



**Gandhiji's Non-violence in
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Selected and Compiled
with an Introduction by
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MANI BHAVAN GANDHI SANGRAHALAYA, MUMBAI

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Preface

Gandhiji's life, ideas and work are of crucial importance to all those who want a better life for humankind. The political map of the world has changed dramatically since his time, the economic scenario has witnessed unleashing of some disturbing forces, and the social set-up has undergone a tremendous change. The importance of moral and ethical issues raised by him, however, remain central to the future of individuals and nations. Today we need him, more than before.

Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sangrahalaya has been spreading information about Gandhiji's life and work. A series of booklets presenting Gandhiji's views on some important topics is planned to disseminate information as well as to stimulate questions among students, scholars, social activists and concerned citizens. We thank Government of India, Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Department of Culture, for their support.

Aloo Dastur

President

Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sangrahalaya

Usha Thakkar

Hon. Secretary

Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sangrahalaya

6th April 2002

"All problems could be peacefully resolved if adversaries talked to each other on the basis of love and truth. All through history, the way of truth and love has always won. This was the belief and vision of Mahatma Gandhi and his vision remains good and true even today."

Ronald Regan
Speech at United Nations Assembly, 1984

Introduction

Bharati Mazmudar

Satya and Ahimsa were not new to India. The people of this country had accepted them since centuries. As far as possible they tried to be truthful and non-violent in their daily life. These virtues were supposed to be cultivated by individuals but Gandhiji used these virtues for fighting against injustice and oppression. He came out with weapons based on Satya—truth and Ahimsa— non-violence to fight against British Imperialism. Weapons like satyagraha, civil-disobedience and non-co-operation were used to fight against injustice, social or political. He had successfully used them in South Africa in a compact group having a common grievance. Looking to the vastness of India and its diversity he wanted to experiment them on a smaller scale.

His first attempt at Champaran was to fight for justice against Indigo planters. His relatively easy success led him to organise satyagraha for the Ahmedabad Mill workers and later in Kheda in 1918. He was thus preparing the ground for a greater fight at national level. He went on teaching lessons of truth and nonviolence to the people of India which helped them to drive away the fear and taught them to stand erect with pride.

Throughout his fight he stuck to truth and non-violence and hence because of the eruption of violence he had to withdraw his struggle on various occasions. On such failures he always blamed himself for his imperfections but never doubted the strength of ahimsa and satyagraha. He went on fast for purification.

He travelled from one end of the country to the other explaining and convincing people of his methods of non-violence.

He also started working simultaneously for social reforms. His constructive programmes included swadeshi, khadi, removal of untouchability, empowerment of women etc. When he realised that leading thousands under the banner of non-violent movement was difficult and some violent incidents are likely to take place he

decided to train his volunteers—satyagrahis. His attempt of mass awakening during the 'salt-satyagraha' was successful and shook the very foundation of British Raj.

In his later life he realised that making people stick to nonviolence and truth for a longer time was difficult. During the Hindu-Muslim riots that took place in 1947-48 as a true soldier carrying the weapon of love and sympathy, truth and ahimsa he tried his best to wipe the tears of people who suffered in Naokhali and Bihar. He thereby established the superiority of the nonviolent method of resolving the conflicts. He strongly believed that "love is a rare herb that makes a friend even of a sworn enemy and this herb grows out of non-violence. What in a dormant state is non-violence, becomes love in the waking state. Love destroys ill will." (14:299)

"All his life he battled against the cult of non-violence and war, against cruelty of man to man, against industrialism and domination of man by machine, against senseless multiplication of wants and the blind worship of mammon, against inequality and discrimination. He lived his message by resolute adherence to non-violence and truth, resistance to evil by satyagraha and self-suffering, cutting down his wants to the minimum and pursuing his moksha by service to mankind."¹

Today we see that India has not travelled along the path shown by the Father of the Nation. The terrorist activities and revengeful actions full of hatred have disturbed the minds of many. It has disrupted our economy and the development of our nation.

Let us not judge or try to find out how successful he was. But let us trace his experiments with truth and non-violence after he entered the political arena of India and see how faithful the people of this country were to him who dedicated his whole life for the betterment of this country.

The matter has been compiled from the *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. The brackets indicate the volume number and page number.

REFERENCE

1. S.S. Gill, *Gandhi a Sublime Failure*, Rupa & Co, New Delhi, 2001, pp. 232-33.

Gandhiji's Non-violence in

Theory and Practice

Before putting non-violence into practice Gandhiji tried to explain his idea of non-violence to different people. During the year 1915 while talking to members of Y.M.C.A., Madras, he said on 27-4-1917:

"Resist tyranny wherever you find it, by all means resist encroachment upon your liberty, but not by shedding the blood of the tyrant. That is not what is taught by our religion. Our religion is based upon ahimsa, which in its active form is nothing but love, love not only to your neighbours, not only to your friends but love even to those who may be your enemies.

"One word more in this connection. ... I think that if we were to practise truth, to practise ahimsa we must immediately see that we also practise fearlessness."
(13:65)

* * *

Explaining it further Gandhiji said:

"He who is acted upon by fear can hardly observe the vows of truth etc. The controller's will, therefore, constantly endeavour to be free from fear of kings, or

society, one's caste or family, thieves, robbers, ferocious animals such as tigers and even death. One who observes the vow of fearlessness will defend himself or others by truth-force or soul-force." (13:91)

Gandhiji while drafting the constitution for his Ashram clarified his idea about non-violence and truth.

"It is not enough to refrain from taking life of any living being. He who has pledged himself to this vow may not kill even those whom he believes to be unjust, he may not be angry with them, he must love them, thus he would oppose the tyranny—whether of parents, governments or others, but will not kill or hurt the tyrant. The follower of truth and non-violence will offer satyagraha against tyranny and win over the tyrant by love, he will not carry out the tyrant's will but will suffer punishment even unto death for disobeying his will until the tyrant himself is won over." (13:91)

* * *

Explaining the essentials of non-violence to Maganlal Gandhi on 14.3.1915 Gandhiji said:

"Its essentials are *daya, akrodha, aman* etc. (compassion, freedom from anger, freedom from the desire to be respected). Satyagraha is based on non-violence.... We must observe all the *yamas* (religious duty or observance. They include

truthfulness, non-violence, compassion, celibacy etc.) and that, if we do so by way of vows, we perceive the inner significance of non-violence.

"I am absolutely clear in my mind that India's deliverance and ours will be achieved through the observance of these vows.

"The principle underlying all these vows is truth." (13:37-38)

* * *

While clarifying the doctrine of Ahimsa Gandhiji wrote:

"Literally speaking ahimsa is non-killing. But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher than the realm to which I would go, if I merely understood by ahimsa non-killing. Ahimsa really means that you may not offend any body, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. . . . For one who follows the doctrine of ahimsa, there is no room for an enemy, he denies the existence of an enemy. . . If we return blow for blow, we depart from the doctrine of ahimsa.

"A man who believes in the efficacy of this doctrine finds in the ultimate stage, when he is about to reach the goal, the whole world at his feet, not that he wants the whole world at his feet, but it must be so. If you express your love. . . . ahimsa in such a manner that it impresses itself indelibly upon your so called enemy, he must return

that love. Another thought which comes out of this is that, under this rule, there is no room for organized assassination, and there is no room for murders even openly committed, and there is no room for any violence even for the sake of your country and even for guarding the honour of precious ones that may be under your charge. After all, that would be a poor defence of honour. This doctrine of ahimsa tells us that we may guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering ourselves into the hands of the man who would commit the sacrilege. And that requires far greater physical and mental courage than the delivering of blows." (13:262)

* * *

In reply to Lala Lajpat Rai's remarks in *Modern Review* of July 1916, Gandhiji wrote: (See Appendix II Vol.13, pp. 566- 697):

"During the past fifteen hundred years we have as a nation given ample proof of physical courage, but we have been torn by internal dissensions and have been dominated by love of self instead of love of country. We have that is to say been swayed by the spirit of irreligion rather than of religion.

"Though my views on ahimsa are a result of my study of most of the faiths of the world, they are now no longer dependent upon the authority of these works. They are a part of my life and if I suddenly discovered that the religious books read by me

bore a different interpretation from the one I had learnt to give them, I should. . . . still hold to the views of ahimsa as I am about to set forth here.

"Our shastras seem to teach that a man who really practices ahimsa in its fullness has the world at its feet; he so affects his surroundings that even snakes and other venomous reptiles do him no harm. This is said to have been the experience of St. Francis of Assisi.

"In its negative form it means not injuring any living being, whether by body or mind. . . . Ahimsa requires deliberate self-suffering, not a deliberate injuring of the supposed wrong doer.

"In its positive form ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If I am a follower of ahimsa, I must love my enemy. This active ahimsa necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. A man cannot deceive the loved ones, he does not fear or frighten him or her. अभयदान Gift of life is the greatest of all gifts. A man who gives it in reality disarms all hostility. He has paved the way for an honourable understanding. And none who is himself subject to fear can bestow that gift. He must therefore be himself fearless. A man cannot then practise ahimsa and be a coward at the same time. The practice of ahimsa calls for the greatest courage. It is the most soldierly of a soldier's virtue. . . . He is the true soldier who knows how to die and stand on his ground in the midst of a hail of bullets.

"Ahimsa, truly understood, is in my humble opinion, a panacea for all evils mundane and extra-mundane. . . . Ahimsa does not displace the practice of other virtues, but renders their practice imperatively necessary before it can be practised even in its rudiments. . . Mahavira and Buddha were soldiers and so was Tolstoy. . . . Let us be joint sharers of these teachers and this land of ours will once more be the abode of gods." (13:294-97)

* * *

Gandhiji never missed an opportunity to explain his idea of Satyagraha and non-violence. In his speech at the Political Conference in Godhra on 3.11.1917 he presented his idea of Satyagraha.

"In Satyagraha there is always unflinching adherence to truth. It is never to be forsaken on any account. Even for the sake of one's country it does not permit resort to falsehood. It proceeds on the assumption of the ultimate triumph of truth. A Satyagrahi does not abandon his path even though at times it seems impenetrable and beset with difficulties and dangers, and slight departure from that straight path may appear full of promise. Even in these circumstances his path shines resplendent like the midday sun and he does not despond. With truth for sword, he needs neither a steel sword nor gun-powder. Even an inveterate enemy he conquers by the force of the soul, which is love. Love for a friend is not put to test. . . . When love is

bestowed on the so called enemy, it is tested, it becomes a virtue and requires an effort and hence it is an act of manliness and real bravery. We can cultivate such an attitude even towards the government and doing so we shall be able to appreciate their beneficial activities and as for their errors rather than feel bitter on their account point them out in love and so get them rectified. Love does not act through fear. Weakness there certainly cannot be. A coward is incapable of bearing love, it is the prerogative of the brave.

"Love can fight; often it is obliged to. In the intoxication of power, man fails to see his error. When that happens a Satyagrahi does not sit still. He suffers. He disobeys the ruler's orders and his laws in a civil manner and willingly submits to the penalties of such disobedience, for instance, imprisonment and gallows. Thus is the soul disciplined.... In the event no bitterness develops between the Satyagrahi and those in power; the latter on the contrary willingly yields to him. ... It need not be assumed that such resistance is possible only against civilized rulers. Even a heart of flint will melt in the fire kindled by the power of the soul." (14:63)

* * *

Gandhiji had heard a great deal about the condition of the Indians working with Indigo planters in Champaran. He started gathering more information to get the true picture of the raiyats. He submitted the report on 13.5.1917 which ended as under.

"In conclusion, I would like to state that I have no desire to hurt the planters' feelings. I have received every courtesy from them. Believing as I do that the raiyats are labouring under a grievous wrong from which they ought to be freed immediately, I have dealt as calmly as is possible for me to do so, with the system which the planters are working. I have entered upon my mission in the hope that they are Englishmen born to enjoy the fullest personal liberty and freedom will not fail to rise to their status and will not begrudge the raiyats the same measure of liberty and freedom." (13:390)

* * *

Notes on the position in Champaran to Date : 14.5.1917.

"In Champaran, the evil is like a weed growing everywhere and anyhow and in growing has smothered all law and order. The very laws for the protection of the raiyats have been used by the planters to reduce them to a serfdom. As the planters have placed themselves above law, even decrees of courts have had no binding effect on them in many cases. The evil, therefore, will require tremendous efforts before it is checked. ... If the settlement comes or even if it does not, it is necessary to post volunteers in villages to act as links between the planters and raiyats, to steal the latter's hearts and by their very presence to protect them from the tyranny of the

amlas etc. The volunteers will be expected to remain in the villages for at least six months." (13:393)

The struggle in Champaran was Gandhiji's first satyagraha in India. He was determined "to secure freedom for the raiyats from the yoke that is wearing them down is inflexible according to Gandhiji".

"The mission is designed to seek relief by self-suffering, never by doing violence to the supposed or real wrong doer. And this lesson has been inculcated among the raiyats in season and out of season." (13:406)

An enquiry committee was appointed and Gandhiji was one of its members. In the deliberations he had to fight every inch of the ground and do hard bargaining to secure the interests of the raiyats. Finally he was able to achieve his aim to 'promote peace between the planters and the raiyats' and secured the freedom and dignity for them.

"The people of Champaran have secured what they wanted. We had no quarrel with the Indigo planters; we only wanted to shake off our slavery to them and this is all we have been able to achieve." (14:77)

* * *

In Ahmedabad mill-workers were on strike. Shri Ambalal Sarabhai requested Gandhiji to intervene. Talking to the workers on 8.2.1918 Gandhiji said:

"You should address a letter to the mill-owners about your grievances. We do not want any bitterness to grow between the two parties. We cannot all at once demand an increase of 50 to 60 percent. We shall appeal to them with due firmness. If, despite that, they do not agree, we will have five persons nominated by each side and accept their decision. It will be binding on both sides. . . . You should follow the path of justice and seek a solution without bitterness. This will make your case stronger. . . Place your just demands before your employees without fear. I want to help you in all this as much as I can." (14:185-86)

Apart from visit to workers' houses and public meetings for educating the workers about the struggle, it was decided to issue instruction leaflets every day with a view to fixing firmly in their minds the principles and significance of the struggle, and supply them with simple but elevating literature which would conduce to their mental and intellectual development and enable them to leave for posterity a heritage of the means for its progress.

On 26-2-1918 Gandhiji addressed the mill-workers.

"Today is the fifth day of the lock-out. Some of you probably think that everything will be all right after a week or two of suffering. I repeat that, though we may hope that our struggle will end early, we must remain firm even if that hope is not realised and must not resume work even if we have to die. Workers have no money but they

possess a wealth superior to money— they have their hands, their courage and their fear of God. If a time comes when you have to starve, have confidence that we shall eat only after feeding you. We shall not allow you to die of starvation." (14:217)

* * *

In leaflet No. 10 issued on 7-3-1918.

"In the situation in which we are placed, it is quite necessary to examine the point mentioned in the preceding leaflet. It is just about a fortnight since the lock-out commenced, and yet some say that they have no food, others that they cannot even pay rent. The houses of most of the workers are found to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. . . . The clothes of the workers are dirty. . . . They cannot afford soap. The workers' children just play about in the streets. They go without schooling.... Such extreme poverty is painful indeed. But a 35% increase will not by itself cure it. Even if wages were to be doubled, in all likelihood the abject poverty would remain unless other measures were also adopted.

"Questioning the workers, we learn that when they are short of money they pay interest ranging from one anna to four annas per rupee per month.

"If as a part of the present struggle all workers take an oath not to pay such excessive interest, they will have an unbearable burden lifted from them. Nobody should pay interest at a rate higher than twelve percent." (14:242-243)

* * *

Leaflet No. 11. 11-3-1918. A meeting was called on 12-3-1918 at 7.30 a.m.

"It is a miserable thing for a working man to be without a job. The meeting will keep up the patience of all workers who feel so. For those who know their strength, there can be no enforced unemployment. In reality the worker can be so independent that, if he realises his true worth, he will never, worry about losing a job. The wealth of a rich person may disappear or be stolen or be lost in a moment by mismanagement. Thanks to miscalculation, a rich man may have to face bankruptcy But a worker's capital is inexhaustible, incapable of being stolen, and bound to pay him a generous dividend all time. His hands and feet, the energy which enables him to work, constitute this inexhaustible capital of his and the wages constitute his dividends. The worker who invests more of his energy in work can easily earn more interest. An idle worker will starve. Such a one may have reason for despair. The industrious has no reason to worry even for a moment." (14:246-247)

* * *

The employers decided to withdraw the lock-out on 12-3- 1918. Gandhiji in his leaflet No. 13 of 13-3-1918 requested the workers not to use coercion.

"Rumours are afloat that many workers are willing to resume work, but that others prevent them by coercion and threats of physical assault. Workers should remember

our pledge that, if they bring pressure to bear on their fellow workers and use threats to stop them from going to work, we shall find it impossible to help them. In this struggle, he alone will win who keeps his pledge. No one can be forced to do this. It is essentially a voluntary matter. We want to be faithful to our pledge and go ahead. . . . Let every worker, therefore, bear in mind that he is not to use pressure on others in any form or manner. If coercion is used, the whole struggle is likely to be weakened and will collapse." (14:250-251)

Leaflet No. 14. 15-3-1918.

". . . This struggle is not merely for a 35 percent increase, it is to show that workers are prepared to suffer for their rights. We are fighting to uphold our honour. We have launched this struggle in order to better ourselves. So long as the mill-owners believe that workers will not take to any labour and, therefore, will eventually succumb, they will have no compassion and will continue to resist. . . . If, on the otherhand workers who have no (other) means of subsistence begin to do manual work, the employers will see that they will lose their workers unless they grant the 35 percent increase forthwith. Thus it is for us to shorten or lengthen the struggle." (14:254-255)

* * *

The strike lasted for a longer period. Gandhiji decided to go on fast.

Leaflet No. 15 issued on 16-3-1918 clarified the motive behind Gandhiji's fast.

"It is necessary to understand the motive and significance of Gandhiji's vow to fast. The first thing to remember is that this is not intended to influence the employers. If the fast were conceived in that spirit, it would harm our struggle and bring us dishonour. We want justice from the employers, not pity for us. If there is to be any pity, let it be for the workers. . . . Gandhiji saw that the oath was losing its force with the workers. Some of them were ready to break their pledge out of fear of what they thought would be starvation. It is intolerable that ten thousand men should give up their oath. A man becomes weak by not keeping a vow and ultimately loses his dignity as man. .. Gandhiji felt that if he fasted, he would show through this how much he valued the pledge. . . . 'Starve but keep your oath' was Gandhiji's message to them. He at any rate must live up to it. That he could do only if he himself was prepared to die fasting." (14:258-259)

* * *

Finally the settlement was reached. Gandhiji gave a speech to Ahmedabad mill-workers on 18-3-1918.

"It appears to me that as days pass not only Ahmedabad but the whole of India will be proud of this twenty-two days struggle and India will see that we can hope much

from a struggle conducted in this manner. There has been no bitterness in it. . . . I hope you will always maintain peace in the same way as you did during the strike.

"I must apologise to the employers. I have pained them very much. My vow (to fast) was aimed at you, but everything in this world has two sides. Thus, the vow had an effect on the employers as well. I apologise to them humbly for this. I am as much their servant as the workers. All I ask is that both should utilise my services to the full." (14:268-269)

* * *

"Truth and non-violence are our goal. Non-violence is the supreme dharma, there is no discovery of greater importance than this. So long as we engage in mundane actions, so long as soul and body are together, some violence will continue to occur through our agency. But we must renounce at least the violence that is possible for us to renounce. We should understand that the less violence a religion permits, the more is the truth contained in it. If we can ensure the deliverance of India, it is only through truth and non-violence. . . . Deal with all with truth and nonviolence.

"Love is a rare herb that makes a friend even of a sworn enemy and this herb grows out of non-violence. What in a dormant state is non-violence becomes love in the waking state. Love destroys ill will. ... So long as we do not have unshakable faith in truth, love and non-violence we can make no progress. ... Be fearless. So long as

you live under various kinds of fears, you can never progress, you can never succeed. . . . Never give up truth and love. Treat all enemies and friends with love."

(14:299- 300)

* * *

In a prayer meeting on 27-2-1918 Gandhiji talked about satyagraha.

"I have always said that it is not only against government that satyagraha can be employed. It can be employed in any situation against any person or body. In Kheda, satyagraha has been going on against the government and in Ahmedabad against the rich and also against the scriptures on the issue of untouchables. ... If we have firmness and purity and display the single-minded devotion which the circumstances require, I think we shall not fail. . . . All that we need to do for the purpose is to cultivate firmness and self-discipline." (14:218)

* * *

Leading the Kheda satyagraha Gandhiji travelled from one village to another explaining the situation to the villagers. He also explained the situation in Bombay on 4-2-1918.

"The first and the last principle of passive resistance is that we should not inflict hardships on others, but put up with them ourselves in order to get justice, and government need not fear anything, if we make up our mind, as we are bent on

getting sheer justice from it and nothing else. To get that justice we must fight with the authorities, and the people that do not so fight are but slaves. We can have only two weapons on occasions like this — Revolt or Passive Resistance—and my request is for the second remedy always. The right of suffering hardships and claiming justice and getting one's demands is from one's birth. Similarly, we have to get justice at the hands of the government by suffering hardships. We must suffer hardships like bravemen. . . . resort to the right means, and that very firmly, in order to remove the distress through which the people of Gujarat are passing. It is my conviction that if we tell the truth to the British Government it can ultimately be convinced, and if only we are firm in our resolve, rest assured that Kheda people shall suffer wrongs no more." (14:182-184)

* * *

Speech at Karamsad on 4-4-1918.

"In a fight one does not become brave by taking up arms. Arms may be there, but they will be useless to those who are cowards in their hearts. Heroism—fearlessness—lies in a man bearing sword-cuts without shrinking. This kind of heroism is possible to all men, women and children. I want the agriculturists of Kheda to have it. Our weapon is uncompromising insistence on truth. Let the agriculturists of Kheda sacrifice their all rather than pay the land revenue. I am

confident the agriculturists here at Karamsad will never turn their backs. We are to submit to suffering, to sacrifice our possessions." (14:307)

* * *

Speech as Navgam on 7-4-1918.

". . . Satyagraha must display the qualities of truthfulness and courtsey.

"Truthfulness, courage and zeal are indispensable in the fight. Again, one cannot hold out unless one puts one's heart into it. Our pledge is not for a few months only, but for indefinite period.

"To suffer for the sake of truth and with immortal fame, that is your truest duty today. In that lies your honour and that of India." (14:315)

* * *

Speech at Sinhuj on 10-4-1918.

"... In this struggle, we shall learn another wonder-working idea, that is we do not propose to fight with arms, we do not want to carry guns or spears; we shall fight with the weapons of truth. He who bears this weapon has need of no other. If without harbouring any fear, we trust to truth and fight, we shall achieve a great success."
(14:327)

* * *

Speech at Od on 16-4-1918.

He was thus preparing the villagers for a non-violent struggle.

"Swaraj consists in knowing our rights and our duties. . . . This requires some education and training. . . . Malice has no place in struggle, nor the sword, nor the *dhariya*. Our sole weapon is to abide by truth, and our arms are faith and courage. Satyagraha knows no defeat. To be sure we shall suffer defeat if we value our lands more than our self-respect. I am confident that my faith in the people of Kheda will not prove to have been misplaced. I pray you will give a good fight and bring glory to the name of Kheda." (14:344)

* * *

Gandhiji gave the following instructions to volunteers of Kheda satyagraha on 17-4-1918.

"1. The volunteers must remember that, as this is a satyagraha campaign, they must abide by truth under all circumstances.

"2. In satyagraha, there can be no room for rancour; which means that a satyagrahi should utter no harsh word about anyone, from a *ravana* to the Governor himself; if someone does so, it is the volunteer's duty to stop him.

"3. Rudeness has no place in satyagraha. Perfect courtesy must be shown even to those who may look upon us as their enemies and the villagers must be taught to do

the same. Rudeness may harm our cause and the struggle may be unduly prolonged. The volunteers should give the most serious attention to this matter and think out in their minds as many examples as possible of the advantages accruing from courtesy and the disadvantages resulting from rudeness and explain them to the people.

"4. The volunteers must remember that this is a holy war. We embarked upon it because, had we not, we would have failed in our dharma. And so all the rules which are essential for living a religious life must be observed here too.

"5. We are opposing the intoxication of power, that is, the blind application of law, and not authority as such. The difference must never be lost sight of. It is, therefore, our duty to help the officers in their other work.

"6. We are to apply here the same principle that we follow in a domestic quarrel. We should think of the Government and the people as constituting a large family and act accordingly.

"7. We are not to boycott or treat with scorn those who hold different views from ours. It must be our resolve to win them over by courteous behaviour.

"8. We must not try to be clever. We must always be frank and straightforward.

"9. When they stay in villages, the volunteers should demand the fewest services from the village-folk. Wherever it is possible to reach a place on foot, they should

avoid using a vehicle. We must insist on being served the simplest food. Restraining them from preparing dainties will add grace to the service we render.

"10. As they move about in villages, the volunteers should observe the economic condition of the people and the deficiencies in their education and try, in their spare time, to make them good.

"11. If they can, they should create opportunities when they may teach the village children.

"12. If they notice any violation of the rules of good health, they should draw the villagers' attention to the fact.

"13. If, at any place, they find people engaged in quarrelling among themselves, the volunteers should try to save them from their quarrels.

"14. They should read out to the people, when the latter are free, books which promote satyagraha. They may read out stories of Prahlad, Harishchandra and others. The people should also be made familiar with instances of pure satyagraha to be found in the West and in Islamic literature.

"15. At no time and under no circumstances is the use of arms permitted in satyagraha. It should never be forgotten that in this struggle the highest type of non-violence is to be maintained. Satyagraha means fighting oppression through voluntary suffering. There can be no question here of making anyone else suffer.

Satyagraha is always successful; it can never meet with defeat: let every volunteer understand this himself and then explain it to the people."

* * *

Gandhiji wrote to Balvantrai Thakore on 12-4-1918.

"I would rather explain what I mean by 'Satyagraha'. Although I use the phrase 'Passive resistance', it does not fully connote what I have in mind. ... I apply to political matters the same law which regulates our conduct in the family. In India I find that people act under the shadow of fear, do not tell the truth out of fear, deceiving themselves and the government. . . . Wherever therefore, I find people submitting to injustice out of fear, I tell them that to shake off imposed hardships, they must suffer voluntarily. This is satyagraha. To make others suffer in order to save ourselves from suffering is duragraha, brute force. When a bullock is hurt, he kicks. When a man is oppressed, he should employ soul force to fight himself free, suffering voluntarily to that end." (14:334-35)

* * *

Explaining his stand Gandhiji wrote a letter to the Viceroy on 29-4-1918.

"If I could popularise the use of soul-force, which is but another name for love-force, in place of brute-force, I know that I could present to you with an India that could defy the whole world to do its worst. In season and out of season, therefore, I shall

discipline myself to express in my life this eternal law of suffering and present it for acceptance to those who care. And If I take part in any other activity, the motive is to show the matchless superiority of that law." (14:379)

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Letter to C.F. Andrews, June 1918.

"... You cannot teach ahimsa to a man who cannot kill. You cannot make a dumb man appreciate the beauty and the merit of silence.

"I do not believe in any government. . . . but parliamentary government is perhaps better than capricious rule. I think it is clear to you that I shall best spread the gospel of ahimsa or satyagraha by asking *himsak* (militant) men to work out their *himsa* in the least offensive manner, and may succeed, in the very act, in making them realise the better worth of ahimsa." (14:444)

On 30-6-1918 Gandhiji wrote:

"... Indians have a double duty to perform. If they are to preach the mission of peace, they must first prove their ability in war. This is a terrible discovery, but it is true. A nation that is unfit to fight cannot from experience prove the virtue of not fighting. I do not infer from this that India must fight. But I do say that India must know how to fight. Ahimsa is the eradication of the desire to injure or to kill. Ahimsa can be practised only towards those that are inferior to you in every way. It follows therefore

that to become a full ahimsaist you have to attain absolute perfection. . . It is enough if we can face the world without flinching. It is personal courage that is an absolute necessity. And some will acquire that courage only after they have been trained to fight." (14:463)

* * *

Writing to Hanumantrao on 17-7-1918.

"It is my practice of ahimsa and failure to get our people even to understand the first principles of ahimsa that have led to the discovery that all killing is himsa, that, sometimes, practice of ahimsa may even necessitate killing and that we as a nation have lost the true power of killing. It is clear that he who has lost the power to kill cannot practise non-killing Ahimsa is a renunciation of the highest type. A weak and an effeminate nation cannot perform this grand act of renunciation. I do believe that we shall have to teach our children the art of self-defence." (14:485)

* * *

Talking about self-defence in Karamsad on 14-7-1918 Gandhiji said:

"The first essential of Swarajya is, thus, the power of self- protection. I am fit for Swarajya only when I am able to defend myself and to shed my blood for my country; and India could be said to be living only if five lakhs of men lay down their lives for her." (14:483)

* * *

Letter to Kishorelal Mashruwala on 29-7-1918.

"... This new aspect of non-violence which has revealed itself to me has enmeshed me in no end of problems. I have not found one master key for all the riddles, but it must be found. Shall we teach our boys to return two blows for one, or tolerate a blow from anyone weaker than themselves but to fight back, should a stronger one attack them, and take the beating that might follow? What should one do if assaulted by a government official!" (14:515)

* * *

Rowlatt Bill was an attack on national self-respect. Gandhiji worked actively to give an organised expression to popular resentment. In his speech at Allahabad on 11-3-1919 he said:

"It behoves everyone who wishes to take the satyagraha pledge to seriously consider all its factors before taking it. It is necessary to understand the principles of satyagraha, to understand the main features of the Bills known as Rowlatt Bills and to be satisfied that they are so objectionable as to warrant the very powerful remedy of satyagraha being applied and finally to be convinced of one's ability to undergo every form of bodily suffering so that the soul may be set free and be under no fear from any human being or institution." (15:130)

* * *

Talking about Rowlatt Bills in Bombay on 14-3-1919 Gandhiji said:

... It is not the same thing as passive resistance which has been conceived to be a weapon that can be wielded most effectively only by the strongest minded. ... It is in the power of truth to conquer untruth which satyagrahis believe the Bills represent. I use the word 'untruth' in its widest sense. . . . Satyagraha is not a threat, it is a fact, and even such a mighty government as the Government of India will have to yield if we are true to our pledge. . . . We have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil." (15:135-36)

* * *

Gandhiji went from one place to another explaining the use of his weapon of satyagraha.

"My experience of satyagraha leads me to believe that it is such a potent force that, once set in motion, it ever spreads till at last it becomes a dominant factor in the community in which it is brought into play, and if it spreads, no government can neglect it. Either it must yield to it or imprison the workers in the movement." (15:139)

". . . Believe me that if we go through it in the right spirit, all the fears expressed by the government and some of our friends will be proved to be groundless and we will not only see the Rowlatt Bills withdrawn, but the country will recognise in satyagraha

a powerful and religious weapon for securing reforms and redress of legitimate grievances." (15:143)

"Satyagraha, as I have endeavoured to explain at several meetings, is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self suffering." (15:145)

"The doctrine of violence is of the earth, earthly, merely material, and can be no guide for a human being who at all believes in the existence of the soul. If I am sure you will reject the doctrine of violence, you have to consider other means for seeking redress, and that, as I would translate, would mean *shatham prati shathyam*."

"The Bills have violated the national conscience, and resistance to those commands which are in violation to one's conscience is a sacred privilege and a duty and it is not this law or this command of the governor that we resist, but it is our duty, it is open to us to resist all commands which are not moral commands, and when we respectfully disobey wrongful things of these Governors, we serve not only them but the whole nation." (15:153)

"I have made three suggestions. I have suggested fasting, total abstention of work including markets and business places and holding meetings all over India to pass resolutions. The proposed fast is not a hunger strike but it is an act of self-denial." (15:158)

* * *

After embarking upon the movement Gandhiji started addressing meetings starting from Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Bombay, Madras, Tanjore, Trichi, Madura, Tuticorin etc. The satyagraha was launched on 6th April 1919 in Bombay. He addressed a meeting at chowpatty,

"No country has ever risen, no nation has ever been made without sacrifice, and we are trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in any shape or form. This is satyagraha. . . . When we have acquired habits of discipline, self-control, qualities of leadership and obedience, we shall be better able to offer collective civil disobedience, but until we have developed these qualities, I have advised that we should select for disobedience only such laws as can be disobeyed by individuals. It is therefore necessary for us till we are sufficiently disciplined and till the spirit of satyagraha has permeated large bodies of men and women to obey regulations regarding processions and gatherings. Whilst we disobey certain selected laws, it is incumbent on us to show our law-abiding character by respecting all other laws. And when we have reached the necessary standard of knowledge and discipline, we shall find that machine guns and all other weapons, even the plague of aeroplanes will cease to afflict us." (15:186-87)

* * *

On 7-4-1919 Gandhiji gave instructions to satyagrahis:

"We are now in a position to expect to be arrested any moment. It is therefore necessary to bear in mind that if anyone is arrested, he should without causing any difficulty allow himself to be arrested, and if summoned to appear before a court, he should do so. No defence should be offered and no pleaders engaged in the matter. If a fine is imposed with the alternative of imprisonment, imprisonment should be accepted. If only a fine is imposed, it ought not to be paid but that his property, if he has any, should be allowed to be sold. There should be no demonstrations of grief or otherwise made by the remaining satyagrahis by reason of arrest and imprisonment of their comrade. (15-191)

* * *

Referring to the incident in Bombay of stone throwing and putting obstacles in the way of tram cars Gandhiji issued a leaflet on 11-4-1919.

"... If we cannot conduct this movement without the slightest violence from our side, the movement might have to be abandoned or it may be necessary to give it a different and still more restricted shape. The time may come for me to offer satyagraha against ourselves . . . The satyagraha and penance I can conceive can only be one and that is for me to fast and if need be by doing so to give up this body and thus to prove the truth of satyagraha." (15:211)

* * *

During the civil disobedience movement he also laid stress on swadeshi.

"... It is not enough that we manage if necessary with as little clothing as possible, but for a full observance it is further necessary to destroy all foreign clothing in our possession. In this connection, it is necessary to understand the distinction between swadeshi and boycott.

"The swadeshi vow is not derived from any extraneous happening, whereas boycott is a purely worldly and political weapon. It is rooted in ill will and desire for punishment, and I can see nothing but harm in the end for a nation that resorts to boycott.

"It is really necessary to use only hand-woven cloth made out of hand-spun yarn. Imported yarn, even though spun out of Indian cotton and woven in India, is not swadeshi cloth.

"When swadeshi pervades the country, every one will be set a-thinking why cotton should not be refined and spun and woven in the place where it is produced; and when swadeshi mantra resounds in every ear, millions of men will have in their hands

the key to the economic salvation of India." (15:197)

* * *

Because of certain incidence of violence Gandhiji decided to suspend the civil disobedience movement. In a press statement on 18-4-1919 he clarified his point of view.

"It is not without sorrow that I feel compelled to advise the temporary suspension of civil disobedience. I give this advice not because I have less faith now in its efficacy but because I have, if possible, greater faith than before. It is my perception of the law of satyagraha which impels me to suggest the suspension. I am sorry, when I embarked upon a mass movement I underrated the forces of evil and I must now pause and consider how best to meet the situation.

"My attitude towards the Rowlatt Legislation remains unchanged. . . . The main and only purpose of this letter is to advise all satyagrahis to temporarily suspend civil disobedience, to give government effective co-operation in restoring order and by preaching and practice to gain adherence to the fundamental principles mentioned above." (15:243)

* * *

Gandhiji suspended the civil disobedience but he patiently continued to educate masses and make them understand the meaning of satyagraha. Gandhiji conceived

satyagraha not merely as a political weapon but as a technique of employing soul-force for solving all problems of life.

He wrote to the *Times of India* on 20-8-1919.

"... The advent of satyagraha has, to my knowledge, weaned many an anarchist from his blood-thirsty doctrine. He has found that secret societies and methods of secret murder has brought nothing but a military and economic burden on this unhappy land, and that it has tightened the coil of the Criminal Investigation Department and that it has demoralised and wrecked the lives of hundreds of youths who have been led astray by it. Satyagraha has presented the rising generation with a new hope, an open road and an infallible remedy for most ills of life. It has armed that generation with an indestructible and matchless force which anyone may wield with impunity. Satyagraha tells the youth of India, self-suffering is the only sure road to salvation—economic, political and spiritual." (16:50)

* * *

Explaining to Lala Lajpat Rai his point of view Gandhiji said on 20-8-1919:

"The doctrine of satyagraha, i.e., resistance without violence requires as much strength as it can receive. In my opinion, it will not only solve Indian problems but it will solve the world's problems."

In one of the articles in *Navajivan* Gandhiji explained the aim of satyagraha.

"For me satyagraha is not a mere copy-book maxim; it is my very life. To me nothing but truth has any interest. I am convinced that the country can never benefit by untruth.... I am firmly of the view that, even if untruth should seem profitable for the time being, we must not abandon truth. ... I saw, during my pursuit of truth, that it was our duty to give willing obedience to laws. But I also saw, while doing this duty, that it was equally a duty to disobey a law if it fostered untruth. What form should such disobedience take? We should suffer the penalty for the breach of law involved in acting according to the truth. This is known as civil disobedience.

"... Truth has its effect on the other party, with the result that he harbours no distrust. This ensures mutual respect and amicable relations between the two parties though they fight." (16:92)

* * *

On 26-10-1919 Gandhiji said:

"The spheres of satyagraha are swadeshi, social reforms and political reforms."
(16:260)

* * *

On 25-11-1919 Gandhiji said:

"The question is when massacres like the one at Jallianwala Bagh takes place, when British soldiers abuse us, kick us, debar us from sitting with them in trains, British officers want to keep all power to themselves and British merchants try to monopolise the principal trade of India, how can we help being angry with them? How can we ever feel affection for them? The difficulty is obvious. Wherever one turns, one finds hatred, anger, scorn and falsehood. When Indians do not always feel affection for one another, what can we expect from them with regard to the British? But these doubts arise from want of faith in God. . . Faith-implies truth and love. If these qualities could shine forth within us in their perfection, we would ourselves be God." (16:315)

* * *

"Boycott is a sign of anger; to refuse co-operation, on the other hand, is a sign of firmness. Boycott indicates our weakness; non co-operation proves our strength." (16:322)

"Satyagraha is like a banyan tree with innumerable branches. Civil disobedience is one such branch. Satya (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence) together make a parent trunk from which all the innumerable branches shoot out. We have found by bitter experience that, whilst in an atmosphere of lawlessness, civil disobedience found ready acceptance. Satya and ahimsa, from which alone civil disobedience can

worthily spring have commanded little or no respect. . . We must fearlessly spread the doctrine of satya and ahimsa and then and not till then shall we be able to undertake mass satyagraha.

"I have already explained the reason why this civil disobedience has been for the time being suspended. As long as we know that there is every likelihood bordering on certainty to rioting and violence following civil disobedience, so long disobedience of laws cannot be regarded as civil disobedience, but is disobedience that is thoughtless uncivil and devoid of truth.

Satyagrahi may never commit such disobedience." (16:427)

* * *

"6th April 1919 saw the advent of satyagraha one may dissent from the civil disobedience part of it but no one can dissent from the essential doctrine of truth and love or non-injury. With satya combined with ahimsa you can bring the world at your feet. Satyagraha in its essence is nothing but the introduction of truth and gentleness in the political, e.g., the national life. And whether one takes satyagraha pledge or not, there can be no doubt that the spirit of satyagraha has pervaded the masses."
(17:77)

Gandhiji worked out a programme for non-co-operation which he wanted to start from 1-8-1920.

"... The organisers have fixed definite progressive four stages. The first is the giving up of titles and resignation of honorary posts. The second stage involves much previous arrangements. ... All the classes of servants will not be called out at once and never will any pressure be put upon a single servant to withdraw himself from the government service. Nor will a single private employee be touched for the simple reason that the movement is not anti-English. It is not even anti- government. Co-operation to be withdrawn because the people must not be a party to a wrong—a broken pledge—a violation of deep religious sentiment. For no government, much less the India government can subsist if the people cease to serve it. The withdrawal of the police and the military—that third stage is a distant goal.

"The fourth, i.e., suspension of taxes, is still more remote. The organisers recognise the suspension of general taxation is fraught with the greatest danger. It is likely to bring the sensitive class in conflict with the police.

"Non-co-operation is logical and harmless. It is the inherent right of a subject to refuse to assist a government that will not listen to him." (17:389)

* * *

The non-co-operation movement was to start from 1st August 1920. Gandhiji hoped that from 1st August onwards

Legislatures will be boycotted;

Parents will withdraw their children from government schools;

Lawyers will give up practice and help people to settle their civil disputes among themselves;

Invitations to government functions, parties etc. will be politely refused, non-co-operation being given as the sole reason for doing so. (18:5)

* * *

Justifying the right to withdraw co-operation Gandhiji said:

"Withdrawing co-operation from a government which breaks its promises is a course followed from immortal times. The history of our country provides instances after instances of subjects oppressed by a king leaving the kingdom. The subjects have a right to show that they are displeased.

"The non-co-operation I have suggested is a mild way of boycotting. Total boycott is the ultimate stage in non-co-operation. We have even forgotten how to show that we are displeased." (18:29)

* * *

Preparing the nation for non-co-operation during Khilafat movement and Jallianwal Bag massacre Gandhi said:

"I do believe that where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence I would advise violence. . . Hence it was that I took part in the Boer War, the so called Zulu rebellion and the late war. Hence also do I advocate training in arms for those who believe in the method of violence. I would rather have India rose to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain helpless witness to her own dishonour.

"But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence; forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is power to punish, it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. ... But I do not believe India to be helpless, I do not believe myself to be helpless creature. Only I want to use India's and my strength for better purpose.

"Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law to the strength of the spirit.

"Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible

for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

"And so I am not pleading India to practice non-violence because it is weak. I want her to practice non-violence being conscious of her strength and power. No training of arms is required for realisation of her strength. ... I want India to recognise that she has a soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy physical combination of the world.

"My life is dedicated to service of India through the religion of non-violence which I believe to be the root of Hinduism. Meanwhile I urge those who distrust me . . . not to disturb the even working of the struggle that has just commenced, by inciting to violence. . . . them give non-co-operation a trial and they will find that I had no mental reservation whatsoever." (18:132-34)

* * *

"We cannot possibly combine violence with the spiritual weapon like non-co-operation. We do not offer spotless sacrifice if we take the lives of others in offering our own. Absolute freedom from violence is therefore a condition precedent to non-co-operation. But I have faith in my country to know that when it has assimilated the principle of the doctrine to the fullest extent, it will respond to it." (18:183)

* * *

"I believe that man not having been given the power of creation does not possess the right of destroying the meanest creature that lives. The prerogative of destruction belongs solely to the creator of all that lives. I accept the interpretation of ahimsa, namely, that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil doer. But it does not mean helping the evil doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary love, the active state of ahimsa requires you to resist the wrong doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. . . . Non-co-operation is not a passive state, it is intensely active state, more active than the physical resistance or violence . . . Non-co-operation in the sense used by me must be non-violent and therefore neither punitive nor vindictive, nor based on malice, ill will or hatred."

"Non-co-operation is nothing but discipline in self sacrifice. And I believe that a nation that is capable of limitless sacrifice is capable of rising to limitless heights.

"The purer the sacrifice the quicker the progress." (18:194-196.)

* * *

In *Navajivan* of 21-11-1920 Gandhiji wrote an article titled "Triumph of Non-violence."

"Even as late as a year ago, we could not express our ideas as freely as we do today. By taking care that the government should have nothing to fear from us, we

ourselves have acquired courage. We have come to have the confidence that, since we ourselves have no guilty thought in us, others can do us no harm. We have an instinctive feeling that, as we do not intend violence to any one no one will use violence against us either.

"We want to win Swaraj by changing people's ideas through the force of love and reason.

"We still do not have the spirit of perfect peace among us. The tongue has not yet become clean, the heart is not pure. We have anger in us. Because of this, our remaining peaceful does not produce the effect it should. We shall have Swaraj the day our struggle is free from all bitterness and the workers are perfectly sincere."

(19:10)

* * *

On the occasion of the visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, Gandhiji wrote in *Young India* on 1-12-1920.

"His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught will be soon in our midst. It is a matter of great sorrow to me that I should have to advise a complete boycott of all public functions held in his honour. He is personally an amiable English gentleman. But in my humble opinion, public interest demands that this official visit should be strictly ignored. His Royal Highness comes to sustain a corrupt system of government; he

comes to whitewash an irresponsible bureaucracy, he comes to make us forget the unforgettable, he comes not to heal the wounds inflicted upon us but to mock us by flinging deceptive reforms at us. To welcome His Royal Highness is to associate with him in promoting our own dishonour." (19:53)

[His Royal Highness arrived in India on 10-1-1921.] (19:53)

* * *

Speaking on Non-co-operation on 13-12-1920 in Calcutta Gandhiji said:

"Non-co-operation will not succeed unless we create an atmosphere of perfect freedom, unless we prize our opponent's liberty as much as our own. The liberty of faith, conscience, thought and action which we claim for ourselves must be conceded equally to others. Non-co-operation is a process of purification and we must continually try to touch the hearts of those who differ from us, touch their minds and their emotions, but never their bodies. Discipline and restraint, are cardinal principles of our conduct and I warn you against any sort of tyrannical social ostracism." (19:104)

* * *

Speaking at Dacca on 15-12-1920 Gandhiji said:

"India needs only one lesson to learn and that is, not to be afraid. When she has learnt that, I would then understand that India has become independent. Your actions should now be practical. The two words 'non-violent' and 'progressive' are part and parcel of non-co-operation. . . . We will use swords when the time will come. He who does not draw the sword at a proper time is a fool and he who uses sword at an improper time is also impudent. . . . Indians need to remember only one thing, and that is, they should expel fear from their minds. . . . Let Indians give up fear only for five years." (19:122)

* * *

On 12-1-1921 Gandhiji wrote in *Young India*.

"The spirit of non-violence necessarily leads to humility. Non-violence means reliance on god, the rock of ages. If we would seek His aid, we must approach Him with a humble and a contrite heart. . . . Whilst we may not be dissatisfied with the progress made so far, we have little to our credit to make us feel proud. We have to sacrifice much more than we have done to justify pride, much less elation.

"Non-co-operation is not a movement of brag, bluster or bluff. It is a test of our sincerity. It requires solid and silent self- sacrifice. It challenges our honesty and our capacity for national work. It is a movement that aims at translating ideas into action.

And the more we do, the more we find that much more must be done than we had expected. And this thought of our imperfection must make us humble.

"A non-co-operationist strives to compel attention and to set an example not by his violence but by his unobtrusive humility. He allows his solid action to speak for his creed." (19:220)

"Non-co-operation means refusing to associate ourselves with or be a party to tyranny of the government, and to render any support, direct or indirect, to such tyranny." (19:250)

On 6th April 1919 Hartal was observed to protest against Rowlatt Bills. On 13th April 1919 Jallianwala Bag tragedy took place. This week is celebrated as satyagraha week. The slogan for the year 1921 was 'Swaraj in One Year'. Gandhiji clarified his concept of Swaraj and started training people for its early achievement.

In *Young India* of 20-4-1921 Gandhiji wrote:

"For me non-co-operation is not suspended, and never will be, so long as the government has not purged itself of the crimes against India. . . . and so long as the system is not changed to respond to the will of the nation. Surely it was necessary to remove the hallucinations about titles, law-courts, schools and councils. I venture to think that, on the whole, the nationalists have responded nobly in regard to these items." (20:14)

"Swadeshi propoganda in its intensive and exclusive form had to come and it has come in its order. It was, and is, part of the non-co-operation programme. It is, I claim, the biggest, the safest and the surest part. (20:15)

* * *

"Complete civil disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion, a refusal to obey every single state-made law. It is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion. For it can never be put down if the civil resisters are prepared to face extreme hardships. It is based upon an implicit belief in the absolute efficiency of innocent suffering. By noiselessly going to prison a civil resister ensures a calm atmosphere." (20:466)

* * *

On 27-10-1921 Gandhiji said:

"There is no doubt that non-co-operation is an education which is developing and crystallising public opinion. And as soon as it is organized enough for effective action, we have Swaraj. . . . Our tyranny, if we impose our will on others, will be infinitely worse than that of the handful of Englishmen who form the bureaucracy. There is a terrorism imposed by a minority struggling to exist in the midst of opposition. Ours will be a terrorism imposed by a majority and therefore worse and really more godless than the first. We must therefore eliminate compulsion in any shape from our struggle. If we are only a handful holding freely the doctrine of non-

co-operation, we may have to die in the attempt to convert others to our view, but we shall have truly defended and represented our cause. If however we enlist under our banner men by force, we shall be denying our cause and God, and if we seem to succeed for the moment, we shall have succeeded in establishing a worse terror.

"We shall also retard our cause if we suppress opinion by intolerance. For then we shall never know who is with us and who is against us. The indispensable condition therefore of success is that we encourage the greatest freedom of opinion. . . . We must have the courage and the charity to hear or read all sorts of nasty things said about us or to us. It gives us an opportunity of converting them." (21:352-353)

On 10-11-1921 -

"The next week should see civil disobedience in full working order in some part of India. With illustrations of partial and individual civil disobedience the country has become familiar. Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral state law. Thus, for instance, he may refuse to pay taxes, he may refuse to recognise the authority of the state in his daily intercourse. He may refuse to obey the law of trespass and claim to enter military barracks in order to speak to the soldiers, he may refuse to submit to limitations upon the manner of picketing and may picket within the prescribed area.

In doing all this he never uses force and never resists force when it is used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force against himself. This he does because and when he finds the bodily freedom he seemingly enjoys to be an intolerable burden. . . . Submission to the state law is the price citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. . . . Thus considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state. Is not this history of all reforms? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with evil practice?

"... A body of civil resisters is, therefore, like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldier, only harder because of want of excitement of an ordinary soldier's life. And as civil resistance army is or ought to be free from passion because free from the spirit of retaliation, it requires the fewest number of soldiers. Indeed one *perfect* civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right against Wrong." (21:414-415.)

* * *

"I have repeatedly said that non co-operation springs from love, not hatred. Soul force is love force and the world is ruled by this force. If you want to free India through your strength, shower love on others. If you like being called a helper of the

distressed, you must become the very image of tolerance, heroism, truth and other virtues. Mere show will never win Swaraj." (21:491)

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"This is a test of satyagraha, of our firmness in clinging to truth. To this day, there has been no nation in the world which claimed to adhere to truth and won its freedom. By adopting the means of their choice, nations did not win independence by acquired power over others. England is not free, but only powerful. It has enslaved us. To a slave, his master seems free and he strives to be like the latter and so finds pleasure in enslaving others. Such a slave never becomes really free, but is always subservient to anyone stronger than he is." (21:525)

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"On the contrary our non-violence teaches us to love our enemies. By non-violent non-co-operation we seek to conquer the wrath of the English administrators and their supporters. We must love them and pray god that they might have wisdom to see what appears to us to be their errors. It must be the prayer of the strong and not of the weak. In our strength must we humble ourselves before our Master." (21:550)

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Bardoli was chosen for mass civil disobedience. With the incident at Chauri Chaura near Gorakhpur mass civil disobedience contemplated at Bardoli and elsewhere was suspended.

Reacting to what took place at Chauri Chaura Gandhiji said on 16-2-1922:

"God has been abundantly kind to me the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which and which alone can justify mass disobedience which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, wilful yet loving, never criminal and hateful.

"He warned me in 1919 when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Kheda erred, Amritsar and Kasure erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan miscalculation, humbled myself before god and man and stopped not merely mass civil disobedience but even my own which I knew was intended to be civil and non-violent. Next time it was through the events of Bombay that god gave a terrific warning. He made me eye witness to the deeds of the Bombay mob on 17th November 1921. The mob acted in the interest of non-cooperation. I announced my intention to stop the mass civil disobedience which was to be immediately started in Bardoli. The humiliation was greater than in 1919. But it did me good. I am sure that the nation gained by the stopping. India stood for truth and non-violence by suspension.

"But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did give the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura.

"Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes a non-violent control over the violent elements of the country. Nonviolent non-co-operation can only succeed when they have succeeded in attaining control over the hooligans of India. In other words, when the latter also have learnt patriotically or religiously to refrain from their violent activities at least whilst the campaign of non-co-operation is going on."
(22:415-416)

* * *

. . Whilst it is perfectly true that the country as a whole has made remarkable progress in the cultivation of a non-violent spirit it cannot be denied that there is still room for the improvement and that we are living in a state of perpetual suspense. The ideal atmosphere of civil disobedience, whether individual or mass, is undoubtedly an atmosphere of perfect calm. Civil disobedience must not be demonstrative. Each one who is arrested has to go to prison unattended by demonstrative escort." (22:483)

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After suspending the civil disobedience Gandhiji concentrated on his constructive programme. After a lapse of nearly eight years Gandhiji returned to politics and took

the leadership of the movement. This time the goal was complete independence and not Dominion Status.

He wrote in *Navajivan* on 10-11-1929.

"Until this day I have felt that I have served the country and the world by calling off the Bardoli struggle. I am confident that history will look upon it as a form of perfect satyagraha and not as an act of cowardice. On my part, I have seen even its results to be excellent. If I had deliberately continued the struggle, the nation would have been crushed. As a result of the postponement of the struggle the nation has made progress, though at a slow rate, its thinking power has increased and the awakening that followed in its wake has been stabilised.

"The struggle which was begun in 1920-21 has not yet ended. I have not admitted defeat. I live in the hope of either winning Swaraj in this birth or dying while fighting for it. There is no such thing as defeat in satyagraha. Once a satyagrahi has chalked out his path he never retreats from it. Anyone who does so is not a satyagrahi.

"It is my desire to plan my strategy by taking into account incidents such as those which took place in Chauri Chaura, so that we can deal with them when the time comes for launching the struggle." (42:128)

* * *

Again on 27-2-1930 Gandhiji wrote in *Young India* before launching the Salt Satyagraha. He gave instructions to his followers to be followed if he is arrested.

"This time on my arrest there is to be no mute, passive nonviolence, but non-violence of the activist type should be set in motion, so that not a single believer in non-violence as an article of faith for the purpose of achieving India's goal should find himself free or alive at the end of the effort to submit any longer to the existing slavery. It would be, therefore, the duty of everyone to take up such civil disobedience or civil resistance as may be advised and conducted by my successor, or as might be taken up by the Congress.

"So far as I am concerned my intention is to start the movement only through the inmates of the Ashram and those who have submitted to its discipline and assimilated the spirit of its method.

"When the beginning is truly made, I expect the response from all over the country. If will be the duty then of everyone who wants to make the movement a success to keep it nonviolent and under discipline. Everyone will be expected to stand at his post except when called by his chief. If there is spontaneous mass response, as I hope there will be, and if previous experience is any guide, it will largely be self-regulated. . . . Mass movements have all over the world thrown up unexpected leaders.

"Whilst, therefore, every effort imaginable and possible should be made to restrain the forces of violence, civil disobedience once begun this time cannot be stopped and must not be stopped as long as there is a single civil resister left free or alive."
(42:497-498)

* * *

Gandhiji wrote on 9-3-1930 in *Navajivan*:

"I am now ready to take the ultimate step even at the risk of a violent outbreak, because I find that there is no other way in which I might prepare the people for this struggle. ... If nonviolence has the power to check violence or if I am truly nonviolent I must be able to find a non-violent way to restrain the double violence which I have mentioned." (43:32)

Dandi March started on 12th March 1930 at 6.30 a.m. Before leaving Gandhiji gave a speech at the prayer meeting on 11-3-1930 at Sabarmati Ashram.

"The reins of the movement will still remain in the hands of those of my associates who believe in non-violence as an article of faith. . . . But once I am arrested the whole general responsibility shifts to the Congress.

"These laws (salt laws) can be violated in three ways. It is an offence to manufacture salt wherever there are facilities for doing so. The possession and sale of contraband salt (which includes natural salt or salt earth), to carry away the natural salt deposits

on the seashore is likewise a violation of law. So is the hawking of such salt. In short you may choose anyone or all of these devices to break the salt monopoly." (43:46)

* * *

Prayer meeting at Sabarmati Ashram on 12-3-1930.

"We hope to become the representatives of the poorest of the poor, the lowest of the low and the weakest of the weak. If we do not have the strength for this, we should not join the struggle.

"We are entering upon a life and death struggle, a holy war, we are performing an all-embracing sacrifice in which we wish to offer ourselves as oblation. If you prove incapable, the shame will be mine, not yours. You too have in you the strength that god has given me. The self in us is one and the same. In me it has awakened; in others it has awakened partially." (43:59)

March at Borsad on 18-3-1930.

"Here, in this righteous war, truth, non-violence and forgiveness are the weapons. The consequences of using such weapons can only be beneficial, and it is the duty of every student and teacher to take part in such a struggle." (43:102)

"Mass civil disobedience means spontaneous action. The workers will merely guide the masses in the beginning stages. Later the masses will regulate the movement themselves.

"If there is true mass awakening, those who are not engaged in civil disobedience are expected to occupy themselves and induce others to be engaged in some national service, such as khadi work, liquor or opium picketing, foreign cloth exclusion, village sanitation, assisting families of civil resistance prisoners in a variety of ways." (43:170)

Salt law was broken on 6th April 1930. The salt satyagraha resulted in mass awakening which shook the very foundation of the British Empire.

The year 1940 was the year of Individual Civil Disobedience On 29-9-1940 Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan*:

"Non-violent non-co-operation, however imperfect it was, has redeemed India at least somewhat from the slavery under which she was groaning. It has raised India from the slough of despond and has brought her prestige which nothing else could have. I make bold to say that, if the non-violence offered had been not adulterated, its effect would have been still more visible. My greatest claim however is that it is this despised non-violent resistance which hitherto saved India from anarchy and red

ruin. It is not entirely saved. If it is to be saved, it will only be by the non-violent method." (73:54)

* * *

Demand for freedom was made during the second world war. A resolution drafted by Gandhiji and moved by Jawaharlal Nehru was passed at the All India Congress Committee on 16-9- 1940.

"... The All India Congress Committee cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of public opinion and which could lead to the degradation of her people and their continued enslavement. By following this policy the British Government have created an intolerable situation, and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of the honour and the elementary rights of the people. The Congress is pledged under Gandhiji's leadership to non-violence for the vindication of India's freedom. At this grave crisis in the movement for national freedom, the All India Congress Committee, therefore, requests him to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken.

"... The Congress has, however, no desire at present moment to extend non-violent resistance, should this become necessary, beyond what is required for the preservation of the liberties of the people.

"This Committee firmly believes in the policy of and practice of non-violence not only in the struggle for Swaraj but also in so far as this may be possible of application in free India. The Committee is convinced, and recent world events have demonstrated, that complete world disarmament is necessary, and the establishment of a new and juster political and economic order, if the world is not to destroy itself and revert to barbarism. A free India will, therefore, throw all her weight in favour of world disarmament and should herself be prepared to give a lead in this to the world. Such lead will inevitably depend on external factors and internal conditions, but the state would do its utmost to give effect to this policy of disarmament. Effective disarmament and the establishment of world peace by the ending of national wars, depend ultimately on the removal of the causes of wars and national conflicts. ... To that end India will peacefully labour, and it is with this objective in view that the people of India desire to attain the status of a free and independent nation." (73:1-3)

* * *

Gandhiji's speech at the AICC meeting, Bombay, on 15-9-1940.

". . . There is another thing in this resolution. At a time when the British people are fighting for their very existence and are risking their lives and their all, no satyagrahi will ask, 'Are you going to give us Swaraj now or not?' He will remain quiet. He will say, 'Why fight against an opponent in trouble?' We cannot start the battle of Swaraj

now on the assumption that they will give us nothing after they have won the war. It is not the way of satyagrahis to take advantage of the opponent's weak position to wrest political power from him. We have to wrest power with our own strength. We, therefore, tell them: 'At this hour of your trial we do not wish to harass you.'

"... Under the circumstances if we do not make our opposition known we shall cease to exist. At a time when our existence hangs in the balance what can we say or do? We can at least say this. 'Send us to jail if you want, but we will make our feelings known. We will not let ourselves go out of existence'.

"Still we are observing this restraint : The fight will not be on a mass scale.

"In the end the resolution expresses the conviction that if we accept non-violence within our hearts and minds and act according to it, a day will come when the world will come to us and ask us how it can extricate itself from the war. (73:9-13) * * *

Gandhiji further explained the position and said:

"... The part that I would like to take is the part of a peace maker. If the British people in their wisdom had recognised the independence not of the Congress but of all India, and if other parties in India had also co-operated with us, we would have taken the honourable place of peacemakers between these nations. Such is my ambition. But today I know that it is a day-dream. But sometimes a man lives in his day-

dreams. I live in mine, and picture the world as full of good human beings—not goody goody human beings."

"I do not want to hurl civil disobedience or anything in the face of the government without making my meaning clear; the meaning I attach to the sum total of government actions—actions beginning with the declaration of the Viceroy, the statement of the Secretary of State for India, and the series of actions and policy that the government has pursued since. The sum total of all these has left an indelible impression on my mind and there is something wrong, some injustice being perpetrated against the whole nation, and that the voice of freedom is about to be stifled.

"So long as you can preach non-co-operation with war effort in men and money, there should be no civil disobedience. But if you have not that liberty, there is no Swaraj but perpetual bondage. I would like the British people and the viceroy to be able to tell the world that they have given the leaders of the Indian people liberty to preach to their people what they like. The British can then say to the world : 'Judge us by our conduct. Here in India we are playing the game'.

"... I will place my argument before the Viceroy. I may fail in my mission. But I have never approached a mission in despair. ... I shall approach the Viceroy in the

confidence and hope that he will understand the great reasonableness of the request of the Congress for full liberty to preach 'no war' in India.

"I shall strain every nerve to avoid satyagraha in your name. What shape it will take, when it comes, I do not know. But I know that there will be no mass civil disobedience, because mass civil disobedience is not required for this occasion.

"Freedom of speech and pen is the foundation of Swaraj. If the foundation stone is in danger, you have to exert the whole of your might in order to defend that single stone." (73:13-21)

* * *

"But the standard is quite the contrary for selecting recruits for a non-violent body. The chief thing to test is the candidate's mental fitness. And so much a body may have old men, women, raw youth, the blind and the lame, and even lepers, and it would bid fare to win. The ability to kill requires training. The ability to die is there in him who has the will for it.

"A violent army will not have its arms for show but definitely for destructive purposes. A non-violent body will have no use for such weapons and will therefore beat its swords into plough— shanks and spears into pruning hooks, and will shrink from the thought of using them as lethal weapons. The violent soldier will be trained in the use of violence by being taught to shoot. The non-violent soldier will have no time for this

pastime. He will get all his training through nursing the sick, saving those in danger at the risk of his own life, patrolling places which may be in fear of thieves and dacoits and in laying down his life, if necessary in dissuading them from their purpose." (73:66)

"Deep inside me I have an ever growing faith that in the midst of this universal destruction due to bloodshed, I am carrying on an absolutely innocuous struggle which, however, is pregnant with great potentialities.

"The movement, for the conduct of which I am responsible, may prove a vain effort, if I represent no one but myself; and if I remain true to my faith, I may be satisfied, but so far as world peace is concerned, the effort will prove inadequate in terms of the present. For producing the desired result during the lifetime of the present generation, it will be necessary to give an unmistakable demonstration that a substantial part of the nation is behind the effort. Much more has to happen before such a demonstration becomes possible. The present movement is a humble attempt in that direction.

"Man can only make an honest attempt. In a satyagraha movement, the saying that God is the giver of the result is literally true. Therefore, it is faith that sustains me and it is faith that must sustain the other satyagrahis. We have only begun the battle. The real test, the real suffering, has yet to come. Let me repeat for the thousandth time

that, in this long and arduous struggle, quality alone will count, never quantity. In this there is no room for hatred, certainly not for camouflage.

"Despite my being the originator of this struggle, I venture to say that only through it can we hope for permanent world peace. Peace can never come through war.

Sevagram, 29-3-1941.

Gandhiji wrote a letter to *The Times of India* on 31-7-1941.

"From the very inception of the movement in 1920 nonviolence has been a policy and not a creed. . . . With the majority non-violence was a policy. The weakness was therefore inherent in the movement. It should not be forgotten that I am trying the great experiment of using non-violence for the political freedom of the country. With me no doubt non-violence is an end in itself, though it is also a means for the attainment of the freedom of the country. With the vast majority of Congressmen it is and must remain a means. The weakness is thus inherent though none the less regrettable. The marvel is that inspite of the weakness, twenty years' experience has not weaned Congressmen from the nonviolent policy though it is open to it to change it any time." (74:199)

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"As far as I am aware, no one has hitherto employed ahimsa in the political arena in this manner." (25-1-1942; 74:220)

* * *

On 14-6-1942 Gandhiji wrote in *Harijanbandhu*:

"But when masses are called upon to sacrifice themselves on the altar of independence some specified conditions will be relaxed as had been done in the earlier mass movements. So when the leaders are arrested every Indian will consider himself a leader and will sacrifice himself, and will not worry if his action results in anarchy.

"Our ahimsa will remain lame as long as we do not get rid of the fear of anarchy. This is the time to prove that there is no power stronger than ahimsa in this world."

(76:220)

* * *

Gandhiji's statement to *The Times of India* from Sevagram, Wardha, on 19-4-1941.

"... So far as I am concerned, there is no drawing back. Whether civil disobedience is offered by one or many is of no moment. It must continue against all odds. Congressmen can certainly repudiate it in more ways than one. It will then cease to be an organisational movement, and therefore I will admit it will cease to be effective in any shape or form. But I would be content if I still retain the faith to be the solitary witness of the power of non-violence.

"I make bold to say that when the clash of arms has ceased and we have settled down to peace, permanent or impermanent, history will record that the Congress fight in its totality was a supremely moral fight and free from any injury to man's dignity." (74:3-4)

* * *

Gandhiji wrote a letter to Rameshwari Nehru on 14/16-7-1941 answering some questions raised by her.

"... In non-violent war, to mix poison in water or to burn grains, oil, etc. are forbidden, and should be so. It is one thing to non-co-operate with the enemy and quite another to stop water etc.; to harm him. The non-co-operator accepts suffering for himself. ... A satyagrahi is not to protect his property, instead he may give up his life. A satyagrahi should be a non-possessor and he can defend others by being so. That is why I said that Englishmen may lose England but not their self-respect. To save his self-respect while doing no harm to his enemy, a satyagrahi has, for the time being, to allow his property to be looted. Any way in a violent war too he would, on being defeated, lose his property." (74:164-165)

* * *

Letter to Agatha Harrison on 22-10-41

"... Distrust of the Rulers is growing and spreading. We here perceive no difference between Hitlerism and British Imperialism. Hitlerism is a superfine copy of Imperialism and Imperialism is trying to overtake Hitlerism as fast as it can.

Democracy is nowhere." (75:37)

* * *

Statement to the press on 7-12-1941.

". . . Civil disobedience without the backing of constructive programme can never lead us to independence. Shorn of it, civil disobedience becomes a method of violence bound to prove ineffective in the end.

"Moreover civil disobedience, even when it is mass, will only be offered by those who are bodily fit, whereas constructive programme is for all and will never be suspended. If the whole nation took it up in earnest it is enough to give us complete independence. The prosecution of the constructive programme means constructing the structure of Swaraj.

"To my mind, Swaraj based on non-violence is a fulfillment of the constructive programme; hence, whether the authorities jail us or not, we must pursue constructive programme." (75:137)

* * *

During the second world war England was being defeated and Japan was almost knocking at the doors of India. Gandhiji wanted the Britisher to quit and leave us alone to face the situation. To solve the political deadlock Sir Stafford Cripps came to India with some proposals. Referring to the proposals Gandhiji said:

"It is a thousand pities that the British government should have sent a proposal for dissolving the political deadlock, which, on the face of it, was too ridiculous to find acceptance anywhere. And it was a misfortune that the bearer should have been Sir Stafford Cripps, acclaimed as a radical among radicals, and a friend of India.

"He knew too that the proposal contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts each having different ideas of governance.

"I would love to see a joint fight for Independence. In the very process of securing Independence it is highly likely that we shall have forgotten our quarrels. But if we have not, it will be then only time to quarrel, if we must." (76:28-29) * * *

"I want to be friendly with the British particularly. But it is British domination and British Imperialism which I want to banish from this land. I am telling the British rulers to withdraw quietly. It is the British domination that we want to end altogether because it is a poison which corrupts everything it touches. This rule is an obstacle to all progress." (76:156)

* * *

Answering to a question that all people are not non-violent then how would we be able to drive out the Britishers, Gandhiji said:

"I always thought that I would have to wait till the country was ready for a non-violent struggle. But my attitude has undergone a change. I feel that if I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed and worked for may never come, and in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames of violence that are spreading all around.

"But today we have to go a step further. We have to take the risk of violence to shake off the great calamity of slavery. But even for resort to violence one requires the unflinching faith of a non-violent man. There cannot be any trace of violence either in my plans or in my thoughts. A non-violent person has complete faith in god. My ahimsa was always imperfect and therefore it was ineffective to that extent. But I have faith in god. . . . There is no trace of violence in my consciousness or in the remotest corner of my being. My very being is full of consciousness. How can a man who has consciously pursued ahimsa for the last fifty years change all of a sudden?

"The people do not have my ahimsa. And therefore I have to take a risk, if I cannot curb their violence. I cannot remain inactive. I will certainly launch a non-violent movement. . . . Violence which is due to the weakness of human nature, is bound to

be there. Crores of people in the country have no weapons. ... However, we shall try our best to prevent violence." (76:159- 160)

* * *

Gandhiji in his speech at the A.I.C.C. meeting said:

"And we cannot become really free by merely declaring our freedom. We can be free only when the British go out bag and baggage and we can hold our own in the face of aggression by Japan, Germany, Russia or Afghanistan. It is useless today even to talk of civil disobedience for securing complete independence. What use is fighting for freedom against a country whose own independence is in danger?" (77:23)

* * *

And came the Quit India Resolution of August 1942 at the A.I.C.C. meeting held on 7th and 8th August 1942 in Mumbai. All leaders were arrested and the struggle for freedom was carried on as per the instructions given by Gandhiji and other leaders. The slogan was 'Do or Die'.

After the war was over England was eager to transfer power. Negotiations led to Partition and communal riots. Gandhiji was very much disturbed by the incidents that took place in Noakhali and Bihar. He wrote to Amrit Kaur on 4-11-46.

"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." (86:72)

Talking to refugees on 7-11-46 Gandhiji said :

"I have not come on a whirlwind propaganda visit. I have come to stay here with you as one to you. I have no provincialism in me. ... I have vowed myself that I will stay on here and die here if necessary; but I will not leave Bengal till the hatchet is finally buried and even a solitary Hindu girl is not afraid to move freely about in the midst of Mussalmans.

"The greatest help you can give me is to banish fear from your hearts. And what is the talisman that can do for you? It is the unfailing mantra of Ramanama. . . call him Ishwar, Allah, God, Ahur Mazda. His names are innumerable as there are men. . . . He is timeless, formless, stainless, such is my Rama. He alone is my Lord and Master.

"To run away from danger instead of facing it, is to deny one's faith in man and god and even one's own self." (86:96-97)

* * *

Gandhiji went from village to village explaining the message of Koran and asking them to shed their fears. On 7-11-46 he was talking to relief workers at Chaumuhari.

"There is nothing courageous in thousands of Mussalmans killing a handful of Hindus in their midst, but that the Hindus should have degraded themselves by such cowardice, i.e., being witness to abduction and rape, forcible conversion and forcible marriage of their women folk, is heart rending." (86:99)

* * *

In a Press interview on 2-12-46 at Srirampur Gandhiji said:

"The idea ultimately is to go on foot, when possible and necessary from village to village and induce to evacuees to return. This I can only do with effect when I have seen things myself. It is quite clear to me that my mere word carries very little weight. Distrust has gone too deep for exhortation.

"I find that my ahimsa does not seem to answer in the matter of Hindu-Muslim relations. This struck me forcibly when I came to learn of the events in Noakhali. The reported forcible conversions and the distress of the Bengali sisters touch me deeply. I could do nothing through pen or speech. I argued to myself that I must be on the scene of action and test the soundness of the doctrine which has sustained me and made my life worth living. Was it the weapon of the weak as it was often held by my critics or was it truly the weapon of the strong? The question arose in me when I had no ready made solution for the distemper of which Noakhali was such a glaring symptom.

"And so setting aside all my activities, I hastened to Noakhali to find out where I stood. I know positively that ahimsa is a perfect instrument. If it did not answer in my hands, the imperfection was in me. The technique was at fault. I could not discover the error from a distance. Hence I came here trying to make the discovery. I must, therefore, own myself in darkness till I see light. God only knows when it will come. More I cannot say." (86:182-183)

Harijan — 19-1-1947.

"I don't want to return from Bengal defeated. I would rather die, if need be, at the hands of an assassin. But I do not want to court it, much less do I wish it." (*Mahatma Gandhi-The Last Phase*, Vol. I Book II. p.77)

Speaking at a prayer meeting in Patna on 5-5-1947, Gandhiji said:

"Those who cry for avenging Noakhali in Bihar do not know the meaning of vengence. Is it manliness to return barbarism for barbarism? We ought to overcome violence by love.

"The way to achieve independence consists in all Indians saying with one voice that unless they gave to the whole world all that was good in them, their survival would be meaningless. Are we going to compete in (making) atom bombs? Are we going to match barbarism with even more barbarous acts? India has placed before the world a new weapon. I adopted the way of non-violence in 1920-21. We have been

insisting that we will attain independence through non-violence. I do not claim that all Indians have accepted non-violence as a matter of creed. But even when we accept anything as a matter of policy, it becomes our duty to act upon it." (87:44-45)

* * *

At a prayer meeting in Patna on 12-3-1947.

"I wish to remind you today that Bihar is a hallowed land of Lord Buddha and King Janaka: Lord Ramchandra had also once walked on this soil. It will be a great shame if this sacred land continues to witness the devilish dance of violence. You can retrieve the ancient glory of Bihar by means of non-violence. I do not want bravery of swords or words. To-day we need that non-violence which was exemplified by the people of Champaran in 1917. (87-75)

* * *

Prayer meeting in New Delhi on 12-9-1947.

"True human being is he who does a good turn for evil. I learnt this in my childhood. I still believe in the rightness of this. I would like you to return evil with good."

"I appeal to the Muslims that they should open heartedly declare that they belong to India and are loyal to the union. If they are true to god and wish to live in the Indian union they just cannot be enemies to the Hindus. And I want the Muslims here to tell

the Muslims in Pakistan who have become the enemies of the Hindus, not to go mad. If you are going to indulge in such madness, we cannot co-operate with you. We will remain faithful to the union and salute the tricolor. We have to follow the order of the government. These Muslims themselves should tell all other Muslims to surrender all their arms." (89:175)

* * *

"I will only say die but do not kill; and I shall die saying this." (89:240)

* * *

On 13-1-1948 Gandhiji said:

"My fast is against no one party, group or individual exclusively and yet it excludes nobody. It is addressed to the conscience of all, even the majority community in the other Dominion." (90:413)

* * *

In a prayer meeting in New Delhi referring to his fast Gandhiji said:

"Mine is a fast of self-purification. Everyone should purify himself. Muslims will also purify themselves. Every one should cleanse his heart.

"I do not say this in order to appease the Muslims or any one else. I want to appease myself which means that I want to appease God. I do not want to be a sinner against God.

"I shall terminate the fast only when peace has returned to Delhi. If peace is restored in Delhi it will have effect not only on the whole of India but also on Pakistan and when that happens, a Muslim can walk around in the city all by himself. I shall then terminate the fast." (90:414)

* * *

Peace was restored in Delhi and Gandhiji agreed to break his fast.

"I shall break my fast. Let God's will prevail. You all be witness today." (90:448)

Gandhiji's principles of Truth and Non-violence were put to severe test in the last phase of his life. But he proved his fearlessness during the riots in Bengal. He walked through the muddy lanes of Noakhali without any protection to wipe the tears of many who suffered during the riots. He used his love force to bring peace and remove hatred from the heart of one and all.

"There is no parallel in human history of one individual staking his own life for upholding what he believed to be true and trying to fight hatred with love and compassion in his heart."¹

1 P. C. Alexander; *India in the New Millennium*, Somaiya Publication Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, p. 276
