin who courteously reiterated his helplessness. Other Kerala temples have been opened. Travancore has set a brilliant example by its great State proclamation. The Minakshi and Palni temples are open. Why should Guruvayur yet remain closed? Surely no satyagraha should now be necessary? It is up to the Provincial National Government to see that the opinion of the great bulk of the temple-going public is not defeated by legal technicalities. It is a thousand pities that even at this time of day there are temples in India which shut out Hindus, miscalled Untouchables.

NEW DELHI, September 29, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

370. *LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA*

NEW DELHI,

September 29, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It is very good of you to want to do something for the charkha class. So far as I am concerned, the delicacy of your gesture is equal to the best you can do. However, in order to please yourself, I suggest a small donation to the cause of the removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

M. W. H. DE SILVA

(CEYLON REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

371. LETTER TO PHEROZE

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1946

BHAI PHEROZEBHAI,

I have your letter. Why in English? Have you forgotten your Gujarati? And why are you staying in bed? Why are you subsisting on your friend's sympathies? What did you do all these years?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

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

372. HAND-SPINNING v. MILL-SPINNING

Some time before the Provincial Ministries throughout India were formed, I had heard that quotas of spindles were offered to the Provinces on pain—if a particular province did not take its quota—of the refused quota being transferred to the other provinces. Now that the Provincial administrations are in full swing, the question has arisen as to whether these Governments can admit new mills and, at the same time, promote hand-spinning on a national scale. My answer is emphatically in the negative, if the encouragement of hand-spinning is meant to be sincere. Behind the India-wide quota is the fundamental belief that mills alone can and must supply India's needs for cloth and that hand-spun may be permitted to exist for the fastidious few. That was not how hand-spinning was conceived in Congress resolutions and that certainly is not the way that the A. I. S. A. has progressed. If the national Governments have come to the conclusion that hand-spinning has and should have no future, they should not waste a single rupee along the lines followed by the A. I. S. A. If, on the other hand, they share the belief of the A. I. S. A., they should forgo their quota even if the forgoing should involve some initial loss. The loss will be demonstrably for the future gain of the masses.

Another question has arisen as to why the Working Committee should not, at any rate, declare a uniform policy to be followed by all the Congress Provinces. There is nothing to prevent the Committee from doing so. But it is open to them to say that the Congress policy has been enunciated times without number. Each Province has to

measure its own belief in the Congress scales. The Working Committee might not go into details.

Then why may not the Central Government lay down a policy? The answer is obvious. The Central Government represents all India and all parties. It may not, therefore, lay down any exclusively Congress policy, much less a policy in a matter wholly within the jurisdiction of the Provinces. It would be an unwarranted interference with the rights of Provinces.

Looked at from all points of view, in the matter of khadi as of prohibition and other subjects allotted to the Provinces, the Provinces must evolve along their own lines. They will miserably fail if they look to the Working Committee to guide them. The Central Government simply has not the right, even if it had the unholy wish.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946

Harijan 6-10-1946

373. *SCAVENGERS' LOT*

Q. You have doubtless written on this subject before but I would like you to say a word again in regard to the duty of municipal and other authority as well as private employers in the matter of providing Bhangis with the proper means of scavenging. Unless water-tight iron pails are provided, for example, the drippings during the rainy season, through baskets or gunny bags, fall on the unfortunate workers. All scavenging should really be able to be done without soiling the hands or any part of the body. If this were so, the work would assume a dignity which it does not carry at the moment. Along with the supply of proper means of scavenging, sweeping, etc., the Bhangi needs instruction. It is a matter which local and provincial authority should take up in the cause of cleanliness.

A. I would advocate bye-laws requiring authorized receptacles, brooms, etc., which would avoid physical handling of dirt and would also prescribe simple working costume. Inspectors or overseers will be trained for the humane and sanitary work instead of being expected to exact work anyhow. The result of the present system is maximum of insanitation and minimum of work plus bribery, corruption and bad manners.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

374. HOW?

A correspondent writes :

You are aware of the backward States of the Simla Hills. The Raja Saheb of Rampur Bushahr is a man of orthodox views. Recently a young man of a high caste Hindu family married a Koli girl. The Lambardar of the village (Mandhol) brought the matter to the notice of the ruler. The Raja Saheb has sentenced both husband and wife to six months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 each. Such action is intolerable and retards progress. Some others who were contemplating inter-caste marriages have been deterred.

Must we wait till autocracy is wiped out?

The rule of one man over many is intolerable. It must end. How is the question. The way is for the many to begin to live. To cut off the head of one ruler is easy enough. Remember the legend of Ravana. He had ten heads. As soon as one was cut off, another popped up in its place. The moral is that no cutting off of heads becomes necessary in the presence of a living Demos. The one will respond and submit. In the given instance the couple will cheerfully undergo the sentence. Only many should follow their example, if the tie is not lustful bondage but a bond of love born out of the zeal for reform. If the reformers do not wish to suffer imprisonment, they should migrate to a free place where they can live without let or hindrance.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946

Harijan, 6-10-1946

375. TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

NEW DELHI,

September 30, 1946

MAVALANKARJI

AHMEDABAD

SO FAR I AM CONCERNED FOURTEENTH SUITABLE.
WIRING SHYAMLAL.¹

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* the following item.

376. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA
MAVALANKAR DESIRES FOURTEENTH KASTURBA EXECUTIVE.
HAVE WIRED ACCEPTANCE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

377. TELEGRAM TO ZAMINDARI AND
MALGUZARI SABHA

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

ZAMINDARI AND MALGUZARI SABHA
NAGPUR
ADVISE SEEK APPOINTMENT AFTER RETURN WARDHA.¹

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

378. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

“VALMIKI MANDIR”,
READING ROAD,
September 30, 1946

I gave nearly one hour to Avinashilingam and probably over an hour next day to reading the papers you left with me on Basic Education and Village Industries. Both present an attractive though, in my opinion, a defective and expensive programme. I would like to warn you against going in for expensive programmes. That will betray a woeful lack of a knowledge of the realities in the 7,00,000 villages. It is not money so much as men that we want and if you have sincere

¹ The Sabha had held a meeting on 22nd at Nagpur to oppose the abolition of zamindari and its representatives had sought an interview with Gandhiji.

honest workers who will work for love of service but not for love of money, success is assured. And you will get ten-fold return for the little money that you will have to spend.

Your educational programme is, in my opinion, far too ambitious. Basic Education cannot be started piecemeal—and to introduce a craft in the ordinary curriculum is to defeat the basic fact, viz., whole education through a craft, for Indian cotton craft. This is wholly different from education plus a craft or even spinning. Spinning you have to introduce in all schools and colleges, if the Khadi Scheme is to make headway. Shri Aryanayakum came in today. I must show this to him and let him write to you separately.

As to village industries, have you looked at the appendices? If not, just see and you will realize the absurdity. Haste is waste. Think well before you act.

SHRIT. PRAKASAM
PREMIER
MADRAS

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

379. LETTER TO NIRMALA

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, September 30, 1946

CHI. NIRMALABEHN,

I cannot bear your still being bed-ridden. You have faith, you have humility—how can such a one contract a disease? It is a puzzle for one like me. It makes short work of my learning. If I was to stay in one place I would ask you to come to me and do what I can towards your recovery. Will it ever be?

Well or unwell, “drink the joy of Ramanama”.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. NIRMALABEHN
(THE) RETREAT
SHAHI BAGH
AHMEDABAD

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

380. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

Wherever I may be I am always surrounded by an atmosphere of spinning and khadi. I informed you the day before yesterday that another charkha class would be held here from today for seven days. This time the teachers are better prepared and all the accessories for teaching are also available. It was intended not to admit more than 30 persons at a time to the classes. But 38 came this morning and 34 this afternoon. There were 21 men and 17 women in the morning and 14 men and 20 women in the afternoon.

This shows that there is enough faith and enthusiasm in a certain section of the public. Is it then the fault of those who are responsible for teaching or the present age that spinning has not become universal? To put the blame on the times in which we live shows lack of courage. Faith and diligence should rise above circumstances. If all work were to be carried out on this basis and in this spirit, God would surely reward our labours.

Gandhiji requested those who had charkhas in their homes and were not using them to make them over to him either for payment or as gifts. More wheels were needed for the classes. Those whose charkhas were not in working order should take them to the Khadi Bhandar, Chandni Chowk, where they would be set right.

The Hindustan Times, 1-10-1946

381. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*September 1946*]²

Again you are making a mistake. The reason for my saying no is different. There is considerable danger in this. Instead of peace there can be rioting. I do not have the time now to explain. Have faith in my words if you can and forget about the thing. Service lies in

¹ It being a silence day, this message, which was in Hindi, was read out at the meeting.

² This was obviously written when the addressee was in Delhi with Gandhiji, i. e., in September, 1946.

refraining. If you want to sleep at Devdas's, you may go there. Eat, play, spin and read the Koran. Do you tell beads?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 687

382. *LETTER TO HANNAH*

AS AT SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,¹

INDIA,

October 1, 1946

MY DEAR HANNAH²,

Manilal tells me you have not yet shed your sadness. I had hoped that you had left all your sadness in India as lumber to be thrown away. Those like you who believe in God should have no sorrow. When the life is wholly dedicated to Him, we live a consecrated life as trustees to do His will and to work for Him. Therefore, you have to live free from care. If you would be worthy of Herman you cannot afford to worry. Choose some field of service. It will leave you not time for worry. All enjoyment has to be derived from service. If you could have kept well here, I would have asked you to come and share the life with me. But that cannot be.

Tell me all about your activities and your health.

This goes care of Manilal as I do not know your address.

All whom you came in touch with whilst you were in India often think of you with affection.

Love.

BAPU

HANNAHBEHN
C/O MANILAL GANDHI
S. AFRICA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Permanent address

² Niece of Herman Kallenbach, Gandhiji's friend and co-worker in South Africa

383. *LETTER TO SAROJ NANAVATI*

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. SAROJ,

Just now, after the morning prayer, Kakasaheb tells me that today is your birthday. He says that the few lines you sent for me were left behind there.

May your devotion to service go on increasing and Raihana's with yours, or yours with Raihana's. You may be separate in body, but are not you one in spirit?

Blessings to both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10465

384. *LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA*

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

BHAI JAMSHEDJI,

Tulsiram is an admirer of yours. that is why I was drawn towards him. He pleaded with me to write something to you. I told him that I knew you better than he did. You are dedicated to service. May your work of service grow.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JAMSHED MEHTA

KARACHI

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

385. *LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI*

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

I am at present held up here. The meetings¹ will be held here. So, even though the meeting of the Agents may not take place it will be good if you come over about that time. We can then have talks. If you want to come even earlier you may do so whenever you please.

Preserve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

386. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

You sent no letter with Deo. I am wearing only your dhoti. Now it will be one day yours and one day Avantikabai's.

I have been detained here. I may leave by the 20th. You should get well and be of steady mind. The sheep that is to be sacrificed should be free from blemish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 530

¹ Of the various Sanghs

387. *LETTER TO HOSHIARI*

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. I am glad that you have taken up weaving. If you learn all the processes relating to cotton everything will be all right.

My stay here is getting prolonged.

Blessings from
BAPU

HOSHIARIBEHN
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

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

388. *LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD*

October 1, 1946

BHAI KALKA PRASAD,

Please sell khadi worth Rs. 50 to Tulsiram. You may assume that he has tendered the necessary yarn. However, please charge him the price of the yarn.

M. K. GANDHI

GANDHI ASHRAM
CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

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

389 *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*¹

[October 1, 1946]

In the song that has just been sung, the poet says that he who loses the self finds God. If we understand its significance, we really need nothing more. This is what the spinning-wheel teaches us. You

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 7-10-1946

might ask how it is possible to find God through the spinning-wheel. As I have told you before, the spinning-wheel enables us to identify ourselves with the millions. The millionaires imagine that money can bring them anything in the world. But it is not so. At any moment death might come and snuff them out. Some are being stabbed daily but losing one's life that way is not the same thing as shedding the self. One has to learn to efface the self or the ego voluntarily and as a sacrifice in order to find God. The spinning-wheel rules out exclusiveness. It stands for all, including the poorest. It, therefore, requires us to be humble and to cast away pride completely.

It holds the key to swaraj. But can one spin for swaraj and yet not be filled with subtle pride? If pride is there, spinning won't bring one the swaraj of the spirit or the realization of God.

When the self is shed the change will be reflected in our outward behaviour. It will show in the least of our little acts. The whole outlook on life will be changed. Everything we do will be undertaken not for the self but for all.

The hymn goes on to say that to find God one need not go out anywhere. He resides in our hearts. But if we instal the self or the ego there we dethrone poor God. I have here used the epithet 'poor' advisedly. For, although He is the King of kings, Most High Almighty, yet He is at the beck and call of anyone who has reduced himself to zero and turns to Him in uttermost humility of spirit. Let us then become poor in spirit and find Him within ourselves.

Harijan, 13-10-1946

390. MESSAGE TO TAN YUN-SHAN

[On or after *October 1, 1946*]¹

Is not silent prayer better than a written message ?

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

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's letter of October 1, 1946 to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

391. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

Express

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

SUSHILA¹ SAYS DIFFICULT CONVENE MEDICAL MEETINGS
NOW. THEREFORE ADVISE POSTPONEMENT AGENTS
MEETINGS ALSO.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

392. LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I shall treasure your cheque for the cause of untouchability. May your work in India result in bringing the two countries together as never before.

Yours sincerely,
M. K.GANDHI

M. W. H. DE SILVA
CEYLON REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

393. LETTER TO DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your kind letter of 18th Sept[ember] only three or four days ago. You know why it came into my hands so late.

¹ Dr. Sushila Nayyar

You are more Sudhir's director than I. He was wanted by the Cabinet Mission and he went at their instance. My part consisted in not dissuading him from going. In any case I have never thought that his youth went against a man. But let Sudhir's work tell its own tale. He is due on Saturday next.

You have given me interesting information about your activities. I am jealous of your youth.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

394. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 2, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is so much change in my ideas. The teacher should not look upon his pupil as his wife. But you were helpless. One's nature cannot be checked. So I have decided not to stand in your way. I wished Manu would come. I naturally wanted to know her mind better, and dispel her fears. I have decided not to stop her in any way if she wants to marry. I will not perform the marriage. Beyond that I shall put no restrictions. This is my position.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

395. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have received the other clothes sent by you. Much work had been done. I see ignorance in your letter. Ability comes from doing work. There you eat without earning your bread. All this shows that you write for the sake of writing. Do go to Borkamata and do

whatever work you can. Only God knows where our good lies. How can man know God's will? Therefore one should go where one's heart may lead. After all God resides only in the heart.

Sankaran will come with Jajuji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 531

396. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

NEW DELHI,

October 2, 1946

CHI. RAMULU,

Now all your letters to me are in English. It is not good. Do not go about with a placard hung round your neck. The thoughts confined to the placard are valueless.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 107

397. LETTER TO PANDURANG PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,

October 2, 1946

BHAI PANDURANG,

I have your letter. I do hope that Appasaheb will recover. You did well in writing to me. I shall be more careful. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PANDURANG PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN

SAHITYA MANDIR

RATNAGIRI

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

398. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

It is as though God had sent us a special message in the form of this song.¹ In truth the springs of India's life are drying up. It would be folly to suppose that because there is a Congress Government at the Centre all is well. I shall not dwell on the stabbings that are going on, shocking as they are. To illustrate to you how the springs of our life are drying up, I shall say something on what is going on in Goa.

Goa is a small island. It is an integral part of India. News has come that Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia has been arrested immediately on his arrival there and placed in solitary confinement. A few days ago Shri Kakodkar was arrested for having raised his voice for civil liberty and sentenced to imprisonment for nine years. It is being said that he may be deported.

Dr. Lohia is a learned man. I may not agree with his views but this does not mean that I can remain untouched by his case. You must all be as much pained as I am by the arrest of Dr. Lohia and the happenings in Goa. I carried on some correspondence with the authorities in Goa, but it was infructuous. To tell any Indian that he cannot enter Goa is as insulting as to tell me that I may not enter any particular part of India. Goa is as much a part of India as Kashmir or any other State. It is intolerable that Dr. Lohia should be treated as foreigner and denied the right of entry into Goa.

Let us see what steps Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who has donned the crown of thorns, and Lord Wavell take to see that this high-handedness on the part of the Goa authorities is stopped.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 3-10-1946

¹ A song written by Rabindranath Tagore and sung at the congregation. Translated, its first line read : "When the springs of life are drying up, do then come as a shower of mercy."

399. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1946

In the context of the forthcoming Congress Presidential election, some friends tell me, it is being said that I am in favour of Acharya Kripalani being elected. I have also been shown a newspaper report to this effect. Although I do have my own personal views in the matter I have told friends who came to consult me not to cite my name in any way in connection with the election. It is my firm view that Congressmen should exercise their vote in this election without being influenced by any other Congressman or by those who are not members of the Congress, such as myself. Congressmen should consider what is best in the interest of the country and vote accordingly.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 4-10-1946

400. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1946

Gandhiji expressed satisfaction that the second charkha class was going on better than the first. There were fewer absentees. They had only three more days left, but if the will was there much work could be done in three days.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter he had received asking him how they should celebrate *Dussehra*. Should they take out a procession and eat and drink and be merry? Yesterday he had told them that the fountain of life had gone dry. Could there be rejoicing in a country where daily stabbings were taking place and brother hated brother? *Dussehra* was the celebration of Rama's victory over Ravana, but this victory was not achieved by violence.

When Vibhishana asked Shri Ramachandra how unarmed, unshod, without any armour, he was going to defeat the heavily-armed and mighty Ravana with his chariots, Rama's reply was that it was faith and purity that would win the battle. His bow was his self-control. His victory was the victory of good over evil. Gandhiji, therefore, advised the people to spend *Dussehra* quietly at home in prayer if they had understood the real meaning of religion and *Dussehra*.

Gandhiji added that he was daily receiving letters of abuse saying that his

doctrine of non-violence was emasculating Hindus, that he was no Mahatma, that he was injuring them and leading them astray. He had never laid claim to being a Mahatma. He was an ordinary mortal as anyone of them. He hoped he had never injured anyone. What he told them he told them for their own and universal good. He had said that if they could not act non-violently they should defend themselves violently rather than be cowards.

But the ability to die smiling at the hands of a brother without any retaliation, physical or mental, was the highest bravery. In no case was it right to spoil for a fight. That was no self-defence. It was bad for them, bad for the country and utter disloyalty to their leaders. It was hindering them in their march towards swaraj.

Gandhiji reiterated that today no one had a right to feast and eat one morsel more than necessary. If they behaved in a disciplined manner, India would live. If they did not, then India would die and they would be unable to hold their heads high.

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1946

401. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

SATISBABU

KHADIPRATISHTHAN

15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

DONT WORRY ABOUT ACCOMMODATION. WIRE TRAIN DATE
ARRIVAL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

402. *AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONGRESS, THE
MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL*¹

October 4, 1946

The Congress does not challenge and accepts that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles they alone have today an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India. But the Congress cannot agree that any restriction or limitation should be put upon the Congress to choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress as their representatives.

II. It is understood that all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case.

I accept this formula.

M. K. GANDHI

HAMIDULLAH [NAWAB OF BHOPAL]

SHOAIB QURESHI

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. III, p. 282

¹ This was intended to enable the Muslim League to join the Interim Government, which was to consist of 14 members—6 from the Congress, 5 from the League and 3 representatives of minorities to be nominated by the Viceroy. Jinnah put forth the condition that there should be no Muslim among the nominees of the Congress. Gandhiji therefore accepted the formula laid down in the agreement. As it was, it found no approval from other Congress leaders, notably Nehru, who found the formula “not happily worded”. In a letter to Jinnah he was prepared to concede to the Muslim League “the right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognized the Congress as the authoritative organization representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress.” He further suggested that no formula was necessary. In the event the Congress list contained the name of Asaf Ali and the League nominated Jogendranath Mandal.

403. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. SUMI,

I am glad you are comfortable there. You will do as much as you can, with due regard for your health, and go forward. That is what I hope.

I had certainly hoped to be in Sevagram this time¹ but I am held up here till the 20th on account of the work. Let us see when I can get away.

Let me have news from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUM. SUMITRA R. GANDHI
KHALASI LINE
NAGPUR

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

404. LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. You have my letter with you. You can make use of it in my absence so that the apparent contradiction will disappear. You should therefore quietly go on doing your work and improve your health.

Manu is at present here. Jaisukhlal too was here; he left last night. Manu will stay on for some more time.

Write to me what you decide.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Presumably for Charkha Jayanti

405. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I agree that you should resign. But I see a number of difficulties in pursuing nature cure work in Khurja at present. I have not taken any decision yet. When you come here I shall understand your mind better. Then we shall decide. So come on Monday the 7th at 8 p. m. If in the meanwhile some other work crops up you will have to wait.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 370

406. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

It is impossible for me to send individual acknowledgments to the senders in India and abroad of numerous messages of birthday greetings. I must content myself with sending them my thanks through the courtesy of the Press.

The Hindustan Times, 5-10-1946

407. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

In the song that has been sung Mirabai says that she has bought Govind. There is a similar song by her in Gujarati, too. How can one buy God? Not with money, but with love certainly. The yarn lovingly drawn by a student of the spinning class can find God. Our Rashtrapati yesterday said that Afghanistan was in need of cloth. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as President of the Congress, is not only our

Rashtrapati, but he is also our Prime Minister. We cannot shut our eyes to the needs of others. Today we have to confess we have gone berserk and are fighting each other. But in 1920 we had resolved to fight the British with truth and non-violence. We achieved our freedom through non-violence and the whole world is congratulating us. How then can we be enemies of anyone? Badshah Khan is a Pathan. His Pathan brethren from across the border have asked us for cloth. It is India's duty to give them this help. This river of love can and should flow from India. Time was when India produced all the cloth it needed and more, when its muslin was famous the world over. Today, owing to our laziness, we go naked in our own country. By plying the charkha we can not only meet all our requirement of cloth but also that of other countries. It is to be regretted that there are not enough charkhas for this second charkha class. Carpenters have forgotten the art of making charkhas, though they make any number of chairs and tables. But we shall teach spinning on *taklis*.

I appeal to everyone to spin and bring the yarn to me. I shall have it woven to provide cloth to those who need it.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 5-10-1946

408. *ROWDYISM RUN RIOT*

A correspondent from Jubbulpore describes the rowdyism exhibited by a section of the Hindus at a benefit performance in aid of the local convent school for girls. A Hindu friend actually organized the show. The actors in the little drama were all girls from the convent. Towards the end there was a scene in which an orphaned girl, tired of the world, was praying to God. Angels appeared and advised her to have faith in her Christ and the play ended with a hymn in praise of Jesus. This was the signal for pandemonium. The Hindus who created the disturbances raised a hue and cry against Christianity, the organizer who tried to speak was unable to make himself heard and money for the tickets was demanded back. The writer asks whether this scene could have taken place if the hymn sung had been in praise of Shri Krishna instead of Jesus.

If what the correspondent says is true, the behaviour described was wholly unworthy. It betrayed extreme intolerance. Those who do

not like things that do not coincide with their notions need not patronize them but it is ungentlemanly to behave like less than men when things are not to their taste.

NEW DELHI, October 5, 1946

Harijan, 13-10-1946

409. QUESTION BOX¹

IS NOT WORK WORSHIP?

Q. Would it not be better for a man to give the time he spends in worship to the service of the poor? If a man did this, would worship be still necessary for him?

A. I sense mental laziness and unbelief in the question. The biggest of *karmayogis* never give up devotional singing and worship. Of course as a general principle it can be said that selfless service itself is worship and those who engage in it do not need any other kind of worship. But in truth *bhajans*, etc., are a help in the work of service and keep the awareness of God ever fresh.

HOW TO REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY

Q. It is no doubt good to provide education to Harijans, to let them use public wells and visit temples, but really Harijans should not be segregated in *cherries* and the like. Then alone can untouchability be uprooted.

A. It feels good to say that Harijans not having separate quarters will be a sign of the vanishing of untouchability. Even at present, so far as I know, there is no law compelling Harijans to live in locations especially built for them. Only the evil custom segregates them. The custom is going, though rather slowly. It is the duty of all to do away with it. It is a question of moving the hearts of people. Such an enterprise can succeed only with *tapascharya*. Tulsidas says :

Through the power of *tapa* Brahma created the world.

Through the power of *tapa* Vishnu sustains the world.

Tapa, O Parvati, is the basis of all creation.

Go and do *tapa*, knowing this in heart.

The day someone is born who has this power everything will become easy and dharma will be saved.

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

IS RAMANAMA THE SAME AS INCANTATIONS?

Q. My nephew was ill. The relatives did not give him any medical treatment. They called in medicine-men and resorted to incantations. One cannot say that these did any good. Maybe your mother did the same in your case. Now you talk of Ramanama. Could Ramanama be the same as incantations?

A. I have, in one form or another, answered this question before. But it is as well to do so again. So far as I can recollect, my mother did give me medical treatment. But she certainly believed in incantations too. I do not. I have a few learned friends who believe in them, but I cannot have this faith. I can therefore categorically say that incantations have no connection whatever with my Ramanama. I have said that to utter Ramanama or any other name of God from the heart is to seek succour from the supreme power. What that Power can do no other power can. The atom bomb is as nothing compared with it. It is the cure for all pains. It must, however, be admitted that it is one thing to talk about uttering Ramanama from the heart, quite another to do it. Nevertheless, however difficult it may be, it is the highest thing in life.

NEW DELHI, October 5, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

410. A GOOD WAY

The following is the gist of a correspondent's letter from Dalhousie :²

If this story is true, it just shows what a mighty weapon fasting can be in the armoury of the official class.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 6-10-1946.

² Not reproduced here. It described how in a certain village shops were closed in protest against terrorism by some goondas and how a magistrate had them opened by resorting to a fast. *Vide* "Speech of Prayer Meeting", 27-9-1946.

411. WELLS THROWN OPEN

Shri Kalyanji Mehta writes¹ :

It is a good thing that the wells were thrown open. But more than that it is a matter of shame that Harijans are still not able to draw water from numerous wells. The burden of shame will be lightened if after having come to know about it, others are inspired to throw open the rest of the wells.

Some went in for inter-dining. While congratulating them one can't help commenting—only so few!

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

412. THE DANGER OF 'VANASPATI'²

In the *Harijan* of 14-4-1946 you have supported Sardar Datar Singh on the question of 'vanaspati'. His article contains several suggestions which, if acted upon, can check the evil. But the evil is spreading. In the Punjab, in Akola, Shegaon and Kurnool, permission has actually been given for starting new factories. At least this should be stopped. In a province like the Punjab the Government has not even ordered the colouring of 'vanaspati'.

The above is the substance of a letter I have received. I have put 'Vanaspati' in quotes. Its full name is 'vanaspati ghee'. Vanaspati, which means flowers, fruits, leaves and so on, is always good. But when it becomes the name of something else, it becomes a poison. Vanaspati is not and never can be ghee. If ever it were to become ghee, I would be the first to loudly proclaim that there is no further need for real ghee. Ghee or butter is the fat drawn from the milk of an animal. Selling vegetable oil in the form, or in the name, of butter or ghee is a great fraud perpetrated on India. It is a betrayal of India. It is the duty of the businessmen of India not to sell any oil or any other product in the name of ghee. Certainly no Government should

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that in Surat District many wells had been thrown open to the Harijans and a few leading persons had participated in a dinner to which Harijans had been invited.

² A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

countenance such sale. The crores of India today get neither milk nor buttermilk, neither ghee nor butter. The result is that people go on dying and becoming more and more enfeebled. Human body, it would appear, needs meat and milk or milk products, such as curds, buttermilk, ghee and butter. Anyone who deceives people in this regard or countenances deception of them is an enemy of India.

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

413. DOLA-PALKI¹

The Hindus of the Garhwal District are so ignorant that they do not permit Harijan bridegrooms to ride in a *palki* or any conveyance and pass by temples or through public squares or the residential quarters of high caste Hindus. An evil custom like this should not be tolerated any more. A friend has even sent me a draft of a law, the passing of which might make these ignorant people see reason. This should be certainly done. In any case, whenever a Harijan bridal procession is taken out, these unfortunate people should be afforded police protection. The authorities should also distribute notices that no one is to be prevented from riding in a *palki* or using any other conveyance, and that anyone obstructing such a procession will be punished.

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

414. TELEGRAM TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 6, 1946

SARALADEVI

CARE BUSINESS

AHMEDABAD

YES CERTAINLY YOU CAN REACH EIGHTH OR WHENEVER
YOU WISH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. NOTE ON INTERIM GOVERNMENT

[On or before *October 6, 1946*]¹

1. No reference to the Viceroy at any stage on any matter.
2. League to nominate all League quota of Muslims whenever vacancy occurs.
3. Congress to nominate other members including other minorities including nationalist Muslims.
4. Communal safeguards shall be decided by joint consultation subject to reference to arbitration in point of difference.
5. Vice-President to be from the Congress.
6. The Chairman of the inner cabinet to be the Leader of the House.
7. The Congress would like Q. A. to join the I. G.

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

¹ From the points listed in the note it is evident that they were set down by Gandhiji to be amplified by Jawaharlal Nehru in his letter to M. A. Jinnah, dated October 6, 1946; *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Note on Interview with Gandhiji and Nehru", 27-8-1946.

416. *UNCERTIFIED BUT GENUINE*

The above two letters¹ are from blood sisters. That both of them are very sincere is clearly shown by their letters. Some may even recognize them. I have had to delete as much I could to conceal their identity.

I have also received other similar letters. I can also understand the anguish of those who write in English and Hindustani. Even then I have to adhere to my dharma as I understand it. I should therefore like to stick to what I have written. It is possible that my writing is not very clear. In fact no writing is perfect because writing circumscribes the thought of the speaker or the writer. It is impossible to convey the complete thought through speech or writing.

Whether khadi is certified or not, as long as it is khadi ideologically it is superior to mill cloth.² Mill cloth should be discarded even if compared to khadi it is cheap, soft and fine.

Those who buy cloth in the name of khadi knowing that it is not khadi are hypocrites. My writings are not meant for them. Genuine khadi even if it is uncertified is preferable to mill cloth.

The lady who, because of the purity of her thought returned empty-handed from a store selling uncertified khadi commands our respect.

There is a saying in English "Buyers Beware". If a buyer is cautious he will never be deceived. He will make sure before buying anything. Such a person will read my articles again and again and till he is thoroughly convinced he will not act on them. A time may come when the Charkha Sangh will stop giving the certificates. What will happen to khadi then? Will not all khadi be uncertified then? Among stores dealing in khadi some would be honest and some dishonest. A buyer will buy khadi from the store he prefers.

A businessman should be honest and should not sell uncertified khadi.

The other letter deals with the office-bearers of the Congress. It

¹ Not translated here. One of the correspondents had said that had to return empty-handed from an uncertified khadi store because it pricked her conscience. The other had complained about the corruption in the Congress.

² *Vide Vide* "Uncertified Khadi v. Mill Cloth", 12-9-1946

is a sad story. The corruption among us is responsible for the corruption that has crept into khadi. Those who have remained pure in spite of being in the midst of corruption, have to remain so. One needs steadfastness and generosity to cultivate that art. Is not being strict with oneself and generous to others the way to get rid of corruption?

NEW DELHI, October 7, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

417. TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

KUMARAPPA

MAGANWADI

WARDHA

BHANGI COLONY SUITABLE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

418. *LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P.
RAILWAY*

“VALMIKI MANDIR”, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

THE GENERAL MANAGER
GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter No. 20435-V 395 of 28th ultimo.¹

My suggestion is that the driver himself should be asked as to what article or articles of use he would want and you or the Railway Board should decide what should be done. The donors will have no opportunity of coming to a correct decision and it would be improper for them directly to approach the person concerned.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10531

419. *LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA*

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. If only you are patient, the clouds of misfortune that have gathered over you will disperse.

It is surprising that Shanti has still not recovered. Write to Sheth Bachharaj Tribhuvandas at Panchgani. He will at once make some arrangements. Medical and other facilities are available there. And go there when he writes. There is no need to go to Miraj just now. Besides, the place may have no facilities. It must be getting a little cold in Panchgani now, but that is nothing to worry about. Let me

¹ The addressee had said that he had received a further sum of Rs. 1200 to be given as a reward to the driver whose vigilance had averted a serious accident to Gandhiji's train and had asked how the reward might be paid. *Vide* also "Letter to General Manager. G.I.P. Railway", 2-8-1946.

know what happens. Bachhrajbhai is known to us and you need not, therefore, go to another place.

Has Pramod stayed on there? I hope he has got well.

I shall have to stay on here for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing a separate letter to Gatulal. Let this be for him also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1049. Courtesy: Champa R. Mehta

420. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,

October 7, 1946

CHI. LILY,

You did well in writing to me. Your letter is painful. What is His will He alone knows. We have gone completely mad. Thoughtful men and women should pray to God to save us. By “we” I do not mean you and I but everyone. You and I should ask that we may sacrifice ourselves in this conflagration. But we must also make ourselves fit for that, shouldn’t we? Go on doing service.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI

G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE

LADIES’ HOSTEL

PAREL

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10247. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

421. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

N[EW] D[ELHI],
Silence Day, October 7, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got both your letters. I do not at all like your having fallen ill. Now that your yearning has been satisfied, you should get well soon at least for the sake of the baby that will be born. You will do so not by overeating but by eating moderately, taking sun-baths, living in the open air, drinking clean water, taking fruit juice, eating steamed or boiled vegetables and avoiding sweets and spicy foods. If you take friction-baths and hip-baths, you will get well soon.

Why need you feel ashamed of being pregnant? That is what you were yearning for. Why need one feel ashamed of what one yearns for and of what happens to everybody? You must now overcome your sexual urge for three years at least. And that for the sake of the child.

Yes, Munnalal has reason to be ashamed of himself, for it was his ambition to observe *brahmacharya* though he had no capacity for it at all. I had cautioned him sufficiently. But what could even he do? Could he have helped following whither nature led him? If he humbly admits his weaknesses, they will disappear.

I advise you to have the confinement in Vyara itself. If you wish, you may go to Sevagram for it. But there are difficulties in that. To ensure easy delivery, Munnalal should be told to stay away from you. Moreover, he should now earn enough for a living. Nobody need hesitate to ask for his market-price.

I told Munnalal that, even if you two satisfied your passion, you could continue to do my work. If, therefore, he is ready to take up a regular job, I am prepared to give him one and pay him for it. Whatever may have happened from my point of view, Munnalal has committed on sin. He should, therefore, humbly admit what has happened without feeling guilty about it and take up whatever work is available. He should earn a modest living and do whatever other service is possible in the time he can spare from his duties as a householder. He should do nothing that will heighten sexual craving; he should try to control it. The birth of a baby is a reminder. You

may show this letter to everybody without feeling the least embarrassment. Neither of you has committed a sin. If any party is guilty, generally it is the man. For the present I am here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8253. Also C. W. 6977. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

422. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,

October 7, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter written to Kanchan. Can the fact of pregnancy be ever concealed? And why need it be concealed? Surely you have committed no sin. And even if you have committed a sin, you should not commit another by hiding it. Sin is a kind of boil. If we let the poison circulate in the system we shall die, but if we throw it out with the help of natural remedies we shall live. You have committed no sin, but you did cherish great pride. Everybody thought that you were a strong-willed *brahmachari*. If that pride has melted, you have won. I have written to Kanchan at length and explained what she and you should now do. I shall not repeat it here. Generally I keep no copies of the letters I write to you. But copies of my letter to Kanchan and of this one shall be kept. They may also help me in refreshing my memory in future.

You should now, like a householder, earn an adequate living. You can be accommodated in one of our departments. Think over your needs and let me know. Also state what kind of work you would like. It would be better if you reply to this letter after reading my letter to Kanchan. It would be all right even if both of you stay in Vyara. You may go on serving the people while looking after your own affairs. I am of course of the view that during the period of Kanchan's pregnancy and for two years after the birth of the baby you should not cohabit with her. Doctors advise the same thing. It is for this reason that people adopt artificial methods of birth-control. I don't think, however, that your craving for indulgence is so strong as to make that necessary. But even if it is, you should humbly admit the

fact. There are numerous men and women who adopt artificial methods. Society does not boycott them; on the contrary, it even commends them. Sin is what we believe to be sin and virtue what we believe to be virtue. There are but few things which are sinful or virtuous in themselves. And in the last analysis even these are so because we think them so. I have written enough now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8398. Also C. W. 7217. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

423. *LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN*

NEW DELHI,

October 7, 1946

CHI. APPA,

I have your postcard. I hope you got my letters. You should leave only after you are fully recovered. Never mind if it takes time. If you are not completely cured and made strong, nature cure and Dr. Bhagawat will be put to shame. Handle from where you are as much Ratnagiri work as you can. Keep me posted with news of your health. You should regard me as free only when I leave this place.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. APPA PATWARDHAN

URULI KANCHAN

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

424. *LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK*

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, October 7, 1946

CHI. GAJANAN,

I am tired of you letters. I shall not get tired if you permit me to show them all to the persons about whom you write.

Many public workers go in for life insurance. How can they be bracketed together? You have to cultivate a liberal attitude.

One reaps as one sows. If we happen to notice someone's shortcomings we should feel alarmed and say to ourselves: "What if I have even more serious ones and others can see them!" This reflection should make us try to see our own shortcomings and to remove them.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GAJANAN NAIK
WARDHA

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

425. *LETTER TO JATINDAS AMIN*

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. AMIN,

I have already sent you the messages. There is certainly nothing wrong in acquiring knowledge. Learn to have calmness of mind, to develop the spirit of service, to free yourself of attachments and aversions and to make your intellect steadfast.

Sushilabehn will write the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

KOLHAPUR

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

426. LETTER TO MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I was no doubt informed about your earlier cheque. Your cheque for Rs. 100 dated October 4, 1946, has reached me safely.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS
BHAGA TALAO
SURAT

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

427. LETTER TO PRAVINA DIWANJI

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Kishorelal has forwarded to me here in New Delhi the noble gift you sent for me. It is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. PRAVINABEHN DIWANJI
KHAR

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

428. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. SATISH,

I have your letter. The story about the Chinese is very interesting. I might use it in *Harijanbandhu*.

I was very glad to read that Chandan has acquired faith in Ramanama and following in her footsteps so have you. How nice if

[the baby] possesses qualities worthy of the name it has been given and what a great delight it would be for all of you! If Rama came to dwell in Chandan's heart all illness would disappear from her.

To you all,

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. SATISH KALELKAR

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

429. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

NEW DELHI,

October 7, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

Appasaheb should leave the place only when he has recovered fully and regained his strength. If the cure is not within your reach and you need help from someone do take it. It is a human virtue to know one's own limitations.

I hope everything else is going on well. How is Balkrishna? Is milk available?

My blessings to all.

URULI KANCHAN

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

430. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,

October 7, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

It is bad that you keep falling ill. What service can you render if you continue to be ill? The weather there should be good these days. Do you get any sun in the house? Is the bathroom good? Do you get fresh air? I have stayed in Amritsar houses. One cannot say even the house of the rich are good. Is your diet all right? Air and diet are more efficacious than medicines.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

431. LETTER TO RAJ

October 7, 1946

CHI. RAJ,

Your handwriting is good. I was of course confident that your parents would be pleased with your sacrifice. Keep your pledge and strengthen your spirit of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

432. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
October, 7, 1946

The talks² now going on give rise to the hope that the Muslim League will join the Cabinet. I shall pray for it. I ask all of you also to pray that the entente between the Congress and the Muslim League this time may be even more cordial and enduring than in 1916 or during the Khilafat days, that brother may not now abuse or kill brother and all may live in peace.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 8-10-1946

433. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

October 8, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. I hope you received the message I sent in Behn's³ letter. When does New Year commence for us? Is not time

¹ It being a Silence Day, the message was read out at the meeting.

² Jawaharlal Nehru had met M. A. Jinnah to explore possibilities of the Muslim League accepting the five seats offered to it in the Cabinet, so that the Interim Government could be worked as a Provisional National Government.

³ Addressee's mother, Sushila Gandhi

changing ceaselessly? If we remain steadfast in all these changes, why need we care for a New Year?

But you may have the good wishes.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

And aspire to live for 125 years, doing service till the end.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4992

434. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF A. I. S. A.¹

NEW DELHI,

[*October 8, 1946*]²

A member suggested that the A. I. S. A. might pass a resolution requesting the Government to nationalize all new textile mills and the existing ones also as soon as practicable. Gandhiji demurring to the suggestion explained that they could not ask the Government to nationalize new textile mills when they were telling them that khadi and the erection of new mills could not go together. Shri T. Prakasam, the Premier of Madras, had already made an announcement to the effect that no new textile mills would be erected in the Madras Presidency. They might ask for the nationalization of the existing mills but he himself preferred putting them under strict State control to taking charge of and running them as a State concern. As a believer in non-violence he believed in trusteeship. He wanted a peaceful conversion of mill-owners, so that the mill-owners and their employees would all come under social control voluntarily. That meant that though, for instance, X might continue to be the legal owner, he would only take such commission out of the profits for himself as was warranted by his services and sanctioned by the people. The real owners would be the labourers in the mills. In one of the Tata concerns the labourers were reported to have become profit-sharers. Shri J. R. D. Tata's speech in that connection was worthy of perusal. He (Gandhiji) considered such solution to be the best. Several mill-owners had assured him that they were ready to co-operate in any such scheme, if required, and would prevent further expansion of their textile mills. He deprecated the idea of joint control of the mill industry by the Government, the A. I. S. A. and the mill-owners. He said:

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 15-10-1946 and 18-10-1946. The annual meeting of the A. I. S. A. was held at the Harijan Colony in Kingsway on the 8th, 9th and 10th October.

² From *Indian Annual Register*

Our job is not to run mills but to ply the little wheel by hand. Why should we spend time in discussing a thing which lies outside our sphere of action. I would not shed a single tear if all the mills were to close. If mills flourish, khadi must die. It might still function as a supplementary occupation for the relief of the poor. But for that you do not need a big organization like the Charkha Sangh.

He would, he concluded, be perfectly satisfied if the State exercised control over the textile mills in consultation with them and so far as possible according to their advice.

“Would it not be advisable”, asked Shri Jajuji, “to ask the Government to give those who spin for themselves a subsidy so as to reduce the charges of weaving for self-spinners?” Gandhiji’s reply was that they should not ask for subsidy but ask the Government to help in supplying cotton, the necessary implements and the services of teachers and technical experts to those who would take to spinning for their own cloth requirements. He did not want to have it said that the Charkha Sangh was cashing its influence to make the government squander money on the whims of cranks and faddists. He wanted no favour for the Charkha Sangh which must stand or fall on its merits. He wanted everybody to feel that nothing had been given at the instance of the Charkha Sangh which had not been paid back tenfold.

Another member suggested that the weavers should be required to weave a certain amount of hand-spun yarn and unless they did that the quota of mill yarn should not be given to them. Any kind of compulsion, replied Gandhiji, would only create a revulsion against khadi. It would then cease to be the ‘livery of freedom’. He said :

The spirit of independence is in the air. The weaver might well refuse to be compelled.

“There is control in everything—food, cloth, etc. Why cannot joint control be introduced with regard to weavers?” Gandhiji replied :

I do not like the idea. We do not use compulsion with regard to spinners. We cannot use it for weavers. Let us go to the root of the difficulty. Our initial mistake was that we took to spinning but neglected weaving. If we had adopted universal weaving along with spinning, all these difficulties would not have arisen. The remedy is to improve the yarn so that the weavers have as little difficulty in weaving as possible. We should reason with the weavers and explain to them that dependence on mill yarn must kill their avocation in the end. Mill-owners are no philanthropists. They would draw the noose tight round the handloom weavers’ neck the moment they came within effective range of competition with mill cloth.

If we have faith in the charkha, we must forge ahead undismayed by these temporary bottlenecks. The number of handlooms weaving hand-spun will increase in due course. We have got enough artisans and indigenous skill in our country to produce all the cloth that we require for ourselves.

JAJUJI: This means that the work must go on as before at a snail's pace. Our scheme of making 4 lakhs of people self-sufficient in cloth in a short time in this way will not succeed.

GANDHIJI: If it does not, the fault will be ours.

J. That is right in the ultimate sense. But circumstances also count.

G. It is man's privilege to overcome adverse circumstances. Is not conquest of nature the slogan of the age we are living in? If circumstances alone had counted, Germany and Japan would have won the war. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the English people who do not know what it is to admit defeat. We have to cultivate austerity and penance on our life. There is nothing that the power of penance cannot achieve.

"You have taught us to be straight and above board in everything," asked another member. "Is it not dishonest to wear uncertified khadi and be known as a khadiwala when one does not fulfil the conditions of wearing khadi? Is it not better to be honest and use mill cloth instead?"

Gandhiji replied that he did not approve of uncertified khadi, but he was of opinion that khadi, so long as it was genuine stuff, was preferable to mill cloth. All uncertified khadi was not dishonest.

For instance, people who spin for themselves or their family and have their yarn woven do not use certified khadi. Yet such khadi is of the highest merit. Certified khadi carried the guarantee that the rules of the A. I. S. A. have been observed, as for instance paying to the spinners a certain minimum wage. Khadi, even when the spinners are not paid the standard A. I. S. A. wage, is preferable to mill cloth. The higher wages paid to labourers in the spinning mills are more apparent than real. Mill cloth is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times cheaper than khadi today. Experts have told me that if the mill industry did not receive special privileges and concessions in several ways, which it today enjoys, mill cloth would not sell cheaper than khadi. For instance, we provide cheap transport facilities to the mills to enable raw materials and mass-produced finished goods to be taken from one place to another. Again, enormous sums have been spent on growing long-staple cotton

or on starting technical institutes and on research work. No one has bothered to do anything for any of the seven lakhs of India's villages. So the mills are today actually being subsidized in some shape or other. Remove all that and then see whether mill cloth is cheaper than khadi.

He could not possibly encourage uncertified khadi, continued Gandhiji, but mill cloth should be absolutely taboo.

A day might come when the A. I. S. A. might stop issuing certificates. Anybody would then be free to sell khadi. That would be inevitable when khadi became universal. The Charkha Sangh would then function as the custodian of the ethics and the general policy of khadi. Its business activities would cease.

People must become honest by habit and insist upon meticulous honesty on the part of the producers or the dealers in khadi so that only genuine stuff is sold and bought.

I have called khadi and the charkha the symbols of non-violence. But it is said that there is dishonesty even in certified bhandars. I wish it were not so. But there is no denying the fact that it is true of some.

I have objected to the term vegetable ghee because it is not ghee. It should be labelled as vegetable oil. Similarly, I cannot tolerate that cloth which is not khadi, i. e., is not hand-spun and hand-woven, should pass as such. The ultimate remedy lies in the buyer's hands. "Buyer beware" is a sound legal maxim for all to remember.

It was suggested that the formulation of khadi policy for each unit of area should be left entirely to local bodies which should be completely independent of the central organization. Gandhiji, while he was entirely in favour of the maximum decentralization of initiative and responsibility, was opposed to the creation of local committees of untrained men and women to take the place of khadi workers. For organization of khadi work what was needed was a body of technicians and experts, men endowed with business talent and filled with the spirit of service. There was no room in it for personal ambition or power politics. The latter had become the bane of the Congress. To get rid of corruption in the Congress organization he had suggested that it should convert itself into an organization of workers. To introduce an element of democracy into khadi work would be to kill khadi. The Charkha Sangh was not a democratic organization in the sense the Congress was. It was an organization created by the Congress for the building up of democracy. Like the Directorate of the Bank of England, it was a business organization first and last. Only it was motivated by an altruistic, not profit, motive. A business organization of a democratic body could not be bound by the procedure of the democratic vote. He said :

We want to disperse in the villages. A khadi worker can have no use for any other sanction save such as persuasion and service can command. The moment he seeks to arm himself with any other, he kills khadi.

“To make khadi universal,” finally asked a friend, “you need to inspire the co-operation of everybody.”

Gandhiji replied that since khadi workers were expected to be full servants of the people, their worth if there was any could create public opinion in their favour. The need was not for a committee of members who might be a hindrance rather than help, whereas if service drew supporters they would be a powerful help.

“What would be the authority of the A. I. S. A. after khadi became decentralized?” was another question.

The answer came quick! The authority of the Sangh would be merely moral and, therefore, more potent than at present. Its function would not be to provide money or material but only to smooth the way for khadi work by the creation of a moral sanction. It would lend the khadi workers the use of its name but not seek to impose its will upon them. Its moral authority would be available to anybody who accepted its policy. Even its present assets would be put at the disposal of any unit that was ready and considered fit to claim autonomy, provided only that it guaranteed the right use of the assets allotted to it and bound itself to return the same after a certain period. The Charkha Sangh would have the right of inspection but even that would be at the will of the autonomous unit.

Harijan, 20-10-1946 and 27-10-1946

435. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*

NEW DELHI,

October 8, 1946

We must all pray from the heart that the talks going on between the Congress and the Muslim League may bear fruit. I cannot give you any news today. I cannot even say what will happen in the future. Maybe it is the will of God that we should under go yet further suffering. If that be so, we must put up with the suffering.

If we sincerely desire peace and if we have faith in God we should pray for a successful issue of the Congress-League parleys, so that people who are today behaving like savages may be brought back to civilized ways. However people in Europe or other parts of the world may behave, we must never sink to the state of the brute. We must remember that our actions reflect our inner feelings. You who

are sitting here before me are but a drop in the vast sea of Indian humanity. If it is the wish of everyone to live at peace with his neighbour the Congress and the Muslim League will have to come to terms. Though it is true that the Viceroy acts under instructions from the British Cabinet, he is nevertheless an autocrat. Our leaders, on the contrary, are representatives of the people and must carry out people's wishes. You should therefore pray that your mind may be cleansed of anger and hate and the leaders may be granted good sense so that the country may become united and free. If we desist from the present strife and mutual slaughter, we shall certainly achieve freedom. There is so much that a free India has to do. We are hungry and naked. Corruption and black-marketing are rampant. All this should go. Then alone can we organize ourselves and bring into being the new order which we want to see established.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 9-10-1946

436. ENGLISH-HINDUSTANI DICTIONARY¹

A friend from the Bhangi Colony, Delhi, asked me the other day why the *Harijan Sevak* had discontinued the above feature. I told him it appeared only in *Harijan*. He was disheartened. I explained to him that it was meant for the English-knowing public and, therefore, was not published in either the *Harijanbandhu* or *Harijan Sevak* and that it was by mistake it had appeared in *Harijan Sevak*. It would have been well to explain this in *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak*. Those who are interested in it can remit postage stamps worth 1/6 and have the off-prints of the dictionary. Off-prints from the past issues are also available.

NEW DELHI, October 10, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-10-1946

¹ This was published under the heading "Notes".

437. TELEGRAM TO Y. M. DADOO

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DOCTOR DADOO¹
DURBAN

GLAD PASSIVE RESISTERS ADHERE NON-VIOLENCE. HOPE
NO WEAKENING OR DIVISION AMONG OUR PEOPLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

438. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to send me your wishes for my birthday which is synonymous with the rebirth of the spinning-wheel in 1918.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 217

439. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Three letters I am writing after the morning prayer. The other two are to the Lawrences.

Many thanks to you two for your wishes. I am here only for the work you expect me to do. Heaven help us all.

¹ Indian leader; Chairman of the Passive Resistance Council and Democratic Action Committee

Hope you are really well and strong.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 218

440. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,

October, 10, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I will not address you in the honorific plural. I cannot help writing to you today. Jehangir's letter has only a line about you. My heart cries out for you. Why should you, an adherent of nature cure, feel distressed? How can your sorrowing alleviate others' sorrow? Hasn't a nature cure practitioner himself said: "Physician, heal thyself.¹ If you can get away from there and if you are still depressed, come to me and have the cure for your depression. Never mind if I am in Delhi or Sevagram or anywhere else.

I hope Gulbehn and the children are well. Mother must have now recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

POONA

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

¹ This is in English.

441. *LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI*

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your letter. You may come wherever I may be. God is in you. He will give you fortitude. You have ears to listen to His voice, then why bother to hear anything else?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RANGANAYAKI DEVI
FIRST HOUSE
SRIRANGAM

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

442. *NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

It is wrong.¹ The really poor are never able to listen to the radio. I am therefore not at all enthusiastic about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 325

¹ Some one had suggested to the addressee that he should arrange for Gandhiji to broadcast on the radio, so that the whole country might hear him.

443. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS OF HARIJAN
UDYOGSHALA¹

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

It is my earnest desire that the students of the Harijan Udyogshala and members of their families should become true Harijans—i. e., men of God.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 11-10-1946

444. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting in Bhangi Colony on Thursday evening, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had thought that all the jewellery that had been presented to him had been auctioned out. But a ring had just then been given him which he auctioned, as usual, immediately after the prayer. . . . He was, led to recall how over than 20 years ago he had, during the course of one of his tours, begun collecting money by auction at Ahmednagar. In those days, auctions used to go on by the hour and he used to collect thousands in a day. Now he had not the physical strength to do this.

Among other things, he even used to auction garlands of flowers which were presented to him. Here he confessed that he had never liked garlands of flowers. He had always held it to be cruel or wrong to pick flowers from plants. Flowers should be allowed to fall to the ground in a natural way. They then made a beautiful carpet under the trees and looked just as lovely as when they were in blossom. In his ashram people were expected not to pick flowers from off the trees. Thus was introduced the custom of presenting garlands of hand-spun yarn in the place of flowers.

Gandhiji, however, assured the audience that he did not want them to think that all who bid at the auctions had to pay or indeed bid at all.

The Hindustan Times, 11-10-1946

¹ The message was for the convocation of the Udyogshala. Gandhiji was not able to be present.

445. LETTER TO PYARELAL

[After October 10, 1946]¹

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have not written without thinking. You have high regard for your own knowledge. Hence, I feel like a child before you. How can I feel attached because you consider me your father and respect me ? The very fact that your mind is in turmoil shows that in spite of your having lived with me for so many years you are in anguish ! Whatever I say or do has no effect on you ! How much should I write ? To whom should I write ? I am defeated.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My silence does not apply when visitors like Nawab Saheb, Maulana Saheb come.

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

446. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

BHANGI COLONY,

READING ROAD,

October 11, 1946

DEAR SHRI PRAKASAM,

I am writing to you under instructions from Gandhiji.

He has had a letter from a friend, whose name he is withholding, making certain complaints. I give the relevant extracts and Gandhiji would like to have your opinion on them.

(a) "An indescribable arrogance has entered into the mind and heart of 75% of Congressmen in the Madras Province which is arousing bitterness in all who are not Congressmen . . . Some of them are blackmailing officials and others by openly approaching ministers and thus pretending that they could do anything with their influence."

¹ The letter is written on a paper bearing the stamp of this date "October 10, 1946".

(b) "Members of the Legislature are paid Rs. 150/- p.m. They also get a large daily allowance and travelling *bhatta* when they attend the Councils. As paid men they should do some work for the district they represent but they don't . . . They are very prominent only when ministers visit the districts."

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

447. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

October 11, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I have gone through your letter. I gave it to Sushila Pai, Kanu, Sushila (Dr.) and Pyarelal to read. Here I shall tell you only this, that I liked your letter.

Further, I shall be happy if you come over and have a talk with me. I do not wish to put any pressure on you. It is my earnest desire that you should remain a pure virgin till the end of your life and spend your life in service.

I hope Umiya's son is doing well.

Blessings to all from

BAPU

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

448. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I wonder what I can do. I shall see what can be done; not much, I fear.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI PERINBEHN CAPTAIN
ORIENT CLUB
BOMBAY

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

449. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter is no doubt long. But it does not matter. If your heart prompts you to go to Borkamata, do go. I do not know what order to give you. When we meet we shall talk more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 532

450. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ²

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

This³ is a specimen of the yarn Punjabi women bring to me. The yarn has been given to me for the poor, including the Harijans,

¹ This sentence and the address are in English.

² A slightly different version of this speech also appeared in Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

³ Here Gandhiji displayed a skein of yarn.

who are the most oppressed. The skein has a nice look, but it is difficult to unwind. It had been my experience in the past that unwinding the yarn took a long time and it frequently broke in the process. The result was further delay and more labour. What the spinner should do is to take off the yarn entirely from the spindle and put it on a winder that takes a round of four feet. They should count the rounds for each hank and tie them up. The yarn should be strong and even so that weavers do not find it difficult to handle. Today mill yarn is readily available. But this will not always be so. But why should weavers be dependent on mill yarn? If hand-spun yarn of good quality is available they will not buy mill yarn. If you can spin yarn of good quality you can clothe everybody and put an end to the mills.

I hope all spinners will take the trouble to do as indicated.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 12-10-1946

451. HINDU PANI AND MUSLIM PANI

A stranger travelling in Indian trains may well have a painful shock when he hears at railway stations for the first time in his life ridiculous sounds about *pani*, tea and the like being either Hindu or Muslim. It would be repulsive now that the Government at the Centre is wholly national and a well-known Indian in the person of Asaf Ali Saheb is in charge of Transport and Railways. It is to be hoped that we shall soon have the last of the shame that is peculiarly Indian. Let no one imagine that Railways being under a Muslim, Hindus may not get justice. In the Central and Provincial Governments, there is or should be no Hindu, Muslim or any other communal distinctions. All are Indians. Religion is a personal matter. Moreover, the members of the Cabinet have set up a wholesome convention that they should always meet at the end of the day's work and take stock of what each member has done. It is team work in which the members are jointly and severally responsible for one another's work. It is not open to any member to say that a particular thing is not his work because it is no part of his portfolio. We have a right therefore to assume that this unholy practice of having separate everything for every community at railway stations will go. Scrupulous cleanliness is a desideratum for all. If taps are used for all liquids there need be no

compunction felt by the most orthodox about helping themselves. A fastidious person may keep his own *lota* and cup and receive his milk, tea, coffee or water through a tap. In this there is no interference with religion. No one is compelled to buy anything at railway stations. As a matter of fact many orthodox persons fast for water and food during travel. Thanks we still breathe the same air, walk on the same mother earth.

All communal cries at least at railway stations should be unlawful.

As I have often said in these columns trains and steamers are the best media for the practical education of the millions of travellers in spotless cleanliness, hygiene, sanitation and camaraderie between the different communities of India. Let us hope that the Cabinet will have the courage to act up to their convictions and may confidently expect the hearty co-operation of the Railway staff and the public in making this much needed reform a thorough success.

New Delhi, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

452. REAL INDIA

If my frequent wanderings throughout India of the villages have not deceived me, it can be confidently asserted that the 700,000 villages get and want no police protection. The solitary Patel to a village is a terrorist lording it over the villages and is designed for helping the petty revenue collector to collect revenue due to the *Ma-Bap*¹. I am not aware of the policeman having aided the villagers in protecting their goods or cattle against depredations of man and beast. The Police Patel is not to be blamed for what he is. He has been chosen for his task which he does well. He has not been taught to regard himself as the servant of the people. He represents his master the Viceroy. The change at the top has not yet permeated the most distant village. How can it ? It has not come from the bottom. The Viceroy still retains legal and military powers to remove and even to imprison his ministers. The latter have no power, legal or other, to imprison the Viceroy. Even the Civil Service is still under his control. It is not suggested that the Viceroy does not mean to shed all power

¹ Government

nor that he does not wish the most distant village to realize that he is determined under instructions from Whitehall to shed every vestige of British control in the quickest time possible.

The relevance of all this writing is for showing that we do not yet learn from the village in which India lives that every Indian, man or woman, is his or her own policeman. This he or she can only do when neither harbours mischief against his or her neighbour, no matter what religion he professes or denies. If unfortunately the politically minded will not or cannot go as far as suggested here, he must at least shed all fear and resolutely deny himself all protection whether from the military or the police. I am positive that India will not come into her own unless every home becomes its own castle not in the sense of the ages known as dark but in the very ancient true sense that everyone has learnt the art of dying without ill-will, or even wishing that since he cannot someone else will do away with the would-be assassin. How nice, therefore, it would be if everyone of us had this lesson burnt into us. There is much proof in support of the lesson, if we will take the trouble to examine the proof.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

453. QUESTION BOX

ONENESS OF COSTUME A CURE?

Q. In these last four weeks, I have seen so much bloodshed and firing that it has left a bitter taste in my mouth. Every day since the riots started I have been on duty as a magistrate trying to maintain the peace. Now, more than ever before, I am convinced of the necessity that we should insist on every Indian wearing the same nationalist dress— as you remember I had broached the subject before but at the time you had not approved of the idea. Why is it that none of the stabbings have been of people wearing a shirt and pant? This should be conclusive proof that the dress causes the difference in religion to be accentuated. Your reply to this through the *Harijan* for others like me who think that communal riots would disappear within a short time on our wearing the same kind of dress would be most appreciated.

A. I publish this as from a well-versed, well-meaning friend. These three qualities combined do not necessarily make for clearness of thought. What is wanted is not oneness of costume but oneness of hearts. We have only to look at Europe to demonstrate the emptiness of the idea that oneness of costume will enable us to get out of the

mess we are in. Ill-will is like an ill wind. It must go and be replaced by the fresh and bracing wind of goodwill.

THE SMOKING EVIL

Q. While you have all along written very strongly in favour of prohibition, you have not spoken either often enough or with equal emphasis in the matter of smoking. This evil is increasing with alarming rapidity and even children are increasingly getting addicted to it. The crores that are literally burnt by smoking could be so well utilized in wise ways in our poor land.

A. The taunt is true but not new. The reason for want of equal emphasis is to be sought in the fact that smoking has attained alarming respectability. When a vice reaches that state it becomes difficult to eradicate. This admission does not mean that we should not agitate for abatement of the nuisance. How to do so and when is the question. I am sorry to have to confess my inability to answer it.

THE CURSE OF DOWRY

Q. The demand for dowries in the marriage market is growing. None is immune from this injustice. The richer the parent of the prospective bride-groom, the heavier is the demand of the dowry. The problem now is such that many marriageable girls cannot be married and the state of their parents can better be imagined than described. Popular governments should help to check the evil through the law.

A. It is a curious phenomenon the questioner notices. Education not only does not improve the situation but makes it worse. The affected class has to wake up before the curse destroys the class which in its terrible weakness shamelessly betakes to it. Let them ceaselessly and restlessly agitate. I know no other way.

WHY THIS SECRECY?

Q. Can you say why, when mutual slaughter between brother and brother is going on, the names of the respective communities should be with-held?

A. I confess that the question has often occurred to me. There seems to me to be no reason for this hush-hush policy save that it is a legacy from the autocracy which, let us hope, the national Government have displaced. Those who ought not to know, know who stabs whom. And those who should know are kept in the dark. I am sure there are many Hindus and Muslims and even members of other communities taking pride in being Indians first and last without ceasing to be devoted followers of their own religions and who love to do their best to dissuade blind fanatics from making mischief. I know

many such. They have no means of ascertaining facts except through the Press. Let darkness be exposed to light. It will be dispelled quicker.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

454. *HOW TO MAKE THE WHEEL GO?*¹

Shri Kanu Gandhi's note² deserves consideration. It should be remembered that the charkha is not, nor can ever be, like the various small or big things made in the West. There are millions of watches, all made in the same place. They are sold all over the world. The same story applies to the sewing-machine. These things are symbols of one kind of civilization. The charkha symbolizes an opposite kind of civilization. We do not want to mass-produce charkhas in one place and scatter them all over India. Our ideal is to manufacture charkhas and accessories in the towns or villages where the spinners live. Therein lies the value of the charkha. If anything goes wrong with the charkha the spinners should learn how to put it right. It is for the Charkha Sangh to see to all this. So long as this does not happen khadi can never replace mill cloth.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-10-1946

455. *NOTE TO J. C. KUMARAPPA*

[*October 12, 1946*]³

I am too much preoccupied to give due attention to this matter. Jhaverbhai⁴ should go. He does not want to take anything from the Government for his feed. This he wants to draw from A. I. V. I. A. You may talk to him and fix up what you think proper. That will save some time. He may see this note and you two may do what is necessary. Meanwhile let him not live on borrowed money. When I

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

² Not translated here. The note had enumerated certain steps to be taken by Khadi Bhandars to make the charkha more popular.

³ The date is in the addressee's hand.

⁴ Jhaverbhai Patel

come to Sevagram we shall work it out. You may advance what he needs for the time.

From a photostat: G. N. 10184

456. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I have been shown a note¹ on salt circulated to the Members of the Cabinet. You were to have sent me an amendment which you had admitted was necessary. But instead I see the long and argued note without any amendment. It contains also a proposal to retain a portion of the tax and therefore the monopoly also I suppose.

I confess that I have glanced through the note most hurriedly. Rajaji has asked me to send him my amendment which I am now doing. A copy will be sent to you when I am ready [*sic*].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.
MEMBER, CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE
SECRETARIAT, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 164

¹ Not reproduced here. It contained proposals, for which "general approval" of Gandhiji was claimed, envisaging abolition of excise duty on salt but continuation of Government production of salt, control of organized manufacture and retention of existing machinery for exercising such control.

457. LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

BHAI KALKA PRASAD,

Shridharani has just arrived from America. He needs khadi. Give him as much as he wants. Charge the actual price. Assume that the yarn is with me. Charge the price of the yarn also.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10418

458. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi began his address by telling the audience that he had been in two minds whether or not to break his silence, which he had taken to for various reasons, in order to address them. Ultimately he decided to break it. He wanted to tell them that while he had not taken a vow of silence he had made up his mind for the time being to speak only on business to those whom he called his jailors. One result of his imposed silence was that he had been able to get through a fair amount of writing for *Harijan*.

Gandhiji went on to say how he felt impelled to tell them of the error committed by him three days ago. He was thoroughly ashamed of it. For him, at his time of life, it was unpardonable. No harm had been done to anyone because of it. It was not possible for him to remember ever having done anything to hurt anyone. His error consisted in being over-hasty. He read a little thing hurriedly, though there was no occasion for hurry, and fancied it was quite right whereas it was not quite that. No public servant had the right to act in this way. He seemed, for the moment, to have lost confidence in himself and the belief that he would live for 125 years.

The first verse of the *Ishopanishad* demanded giving oneself and all possessions to God. If a man fully did that, he could never be hasty. It may be that he was old now and his brain was getting weak. He knew that his memory was not as good as it used to be. It never was extra good. But when a man was guilty of error it was his duty to call God as witness and vow never to commit the mistake again. That

¹ A slightly different version of this speech also appeared in Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

was the only true way of repentance to realize the guilt and confess it immediately before the sun went down. Death had got to come to everyone, and who knew when it would come ?

Gandhiji said his life was an open book and he hid nothing from the world. They who listened to him were his world for the time. He was telling them of his mistake in order that they may learn a lesson from it and never be hasty or careless in their actions. While his mind had been relieved of a burden by confession, Gandhiji said it would take a long time for him to regain the lost confidence as far as living 125 years was concerned.

The Hindustan Times, 13-10-1946

459. RURALIZING UNIVERSITY EDUCATION¹

There is much truth in what Dr. Kini says. He should put himself in touch with Dr. Zakir Hussain and the Aryanayakums and devote his energies to evolving a workable scheme. I see no difficulty in existing Universities conforming to the requirements of the villagers, who are India, instead of turning out indifferent imitators of the West.

Harijan, 13-10-1946

460. DR. LOHIA AGAIN

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's letter to the Chief Judge of the Goa High Court deserves more than passing attention. I copy it below from the daily Press :

At the time of my arrest², I had not, so far as I know, violated any Goan law. I may have been intent on doing so but that is irrelevant. The police officer at Collem walked into my compartment, asked me no questions and put me straightway under arrest. International law, as it stands today, probably empowers the Portuguese Government to arrest and deport anyone whom they consider an undesirable alien but they are surely not empowered to hold him in prison unless he has actually violated some law. The Portuguese Government have in the past declared me as alien and taken up their stand on a provision in International Law with regard to me. They owe me an apology and damages for illegal imprisonment or else

¹ This was appended to an article by Dr. Kini, Secretary in the Education Department of Mysore; *vide also* "Village University", 15-9-1946

² On the 29th September

they must give up their attempt to apply International Law as between Goa and the rest of Hindustan. Furthermore, between September 29 and October 2, they kept me in a cell, which has probably as much ventilation as just keeps a man alive. They owe me an added apology and damages for this kind of treatment.

I continue to be held in solitary confinement, although under better conditions and I am not taken out of my cell except for bath and I am held incommunicado. These add to the illegality of my imprisonment.

Let no one laugh at Dr. Lohia's presumption in asking for damages. If he had power behind him, the Goan authorities would quickly apologize and offer to pay damages. It is not an unusual thing for big powers to ask for damages and obtain them for injury or insult done even to insignificant subjects. Dr. Lohia is not a little man. Well, India has a National Government. I am sure they are as sensitive as any can be. I should not be surprised if they have lodged their protest and asked the Goa Government to mend their manners. Anyway, let the force of public opinion be behind the National Government and the injured Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. The injury done to him is injury done to our countrymen in Goa and through them to the whole of India.

NEW DELHI, October, 13, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

461. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS¹

October 14, 1946

Q. Wouldn't it be better to set up a public institution at Bordi for conducting research in the Ayurvedic system of medicine?

A. It would be good to make Bordi a public institution.

Q. The Government Ayurvedic Colleges teach seventy per cent allopathy. Ayurveda should be taught as a separate science. When this question was first discussed you had said that you would arrange for me to meet Dr. Gilder.

A. The Ayurvedic education is something I have been long interested in. The work can certainly be pursued if there are *vaidyas* you know who think like you and who are selfless. Only then would it be useful for you to go to Dr. Gilder.

¹ The questions, reproduced here only in summary, were asked by Vallabhram Vaidya. Gandhi gave his answers in writing.

Q. It is difficult to find *vaidyas* who fully share my views. There are some who are too orthodox to allow any changes or innovations in the Ayurvedic system while others want to turn it into allopathy. In fact Ayurveda is based on theory of *tridosha*¹ and its cure is based on five basic substances.

A. What do you think of Joshi of Poona? If there is no one else, what can you do by yourself? Many doctors have told me that the treatment based on *tridosha* is a fraud. It is for you to prove that it is not so. It is also for you to train *vaidyas* like you.

What Dr. Gilder has passed has also been prepared by *vaidyas*. Bhadkamkar, Lagu, Gananath Sen and Vishwanath are from among you, are they not?

Q. The doctors do not know anything about the treatment based on *tridosha*. Bhadkamkar and other *vaidyas* are more of doctors than *vaidyas*, and that is why they have approved the scheme.

A. I can arrange a meeting with Dr. Gilder. But I would advise you to see Bhadkamkar and Joshi. Have a little talk with Sushila Nayyar, with Satis Babu, too. He is here at present.

Q. I have gone through the book *Prakritik Chikitsa* which you gave me. It is full of tall talk and is not based on the author's personal experience. He has described properties of medicines without citing authority.

A. I have noted the tall talk in it. Only you can write authoritatively on medicines.

Q. I will prepare the students. But it is obvious that my syllabus will be different from that prescribed by the Government Board. So what shall we do about its registration?

A. Prepare something. Do not worry about registration. First of all train the volunteers. It is not necessary for them to have degrees. If they are good I will accommodate them. I do not care for degrees.

From Gujarati: C. W. 2930. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

¹ The three humours, viz., wind (*vata*), bile (*pitta*) and phlegm (*kapha*)

462. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 14, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You had left a letter here. I sent the reply the very next day. You would not have got it. It went to Udaipur.

I have your letter today. I was sorry to learn about Shankarlal's illness. It is good you two sisters went to Udaipur. Tell Shankarlal that he should quickly get well. It does not behove a scout to fall ill. Whatever the job he may be doing, he cannot cease being a scout.

Why is Umia feeling unhappy ? Bring her along with you. It is another matter if you yourself do not come.

I am not calling you to me to make you unhappy. You are not afraid of me, are you ? It can never be that I would make you do anything against your wishes. I only wish you well. I wish to see you healthy and well.

Now there is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

463. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
October 14, 1946

Man should earnestly desire the well-being of all God's creation and pray that he may have the strength to do so. In desiring the well-being of all, lies his own welfare; he who desires only his own or his community's welfare is selfish and it can never be well with him.

Harijan, 20-10-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". This was a written message read out at the meeting, it being a Silence Day.

464. DEADLY EMBRACE

In Bombay a Hindu gave shelter to a Muslim friend the other day. This infuriated a Hindu mob who demanded the head of the Muslim friend. The Hindu would not surrender his friend. So both went down literally in deadly embrace. This was how it was described to me authentically. Nor is this the first instance of chivalry in the midst of frenzy. During the recent blood bath in Calcutta, stories of Muslims having, at the peril of their lives, sheltered their Hindu friends and *vice versa* were recorded. Mankind would die if there were no exhibition any time and anywhere of the divine in man.

Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, has described in glowing terms the instance of two youths rushing to still the wrath of a Muslim mob and meeting what they knew was certain death. They met Death as their true friend. Let no scoffer deny the inestimable value of such sacrifice—sacred deed. It would be mock sacrifice, if every such act ended in success so called. The certain moral is that, if such instances are sufficiently multiplied, the senseless slaughter on either side in the name of religion will stop. One indispensable condition is that there should be no hypocrisy, no mock heroism. Let us appear as we are.

NEW DELHI, October 15, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

465. DECENTRALIZATION

At the meeting of the Charkha Sangh at Delhi on the 10th many important subjects were discussed. One of them was decentralization. Decentralization is the soul of khadi. The ambition of the Charkha Sangh is to see that charkhas and looms find a home in the seven lakh villages of India, that crores of Indians wear only khadi and mill cloth is completely wiped out.

The time has come for a province to become self-reliant, if it wants. However, if it does not want to do so or if it cannot do so a district can become self-reliant. If it fails to do that a taluka can become self-reliant. If that is not possible a group of villages can and if even they can't become self-reliant, a single one can. Ultimately an individual can certainly become self-reliant.

One should not ask how this can be possible. Those who are members of the Charkha Sangh should write to its Secretary in detail, and their problem will be solved. Those who possess the property of the Sangh will have to make some arrangement to return the money. Only he will be bound by the policies of the Sangh who accepts them. No one is obliged to accept them. Discipline is for those who want to observe it. There is no uniform code of conduct. There is one root but there are many branches and each branch has many leaves. Diversity in unity is a wonderful law of the world. Therefore the Charkha Sangh has adopted as its policy the giving of as much encouragement as possible to decentralization. On the other hand the branches of the Sangh should aspire to become independent as soon as possible.

NEW DELHI, October 15, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1946

466. TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

NEW DELHI
October 15, 1946

DOCTOR RAM MANOHAR LOHIA
RAMNIVAS THALAKWADI
BELGAUM

YOU HAVE TO RE-ENTER GOA BUT BEFORE DOING
SO COME HERE. NO HURRY. WIRE REPLY.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

467. TELEGRAM TO SIDDHINATH SARMA

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

SIDDHINATH SARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
GAUHATI

GODS WILL. DOING WHAT IS POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

468. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I have to thank you for your letters.¹ The maps will be useful. As to the amendments I have spoken to Rajaji. I have, therefore, no copy to send you. You will know all from him. Nevertheless, if there

¹ Both dated October 12. The first assured Gandhiji that “provisions relating to the use of structures and to the enclosure of land for salt manufacture” had not been forgotten and the second enclosed maps showing production, consumption and distribution of salt.

is any difficulty, I trust you will see me again or write. In any case I would like to see the final form before it is published.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.
MEMBER, CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 166-7

469. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR LOTUSBORN,

Your two loving letters.

You are doing good and brave work. It will bear fruit. Hope you are keeping well.

Love.

PADMAJA NAIDU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your two letters. Sjt. Kaleswar Rao I understand.

As to khadi, you have a difficult task, I have seen the attack in *Hindu*. Is your Cabinet with you, is the Assembly with you, is the public with you? Then you have nothing to fear. If you are to have success, you should carry the country with you. If it is not, you may drop the scheme. I have stated the conditions of success. I know that the attack is ignorant. You and I should know that often does ignorance rule the public.

I am with you in the scheme on merits. But who am I? Therefore, do not think of me, but think of the public and act.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. LETTER TO ABDUL HAMID

October 15, 1946

DEAR ABDUL HAMID,

I take it you know Gujarati. I await you every day. Your shoes are with me. How much money do you need? Why are you afraid of your parents? They don't want to suppress you. come and see me. They looked for you at the hotel but could get no news of you.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

MIAN ABDUL HAMID
HOTEL IMPERIAL
NEW DELHI

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

472. LETTER TO KANTILAL N. KAMDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

BHAI KANTILAL,

I referred your letter to a specialist in medicine. He says what you say is right but that there are so many scientific hitches involved that it is better not to go through the process. I therefore do not want to involve myself in the matter.

M. K. GANDHI

KANTILAL NAGARDAS KAMDAR
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
PAREL, BOMBAY 12

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

473. *LETTER TO MAULANA HIFZURREHMAN*

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I have read all your papers. The attack is on me, not on Kripalaniji. If what I have always believed is a crime, then Kripalaniji is guilty.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

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

474. *A LETTER*¹

October 15, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. I have not had a minute to spare. . .² You take a perverted view of all that I say. God is our witness.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

475. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting on Tuesday evening in Bhangi Colony, New Delhi, Gandhiji said he was grieved to learn that floods in Assam had taken a heavy toll of life and property. Thousands had been rendered homeless, property worth lakhs had been destroyed, and many persons were reported to have been washed away by the floods. That was an act of Nature.

But what was far worse than the news from Assam was the fact that there

¹ This could have been addressed to Moulvi Abdul Haq; *vide* "Letter to Abdulk Haq", 19-9-1946.

² Blank space in the source

was rioting in Noakhali in Eastern Bengal. The papers said that the Hindus, a very small minority there, were being attacked by the Muslims. He did not want to go into the details of the happenings. He knew his doctrine did not count for much among the people today and yet it was his duty to give his advice whether they acted upon it or not. Gandhiji himself had never thought that there was any difference between Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis or others. All were brothers, sons of the same soil. But even brothers fought furiously with each other sometimes and this was what was happening today between Hindus and Muslims.

Ever since he had heard the news of Noakhali, indeed ever since the blood bath of Calcutta, he had been wondering where his duty lay. God would show him the way. But what he wanted to tell them and through them a wider public was that it was the duty of every Hindu not to harbour any thoughts of revenge on Muslims in spite of what they did in Noakhali. That was the creed of the Congress. It had brought them thus far. But was non-violence only an expedient against the British, as some people thought, because the British were so strong?

Such an approach to non-violence was wholly wrong. The Congress had an overwhelming majority of Hindu members but it belonged to all communities. Maulana Saheb had served it for years and through it everybody, irrespective of caste or creed. His name was up again but he was withdrawing it and Gandhiji had supported his withdrawal. He was an ill man today. The new President was Shri Kripalani whom he had first met in Champaran. He was going not only to wear a crown of thorns but also lie on a bed of thorns. It was a much more difficult place than even the Cabinet members were filling.

Shri Kripalani would have to teach people how to die. That was the only way to end this fratricidal war, to learn how to die without killing.

A friend from Ahmedabad had some time ago written and said that people knew how to return blow for blow, they had learnt how to be fearless of going to jail but they had not learnt how to die without killing. It was up to him and others who believed in non-violence to teach people this supreme way by personal act.

Gandhiji said that the Muslim League was, according to Press reports, coming into the Interim Government. He hoped they were coming in to work as brothers. If they did, all would be well. And just as he had exhorted Hindus not to slay Muslims nor harbour ill-will towards them, so he appealed to the Muslim League, even if they wanted to fight for Pakistan, to fight cleanly and in a friendly manner.

Quaid-e-Azam had said how everyone would receive justice in Pakistan. It was as good as Pakistan where they were in the majority and he implored them to treat Hindus as blood brothers and not as enemies. He hoped both Hindus and Muslims would vow not to hurt each other henceforth. Unless they did this he would like to

proclaim from the housetops that they had not got and would never get the independence they craved for. No man or people could be free who followed the law of the jungle.

The Hindustan Times, 16-10-1946

476. TALK WITH ASSAM DEPUTATION

[Before *October 16, 1946*]

In the course of his reply to the Deputation,¹ Gandhiji said that Assam need have no fear. Pandit Nehru's broadcast had made no change in the Congress stand as regards the grouping of provinces and Assam would be able to frame its future constitution by itself. Gandhiji added :

The Congress is an institution of the brave, not of cowards. The Congress would certainly help Assam if she marches on with courage.

The Hindu, 16-10-1946

477. TELEGRAM TO NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI

October 16, 1946

NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI

RANAVAV

YOU MAY COME THOUGH BUSY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. TELEGRAM TO JANARDAN PRASAD

NEW DELHI,

October 16, 1946

JANARDAN PRASAD

LAHERIA SARAI

AM GLAD HE² IS DELIVERED FROM AGONY. WE SHOULD ALL REJOICE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The Deputation, headed by Maulana Tayabulla, President of Assam Provincial Congress Committee, had expressed the "strong attitude" of Assam with regard to Grouping.

² Brijkishore Prasad, who had died on October 15, 1946

479. TELEGRAM TO YASHMILAP

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

YASHMILAP
LAHORE

INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR JUDGMENT.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

480. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

DEAR DR. HOLMES¹,

Your kind letter of 27-9-1946 and the little book came into my hands only yesterday. His goods had to follow Devdas. He could not carry them in his 'plane'.

I am glad Devdas made it a point to see you, no matter how busy he was.

The book I am keeping on my desk, in the fond hope that I shall snatch a few minutes to drink in the wisdom it contains.

The rest you get from the papers.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10967. Courtesy: S. P. K. Gupta. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ American Unitarian clergyman, pastor of the Community Church of New York

481. *LETTER TO LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE*

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

So you are two years ahead of me. You should try as we all should to live the full span of life—125 years. I seem to have lost the equilibrium I thought I would have to entitle me to entertain the wish. May you have what I seem for the moment to miss.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE
11 OLD SQUARE
LINCOLN'S INN
LONDON, W. C. 2

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

482. *LETTER TO MADALASA*

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I should like you not to violate your resolution.¹ If you are busy, you may write only a post-card.

Thank God Rajat has recovered.

The love of has recovered.

The love of husband and wife should be like that of intimate friends, and perfectly pure. They should share each other's joys and sorrows and must be able to tolerate each other's weaknesses. They should be generous to each other and perfect understanding should prevail between them. They should entertain no suspicions against and keep back nothing from each other.

¹ The addressee had resolved to write to Gandhiji on every Tuesday but for some reason had not been able to write on one of the Tuesdays.

I think this is enough. For examples of such love ask me when we meet.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako BAPUke Ashirvad, p. 330

483. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

Two letters of yours are lying in front of me. I started writing a reply as soon as I received the second one, but laid it aside when the people for whose sake I am here came in. I am, therefore, writing the reply today.

I will say nothing about Nuremberg. In barbarity there are no comparisons. Whether it is here or there, it is all “here”.

It is not correct to say that I have abandoned constructive work to come here, nor that I have yielded to the temptation of politics. In fact life cannot be divided into compartments. The organs of the body are called by different names, but the body is one. The same is true about life. But since you think that it is an error on my part, you should believe it to be so. One day you will realize your error and see the unity of my life, or reform me. I have never laboured under the delusion that what I believe is true. Yes, what I believe is true for myself, otherwise I would cease to be a satyagrahi. The same rule applies to all.

And now your particular question. I should like the girls to remain unmarried, but they cannot be forced to do so. We must, therefore, help those who wish to get married.

It was, and is, Acharya Bhagawat’s duty to plead with you and other co-workers and carry them with him in whatever he did.¹ He made a mistake in doing what he did without consulting you. You also should not tolerate his improper conduct through your desire for gaining something from him. But you did

¹ Acharya Bhagawat had persuaded women workers of the Kasturba Trust to get married and even arranged their marriages.

that. In this matter, too, the final decision must be yours. For occasions do arise when one has to swallow such bitter draughts. I have merely explained a general principle to you.

Please understand that I have no time to write more than this.

If Sushila, who is here, has understood the situation better, she will write to you. I am observing silence. It is doing me good. I was afraid that I might break down. More when we meet.

I was not happy that the meeting of the Agents¹ did not take place.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10449. Also C. W. 6888. Courtesy: Prema Katak

484. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

NEW DELHI,

October 16, 1946

CHI. DURGA,

Rest assured that I will not go against your wishes and encourage Bablo in any way. I also read the letter from Narahari. I shall not enter into any argument because now there is no question of sending Bablo to Afghanistan.

I think it is right for you to stay wherever Bablo may be living. I also like the idea of [his] working for Nayee Talim. Let us all wish that he may keep good health and grow strong in body, mind and spirit.

My return to Sevagram is again delayed. Everything is in the hands of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. DURGABEHN DESAI
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

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

¹ Provincial representatives of the Kasturba Trust

485. *LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA*

October 16, 1946

CHI. BABUDI (SHARDA),

I have your letter. Your weight will increase if you eat properly. Shakaribehn should try hip-bath and friction-bath. She should put a cold mud pack on the part of the head affected by migraine. I am held up here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 100671. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

486. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. As far as I can tell I am here till the 23rd. But you should understand that I live from moment to moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

BAPuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 371

487. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

Gandhiji said that he could not sense any generosity in the nomination of a Harijan¹ by the Muslim League in their quota of five seats especially when he read of what was happening in East Bengal.

A man like himself ought to be glad, they might say, that another seat had been given to a Harijan. But he would be deceiving himself and Mr. Jinnah if he said so. Mr. Jinnah had always been of the opinion that Muslims and Hindus

¹ Jagendranath Mandal

were two nations, that the League was a purely communal organization. How then could they nominate a Harijan to represent them? Gandhiji said he feared that the League's mode of entrance into the Cabinet had not been straight. He was, therefore, forced to wonder whether they had come into the Cabinet also to fight. He hoped, nevertheless, that his fears would be proved wrong and that they would work there as brothers, determined to serve India as a whole. He hoped, too, that the Harijan member would prove a worthy son and servant of India.

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to Babu Brijkishore Prasad of whose death he had learned in the morning. It was a custom to condole with the relatives of the deceased. But Gandhiji had said in his telegram that they should rejoice that Brijkishore Babu had been relieved of his physical suffering. He had first met him at the Lucknow Congress and then when he went to assist the indigo labourers of Champaran, he had realized the sterling worth of Babu Brijkishore from the beginning of his acquaintance. Dr. Rajendra Prasad looked upon him as his chief.

Babu Brijkishore was a man of his word, honest and a true servant not only of Bihar but of the whole of India. Gandhiji became closely associated with Brijkishore Babu, so much so that he sent his daughter, Prabhavati Devi, to Sabarmati Ashram. She became as Gandhiji's own daughter. She married Shri Jayprakash Narayan. Brijkishore Babu had been a star in the firmament of Bihar and his memory would always be cherished.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1946

488. *HAND-SPUN v. MILL CLOTH*

The Premier of Madras has fallen foul of the big capitalist interests such as the Chamber of Commerce and even some Congressmen. I have had cuttings sent to me from the Madras Press. I am sorry to say that the criticism seems to me to be interested and ignorant.

My name has been dragged in the controversy. That I sponsored the Premier's scheme should not affect a dispassionate discussion of the very simple problem.

The simple question is merely this: can khadi become universal in Madras if encouragement is given by the Madras Government to new mills being erected or old ones being so expanded as to enable them to double production? Are the villagers expected to be so simple as not to understand that it would be merely playing with khadi if mill cloth, heavily aided, is to be dumped down in their midst, probably at

a rate cheaper even than cotton required to weave a particular length of calico? This happened when Japan sent her calico to India.

The Madras scheme is undoubtedly meant to utilize a part of the idle hours of the villagers for spinning sufficient yarn to clothe themselves. Is it chimerical to induce and expect the people to utilize their idle hours to do useful, national, honest labour?

It will be time to declaim against the Madras Government when there is a feasible scheme to find useful and more remunerative employment for all who need work. It is hardly an honourable pastime to dismiss from consideration honest servants of the nation by dubbing them idealists, dreamers, fanatics and faddists.

Let not capitalists and other entrenched personages range themselves against the poor villagers and prevent them from bettering their hard lot by dignified labour.

The great flaw about new mills in the Madras scheme was detected by me. It was when the Textile Commissioner was convinced of the absurdity of the two things running side by side and the feasibility of the scheme as envisaged by the A.I.S.A. that he ventured to recommend it to the Madras Government. His reputation will be at stake if it is impracticable or unworkable, not the critics'.

This is work for democracy by a democratic Government.

Hence the scheme must be popular at least where it is to be tried.

It must not be one man's scheme but the whole Government's.

It must have the backing of the Legislature.

In no case may it smack of compulsion.

It must be intrinsically practicable and of benefit to the masses.

These conditions of success are all reduced to writing. The Government has accepted them *in toto* after, I understand, full discussion with experts and among themselves.

Let it be remembered that the existing Madras mills will not be touched at present. That the whole mill industry will be affected if the scheme spreads like wildfire, as I expect some day such a thing must, goes without saying. Let not the largest capitalist rue the day when and if it comes.

The only question then worth considering is whether the

Madras Government are honest and competent. If they are not, everything will go wrong. If they are, the scheme must be blessed by all and must succeed.

NEW DELHI, October 17, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

489. TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

Express

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DOCTOR LOHIA

RAMNIVAS THALAKWADI

BELGAUM

PROBABLY DELHI SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. TELEGRAM TO MEDH

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

MEDH

CARE MITRAVADAN DHRU, SANKADI SHERY

RUGHNATH BUMB'S POLE, AHMEDABAD

THOUGH MY MOVEMENTS UNCERTAIN YOU CAN COME.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

October 17, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

This is a mere love letter, not a news letter. I hope you had a comfortable journey and that the little boil was not too troublesome. I see you had to negotiate stairs. Hope it did no damage.

It is after 3 o'clock now and yet the expected wire has not come. But I shall continue to expect it.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4178. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7814

492. *LETTER TO T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR*

NEW DELHI,

October 17, 1946

DEAR NAMBIAR,

Why write in English? Not to know the inter-provincial language, Hindustani, of India is worse than praying after sunset or eating during sunset or not smearing the forehead. God can be worshipped at any time and no one is worse off for not smearing the forehead.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR, B.A.,B.L.

THUCKALAY, TRAVANCORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

493. *LETTER TO LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU*

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DEAR LAXMI KANT,

Your p. c. All eatables are . . .¹ food whether vegetables, fruit, milk, cereals, pulses, eggs or flesh meat.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU
C/O CAP. TARNSEJRA
AQUANDA
POST GOA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

494. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHA,

Yesterday I got the news of your father's² demise. I was glad. He was released from pain.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you got my wire.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3586

¹ Illegible in the source

² Brijkishore Babu; *Vide* also "Telegram to Janardan Prasad", 16-10-1946.

495. *LETTER TO GANGA P. BHATT*

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. GANGA,

I had your earlier letter. If you have to follow Purushottam it is no more than your dharma. You ought now to give up your hankering after social service. Purushottam has some kink somewhere but I cannot place it. He ought to withdraw from some field of work or other. He alone can know best whether his body will stand up to it, whether he can do as much as this. If he cannot, you must give up your attachment [for social service], but this too appears difficult. You may therefore go on living as seem best to you. I am held up here.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN PURUSHOTTAM
29 BHAWANI PETH
POONA 2

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

496. *LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI*

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your long but detailed and interesting letter. I don't get any time to write letters. I am simply stuck here and cannot get away.

It is unfortunate that Gangabehn left. She is such a public-spirited worker. But this is how a woman's life is. A man may desert his wife for any reason; a woman cannot do likewise even for the sake of selfless service. This is a flaw in dharma but it has gone so deep that it cannot be got rid of.¹

You must have a woman worker with you and if possible you

¹*Vide* the preceding item.

should train one locally. Only intense purity on the part of all of you can bring about this result. Act only after full consideration. Don't be rash. Never mind if you have to carry on without a woman worker. If all of you are absolutely pure you will find one. Maybe Gangabehn will herself come back. We were hoping to have Kanchan but it cannot be thought of for the present. Amtussalaam is a big person. She might have to go to Bengal. Moreover, she will not stay there without me.

I cannot think of anyone else.

What you are doing is good.

It is now 6 o'clock in the morning and I must have my constitutional. So be content with this much.

Blessings to all.

MANILAL

URULI KANCHAN (POONA)

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

497. LETTER TO K. T. SHAH

NEW DELHI,

October 17, 1946

BHAI KHUSHAL SHAH,

I have gone through your statement and made a few changes that I thought were warranted. I have kept the substance intact. A point suggested itself and so I have added a paragraph which you may accommodate at the right place.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI K. T. SHAH

BARODA HOUSE

DELHI

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

498. LETTER TO SUNDARAM

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. SUNDARAM,

I got your letter in beautiful Tamil handwriting. I could follow the whole of it. Panditji¹, I hope, is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3178

499. LETTER TO DATAR

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI DATAR,

When will your work begin? When we work for someone on payment we have to observe a time-limit; the same applies to altruistic work.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DATAR

NIJADHAM

URULI KANCHAN

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

¹ Madan Mohan Malaviya

500. LETTER TO S. M. CHITRE

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI CHITRE,

I have your letter.

Do what you can by your own effort. Why do you write in English?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI S. M. CHITRE
HARDIKAR HOUSE
BHANDARA, C. P.

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

501. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

Gandhiji referred again to the tragic happenings in Noakhali and Tippera districts in East Bengal.

What hurt him very much more than the killings was the fact that women were being carried away, abducted and converted to Islam. Of course women generally did not carry swords. The Rani of Jhansi had one. All could not be Ranis. But he would remind them of the incomparable power of Sita whom all the physical might of Ravana could not defile. Women must learn how to die before a hair of their head could be injured. He would like to say to the Hindus wherever they were in the minority and *vice versa* to the Muslims not to die helplessly but face death bravely and without a murmur. Then only could the terrible killings now going on in Noakhali and Tippera come to a stop.

Sarat Babu, brother of Subhas Babu, who knew no barriers of caste or creed, will be visiting Bengal in a day or two. He was ill but that was not going to deter him. Shri Kripalani, the President-elect, and his wife were also going to do what they could to stop the slaughter. They were not going there to protect one party but to stop the fratricidal warfare. It was a good beginning for Acharya Kripalani and his wife.

The fair name of Bengal was being tarnished—Bengal which had given them

so much, Bengal the home of Gurudev, whose bhajan they had just heard. The hymn asked God to make the devotee pure of heart and fearless. It was with this hymn on their lips that they were going and it was the audience's duty to wish them every success.

Gandhiji referred to two letters he had received today in which the auctions he had been holding had been referred to as gambling and black-marketing. It was man's duty to keep his speech correct but these friends had not weighed their words before writing.

Gambling and black-marketing were indulged in for personal ends. Men even died for their selfish ends and stooped to anything to make money. The money spent at the auctions here was given for the Harijan cause. The articles bought were not for use but to be kept as souvenirs for the children to remember what their parents did to remove untouchability. Of course anyone could misrepresent a pure act as an impure one. Such base misrepresentation could not be helped.

The Hindustan Times, 18-10-1946

502. DISCUSSION WITH CO-WORKERS¹

[On or before *October 18, 1946*]

In the course of the talk, one of them asked Gandhiji whether he would recommend fasting to check the orgy of communal madness that was spreading in Bengal. Gandhiji's reply was in the negative. He narrated how a valuable colleague from Ahmedabad had invited him to immolate himself. "We believe in the non-violent way but lack the strength. Your example would steady our wavering faith and fortify us."

The logic was perfect and the temptation great.

But I resisted it and said no. There is no inner call. When it comes, nothing will keep me back. I have reasoned with myself too about it. But I need not set forth my reasons. Let people call me a coward if they please. I have faith that when the hour arrives God will give me the strength to face it and I won't be found unready.

Fasting cannot be undertaken mechanically. It is a powerful thing but a dangerous thing if handled amateurishly. It requires complete self-purification, much more than is required in facing death without a thought of retaliation. One such act of perfect

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Travail", 18-10-1946. The interviewers were two co-workers from Bengal who had come to seek Gandhiji's permission to go to Bengal before he himself went.

sacrifice would suffice for the whole world. Such is held to be Jesus' example.

The idea is that you appropriate to yourself and assimilate the essence of His sacrifice symbolically represented by the bread and wine of the Eucharist. A man who was completely innocent offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act. "It is finished" were the last words of Jesus, and we have the testimony of his four disciples as to its authenticity.

But whether the Jesus tradition is historically true or not I do not care. To me it is truer than history because I hold it to be possible and it enshrines an eternal law—the law of vicarious and innocent suffering taken in its true sense.

A Hindu and a Mussalman braved the fury of the madened crowd in Bombay and went down together literally clasped in a fatal embrace but refused to desert each other. Rajabali and Vasantrao Hegishte similarly fell to the frenzy of a mob in the attempt to quell it. "What came of it?" people might ask, "the fire still continues to rage." I do not think for a moment it has gone in vain. We may not see the effect today. Our non-violence is as yet a mixed affair. It limps. Nevertheless, it is there and it continues to work like leaven in a silent and invisible way, least understood by most. It is the only way.

As a further illustration of his remarks he recalled the history of the Champaran Satyagraha. There had been several bloody risings within half a century preceding it against the infamous compulsory indigo plantation. But each attempt had only resulted in fastening the rivets tighter than ever before. Then came the Champaran Mass Satyagraha, untainted by acts of violence, and a century-old evil was overthrown in less than six months.

Go forth, therefore. I have done. I won't detain you for a day longer. You have my blessings. And I tell you there will be no tears but only joy if tomorrow I get the news that all the three of you are killed.

"It will be pure joy to be so killed," they echoed.

Go, but mark my words. Let there be no foolhardiness about it. You should go because you feel you must and not because I ask you to.

Harijan, 2-10-1946

503. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,

[On or before *October 18, 1946*]

Gandhiji remarked at the evening prayer gathering that day that he had received numerous messages from Bengal inviting him to go there and still the raging fury. Whilst he did not believe that he had any such capacity, he was anxious to go to Bengal. Only he thought it was his duty to wait till Pandit Nehru's return and the meeting of the Working Committee.² But he was in God's hands. If he clearly felt that he should wait for nothing, he would not hesitate to anticipate the date. His heart was in Bengal.

Harijan, 27-10-1946

504. NOTES

HOW TO COMBAT UNHOLY BOYCOTT

A correspondent from Mercara (Coorg) writes to say that many youthful reformers do not believe in animal sacrifice offered to the village gods. Therefore, he says, the villagers have threatened to boycott them. What are the reformers to do?

Reformers all over the world have no easy task. The threatened boycott should have no meaning for the reformers. They must be ready and willing to submit to the hardships entailed by the boycott. They should on no account be angry with the villagers who honestly believe in superstitious practices. It is a question of the real education of the people. These village gods have no existence except in the villagers' imagination. Unmindful of the boycott, they should calmly persevere in their reasoning with the villagers, rendering them all the time such services that the villagers may be in need of. Patience and perseverance will overcome the mountains of difficulties that may face the reformers. The reformers may not summon police assistance against the villagers.

WAYS OF VIOLENCE

A straight line is one. Non-violence is a straight line. Lines that are not straight are many. A child who has learnt how to handle a pen

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's article "The Travail", 18-10-1946

² This was held on the 23rd, 24th and 25th October, under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru.

can draw as many lines as he wishes. He won't draw a straight line except perhaps by chance. Several readers ask me whether in the violence "permitted" by me several things mentioned by them could be included. Strange to say all the letters received are in English! The writers should reread my article and they will at once know why I cannot answer those questions. I am unfit probably for the simple reason that I have never practised violence. Above all I have never permitted violence. I have simply stated two grades of bravery and cowardice. The only thing lawful is non-violence. Violence can never be lawful in the sense meant here, i. e., not according to man-made law but according to the law made by Nature for man. Though violence is not lawful, when it is offered in self-defence or for the defence of the defenceless, it is an act of bravery far better than cowardly submission. The latter befits neither man nor woman. Under violence, there are many stages and varieties of bravery. Every man must judge this for himself. No other person can or has the right.

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

505. *ELOQUENT FIGURES*

When Shri S. Venkateswaran, the Provincial Textile Commissioner, was in Delhi specially for the purpose of the Madras khadi scheme, I asked him to give me his own figures on the assumption that Madras had no mills and had to clothe the whole Presidency in khadi. Here are the figures¹ which speak for themselves :

Is it extravagant to expect every five persons out of eight to spin one hour per day, say, for love of the country of their birth?

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

¹ Not reproduced here

506. NOTES

FIREWORKS DURING DIWALI DAYS¹

I have received several letters complaining of the use of fireworks. The complaints are justified. I wrote against this practice in the columns of the *Navajivan*. I do not know whether the writing had any effect. At present when fire surrounds us it is a sin to have fireworks, illuminations with ghee or oil or electric lamps and consume sweets.

WHAT ABOUT DAKORE ?²

A friend from the Kheda District, who keeps Bhangi men and women in his house as his own brothers and sisters, writes: "Big temples in Madras are being thrown open to Harijans. Is it not strange that the deluded Gujarat should not throw open the Dakore temple?" If the deluded Gujaratis become sane, Dakore temple can be thrown open today. But if Gujarat must find joy in hugging a shameful custom, who can prevent her?

On the Trustees of the Dakore temple rests a heavy responsibility.

VICTIMS OF DUTY

I give below an extract³ from a letter from a Parsee friend.

These two gentlemen are certainly worthy of commendation for their sacrifice and bravery. It is really baffling why neither the Congress nor the League said anything in their praise. There must be something at the back of it.

WHY THESE TEARS ?⁴

In his letter of birthday greetings to me, Professor Satish Kalelkar relates an interesting and instructive Chinese story, which I give below for the benefit of the readers of the *Harijanbandhu*.

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946.

² A translation of the original Gujarati published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946, is reproduced here.

³ Not translated here. The letter described the death of Gazdar and Nawdar of St. John's Ambulance corps during the riots in Bombay while they were engaged in removing the wounded.

⁴ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946.

Dr. Wellington Koo, at one of his meetings in London, once narrated a sweet story about a Chinese family. The eldest member of the family was considered, as with us, the head of the family. As such he had the right to use an ancient family stick by way of punishment whenever necessary. Once a hundred-years-old man used the stick on the back of his seventy-five-years-old son. Tears ran down the withered cheeks of the son. The father asked the cause of the tears which he had never before seen him shed on a similar occasion. The son replied, "Father your stick has lost its original force. Your feebleness hurts me. Hence the tears.

Kakasaheb was in Delhi with me when the letter was received. I gave it to him to read and he said such things had happened in our country in the past and must be happening even now. He narrated the following incident :

One day a High Court judge of Madras is said to have gone out with a friend at the end of the day's work instead of going home as usual. When, therefore, he reached home late in the evening he met his mother standing in the doorway waiting for him. "Why have you come late?" asked the old lady with a slap on his face. Tears rolled down the son's cheeks.

The friend remarked that it was but natural that a grown-up learned man like him should feel insulted on being slapped like that. It was strange on the mother's part to have slapped him.

"No, there was no insult in that slap," promptly replied the judge. "It is my proud privilege to receive a slap from my revered mother now and then. My eyes became wet only because I missed this time the strength that used to be in her slap. Evidently she has grown old and weak. Should not that hurt a dutiful son?"

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

507. WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR HARIJANS?

A gentleman writes the following pathetic letter¹ :

It is true. The correspondent himself is a Harijan *sevak*. It becomes difficult to bring about any reform when fraud is practised in the name of religion. This we see happening every now and then. Then again we are cowards. I have found only one royal road: namely, that one who has seen Truth should expound it through personal example, be generous towards opponents, never give up patience and remain happily engrossed in his own work.

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

508. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

The expected wire came after 5 p. m. yesterday. Everybody is anxious to know the result of medical examination there.

I have been incessantly writing for *Harijan*. Have practically or wholly finished. It is now 3 o'clock.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4179. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7815

¹ Not translated here. The correspondent had lamented that people had not adopted Gandhiji's programme for eradicating untouchability and asked him what changes he would suggest.

509. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your two letters but not the article. I received the story, and it is going to the press.

I am engrossed in work. I am observing silence, it is that which is sustaining me. I have not been able to get the peace that I seek. I am striving for it. I will, therefore, reply to your second letter later on.

I am enclosing Vidyalkar's scheme.¹ Please read it. Let Shriman also read it and then give me your opinion.

I see no possibility of my being able to go there in the immediate future. I feel that fate will take me to Bengal. It seems I shall be here till the 23rd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10977

510. *LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH*

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. HEMANTKUMAR,

Why talk about prejudice? We should not think of it. You have made much improvement in your Gujarati. Continue to show such good results.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. HEMANTKUMAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

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

¹*Vide* "Letter to Chandragupta Vidyalkar", 18-10-1946

511. LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VIDYALANKAR

October 18, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAGUPTA,

I have received the scheme. I have gone through it. You have taken great pains. Why have you put languages in two sections? It will be a source of quarrels and so far as I can see no purpose will be served. I have sent the scheme to Kakasaheb and Shrimanji.¹ They will scrutinize it more thoroughly. More afterwards.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 7209. Also C. W. 4865

512. LETTER TO JANAKIRAM

NEW DELHI,

October 18, 1946

BHAI JANAKIRAM,

Your case has appeared in the newspapers; there is no need to say anything more.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JANAKIRAM

KADAVUR

VIZAGAPATTAM

SOUTH INDIA

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

¹Vide "Letter to D.B. Kalelkar", 18-10-1946.

513. LETTER TO PARWANI

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

BHAI PARWANI,

Personally I see nothing wrong in what you are doing.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PARWANI

TEJ

KOTRI, SINDH

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

514. LETTER TO RATNAMAYEE DEVI

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. RATNAMAYEE,

It is well that Dikshitji's¹ wife has left this world². We should learn from such a death.

BAPU

SHRI RATNAMAYEE DEVI

BALIKA ASHRAM

OKHLA

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

¹ Sitacharan Dikshit, who later served as Editor (Hindi) of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*

² She had been ailing for a long time.

515. CHARKHA MANDAL¹

The Charkha Mandal has evolved out of the three spinning classes held in the Bhangi Colony.² How I wish such Mandals would spring up all over the country! Before that can happen a number of Mandals should be opened in Delhi and function regularly. There are so many clubs formed for sports. Why should we not have organizations for useful work?

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 18-10-1946

516. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING³

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

Gandhiji advised the women in East Bengal to commit suicide by poison or some other means to avoid dishonour. . . . Yesterday he told the women to suffocate themselves or to bite their tongues to end their lives. But two doctors, B. C. Roy of Calcutta and Sushila Nayyar, had informed him that such means of suicide were impossible.

The only way known to medicine for instant self-immolation was a strong dose of poison. If this was so, he, the speaker, would advise everyone running the risk of dishonour to take poison before submission to dishonour. He had, however, heard from those given to yogic practices that it was possible by some yogic practice to end life. He would try to inquire. His was not an idle idea. He meant all he had said.

The very fact of steeling oneself for death before dishonour braced one for the struggle. A woman in our country was brought up to think that her place was with her husband or on the funeral pyre. He held wholly different views. He held that a woman could be as brave as the bravest man. If one half of India's humanity was paralysed,

¹ Kanu Gandhi's outline of the Charkha Mandal, on which this is the comment, is not reproduced here. The Charkha Mandal had been founded to encourage community spinning at fixed times and places.

² *Vide* "Eleven-day Charkha Class", 24-9-1946.

³ The report has been touched up.

India could never really feel free. He would far rather see India's women trained to wield arms than that they should feel helpless. He knew, however, that arms were a poor weapon when it came to the matter of defending one's honour against odds. Honour knew no surrender to any power on earth.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter received from a Muslim friend to the effect that although he was ready to condemn atrocities by Muslims he preferred to be silent when Hindus committed them. He could only say that the charge was baseless. To him all human beings were like blood brothers.

Lastly, he mentioned messages received from Bengal inviting him to go there and help in restoring law and order. Whilst he did not believe that he had any such capacity he was anxious to go to Bengal. Only he thought it was his duty to wait till Pandit Nehru's return and the meeting of the Working Committee. But he was in God's hands. If he clearly felt that he should wait for nothing, he would not wait.

The Hindustan Times, 19-10-1946

517. THE COMING CONGRESS SESSION¹

A basketful of letters are before me in connection with the Meerut Congress session to be held shortly. The correspondents complain of the 'lavish' expenditure that is advertised to be incurred in connection with it. I must refuse to sit in judgment upon the doings of the Reception Committee. I have neither the wish nor the required leisure to study the facts. The following, however, I can say without the necessity of studying facts and figures. It may be of some use to the Committee. There should be no *tamashas*. The Congress session is any day a serious business to be tackled seriously. There can be no side-shows. Crowds should not be attracted. The fact of the Congress session being held is by itself enough attraction.

All illuminations should be strictly avoided. Food to be provided should be of the simplest kind requiring little or no fat and sugar in its preparation. Uninvited guests should bring their own provisions or refrain from coming.

Sanitary arrangements should be perfect and serve as a lesson to all comers. Sight-seers should be discouraged.

NEW DELHI, October 19, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

¹ This was published under the heading "Notes".

518. I AM DEFEATED

Letters continue to rain down on me regarding uncertified khadi. They are from persons of repute and experience. I do not find any flaw in my argument. My defeat would lie in the fact that though there are large stocks of uncertified khadi it is very difficult to find in it genuine khadi. If this is true then I have to withdraw my words and I do so.

It is necessary to understand in what lies the defeat. I do not have any doubt and indeed no one has any doubt that genuine khadi, even if it is uncertified, is superior to mill cloth. But my friends laugh at me because genuine khadi is always certified and what is available in the market is an imitation only. It is adulterated; there is fraud in it and the desire to cheat. I must accept that such khadi is as good as mill cloth. I have come to know from reliable sources that because of my writings some dishonest traders were able to increase their loot. I therefore hope that from now onwards a khadi buyer will go only to a certified khadi bhandar and buy whatever is available there. He should not even by mistake go to a store where uncertified khadi is sold.

Those who can prove to me that they are unable to spin I will consider as friends and give them the certificate that I have received yarn from them, because I always have yarn accumulated with me.

NEW DELHI, October 19, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

519. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

AMTUSSALAAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

WRITING.¹ SELF MAY GO BENGAL AFTER 23RD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 534

520. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have wired to you. I have no information. What can I tell you? I do not consider myself fit to guide you. Go to Bengal if you want to.

I am myself getting ready to go there. I have said so in the Press also. When God will take me there I do not know.

Tell everybody to give up any hope of my returning to Sevagram for the present. I want to return there but God won't let me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 533

¹*Vide* the following item.

521. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

DEAR C. R.,

Here is something on salt for you, Matthai¹ and Greenfield to see. There seems to be much in what the writer says. It has no bearing on the tax which I hope is soon going.

Love.

BAPU

RAJAJI
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

522. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your wire came in last night. So you were still suffering. That did signify subsiding. Let me hope it is better as I am writing this 5.35 p.m.

Here is a letter from V. G. D. You will see amusing remarks about the vocabulary. I must fully share the guilt with you about “architect”.² It should [have] been नक्शा. We must give a list of amendments. You may return the letter and I shall make notes.

Renuka and her sister were with me last night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4180. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7816

¹ John Matthai, Finance Minister in the Interim Government

² The reference presumably is to the meaning of the word given in “Hindustani Dictionary” published in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946, where “architect” was explained as इमारत बनाने वाला

523. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 20, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I see in your talk the same shallowness as before. It does not seem good. You talk without thinking. You are not to accompany me to Bengal. You must finish your study. After that you may devote yourself to service as much as you wish. I will then gladly accept it. It would be a different matter if you were to lay down your life in Bombay. I don't like your doing no work here. You need not wait to be asked to do something. I am not referring to household chores. You can do some reading or writing or spinning. I see you doing none of that. I wish you would do some fine carding and spinning, repair spinning-wheels which go out of order and learn weaving. You will do all these things only if you feel a spontaneous urge to do them. But it does not seem likely. I shall be satisfied even if you become only a good doctor and do service.

Since it is now time for you to leave for Bombay, what more shall I say? Stop the bleeding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9603. Also C. W. 6575. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

524. LETTER TO BAPU BHAI VASHI

NEW DELHI,

October 20, 1946

BHAI BAPUBHAI,

I have your letter. Bengal has caught hold of me so completely that I may say I have absolutely no time whatever. You may therefore glean whatever you can from *Harijan*. When you are completely recovered do come to Sevagram if I am there. Writer to Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. BAPUBHAI VASHI

KAPOL SANATORIUM, BLOCK NO. 6

DEOLALI (G. I. P.)

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

525. *LETTER TO BLIND STUDENTS*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BLIND STUDENTS,

Thanks for the gift you have sent through Jayantilal on the occasion of Charkha Jayanti. It will be used in the service of Harijans.

Those who blindly drift along although they can see are truly blind. Those who go along the straight path are not blind.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

526. *LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. HARJIVAN,

You have fallen ill again. Now get well soon.
I am held up here for the time being.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT HARJIVAN KOTAK
SHRI LALLUBHAI GORDHANDAS HOSPITAL
MANINAGAR
AHMEDABAD

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

527. *LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI MANU SUBEDAR,

I am going to make use of matter from your published article.

Have you seen what I have been writing recently on khadi? If you have, do you agree with it? If you have studied the Madras

scheme,¹ do you see any flaw in it? Don't hesitate to ask for any information regarding it that you may need.

Do you at all spin? Do you know carding and other processes? As I read your article I could see your faith in khadi and village industries.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

528. *LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,

October 20, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am sending you this (Manilalbhai's letter). Nowadays I mostly observe silence. There is a great load of work. God carries it and hence I don't feel it so much. The less one's faith in Him the more one feels the burden. And I am certain there can be no burden where there is perfect faith. I take it that all of you are well. My return to Sevagram has been postponed for the present.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI

AKOLA

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

529. *LETTER TO VACHHRAJ T. DOSHI*

NEW DELHI,

October 20, 1946

BHAI VACHHRAJ,

I got your two letters. I hope you got Champabehn's letter. Please do what is necessary. There is no sign of my going there for the present. You should all do what you can. You can have some

¹*Vide* "Hand-spun v. Mill Cloth", 17-10-1946.

additions and alterations made. We had better have Preston Grover in the regular way.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI VACHHRAJ TRIBHUVANDAS DOSHI
PANCHGANI

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

530. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

October 20, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your letter. I see that you have not yet recovered. Here you have constipation. For this you must be at fault somewhere. If there is any deficiency in the diet, it should not be so.

I have made up my mind about you. You must work in *Harijan*. Therefore your Hindi and Urdu should be strong. If your English could also improve, it would be still better. I want to put the entire burden of *Harijan Sevak* on you. The Hindustani should be excellent. Today it is not so. If you do not like this work tell me. The English translation should be of good quality. Rajkumari compiles the dictionary. That you should do.

If you have to go home, it would be well if you went now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6714. Also C. W. 4458

531. *LETTER TO DHIRENDRA*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI DHIRENDRA BABU,

I had your letter. Please forgive me for the delay in replying. You can now take charge of the purse presented to me and spend the amount in accordance with the scheme you have sent to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DHIRENDRA

VIDYA ASHRAM

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

532. *LETTER TO ISHWARDAS NATWAR*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI ISHWARDAS,

I have your two letters. Not a pie should be spent on your son's wedding.

The [desire to] come to me is ignorant attachment. Besides, there is nothing certain about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ISHWARDAS NATWAR

MOHAN ASHRAM

HARDWAR, U. P.

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

533. *LETTER TO MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR*

NEW DELHI,
October 20 , 1946

BHAI MAHAVIR PRASAD,

I have your letter. I am writing to Dr. Katju.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR
AROGYA MANDIR
GORAKHPUR, U. P.

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

534. *LETTER TO KAILAS NATH KATJU*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI KAILASNATHJI,

Read the enclosed letter. My suggestion is that the work will be done more quickly if you appoint someone for such jobs.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

535. *LETTER TO KALYAN CHOUDHARI*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

SISTER,

I have your letter. I have nothing to give. You should remain there and serve.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KALYAN CHOUDHARI
C/O SHRI JAGDISH CHANDRA DUTT CHOUDHARI
MOHALLA MALIGUNJ
LUDHIANA, PUNJAB

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

536. *LETTER TO SANKARAN*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

Your mental state does not appear to be good. What is it that has appeared in *Jeevan-Sakha*? It contains something about you which is not at all good. It does not suggest humility. Now, what are you going to do? It is not good to hang around here aimlessly. I allowed you to come here because I wanted to know your wishes. It is Sushilabehn who has made you what you are, and if you cannot get on with her how are you going to do the hospital work at Sevagram? Think for yourself and make a determined effort. I cannot talk. It is better for me to observe silence today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN

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

537. *LETTER TO SANKARAN*

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

If you remember the particular issue of *Jeevan-Sakha*, I shall obtain it from here. Perhaps it cannot be said that you possess scientific knowledge. That you have denied being a doctor is quite proper.

You will gain nothing by going around with me. By all means work in the Talimi Sangh if Aryanayakumji will have you.

What is the need of taking Jajuji into the Trust? He carries on his own activity. I do not find any harm in your working there. He will have assistance and you will add to your experience. My experience is little. You may sleep if you must. It will not be right to retire to a village.

It will be good to have a talk with Su[shila]behn.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SANKARAN

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

538. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi devoted his after-prayer discourse on Sunday to answering the question put to him during the previous 24 hours as to what should be done with persons who were forcibly converted or abducted.

He said he had no hesitation in maintaining that forcible conversion was no conversion at all nor abduction a bar to the return to her home of the abducted girl. He held that no purification or penance was necessary in such cases. Hindu society was wrong when it imposed penance on such persons. They had not erred.

Gandhiji said that he had lived for years among Muslims and Christians. They had all assured him that there could be no use of force in religion. Those who resorted to force did not deserve to be called men of religion. In a sense he and his audience who believed that God was one and no other and who believed that Mohammed was one of His messengers were Muslims. But if anyone forced them or him to recite the Kalma, they would flatly refuse to obey and take the consequences.

It was his fervent hope that all good Muslims would stand up against the practices reported from the affected areas in East Bengal.

The Hindustan Times, 21-10-1946

539. *A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY*¹

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

He who loses patience, loses Truth as well as Non-violence.

July 17, 1946

There is no happiness like Truth, no misery like untruth.

July 18, 1946

The wonder is that even though a man knows where true happiness lies, he wastes his life in pursuing untruth!

July 19, 1946

Whatever we do should be done not to please or displease anyone, but only to please God.

July 20, 1946

Even if you have told someone something a hundred times and he has not listened, you must tell him again and again. That is patience.

July 21, 1946

Accepting undesired service, which is not joyfully rendered, is a painful burden.

July 22, 1946

Great caution is necessary when a man represses his nature.

July 23, 1946

If the nature is evil, it needs not repression but casting out.

July 24, 1946

He who wishes to save time will never do a single unnecessary thing.

July 25, 1946

He who obeys God's Law will never care for any other law which is opposed to the Divine Law.

¹ Gandhiji started writing "A Thought for the Day" for Anand T. Hingorani at the latter's request, on November 20, 1944, and continued the practice for about two years. The thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, 10-10-1946. These were originally in Hindi. The translation by Anand T. Hingorani is reproduced here with slight alterations.

July 26, 1946

Is it proper that one should give up a good thing not because one wishes to but for the sake of friends?

July 27, 1946

The first service is latrine-cleaning.

POONA,

July 28, 1946

Inexhaustible patience is needed if Truth is to be brought home to anyone.

July 29, 1946

However great the fury of the storm, the sea does not abandon its calm.

July 30, 1946

Why does a man become restless when he is unable to do his work?

July 31, 1946

There is goodness as well as greatness in simplicity, not in wealth.

URULI,

August 1, 1946

Whatever the crisis, the fire of love will overcome it.

August 2, 1946

Nothing turns out right so long as there is no harmony between body, mind and soul.

Saturday, August 3, 1946

Praise and censure should be alike for a votary of Truth. He will, therefore, neither listen to praise, nor be angered by censure.

August 4, 1946

He who is face to face with God does not speak, cannot speak.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,

Monday, August 5, 1946

Man has two eyes and two ears, but only one tongue; let him, therefore, do half as much talking as seeing, and half as much talking as hearing.

SEVAGRAM,

Tuesday, August 6, 1946

Man's capacity for self-deception is amazing.

Wednesday, August 7, 1946

Give all, gain all.

Thursday, August 8, 1946

Keep all, lose all.

Friday, August 9, 1946

What is 'big' or 'small' in sin? Sin is sin. To believe otherwise is self-deception.

Saturday, August 10, 1946

To destroy something is easy. To build requires great skill and care.

Sunday, August 11, 1946

We shall cease to think only of ourselves when we think of others.

Monday, August 12, 1946

Many things are wrought by patience, even as they are spoilt by impatience.

Tuesday, August 13, 1946

Simplicity cannot be affected, it should be ingrained in one's nature.

Wednesday, August 14, 1946

Man cannot raise himself by searching outside. The scope for growth lies within.

Thursday, August 15, 1946

Pure love removes all weariness.

Friday, August 16, 1946

How can one claim to be human if he acts like a beast?

Saturday, August 17, 1946

When Reason and Faith are in conflict, it is better to prefer Faith.

Sunday, August 18, 1946

He who is afraid of people's censure will never be able to do anything worth while.

Monday, August 19, 1946

Everything is right and proper in its place, improper when out of place.

Tuesday, August 20, 1946

It appears that man cannot escape the snare of exaggeration.

Wednesday, August 21, 1946

Insistence (or dogmatism) may be true or false. Falsehood does not shake (or eliminate) it. Truth is not affected (or tainted) by it.

Thursday, August 22, 1946

Do not do anything do not read anything without understanding.

Friday, August 23, 1946

The Ganga flows in man's heart, yet he does not bathe in it, and remains unwashed.

Saturday, August 24, 1946

He alone can offer sacrifice who is pure, fearless and worthy.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,

Sunday, August 25, 1946

Despair corrodes man.

Monday, August 26, 1946

Selfishness and fear must go if one is to realize God.

NEW DELHI,

Tuesday, August 27, 1946

To surrender to force is a sign of unmanliness.

Wednesday, August 28, 1946

The real service to the Bhils would be to make them fearless and remove their despair.

Thursday, August 29, 1946

Silence above all.

Friday, August 30, 1946

The light of knowledge can never dawn on the proud.

Saturday, August 31, 1946

To quench one's thirst without the water of the Ganga and to satisfy the soul without God are both equally impossible.

September 1, 1946

Nobody progresses without opposition.

September 2, 1946

Every man should seek for the Source of his being.

September 3, 1946

He who does not know himself is lost.

September 4, 1946

The human body is like a musical instrument. Any note that is desired can be struck on it.

September 5, 1946

Thought pierces even a wall of steel.

September 6, 1946

Die and be saved.

Saturday, September 7, 1946

Faith makes the ship move.

Sunday, September 8, 1946

Why fear death when the threat is ever present?

Monday, September 9, 1946

We are all mad. Which of us shall call whom mad?

Tuesday, September 10, 1946

When we wipe the slate clean, we see God's signature clearly on it.

Wednesday, September 11, 1946

However lofty the ambition, even those considered the lowliest of creatures should come within its ambit.

Thursday, September 12, 1946

God and Satan cannot both occupy the throne of the heart.

Friday, September 13, 1946

Dying for religion is good; for fanaticism, neither dying nor living.

Saturday, September 14, 1946

Inner strength grows by prayer.

Sunday, September 15, 1946

If you see inner beauty, the outer will seem dull.

Monday, September 16, 1946

Life spent in service is the only fruitful life.

Tuesday, September 17, 1946

It is strange that we toil so much over externals without a care for what lies within.

Wednesday, September 18, 1946

All will be well with us if, even in the hour of our travail, we are able to realize the presence of God within us.

Thursday, September 19, 1946

The greater man's realization of the Self, the greater his progress.

Friday, September 20, 1946

A troubled mind causes more suffering than an ulcer.

Saturday, September 21, 1946

The pain of hunger is said to be severe. If we wish to live as human beings, let us rise above even this pain.

Sunday, September 22, 1946

Only experience makes us realize how hard it is to attain the state of non-attachment.

Monday, September 23, 1946

In egotism lies all trouble.

Tuesday, September 24, 1946

A life without thought is like that of a beast.

Wednesday, September 25, 1946

We have to make ourselves as nearly as possible like Him we want to reach.

Thursday, September 26, 1946

If you must be annoyed, why should it be at other people's lapses, why not at your own?

September 27, 1946

There is a lot of difference between living faith and a mere desire for faith. Man is deceived by not knowing this.

September 28, 1946

Not everyone is destined to acquire material knowledge. But all can acquire spiritual knowledge; it is their duty to do so.

Sunday, September 29, 1946

God is said to have four arms as well as a thousand. It shows that all this is mere imagery.

Monday, September 30, 1946

If we dwell on evil thoughts, they do not disappear; they are likely to become our companions. “*Dhyayato vishayan.*”

Tuesday, October 1, 1946

The simple and one hundred per cent truth is that if we dwell on nothing but Ramanama, all our thoughts and actions will be automatically right.

Wednesday, October 2, 1946

Man has to do God’s work, but how is he to know what that is?

Thursday, October 3, 1946

The way to know what God’s work is heartfelt prayer and corresponding action.

Friday, October 4, 1946

Faith is the sun of life.

Saturday, October 5, 1946

If God keeps you, what does it matter if men reject you?

Sunday, October 6, 1946

If one man can become perfect, it is but fair to assume that all can become so.

Monday, October 7, 1946

What a pity that even though a man knows it, he still prefers to fall!

October 8, 1946

Let us think not of big things but of good things.

October 9, 1946

What does it matter if people look upon us as dreamers?

October 10, 1946

The possibility of living up to 125 years is receding. What right has he to live who has not achieved sufficient mastery over anger and attachment?

A Thought for the Day, pp. 602-88

540. TELEGRAM TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

HEMPRABHADEVI¹
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
CALCUTTA

YOU SHOULD BE CALM.² HOPE COME SOON.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

541. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,³

Your two letters came in together.

I am sorry for your sufferings. Let them do you good which they would if you interpret them correctly. Physical suffering can be, and should be, transmuted into spiritual joy. It is a difficult process but it has to be gone through if one is to be truly rich. This enforced idleness should be used for enriching one's thoughts.

That Shummy⁴ is not angry with me shows his nobleness, not the care I should have bestowed on you. On the first sign of the boil I should have insisted on your going to Simla. This place is

¹ Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Founder-President, Bengal Khadi Pratishthan

² Communal riots on a large scale had broken out in Calcutta and Noakhali.

³ The superscription in this and other letters to the addressee is in Devanagari.

⁴ Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

not made for nursing patients like you. It has its unavoidable limitation.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

V.¹ cannot be sent for as you suggest. I know him much better than you do.

From the original: C. W. 3699. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6508

542. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. VALJI,

I liked your letter of yesterday addressed to Rajkumari. If, extending the idea a little further, you yourself can prepare the dictionary², do so and send it. Rajkumari is herself compiling it with much effort. I have not found anyone as hardworking and regular as she is. I look through it but errors remain. Besides, Rajkumari is going to Paris³ for two months. I do not wish to place too great a burden on you. Give as much as you can.

How are you now? I am stuck here for the present. I shall have to go to Bengal. If I go, it will be after the 23rd.

I have omitted your sixth story⁴. You will have seen the reason.

It will be better if you send the Gujarati or English also of whatever you send. If you can send the Hindustani, too, nothing like it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 3172. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

¹ Valji G. Desai; *vide* also the following item.

² The reference is to the English-Hindustani dictionary, which appeared fortnightly in *Harijan* beginning with the issue dated September 1, 1946; *vide* also "English into Hindustani", 25-10-1946.

³ To attend the UNESCO session as a member of the Indian delegation headed by S. Radhakrishnan

⁴ The addressee had been sending selected stories by different authors for publication under "Story Hour" in *Harijan*.

543. *LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH*

October 21, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Please pass on the accompanying letters to the addressees.

My return is being put off. Bengal is calling. One should live as He wishes and go cheerfully wherever He takes one. If we but reach the state where we know that we do nothing, what more can we desire?

How is Sharda¹? Read the book she has. You will find in it something for Shakaribehn². There is some exaggeration in it, but on the whole it is quite good.

If Shakaribehn wishes to cook separately for herself, let her do so. See that she and Babudi are happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. G. 129

544. *LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA*

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA³,

I have your letter. I do not like your falling ill again and again. There is no hurry about the Trust work.⁴ Do it at your leisure.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4693. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

¹ Sharda G. Chokhawala, also called Babudi, addressee's daughter

² Addressee's wife

³ Solicitor; President, Bombay Legislative Council from July 1937 to August 1947

⁴ The reference, presumably, is to the drafting of Nature Cure Clinic Trust Deed; *vide*, "Letter to Mangaldas Pakvasa", 12-6-1945. and 25-6-1945.

545. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

October 21, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I forgot to write about the distribution of work¹ mentioned in your letter. I like it. Let everybody adhere to it and keep a daily account of his work.

The reason why Dhiru does not put on weight may be that his present weight is all that his system can carry. Only, he should keep up his energy and not lose weight further.

The cases have ended well. Has Datar² sent any reply?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2739. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

546 LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,

October 21, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter. It is all right if you stay for the sake of Mother and your hotel. You have my permission to come over whenever you want to. Your mind must become calm. I hope Ardeshir³ and the little girl⁴ are all right and Gulbai⁵ is also well. My stay here has been prolonged.

I have written this in a great hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
HEALTH HOTEL
TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

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

¹ At Nature Cure Clinic, Uruli-Kanchan, where the addressee was Manager

² Datar Singh

³ Son, daughter and wife of the addressee

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ *ibid*

547. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. In my opinion your place is there. If you cannot be cured there, what will do in Noakhali? The thing is that what I say does not appeal to you. What is the use of swallowing it as a bitter draught? So long as it does not come naturally, you should do as your heart dictates.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall probably leave for Bengal on the 24th or 25th. But God alone knows best.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 535

548. *LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT*

October 21, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT¹,

I am able to write to you only now. Go for the medical conference.

I have got Appa Saheb's² letter. I am writing to him at his address. He will have recovered by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 2740. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

¹ Of Nature Cure Clinic, Uruli Kanchan

² Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan

549. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA¹

October 21, 1946

I do not even remember that you said anything to me. Nobody has poisoned my ears. Kanu² and someone else, too, told me and, after getting their permission, I reported it to Hariji. Yes, the letter was from some Harijan.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2496

550. LETTER TO HARIHAR SHARMA

NEW DELHI,

October 21, 1946

CHI. ANNA³,

I have your letter. There is art in dying also. As it is, all die, but one has to learn by practice how to die a beautiful death. The matter will not be settled even if everybody went to Noakhali and got killed. When the time comes I shall call for you, Reddy⁴ and Amtussalaam to go there. So far I do not see that the moment has come. Your keeping indifferent health is another difficulty. Considering all this, please tell me what you would like to do. Can you go to Assam? Or to Sindh?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

551. LETTER TO PADAMPAT SINGHANIA

NEW DELHI,

October 21, 1946

BHAI PADAMPAT,

Mirabehn has forwarded to me the letters you wrote to Hari. In my opinion it is not right to postpone collecting the money till land

¹ The addressee had in a note complained that Thakkar Bapa suspected him of having instigated Swarupanand to poison Gandhiji's ears against Viyogi Hari.

² Son of Narandas Gandhi

³ Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

⁴ Govinda Reddy, an inmate of Sevagram

has been acquired. Do send the money and collect from other donors. The amounts will be returned in case the project does not materialize. I have collected money on many occasions; work always follows. Isn't this the history of all activities?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

552. *LETTER TO GOVINDA REDDY*

NEW DELHI,

October 21, 1946

CHI. REDDY,

Read the letter I have sent to Anna.¹ I shall let you know when the time comes for you to go. Anyway, you are all free. On your own you can do whatever you wish, go wherever you please.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

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

553. *LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA*

NEW DELHI,

October 21, 1946

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your sorrowful letter. But despite all that you have to regain your composure. You cannot get over grief by nursing it and brooding over it. It can be got over only by effort and *tapas*. Take the name of God and engage yourself in your routine. God will show the way.

The wire² I am sending will have been received. I have drafted it. It is night time now, so it will be despatched tomorrow.

I am trying to get there.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹Vide "Letteer to Harihar Sharma", 21-10-1946.

²Vide "Telegram to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 21-10-1946

554. INTERVIEW TO PRESTON GROVER¹

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi declared in an interview today that the Muslim League Ministry in Bengal should be able to control the outbreak of disorders in East Bengal in which a good few thousands have been driven from their homes and an undetermined number killed or kidnapped. He said :

Control will depend on the Ministry. If the Muslim League wanted to control it, I should think that it could. The Muslim League has the overwhelming percentage of Muslim voters on their side.

Mahatma Gandhi described the Bengal outbreak as "heart-breaking". His comments on the outbreak of robbing, burning and looting in East Bengal were made in his small room in the Untouchable Colony where he has lived most of the time since the arrival of the British Cabinet Mission in March. He sat on a thin mat with a small sloping desk before him and I sat on the floor while he talked of many things including America, the new Government in India, South Africa and his own health.

He announced again his intention of visiting the troubled areas in Bengal after his meeting on October 23 with Pandit Nehru and the Working Committee where they will discuss problems created by the entry of the Muslim Group into the Central Ministry. He said :

The fact that I go there will satisfy the soul and may be of some use.

PRESTON GROVER: Will the Muslims listen to you?

GANDHIJI: I don't know. I don't go with any expectation, but I have the right to expect it. A man who goes to do his duty only expects to be given strength by God to do his duty.

To a question as to when this type of disturbances would end in India, he replied :

You may be certain that they will end. If the British influence were withdrawn, they would end much quicker. While the British influence is here, both parties, I am sorry to confess, look to the British power for assistance.

¹ Of the Associated Press of America

Turning to the affairs of the Interim Government, Mahatma Gandhi regretted the statement¹ of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, the Muslim League selection for the Central Government. To Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan's statement that the League was going into the Interim Government to fight for Pakistan, Mr. Gandhi said :

That is an extraordinary and inconsistent attitude. The Interim Government is for the interim period only and may not last long. While it is there to deal with the problems that face the country—starvation, nakedness, disease, bad communications, corruption, illiteracy. Any one of these problems would be enough to tax the best minds of India. On these there is no question of Hindu or Muslim. Both are naked. Both are starving. Both wish to drive out the demon of illiteracy and un-Indian education.

There is not much time to elapse between this Government and that to be set up by the Constituent Assembly. The time will be shortened if both apply their will to the completion of the work of the Constituent Assembly.

The Constituent Assembly is based on the State Paper. That Paper has put in cold storage the idea of Pakistan. It has recommended the device of "grouping" which the Congress interprets in one way, the League in another and the Cabinet Mission in a third way. No law-giver can give an authoritative interpretation of his own law. If then there is a dispute as to its interpretation, a duly constituted court of law must decide it.

[P. G.] But if the Muslim League do not accept the court interpretation?

[G.] They cannot impose theirs on others. If they do, they put themselves in the wrong box. The alternative is to come to blows. We are all savages and come to blows often when we don't agree. Yet we are all gentlemen. This is so whether in America or Europe.

Asked for his reaction to the decision of the Madras Ministry which has decided against any expansion of the cotton mills industry in the Province in order to promote the Gandhian plan for home spinning and weaving, the Mahatma said :

I think it is the finest thing going. If you want to follow this logically, then you must follow it through.

Asked whether it would then be logical to "follow through" to the extent that mills presently in the Province would be stopped, he replied that if in time, through

¹ Ghazanfar Ali Khan made the statement while addressing a students' meeting at Lahore on October 19.

the progressive programme, the mills came to have no customers, then they would quit—"unless they chose to sell outside India".

He assailed the Natal Sugar Mills industry as responsible for bringing indentured Indians there to work and thus creating the segregation problem.

To a question as to what would become of Englishmen in the service of the Government of India, Gandhi said :

I think that India has use for every one of them who is loyal to India and to Indian traditions and conditions and who will be above temptation and corruption. I don't want to say that they should be disloyal to England. That is not the point. They should not be disloyal to India. These things not conflict but it has happened in history. Most have come here to serve the country of their birth by exploiting India. That is hypocrisy. It is dishonesty. There is no room for dishonesty in any service or outside it.

Asked if he had any message for America, he said :

Dislodge the money God called Mammon from the throne and find a corner for poor God. I think America has a very big future but in spite of what is said to the contrary, it has a dismal future if it swears by Mammon. Mammon has never been known to be a friend of any of us to the last. He is always a false friend.

Mahatma Gandhi, who has passed 77 years of age, said :

I am shaken in that belief, although not because it is illegitimate. But there are well defined limits to the fulfilment of that wish. If you do not fulfil those limits, then you may not attain the wish. For the time being, I feel dislodged. I have not attained the necessary equanimity. I don't want to live 125 years or even one year on nostrums, medicines and that kind of thing. I want to live a life of service in my present way. That is possible provided you have equableness under every circumstance. Nothing should irritate you. I am not able to say today that nothing irritates me or has irritated me.

He said he had thought calmly of living until 125 "until a few days ago", when he had a "rude shock". It was on the occasion of his birthday by the Hindu calendar, which came this year ten days ahead of October 2, the day of his birthday by the ordinary calendar. Rajendra Prasad, the Food Member in the Cabinet, had come to preside at a flag raising in connection with the birthday, and on that occasion, he was told, "monkey-nuts, raisins, etc., were to be served to the Harijan children and volunteers in the camp".

He said he considered it an insult to the Food Minister to give food needlessly in his presence to children and others “who were not in need”. His anger flared up, he said, because “every morsel of food has to be husbanded. If we do it, there will be no shortage. India is the last country in the world that should be short of food if our rulers know their business—and there is no black marketing.” The Mahatma said :

I flared up madly. I lost my balance. You can use any adverb or adjective you may like to describe it. It was then I discovered my failure. This loss of self-control has cost some years of my life—which it will be possible to regain if I regain my equanimity—or gain it. That is the humbler way to say it.

Harijan, 3-11-1946

555. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*¹

NEW DELHI,
October 21, 1946

Gandhiji pointed out to the people that the coming Diwali could not be an occasion for feasting. How could there be feasting in a house where there were any number of the starving and the naked? On top of that they were quarrelling amongst themselves. He had written and spoken enough on the subject. Yet he could not help repeating the same advice.

In these days those who were pure should become purer, those who were sinners should wash off their sins. All should save as much food as possible and spin as much as they could so that there might be more cloth. To save food was as good as producing it. To spin was to help reduce the nakedness of India. He who was truthful took the world a step forward. Let these things engage all their energies. It should be clear to them that these were not days of festivity or merry-making.

The Hindustan Times, 22-10-1946

556. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

October 22, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. Don't worry about work here. It is clear to me that there was no sting. Something has come from within. Be patient and let it take its course.

I have written² to Valji G. Desai. What I sent you was for your

¹ It being Gandhiji's day of silence, the speech was read out.

² *Vide* “Letter to Valji G. Desai”, 21-10-1946.

amusement. Mistakes will occur in the work that is being done.¹ We must be as accurate as possible when the book is published.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4181. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7817

557. *LETTER TO MANU GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I got yesterday your letter written from Udaipur. I think now I shall be going to Bengal in a day or two. I would have been happy if you had come before that. But now you may do as you wish. I will accept anything that makes you happy, restores your health and enables you to resume your work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Stay there as long as necessary to please Umiya². Your health should improve there. People praise the climate of the place.

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

558. *LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI*

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

CHI. SANTOK,

I have your letter. It is difficult to solemnize the marriage³ on *Kartak Sud* 12. God knows where I shall be on that day. The idea of my going is being hotly talked about. I will leave on the 24th or the 25th. It is not known how long I shall have to stay there. Under these circum-stances, we shall have to think what to do. Nor do I know when I shall be able to return, if at all, after I reach Bengal.

¹ The reference is to the erroneous meaning of "architect" in English-Hindustani dictionary published in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946;

² Addressee's elder sister, Umiya Agrawal

³ Of the addressee's daughter, Radha, who was married to Dipak Dutt Chowdhary

Everything is uncertain. Such being the situation, there is a risk in asking me to solemnize the marriage. Let me know what you think best. I may leave here tomorrow or the day after.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

559. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. I cannot always be sending you telegrams. I have said what I had to say. It is strange your dragging Reddy and Anna with you. I have said 'No' to them. What can they do? I cannot see what even you will do. I merely told Jajuji¹ that if he felt so inclined, he might give his consent. Everyone is free, and may go anywhere in exercise of that freedom. But not on my behalf or the Ashram's behalf.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 536

560. *LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA*

October 22, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your whole letter. I do not believe that you will learn anything by coming to Calcutta. Your coming would have been meaningful if you were ready to take up *Harijan* work.² I advise you to get well and prepare yourself for *Harijan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6715. Also C. W. 4459. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

¹ Shrikrishnadas Jaju

² *Vide* "Letter to Mahesh Datt Mishra", 20-10-1946

561. MESSAGE TO VALMIKI MANDIR

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

It is good that the Valmiki Mandir has, on the occasion of the Charkha Jayanti, taken part in the national *yajna* by spinning . . .¹ hanks of yarn. May you repeat the performance in future too, and march forward.

M. K. GANDHI

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

562. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 22, 1946

Gandhiji said that a correspondent had drawn his attention to the fact that he had said nothing against illuminations at Diwali in his message on Monday. It was an accidental omission. He had been opposed to illuminations even in the olden days when there was no food shortage. To burn oil or ghee today when there was not enough to eat was unthinkable. Real India did not reside in cities like Delhi. It resided in the seven lakhs of villages. For the hungry and naked villagers there could be no Diwali illuminations or any other kind of festivity. It was their duty to abstain and save all the ghee, oil and money they could.

Commenting on the Marathi *bhajan* sung by Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, Gandhiji said that like Shri Thakkar Bapa, Kher Saheb had been a servant of the Harijans and Adivasis ever since he had known him. Now he had put on the crown of thorns and become the Premier of Bombay. For Gandhiji his service to Harijans and Adivasis was more important than anything else. In the *bhajan* Tukaram makes the devotee say that he would prefer blindness to vision which could enable him to harbour evil thoughts. Similarly, he would prefer deafness to hearing evil speech. He liked only one thing, namely, the name of God.

The Hindustan Times, 23-10-1946

¹ Omission as in the source

563. UN-ISLAMIC

Sheikh Saheb Hisam-ud-Din, former President of the All-India Majlis-e-Ahrar, has issued the following to the Press :¹

Maulana Saheb himself issued the following four days ago :²

The value of these statements lies not so much in the numbers of Muslims supporting it, but in the fact that these Muslims of undoubted repute in Islam have no hesitation in condemning in unmeasured terms the nefarious deeds of the Muslims in East Bengal. It would be wrong to stigmatize the doers as *goondas*. These perpetrators of wrong are undoubtedly misled by men who should know better. There is little wonder that the atrocities have taken place when one bears in mind the poison that is instilled into the credulous minds of simpleminded Muslims.

In order to meet the evil, the sane element in Islam must not only speak out its mind, but act accordingly and promptly. It would be interesting to know whether the former President of the all India Majlis-e-Ahrar has been able to send the contemplated body of volunteers to undo the mischief.

NEW DELHI, October 23, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

564. HOW VILLAGES CAN MANUFACTURE THEIR CLOTH

After reciting the scheme which I copied in the *Harijan* of August 14, 1946, from his letter to me, Shri Manu Subedar³ has given his argument in support of the scheme in the *Rast Rahbar*. I copy below two relevant paragraphs from the interesting article :⁴

Not only will the cloth produced under the above scheme be cheaper than the black market, but it would be cheaper than the mill cloth for the reason that many items, which go into the price of the mill cloth to the consumer, would be eliminated. Amongst these are profits of the mills and of the

¹ Hisam-ud-Din and Abul Kalam Azad, in separate statements, not reproduced here, had condemned the arson, murder and forcible conversions in East Bengal as un-Islamic and called upon the Muslim majority there to protect the Hindu minority.

² *ibid*

³ Member, Central Legislative Assembly

⁴ Only extracts are reproduced here.

middleman distributor of cloth, the cost of transport of cloth and cotton both ways, the cost of supervision and management, and interest charges and depreciation. Since the labour up to the stage of the yarn would be contributed and the labour charged for weaving would be in kind, even in normal peace time cloth produced under these conditions would be cheaper than factory cloth. . . .

I would invite the leaders to note that in the above scheme not only is there co-operation under the guidance of the village *Panch* and complete self-government, free from any interference of anybody outside, but there is the seed of the kind of economic revolution which we seek in this country. . . . The amount of State assistance involved in the proposal is so miserably small per head and is actually lower than the cost incurred by the State for many other purposes for the benefit of other groups and grades of the Indian population. The further advantage in this scheme is that it would be automatic in so far as in some villages it would take root quickly and they may want another bale inside a month. In other villages it might take them three or four months. Some of the villages will probably supply all their requirements by this method in the next few months and may have something to spare, and indeed I would not consider it wrong if cloth produced under these circumstances after it was found to be in excess of the requirement of the village which has produced it, was made available in the larger cities for sale to the general public. I would, however, sound a warning that the scheme would break down if individual exploitation is permitted. The surplus should not be dealt with except through the village collectively and should not be brought to the city except through the Government agency, which lands the bale at the door of the village. Nor should it be sold in the cities except at the Government retail shops. . . .

In a letter in Gujarati, Shri Subedar says :

If my scheme is not adopted, we may have the sorrowful spectacle of womenfolk going without cover and therefore remaining indoors.

The hard-heartedness which mill-owners and middlemen have exhibited require some such immediate remedy as I have suggested.

You have rightly said that the removal of the salt tax will drive home to the millions of villagers the truth that our *Sarkar* has now the reins of Government in its hands. Will they not also realize this truth, if the villages have cotton

cotton delivered at their homes on the easiest terms possible so that with a little corporate labour they can clothe themselves without difficulty?

NEW DELHI, October 23, 1946

Harijan, 17-11-1946

565. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

October 23, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your letter. It would be tragic if you couldn't go to Paris because of obstinate boil. T[he] doctor in attendance can't say even that much! I am sure a good *vaidya* or, perhaps better still, a *hakim* could prescribe an innocent ointment which would bring it to a head and open it nicely and close the opening within the limited time. Ramanama is the sovereign remedy but it cannot be prescribed. It has to come of itself, if it comes at all.

J.'s wound is nothing but Badshah's is bad. It was a narrow escape for the three.¹

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3700. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6509

566. *LETTER TO RENUKA RAY*

NEW DELHI,

October 23, 1946

DEAR RENUKA²,

I am doing all I can about your question.

I am sorry about the illness of your brother's child. Will you need to stay on whilst there is work in Bengal? Of course, you know where your duty lies for the moment.

Rajkumari is no better. The boil is obstinate. The surgeon in

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb, while returning to Peshawar after a study-tour of tribal areas of the North-West Frontier Province on October 21, were attacked by a mob. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who tried to protect Nehru, was injured more than the other two.

² Congress worker and Vice-President of the Bengal Rehabilitation Committee

Simla says it cannot yet be opened.

Yours,
BAPU

SMT. RENUKA RAY
2 SAFDARJANG LANE
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

567. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1946

CHI. KUSUM,

I do not know whether I shall be attending the Congress¹ this time. So forget me. If you wish to go there, make your own arrangements. At present, I am preparing for a tour of Bengal.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KUSUMBEHN DESAI
MEHTA POLE
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1852

568. LETTER TO SUSHILA, ARUN AND SITA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 23, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. The excerpts from *Indian Opinion* which you send me are quite useful. So continue the practice. Most probably I shall be going to Bengal in a day or two.

Sita will have recovered by now. I like her plan of rushing to Manilal. But she must not give up what she has undertaken. I will say she has rightly fulfilled her duty if she takes up Manilal's work in South Africa after completing her education. Build up well your body and mind. Go only after you have prepared yourself to leave the children in India. In the meanwhile Manilal will carry on. It is natural that he should want you and the children with him. But he has to

¹ To be held at Meerut from November 21 to 25

restrain himself.

It is good that your mother has returned. Take care of your health. How is Tari¹? I have written² again about uncertified khadi. Do look it up. I did not realize that corruption has gone so deep. There have been many other letters too.

My silence is more spiritual than physical. It does not irk me; it pleases me. It saves me a lot of time. None of you are to worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUSHILA GANDHI

AKOLA

CHI. ARUN³,

I am glad that you wrote to me. How nice that you like to study. Which do you like better, study or play? In which form are you? What games do you play?

Has Ila⁴ become less naughty? I shall see about the photographs.

CHI. SITA,

I shall save my time since I have already written enough about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

569. INTERVIEW TO ANDREW FREEMAN⁵

NEW DELHI,

[On or after *October 23, 1946*]⁶

ANDREW FREEMAN: Has the spinning-wheel a message for America? Can it serve as a counter weapon to the atom bomb?

GANDHIJI: I do feel that it has message for the U. S. A. and the

¹ Tara Mashruwala, Sushila Gandhi's sister

² *Vide* "I am Defeated"

³ Son and daughter of Manilal Gandhi

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Spinning-wheel and the Atom Bomb"

⁶ According to Pyarelal the interview took place after Freeman of the *New York Post*, returned from his assignment in the N. W. F. P. tour with Nehru which was on October 23.

whole world. But it cannot be until India has demonstrated to the world that it has made the spinning-wheel its own, which it has not done today. The fault is not of the wheel. I have not the slightest doubt that the saving of India and of the world lies in the wheel. If India becomes the slave of the machine, then, I say, heaven save the world.

India has a far nobler mission, viz., to establish friendship and peace in the world. Peace cannot be established through mere conferences. Peace is being broken, as we all see, even while conferences are being held.

A. F. It seems so tragic. India must lead the way and India is in turmoil. If any country can really take up the wheel, it is India. Do you think it will?

G. It is doing so, but I confess the process is very slow. Pandit Nehru called khadi the “livery of our freedom”. It cannot be that so long as it is the consolation of cranks and paupers only. There are many things that are not possible for man to accomplish. But everything is possible for God. If there is no living power called God, the spinning-wheel has no place.

A. F. Those who spin are not called cranks here.

G. No. I used that expression to anticipate what Americans would say. I allow myself to be called by that name to protect myself. I was described by a friend as a ‘practical idealist’.

A. F. As a fairly intelligent human being and an American I can only say that though many Americans would call spinners cranks, there are not a few who are thinking hard. Something has to be found that would save civilization from destruction. Life must be simplified.

G. Human personality cannot be sustained in any other way. I stand by what is implied in the phrase ‘Unto This Last’. That book¹ marked the turning point in my life. We must do even unto this last as we would have the world do by us. All must have equal opportunity. Given the opportunity every human being has the same possibility for spiritual growth. That is what the spinning-wheel symbolizes.

A. F. Would you like the Americans to take to the spinning-wheel?

G. Yes. But I do not know whether it will be taken up by anybody before it is well established here. If, on the other hand, India adopts it for clothing itself, I won’t need to tell the world. It will adopt it of itself. Today there is such an onslaught

¹ By John Ruskin

on India of Western machinery that for India to withstand it successfully would be nothing short of a miracle. I must confess that today everything seems to point to the contrary. Look at our internecine quarrels.

A. F. But you have not given up hope?

G. I cannot, so long as I have faith in that living Power which is more with us than we know. But let me ask you a counter-question. Has America with all its Mammon-worship abolished unemployment, poverty, corruption, Tammany Hall?

A. F. The answer is obvious.

G. Has England? Has it not still to grapple with the problems that baffle her? It is a very curious commentary on the West that although it professes Christianity, there is no Christianity or Christ in the West or there should have been no war. That is how I understand the message of Jesus. There is much ignorance and superstition in India. But deep down in us is that faith in God—the instinct for religion.

A. F. All newspapermen and others have sensed that. But I must confess there are moments when I feel it is hopeless. Look at the recent attack on Pandit Nehru in the tribal areas from which I have just returned, and the happenings in East Bengal. You too must at times have felt the hopelessness of it all. Would you say Islam has repudiated its teacher, as Christianity of today has its Jesus?

G. I have said so openly. Where is Mohammed and his message which is peace? I said recently at a public gathering that if Mohammed came to India today, he would disown many of his-so-called followers and own me as a true Muslim, as Jesus would own me as a true Christian.

A. F. How can we bring men back to God or to the teaching of Jesus or that of Mohammed?

G. I might give the answer that Jesus gave to one of his followers: "Do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, not merely say Lord, Lord¹ ." That holds true of you, me and everybody. If we have faith in the living God, all will be well with us. I hope not to lose that faith even to my dying day. In spite of my numerous failings and shortcomings of which I am but too well aware, my faith in God is burning brighter every day. If

¹ *St. Matthew*, VII. 21

it did not, I would take the same prescription that I gave¹ to women threatened with dishonour and with no prospect of help or escape, viz., commit suicide.

A. F. Have you thought of the charkha as a therapeutic agent?

G. Yes. I have read some literature on the subject sent to me by a Glasgow professor. A retired Superintendent of a jail in Bengal too wrote to me describing the use of the spinning-wheel for curing lunatics, particularly by virtue of the soothing effect of its rhythmic motion.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

570. ABDUCTED GIRLS²

Q. You have called attention³ to the fact that girls who are forcibly abducted have not erred and that society would be wrong in penalizing them. In further exposition of your views, would you tell us if any ceremony purporting to be one of marriage forced on unwilling victims of such outrage, should be considered binding in any way, against the will of the girls concerned? Is it not right that both society and the family should be broad-minded enough to receive them back? In the case of unmarried girls abducted or forced to undergo such mock ceremonies of marriage, should not a special effort be made by society not only to reclaim them, but to help them to contract marriage in the normal manner and thus be completely vindicated and restored to the fold?

A. You are right. All you say follows from my remarks referred to by you. I have no doubt that girls forcibly abducted have committed no crime, nor incurred any odium. They deserve the pity and active help of every right-minded man. Such girls should be received back in their homes with open arms and affection, and should have no difficulty in being suitably matched.

NEW DELHI, October 24, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 18-10-1946

² This appeared under "Notes".

³ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 20-10-1946

571. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1946

SATIS BABU
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

NO NECESSITY SPECIAL. SHALL WIRE DATE DEPARTURE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8913

572. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 24, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I replied the very next day to the letter you had sent. But you could not have received it. It must have gone to Udaipur.

I got your letter today. I am sorry to hear that Shankarlal¹ is ill. It was good that both of you sisters went to Udaipur. Tell Shankarlal to get well soon. It does not behove a scout to fall ill. He may take up any job but a scout does not cease to be a scout.

Why should Umiya be unhappy? Bring her along. If you yourself do not come, that is a different matter.

I am not sending for you to make you unhappy. Are you afraid of me? I will never force you to do anything against your wish. I always have your welfare at heart. I wish to see you healthy and happy.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./24

¹ Shankarlal Agrawal, husband of addressee's elder sister Umiya Agrawal

573. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

October 24, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your whole letter. Give up your insistence on accompanying me to Calcutta at present. If I feel, after reaching there, that your coming may be good, I shall send for you. Now go home and get ready for *Harijan*. Improve your health.

I admit my mistake about *Harijan*; forget it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6716. Also C. W. 4460. Courtesy: Mahesh Datt Mishra

574. LETTER TO RAM NARAYAN DUBE

NEW DELHI,

October 24, 1946

BHAI RAM NARAYAN DUBE,

I read your book on nature cure. It is packed with information but there is much exaggeration. There is a “must” with every instruction.

I passed on the book to a well-known *vaidya* to read the chapter on herbal science. He says that your claim cannot be proved.

If it is so, the book needs to be drastically revised.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAM NARAYAN DUBE

PRAKRITIK CHIKITSALAYA

BENARES

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

575. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,

October 24, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

I am so glad the boil has been opened and it promises to heal within time.

Jawaharlal was here when I got your letter. I showed it to him.

Just about to go to the prayer.

It was good to have attended to the dictionary, so like you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4182. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7818

576. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,

October 24, 1946

Gandhiji told them² that it had already reached them. His own place, he knew, was in Bengal. He assured them that the heart of every man and woman who believed in God was bleeding for Bengal. He admonished them for creating a disturbance at prayer-time and asked them to be calm and join in the prayers. . . .

The regular prayer was not recited. Gandhiji said their minds were not calm enough for it. *Ramdhun* was sung and as usual had a calming effect on the gathering. Although the regular prayer had to be given up, it was in his heart, said Gandhiji, and he was sure it would reach God.³

He assured the audience that if members of the Interim Government were convinced that even by offering their lives as a sacrifice they could put a stop to the disturbances in East Bengal, not one of them would hesitate to make that sacrifice.

Referring to the remark of the young man who had used the metaphor of a house on fire,⁴ Gandhiji said that the duty of the owner of the house or his servant was that when the house was burning he should concentrate on putting out the fire and not lose his head. He alluded to the legend about King Janaka who remained calm and unperturbed when the report was brought to him that his capital was burning, because he had done all he possibly could before and after the accident and therefore could rest secure in his faith in God. If he had lost his head and run to the place of accident,

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter".

² A crowd of excited young men carrying placards and shouting slogans had come to demand redress for East Bengal and invaded the prayer ground saying they wanted their voice to reach the members of the Working Committee which was meeting in Gandhiji's room.

³ The following paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

⁴ Somebody had shouted that they could not pray when their house was burning.

he would only have assisted the flames by distracting attention.

They were pained at the news of women's suffering in East Bengal, said Gandhiji. But they had so lost their heads that they had themselves failed to be considerate towards the women in the audience. They had scared them away from the prayer ground. They had occupied the place where women sat every day. It was a strange way of demonstrating their sympathy with the outraged womanhood of East Bengal. He hoped that they would see the irony and inconsistency of it. Our women were easily scared away. It was so more or less all the world over. He wanted our women to learn to be brave. His advice to them to commit suicide rather than allow themselves to be dishonoured had been much misunderstood. They could keep a dagger for self-defence if they wished to. But a dagger was no use against overwhelming odds. He had advised them to take poison and end their lives rather than submit to dishonour. Their very preparedness should make them brave. No one could dishonour a woman who was fearless of death. They had two ways of self-defence—to kill and be killed or to die without killing. He could teach them the latter, not the former. Above all he wanted them to be fearless. There was no sin like cowardice.

But there was a moral code even for those who believed in violence. He did not wish them to copy the methods said to have been adopted in East Bengal. They must have read Maulana Saheb's statement and the statement issued by the ex-President of the All India Majlis-e-Ahrar. They had said that Islam did not permit forcible conversion or abduction and molestation of women.¹

Harijan, 3-11-1946; also *The Hindustan Times*, 26-10-1946

577. ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI²

This fortnightly attempt is proving its use. Its defects are not unknown to me. It is a labour of love for the Rajkumari. Insistence on such an effort was mine. I was anxious to give to the lovers of the blend of Hindi and Urdu something ready-made. The hope then was that the vocabulary will be the joint effort of perhaps half a dozen co-workers. But it could not be. It had to be made where I was. My lot happened to be cast in Delhi. The attempt was not to be interrupted. The Rajkumari took it up with rare passion. But she is no scholar of Hindustani. She produces every fortnight what labour of love can. When and if the labour is completed and the time comes to publish the vocabulary in book form, it will undergo revision and errors and

¹ *Vide* also "How Villages Can Manufacture their Cloth", 17-11-1946

² This appeared under "Notes".

defects will be removed. Friends will, therefore, please continue to send their corrections and suggestions which, where acceptable, will be adopted at the time of revision. The chief thing to be borne in mind is that the student may have by him a ready though not scholarly companion to refer to in case of need.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

578. *PLUCKY STAND*

Papers received from Natal contain among other things a remarkable correspondence between the Mayoral Secretary of Durban and the Natal Indian Congress Secretary. A committee has been formed for making arrangements for the royal visit to Durban proposed to take place in the month of March next year. The main committee has established a sub-committee to deal with the question of joining the coloured and non-European sections of the population of Durban. For the purpose, the Committee invited the Natal Indian Congress to appoint two representatives to serve on the sub-committee so as to give their advice and assistance to enable the Indian community to see Their Majesties and the Royal Princesses.

To this invitation the Joint Hon. Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress (Meer Saheb) sent the following plucky reply on the 11th September last :

I am directed by my Executive to state that while the Indian community has the greatest respect for Their Majesties and the Royal Princesses, it must be noted that the Indians of South Africa are at the present moment passing through the most critical period in their history. A series of colour discriminatory Acts depriving us of our elementary human rights during the last half century has culminated in the passing of the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act, 1946, passed in the teeth of the strongest opposition ever voiced by our community. The action of the Union Government in thus oppressing a voteless section of its population has plunged the whole Indian community in a state of grave unrest. Recent trends in colour legislation leave no room for doubt as to what is in store for people of colour in this country. The colour of a man's skin has become the sole criterion of judging human qualities.

As a result of all this the Indian community of South Africa resolved on the 13th June, 1946 to launch a campaign of passive resistance against colour discrimination in the laws of this country. This peaceful protest still goes on

and 627 of our people, including national leaders like Dr. Yusuf Dadoo and Dr. G. M. Naicker, have been sent to jail where they are treated like common criminals. Some of them have served their sentences and have been released after being subjected to inhuman treatment, but hundreds still remain behind prison bars and many more continue to be sent to prison daily.

While the Indian community finds itself in such an unhappy situation in a part of His Majesty's Empire, it is most unreasonable to expect Indians to participate in any rejoicing or celebrations in honour of Royalty. In the circumstances we cannot but suggest that you advise Their Majesties to postpone their visit until such time as there is peace and goodwill in South Africa between the rulers and the ruled, the White and the non-White, the represented and the unrepresented, the privileged and under-privileged, so that all who constitute the South African nation can equally share, not only its burdens, but also its rewards.

The Natal Indian Congress Executive is to be congratulated on the reply. The Royal visit can evoke no feeling of joy among those who are fighting for their self-respect in South Africa in the making of which they have no mean share. Let us hope that the Royal visit will be postponed to a more propitious time when the colour bar has become a thing of the past. Such self-denial on the part of Their Majesties will be quite in keeping with the direction which the King and Queen recently issued to substitute in the National Anthem the following new verses :

Nor on this land alone,
But be God's mercies known,
 From shore to shore.
Lord make the nations see,
 That men should brothers be,
And form one family,
 The wide world o'er.

for the antiquated and indefensible verses :

Oh, Lord our God arise,
Scatter his enemies,
 and make them fall.
Confound their politics,
 Frustrate their knavish tricks.
On Thee our hopes we fix,
 God save us all.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

579. A WISE STEP

Shri G. D. Tapase, Minister for Backward Classes (Bombay) has sent me a copy of the Bombay Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act just passed by the Bombay Legislature. I give below the most relevant clauses :

3. Notwithstanding anything contained in any instrument or any law, custom or usage to the contrary, no Harijan shall merely on the ground that he is a Harijan—

(a) be ineligible for office under any authority constituted under any law;

or

(b) be prevented from—

(i) having access to or using any river, stream, spring, well, tank, cistern, water-tap or any bathing place, burial or cremation ground, any sanitary convenience, any road, or pathway which the members of all other castes and classes of Hindus have right to use or have access to;

(ii) having access to or using any public conveyance licensed by the Provincial Government or any local authority to ply for hire;

(iii) having access to or using any building, well, cistern or place used for charitable or public purposes maintained wholly or partially out of the revenues of the Province or the funds of a local authority;

(iv) having access to a place of public amusement or place of public entertainment;

(v) having access to a shop which the members of all other castes and classes of Hindus have a right to have access to;

(vi) having access to or using any place set apart or maintained for the use of Hindus generally but not for the use of any particular section or class thereof;

(vii) enjoying any benefit under a charitable trust created for the benefit of Hindus generally but not for the benefit of any particular section or class thereof.

3.A. No person in charge of any of the places referred to in sub-clauses (i), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) or any conveyance referred to in sub-clause (ii), or clause (b) of Section 3 shall impose any restrictions on a Harijan or act in a manner as to result in discrimination against him.

4. No court shall in adjudicating any matter or executing any order recognize any custom or usage imposing any civil disability on any Harijan

merely on the ground that he is a Harijan.

5. No local authority shall in carrying out the functions and duties entrusted to it under any law recognize any custom or usage referred to in Section 4.

6. Whoever—

(a) prevents any person, by reason of his being a Harijan, from having access to or using any of the places referred to in sub-clause (i), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) or any conveyance referred to in sub-clause (ii) of clause (b) of Section 3 or from enjoying any benefit under a charitable trust referred to in sub-clause (vii) of clause (b) of the said Section or abets the prevention thereof; or

(b) imposes any restriction on a Harijan or acts in a manner so as to result in discrimination against him or abets any person to impose such restriction or to act in such manner shall, on conviction, be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine which may extend to Rs. 200 or with both.

7. If any person who has been convicted of any offence punishable under this Act is again guilty of the same offence, he shall be punished on the second conviction with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with a fine which may extend to Rs. 500 or with both and if he is again so guilty shall be punished on the third or any subsequent conviction with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year and shall also be liable to fine which may extend to Rs. 1,000.

The author of the measure has kindly supplied me with the text of his speech delivered on his introducing the measure. From it I note below the most poignant passages.

This untouchability amounts to irrationality. As soon as a Harijan is born, untouchability applies to him. . . . As a Harijan he is born, as a Harijan he lives all through his life and as a Harijan he dies. . . . However clean he may be, however wise he may be, however superior he may be, to the so-called orthodox Hindus, he is not a superior being. The worse of it is that even after his death his dust and ashes are not allowed to mingle with the dust and ashes of the others. . . . The agonies of the untouchable are further aggravated by the fact that he is treated as an untouchable not only by the caste Hindus but even by Christians, Muslims and others. . . . To my mind the Bill gives a *sanad*, a charter, to the Harijans for the exercise of certain social, civic, fundamental rights.

It is worthy of note that the Bill was passed without opposition worth the name from the Hindu side. That is a good augury for the

successful working of the Act. And yet it would not do to be over-sanguine about it. Unfortunately for us, we know that we pass resolutions by acclamation and allow them to become dead letter. The greatest vigilance will have to be exercised by the Government and the reformers in the strict enforcement of the law.

It is no use blinking the fact that the reign of irrationality referred to by the author of the relief bill is still very much to the fore in India. It is not merely in regard to untouchability but many other things. Reformers, therefore, have to watch the demon and utilize their watchfulness, courtesy and tact in dealing with those who are possessed by the demon.

NEW DELHI, October 25, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

580. "AMONG THE SAVARAS OF ORISSA"¹

The moral is that basic education, i. e., education through craft, is the education that India needs.

NEW DELHI, 25-10-1946

Harijan, 24-11-1946

581. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

October 25, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

You are impatient. You will definitely be offered in sacrifice at the proper time. In my opinion Pushpa² is not yet fully trained. Everyone should be given sufficient time.

We shall know more about the situation in Bengal after I reach there. If necessary I will write from there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9276

¹ The report by A. V. Thakkar under this title is not reproduced here. It gave an account of the efforts made by a social worker to attract Savara children to school and the difficulty the parents had in sparing the children from the various chores they were required to do.

² Pushpa Desai

582. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I do not at all remember what I said to Jainendra. Whatever I may have said, it is not certain whether I shall or can go to Meerut.¹ I do not know what purpose I shall serve if I do go there. I am also of the opinion that there should not be too many meetings on the occasion and if there are, everyone should not attend all of them. You may, therefore, give your own independent opinion.

I understand about Nanavati². I had expected it.

Gajanan³ has his own ways, and so has Babu Kamath.

I have been reduced to the position of Trishanku⁴. I am hanging in mid air. I do not know whether I shall go to Bengal or continue here or go to Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10978

583. *LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH*

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Since you seem to have made up your mind, I will not interfere. No doubt you will be useful wherever you are. Your arguments do appeal to me. If I had any say in the matter, I would have asked you to wait till I reached Sevagram. But I do not insist on that, either. I do not know where Fate will take me. Let Him decide.

¹ For the annual session of the Indian National Congress

² Amritlal T. Nanavati

³ Gajanan Naik

⁴ Character in mythology who found himself suspended between earth and heaven

It is good that Vanamala¹ is staying on for the present.
It is all right about M.'s² daily diary. You must fully recover.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9145

584. LETTER TO G. D. TAPASE

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

BHAI TAPASE,

I have your letter of October 4, 1946. Thanks. I have been able to reach it only today. I am giving the relevant parts in the *Harijan* papers.³

It should be properly implemented.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

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

585. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

October 25, 1946

CHI. DEV,

It is not required of you to go to Bengal just now. I did wish you to be with me during the holidays. My visit to Bengal has not yet been finalized. Of course, my heart is there. Here also there has been enough work. There is no need to decide anything in haste. Enough if you know that the work you have taken up there is not quite simple.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ Vanamala N. Parikh, addressee's daughter

² Munnalal G. Shah

³ *Vide* "A Wise Step"

586. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
October 25, 1946

India is passing through a difficult time. As a matter of fact the whole world is passing through a crisis and India is no exception. What help do we need to meet this crisis?

According to the teaching of the *Gita* the first requisite for spiritual conduct was fearlessness. On New Year's Day people made some good resolve. He wanted them to make a firm resolve to shed all fear. Without fearlessness all other virtues were turned into dust. Attainment of truth or non-violence was impossible without fearlessness.

Fearlessness did not mean arrogance or aggressiveness. That in itself was a sign of fear. Fearlessness presupposed calmness and peace of mind. For that it was necessary to have a living faith in God.

In the song that had been sung before them, Gandhiji concluded, the devotee says that divorced from God, he is a most worthless creature. God is his refuge all along. He who takes refuge in God has no fear.

Harijan, 3-11-1946

587. SIND BANS "SATYARTH PRAKASH"

One had thought that the ban on *Satyarth Prakash* had lapsed, never to be renewed.² But the hope was a dupe. Here is the renewed ban :

Whereas it appears to the Government of Sind that Chapter XIV of the book in Sindhi entitled *Satyarth Prakash* contains matter which promotes feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects—

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 99-A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, the Government of Sind hereby declares to be forfeited to His Majesty every copy wherever found of the book in Sindhi entitled *Satyarth Prakash* written by Swami Dayanand Saraswati and published by Professor Tarachand D. Gajra, M.A., on behalf of the Pratinidhi Sabha, Sind, Karachi, and all other documents containing copies, reprints or translations of, or extracts from,

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

² The ban had lapsed on September 30, 1946.

Chapter XIV of the said book on the grounds that in the said chapter the author (a) ridicules some of the religious beliefs of the Muslims; (b) misrepresents and reviles the teachings of the Koran; (c) attacks and belittles the authority of the Prophet Mohammed; and (d) generally contains matter calculated to hurt and which hurts, the religious susceptibilities of Muslims.

It is wider in application than before. The lapsed ban made it criminal to print or publish the book containing Chapter XIV. The renewed ban makes the possession of such a copy a crime. I cannot help feeling that the ban is senseless and is calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the Arya Samajists all the world over. *Satyarth Prakash* enjoys the same status for 40 lakhs of Arya Samajists as the Koran for the Muslims and the Bible for the Christians. It is possible to understand a ban on contemporaneous controversial literature, though at this time of the day popular Governments are reluctant even then to use their power. But it seems to be mischievous to ban a scriptural book. I would, therefore, urge the Sind Government to withdraw the ban in question. The Sindhi translation of *Satyarth Prakash* is not a new publication. Is it to be contended that a book that has passed through so many editions and has been translated in most of the languages of the world has been now found to contain matter “which promotes feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty’s subjects”? The virtue of toleration is never strained, especially in matters of religion. Differences of religious opinion will persist to the end of time; toleration is the only thing that will enable persons belonging to different religions to live as good neighbours and friends. Religion never suffers by reason of the criticism—fair or foul—of critics; it always suffers from the laxity or indifference of its followers.

NEW DELHI, October 26, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

588. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 11946

CHI. AMRIT,

This is just a line under great pressure of work. I do hope you will not be in a hurry to see the cut healed. Let it take its course. It will be the shortest.

I leave tomorrow morning.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 418. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7820

589. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

You do not acknowledge my letter in yours of today. I have never missed a day.

I do hope your cut will heal by the time you are ready to fly and that you will be able to leave without any harm to the body.

We leave for Calcutta on Monday.

Herewith a letter from Shanta.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4183. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7819

590. *LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH*

October 26, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. I must have myself opened your letter if you had marked it 'Personal'. I must have thought of answering it; but it would appear owing to pressure of other work I was not able to do so.

You can, of course, join in my work. You must accept a salary

for that. There is nothing wrong or shameful in your having become a householder. You should do what all others do. All I suggest is that if you accept less than your market price, it will be tantamount to not accepting a salary. Your needs can never be many. Where then is the problem? Stop thinking too much and engross yourself in whatever you consider your duty. All my plans have been upset now. Whatever I can do from Bengal is all that is possible.

I am likely to leave for Bengal on Monday. I will do there what God prompts me to do. I shall be on my test. Under these circumstances, give up the idea of staying near me and engage yourself in some service. You need not consult Kanchan¹ in this matter. She will be agreeable to whatever you do. You have to decide by yourself.

It is surprising that Kanchan has not written. The first delivery is often difficult. It is for you to decide what is your duty in this matter. I would not know. The decision whether you should stay with her or away from her rests with you two.

I have written these lines on the basis of what I remember of the contents of your letter. Do not write 'Personal' henceforth. Let the whole world know the facts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8400 and 8399

591. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 26, 1946

CHI. KRISHNADAS²,

I have your letter. I agree that we should not demand yarn against [the sale of] such items as cotton-mats, carpets, webbing tape, etc.

Similarly, it seems right not to ask for yarn against khadi required for hospitals and such other institutions.

Tell Jajuji that I have his letter. Perhaps it would be only proper

¹ Addressee's wife

² Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

for Rajaji¹ not to say anything because he is in the Government. I am writing² to Pattabhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS GANDHI
SEVAGRAM

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

592. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

October 26, 1946

BHAI MATHEW,

Rajkumari is at Simla. She is giving herself a rest. No letters are sent there. Why grieve over the passing of your mother? She has been freed from pain. I am going to Bengal.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. P. G. MATHEW
SACRED HEART'S COLLEGE
THEVARA
ERNAKULAM

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1546

593. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING³

NEW DELHI,

October 26, 1946

Gandhiji said that the late Shri Mahadev Desai had rendered the song into Gujarati.⁴ The burden of the song, commented Gandhiji, was that the devotee should have the strength to walk alone in the face of difficulties however great. If he realized that God was ever with him, he would not feel lonely. The *bhajan* was not meant for

¹ C. Rajagopalachari, who was in charge of Education and Arts in the Interim Government since October 6

² *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya", 27-10-1946

³ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*. The opening sentence and the last two paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times*.

⁴ The reference is to Rabindranath Tagore's song 'Ekla Chalo Re'. It was sung by the poet's grand-niece, Nandita Kripalani.

evil-doers. They could not walk alone.

The League members, he continued, had come into the Cabinet. He hoped that they had come with the firm resolve to make a success of their business. The Government of the country lay in the hands of these fourteen men¹. They had to find food and clothing, provide for the education of the crores and fair transport facilities for them and be responsible for the peace and order in the country. He said :

Let us all pray that they will be able to work as one team and all their dealings will be above board and corruption and jobbery would be things of the past.

Gandhiji then reminded the audience of the Charkha Mandals that had been established in Delhi. Only those who had learnt all the processes beginning with the separation of cotton seeds and ending with spinning could become members. Tomorrow there would be an examination for them. Those who knew the processes could take part in the examination. Cotton would be supplied to them when they came. The rest of the equipment they should bring with them.

The organizers had not been able to procure enough cotton as yet. Cotton ginned in mills was easy to obtain but it was no good for *tunai*. For that they required cotton as it came from the pod. The examinees were free to bring their own cotton to avoid disappointment in case of failure to procure it. They should learn the lesson of the *bhajan* to stand alone.

Harijan, 3-11-1946; and *The Hindustan Times*, 27-10-1946

594. WHO CAN BE A TRUSTEE?²

The purpose for which the A. I. S. A. has been created is so vast and great that the qualifications to be a trustee of the A. I. S. A. require careful consideration. In my opinion they should be as below :

1. No one should be a trustee merely in name or for the sake of name. A trustee should have the faith that in a country like India

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Asaf Ali, Baldev Singh, Jagjivan Ram, John Matthai, C. Rajagopalachari, C. H. Bhabha, Liaquat Ali Khan, I. I. Chundrigar, Abdul Rab Nishtar, Ghazanfar Ali Khan and Jogendra Nath Mandal

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-11-1946. The translation reproduced here has been revised so as to bring it into conformity with the original.

where crores remain unemployed for four to six months in the year, everybody can easily be clad in self-spun cloth and need not touch any other if all those who are physically fit spin for a reasonable time every day, say on an average for an hour every day.

2. A trustee who has this unshakable faith will spin regularly to set a good example to others and for the satisfaction of contributing his or her mite to the service of the country.

3. He or she will try his or her best to attune his or her life with the life in the villages of India.

4. India is made of villages, but our intelligentsia has neglected them. A trustee of the A. I. S. A. would try his or her utmost to remedy the handicaps from which our village life suffers. In doing so he or she should remember that village life must not become a copy or appendage of city life. The cities have to adopt the pattern of village life and subsist for the villages.

5. If a trustee's husband is connected with the mill industry, she should engage a weaver out of her personal money to weave yarn spun by herself or her friends and relatives and use the cloth thus produced. A trustee should read all the literature about hand-spinning and hand-weaving and understand the economic and moral significance of the cloth-making industry. He or she should know that it is possible to make it universal and explain it to others.

6. A trustee should study and understand the history of the A. I. S. A. from the beginning to date and from it should learn how the various processes connected with cotton, i. e., carding, spinning and weaving, have been revolutionized.

I have given my views as suggestions. They cannot be obligatory. I shall welcome all helpful suggestions by way of amendment or addition.

NEW DELHI, October 27, 1946

Harijan, 3-11-1946

595. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SUMMER HILL
SIMLA

GLAD PROGRESSING. NO WORRY. ADDRESS KHADI
PRATISHTHAN, COLLEGE SQUARE. LOVE ALL.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4143. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7452

596. *LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI*

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

I had told you that I would send you my views regarding a trustee. I could not manage it earlier. But now I have written¹ something for *Harijanbandhu* and I am sending to you a copy. I see in it nothing that you cannot do. I shall therefore await your consent.

Tomorrow I leave for Bengal. I shall get your letter if you address it to Khadi Pratishthan, College Square, Calcutta.

How nice if Nirmalabehn were recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARALABEHN SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

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

597. *LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI*

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI (DESAI),

Is there any hitch in working out this amalgamation (of the Sasta Sahitya [Mandal] and the Navajivan Trust)?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

(The suggestion is from Sjt. Manu Subedar.)

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

¹ *Vide* "Who Can Be A Trustee"

598. *LETTER TO BABUBHAI JHAVERI*

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

BHAI BABUBHAI,

You should let your wife do what she thinks right. I see no point in dragging her to court. I have torn up the letter.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. BABUBHAI JHAVERI
248 DOSHIWADA'S POLE
AHMEDABAD

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

599. *LETTER TO SHANTILAL A. THAKKAR*

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

BHAI SHANTILAL,

I have your pathetic letter. If your repentance is genuine, you have started life anew. Seek *satsang*¹ if you can. If you cannot have *satsang* of people, read good books and meditate. You should give up pleasures and pastimes, but not exercise, *asanas*, etc., which are necessary for building up the body.

I am not available now. Nor am I useful any more for such work.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHANTILAL AMRITLAL THAKKAR
DOSSA JIVAN'S CHAWL
NEW HANUMAN LANE
BOMBAY

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

¹ Company of the good

600. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI (MUNSHI),

I have your letter. I like your idea. But for the time being you or people like you will not be going with me. I have no idea what God wants me to do. I shall see my way after I reach there. And if I feel the need, I may write to you or send a wire.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

601. LETTER TO NANABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 27, 1946

BHAI NANABHAI AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I had your letter. Yours seems to be a laudable effort. It was nice of you to have sent the skein of yarn. Carry the work forward with the help of Bhai Diwanji.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI NANABHAI
GANDHI KUTIR
KARADI (DIST. SURAT)

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

602. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

October 27, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

It would be well if you issued a statement¹ to the effect that the attack on [the policy of] not having any new mills in Madras was not proper.

¹Vide also "Letter to P. G. Mathew", 26-10-1946

I am going to Bengal.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

603. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

October 27, 1946

CHI. SARU (SARASWATI),

I am able to write only this much while preparing to go to Calcutta. I got your letter. Kanti¹ is doing well. You too are growing wise. May you both make progress, enjoy long lives and always render service.

Blessings to all three of you from

BAPU

SHRI KANTI GANDHI

BANGALORE

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

604. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

NEW DELHI

October 27, 1946

Speaking before the evening prayer Gandhiji said that he was leaving for Calcutta the following morning. He did not know when God would bring him again to Delhi. He wanted to go to Noakhali from Calcutta. It was a difficult journey and he was in poor health. But one had to do one's duty and trust in God to make the way smooth. It was not that God necessarily and always removed hardships from one's path, but He always enabled one to bear them.

He did not want anyone to come to the station. India had given him enough affection. It needed no further demonstration.

He was not going to Bengal to pass judgment on anybody. He was going there as a servant of the people and he would meet Hindus and Muslims alike. Some Muslims looked upon him as an enemy today. They had not done so always. But he did not mind their anger. Were not his own religionists angry with him at times?

¹ Addressee's husband

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

From the age of seventeen he had learnt the lesson that all mankind, be they of any nationality, colour or country, were his own kith and kin. If they were God's servants, they had to become servant of all His creation.

It was in that capacity that he was going to Bengal. He would tell them that Hindus and Muslims could never be enemies. They were born and brought up in India and they had to live and die in India. Change of religion could not alter that fundamental fact. If some people liked to believe that change of religion changed one's nationality also, even then they need not become enemies.

Suffering of women had always melted his heart. He wanted to go to Bengal and wipe their tears and put heart into them if he could. In Calcutta he would try to see the Governor and the Prime Minister Mr. Suhrawardy and then proceed to Noakhali.

He was proceeding under auspices none too happy. He referred to the ugly demonstration before the Viceroy's House on the day before when Jawaharlalji and some of his colleagues in the Interim Government were abused and insulted. It was bad. Why should such things happen when the two parties, the Muslim League and the Congress, had formed a coalition at the Centre? Praise or abuse made no difference to the leaders who wanted to serve them to the best of their ability. But the people had to behave.

Let us all still pray and hope that all the Ministers will be able to work as a team. If India can speak with one voice, she will be the greatest country in the world and every true Indian must wish her to attain that status.¹

Gandhiji told the audience that about 30 men and women had taken part in the spinning examination held in the afternoon. The cotton had been procured. God always enabled one to procure the means for a good project. He (Gandhiji) himself had joined them in spinning and had spun the slivers prepared by them. It was a noble sight. They all knew their job and went about it in perfect quiet. The music of a well-running wheel or wheels was most soothing for the mind and the spirit. All those who took part in the spinning were well-to-do people. They did it as a sacrificial act. A number of such mandals were being established to popularize the idea of sacrificial spinning. The whole conception and the demonstration of it that he saw that day were beautiful.

Harijan, 10-11-1946; and *The Hindustan Times*, 28-10-1946

¹ What follows is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

605. *DISCUSSION WITH DIRECTOR OF BRITISH DAILY*¹

NEW DELHI,

[Before *October 28, 1946*]²

GANDHIJI: We are today suffering from a double evil—suppression of facts and concoction.

DIRECTOR: It does not pay to emphasize news about riots. My paper does not.

But Gandhiji told him that he and his paper would be doing a real service to India not by suppressing relevant facts but by presenting them truthfully, without bias or prejudice. He said :

Truth never damages a cause that is just.

Replying to another question as to when the present trouble would end, Gandhiji remarked that it was bound to go, though he did not see any signs of abatement just yet. He added :

There are interested parties fomenting it. Mine may be a voice in the wilderness today, but I maintain that so long as British troops are here, both Hindus and Mussalmans will continue to look up to them for help and the trouble will continue. Nothing worse could happen to a people struggling to be free.

This shocked the British conscience of the friend. He asked: “The Britisher would like his troops to go out quicker. Who obstructs?”

Who else but the British themselves, unless you can show that it is physically impossible to effect immediate withdrawal.

After some parrying the friend admitted that the British commercial and other vested interests in India and their henchmen stood in the way of their withdrawal. He was, however, still doubtful as to the function of British troops in the maintenance of law and order. “You say there can be no peace while they are here. Yet every day there is an increasing demand for them for the maintenance of peace. The complaint is that they are not sufficiently used.”

G. That is the very reason why they should be withdrawn.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “A Friendly Overture”. Pyarelal explains that “a Director of an influential British daily paper had come to see Gandhiji at New Delhi and told him that his paper was anxious to do a friendly turn to India”

² Gandhiji left New Delhi for Calcutta on the morning of October 28, 1946.

Their presence, in my opinion, does not act as a preventive measure but becomes punitive. Where they are used to maintain law and order, it is after the trouble. Future historians will bear this out. Order will be restored in East Bengal too. But after what slaughter, what suffering? No, the British troops are in India not to protect India but to protect British interests which were imposed on India and which are now so well entrenched that even the British Government cannot dislodge them. The British did not come here as philanthropists, nor is there any altruism in their continued stay here or the continuation of their troops, all that might be claimed to the contrary notwithstanding.

D: How do you think the succession of war such as we have witnessed of late can be stopped?

G. I have no doubt that unless big nations shed their desire for exploitation and the spirit of violence of which war is the natural expression and atom bomb the inevitable consequence, there is no hope for peace in the world. I tried to speak out during the war and wrote open letters to the British people¹, to Hitler² and to the Japanese³ and was dubbed a fifth columnist for my pains.

D: But non-violence might take a long time to act. But for the Second Front there probably would have been no Russia.

G. All these are arguments dictated by reason. It is not permitted me to think in these terms or else I would be denying my faith which today burns brighter than ever in spite of all the bitter experiences that I have had. History provides us with a whole series of miracles of masses of people being converted to a particular view in the twinkling of an eye. Take the Boer War. It has given to the English language the word 'mafficking'. People went mad on the Maffeking Day. Yet inside of two years the whole British nation underwent a transformation. Henry Campbell-Bannerman became the Premier and practically all the gains of war were given up. The recent labour victory at the polls was another instance in point. To me it is a sufficient miracle that in spite of his oratory and brilliance, Churchill should cease to be the idol of the British people who till yesterday

¹ *Vide* "To Every Briton"

² *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 24-12-1940

³ *Vide* "To Every Japanese"

hung on his lips and listened to him in awe. All these instances are enough to sustain the faith of a believer like me that when all other powers are gone, one will remain, call it God, Nature or whatever you like.

His own faith in the triumph of non-violence he likened to that of the witnesses in the Second Coming of Christ. It was to take place within the lifetime of the witnesses though it has taken two thousand years and yet remains a distant dream. Faith could think in no other terms.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

606. TELEGRAM TO SIND HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH¹

[On or before *October 28, 1946*]

SEPARATE ELECTORATES ARE IMPOSSIBLE. BUT RESERVATION
OF CERTAIN SEATS SUBJECT TO MERIT
IS DESIRABLE.

The Hindu, 30-10-1946

607. CABLE TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

[On or before *October 28, 1946*]²

GOD HAS CROWNED YOUR EFFORT WITH SUCCESS.³
CONGRATULATE CHAGLA⁴ ON MY BEHALF. THE
RESULT WILL HEARTEN OUR PEOPLE IN SOUTH
AFRICA.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-10-1946

¹ The news report under the date-line Karachi, October 28, said : “. . . The Sind Provincial Scheduled Castes’ Federation had submitted a memorandum to the Sind Government demanding representation for Scheduled Castes on the local bodies in the province. The Sind Government sought the views of the Sind Harijan Sevak Sangh over the memorandum and the Sangh in turn sought Gandhiji’s advice.”

² The cable was reported under the date-line October 28, 1946.

³ The reference is to U. N. Steering Committee’s decision against Gen. Smuts’s proposal to omit from the agenda the South-Africa Indian question, which he argued was a domestic problem and not within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly. The addressee led the Indian delegation to the U. N. O.

⁴ M. C. Chagla, a member of the delegation

608. TALK WITH A FRIEND

NEW DELHI,

[On or before *October 28, 1946*]¹

I do not know what I shall be able to do there. All I know is that I won't be at peace with myself unless I go there.

There are two kinds of thoughts—idle and active. There may be myriads of the former swarming in one's brain. They do not count. But one pure, active thought proceeding from the depth and endowed with all the undivided intensity of one's being, becomes dynamic and works like a fertilized ovum.

He was averse to putting a curb on the spontaneous urge which he felt within him to go to the people of Noakhali.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

609 LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,

October 28, 1946

CHI. SUMI²,

I had your note. Didn't you go to Kashi a little early? I am today taking the train to Calcutta. I don't know how long I shall have to be there or what is going to happen there. But then, what have we to do with that? Let us live as God wills and go on doing His bidding. He has already shown us what we should do! You are studying, aren't you? Tell me.

The rest in my letter³ to Sita. Both the letters are for both of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

SUMITRA GANDHI
BANARAS

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

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". According to Pyarelal Gandhiji was having an "argument with a very esteemed friend who made an eleventh-hour effort to dissuade him from setting out on such a long journey just then". Gandhiji however left Delhi on October 28, 1946.

² Daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

³ This is not traceable.

610. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL G. BANKER

NEW DELHI,
October 28, 1946

CHI. SHANKARLAL,

I have sat down to write letters after the morning prayer. I have your letter before me, as also Anasuyabehn's¹.

I am getting ready for Bengal. I will be doing there what God commands. I wish to be there as long as He wills. I hope you are calm. You should be. How do you spend your time?

My address will be: Khadi Pratishthan, College Square, Calcutta. But I want to go on to Noakhali.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHANKARLAL BANKER
AHMEDABAD

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

611. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 28, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I think it useless for you to come to Bengal at present. Your health is not such that it can bear the strain. Otherwise also, there is work to be done here. I do not know what the conditions there will be like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2495

¹ Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

612. A LETTER

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
October 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Pardon the bad hand. I am writing on a moving train. You need not worry over the happenings¹ of the 24th.

M. K. G.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

613. LETTER TO MADALASA

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I am under the impression that I had immediately replied to your long letter. But I don't find your name in the despatch list. And yesterday, on the occasion of the New Year, I got another letter from you.

Let us wait and see when our New Year commences.

I did not tell Janakibehn² that you had written to me about Rama.³ But in reply to a question by me she expressed her own opinion. Everything should be left to Rama. He is no more a child. We should do what he wishes.

I hope you are well. I don't know when I shall return from Bengal. Today only this much.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, pp. 330-1

¹ Presumably a reference to the incidents in Calcutta, in which five persons were killed and forty others injured

² Addressee's mother, Janakidevi Bajaj

³ Ramakrishna Bajaj, the addressee's younger brother. The reference is to his marriage.

614. LETTER TO KANAM GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. KANAM¹,

I am writing this on a moving train. I am going to Bengal. I do not consider your handwriting too bad. Still you can improve it. You are engrossed in your studies. I do not know when I shall be going that way. Ask Ushi² to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9523. Courtesy: Kanam Gandhi

615. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

October 28, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. I will write to Satyanarayan³. I am writing this on a moving train which is taking me to Bengal. Do what you can. The result lies in God's hands.

In the end the national language has to be Hindustani.

Cannot the books be sent with someone who may be going that side?

I cannot write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10812

¹ Son of Ramdas Gandhi

² Usha, addressee's sister

³ M. Satyanarayan of Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

616. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. RAMDAS,

I am writing this on my way to Bengal. I got your note. You had better preserve your health.

I had a postcard from Sumi. She seems to be deeply immersed in her studies. I don't know when I shall be able to return from Bengal.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

617. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1946

CHI. JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter. We cannot give up the flag. A procession or drums may not be necessary but it is our duty to hoist the flag in a peaceful manner. More can be said only after observation.

I am going to Bengal. I do not know when I shall return.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

618. CRUELTY TO THE DUMB CREATION

A Mysorean draws my attention to . . .¹

I have had the misfortune to advise the destruction of stray dogs. But that had to be, if men would be so cruel as, out of a false sense of pity, to feed *pariah* dogs and permit them to become a menace to the neighbouring population. But my advice can never include impounding such dogs and torturing them as those mentioned

¹ The extract from the correspondent's letter is not reproduced here.

by my correspondent seem to have been. Humanitarian instinct demands destruction of such animals in an instantaneous and painless manner. I would love to hope that there is exaggeration in what the correspondent has stated. Anyway, the Municipality in question and all such other institutions should mend their manner if they do not satisfy the test demanded by humanity.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 10-11-1946

619. DOLA-PALKI

The dola-palki dispute in Garhwal should be set at rest seeing that the U. P. Government are said to have passed orders for prompt measures to be taken against those who would interfere with Harijan bridegrooms riding on ponies or using any other form of conveyance in spite of custom to the contrary trotted out by objectors.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan 10-11-1946

620. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES¹

A thoughtful friend, writing of village industries, says :²

. . . The children should be paid at the rate of one anna and the adults four annas per day from the day they begin to work. As they acquire more skill, the wages of the children should be increased up to five annas and those of the adults up to eight annas per day.

The manufacture in one village should be confined to one kind of goods only, so that in about two months' time the workers will acquire skill and avoid making mistakes. The manufactured article should be such as can be utilized locally. The State should arrange to supply raw material and appoint two or three experts to train workers. The State should also undertake to popularize the manufactured goods and arrange for their transport and cheap distribution to the poor consumer. . . .

This scheme will enable millions to add to their income and make the two ends meet without throwing them on the unemployment dole or loss of self-respect.

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-11-1946. The translation reproduced here has been revised so as to bring it into conformity with the original.

² Only extracts from the letter are translated here.

. . . The man who is engaged to keep stores, accounts etc., should be made responsible for the education of the children as well. After two or three years, the education should be carried on by the monitor system, that is to say, the senior boys should teach the junior ones and the teacher should teach the senior boys only.

This teacher should also keep about 50 commonly used drugs. . . . These drugs should be sold to the villagers at the cheapest rates.

The following is a list of some of the household articles that can be manufactured in this way: ¹

The letter is interesting and deserves consideration. One thing is apparent. The writer has given the first place to cloth. It is the only article in the list of universal importance. The various processes involved in khadi production can engage millions of adults and children and enable them to earn a fair amount. This includes the weavers. The weavers live in the cities today. The businessman exploits them and keeps them dependent on him. If the people's Government could supply them with all the yarn they require it would simplify things for them and put their vocation on a stable basis. They would not then need to live in the cities. But this is beside the point. Much has been said and will be said about khadi.

In regard to this letter I have two kinds of difficulties. One is whether it is possible to sell hand-made articles as cheaply as machine-made ones. The second is that out of the articles that have been enumerated in the scheme, there is hardly any except khadi which can become universal. They will not, in a large measure, be consumed locally and so will have to be sold in the cities. This is as it should be. The villagers should develop such a high degree of skill that articles prepared by them will command a ready market outside. When our villages are fully developed there will be no dearth in them of men with a high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and research workers. In short, there will be nothing in life worth having which will not be had in the villages. Today the villages are barren and desolate and are like dung-heaps. Tomorrow they will be like beautiful gardens and it would be difficult to deceive the people there.

The reconstruction of the villages along these lines should begin right now. That might necessitate some modifications in the foregoing scheme. The reconstruction of the villages should be organized not

¹ The list, which named some 45 items, is not reproduced here.

on a temporary but on a permanent basis.

My second difficulty is that in the scheme under question training and education have been divorced from each other. In fact training is a judicious blending of craft, hygiene, education and art. According to Nai Talim, craft, literary instruction, hygiene and art are not separate things but blend together and cover education of the individual from the time of conception to the moment of death. Therefore, I would not divide village uplift work into water-tight compartments from the very beginning but undertake an activity which will combine all four. Instead of regarding craft and industry as different from education I will regard the former as the medium for the latter. Nai Talim therefore ought to be integrated into the scheme.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 10-11-1946

621. EXCISE DEPARTMENT IN C. P.¹

This is a scandalous abuse of authority for raising revenue. Let us hope that now that the Government is representative in C. P., as elsewhere, this abuse will be set right.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 17-11-1946

622. AN INDIAN VILLAGE FIGHTS AGAINST FAMINE²

I would only add to this thanksgiving essay that God helps those who help themselves. The villagers must be taught to grow more food themselves. Then help from outside will come and will be welcome.

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, October 29, 1946

Harijan, 24-11-1946

¹ The article under this heading by A. V. Thakkar is not reproduced here. It described how the "outstill system of liquor production and distribution by Government through the agency of licensed manufacturers who are also retailers of the same" had helped increase excise revenue, especially in tribal and backward areas.

² The article under this heading by Horace Alexander is not reproduced here. It described the famine conditions that Belgatta, a village in Mysore, had to face on account of the failure of rains and the help it received in the shape of foodgrains from America, Canada, Australia and Egypt.

623. LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI

October 29, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I am writing this on the train which is carrying me to Calcutta. You could not stick to Nai Talim. You are not right in saying that you will learn nothing there. It only means that you have not learnt the knack of doing such work. I think your going there was premature. We should give perfect service wherever we are. Those who have accepted service as their sole dharma must learn to be perfectly happy wherever they are serving. One acquires the necessary knowledge while doing such service.

You will be calm now and keeping perfect health.

You must have read what I wrote¹ to Bhansalibhai about Bengal. There is no question yet of your undertaking such work. I myself do not know how things will shape.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9277

624. LETTER TO GOVINDA REDDY

October 29, 1946

CHI. GOVINDA REDDY,

I had your letter but could not reply to it promptly. You should regard the work you are doing itself as Nai Talim. It can be said that work in the kitchen is the most difficult of all. It is not easy to humour people of different temperaments and yet get them to follow the rules. The task requires a *sthitaprajna*². I cannot tell you how you should accomplish it; you will learn by experience. Only you must have a generous heart, self-restraint, calmness and thoughtfulness.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY
SEVAGRAM

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

¹ Vide "Letter to J.P. Bhansali", 25-10-1946

² The man of steadfast intellect described in *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 55-72

625. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

SODEPUR,
October 29, 1946

In his prayer discourse he told them how he had never dreamt that he would be coming back to Sodepur so soon.² But God had sent him in their midst again. The train had arrived five hours late. He called that also the will of God. No doubt there were big crowds at Aligarh, Khurja Road, Kanpur and other big stations and the train was detained as a result. But he literally believed in the old maxim that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. Some might say that all his talk about God was a make-believe which he used as a blind to cover his hypocrisy. All he could say was that he was not aware of any hypocrisy in himself. He spoke what he believed to be God's truth. As regards his future plan, Gandhiji said that he had come to Calcutta with a blank mind to do His will. What he could do here and how long he would stay in Bengal he did not know.³ All he could say was that he had not come to stay in Calcutta. He would be in Calcutta only for a day or two and then proceed to Noakhali. His proper place was Noakhali. God would indicate to him the next step on reaching Noakhali.

Harijan, 10-11-1946; and *The Hindu*, 31-10-1946

626. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
October 30, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SUMMER HILL
SIMLA

NO ANXIETY. GOING NOAKHALI PROBABLY FRIDAY.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4185. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7821

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The prayer was arranged at 5.30 p.m. but Gandhiji could attend it only after 7 p.m.

² Gandhiji had earlier visited Sodepur in December 1945.

³ The following three sentences are reproduced from *The Hindu*.

627. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

CALCUTTA,
October 30, 1946

BHAI KALYANJI (MEHTA),

I have your letter about the Dandi March Road. There is no need to write about it in *Harijan*. The project is such as can be accomplished with the efforts you make.

Blessings from
BAPU

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SURAT

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

628. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

SODEPUR,
October 30, 1946

The next day, owing to his engagements in Calcutta with H. E. the Governor and the Prime Minister², he had again to apologize to his audience for coming late to the prayer meeting. He remarked :

He who gives all his time to the service of people, his whole life is an unbroken sound of prayer.

He did not however, wish thereby to diminish the importance of fixed time for prayer. There was a difference between community prayer and individual prayer. He was sorry he had not been able to do justice to the former. It was generous of them to have waited for him with such exemplary patience and it filled him with joy and faith and confidence in regard to the task before him. But he could not forgive himself so easily for his failure to keep punctually the prayer appointment with them.

He drew their attention to the Viceroy's appeal issued in the name of the whole Cabinet of which the Viceroy was the President and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Vice-President and which consisted of both Congress and Muslim League representatives. In that appeal the Viceroy, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, had appealed that the two major communities of India should bury the hatchet and become one at heart. The unity should be genuine,

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

² Sir Frederick Burrows and Huseyn Sheed Suhrawardy

not imposed by the military or the police. The speaker had come to Bengal for that purpose. He took no sides. He could only side with truth and justice. He wanted them all to pray with him for the establishment of heart unity between the Muslims and the Hindus. Their name would be mud in the world if they degraded themselves by fighting among themselves like wild beasts.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

629. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*¹

SODEPUR,
October 31, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting Gandhiji said that he was sorry to tell the audience that he would not be leaving for Noakhali tomorrow as he had intended to. The Prime Minister had sent him word that the train could not be arranged for Noakhali tomorrow. He hoped to leave on Saturday or Sunday. In the meantime he would try to render here whatever service he could.

Gandhiji was able to tell his audience that he saw a faint ray of hope that peace might be established between the communities. He had met H. E. the Governor and his Prime Minister twice. The visit to the former was more or less in the nature of a courtesy call. His main business was with the Prime Minister. As one drove through the deserted streets with garbage heaps, at places banked up nearly two feet high against the pavements, and entire rows of gutted shops and burnt-out houses in the side-streets and by-lanes as far as the eye could reach, one felt overcome with a sinking feeling at the mass madness that can turn a man into less than the brute. By its very nature this state of things cannot last. Human nature won't stand it. As Abraham Lincoln said, "You cannot fool all the people for all time." There seem to be indications that the people are already beginning to sicken of the carnival of blood and bestiality. They had been fighting amongst themselves like wild beasts. The fighting could do no good to Calcutta, Bengal, India or the world.

To make peace between quarrelling parties, the speaker said, had been his vocation from his early youth. Even while he practised as a lawyer, he tried to bring the contending parties together. Why could not the two communities be brought together? He was an optimist, he said.

From them he wanted only this help: that they should pray with him that this mutual slaughter might stop and the two communities might really become one at heart. Whether India was to become divided or remain one whole could

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The first paragraph is reproduced from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

not be decided by force. It had to be done through mutual understanding. Whether they decided to part or stay together, they must do so with goodwill and understanding.

He could never be party to anything which might mean humiliation or loss of self-respect for anyone. Therefore any peace to be substantial must be honourable, never at the cost of honour.

In this he was only echoing the sentiment expressed to him by a prominent Muslim who had seen him. This friend had said: "We must reach our goal, whatever it might be—Pakistan or undivided India—without bloodshed or fighting. I go so far as to say that if it cannot be reached except through bloodshed and fighting amongst ourselves, it is not worth reaching."

Harijan, 10-11-1946; and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-11-1946

630. TELEGRAM TO SUDHIR GHOSH

[*October 1946*]¹

SUDHIR GHOSH

NARGISBEHN BROUGHT LETTER YESTERDAY. SUSHILA SEVAGRAM
ATTENDING CHOLERA PATIENTS. HOPE VISIT BENGAL LAST WEEK
OCTOBER. LOVE.

BAPU

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

631. TALK WITH A MUSLIM FRIEND²

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
[*Before November 1, 1946*]³²

"Why do you want to go to Noakhali? You did not go to Bombay, Ahmedabad or Chhapra, where things have happened that are infinitely worse than Noakhali. Would not your going there only add to the existing tension?" Was it because in these places it was the Muslims who had been the sufferers that he did not go there and would go to Noakhali because the sufferers there were Hindus?

¹ From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Bengal in the last week of October; he reached Calcutta on October 29, 1946.

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", dated November 1, 1946

³ *ibid.*

Gandhiji's reply was that he made no distinction between Hindu and Muslim. He would certainly have gone to any of the places mentioned by the friend if anything approaching what had happened at Noakhali had happened there and if he had felt that he could do nothing without being on the spot. It was the cry of outraged womanhood that had peremptorily called him to Noakhali. He felt he would find his bearings only on seeing things for himself at Noakhali. His technique of non-violence was on trial. It remained to be seen how it would answer in the face of the present crisis. If it had no validity, it were better that he himself should declare his insolvency. He was not going to leave Bengal until the last embers of the trouble were stamped out.

I may stay on here for a whole year or more. If necessary, I will die here. But I will not acquiesce in failure. If the only effect of my presence in the flesh is to make people look up to me in hope and expectation which I can do nothing to vindicate, it would be far better that my eyes were closed in death.

He had mentally prepared himself, he added, for abstention from the Congress session, if necessary. He had similarly disengaged himself mentally from all his responsibilities in respect of Sevagram and Uruli—his latest love.

Harijan, 10-11-1946

632. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
Friday, [November 1, 1946]

The whole of India, Gandhiji said, was faced with a difficult situation. That of Bengal was still more so, he remarked in his after prayer address on Friday last. He had been asked as to what their duty was under the circumstances. According to the scriptures, that was dharma which was enjoined by the holy books, followed by the sages, interpreted by the learned and which appealed to the heart. The first three conditions must be fulfilled before the fourth came into operation. Thus one had no right to follow the precepts of an ignorant man or a rascal even though they commended themselves to one. Rigorous observance of harmlessness, non-enmity and renunciation were the first requisites for a person to entitle him to lay down the law, i. e., dharma.

He had told them what he considered to be his duty. But they had to judge for themselves what their duty was. He did not ask them to follow him but he pointed out to them the way to discover what their duty was in the difficult position they found themselves in. The *Gita* had told them that if they only waited on God, they would know the way.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

633. GREEN CROSS SOCIETY

Red Cross Society one is aware of. It had at one time only military associations and used to have an imperialist flavour. Now it has expanded into civil work and covers every form of first-aid work for the relief of suffering humanity. Nevertheless its activities are largely confined to cities. It has hardly touched Indian life.

England is a country for lost causes: humanitarian and even strange causes. One such is represented by the Green Cross Society for the wild life heritage. Mrs. M. H. Morrison is its Hon. Secretary (41, Asmuns Place, London, N. W. 11).

The Society aims at the U. N. O. identifying itself with it. The following resolution is to be submitted to the U. N. O. for acceptance :

(a) That U. N. O. ideals should include immediate effort in each country to delimit the area of any suitable National Park incorporating Nature Reserves for the protection of unique and valuable wild life—flora, fauna, avifauna—with the distinctive terrain upon which these depend.

(b) And, further, that the world at large should consent to an International Park, or World National Park in South America, Africa or Asia. If in Asia then upon, around or within—it is suggested—the immense mountains encircling Tibet, Britain, China, India, Russia and U. S. A. appointing Custodians and acting as Trustees.

Reasons adduced for inviting the U. N. O. to pass the foregoing resolution are :

1. That a stand must now be made against the maddening encroachments of materialism.

2. That the idealism and realism of the United Nations Organization should include an urge to all the world and to each nation to protect our heritage of wild life—its beauty, grandeur and interest—wild birds, wild animals, wild flora (flowers, plants, trees) and wild country or landscape; to protect our heritage wherever possible; and with special care within the Nature Reserves of National Parks.

3. That the United Nations will jointly set an example to the component nations by claiming its own World Nature Park, or International Park in South America, Africa or Asia. If in Asia, then upon, around, or within the immense mountains encircling Tibet. In this case Britain, China, India, Russia and U. S. A. might appoint Custodians and act as Trustees to prevent disastrous and disfiguring exploitation.

4. And, further, that such "Far Horizon", can give direction and cohesion to friends, allies, sympathizers and well-wishers gathering in groups along the way for the march and drive on toward the distant goal.

Among the numerous signatories to the resolution are Sir Alfred J. Munnings, President, Royal Academy of Arts, Dame Laura Knight and the world famous George Bernard Shaw.

Mrs. Morrison would like the signatures of leading Indians and other leaders in Asia and Africa. Those who would endorse the resolution should put themselves in communication with Mrs. Morrison.

SODEPUR, November 2, 1946

Harijan, 17-11-1946

634. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

CALCUTTA,

November 2, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. You are a brave girl; why then have you gone soft? It is true that generally during illness the spirit droops. But there was a girl just eighteen years old, whose mind retained such fortitude that, though suffering from a protracted illness, she wrote a fascinating book which has become very famous. You can achieve some such thing if you but make up your mind.

The secret of Ramanama is that one should repeat it mechanically even when one cannot concentrate. If one does this with faith, then all disturbing thoughts vanish and we become calm. If we take pleasure in repeating the name, it drives all maladies away. Ramanama does not bar other remedies. About food, consult the book and make necessary changes in your diet.

I am stuck here for the present. God knows when if at all we shall meet.

Do you strip completely for sun-bath? You can arrange for such privacy. It would be worth while to try the treatment recommended in the book you have, viz., sun-treated water in coloured bottles. If you

do not have the energy to do all that, seek help from Shankaran¹. He has trained himself a little in this treatment. He will guide you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10072. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

635. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*²

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,

[November 2, 1946]

Mahatma Gandhi indicated that he was trying to do some work in the metropolis. He was not, therefore, leaving for Noakhali . . . Gandhiji added that the arrival of the four members³ of the Interim Government might help in the peace movement.

Gandhiji impressed upon the people how the desire of retaliation and the tendency to look to the Viceroy or the Governor, the military and the police for protection were incompatible with independence to which they were all pledged. The Viceroy's powers vested in the Cabinet, the Governor's in the Bengal Ministers. If they wanted lasting peace, it must come from the people's hearts. He had been proclaiming from the housetops that no one could protect them except their own stout hearts. No one could ever dishonour the brave. Retaliation was a vicious circle. If they wanted retaliation they could not have independence. He said :

Supposing someone kills me, you will gain nothing by killing someone else in retaliation. And, if you only think over it, who can kill Gandhi except Gandhi himself? No one can destroy the soul. So let us dismiss all thought of revenge from our hearts. If we see this clearly, we shall have taken a big stride towards independence.

Harijan, 17-11-1946; and *The Sunday Hindustan Standard*, 3-11-1946

¹ Shankaran Nair

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The first paragraph is reproduced from *The Sunday Hindustan Standard*.

³ The reference is to Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdul Rab Nishtar who were expected to visit Calcutta.

636. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Silence Day [After November 2, 1946]¹

CHI. PYARELAL,

I understand nothing of this. What is a drop in the ocean ? What in particular can I ask ? What can I say ? That is why I said that you should tell me what you want to tell me so that my knowledge of the subject may be increased.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

637. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[November 3, 1946]²

“MORNING NEWS” REPORTS BUTCHERY BY HINDUS OF
MUSLIM PASSENGERS.³ MUSLIMS FLEEING FROM MOB
FURY AND PREMIER⁴ COUNTENANCING. WIRE PARTICULARS.⁵

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-11-1946

638. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING⁶

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,

November 3, 1946

Gandhiji said that the Prime Minister of Bengal had asked him to delay his departure for Noakhali till after the Bakr-Id and the speaker had agreed to do so. The Prime Minister wanted him to pass the Bakr-Id in Calcutta. His presence in the city might be helpful for peace. Gandhiji said that he had come to Bengal to serve the Muslims as well as Hindus and others.

¹ This is written on the reverse side of letter dated November 2, 1946.

² *Vide* the following item and “Speech at Prayer Meeting”, 4-11-1946

³ Communal rioting had broken out in Bihar following a hartal on October 25, and *Morning News*, an organ of the Muslim League, had stated that the number of persons killed was of the order of hundreds of thousands.

⁴ Srikrishna Sinha

⁵ For Jawaharlal Nehru’s reply, *vide* “Speech at Prayer Meeting”, 4-11-1946

⁶ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “Weekly Letter”. The first paragraph is reproduced from *Hindustan Standard*.

From his earliest childhood, he had learnt to dislike the wrong, never the wrongdoer. Therefore, even if the Muslims had done any wrong, they still remained his friends, but it was his duty to tell them that they had done wrong. He had always applied that rule in life with regard to his nearest and dearest. He held that to be the test of true friendship. He had told them on the previous day that revenge was not the way of peace, it was not humanity. The Hindu scriptures taught forgiveness as the highest virtue. Forgiveness became a brave man. A learned Muslim friend had come to see him on the day before. He had told the speaker that the teaching of the Koran was also similar. If a man killed one innocent person, he brought upon his head the sin, as it were, of murdering entire humanity. Islam never approved of but condemned murder, arson, forcible conversions, abductions and the like.

If they could be generous enough to forgive a person who gave them a slap, remarked Gandhiji, they could give him one in return. He could understand that. But if the miscreant ran away and the injured party slapped his relation or co-religionist by way of retaliation, it was below human dignity.

If someone abducted his daughter, the speaker continued, was he to abduct the abductor's or the abductor's friend's daughter? He held it to be infamous. Muslim friends had condemned such acts in Noakhali. But what was he to say of Bihar if what he was told was true? He was pained beyond measure to hear of the reported happenings in Bihar. He knew the Biharis well. The cry of blood for blood was barbarous. They could not take revenge in Bihar for the happenings in Noakhali. He was told that some Muslims, who were running away from Bihar in panic, were murdered by Bihari Hindus. He was shocked to hear it. He hoped that the report was not true. It was contended that the *Mahabharata* advocated the way of retaliation. He did not agree with that interpretation. The lesson of the *Mahabharata* was that the victory of the sword was no victory. That great book taught that the victory of the Pandavas was an empty nothing.

He told them of the talk he had with Shaheed Saheb, their Prime Minister. Years ago he had met him at Faridpur. Shaheed Saheb then took pride in calling himself the speaker's son. He knew they had many grievances against their Prime Minister. But the latter had given him his assurance that he wanted peace. It had grieved him to alienate his Hindu friends. He, the speaker, could not disbelieve that assurance till it was found to be untrue. He had by giving that assurance put himself to test. The golden way was to be friends with the world and to regard the whole human family as members of one family. He who distinguished between one's own family and another's, miseducated the members of his own and opened the way for discord and irreligion.

Harijan, 17-11-1946; and *Hindustan Standard*, 4-11-1946

639. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

November 4, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your packet just came. Am over head and ears in work though this is silence day. Bihar has shaken me to bits. I have been for the past six days on spare diet (milkless) principally for health. Now Bihar will send me to complete fast if things do not radically mend. There will be no time limit. Do not agitate yourself but be really glad that I feel I have the strength to go through the ordeal and live up to my creed.

Do not interrupt your Paris programme. If that programme is not to come off at all and if you are strong enough, you are at liberty to join me.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3701. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6510

640. *LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI*

CALCUTTA,

November 4, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have received Manu's letter and along with it the one you wrote to her. As requested by her, I return both herewith. I write this to you since I am not sure whether Manudi has reached there or not. I do not have the time to write a separate letter to her. I may say that I don't have the time even to write this. But I must. . . .¹

This letter has been written in three instalments. I am afraid this will be the last letter. The happenings in Bihar have made me decide that if people's hearts do not change for the better I must not be a witness to them. These days I am observing something like a partial fast. The main reason for its being partial is my health. But Bihar will lead me on to a total fast. I will go to Noakhali the day after tomorrow. These days I write very few letters. After coming here this is the longest I have written today. These days, therefore, Manu should

¹ Omission as in the source

be with me. But it seems it is now impossible for her to come. May she be out of trouble and happy. The rest you will see from the newspapers.

[From Gujarati]

Eklo Jane Re, pp. 3-4

641. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA¹

CALCUTTA,

November 4, 1946

DEAR KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA,

Because you are the oldest person in the Ashram, I am writing to you. Read this to all. Bihar has moved me. Chiefly for the sake of the body, I am on a semi-fast. Later on it may take the shape of a gradual complete fast. Gradual because I still have some work on hand. I have to go to Noakhali. You can read further details in the newspapers.

Nobody should run up to me, nobody should fast in sympathy, all should stick to their place and be completely engrossed in their work. Each should try to remove his own defects and should obtain purity for hard *tapas*. Nobody should worry about me. Let all pray for me that I may come out with flying colours through this penance and that I should not prove to be a coward.

Bhansali must not take any risks. When I am on fast, none should follow suit. Anything may happen after my passing away. I am not certain that, should I pass away, people's hearts will melt. If that does not happen, my passing away will at least reduce the burden on the earth, for my capacity for progress will have come to a standstill.

Let Asha Devi², Aryanayakam³ and Deo⁴ act up to the principles of Nai Talim. Let Shanta bring glory to her work. What can I say about Jajuji and Krishnadas Gandhi? There is a heavy load on Kumarappa⁵ also. I am not writing separately to Vinoba. Nor can I

¹ The Gujarati original of the letter is not available.

² Ashadevi Aryanayakam and E. W. Aryanayakam

³ *ibid*

⁴ Shankerrao Deo

⁵ J. C. Kumarappa

write separately to Kaka.

Krishnachandra will be all right. I am still more convinced today of the correctness of what I have written¹ to Pushpa.

Let Chimanlal² not feel too much burdened with responsibilities. Let Balvantsinha overcome anger. I have left out many names but that is only because I have no time to write more and not because I have forgotten.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy: G. N. 10185

642. *LETTER TO H. S. SUHRAWARDY*

SODEPUR,

November 4, 1946

BHAI SHAHID,

The arrangements for rail-cum-steamer journey that you have made for me are for big people. I have already told Satis Babu that I don't want all this. I shall be quite content with ordinary arrangements. All my companions will sit with me. Third class is good enough for us. It will suffice if we can have privacy on the steamer. We shall carry our own food and it will be enough. For myself I do not need even the special train. If the Railway people want it, then it is another matter.

There is no need for a journalist. Why make it a big caravan?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

BHAI SHAHID,

Is this from the *Nationalist*? Is there any truth in it? And why? I am disturbed over the Bihar episode. May God save us.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

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

¹Vide "Letter to Pushpa Desai", 29-10-1946

² Chimanlal N. Shah

643. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,

November 4, 1946

Yesterday, while speaking to you, I referred to the news which had come from Bihar. The news moved me deeply, and so I sent the following telegram² to Jawaharlalji through the Prime Minister, Shaheed Saheb. Panditji has sent the following reply :

Report in *Morning News* grossly exaggerated and vague. Government here doing its utmost but situation tense and grave in many places. Am staying on here with Nishtar. Vallabhbhai and Liaquat Ali going on to Delhi.

It is evident from the reply that although there has been exaggeration in the news, yet things have gone wrong and the condition is serious. This is unbearable for me as one who is attached to the province of Bihar and also wants that the infection should not spread to other provinces. I have been thinking deeply what my duty should be in this connection.

The Congress belongs to the people, the Muslim League belongs to our Muslim brothers and sisters. If Congressmen fail to protect the Mussalmans where the Congress is in power, then what is the use of a Congress Premier? Similarly, if in a League province the League Premier cannot afford protection to the Hindus, then why is the League Premier there at all? If either of them have to take the aid of the military in order to protect the Muslim or Hindu minorities in their respective provinces, then it only means that none of them actually exercises any control over the general population when a momentous crisis comes. If that is so, it only means that both of us are inviting the British to retain their sovereignty over India. This is a matter over which each of them should ponder deeply.

Let us wait for what Panditji and Nishtar Saheb are able to do in Bihar. Let us see whether the Hindus of Bihar shed their madness or not? Tomorrow is the day of Bakr-Id. It is not an occasion when we should quarrel with one another. Let us also wait and see what Shaheed Saheb does tomorrow. How nice it would be if from tomorrow Hindus and Mussalmans and every other community

¹ It being Gandhiji's silence-day, the speech was read out by Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

² Vide "Speech at Prayer Meeting",

in India start living with each other as friends, and the military or the police find no occasion to use their arms at all.¹

We always put the blame on *goondas*. But it is we who are responsible for their creation as well as encouragement. It is, therefore, not right to say that all the wrong that has been done is the work of the *goondas*.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-11-1946

644. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,

November 5, 1946

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SUMMERHILL
SIMLA

COUGH DISTRESSING OTHERWISE WELL. GLAD YOU
BETTER. VOCABULARY RECEIVED. SEND DIRECTLY TO
"HARIJAN". GOING NOAKHALI TOMORROW.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 4186. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7822

645. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

CALCUTTA,

November 5, 1946

CHI. LILI,

I may have to resort to a fast. If that happens, do not get panicky but concentrate on your studies and bring credit to me if not to yourself. Trust in God. You will not help me in any way by rushing here. I am getting more help here than I need. The additional help lies in each one doing his or her duty steadfastly. Those who come here uninvited will certainly be a hindrance. Therefore do not worry at all. Complete your studies and then engage yourself in my work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9604. Also C. W. 6576. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

¹Vide "To Bihar", 6-11-1946

646. *LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI*

CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

For the present, you should all give up any hope of my coming to Uruli. I cannot leave Bengal and Bihar. I see that I shall have to resort to a fast if the carnage does not stop. You may see everything from the newspapers. I myself shall not be able to write, but I will have others to write. Let each one remain engrossed in his or her work, without worrying. Do not give up your work in Uruli, whatever happens to me. Dr. Bhagawat, Dhuru, Balkrishna¹ and you are of course there. If Parmanand is inclined to stay on, then he and his wife to be are more than enough.

This letter is for all of you. There will be no problem about money.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 2738. Courtesy: Manilal B. Desai

647. *LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA*

CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

Today is the seventh day of my restricted diet. I am fine. The main reason for my going on this diet was the cough and eruptions. Now it will continue and I may even go on a fast. The reason is the current massacre in Bihar. Whatever will be, will be. God is the doer as well as the undoer. There is no need to rush to me. Serve your mother who is there. Place your sanatorium on a sound footing. Write to me and ask me anything you want to.

¹ Balkrishna Bhave, brother of Vinoba Bhave

Gulbai, I hope, is well and so also are the children.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

POONA

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

648. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

November 5, 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

The events in Bihar have distressed me. I can clearly see my duty. My bonds with Bihar are close. I cannot forget it. If half of what I hear is true, it means that Bihar has lost all humanity. To say that *goondas* were responsible for whatever happened there would be quite untrue. Although I have tried hard to avoid the fast, I shall not be able to do so. It is the seventh day today since I gave up milk and cereals. The cough and the boils were responsible for it, but also I was tired of the body. Then Bihar made matters worse. And the cry came from within: 'Why should you be a witness to this slaughter? If your word, which is as clear as daylight, is not heeded, your work is over. Why do you not die? Such reasoning has forced me to resort to fasting. I want to issue a statement that if in Bihar and other provinces slaughter is not stopped, I must end my life by fasting.

The letter Mohammed Yunus wrote to Shamsuddin¹ is with Sardar Baldev Singh². See it. Is what it says correct? It is our duty to give full report of what happened.

My low diet will continue. There may be delay in undertaking the fast. In Delhi you had asked me about the fast. I had said I had no idea then. Now the situation is not the same. Still you may say what you want to say. If it appeals to me I shall give up the idea of a fast. What I hope is that, knowing my nature, you will appreciate my position. Whatever the issue, I shall advise that all of you continue to do your work. Do not waste time thinking of my

¹ Shamsuddin Ahmed, Minister for Commerce, Labour and Industries in the Bengal Muslim League Ministry

² Minister of Defence in the Interim Government

death. Leave me in the hands of God and stop worrying.

You can show this letter to the Bihar Cabinet. Is this the Bihar of Brijkishore Prasad¹ ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 326-7

649. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SODEPUR,
November 5, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am enclosing a copy of my letter² to Jawaharlal, which please see. I have nothing more to say. If you have anything to say, do let me know. I am willing to listen. This fast is not like the ones you have witnessed, though it is not too different either. I have passed through no small agony.

Rajaji, Devdas and others should read this letter.³

No one should come rushing to me. There are so many to assist me. My going on living depends entirely on complete peace being established in India. You will certainly do everything to achieve that end. Do not attach too much weight to the warnings about my death. Say rather that if I have erred, there will be no harm in letting me die. I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro— 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 325

¹ A Congress leader of Bihar; father-in-law of Jayaprakash Narayan

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ In a postscript, Sushila Nayyar added that it was Gandhiji's wish that Abul Kalam Azad also should be shown the letter.

650. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*¹

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1946

The Hindus, said Gandhiji, might say: did not the Muslims start the troubles? He wanted them not to succumb to the temptation for retort but to think of their own duty and say firmly that whatever happened they would not fight. He wanted to tell them that the Muslims who were with him in the course of the day had assured him that they wanted peace. They were all responsible men. They said clearly that Pakistan could not be achieved by fighting. If they continued quarrelling with each other, independence would vanish into thin air and that would firmly implant the third power in India, be it the British or any other. India was a vast country, rich in minerals, metals and spices. There was nothing in the world that India did not produce. If they kept on quarrelling, any of the big powers of the world would feel tempted to come and save India from Indians and at the same time exploit her rich resources.

They wanted independence. They were ready to sacrifice their all for the Congress, the organization which had done so much for India. Were they going to undo all that the Congress had done for more than the last 60 years? He had told them they should return blow for blow if they were not brave enough to follow the path of non-violence. But there was a moral code for the use of violence also. Otherwise, the very flames of violence would consume those who lighted them. He did not care if they were all destroyed. But he could not countenance the destruction of India's freedom.

The reports of the happenings in Bihar were awful if true. Pandit Jawaharlal had told the guilty parties that the Central Government would never tolerate such barbarism. They would even use aerial bombing to put it down. But that was the way of the British. The Congress was an organization of the people. Was the Congress to use the foreign mode of destruction against the people whose representative it was? By suppressing the riots with the aid of the military, they would be suppressing India's freedom. And yet what was Panditji to do if the Congress had lost control over the people? The better way, of course, was to give up the reins of Government, if the people were not amenable to discipline and reason.

To retaliate against the relatives or the co-religionists of the wrong-doer was a cowardly act. If they indulged in such acts, they should say good-bye to independence.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

651. TO BIHAR

SODEPUR,
November 6, 1946

TO BIHAR,

Bihar of my dreams seems to have falsified them. I am not relying upon reports that might be prejudiced or exaggerated. The continued presence of the Central Chief Minister and his colleagues furnishes an eloquent tale of the tragedy of Bihar. It is easy enough to retort that things under the Muslim League Government in Bengal were no better, if not worse and that Bihar is merely a result of the latter. A bad act of one party is no justification for a similar act by the opposing party, more especially when it is rightly proud of its longest and largest political record. I must confess, too, that although I have been in Calcutta for over a week I do not yet know the magnitude of the Bengal tragedy. Though Bihar calls me, I must not interrupt my programme for Noakhali. And is counter-communalism any answer to the communalism of which Congressmen have accused the Muslim League? Is it Nationalism to seek barbarously to crush the fourteen per cent of the Muslims in Bihar?

I do not need to be told that I must not condemn the whole of Bihar for the sake of the sins of a few thousand Biharis. Does not Bihar take credit for one Brajkishore Prasad or one Rajendra Prasad? I am afraid, if the misconduct in Bihar continues, all the Hindus of India will be condemned by the world. That is its way, and it is not a bad way either. The misdeeds of Bihari Hindus may justify Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah's taunt that the Congress is a Hindu organization in spite of its boast that it has in its ranks a few Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and others. Bihari Hindus are in honour bound to regard the minority Muslims as their brethren requiring protection, equal with the vast majority of Hindus. Let not Bihar, which has done so much to raise the prestige of the Congress, be the first to dig its grave.

I am in no way ashamed of my ahimsa. I have come to Bengal to see how far in the nick of time my ahimsa is able to express itself in me. But I do not want in this letter to talk of ahimsa to you. I do want, however, to tell you that what you are reported to have done will never count as an act of bravery. For thousands to do to death a few hundreds is no bravery. It is worse than cowardice. It is unworthy of

nationalism, of any religion. If you had given a blow against a blow, no one would have dared to point a finger against you. What you have done is to degrade yourselves and drag down India.

You should say to Pandit Jawaharlalji, Nishtar Saheb and Dr. Rajendra Prasad to take away their military and themselves and attend to the affairs of India. This they can only do if you repent of your inhumanity and assure them that Muslims are as much your care as your own brothers and sisters.

You should not rest till every Muslim refugee has come back to his home which you should undertake to rebuild and ask your Ministers to help you to do so. You do not know what critics have said to me about your Ministers.

I regard myself as a part of you. Your affection has compelled that loyalty in me. And since I claim to have better appreciation than you seem to have shown of what Bihari Hindus should do, I cannot rest till I have done some measure of penance. Predominantly for reasons of health, I had put myself on the lowest diet possible soon after my reaching Calcutta. That diet now continues as a penance after the knowledge of the Bihar tragedy. The low diet will become a fast unto death, if the erring Biharis have not turned over a new leaf.

There is no danger of Bihar mistaking my act for anything other than pure penance as a matter of sacred duty.

No friend should run to me for assistance or to show sympathy. I am surrounded by loving friends. It would be wholly wrong and irrelevant for any other person to copy me. No sympathetic fast or semi-fast is called for. Such action can only do harm. What my penance should do is to quicken the conscience of those who know me and believe in my *bona fides*. Let no one be anxious for me, I am like all of us in God's keeping.

Nothing will happen to me so long as He wants service through the present tabernacle.

Your servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 10-11-1946

652. *LETTER TO KIRON SHANKAR ROY*

SODEPUR,
November 6, 1946

DEAR KIRON SHANKAR¹,

Please see Sarat Babu² to whom I talked last night about my interview with Muslim friends.³ My opinion is that you should all join the proposed advisory committee if it comes into being.

Yours
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

653. *INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA*

SODEPUR,
November 6, 1946

Gandhiji was asked whether he thought that after the withdrawal of the British troops from this country, the present disturbances would immediately stop and how he thought that the minority communities would be safeguarded from a fear of the majority communities in the different parts of the country. Replying Mahatma Gandhi observed :

The disturbances will not stop immediately, but they must stop much quicker when the British troops are withdrawn. Today we have to witness the degrading spectacle of wanting the help of the British troops. When they are withdrawn, people will necessarily learn the art of self-defence with counter-violence or, better still, with non-violence. The minorities will undoubtedly keep the British troops if they can unless they learn to be brave and trust the majority.

Again, when the British troops are gone, the majority will know how to behave towards the minority. Today, even the best behaviour of the majority does not receive its full value

¹ Congress member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly

² Sarat Chandra Bose

³ Gandhiji had met them on November 5 at the residence of H. S. Suhrawardy about forming a Central Peace Committee; *vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 5-11-1946

whilst the temptation of relying on British troops exists. By British troops, I do not mean merely White soldiers, but all who have been trained by British officers and have been trained to be loyal to the British in India and have often enough been used against the people to crush their freedom.

In any event people will have first to learn to do without the protection of the military or the police during communal troubles. The function of the police is to protect the citizens against thieves and robbers, of the military generally to defend the country against the foreign aggressor where the people have not learnt the matchless bravery of non-violence.

When Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the fact that in Calcutta and other places, people could move about quite safely even in the riot-affected areas if they were dressed in European fashion as the miscreants took them to be Christians, he said :

It is impossible for any self-respecting man to appreciate the advice that he must look like a Christian in order to avoid murder. The suggested change would cast a reflection on the Hindu as well as the Muslim. In order to live at peace with one another, we have to imbibe the virtue of toleration of the manners, customs and dresses of the different communities living in India.

The Hindu, 11-11-1946

654. LETTER TO MOHAMMED YUNUS

November 6, 1946

BHAI MOHAMMED,

What has happened in Bihar? I am stupefied. Read my letter¹ to Jawaharlal. The train is leaving. Send me a full account.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 5106

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-11-1946

655. SPEECH AT KUSHTIA

November 6, 1946

Addressing the waiting crowd Gandhiji said that his object in going to Noakhali was not to take sides and promote mutual quarrelling. He had toured all over Bengal including East Bengal with the late Ali Brothers. Those were the days when they had Hindu-Muslim unity. Large numbers of Muslims joined the Congress. The Congress then belonged to all. But today he was not going to East Bengal as a Congressman. He was going there as a servant of God. If he could wipe away the tears of outraged women, he would be more than satisfied.

Shaheed Saheb wanted to accompany him on the East Bengal tour but he was held up in Calcutta. He had sent Shamsuddin Saheb (the Labour Minister) instead. Shamsuddin Saheb had not come to spy upon him but to ensure Government help wherever it was required. He was hopeful that the tour would have good effect and the Hindu-Muslim unity of the Khilafat movement would come back. In the Khilafat days, no one talked of dividing India. Now they did so. But partitioning, even if it was desirable, could not be achieved through violence. Even if it could be achieved, it could not be retained except by the goodwill of the people concerned. The Bengal Ministers had assured him yesterday that the Muslims did not believe in Pakistan through force.

Continuing, Gandhiji said that perhaps his place now was in Bihar. He had served Bihar much more and he had much greater influence on the people there than in Bengal. For the time being, instead of proceeding to Bihar, he was satisfied by addressing an open letter¹ to the Biharis which they would all see and all that he had to say to the audience was that they could not live in India as enemies. They had to be friends and brothers. All that had happened in Bengal and was happening in Bihar was most unbecoming. They were being disgraced before the whole world. He had to go to Noakhali and would stay on till Hindus and Muslims again lived as blood-brothers.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-11-1946

656. SPEECH AT GOALUNDO

November 6, 1946

Addressing a fairly large crowd that had gathered at Goalundo Ghat, from the deck of the steamer, Gandhiji said that he would like to visit every affected village in Noakhali if he could possibly do so. He was going to Noakhali to console the victims

¹ *Vide* "To Bihar", 6-11-1946

of the riots, to wipe the tears of the oppressed.

If they thought in terms of revenge and kept quarrelling, Hinduism and Islam would both ultimately be destroyed. No religion, he said, sanctioned what was reported to have happened in Bihar and if anybody thought that Bihar had done the fine thing by way of teaching the Muslims a “lesson”, he was greatly mistaken. Such talk was sheer folly. In his opinion Bihar had disgraced itself and the fair name of India, even as Bengal had done. The Prime Minister at the Centre, Pandit Nehru, had told the Biharis that they had to kill him before they could touch a single Mussalman.

The reins of the Government were in the hands of the 14 members of the Central Government, but if they suppressed the riots with the aid of the military, the reins would pass into the hands of Lord Wavell, the Viceroy. Gandhiji said he could never tolerate that. If a population of 1,000 Muslims attacked the members of the minority community living in its midst and if they looted their homes, molested their women and tried to convert them forcibly, they thereby stabbed their own religion.

He was not going to leave Bengal till the Hindus and Muslims had told him that his presence in Bengal was no longer necessary. There was, of course, the call of Bihar. But Pandit Nehru had assured him that his presence was not required there at present.¹

It is sad that people should have left their homes and flocked to towns for relief. You must stick to your villages in face of any aggression and violence. Fight violence with non-violence if you can and if you can't do that, fight violence by any means, even if it means your utter extinction. But in no case should you leave your hearths and homes to be looted and burnt.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-11-1946; and *The Hindu*, 9-11-1946

657. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA²

November 6, 1946

CORRESPONDENT: In view of recent Indian history—1942 unrest, I. N. A. movement and unrest, R. I. N. mutiny, Calcutta-Bombay disturbances, movements in Indian States such as Kashmir and recent communal riots—can it be said that your creed of non-violence has failed, in so far as non-violence has not taken roots in Indian life?

GANDHIJI: This is a dangerous generalization. All you mention

¹ What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu*.

² The interview appeared under the title “A Challenge to Faith” by Pyarelal. According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-11-1946, the interview took place on board the steamboat *Kiwi* during Gandhiji's journey to Chandpur.

can certainly be called *himsa* but that can never mean that the creed of non-violence has failed. At best it may be said that I have not yet found the technique required for the conversion of the mass mind. But I claim that the millions of the 700,000 villages of India have not participated in the violence alluded to by you. Whether non-violence has taken roots in Indian life is still an open question which can only be answered after my death.

What should one do in his day-to-day life—that is, what is the minimum programme—so that one can acquire non-violence of the brave?

The minimum that is required of a person wishing to cultivate the ahimsa of the brave is first to clear his thought of cowardice and in the light of the clearance regulate his conduct in every activity, great or small. Thus the votary must refuse to be cowed down by his superior, without being angry. He must, however, be ready to sacrifice his post, however remunerative it may be. Whilst sacrificing his all, if the votary has no sense of irritation against his employer he has ahimsa of the brave in him. Assume that a fellow passenger threatens my son with assault and I reason with the would-be-assailant who then turns upon me. If then I take his blow with grace and dignity, without harbouring any ill-will against him, I exhibit the ahimsa of the brave. Such instances are of everyday occurrence and can be easily multiplied. If I succeed in curbing my temper every time and though able to give blow for blow I refrain, I shall develop the ahimsa of the brave which will never fail me and which will compel recognition from the most confirmed adversaries.

Harijan, 17-11-1946

658. *TALK TO CONGRESSMEN*¹

CHANDPUR,

[November 6, 1946]²

Replying to memoranda presented to him by prominent leaders of Tippera district at Chandpur Gandhiji observed :

We feel helpless, but we are not so helpless. If we rely on the

¹ The report said: "A number of Congressmen headed by Kamini Kumar Dutt, leader of the opposition in Bengal Legislative Council, met Gandhiji on board the steamer at Chandpur and apprised him of the situation. They submitted a detailed report of happenings from the beginning."

² Gandhiji reached Chandpur at 8.30 p. m. on November 6. He left the following morning.

military and the police then we are really helpless. If 20,000 people of Chandpur fight, then it will be a sight for the gods to see and I would like them to do this.

People must not take the offensive, but defend themselves they must, even, if necessary, with the help from the neighbouring people. None must flee and even if one is surrounded by 1,000 people, one should, if need be, die fighting. Those marooned should stick to their places. People should learn to die. Constructive work requires the spirit of sacrifice. But fighting must never be secret. In no case should women and children or invalids be touched.

The Hindu, 9-11-1946

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TO M. A. JINNAH¹

October 6, 1946

I have consulted some of my colleagues about the matter discussed by us yesterday and over the possibility of a rapprochement between the Muslim League and the Congress. We are all agreed that nothing could be happier and better for the country than that these two organizations should meet again as before as friends having no mental reservations and bent on resolving all their differences by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign power. We would, therefore, welcome the decision of the League to join the Interim Government for it to work as a united team on behalf of India as a whole.

The points put forward by you in our conversation yesterday were :

1. the formula suggested to you by Gandhiji,
2. the League not being responsible for the members at present representing the Scheduled Castes and the minorities,
3. what should be done in case any vacancy should arise among the members representing the minorities other than the Scheduled Castes
4. the procedure to be adopted over what may be called major communal issues, and
5. alternating Vice-Presidentship

Regarding No. 1, we feel that the formula is not happily worded. We do not question the purpose underlying it. We are willing as a result of the elections, to accept the Muslim League as the authoritative representative organization of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India and that as such and in accordance with democratic principles they have today the unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organization representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction or limitations to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress. We would suggest, therefore, that no formula is necessary and each organization may stand on its merits.

Regarding No. 2, I am to say that the question of the League being responsible does not arise and, as you do not raise any objections to the present constitution of

¹ *Vide* "Uncertified Khadi v. Mill Cloth", 12-9-1946.

the Government in this respect, there is no question to be solved.

Regarding No. 3, I am to say that if any such vacancy arises, the whole Cabinet will consider what should be done to replace the vacancy and advise the Viceroy accordingly. There can be no question of right in the matter of consultation with the League in regard to the representation of these minorities.

Regarding No. 4, your suggestion about the Federal Court is not feasible. Matters coming before the Cabinet cannot be made subject matter of references to court. We should thrash out all such matters amongst ourselves and bring up agreed proposals before the Cabinet. In the event of failure to reach an agreed decision, we should seek the method of arbitration of our own choice. We hope, however, that we will act with such mutual trust, forbearance and friendliness that there will be no occasion to go to such arbitration.

Regarding No. 5, it is out of the question to have any rotation in the Vice-Presidentship. We have no objection if you desire to have an additional Vice-Chairman for the Co-ordination Committee of the Cabinet who can also preside over such Committee meetings from time to time.

I am hoping that if your committee finally decide upon the League joining the National Cabinet, they will also decide simultaneously to join the Constituent Assembly or recommend to your council to this effect.

I need hardly mention that when an agreement has been reached by us it can only be varied by mutual agreement and not otherwise.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy: Beladev Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

APPENDIX II

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI AND NEHRU¹

August 27, 1946

I said that I had asked them to come and see me because I had returned from Calcutta. I gave a description of what I had seen in Calcutta; and said that the only way to avoid similar trouble all over India on an even larger scale was by some lessening of communal tension and settlement between Hindu and Muslim. I stressed the importance of coalition Governments, both in Bengal and at the Centre.

1. I said that while I recognized the difficulty in reopening negotiations with the Muslim League, I felt sure that the country expected it as a result of what had happened in Calcutta. The crux of the whole matter lay in the doubt about the

¹*Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 28-8-1946

Congress interpretation of the Grouping in the Constituent Assembly. I said that I thought I had been quite clear in my mind that Congress had now agreed to abide by the Statement of May the 16th, and to me this had meant the acceptance of the Grouping arrangements. When I made my broadcast a few nights ago, the draft of which I had shown to Nehru, I had been quite convinced that this was the intention and that it was on this understanding that I had said what I did in my broadcast. I said that I thought the only chance of a peaceful transfer of power in India was if the Congress made a categorical statement that they would accept the position that the provinces must remain in their sections, as intended by the Mission, until after the first elections under the new Constitution. I said that I could not undertake the responsibility of calling together the Constituent Assembly until this point was settled. I handed to Gandhi and Nehru the draft of a statement which I asked them to make, as follows :

2. "The Congress are prepared in the interests of communal harmony to accept the intention of the Statement of May 16th that provinces cannot exercise any option affecting their membership of the Section or of the Groups if formed until the decision contemplated in paragraph 19(viii) of the Statement of the 16th May is taken by the new Legislature after the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation and the first general elections have been held."

3. Gandhi began by saying that he thought it was a matter for the Interim Government. I said that it was a matter for Congress who had challenged the interpretation of the Mission. He then went off into long legalistic arguments about the interpretation of the Mission's statement. I said that I was a plain man and not a lawyer, and that I knew perfectly well what the Mission meant, and that the compulsory Grouping was the whole crux of the Plan.

4. The argument went on for some time, and we did not make much progress. Nehru at one time got very heated and said that this was simple "bullying" by the Muslim League. Gandhi said that if a blood-bath was necessary, it would come about in spite of non-violence. I said that I was very shocked to hear such words from him. In the end they took away the formula, but I do not think there is much hope of their accepting it.

5. The interview lasted about forty minutes.

W(AVELL)

27-8-1946

From a copy: India Office Library & Records, London; also *The Transfer of Power*.

APPENDIX III
LETTER FROM SUDHIR GHOSH TO GANDHIJ¹

LONDON,
September 7, 1946

DEAR BAPUJI,

I got your message of the 28th August. . .² and I cabled an answer back. I went and saw Pethick-Lawrence as soon as I got the cable. . . .³ I guessed that you had sent it after your meeting with the Viceroy the previous evening. I therefore knew what it meant and I had no difficulty in interpreting it to Pethick-Lawrence.

I had a long discussion with him but he was rather sticky. He took the line that Congress people were trying to have it both ways; on the one hand they want to get hold of as much power as possible and want the British and their Viceroy to have as little to do with India's affairs as possible and on the other hand they want British to step in and take a retrograde step, viz., to exercise their extraordinary authority in provincial matters and to suppress a constitutionally elected ministry in Bengal. He expanded himself on the subject. I explained to him that there was no desire on the part of Congress to take any retrograde step; all that we were worried about was that we could not afford to have a repetition of the Bengal tragedy. If Mr. Suhrawardy feels that injustice has been done to the Muslim League and he must seek redress by breaking the law of the land he is entitled to do so, and in that case he should go out of the Government, break the law and face the consequences. But if he chooses to be the keeper of the law and the breaker of the law at the same time, the situation becomes intolerable. Pethick-Lawrence pointed out that he had no evidence that Mr. Suhrawardy was implicated in the crime of breaking the peace in Bengal. I told him that I could not produce legal proof but there was enough circumstantial evidence of his guilt and in any case even if he was not implicated in the crime of breaking the peace, it was obvious to the whole world that he had fallen down on the job of maintaining order in the province which is the primary duty of a Government, and it resulted in gruesome tragedy, such as we have never before witnessed in the history of our country; this was sufficient justification for the dismissal of the Ministry in Bengal. Nobody in the Congress would like to take such a step, but how are they to deal with the numerous big problems that await their attention if they are not in a position to keep the country as a whole in order? Pethick-Lawrence explained that he did not believe that that was the way to keep the country in

¹ *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Lord Wavell", 28-8-1946

² Omissions as in the source

³ *ibid*

order. In his view the root of the trouble was the dissatisfaction in the Muslim mind and the only way to remedy it is for the Congress, who are now in a powerful position, to make some further concession which would induce Mr. Jinnah to come into the Government and thus there would be no further trouble from the Muslims. The concession which he thinks would satisfy Mr. Jinnah is that Congress should allow the provinces to go into their respective sections, according to the British plan, when the Constituent Assembly meets, and that they should make an announcement to that effect right now. He suggested that I should make a suggestion to Mr. Gandhi and persuade him to see the reasonableness of it. I had to be rather harsh to him and to tell him that I myself did not see the reasonableness of such a suggestion and therefore I was unable to say anything to Mr. Gandhi about it and in my view such a policy of appeasement would only make things worse. He was rather upset about it. Thus I have made myself somewhat unpopular.

But Attlee showed a great deal more understanding. I went to him two days after I saw Pethick-Lawrence. I showed him the cable and explained to him what it meant. I also showed him the cuttings of the *Statesman* editorial comments on the Calcutta tragedy. He did not try to be diplomatic. He plainly said that if in Gandhi's judgment the situation is such that the Viceroy needs the assistance of a mind abler than his own and if Gandhi thinks that, otherwise, a repetition of the Calcutta tragedy is not only possible or probable but certain, then that is a matter which must be taken seriously. He explained that he was naturally anxious to leave these things to the Secretary of State but he was going to call the Secretary of State and have a talk with him about all this. He told me that your letter to the Viceroy on this subject had been cabled to the British Government and he showed me the copy he had got. He said that all these things would be discussed at the next meeting of the Cabinet and he added that I might go and see him again on Wednesday the 4th. I therefore went to see him again on Wednesday. He said he was happy to hear from the Secretary of State that although the week-end was difficult time at Delhi, things had improved since the Congress leaders actually took office on Monday, the 2nd September and that there is really no need to worry about the progress of things at Delhi. He then talked at some length about the Viceroy and your message. He admitted that there was a good case for a new Viceroy but there was no sense in making a change unless he was in a position to find someone who was obviously better than the present occupant of the post. And it is not easy to find a man from this country who is very much better. Then he went on to remark (he was thinking aloud) that the kind of assistance which Gandhi thinks the Viceroy needs should now be provided by Nehru—who has a very able mind and legal mind. (Here he joked about legal minds and remarked that although he himself was a barrister he had left the profession early enough!) I said that the Prime Minister had hit the nail on the head; if he would now

give instructions to the Viceroy that henceforward the Viceroy, in the exercise of his extraordinary authority, must always be guided by the advice given him by his Prime Minister Pandit Nehru, then the whole problem would be solved. The Prime Minister would not commit himself but he said he very much hoped things would work out that way.

Cripps is returning to London tomorrow. But I hear he is not very well in spite of his stay in Switzerland. He therefore will not be able to do much to help us. I have kept him fully informed about developments in India but he really has no very great influence with the British Cabinet. He is a good man but he is not what they call a good "party man" like Pethick-Lawrence is. Cripps's influence therefore is much less than that of Pethick-Lawrence. Attlee, on the whole, is very sensible about India. I am told that he is very different from what he used to be during the Round Table Conference days. My impression is that he is keen to get on with Congress.

Love from

SUDHIR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 pp. 370-2

APPENDIX IV

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ON KASHMIR¹

September 25, 1946

Recent events in Kashmir have been repeatedly considered by the Working Committee and the Committee have been greatly affected by them. They refrained, however, from expressing any opinion as they hoped that the situation could be handled satisfactorily by friendly mediation. Their approaches, however, to the State authorities had an unfriendly response, and the situation has progressively deteriorated, involving repression of, and suffering for, the people.

Recently, the popular leader of the people and the President of the Kashmir National Conference, Sheikh Abdullah, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. This has added to the gravity of the situation and distressed and angered large numbers of people within and outside the State.

When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru went to Kashmir and was arrested there, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then President of the Congress, asked him to come back in order to continue the valuable work he was doing for the Congress in connection with the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission.

Maulana Azad had assured him then, with the consent of the Working

¹*Vide* "Draft Resolution for the Working Committee", 25-9-1946

Committee, that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir their own. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru willingly returned, though not without misgivings. The Working Committee regret to find that his misgivings were justified.

From all accounts received by the Committee, repression of an open as well as a subtle type is continuing, and the people connected with the Kashmir [National] Conference are being harassed in many ways.

It is reported that while elections have been announced for the State Assembly, large numbers of names are being struck off the electoral rolls, and many prospective candidates for the election have been disqualified. No attempt is being made to liberalize the Constitution and to make it more democratic and responsible.

In view of these reports, the Working Committee feel it necessary to send a deputation, consisting of persons of unquestioned ability and impartiality, to inquire into the reports of repression and suppression of civil liberties. The Committee, therefore, earnestly recommend to Kashmir State that they should invite such a deputation.

Recent events in Kashmir have a large significance affecting the rulers and peoples of all the States in India and Committee trust that the States will welcome the step that they are taking in regard to Kashmir.

While noting with deep regret the sentence passed on Sheikh Abdullah, the Committee would consider his incarceration as a worthy sacrifice if it results in the achievement of the freedom for which he was labouring. The Committee express their sympathy for all those who have suffered or are suffering for the cause of freedom in Kashmir.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50, Vol. I, pp. 23-4

APPENDIX V

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI¹

September 26, 1946

I had also an hour with Mr. Gandhi. He told me that there was no fixed date for his departure, and obviously means to stay as long as the negotiations last.

I outlined to him the result of my discussion with Jinnah and used the same general line of argument as with Nehru. He listened patiently and then said that he had no doubt of the honesty of British intentions, that he entirely agreed that the Muslim League must come in, but that the Nationalist Muslim was a difficult issue. As usual, he then began splitting hairs, saying that if it was merely a Congress

¹ *Vide* "Discussion with Lord Wavell", 26-9-1946 Lord Wavell also transmitted the text of the note to the Secretary of State the same day.

“right”, they could make concessions on it, but that if it was a “duty”, it was a different matter. He said that the proper way of settling the matter would be by a meeting between Jinnah and Nehru.

Gandhi then really disclosed his hand, by saying that he wished to know what we should do if the worst happened and the Muslim League did not come in. His own view was that in that event it would be of no use for the Constituent Assembly to meet, and it would be quite honourable for the British Government to say that their scheme could not be enforced, and that the solution of a Constituent Assembly in which the Muslim League was not represented would not be maintained by British arms.

I then said to him that that was a possible line of argument, but supposing the worst did happen, which I refused to admit and was not going to allow, what was his solution : “Where did he go from there?”

He then said that though the Constituent Assembly should be dropped, the Interim Government should go on, the vacant Muslim seats being filled by other prominent Muslims. This of course has been Gandhi’s objective and the objective of the majority of the Congress, I think, from the first : i. e., to establish themselves at the Centre and to suppress, cajole, or buy over the Muslims, and then impose a Constitution at their leisure.

I said quite firmly that I was not prepared to accept his solution; I was not going to allow the present negotiations to fail, but that if they did His Majesty’s Government would have to reconsider the whole position.

He concluded by saying that he hoped I would do something to prevent Kashmir from becoming a major issue.

W(AVELL)

26-9-1946

From a copy : India Office Library and Records, London