IN THE LAHORE FORT

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

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Publisher's Note

Jayaprakash Narayan is undoubtedly the coming man. Next to Pandit Nehru he has captured public imagination to the greatest degree. Much younger than most political leaders prominent in the public eye, he has had a most varied career. Educated for the most part in the United States of America, he has brought to bear on Indian politics a freshness of outlook and a new influence. But he has not completely broken away from the main stream of political development and does not stand for anything exotic, unsuitable to the genius of India. While locked up in Hazaribagh Jail during the 1942 movement and after, he found waiting behind prison bars unbearable in view of the general lack of purpose and frustration in the country. He escaped from the jail and for almost a year and a half lived most dangerously organising the forces of freedom against the might of British Imperialism. On his arrest in September 1943 he was taken to the celebrated Lahore Fort—the *Shahi Quila*—where, as he tells us in his Preface, he lived for sixteen months "under the watchful, malignant eye of the Punjab C. I. D". These random jottings entitled *In The Lahore Fort* are the reactions of Jayaprakash Narayan to events and things in that putrid atmosphere.

ABOUT THE FORT

Those who have experience only of prison life cannot understand what it means to have spent sixteen months under the watchful, malignant eye of the Punjab C. I. D. in the Shahi Quila, Lahore. A prison gave one company, and, at least in the higher divisions, opportunities of recreation, and ordinarily fair treatment. In the Lahore Fort you were surrounded with an evil atmosphere, and with people who, to say the least, were dehumanized, having no human standards or values, and who accordingly treated you not as a human being but as an animal that they called *mulzim*.

A *mulzim* (an accused) in the world outside is an ordinary enough creature, but in the Lahore Fort he is definitely a sub-human. No human sympathy should be shown to him; the sweeper or the *bhishti* should never speak to him, no superior being such as a C. I. D. constable should show him any courtesy or talk to him as a brother creature or an equal.

The *mulzim* should be kept under lock and key all through the day and night, and a sentry with rifle and bayonet must stand guard at his door which was barred, bolted and heavily padlocked anyway. When talked to, the sentry must turn deaf or into a statue of stone, but his ever-wakeful eyes must follow faithfully every move that the animal made in the cage.

Whenever this *Mulzim* creature left his cell, or, rather, was taken out, he had to be put in handcuffs and chain; and when he was "taken out for exercise", two sentries with loaded rifles had to parade, fore and aft, supporting a C. I. D. officer who formed the middle, carrying a loaded revolver at his hip and a garland of bullets around his neck.

Sometimes, of an evening, when the *mulzim*, alone in his cell, grew philosophic and attempted to assert to himself

his humanity, his philosophies suddenly came tumbling down as a shriek, half human, half animal, pierced through into his cosmos, followed by other strange noises that seemed to have no relation with life's normal functions. Was the ogre at it again, beating and degrading his victim ? —the *mulzim* asked. And as the answer formed in his benumbed mind, he turned into an insane, raging brute, filled with uncontainable hate.

This was one's normal life in the Fort. What happened when one was summoned, as one often was, into the presence of higher C. I. D. worthies was a story of human degradation which I have no inclination to relate. It was not the number of days and nights one was kept awake, nor the abuses, taunts or the filth one had to listen to, that affected one so much as the sight of creatures having all the apparent human traits and endowments, behaving utterly as brutes and obviously enjoying their part.

Such was the Shahi Quila where I lived from September 1943 to the end of January 1945. Those were sixteen nightmarish months for me. No words that I can find can describe the atmosphere of that vicious place and the effect it had on one.

I was arrested on the morning of 18th September, 1943, at the Amritsar Ry. Station, and my captors took me in the same train to Mughalpura station. From there I was driven straight to the Lahore Fort, where I was dumped in a filthy cell. For nearly two months no one took any interest in me. Then started the so-called interrogation that lasted for fifty days. The facts of the interrogation are given in the letter (reproduced here) that I wrote later to the Punjab Government. The interrogation was stopped owing to the scandal caused by the arrest of my friend, Homi Pardiwala, who had gone to Lahore from Bombay, to move a *habeas corpus* petition, in connection with my detention, on behalf of Purnima Banerji, who had the courage in those dark days, in spite of delicate health, to take such a risk. The petition, of course, was rejected,

but Robinson, Superintendent of Police, and an Inspector, C. I. D., were fined by the High Court for contempt of court. All this appears so distant at present that there seems little use to tell the story now.

After the interrogation was over I was kept for some time as a State Prisoner, when I received somewhat better treatment. Then I was made a security prisoner again, and the treatment deteriorated.

Most of the sixteen months in the Fort I had to spend alone without meeting or talking to anyone except the C. I.D. staff who condescended to talk to me. For only a part of the time, after long intervals, was I given a companion whom I was allowed to meet for an hour every day. Indra Prakash Anand, Jayachandra Vidyalankar and finally Rammanohar Lohia were my companions.

For some months at the beginning no books or writing materials were allowed. When finally books were permitted and a parcel arrived from Minoo Masani, it was quite an exciting event. Writing materials were also allowed then, and I bought some exercise books. It was then that these prison jottings took birth. No serious work was possible there, nor was the material available to make any kind of a serious study. So, I took to writing whatever thoughts came to me, more as a means to organise my thoughts, and sometimes to give vent to pent-up feelings. Some of these writings will therefore appear moody, and I hope the reader will allow for their subjectivity.

These jottings—all of them written in the Lahore Fort—are arranged chronologically. There is no organic relationship between them except that they are the product of the same environment. Many of them are comments on books read, or on the news of the day. Many are reflections of a political nature. The letters I wrote to Minoo, to whose kindness and care I owed so much of my happy moments in the Fort, were important events in my life there, for they allowed me in some measure to establish an intellectual contact with the

world outside. Therefore, some of those letters too have been included here. The letter I wrote to the Punjab Government, complaining against the maltreatment and torture is of some importance and so is the third *habeas corpus* petition I wrote to the Chief Justice, Lahore High Court. These letters give a dispassionate account of my experiences in the Fort. So these too are reproduced here.

It was on the morrow of the hearing of the third *habeas corpus* petition that I was transferred to the Agra Central Prison, where I stayed till my release in April, 1946.

Jayaprakash Narayan

Coonoor, South India.
April 15, 1947.

INDIA DIVIDED

Shri Rajagopalachari is reported to have said the other day that he did not care if India were divided into ten different parts, each sovereign and independent of the other. His immediate inspiration for making this remarkable statement was the recent Molotov amendment to the Russian Constitution.

Rajaji is too informed a politician really to believe what he has been reported to say. He apparently talks in this fashion with a view to remove suspicions that are harboured in certain quarters, and to pave the path probably for a rapprochement between the Congress and the League. But he is doing himself an injustice by pretending to believe that he can ever succeed in his efforts by making fantastic and over-reaching statements. The tragedy of Rajaji is due to a not uncommon fault of clever people: their proneness to discount the ability of the other fellow to see through their trick.

But let us take Rajaji at his word. India divided into ten states ? Even a high school knowledge of Indian history should enable one to forecast the result of such a vivisection of this country. Vivisection obviously presupposes the existence of a widespread desire for separateness. Given this desire and the fact of division and undoubted foreign influences of a conflicting nature, India would present a picture not essentially different from that which existed at the dissolution of the great empires of Indian history. The only outcome of such a confused state would be cultural and economic backwardness, political weakness and eventual subjugation again to a strong foreign power or to more than one power. In fact, if the desire for the division of the country came generally to be shared by the Indian people, freedom from present subjection itself would become impossible, and in the place of Rajaji's ten free states of India, there would be perpetuated the one undivided Indian Empire groaning under the heels of His Majesty John Bull. The forces that are working for the division of India are anti-freedom forces of slavery and between them and nationalist India no compromise is possible. To say that without such a compromise freedom could not be won is a self-contradiction. It is to underestimate grossly the strength of Indian nationalism.

Let us turn now to the recent Russian constitutional innovation. There is no doubt that the Molotov amendments will be seized upon by all sorts of quacks to popularize their own nostrums. But for those who are seriously considering the

future constitutional development of India, the Russian experiment can be of very doubtful value. It is necessary to remember that the so-called decentralization has been introduced into the Soviet state structure not as a measure of internal adjustment but to answer certain diplomatic requirements of Russia's international relations that have arisen during the war and are expected to become more pressing in the post-war period. Internally there can be no question of loosening the central dictatorship of the Communist hierarchy. It is also essential, where Russia is concerned, to distinguish between theory and practice. In 1936 was promulgated the Stalin Constitution, which was tom-tomed throughout the world by the Russian fifth column as 'the most democratic constitution in the world'. And yet, it was in that very year that began the most brutal suppression of political dissidents—it would be wrong to call them even political opponents—that is known to human history. It may be safely presumed, therefore, that the new powers that have been devolved upon the constituent Republics of the Soviet Union are entirely for purposes of Soviet world diplomacy rather than real measures of devolution. There can also be little doubt that even while these measures of decentralization were publicly announced secret administrative and party measures must have been taken to concentrate even more power in the hands of Stalin and his junta.

But let us for argument's sake concede that there has been a real devolution of power and political decentralization in the Soviet. Does that

justify any one to demand the partition of India ? First, the recent Russian amendments leading to decentralization in Russia had not *broken up* the Soviet Union and divided it into a number of *independent* states. As for the "right" to secede, it is an old constitutional guarantee that exists since Lenin's time. But there is all the difference in the world between the recognition of the "right" of separation and the actual fact of separation. As far as Russia is concerned, the nature of the Russian state has always reduced this right to a nullity. In India it is not as if the units that are prepared to join the Indian Union are seeking to *reserve the right* to secede if they find cause later to do so. What is demanded is an outright separation and division of the country. There is a world of difference between the two positions: the first presupposes a desire to stick together and make a serious experiment in joint nationhood, while the latter kills the very possibility of union by immediate partition. In every federal constitution of the world where the right of secession is guaranteed, it has a twofold basis: while, on the one hand, it provides the ultimate solution of intra-national conflicts, on the other hand, it rests on the ground that mutual goodwill and adjustment and the desire to pull together would ever make unnecessary the exercise of this ultimate constitutional right. I believe Congress would have no difficulty in guaranteeing this right to the federating units in India provided there was genuine desire to start as a united nation and to preserve national unity to the utmost extent possible. The Congress

would do this precisely in the hope and belief that the experiment in united nationhood would soon remove suspicion and cement the bonds that naturally exist among all the sections of the Indian people. It can be appreciated how different from this is the position that demands immediate and initial partition of the country. To that the Congress can never agree.

Turning to Russia, the second point to note is that Russia is not just a conglomeration of independent republics, but a highly centralized union with a powerful and effective central government which has the means to check disruptive tendencies and prevent the dissolution of the Union.

Lastly—and this is the most important point—the Russian State is a monolithic state—that is, based on a single political party, the organization of any other party being illegal and treasonable. In view of this one-party rule, and in view of the highly centralized structure of that party, all paper freedoms, rights and enfranchisements lose their meaning. Suppose Latvia is declared to be a member republic of the Soviet Union. Only the Communist party of Latvia would be allowed to function there, and all political, economic, cultural and social power would be centred in that party, or rather, its higher bureaucracy. But the Communist party of Latvia would not be an independent body; it would be a part of, and subject to, the All-Russian Communist party, with the Stalin-Molotov caucus at the top. In this fashion all the rights

and freedom that the Latvian Republic would be guaranteed by the constitution of the Soviet Union would be effectively shackled and hamstrung by this party mechanism and the suppression of all parties but the Communist party.

If we were to draw an Indian parallel, it would be of some such fashion as this. The Congress, let us say, is the only political party that is allowed to exist anywhere in the country. The Congress then rules in every part of the country and suppresses *by force* all other rival parties. At the same time this very Congress grants the right to the various units of the Indian Union to secede if they so desire! We have only to picture this state of affairs to realise what a far cry the Russian system is for us.

Whether the Russian system is good or bad is irrelevant to the present discussion. What is of value for us is to remember that here in our own country no one worth bothering about advocates a monolithic state or one-party rule; nor is such a thing possible here, nor with the exception of British rule does any central power exist in India. In these circumstances, can the imitation of the devices of the Russian constitution be anything but fatal to us ?

The partition of the country is proposed as a solution of the minorities problem. But will the partition *solve* the problem? If we take the Muslims, for instance, and treat them as a minority, does the constitution of a state of Pakistan solve the problem of the Muslim minori-

ties ? In areas where it is proposed to establish Pakistan, the Muslims are the majority and not the minority community. Even in a united India those areas would be ruled by Muslim-majority governments and the Hindus and others would be the minorities there. It is true that the Muslim provinces would be in a minority at the Centre, but apart from that even in an undivided India they would constitute a sort of Pakistan, as far as provincial and local matters are concerned and would have their own minorities. In an independent Pakistan too the situation would remain the same, except for central affairs. On the other hand, in Hindustan (so-called), i.e., the part of India outside Pakistan, the Muslims would continue to be a minority community, both as regards provincial and national matters. Thus neither in Pakistan nor in Hindustan would the minority problem be solved, and the problem of the Muslim minority in areas where they are really in a minority would remain unaltered. It is clear, therefore, that the only object of Pakistan is to remove the Muslim-minority areas from the interference of a Centre where the Muslims do not constitute a majority. But this is a problem of which, given mutual goodwill, it should not be difficult to find a much less drastic solution. The necessity of finding such an alternative solution becomes all the greater when it is considered that a division of the country would weaken both its parts economically, politically and in every other way. After all, when Hindus and Muslims are going to live together both in Hindustan and

Pakistan, it appears precipitate folly to divide the country.

We are aware that the Muslim League claim for partition is based on the theory that the Muslims in India constitute a separate nation, and, as such, should have their own independent State. We do not think this claim would bear any scientific scrutiny. It may conceivably be possible to claim that the Punjabis, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others, or the Sindis including again all the communities living in Sind, constitute a separate nation from, let us say, the Bengalis or the Tamils. But no social scientist would support the contention that the Punjabi Muslims and the Bengali Muslims constitute one nation and the Bengali Hindus and the Punjabi Hindus do another. Mere religion has never formed, obviously not in Islamic lands, the basis for a common nationality. The Arabs and Turks are both Muslims by religion but they constitute two distinct nationalities. It is very difficult to define a nation, as the League of Nations Committee on the European national minorities demonstrated after an exhaustive examination of the question; but race, language, history culture, religion, geography, tradition—all these go to create that intangible psychological product known as nationality. No one of these various factors by itself creates a nation. People of the same race constitute separate nations, as witness the Slavs: those with the same language do likewise, as witness the English-speaking or Spanish-speaking nations of the world, likewise with

religion, as witness the Muslims who constitute so many nations. Nor must a single nation have a single language, race or religion, as witness the Swiss, the British, the Americans, the Canadians, the Chinese. If we take race, language, history, culture, geography, religion, tradition all together, then India forms one single nation much more truly and really than do the separate communities living in this country.

However, let us concede for the sake of argument that the Muslims of India do constitute a separate nation. Does it follow necessarily that they should therefore separate from the rest of the country and constitute an independent State ? Is it not possible for two nations to live together within a common state ? Does not history afford examples of such common statehood ? Do not the Scotch, the Welsh and the English live together under one government, do not the German, the French and the Italian Swiss form one national state, do not the British and French Canadians live together, is not the great American nation the result of the mingling of all the nationalities of Europe, are not practically all the South American nations multi-national in composition ? It seems highly illogical to demand a partition of the country merely because the Indian Muslims consider themselves to be a separate nation.

With the national minorities problem of European and other countries there has always been associated the phenomenon of oppression of

the minority nationality by the majority. In India there is no such historical tradition. In fact, it was the minority community which was till recently the ruling power and the oppressed or otherwise was the majority Hindu community. It is true that a lot of dust was raised by the League about oppression of the Muslims in the Congress-governed provinces. But we do not think that the charges brought against the Congress ministries by the Pirpur Committee would bear examination by any impartial tribunal. However, even granting that the charges were true, would the division of the country save the Muslim minorities in these provinces from the oppression of the Hindu community ? The answer may be that if that oppression did not cease Pakistan would retaliate by oppressing its own Hindu minority. But this remedy, if it can be said to be a remedy, would be available to the Muslim provinces even in a united India, for the Centre, whatever its nature, could never interfere in the internal administration of the autonomous provinces. Thus it would appear that Pakistan would solve none of the problems it seeks to, except the one of the relation of the Central Government with the Muslim-majority provinces. We could willingly admit this solution if it did not endanger the growth and development, prosperity and safety of the whole country, including both or all its parts, and if no other solution were available.

The Muslim fear is that the Central Indian Government in which Hindus will be in a majority will dominate and interfere with the Muslim

provinces, as with the others. There are two ways of removing this possibility. One is carefully to define and limit the powers of the Central Government and vest the residue in the Provincial Governments. If the minimum possible powers are left with the Centre, the possibility of its interfering with the provinces would be reduced to that extent. The next problem is to ensure that the powers that are vested in the national government are so exercised that no injustice is done to the Muslim community. To do this it is possible to provide for checks and balances. The Central Government, as all governments would have two main functions—legislative and executive. Both the Legislature and Executive may be so constituted that the Muslims may have no cause to fear. At the same time a final guarantee may be constitutionally provided in the shape of the right to secede. The very existence of this right—of the possibility of its being exercised—would be a check on the majority.

These three measures should be enough to remove Muslim fears. At the same time they would preserve the unity of the country, which is the only guarantee of its future prosperity, development and power.

February 18, 1944.

THREE VITAL ASPECTS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM OF INDIA

There are three vital problems, each equally important, that are connected with the evolution of a constitution for India. These problems are: the problem of the Muslims, the problem of the States, and the economic problem. Certain aspects of the first have been considered already. Here we shall briefly touch upon the other two.

Broadly speaking, four different parties are involved in the problem of the States : the people of democratic India (the so-called British India), the people of the States, the Princes, and the so-called Paramount Power. Generally speaking the first two would find themselves in one camp while the last two would like to hang together. The starting point of constitution-making for free India is the assumption that the British Power, at least in democratic India, has been brought to

its knees and that a Provisional National Government has been constituted at the Centre, no doubt under the nominal sanctions of the present constitution, but with the explicit and clear understanding that it shall enjoy full power without any restriction or limitation by the present safeguards or the Viceregal prerogatives. It is further assumed that the main purpose of this Provisional Government shall be to supervise the creation of a new constitution, conduct elections and usher in the new government of free India.

Given this assumption, the role of British Power, as far as democratic India, is concerned, would be reduced to pulling wires behind the scenes. But in feudal India its role would still retain both its constitutional and real prerogatives as the Paramount Power. And as such democratic India would have to fight not only the shadow, which are the Princes, but also the substance, which is the Paramount Power. Thus in the constitution-making of free India not a little trouble will arise on account of the States.

To my mind democratic India's attitude to feudal India should be defined according to two basic principles : first, the States should be democratized politically as soon as possible, the position and status of the Princes to be determined by their peoples, second, the representation of the States joining the Indian Union should be on a popular and not a princely basis. No state should be allowed to join the Union that has not democratized or is not prepared to democratize its

onstitution. In any case, the representatives of state—even if it is not fully democratized should lways be elected by the people 'the franchise and he manner of election varying'.

An objection to this proposal may be that nder these conditions, no state, encouraged by he Paramount Power, would be willing to join the Jnion. It may be so to begin with—though it is uestionable that when in democratic India the Bri- ish power has been brought to its senses, the people n the states would be sitting idle. But, at any rate, his plan will guarantee the creation of a strong Centre of a genuinely national character. With such a government functioning at the Centre it may be possible soon to bring such political and economic pressure to bear upon the Princes–which pressure would be powerfully supplemented by the vigorous growth of the state's people's movement that is expected to follow in the wake of the constitution of the Free Indian Union—that they may soon be compelled to surrender power to their people, who would doubtless lose no time in joining the Union. I believe that the combined strength of the Paramount Power and the Princes would not be able to stand very long against the combined and rapidly growing strength of the Indian Union and the states' people.

By the economic problem I do not mean merely the problem of poverty or industrialization or any such economic problem in the ordinary sense of the term. I use this term here in a much more fundamental sense, namely, the

determination of the basic economic principles on which Indian economy shall rest in a Free India. Shall this economy be that of capitalism in which not only shall present economic enterprises and undertakings be owned and directed by private agencies for private profit, but also the entire economic development and future material well-being of the nation will be at the disposition of a handful of moneyed people pursuing the ends of selfish profit ? Or shall the economy of the nation be a national concern under the control and guidance of the State ? We believe that unless a deliberate conscious attempt is made at the very outset to bring the Nation's economic life under the guidance and control of the State, not only would that life be made to serve the ends of Indian capitalism, but soon enough would the State itself be converted into the latter's subservient tool. At the outset, the influence of Indian capitalism on national politics may not be too great, for the middle classes, which in India do not live far removed from the borders of poverty, preponderate not only in numbers but also ideologically. Therefore, the middle classes, if they are so minded, can prevent the capitalists from tying the country's economy to the wheels of their profit-chariot.

Within the Congress there is happily a lively awareness of this vital issue. Pandit Nehru, of course, is a proclaimed socialist. Mahatma Gandhi himself, whose voice may have decisive influence over this question, is known to favour the public ownership of large industries. The Congress

is already committed to the State ownership or control of key industries, mines, railways, etc. Therefore, it is hoped that Congress, further impelled in this direction by the experience of the war, will throw its united weight very substantially in favour of national control of the country's economy. It is doubtful what attitude the other constituents of the political set-up, as brought into existence for the purposes of framing the constitution of free India, would adopt towards this vital problem. The representatives of labour would no doubt be fully with the Congress : indeed they would endeavour to take the constituent assembly much farther on the road to socialization of economic life. The representatives of the states' people would also be wholly with the Congress. It is difficult to say what the attitude of the Muslim League would be. So far the League, though claiming to represent a community which is even deeper in poverty than certain other communities and more exploited, has refused to express any opinion on this vital question, as on so many other equally vital questions. However, if the present leadership of the League persists there is little doubt that its influence would be largely exercised in the opposite direction. It might even take shelter behind religion in order to avoid facing this problem. It is likely that with regard to many questions, such as the agrarian, the League might insist on leaving them to the Provinces to settle. The representatives of Indian capital may be more subtle. They are likely to admit State

control in principle, but might endeavour to see that it is so put into practice that, first, the interests of profit do not suffer, second, the resources of the State are utilized to bolster up industries of which they continue to be the proprietors; and, third, that they are so able to insinuate themselves into the economic limb of the State that eventually they come to rule the roost. What other elements there will be in the Constituent Assembly it is difficult to say. But it is doubtful if they will be of any but a conservative character. The influence of British capital in India that may directly or indirectly be exercised over it will naturally be on the side of capitalist economy. In these circumstances the course of the Congress at the Assembly—provided its own attitude is of a progressive character as we expect it to be—would be one of considerable difficulty. And the fear would be far from unreal of the luke-warm sections of the Congress making of these difficulties an excuse for dropping progressive economic principles.

Conscious of such a political set-up in the Constituent Assembly, I wish to lay down the following proposals in respect to our national economy. The economic life of the nation may be thus divided: land, industry, trade, banking, transport, shipping, mines and forests.

The first economic principle that should be adopted is that the State is the owner of all the natural resources of the country. This principle would immediately and directly affect land, mines,

and forests. These should be declared to be State property throughout the Indian Republic and no provincial or regional exceptions or reservations should be admitted in this connection. The proprietorship having been vested in the State, the next question would be about their exploitation. It is clear that it would be impossible for the State directly to exploit all the natural resources of the country. Land is the primary and often the sole means of livelihood for the overwhelming majority of the Indian people and whatever the merits of collective agriculture, there is no doubt that the peasantry would oppose any such move at the outset. The State will have, therefore, to settle most of the land with individual peasants, the rights of the holders being carefully laid down. The remaining lands should be turned to demonstrative and educative collective or co-operative farming.

It should be noted that by the simple measure of vesting the proprietorship of land in the State, we abolish the zamindari system (permanent or otherwise). This naturally raises the question of compensation to the present zamindars and taluqdars. If the Constituent Assembly that is visualized here were meeting after a successful mass revolution, this question of compensation would not have arisen. But in the circumstances we are visualizing, the zamindars would be in a position to demand compensation and the Assembly would have to consider and admit their claim. We shall not go into the details of this question of compensation because we believe it is not difficult to

prepare a scheme of compensation that will meet the needs of justice if not the avarice and greed of our zamindars.

Another problem more difficult and ticklish than the previous one that is connected with the question of land is that of the size of holdings that each cultivator should be allotted. At present there is a great disparity between the biggest and the smallest peasant holdings. It is clear that such a situation cannot be permitted to continue. An attempt towards equalization of holdings will have to be made. To quieten peasant fears, it would have to be announced that their present holdings would be respected as far as possible and that only in extreme cases would redistribution and re-settlement be resorted to. I believe that roughly speaking 25 per cent of the present holdings will have to be redistributed. It should be understood that technically and for the purpose of regularization under the new land laws, the whole land will have to be re-settled, but it is expected that in respect of 75 per cent of the holdings no disturbance or very little, would be caused. With regard to the rights that the holders may enjoy in their land, it may be left to the provincial legislatures to prescribe them in detail.

The problem would be simpler in regard to mines and forests. But here too the State may not be in a position to exploit all the available resources and, therefore, concessions and leases may be given under suitable conditions to private agencies. The question of compensation to the

present mine-owners will also arise and may be settled according to the general policy of economic compensation.

We turn to industry now. Industry is of small, medium and large size and of a heavy (or basic) and light (or consumption-goods-producing) nature. All heavy or basic industry such as iron and steel and machine-making, should be not only under the control and management of the State, but also purely State property. Of the other industries that produce goods for consumption, those that are on a large scale, such as textile or jute, should also be nationalized. The other industries may be allowed to be run and developed as private enterprises, but there should be provision made for certain amount of State control with respect to prices (both of raw materials and finished goods), wages and production.

The second basic economic principle that I wish to lay down and that the Indian State should adopt if India is to become a real democracy is the principle that labour should play an effective part both in the affairs of the State and industry. We shall consider the relation of Labour to the Legislature and Executive elsewhere; here we wish to confine ourselves to its relation to industry alone. In all the State industries Labour should play an *equal* part with the representatives of the State in running them and disposing of their proceeds. Private capital having been eliminated from them Labour and the State would be the only two partners in the State industries and they should share equal power in their conduct.

In the privately owned industries the rights of labour to organize, to collective bargaining, to strike should be guaranteed by the State. Minimum wage, hours of work, housing, provident fund, should be guaranteed and supervised by the State.

Turning to trade, I shall distinguish three classes of it: retail, wholesale and foreign. Retail trade would clearly be beyond the scope of the State's control, though the State should endeavour to encourage and patronise non-profit-making co-operative trading institutions. With regard to wholesale trade, particularly in commodities that are of common use or constitute necessities of life, the State, if not taking over the entire wholesale trade into its own hand should exercise such control as to eliminate or reduce speculation, cornering and undue profiteering.

With regard to foreign trade, the State should no doubt be the chief foreign trader and control drastically all private foreign trading.

Banking should be entirely nationalized and to save the poor man, either in the village or city, from the clutches of the money-lender, co-operative banks should be developed on a large scale.

Regarding transport, railways and airways must be completely nationalized. Road and river traffic may be allowed to remain, largely or in part, in the hands of private agencies. Shipping too should be completely nationalized.

This leaves a huge number of undertakings in the hands of private bodies. The State should discover means to regulate and control the activities as far as possible in the interest of the common good.

February 27, 1944.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE COMINTERN

The Comintern was dissolved by Stalin because it had become a nuisance and a cause of embarrassment to the Soviet Foreign Office. On the other hand, it had no utility for the Soviet in the form it existed. The leaders of Russia had long given up the objectives of a World Revolution—at any rate, they were not interested any more in playing the role of directors of such a revolution. The Comintern had already been converted into a mere Russian fifth column and had been acting as such. But when in view of Russia's active alliance with the dominent sections of world capitalism, it became a source of embarrassment, the Stalin junta had no qualms in liquidating it. It was only another Bolshevik tradition liquidated. It was easy for Stalin to do so, because the disappearance of the Comintern did not imply the disappearance of the fifth column. Even when the Comintern lived and breathed, the various national communist parties were

not so much under the control and supervision of the Comintern Secretariat, as that of the agents of the Russian Secret Service. The latter held the whip hand not only over the national communist parties, but also over the Soviet embassies and consulates the world over. These embassies and consulates and Secret Service (N.K.V.D.) organisations have not been dissolved with the dissolution of the Comintern. Thus, the control of Moscow over its far-flung fifth column has not in the least been affected by the assassination of the International. What could be more suited to Russian policy ?

In these circumstances it would be a mistake to think that the national communist parties are not held any more in Moscow's leading strings. There has been no change in their relationship to Moscow and their claim to speak for the people of their countries is no less false to-day than ever before.

April 12th, 1944.

ECONOMIC PLANNING AND POLITICAL DECENTRALIZATION

Dealing with the problem of settlement with the Muslim League, I pointed out that full provincial autonomy with residuary powers and minimum agreed powers for the centre, together with some other constitutional devices might create enough self-confidence in the League leaders to enable them to join hands with the Congress. On the other hand, dealing with the basic principles of social organisation, I indicated that the economic development of the country would require to a very considerable extent State planning, control and ownership. For a planned economic development the necessity of a large measure of centralization is obvious. If economic planning were to be left to the provinces, nothing but confusion would be the result. The problem, therefore, is to reconcile these two necessities—centralisation and decentralisation.

I believe a solution of this problem can be found in providing a " voluntary " clause in the Constitution according to which the Provinces may voluntarily surrender to the Centre certain of their powers. In this manner a large bloc might be created where planning might have full scope and a chance of success. It is even likely that no province may, in that case, remain out of the planned *bloc*, because, in the first place, submission to planning would be voluntary and not compulsory, and secondly, the advantages of planning might be too obvious to allow unreasoned prejudice to stand in the way of united endeavour. While this may be more than a likely possibility, we must, however, be prepared to visualize two economic spheres in the country—one under central planning, the other with only provincial planning or none. In this case there would arise numerous, though far from insurmountable, difficulties as regards inter-zonal trading. These difficulties will have to be got over by negotiations between the Central and Provincial governments.

In this connection the following report of a speech of Lala Shankerlal (delivered as President of the Punjab Chamber of Commerce, *Statesman*, April 13th, 1944) is interesting. He recalled Sir J. P. Srivastava's statement that post-war reconstruction was a provincial responsibility. This pedantic constitutional dictum of Governments' seems to ignore all realities. He referred to the Australian example and said that the consti-

tutional difficulty had been overcome by individual states surrendering to the Federal Government their power in certain directions for a period of five years after the war so that a uniform policy could be followed in the whole country.

April 19th, 1944.

THE PLACE OF THE VILLAGE IN FREE INDIA

Village self-sufficiency had been the basis of Indian Society in the past. Its political result was the civic and political isolation of the village. This was not, however, a situation peculiar to India. In every society, such as the European, for instance, where the village was more or less self-sufficient due to the backwardness of the means of production, a similar attitude of mind could be found to have existed. Wars were everywhere not the occupation of the people but of the Herrenvolk—the military caste of feudalism and its mercenary retainers. Consequently armies marched past everywhere, leaving the people largely indifferent—except perhaps where village offered possibilities. The East was no more different from the West in this respect than in so many others.

Among our national leaders there are not a few who look back upon the largely vanished village-self-sufficiency as an ideal to go back to. I find

myself in opposition to such a view. I believe that if free Indian Society and the Indian people are to prosper, are to develop a sense of common and co-operative life, if national unity is to become real, if the divorce from national politics of the mass of the people—which was such a glaring aspect of past Indian society—is to be removed : if parochialism and clannishness are to be banished : if the rigours of the iniquitous caste system —which flourished on the fertile soil of village self-sufficiency and family specialisation of labour— are to be destroyed ; if democracy and self-government are to be made effectual—if all these objectives are to be achieved, the Free Indian State will have consciously to endeavour to break-up the remaining self-sufficiency and isolation of the villages and make them "coherent economic units" in a united and inter-dependant national economy. It is necessary to add that the break-up of a self-sufficiency that is emphasised here does not mean that the village should be placed at the mercy of international markets and the city capitalist. Far from it. What I am suggesting is the village, as a fully protected economic unit (protected both by the State and co-operation in the village itself), not independent or self-sufficient but interconnected, according not to the blind laws of capitalist competition and exploitation, but to a national and regional plan.

Not only economically should the village become a unit in a larger whole, but also politically. It appears to me that if our political life is to be rehabilitated, the village must become once again

a self-governing unit in a very real sense of the term. In fact, unless this is done the village cannot perform the economic functions envisaged here. In the field of politics, if our political institutions are to strike deep roots and command basic loyalties, if they are to be the faithful expressions of our corporate existence, the village panchayats must be revived in all their glory and with all their old authority.

I conceive the panchayats as exercising revenue, executive, and judicial authority. With regard to the first, I have to make a suggestion which seems to me to simplify many tenancy and agrarian problems and at the same time to lay the foundations of an agricultural system that might enable us to combine the best of both the ancient and the most modern systems. One of our fundamental laws should vest the ownership of all land in the State. As the supreme land-owner, the state should settle certain areas of land to every village, taking into account the total land available, the size and needs of the village and the quality of the land, and assess the corresponding revenue. The land should then be divided among themselves by the villagers acting through their panchayats. For this distribution of land the Provincial Government should lay down rules for the guidance of the panchayats, the rules taking into account present proprietory rights. The panchayat there collects the revenue and pays it to the State. It may have to be provided that below a minimum acreage holdings would be revenue-free and above the minimum there may be graduated scale of

assessment. Periodically the State should review the settlement and assessment and revise them if found necessary. Through the panchayats, the State should control the production of grains and their disposal. Transfer of land outside the village should be illegal unless specially sanctioned by the State.

In the sphere of economics, the panchayat should also look after co-operation, marketing, credit and handicrafts. Regarding development of village industries it would be necessary to prohibit the import of manufactures that compete with handicrafts as also to prevent large-scale industry within the country from infringing on their sphere.

With regard to executive functions, the panchayat should have certain police powers, and the task of keeping certain records.

With regard to the third sphere, i.e., judicial, the panchayat should have power to try civil and criminal cases. In certain types of disputes, such as land boundaries, the decisions of the panchayat should be final. Legal procedure in India is so complicated and expensive that a real attempt should be made to simplify it and bring justice within the reach of the poorest. Panchayats, as the lowest courts, functioning right on the spot and in a position to find out the truth by immediate and intimate enquiry should be made one of the most important means of simplification of law and justice in India.

April 19th, 1944.

FRIENDS OF THE SOVIET UNION

I read yesterday of a conference of the Friends of the Soviet Union, It struck me as very odd—this conference of the Friends of the Soviet being convened by Indians at such a time. I wondered what I should have done had I been free and invited to the Conference ? I think I should have sent some such reply : "Shall attend conference if and when the Russians organise a Friends of India Society and convene its conference". I know the so-called friends of the Soviet Union would have howled me down as an enemy of the socialist Fatherland and a fascist. But one has learnt to ignore such howls and barks.

It seems to me that, if there is any country in the world today that needs friendship of other countries it is India, and also that if there is any country in the world today that is expected by virtue of its professions to render such friendship, it is the Soviet Union. But not even the feeblest voice has been raised there for India, in spite of

the boundless injustice that India has suffered during this war at the hands of one of the Soviet's principal allies. China, much weaker militarily and diplomatically and never claiming to play the role of a saviour of peoples, was courageous and honest enough to raise her weak but clear voice for India. But not so Russia, the professed leader of the oppressed and downtrodden.

Yet our Indian Friends of the Soviets must run about organizing conferences. Well, let them. There are some people whose only role in politics today is to run about, shouting: "Stalin be praised, Stalin be praised".

Friends of the Soviet Union, it is interesting to reflect, were organised throughout the world when Russia was a great revolutionary crusader and in constant danger of being attacked in one way or another by the capitalist nations of the world. Russia's position is very different today. Russia is no longer the crusader she once was and it would be egregious folly to copy all that she says or does. Uncritical propaganda for Russia is likely now to do more harm than good. Secondly, Russia has become a great military power and an ally of the greatest capitalist powers on this earth and can be left to look after herself. I think a Friends of China Union is more appropriate than the one announced in the press. Adult Indian politicians should look at the world with Indian eyes and not through glass eyes made in Moscow or anywhere else.

P. S. I should like to add a postscript to say that no Friends-of-This-or-That Society should be formed in our country unless at least some people in this-or-that country are prepared to form in their home a Friends of India Society.

May 7th, 1944.

GANDHIJI'S RELEASE

In recent years perhaps nothing has rejoiced and relieved the country as Gandhiji's release. I too share in this rejoicing, but entirely on the ground of Gandhiji's health and well-being. India, if not the whole of Asia, needs Ghandhiji today and will need him tomorrow as never before and as nothing else. That he may live in health and undiminished strength of mind and body is the prayer of millions of Indians and many more millions of other peoples of Asia.

I do not, however, rejoice at the prospect of a settlement with Britain as a result of Gandhiji's having been restored to freedom. I do not want such a settlement during the war, because I believe that any settlement in the present conditions and on terms that these conditions will naturally determine, will do no good to the cause of India's freedom. I do not for a moment expect that Gandhiji will arrive at any

settlement that is not of benefit to the country : and, therefore, to my mind no settlement is actually going to materialize. However, it would have been better if Ghandhiji had been kept in prison (*i.e.*, if he had not fallen ill) till the end of the war. He would have been in a stronger position then and the risks and drawbacks of a war-time settlement would have been absent. I have explained elsewhere why I am opposed to a war-time settlement and there is no need to repeat my views here.

But due to his illness Gandhiji is free now, and whatever be my own views regarding a settlement, a serious attempt is going to be made for it. Therefore, keeping aside my own prejudices, it may be well to examine what the prospects are for a resolution of the 'deadlock'.

Let us take the British side first. What may be their desires and plans? They, no doubt, would like the opposition of the Congress to be withdrawn, but would they also like Congress co-operation ? I am not so sure that the British are very keen about Congress co-operation ; not because they are doubtful about its value for the war-effort, but because they are afraid of it. First, they know that Congress would not be willing to co-operate unless substantial power—indeed all power except military direction of the war—is transferred from Britain to India. This they are not prepared for. Churchill cannot preside over the Empire's last rites. I believe the British might have agreed to hand over this

power had they known that it involved merely constitutional and formal changes. But they know the Congress and they cannot forget that, when the Congress takes power, it means to wield it. There is no hoodwinking the Congress with the names, from jobs and positions. No, Congress co-operation is too costly a bargain for the British and they would do nothing on their part to remove the obstacles in its path. The position that the British would welcome most is the 1940 Congress position (before individual Satyagraha was launched): that is, the Congress, though not an ally, is also not an enemy. As I look ahead I see the British manoeuvring to bring the Congress to that position back again. That would be disastrous for the Congress. Far better that the Congress remained in prison till the end. The British would no doubt make a great show of renewing the Cripps' offer and of their eagerness for settlement, but below the surface they will set at work all their cunning to prevent it.

What about the Indian side ? Excepting the Congress all other parties have been eager for a settlement with Britain. The Muslim League have repeatedly demanded that the British should leave the Congress alone, intransigent as it is, and hand over to the League and others who may care to come in at the deal-out. The British Government have naturally ignored all such demands, as accepting them would have been a sort of *gunah be lazzat.*

The question, therefore, is, will the Congress and, in the present conditions, Mahatma Gandhi

be prepared to settle with the British? I think Gandhiji would be quite prepared to restate his terms for an agreement as set forth in the famous Bombay resolution and would also draw the attention of the world to the fact that the resolution in question was not in itself a call to war, that it was first a statement of the terms of a compromise failing which it left power to him to launch a mass struggle so as to vindicate the nation's cause. To the re-stated terms the British will say "no", or rather they will say that they cannot consider them as they are not supported by other sections of the Indian people, particularly the Muslim League.

Then, we are led to the second question: will Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah come together and reach an agreement? I believe on the side of Gandhiji there is all the desire and willingness to do so, but I doubt if Mr. Jinnah will respond. So far, Congress-League talks did not make even a beginning because the League insisted on treating the Congress as a representative of the Hindu community and the League as the sole representative body of the Muslim community. I am afaird Mr. Jinnah will once again raise this initial obstacle, because he does not think he can get such terms from the Congress as from the British. But I should add that if the Punjab experience has at all embittered him against the British and accordingly if he does abstain from creating any initial difficulty and therefore if negotiations do actually start, there will not be any insurmountable difficulty in an agreement being reached between him

and Gandhiji. After all, raising of that primary and insurmountable difficulty only mean that Mr. Jinnah was determined not to come to terms with the Congress. Otherwise there was no sense in creating it. However, as I have said above, if serious negotiations do actually start between him and Gandhiji, I see no reason why they should not bear fruit. I have a feeling that once Pakistan is reduced to definite terms, vivisection of the country will not be found to be necessary. I think it is possible for Mr. Jinnah to have quite a satisfactory Pakistan and at the same time for Gandhiji to have one un-divided India. But to the question if Mr. Jinnah will be agreeable to talk seriously, my answer still is seventy-five per cent no.

If, therefore, there is no agreement between the Congress and the League, British propaganda will be vindicated and the release of Gandhiji will prove to have been a blessing for the British Government. Accordingly it is most essential to be very cautious about starting negotiations with Mr. Jinnah. To my mind, Gandhiji should on no account launch upon any such conversations till he is given reasonable proof by mediators that his overtures will find response. If, on the other hand, no such proof is forthcoming, Gandhiji and all his well-wishers and nationally minded persons should proceed in such a manner that the British do not again get an opportunity to throw dust into the world's eyes by advertising our disunity. Rather, steps should be so taken that the real intention of Britain is brought out,

i.e., her intention not to part with power. Gandhiji should say that he would produce national unity—as he would undoubtedly be able to do—within a fortnight if Britain agreed to hand over complete power here and now and not after the war. It should be said on behalf of the Congress that it is useless to discuss the sharing of anything unless the thing sought after is within one's grasp or is soon to be. The merit of this approach—even if it would be otherwise fruitless—is that it would bring out Britain's real game in India and strengthen the cause of Indian freedom here and abroad. This in itself would not be a small gain.

May 8, 1944.

GANDHIJI'S RELEASE *(Contd.)*

There are two other points in regard to Gandhiji's release which should be noted. A point which bears upon Congress-League agreement is that the Congress is prepared to leave the issue of Pakistan for post-war consideration if it is found necessary to do so in the interest of a war-time agreement with the League and the formation of a national Government. I believe this was made clear at the time of the Cripps talks. This attitude of the Congress should make a Congress-League settlement exceedingly easy if Mr. Jinnah were at all keen about it.

The other point is in regard to the August Resolution. Government have made such a lot of fuss about it. I think Gandhiji should point out that all this fuss has been beside the point and in the nature of a smoke-screen for a set policy of repression. The August Resolution has two parts: one ideological or explanatory and the other practical or operative. With regard to the first part, which is nine-tenths of the Resolution, it may be pointed out that it merely explains authoritatively the position of the Congress with

respect to the war and British policy in India, and lays down the conditions on which the Congress might enter into an alliance with the United Nations, and demands the transference of the necessary political power. With respect to this part it may be stressed that neither can the Congress change these fundamental views which have been repeatedly set forth in many Congress declarations nor can their expression be justifiably sought to be suppressed.

As regards the second part of the Resolution, Gandhiji may point out that while it charged him to launch a mass movement of civil disobedience in certain events, effect was not actually given to it. Indeed, no effect could be given to it till attempts had not been made by negotiation with the British Government to secure satisfaction of the demand expressed in the first part of the Resolution. Therefore, it is difficult to understand what is meant by withdrawal of the August Resolution. If it means the repudiation of the fundamental Congress position in relation to the war, not a moment's thought need be given to it, as the Congress cannot give up its very life-breath. If it means on the other hand withdrawal of civil disobedience, the demand is ridiculous because no civil disobedience was actually started by the Congress, the outburst of civil resistance and other anti-British activities were only in the nature of a reaction to the sudden arrest of the Working Committee, Gandhiji and other Congress leaders. In these circumstances, the withdrawal by Gandhiji or the Working Committee of some-

thing which they did not start is meaningless. Whatever anti-British activity there is would automatically cease if the Government released all Congressmen and established the *status quo* as in August 1942.

The demand for the repudiation of the August Resolution may have yet another meaning. It may be intended to ask the withdrawal of the 'threat' of civil disobedience which is held out in the Resolution. This is a childish demand. It means that the people of India are to have no sanction behind them when their representatives sit around the table with the representatives of the British Government, particularly when the other party has a large army, a whole system of ordinance rule and other dictatorial powers. It means that India would achieve her freedom merely on the strength of the sweet reasonableness of her plenipotentiaries, their command over English, and other virtues. Whether the threat of mass action is expressed or implicit, it is ever present by virtue of the very nature of Indo-British relationship. Non-violent mass action has been the foundation of Congress power since 1921, and whether it is expressly mentioned in a resolution or not should be immaterial to those who have to accept the Congress for what it is.

It, therefore, seems to me that all this fuss about withdrawing the August Resolution is merely British humbug and a political excuse for the continuation of the deadlock.

May 10, 1944.

GANDHIJI'S RELEASE *(Contd.)*

The British like to be told how they blunder along and finally arrive, despite the studied mess they make of things and affairs. They positively revel in their blundering, for does not an amused, critical but admiring, world tell them how finally they emerge from every crisis with their feet firmly planted on *terra firma?*

The Government of India communique stressed with a trace of over anxiety the fact that Gandhiji had been released solely on ground of health. One wonders if Gandhiji's illness really gave the British one more chance to pull out of another of their blunderings and land on solid earth with but a few bruises and scratches and a smile of self-satisfaction on their lips, and, most important of all, with a face kept perfectly intact. Next to the Chinese, the British probably attach more importance to face than any other people; and can it be doubted that Gandhiji's illness enabled them as nothing else could to save their face?

The situation in which the British found themselves was none too comfortable for them. India continued to be sullen, and economically things did not look too bright. In spite of all propaganda a considerable part of the world remained critical, even hostile, to British policy in India. The Congress seemed to be far from dead as election results showed, Gandhiji continued to be the centre round whom all Indian politics revolved. Meanwhile, the Japanese had invaded India and the Japanese propaganda drive must have been causing some anxiety. As in the case of all security prisoners, Gandhiji also must have been presented with a charge-sheet to which he must have returned altogether too uncomfortable a reply. Some day that reply would be published and the world would know how Britain continued to keep in prison a man who was not put to any trial at law and who professed the noblest possible ideals of democracy, peace and international brotherhood. No, the situation was far from comfortable for Churchill, Amery & Co. Not that they were prepared even then to do anything to remedy the situation. At this very psychological moment came Gandhiji's illness as a golden opportunity for the British to get out of their self-created difficulty.

Twice in recent years Gandhiji's health broke down seriously in prison. At the time of his Harijan fast he was believed to be practically at death's door when he was set at freedom. Last year, again during a fast, death closed in on him but the British were content to look on and let him die. This time, however, he has been released,

though from press reports he does not seem to have been anywhere near death's premises. A sudden forth-springing of solicitude for the condemned rebel's life particularly when that life was not in any great danger, hardly squares with recent British policy. The conclusion is, therefore, forced upon one that the real reason for his release is political. Having taken the first step without making any commitments whatever, the British can well sit back and watch developments. If they suit their policy they can take the other necessary steps without any sense of embarrassment. If not, well Gandhi may go back to his dreary Wardha and vegetate.

At least, that is what the British would like him to do. But they hardly know their Gandhi. That restless soul will vegetate nowhere—in or out of prison. His release is a golden opportunity not only for the British but for Gandhiji also and there can be no doubt that he will make golden use of it to serve whatever purpose and policy he may have at present.

May 13, 1944.

THE 'ECONOMIST' DISCOVERS TRUTH

A few days ago I remarked how perfectly the British comprehend the truth when they wish to do so. But the truth that sits at the heart of the British Empire is so hideous and monstrous that no Briton dare look into its face too long or too often. Therefore they must need varnish and paint that monstrosity so that it may become decent enough to look at and to exhibit in the imperial window-case.

The *Economist* has accomplished such a dressing up of the truth in an article on Gandhiji's release, reproduced in the *Tribune* of yesterdate.

First, it has been pointed out that the real reason behind Gandhiji's release is political. But when this political motive is analysed, we witness all the tortuous processes of reasoning that lying must adopt. It seems that in the ultimate analysis Gandhiji's release is a counterblast to the "Tata Birla Plan". It has been pointed out that the rich capitalists of India have so long been the

power behind the throne in the Congress but they have now been thoroughly disillusioned or disappointed with the 'politicians' and have made a bid by publishing the Plan to take a direct hand in affairs and occupy the throne themselves. Further, they want to industrialize the country quickly and in order to do this they are determined to give the go-by to democracy and the noble principle of laissez-faire in business, and are plainly and unabashedly seeking to establish a sort of capitalist dictatorship over India. Gandhi, on the other hand, is known to be an agrarian in economics and an advocate of handicrafts, and, in politics, a liberal democrat. What more natural for the British, therefore, than to release Gandhi so that he might foil the attempt of Indian capital to capture the Congress and establish over the country a capitalist dictatorship ? Younger Congressmen and Mr. Rajagopalachari among the older ones are expected to come to Gandhiji's aid!

Surely, the editor of the *Economist* is not so foolish as all this, nor so ignorant of Indian politics. But the threat to British capital is so great from any real scheme—capitalist or socialist—of Indian Industrial development that the mouthpieces of British capital must blare forth lies, raise false alarms, fetch up smoke-bombs and do everything else that might save the interests of British capital in India. As a part of this offensive the *Economist* has thrown a hint to those sections of British Labour that have been rather sympathetic to Indian freedom that they might ask themselves if in the name of freedom they would like to hand

over 400 million helpless people to the exploitation of a handful of Indian capitalists. No doubt, that section of British Labour—the dominant section at the present time—that is as zealous a champion of the Empire as Churchill and Amery, will draw strength from the lesson that the *Economist* has endeavoured to teach them.

The *Economist* has also attempted to draw the Muslim League in its trail. It has shown that the League too stands if not for democracy, also not for the type of capitalist rule and exploitation adumbrated in the Plan. Moreover, the League is opposed a hundred per cent to the rich Hindu industrialist class, i.e., the Tatas, Dalals, Mathais, Ispahanis, Haroons, Daoods, Currimbhoys, Saits, all of whom are of course Hindus ! A well-informed journal like the *Economist* cannot be ignorant of the committee appointed by the League to prepare a scheme for the industrial and economic development of Pakistan, but truth, Sir, is a hobgoblin of little minds who have never ruled empires nor ever will.

May 17, 1944

GANDHIJI'S RELEASE *(Contd.)*

It strikes me that irrespective of Congress League agreement or settlement with the British Government, the Japanese invasion of India may offer Gandhiji such a wide and vital scope of activity that he may be able to turn his August defeat into a resounding victory and also present to the world a course of action which might have a profound influene over international relations. From the beginning of the war Gandhiji has been insisting on non-violent resistance to aggression. The Congress, no doubt, disagreed with him and a situation arose when a serious split in its ranks appeared imminent. But apart from the resignation of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan from the Working Committee, the threatened split matured no further, though it was widely known at that time that if the Congress assumed responsibility or an armed defence of India, Gandhiji's ideological followers in the Congress, such as Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Acharya Kriplani, Dr.

Profulla Ghosh and, of course, Badshah Khan would leave the Congress, though they would offer no resistance to the Congress policy of violence.

It seems to me that Gandhiji's opportunity has at last arrived with the Japanese on Indian soil. Leaving aside the problem of a political settlement for the Working Committee to solve—if and when the Committee are in a position to do so—Gandhiji may well ask the British Government to be allowed to organize a non-violent resistance to the Japanese invasion. For this he may not even ask for a release of his associates, which in dignity he ought not to do : he may only gather together those who have already been released and issue a general appeal to every Indian to join his colours on certain strict terms. In this plan of resistance to the aggressor, Gandhiji, of course, will not co-operate with the British and the United Nation's war against Japan : he will indeed leave Lord Mountbatten's plans alone. All he would ask for is to be allowed to go to the villages of Assam, East Bengal and Orissa to organize his battalions of passive resisters to the Japanese offensive. If Gandhiji is able to do this he would succeed in giving such a demonstration to the world of his principle of non-violence as would not only add a crowning chapter to his life's work but also open up a new path of hope for the world that is foundering today in human blood.

There seem to be two difficulties, however. One is Gandhiji's health. In order to organize

such an army of passive-resisters and to lead them to 'battle', Gandhiji must become at least 20 years younger. Can he, yogi as he is, perform this miracle ? Who can tell ? It seems to be extremely difficult, but not altogether impossible, not for Gandhiji.

The second difficulty is this in view of recent and present British policy in India, will Gandhiji feel called upon to undertake such a programme ? Among other things, can he ever trust the British to leave him full freedom to develop his plans which can never succeed under the limitations of ordinance rule. Gandhiji is not likely to launch upon what will undoubtedly be his greatest experiment in an atmosphere of mass mistrust and hatred of the British on the one hand and British mistrust and oppression on the other. It seems to me that Gandhiji can never undertake such a stupendous task unless he has the whole people behind him in the first place, and a government, in the second place, that is if not co-operative at least not obstructive. As long as present British policy continues in India, can even Gandhiji ever hope to rally the people around him for the purpose in question and also can he ever expect that the imperialist government will leave him in peace to develop his weapon and his plans ? One must reluctantly answer both these questions in the negative. It seems inescapable that only a free people can resist aggression, whether violently or non-violently. A people that is already bound down in slavery can do little of either effectively. It has to fight on two fronts and

combine as best as possible resistance to aggression with resistance to pre-existing slavery. That has been our lot since the war began and remains so today.

May 19, 1944.

MAURICE HINDUS.

Since I finished *Russia Fights on* I have been wanting to make a comment or two. Maurice Hindus in this book may strike one as a very subtle Stalinist propagandist, who frankly admits Stalin's mistakes and his monstrosities, only to lead his reader to love and admire the more the Russian Vozhd. But I don't think there is any conscious subtlety of this sort in Maurice Hindus; at any rate, not in this book. His attitude towards Stalin and the Russian ruling clique is to my mind determined by a much simpler emotional factor. Hindus was born a Russian and his entire attitude towards present-day Russia is produced by a nostalgic nationalism. The fact that Russia and America are allies makes his Russian nationalism compatible with American citizenship. Hindus is just everlastingly grateful to Stalin for making Russia within twenty years a first class military and industrial power. The deeds of the Red Army have washed away all the sins that Stalin and his junta might have committed—for, mind you,

Hindus does not concede all that Stalin's critics say, though he does most of it.

This is why *Russia Fights On* is such a paradoxical book. Hindus, whatever else he may be, gives the certain impression that he believes in the democratic way of life. And though he is not a socialist, he could not be unaware that a socialist society should be far more democratic and humane than the type of democracies that exist today. Yet, he recounts story after story of Stalinist oppression and retrogression without caring to question their need or their place in a socialist society. He pours scorn enough over foreign radicals and communists who went to Russia as to a pilgrimage, and returned disillusioned to write about the dream they lost. These were all faint-hearted, make-belief idealists who could never understand realities and never allowed the glories of the Red Army to dissipate their petty doubts and soft scruples.

Yes, there were purges, those who had hidden valutas or gold were tortured; the kulaks were mercilessly destroyed; inequality of incomes has increased instead of decreasing; there is no democracy in the Communist Party which is ruled by a junta; in matters social such as education, marriage, divorce, there has been a great reaction; and many other things said about Russia and Stalin are true; but what of it ? Can't you see the exploits of the Red Army, the courage of the guerillas, the resistance and endurance of the home front? What more do you want? Let squeamish democrats wail and squeal. For me Mother Russia is

everything. And she lives today and shall live tomorrow and Fascist hordes shall never subdue her—thanks to Stalin, the worthy son. Therefore, whatever others say I say 'Stalin be Praised'.

For Maurice Hindus, the over-grown Russian peasant lad, all this may be satisfying enough and simple enough. But can those who have a serious concern with problems of social and political organization ever accept the view that the Red Army and Russia's fighting strength must justify and vindicate all Stalin's follies, brutalities and vulgarizations of socialism? I am afraid not. They must ask whether all those things were essential, whether there were no other alternatives, whether Russia would not have been stronger instead of weaker if they had been followed, whether the history of Europe during the last twenty years and the history of this war itself could not have been different and far more satisfactory if Russia had followed different policies, whether Nazism could not have been prevented from winning in Germany and whether in that case Fascism could have become the danger it came to be, whether the Spanish Revolution should have failed, whether the Labour Movement, both in its national and international aspects, could not have been united or at least better integrated—all these questions and many more they must ask. And I am afraid some of their answers may not be to the liking of Russian nationalists, whether naturalised in the United States or born and bred in India.

May 27, 1944.

MR. ROOSEVELT PRAYS TO GOD

It is reported that President Roosevelt offered prayers to God, to bless those who "this day have set out upon a mighty endeavour", that is to say upon the deliverance of France and of Europe. In the course of the prayer the President says: "They (i.e., the soldiers of the Allies) fight not for lust of conquest. They fight to let justice arise and tolerance and goodwill among all Thy people..... Help us conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogance." Finally he asks God to "lead us" to a peace "that will let all men live in Freedom."

Having succeeded so long in duping their people, the leaders of this war, Axis or United, have been encouraged to believe that they could also succeed in duping their God. What God will do in the future may be left to the servants of God to speculate upon. What He has done in the past and is doing today, millions and millions of His suffering creatures, famished, diseased and dying, know only too well.

The Allies, says Roosevelt, fight not for lust of conquest. No, they fight for the lust of their *past*

conquests. (Recall Churchill's declaration about the liquidation of the Empire). They also fight for the world's trade, for the world's oil and rubber, for the world's myriad raw materials. Roosevelt wants God to help him crush the apostles of greed and racial arrogance. Yes, God should do that, but spare those who force Negroes to travel in separate compartments, eat in separate restaurants, live in separate quarters, pray in separate churches, who deny them positions in business and government, who deny them positions even in that very army which is to crush the apostles of race arrogance. He should also spare those who do not want coloured peoples to buy property and settle in 'white' areas, who steal the land from the native African and pen him down 'within narrow strips of inferior and disease-filled soil; also those who want a whole continent, of which they occupy but a tiny fringe, reserved for Whites; also the Burra Sahibs of the East, who have been exemplary specimens of racial equality and goodwill.

Finally, Roosevelt asks God for a peace in which all men will live in freedom. Here also God should distinguish between men and men. He should preserve men of North and South and Central Africa, of Near and Far and Middle East, of South East Asia, from the evils of freedom, for freedom in their case would only mean chaos and anarchy. Therefore, men of India, Burma, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Indo China, Hongkong, Korea and the coloured men of the whole of Africa must not be free. So God's will be done.

June 8, 1944.

'ALL OUR TOMORROWS'*

This is a remarkable book by the author of *Insanity Fair*, *Disgrace Abounding*, and A *Prophet At Home.* I have not read his other books which judging from the present one must be worth reading if for nothing else at least to gain an insight into current English history.

Reed writes with vigour, more vigour than one finds in many an English writer of the present generation, and is always in dead earnest. He hates cant and faces truth boldly as he sees it. Above everything he is a real English patriot, for his patriotism is not that false political commodity which is paddled from the conventional platfroms to which politicians pay homage and which hides the selfish interests of the British ruling class. He loves England fervently and the English people, the common English people. His book is addressed not to the politicians or the great political parties but to the common man (and woman)

**All Our Tomorrows* by Douglas Reed, Jonathan Cape, London, 1943.

in England—the miner, the mechanic, the soldier, the bus driver, the waitress, the clerk, the farmer. There is a note of despair in his appeal for, though he believes in the common man, he feels that if he does not awake in time, all would be lost, even victory in this war, of which he is now assured.

June 16, 1944.

GANDHIJI'S PRESENT POSITION

Due to censorship here I have not been able to read all of Gandhiji's statements and letters. I do not, therefore, have a complete picture before me of what is in his mind today. However, judging from whatever I have been able to read, it appears to me that he has once again set out on the other half of his two-fold policy. As the British have a two-fold policy, that of repression now and concession again, so Gandhiji too has a two-fold policy, which is nevertheless a composite whole and follows a single unswerving goal. The two parts of his policy are direct action when the situation is ripe for it; and negotiation, temporizing, constructive work when that is not possible. Clearly the present is not a fit time for an upsurge of direct action. August 1942, on the other hand, was eminently fit for it. But British prescience out-manoeuvred Gandhiji then, and nobody can blame him today if he is trying in his own way, as he alone can, to repair the wreckage caused by

British policy in 1942 and regain the initiative for the Congress in Indian politics. Whichever turn Gandhiji's policy takes, there can be no question that he pursues the same, unchanging goal—the independence of the country. After the events of 1942 not even the most fiery revolutionary should doubt this.

In concrete terms, Gandhiji seems determined to bring about an Indo-British settlement, and to that end he has put forth demands (in the Gelder talks) that are, in his own words, not as high as those of August, 1942. He has done so because, as he himself says, conditions today are not the same as they were in 1942. Writing on this point, the *Tribune* of today says: "There are some who suggest that the change in Gandhiji's attitude is due to the change in the war situation and because the war has taken a turn for the better, from the point of view of the Allies, he has descended from the high horse he was riding. Assuming for argument's sake that this was so, why should not the Government take advantage of the change and put an end to a state of affairs which was a perpetual challenge to their professed aims? For our part we know that the changed attitude of Mahatma Gandhi is due not so much to the war situation as to the internal circumstances in the country, the arrest of the Congress leaders, the disturbances which broke out after it, the ruthless methods adopted by the Government in suppressing them, the famine in Bengal and the acute suffering and distress produced among the people because of rising prices and dwindling supplies. If, under

the circumstances, Gandhiji felt that it was the duty of the Congress to accept even a restricted measure of responsibility for the government of the country, why should any one blame him or seek to attribute unworthy motives to him?".

It seems to me that the *Tribune* is rightly interpreting Gandhiji's mind. Personally, I do not think an Indo-British settlement at this time would be of advantage to India. I also thought we had crossed the Rubicon in 1942 and whether we or Pompey won, there was no turning back for us. However, if I were free today, I think I would have desisted from saying or doing anything to hinder Gandhiji. We fought in 1942 and after and we lost—though only in the sense that we failed to reach the goal. But the experience the country went through then did raise it to a higher level of political strength and consciousness. We did go forward and not backward, but not forward enough to reach the goal. Only in that sense we failed. Today, when Gandhiji himself is out and has decided to pursue a certain course of action, it is not for us to obstruct. If he succeeds in his attempt we can wait and see what result it produces. On the other hand, if he fails, he will have come on top, wiped off the effect of British repression and cleared the way for future action.

July 15, 1944.

THE BRICKS OF SOCIETY

In the conditions in which the vast majority of our people live, it is natural that our first thought should turn to the means to secure their material well-being. The greater part of humanity shares with us the woes of poverty and misery and, therefore, in the west as well as in the awakening countries of the East, such as China, the most dominant social problem is the problem of poverty or, broadly speaking, the economic problem. Undoubtedly, first man must live and, therefore, those conditions have first to be created in which he can live happily, i. e., as far as happiness can be derived from the satisfaction of material needs.

But in laying the foundations of the Indian nation and the future free society of India, it is not sufficient to pay attention to the material aspects of life alone. The human aspect, though not urgently demanding our present attention, is perhaps even more important than that of mate-

rial well-being. The human aspect, which I have in mind, goes beyond the question of social relationship which indeed will be largely, if not wholly, dictated by the nature of the economic organisation; it goes beyond that of education and art and culture. That aspect goes deeper than all these and is their basis, viz., the character and the type of men that we shall rear in a free India. We socialists have suffered from a good deal of fatalistic thinking on this point. We have, no doubt, always conceived of man in a socialist society as an educated, developed, dutiful, good member of society. We probably never had a clear conception of these virtues, but we believed complacently that when economic life had been socialised and acquisitiveness and exploitation removed from society, man in the course of the social process would evolve automatically into a paragon of virtues. But recent experiences have shown that there is as much need of fixing targets and assuring planned progress towards them in the field of character-building of a nation as in the economic field. Indeed, it seems doubtful if the economic and political gains can become permanent without a concurrent development of the human material. On the other hand, even if those gains do become stable, is there much value in creating a society of prosperous but brutalized men? If in the course of socialization of economy and political dictatorship, or in the course of any other process of development that aims at material happiness, man becomes insensitive to cruelty, an intellectual automaton, a moral coward; if lying, deceit, dishonesty, hatred, instead of meeting with univer-

sal condemnation, and therefore being liquidated, are exalted into a principle of state-craft and party-management, all who are not drunk with power must be seriously concerned about the wisdom of such a one-sided development.

What I wish to drive at is that political freedom and economic regeneration and prosperity should not be the only two aims of our nation-builders. A nation is made up of individuals, so it should also be our aim to so mould the character of every individual that we become eventually not only a nation of prosperous but also of good men. Clearly, this is not merely a question of education, though education must be the chief instrument of character-building. The question is of discovering and establishing those basic values of life which should determine the principles of education and govern the entire corporate life of the people and their relations with other peoples. According to Dr. Bhagwan Das, in the view of Manu and the ancient law-givers and seers, all human activity should be organically and consistently related to the well-ascertained and clearly-defined objects of life. The ascertainment of these objects, however, took the ancient seers into the domain of metaphysics and they developed the Science of the Self (Atma Vidya) as the basis of all the sciences and as a compass to guide man on the ocean of life. But here a great obstacle will face us. Apart from the validity of the assumptions of Jiva and Brahma and therefore of Atma-Vidya or Brahma-Vidya, we have in our country several religions and consequently several varieties of metaphysics.

And, though great minds of all religions point out the essential unity underlying them, the mass of the people is most reluctant to seek unity in its varied religious practices. Therefore, it seems to me that, important as the question of essential and basic values of life is, we would be putting our finger into a hornet's nest if we proposed to go to metaphysic and the 'science' of the super-natural to discover those values. It may be left to the various religions to discover them in the light of the teachings of their own scriptures and to inculcate them into their followers. But the State or the Nation though concerned primarily with the secular aspects of life, cannot ignore the task of character-building of the citizen. The citizen of free India must be a good man, no matter what may be his religion, occupation and station in life. I believe it is possible without, on the one hand, plunging into the multitudinous seas of religious differences, and on the other, without restricting ourselves to any one school of philosophy allowing the materialist as well as the idealist full scope for participation in national education and character-building, to agree upon the basic values of life that should inspire all human relationships in our society and be the corner-stone of our education, the common platform of all political parties, the matrix of our economic life.

Among socialists there is not a little confusion over public and individual morality. Marx and the other great socialist writers laid bare the historical connection between reigning mora

standards and class relationships in society. In doing this they had little difficulty in showing that moral codes are usually psychological devices for the preservation of the rights and privileges and enjoyments of the dominant classes in society. But thereby they did not mean to suggest that in socialist society, which shall have no ruling class, there should be no public or individual morality. They did perhaps put too much faith in the automatic growth of socialist morality, which, being free from the taint of being a handmaiden to class oppression, would be superior to all moral codes, except perhaps to those that obtained in the idyllic days of primitive communism. I have indicated above that this expected automatic growth of a new morality is at best too tardy and there seems to be real need here for the socialist to lay down the essential virtues of the social, therefore, ideal man. It seems to me to be unreasonable to plan with meticulous care the production of pigs, for instance, but to leave it to blind social forces to produce man. Planning and conscious direction of every aspect of life is implicit in a socialist society, and in the sphere of morality, as in others, can we plan without a definition of the objectives, the targets. In other words, socialists must fix *a priori* the moral standards and concepts of their society, modifying and developing them as social progress goes apace.

Apart from the question of socialist morality, or the code of morals that shall be suited to a socialist society, when the founders of socialism pointed out the relativity of morality, as of truth, they never meant that there was no such

thing as morality at all. While Engels brilliantly demonstrated the relativity of truth, he made withering fun of those who denied that there was nothing at all that was true. Likewise with morality. Though moral codes have a direct relation with the class nature of society, it does not follow that there is nothing that can be considered moral. It is a different matter that certain types of manifestly immoral behaviour, such as killing or deceiving or lying to the enemy, have been considered by the socialist fathers as of inevitable necessity in the class war and therefore permissible in that sphere. But thereby killing and lying do not become moral virtues, which may be glorified into eternal revolutionary principles. Even the most uncompromising revolutionary socialist must consider lying and killing as immoral, to be resorted to only for the sake of the revolution. I am aware that according to Gandhiji one may not use immoral means even in a virtuous cause. I admit that his is the nobler path. I am also conscious of the warning that Russia has given us all. We have seen that thos who used lying and killing as means of the Revolution became so habituated to them and were so debased by them that they did not hesitate to use them as means either of personal aggrandizement or party factionalism or state management, dispensing with party and social democracy. Notwithstanding all this, I am not prepared to reject the use, within limits, of immoral means for moral purposes–if for nothing else, because I do not possess the requisite moral strength to do otherwise.

Returning to the fundamental values of life ours is a country of great diversities, but to my mind there is a very large and essential unity that characterises us as Indians. This unity is not in the outward forms—obviously—but in those essential matters which go to determine human character. It should not be difficult anywhere in the world to tell an Indian—no matter to what religion or caste or territory he belonged—from men of other nationalities. A common history and a common geography have moulded us all into a common nationality, which is as distinct as any in the world. I therefore make bold to assume that it would not be at all difficult for the leaders of our country, irrespective of differences of party or programme, secularly to determine the common values and virtues and aims of life which should inspire and govern all the secular aspects of our individual and national life.

July 22, 1944.

ENEMIES OF FREEDOM

A Patna report (*Tribune*, 1. 8. '44) says that consequent on Gandhiji's recent statement on underground activities, the Bihar Provincial Satyagrah Council has been dissolved. This is natural enough. But what does not appear to be equally natural is a further report of a meeting of Gaya Congressmen which expressed the view that activities such as sabotage were the "work of people who were enemies of the freedom of India and were out to discredit the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi". Something similar seems to have been said in a pamphlet circulating in Purnea, claiming to speak on behalf of local Congressmen.

It makes me sad to reflect on this inglorious end of "the last fight for freedom"—a fight, which, it now appears, the Congress never started, though thousands of poor fools died in the course of it and many more thousands lost their homes and properties and yet many more thousands lost their "freedom". They were enemies of the freedom

of their country anyway, so what does it matter ?

Violence, it seems, is a terrible sin, but only when used against British rule. For, don't you see how Mahatma Gandhi himself is straining his utmost to have a 'National Government' established, at the command of which hundreds of thousands of Congressmen—the young ones, of course—will shoulder a gun and march forth in the shadow of fluttering tricolours to murder and mutilate the brutal Jap and the bestial German ? That would be violence too but not sinful, for, were it so, how could Gandhiji himself be so anxious to make it possible for Congressmen to commit sin ?

Gandhiji is a deadly dialectician and there is no doubt he could make any intelligent person understand his logic. The trouble is I have no intelligence.

But even I cannot help noticing that during former attempts to set up a National Government, first made by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Shri Rajagopalachari, then by Jawaharlalji and Maulana Saheb, Gandhiji was, at least, not personally involved. As such he was in a position to preach his doctrine of unalloyed non-violence from his high, unsullied pedestal. But this time, third time during the war that such an attempt is being made in the name of the Congress, Gandhiji in his own person is endeavouring with all his heart and soul to have a national government formed in this country. No doubt, he still protests that for himself he is a hundred per cent man of peace,

and says that after the national government has come into being he will retire from active direction of Congress policy, or such part of it as may relate to that government. This is as if Gandhiji were to drag Jawaharlal out of prison, put a gun into his hand and tell him "now go and shoot the Japanese, I do not personally approve of it, but since you were always so keen on the United Nations and China, here is your chance; take it and be damned". (I mean all of it, except the last two words, which may be taken as my own humble contribution to the resolution of the deadlock.)

There is something, it seems to me, in what Mr. Jinnah said the other day about Gandhiji's various personalities or 'capacities'. It is conceivable that Gandhiji may explain all that he is doing by saying that in attempting to resolve the deadlock, he is not acting in his personal capacity, but is trying, as far as humanly possible—one of his favourite phrases—to interpret and express the mind of the Working Committee and the Congress generally, as he feels he is bound to do. The Congress is in prison today largely due to his policy and so, he might say, it is incumbent on him to interpret the Congress and act accordingly.

That is dialectics for you—Hegelian, Marxian, Gandhian.

In spite of my deep love and reverence for Gandhiji, he sometimes bewilders me. But as I said a few days ago, I would not, if I were free, obstruct him, and for the reasons I gave then. I like less and less what he is doing, but as on last

Friday, I think, Churchill, Amery & Co., will not let me down. There does not seem to be any danger of a national government being actually formed in war-time and, therefore, there seems to be no cause to worry. In fact, in these circumstances, whatever Gandhiji does to bring about an Indo-British settlement is bound to develop the country's political consciousness and stimulate the already pervasive anti-British feeling. A few years after the war, we shall see what we shall see.

August 1, 1944.

"JAIL JOURENY"*

Jim Phalen is an Irish revolutionary who was sentenced for life by the British. His father and grandfather were in British prisons too. Though *Jail Journey* is autobiographical, Phalen has written very little about himself. So the book has created in me a powerful desire to know more about him. He seems to be an extraordinary man and an extraordinarily powerful writer. I doubt whether anything as raw and alive and vital has appeared in the English language in recent years.

Jail Journey is a description of the life of prisoners in three British prisons: Maidstone, Dartmoor and Parkhurst, on the Isle of Wight. Britain is a leader of modern civilization and *Jail Journey* is a sad commentary on modern civilized society. It is not Phalen's purpose to point out the evils of an evil system so as to enable kind-hearted people to institute jail reforms. He merely lifts, or rather tears up, the veil that

* *Jail Journey:* Jim Phalen; London, 1940.

surrounds prisons in this self-satisfied modern world and enables all who have eyes to see what man makes of man. Those who will look at that picture will reach only one conclusion: a British prison is a factory where man is turned into a mindless animal and where ultimately every human attribute is pressed out of him. That is the distilled essence of British penology at work.

Whether Phalen's book will create a revolution in penology it is too much to say, but his struggle against a soul-less, animalised system will remain a rare human epic of modern times.

I also believe that he has added a few words to the English language, such as "Madam de Luce" and "mix". I do not mean that these words will find their way into the Oxford dictionary, but they will nevertheless have a wide and increasing use. A hundred years later the Oxford lexicographer might include them into his time-honoured circle.

One of the books I would like very much to read at present is the *Life*†.

August 4, 1944.

† *Life*, an earlier book by Jim Phalen.

"MAKE THIS THE LAST WAR"*

This is an English edition of the book published first in America in 1942. Julian Huxley writes the Introduction. Straight is an editor and Washington correspondent of the *New Republic* and "is now training to be a pilot in the U. S. Army Air Corps". As a student he lived in England and travelled in Europe, Russia, Africa and India.

Straight is a wide-awake economist and has written a brilliant book. But, unfortunately, brilliant books do not seem to affect the progress of humanity. As the Allied Powers approach victory, many of the hopes that burnt so brightly in the hearts of men like Straight are already turned to ash. The United Nations Ltd., is nearing liquidation and the Atlantic Charter has shrunk to the dimensions of the English Channel. The author has referred again and again to India as a test-case. The result of that test is no longer in doubt. Both Capital and Labour in Britain are agreed that India must remain the bulwark of

* Michael Straight: *Make This The Last War*, London, 1943.

the British Empire and of British domination over Africa and Asia that it has always been. Even in 1943 the result of the test was known. Julian Huxley, who inherits a great name, wrote in the Introduction in regard to the colonies and India in particular, "he (i.e., the author) seems to me not to be aware of some of the aspects of the problem, or of the constructive new policies that have been taking shape in Britain in regard to India in 1943" Has not somebody said: "Scratch a Briton and you will find a Tory?" Huxley, I believe, is one of the bright lights of the British Left or whatever they call themselves. And, at the very moment when British rule in India revealed itself in its darkest shape, this celebrated scientist discovered "constructive new policies" taking shape in regard to India! Lest the reader should think that Huxley is referring to the Cripps proposals which probably Straight did not know about when he wrote his book early in 1942, I hasten to inform him that he will find a penetrating analysis of the Cripps fiasco on page 142. I shall quote just two sentences: "*Yet the Cripps Plan was cast in the classical mould of meeting a present crisis* by promising reforms at a future date and reserving present powers to the Viceroy. It was not based on an appreciation of the true impact upon India of the fall of Singapore and the extent to which Indian demands had shifted from the assurance of a constituent assembly in the future to the granting of immediate participation in the war effort". So much for constructive new policies and 'left' British intellectuals.

Straight's suggestions can be compressed under three large heads: (*i*) a federation of Europe, (*ii*) liquidation of empires and imperial economics, (*iii*) setting up the United Nations as a world organisation of co-operative economy, pledged to democratic ways of life, and to which other nations could be admitted on fulfilment of certain conditions. These are very large objectives and there is no hope that any of them will be realized in the manner Straight visualises them. A European federation may be brought about by the European people themselves if they are united enough and clear enough about their aims. But such a federation must arise against the wishes of the Allies, including Russia. I do not think Russia would want a strong Europe, federal or otherwise. England and America would try to set up France and Italy on their legs. Russia would try to bolster up the Slav nations near her frontier. Central Europe I believe, would again be left as an amorphous mass, with only Czechoslovakia as a crystallized agent, friendly equally to Anglo-America and Russia. In any case, a European federation does not seem to be even a remote possibility.

Liquidation of empires and imperial policies cannot come from the top, that is, on the volition of the imperial powers which one should remember include the U. S. A. which has not inconsiderable economic empire in Central and South America. The empires will no doubt be liquidated, but in a different manner. The spearhead of that process would be, as it is even today, India. China's

regeneration, if it is allowed full scope by America after the war, will be the second powerful nail into the coffin of world empires. Further, the freedom movement in the Islamic countries of the Middle East, mainly of the Arab peoples, would be a fourth blow to the empire in Africa and Asia. India must try to link up all these forces to hasten the process of imperial liquidation.

As for the United Nations, it is just a tremendous hoax. The postwar world is going to be dominated by Anglo-America and the United Nations will be only the band boys. Certain institutions of economic co-operation may be created, but their real objects will not be those that Michael Straight sets before him.

No, the prospect is distinctly gloomy and we might as well prepare for World War No. III. Unless—and this is a very big condition—unless the European Revolution bursts forth with a force sufficient to sweep away the Old Order in Europe clean into the Atlantic.

August 4, 1944.

A REVOLUTION IS DISOWNED BECAUSE IT FAILED

For many weeks now, since Gandhiji made his comments on the August movement, a great bitterness has been gnawing at my heart. I know it is fruitless to be embittered and, perhaps, I take things too seriously. Perhaps my fundamentally socialist way of looking at things leads to my being so completely possessed with political issues of the moment. Anyway, I just cannot shake off this bitterness that daily eats deeper into my being. I cannot say if in the end I should not find myself bidding good-bye to Congress politics to dedicate myself entirely to the labour and socialist movements, such as they may be.

I feel bitter because I find we have been badly let down—not I personally, because I openly preached violence and was, therefore, prepared in the event of failure for severe censure and ex-communi-

cation. But, thousands, rather lakhs, of Indian patriots, have been let down.

That Gandhiji should dissociate himself from violent activities, should even condemn them, was natural ; and nobody can have any justification for expecting him to do otherwise. No one can feel any bitterness on that score. But all that happened after August 8, 1942, was not violence. By far the greater part of those moving events was a non-violent mass demonstration—swift elemental, cyclonic. Nothing like it had happened in 1921, 1930 or 1932. Great deeds of heroism, of non-violent heroism, were performed. They deserve to be made immortal in song and national history. But, I fear, they will rather be treated as ugly spots disfiguring the purity of the Congress name and flag. Already, those who performed deeds of sabotage have been condemned as enemies of their country's freedom. Those thousands of unknown soldiers of independence who participated in the stirring events of 1942 did not stop to consider whether the upheaval that caught them in its surge and flung them onward was technically, in accordance with the niceties of political formulæ, a Congress movement or not. It was sufficient for them to know that their leader had declared an "open rebellion", that before he could give the call he was arrested with his colleagues of the Working Committee, that the entire Congress was outlawed and sought to be suppressed. They answered the (technically ungiven) call, and not for a moment did they doubt that the Congress willed them to fight. And what a fight they put up ! How many lives Were lost,

how many villages ruined, looted and burnt! What unspeakable horrors they faced! But they endured all in the faith that they had done their duty.

That they erred is possible: they did no doubt err, judged from Gandhiji's unapproachable standards. But, because of those errors, is the Congress justified in disowning them and their struggle? It is true Gandhiji has praised their courage and patriotism, including the courage of those who are no more to receive his praise. That is the least that Gandhiji and the Congress owed them. But they owe them much more. What the Congress in sheer fairness owes them is to acclaim their struggle as its own and to receive with gratitude both the poison of their errors and the glory of their deeds. A frank, unashamed, identification with the people in travail—that and not cant and hypocrisy (at the worst) and ratiocination (at the best) is the obligation the Congress bears the people. Those who would churn the ocean must be ready to drink the poison with the nectar.

But Gandhiji has disowned the people's struggle, not only because it was tainted with violence but also because the Congress had never formally "started" a mass struggle. That even a "Congress" struggle, started duly after the fulfilment of all ceremonial technicalities, may also at some stage become tainted with violence, is a possibility that cannot at any time be ignored. But such contamination and impurity cannot convert the whole movement from a Congress campaign to just a mob outbreak. The violence

may be condemned but the struggle as a whole may not be disowned. In the same manner, it appears to me, the struggle of 1942 cannot be disowned on grounds of violence.

As for the argument that the Congress had never formally launched a mass struggle, the argument, of course, is true. The A. I. C. C. had appointed Mahatma Gandhi the sole leader and had asked him to initiate and lead a mass struggle when he should find it necessary. But before Gandhiji was able to do anything about it he found himself in prison. These are facts and nobody can deny them. But I have asked before and ask again : what were the people expected to do in such a condition ? Surely not to lie supine under the boot of the British, just because Gandhiji was not offered an opportunity to lead them personally into battle. It was the duty of Gandhiji and the Working Committee to have considered such a possibility and to have forewarned the people about the course of action they should have followed in that event. But if Gandhiji and the Working Committee failed in their obvious duty, expecting a super-human forbearance and magnanimity from the opponents, should the people too have failed in their obvious duty ? If they had, not only would that have broken the heart of our leaders, but also made the Congress the laughing stock of the entire world. The people took care not to let down the Congress. Is it fair then for the Congress, just because the people made a few mistakes—and that too because their leaders had omitted to

give them timely guidance—to turn round and disown the people's travail and suffering and to tell the world that it takes no responsibility for them at all ?

Furthermore, is it strictly true that the leaders omitted to tell the people anything about their duties in the event of their arrest ? I seem to remember the Congress President eloquently asking every Indian in such an event to become his or her own leader. Is it fair, then, to disown those who did become their own leaders and followed the call of the Congress ? Had they succeeded, the Congress would have got the credit : when they failed should not the failure too be that of the Congress ? Does any one believe that the people would have done anything, had they known that the Congress had given them no call to fight ? After reading Gandhiji's statements I think the fairest thing would have been for him and the Congress President to have frankly told the people on the night of the 8th of August that if by any chance they were to be removed from their midst on the morrow, absolute peace was to be maintained, nor a leaf was to stir, not a blade of grass to turn, the nation's normal course of life was to run on unaltered.

Some may think that I am just being morbid and making an unnecessary fuss over this business of "disowning". After all, what difference does it make if a particular movement is described as a Congress movement or merely as a mass disorder ? Well, may be I am making an unneces-

sary fuss, but it does seem to me that no one likes to be disowned by his family or excommunicated by his community. In history many have preferred death to being put out of the pale.

I shall wait and see if the Working Committee too, like Gandhiji, throws its gallant soldiers overboard. I shiver at that tragic possibility.

August 5, 1944.

THREE BOOKS

I read yesterday and today three little books that Minoo had sent: *Tomorrow II* (edited by Raja Rao and Ahmed Ali, Padma Publishers): *Talking to India* (George Allen and Unwin): *Gandhism Reconsidered* (Dantawala, Padma).

A few words about these. First, Dantawala's pamphlet. I believe the main argument of Dantawala was already coming to be fairly shared even before the war by Socialists in India, at least by Congress Socialists. I had a brief talk, perhaps in 1938, with Professor J. C. Kumarappa at Wardha about these problems. After that talk I had formulated certain general ideas which I had on several occasions shared with various friends, and even placed before small meetings of co-workers. I had spoken to Gandhiji also about them who had asked me to stay at Wardha and work out the details along with Prof. Kumarappa, but unfortunately I never got the time to do so. The main idea I had formed then was of

large-scale industries (in the spheres of production that are, as Prof. Kumarappa said, by their very nature large-scale) under State ownership and management and a countrywide network of co-operative cottage industries: both dovetailed together into one economic whole. Professor Dantawala's pamphlet covers a wider field and makes a very valuable contribution to current political and economic thought. But he seems to have been in a hurry. The questions he deals with and the suggestions he makes are of vital importance to a country about to choose its future mould of life. Most books are written around a single, simple, central theme. Dantawala has at least half a dozen themes, which are all central but far from simple. He should develop his themes, and write so that an average Indian reader, who reads English and is interested in these questions, may understand the problems and the solutions or analyses he offers. As the book stands, only the upper layer of even the Socialist workers can appreciate it or understand it enough to agree or disagree with it. Why should he, for instance, assume that everyone has read Burnham's *Managerial Revolution* and understood the problems it deals with? Further, his treatment of agrarian exploitation in relation to Gandhiji's thinking is unjustifiably too brief. Did he forget the eternal refrain, "India is an agricultural country?" What is the Gandhian solution of this myriad-processed exploitation? Take again that quotation from Nym Wales, it sums up beautifully one of Dantwala's (or Gandhism's) central themes. But he should explain

and illustrate it at adequate length before his average reader will understand all its implications. I think he will render a great service to his country if he gave six months to rewriting his pamphlet, which in many parts is no more than synoptic, into a book say, ten times larger.

The gentlemen who thought they were "Talking to India" were talking largely to themselves or to the shadowy shapes of their own minds, or to Ahmed Ali, Mulk Raj Anand...etc. (which is the same as talking to themselves). There is little in these "literary talks" that would interest India, much less inspire her. It never seems to have occurred to these talkers, some of whom seem to expect a great deal from this country, to give her something more solid than words—words at best are sounds, but these words are hollow sounds, vapid, toneless, false.

Here is, for instance, Mr. Mulkraj Anand... "....We, too, have been part of a vast cultural awakening which witnessed not only the blinding spectacle of a great renaissance of the spirit, but the education of the people through mass literary campaigns, the training of men in the art of physical defence against oppression and aggression. When, for instance, the Indian writers recently resolved to tell the people by word of mouth or through the newspaper, of Japan's intentions with regard to India, they were evidencing to the same heroic spirit as possessed you and our brother writers in China." I do not

know of any mass literary campaigns, though when the Congress Ministry functioned, a serious attempt was made for adult literacy. These literacy campaigns, however, were promptly liquidated as soon as power reverted to the hands of the British governors. Mass literacy and imperialist rule do not hold together, a fact which Mr. Anand might have mentioned for the enlightenment not of his Indian listners, but his British friends. Where he learnt about the training of men in the art of physical defence is a puzzle. Perhaps the British Ministry of information or the India Office supplied him with this Madam de Luce* or perhaps the *People's War* of his Indian communist friends. But the statement that takes the prize is about "the heroic spirit" of the Indian writers "who recently resolved to tell the people" etc., etc. Who and what these Indian writers are we know. Japanese *intentions* had no doubt to be exposed: but it never occurred to those "heroic" writers to expose British *deeds*. Perhaps they had never heard of these *deeds*—how could they as they were not listed on their folios of "International Information". Perhaps they were not concerned about them. After all, Chimur, Balia, Bhagalpur, Midnapore were not so near as Hankow or Cracow. Or perhaps it required too much heroism to talk about British deeds in India. After

*I must explain this term. 'Madam de Luce' or just 'Madam' is a term used by prisoners in Britain, as Jim Phalen writes in his *Jail Journey*, to signify untruth, humbug and cant rolled into one. I do not apologize for using the term because I like it and hope it will soon be in common use.

all, it is not too pleasant to vegetate in an Indian prison, when you could be talking on the All India Radio or writing nicely-worded exposes of Japanese intentions. Gandhi and Nehru too wrote about Japanese intentions, but they also wrote and talked about certain other things, and look what happened to them.

Here is again Mr. R. R. Desai talking : "For instance, when it was reported that the Nazis had levelled to the ground a whole village in Czechoslovakia as punishment for aiding the assassins of Heydrich, there were many who said this report was a fabrication, or that the account was perhaps just partly true. Of course, at a distance of six thousand miles things look different ; the reactions would have been different if this massacre of the menfolk and the wholesale deportation of women and children had taken place in the village not of Lidice, but shall we say of "Lalpur".

That is just the trouble. A distance of six thousand miles makes such a lot of difference, you know. Now Mr. Desai is gravely concerned about Lidice, as every human ought to be and, I am sure, all Indians would be if they know about it. But the Lalpur, not Mr. Desai's imaginary Lal pur, but the real ones—and there were many of them—are six thousand miles away from London and the B. B. C. And that makes a difference. One may just ignore them and forget all about them. A few Chimurs, a few hundred burnt and looted villages in Bihar and U. P. and Bengal : a few women raped, a few breast bitten off, a few

children shot in the back, a few others shot in the chest while their unflinching hands held little fluttering tricolours—all these; what do they matter, since they are six (or is it seven?) thousand miles away from London and the glorious fight for liberty and freedom? I may add that Mr. Desai at least, if not his British colleagues, should know that distance never blinded India unlike some other countries. India's heart went out in sympathy when humanity suffered under the tyrant's heel—to Abyssinia, to China, to Spain, to Czechoslovakia, to Russia. No, it is the fog in London that obliterates everything more distant than your nose.

Here finally is a specimen out of Five Specimens of Propaganda: "To those who say that Japan will set Burma or India free, the best answer is: 'why then have they not set free Korea and Formosa, which they have had in their power for so long?'" Yes, that undoubtedly is the best answer, and to any man with intelligence a crushing answer. But the trouble is there are others too who talk of fighting for freedom and one may ask them also with equal force, why do they not free India "which they have had in their power for so long?". This answer, however, would appear to the B. B. C. and its intellectual talkers to be beside the point. Don't you know India is a very complex problem: there are all those minorities to be protected and those innumerable elements in its political life to whom Britain owes very special responsibilities? What madness to talk about freeing India? Did I become His

Majesty's first Minister.....mumbojumboabracadabra.....?

Tomorrow is not a very exciting picture of international culture. I was not much impressed by the reproductions from the foreign writers. The purpose of some of these writers seems to be not to express themselves, but to disguise their meaning by cunning tricks with words. I think anybody who really had something to say would say it simply and, may be, beautifully if he also understood beauty and had learnt to express it. I find neither beauty nor meaning in some of the pieces collected. But that is my fault.

Raja Rao's *Javni* is a good story and should read very well in Kanada. But in English, well, I don't know if the language does not fail utterly to do justice to what he wants to say. I cannot say how Conrad did it, nor how some in our own country do it, but it seems to me that a foreign tongue, i.e., any tongue we have not spoken in childhood, is a poor medium for creative writing. Our creative writers would do greater justice to themselves and enrich greatly the literature of their country if they could give up the temptation of writing in English. In a foreign tongue we can but copy ideas, style, life ; we can never create, innovate experiment. Tagore is a second rate English poet, but in Bengali, he is a colossus—unapproached and unapproachable.

August 7, 1944

"HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY"?

If any one told a Congressman that the Congress was a Hindu body, he would rightly feel indignant. Yet, Congress leaders, other public leaders, nationalist editors, constantly talk of a Congress-Leage settlement as a settlement between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Why this confusion ?

The reason, to my mind, is that following the cue of the British, we have been led to look upon the lack of unity in India as disunity among the communities. We talk endlessly of "Communal Unity" and equate it with national unity. This, of course, assumes that all political life in India is organized on communal lines, which obviously is not the case. Then, why don't we stop to analyse this muddle and state the position in clear terms ?

Some weeks ago, in the course of my comments on Dr. Abdul Latif's book I had pointed out that

there are two parallel developments in India—one the organisation of political and economic and cultural life on a national basis, the other the organisation of such life on a communal basis. Examples of the first type of organisations are the Congress, the Liberal Federation, the All-India Trade Union Congress, the States People's Conference, the Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industries, the Students' Congress, the Unionist Party and the Bangiya Krishak Proja Party. Examples of other type are the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim State People's Conference, the Muslim Chamber of Commerce, the Muslim Students' Federation, and the Akali Dal. Of these two, the national type of organisations have been by far the stronger, but recently fed by various adventitious circumstances, the second type has been growing in strength. There has never been any conflict, though there has been difference of opinion, among the first type of organisations. The conflict really is between the national and the communal forces in our national life. A settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League is not to be a settlement between Hindus and Muslims, but between national and communal ways of life. The ideal thing, of course, for our national growth would have been for the national tendencies and forces to gather such strength that communalism would have been dead. But the existence of a third party makes this impossible and an urgent need is felt now for an understanding between these forces. If such an agreement has become necessary, let it be brought about,

but let us not misunderstand and misrepresent the character of this development. I wish this could be made clear to the country by some one at this time. Will Gandhiji himself make it clear or will he blur the issues in his eagerness to reach an agreement?

August 10, 1944.

THE DISOWNED REVOLUTION

ANOTHER SIDELIGHT

Last night I read Louis Fischer's *A Week with Gandhi*. The same sincerity and genuineness that one finds in his *Men and Politics* are stamped on every page of this little book. To a foreign reader it reveals Gandhi, or a part of him. To an Indian reader it no less reveals Fischer. Such men are a bridge between nations, but unfortunately they are so few that the bridge never gets completed.

In connection with what I wrote about a revolution disowned, the following conversation between Gandhiji and Fischer will bear reproduction.

> "Well", I asked, "how do you actually see your impending civil disobedience movement ? What shape will it take ?"
>
> "In villages," Gandhiji explained, "the peasants will stop paying taxes. They will make salt despite official prohibition.

This seems a small matter; the salt tax yields only a paltry sum to the British Government. But refusal to pay it will give the peasants the courage to think that they are capable of independent action. Their next step will be to seize the land."

"With violence ?" I asked.

"There may be violence, but then again the landlords may co-operate."

"You are an optimist," I said.

"They might co-operate by fleeing," Gandhi said.

Nehru who had been sitting by my side, said:

"They might vote for confiscation with their legs just as you say in your "Men and Politics" that, as Lenin put it, the Russian soldier voted for peace with his legs in 1917—he ran away from the trenches. So also the Indian landowners might vote for the confiscation of their land by running away from the village."

"Or", I said, "they might organize violent resistance."

"There may be fifteen days of chaos", Gandhi speculated, "but I think we could soon bring that under control."

"You feel then that it must be confiscation without compensation?" I asked.

"Of course", Gandhi agreed. "It would be financially impossible for anybody to compensate the landlords."

"That accounts for the villages", I said. "But that is not all of India."

"No," Gandhi stated. "Working men in the cities would leave their factories. The railroads would stop running."

"General strike", I said to myself. "I know", I said aloud, "that you have in the past had a large following among the peasants, but your city working-class support is not so big."

"No", Gandhi acquiesced, "not so big. But this time the working men will act too, because, as I sense the mood of the country, everybody wants freedom, Hindus, Moslems, untouchables, Sikhs, workers, peasants, industrialists, Indian civil servants, and even the princes. The princes know that a new wind is blowing. Things cannot go on as they have been. We cannot support a war which may perpetuate British domination. How can we fight for democracy in Japan, Germany and Italy when India is not democratic ? I want to save China. I want no harm to come to China. But to collaborate we must be free. Slaves do not fight for freedom." (90-92)

That was Gandhiji's mood in June 1942. It was a mood which reflected the mood of the mass, and the two acted and reacted on each other. General strike, non-payment of taxes, seizure of the landlord's estates, a short interreg-

num of chaos ! What a picture of a red-blooded revolution ! Later, the mass, suddenly become leaderless, put a few crude strokes of this picture on history's canvas. For that the mass has been disowned. No one had authority, we are told, to function in the name of the Congress. A few thousand arrests were supposed to have extinguished the Congress, or, at least, isolated it from the people. Were the threads so slender that bound the Congress and the people together ? The people were evidently expected to create, all of a sudden, as if out of a magic basket, another organisation which could inspire them and symbolise for them their yearnings and hopes as did the Congress ! History records no such magic. If there was anything, any organisation, any name, that in August 1942 meant to the people, freedom and suffering and struggle, it was the Congress. Nothing could take its place, therefore, nothing *did* take its place. No matter how many times that struggle is disowned and by whom, it will ever remain in history, with all its faults, a part of the Congress struggle for Indian freedom.

August 15, 1944.

There is another point of interest in Fischer's book which I should like to note here in connection with what I have written above. It is clear from the conversations recorded that, as early as June 1942, Gandhiji was expecting to be arrested and he told Fischer that he was "ready". This is an astounding piece of information. Gandhiji was talking of open rebellion ; in June he said he

was "ready" to be arrested. The question is: had he got the people ready ? He had not—not till August 8, at least. I do not know what to make of this. Everybody knows that Gandhiji is ever ready to turn his footsteps to prison. He needs barely half an hour's notice to pack up his kit. But a responsible leader, thinking of launching upon his life's last and greatest campaign, is not "ready" for prison till he has told his followers what they should do when he is gone. It seems to me that both Gandhiji and the Working Committee owe an answer to the nation as to why on the 8th of August they left it entirely unprepared and completely ignorant of any programme of action that might have been in their mind. I doubt, however, if the nation will have the courage to put them that question. In any case, I know that the answer, charged with great moral and mystic weight and bursting with self-righteous complacency, will be that it is not in the nature of non-violent technique to lay down in advance the forms of struggle.

August 16, 1944.

"RESTRICTIONS" ON RELEASED CONGRESSMEN

In one of his conversations with Louis Fischer, Gandhiji told him how he came actively to oppose British rule in India, and incidentally discovered the method by which India could be made free. Gandhiji described to Fischer how he was prevailed upon to go to Champaran in Bihar, how an order was served on him to leave the district and how he decided to disobey the order. "That day in Champaran became a red-letter day in my life. I was put on trial. The government attorney pleaded with the magistrate to postpone the case, but I asked him to go on with it. I wanted to announce publicly that I had disobeyed the order to leave Champaran. I told him that I had come to collect information about local conditions and that I therefore had to disobey the British law because I was acting in obedience with a higher law, with the voice of my conscience. This was my first act of civil disobedience against the British. My desire was to establish the principle that no Englishman had the right to tell me to leave any part of my country where

I had gone for a peaceful pursuit. The government begged me repeatedly to drop my plea of guilty. Finally the magistrate closed the case. Civil disobedience had won. It became the method by which India could be made free." Elucidating his action Gandhiji said, "What I did was a very ordinary thing. I declared that the British could not order me around in my own country."

This is a simple and beautiful description of the birth of civil disobedience in India—an event that became a turning point in the country's history. But, after twenty-five years of precept and example of civil disobedience, it is unfortunate that even Congressmen have not grasped its basic principle : that the foreigner has no right to order us about in our own country. Punjab Congressmen seem to be the worst offenders in this respect. A large number of Congressmen have been "released" here in recent months, but most of them have been placed under various restrictions. As far as I know, everyone of them is meekly obeying them. I find it humiliating that Congressmen should do so. It is far better to be in prison than voluntarily to agree to carry out British orders as to one's movement and activities. The whole thing goes against the very fundamentals of the Congress. No wonder the Congress is no moral force in this province.

In extenuation of the guilt of these Congressmen, I might say that this tradition of submitting to restrictive orders has been established by the revolutionaries. Both in Bengal and the Punjab

a large number of revolutionaries submitted, as a matter of course, to such orders. But it would not do for Congressmen to imitate the methods of the revolutionaries. They do not fight with civil disobedience as method. Their forms and principles of fight are different. They see no reason why they should court imprisonment. When a revolutionary chooses to live under restrictions, he has usually two motives. Either he hopes to disappear underground in course of time, or he thinks he would be able to do more for the cause with the little freedom he enjoys than when he is denied all freedom in prison. If he follows the second course, he finds himself sooner or latter in prison again. If he does neither of these things, he has ceased to be a revolutionary, and is merely living on his past.

A Congressman may not follow the revolutionary's reasoning. He cannot go underground, at least not in normal times. (If he does, of course, the stigma of obeying orders does not attach to him). Secondly, he cannot further any Congress programme when he is denying the very first principle of the Congress and undermining the very moral plane on which the Congress must function.

Therefore, it seems clear to me that the Punjab Congressmen, or Congressmen anywhere, who are living under government-imposed restraints must refuse to do so, and go back to prison. If nobody accepted such restraints, they would not be heard of any more.

August 16, 1944.

AS YOU WERE!

I wrote in my note of August 1: "I like less and less what he (i.e., Gandhiji) is doing, but as on last Friday, the day of the last parliamentary debate on India, I think, Churchill-Amery & Co., will not let me down. There does not seem to be any danger of a national government being actually formed in war time, and, therefore, there seems to be no cause to worry." Any such cause for worry has, at last, been finally put beyond all doubt. This morning's *Tribune* publishes the latest declaration of British policy on India in the shape of further correspondence between Gandhiji and Lord Wavell. It has now been made clear, without even the vaguest shadow of doubt, that the British Government are not prepared during the war to make the slightest transfer of power to India in any field whatever and under any circumstances. Self-blinded hopefuls like Mr. Rajagopalachari have always believed and asked others to believe that, once the

Congress and the League come together, the formation of a national government would become inevitable. Mr. Rajagopalachari has slowly been blossoming into a prophet, and many things may be pardoned him. But unfortunately for him and his followers, his prophecies have all been going away. For some years now he has been speaking in mysterious accents—prophets must be mysterious—of a national government being born in just a couple of months. But his couple of months have grown into a couple of years, and now they have grown into eternity.

The British Government have now made it clear that, even if all the elements in Indian political life including the States, came to a common understanding, no change in the Viceroy's powers could be made during the course of the war. That is, even if India were to rise as one man and demand a national government—be it only in the sphere of civil administration—the British would shoe that demand firmly into the ocean. After all, there are enough white soldiers in India, as once Mr. Churchill recalled with satisfaction, to take care of all the consequences.

Leaving men like Mr. Rajagopalachari aside, I cannot understand how or why Gandhiji ever thought that the British, who refused to part with any power when they had their wind up after Singapore and Rangoon, would agree to do so now when they had the war situation well in their hands. Or perhaps I do understand. I think Gandhiji never had any illusion about it,

even when he decided to stoop to conquer. But, he probably wanted to clear the deck and remove the cobwebs from the minds of the C. R.'s and Saprus and Sastris before taking other steps. He might have thought that, unless he "climbed down" and made an attempt to settle with the British—an attempt that would be considered by every honest Indian as reasonable—he would be hounded at every step by cries of "intransigent", "unreasonable", "settle now', "national government", and so forth. World opinion too might misunderstand him. So, I think, he decided to go to the farthest limit possible to meet the British so that no doubt might remain anywhere as to his anxiety for a settlement; so that every one with the least intelligence might see for himself what the real obstruction to a national government was. If this was Gandhiji's intention, he has fulfilled it to the fullest extent. Now, the whole world can see that it is not Indian disunity that is in the way of Britain transferring power to India, but British determination to hold all power in their own hands even in the face of the completest Indian unity. All cobwebs have been swept away and even Mr. Rajagopalachari has no fine-spun yarns left to clutch at, nor even a pinch of dust in his political bag to throw into the eyes of his fellow countrymen.

Now, Gandhiji can go ahead, whatever his course of action, without being pursued at every footstep by distracting cries and strident noises. The question is : what can be Gandhiji's future course of action. It is clear that during the

course of the war, there is no possibility now of putting any mass pressure—in the form of mass civil disobedience—upon the British for enforcing the demand for a national government. Even if the Congress were made lawful again—which is doubtful—and if the leaders were released, the possibility of mass action must be ruled out. The only course of action left to Gandhiji is carefully to nurse the wounds of the nation and bring it back to health and vigour, and bide his time. Soon after the war, his chance will come. Part of this process of national rehabilitation will be settlement with the League, and the growth of national unity, conceived not as an agreement between communities, castes and classes, but as the growth of nationalism. It is slow patient work, but there is no alternative before Gandhiji. A joint Gandhi-Jinnah demand for a national government will have no more than propaganda value; neither would the British yield, nor would Mr. Jinnah agree to fight the British. In fact, Mr. Jinnah's refusal to fight might torpedo the entire negotiation that Gandhiji is to carry on with him. Gandhiji is not likely to take the recent description of British policy as a settled fact and he might press Mr. Jinnah to join him in unsettling it, but the League leader is not expected to do so. He will ignore the war-time issues and concentrate only on a post-war settlement. Gandhiji has a difficult task before him. But even if Mr. Jinnah chooses to sacrifice the interests of his country and the Muslim community and refuses to join Gandhiji in demanding immediate

power, and thus if the negotiations are terminated, the country would not have the same sense of loss and failure as it would have had if the recent British declaration had not been made. So, even in the case of failure of his negotiations with Mr. Jinnah, Gandhiji might feel less cramped in pursuing his chosen course of action. I wish all power to his elbow.

August 18, 1944.

THE PROBLEM OF CONGRESS-LEAGUE SETTLEMENT

I have been feeling for some time now the need of integrating my thoughts on the problem of Congress-League settlement. I have, in the past months, expressed views on this subject which appear contradictory. Writing on this problem in February of this year I said, "In every federal constitution of the world where the right of secession is granted, it has a double aspect: while, on the one hand, it provides the ultimate solution of intra-national conflicts, on the other hand, it rests on the ground that mutual good will and adjustment and desire to pull together would ever make unnecessary the exercise of this ultimate constitutional right. I believe the Congress would have no difficulty in guaranteeing this right to the federating units in India, provided there was genuine desire to start as a united nation and to preserve the national unity to the utmost extent possible. The Congress

would do this precisely in the hope and belief that the experiment in united nationhood would soon remove suspicions and cement the bonds that naturally exist among all the sections of the Indian people. It can be appreciated how much different from this is the position that demands immediate and initial partition of the country. To that the Congress can never agree." Writing in the middle of July last, I said again, "The underlying principle of Rajaji's formula is contained in the Delhi resolution (of the Working Committee of the A. I. C. C.). That resolution explicitly admitted the right of territories in India to self-determination. That same general idea has been put in concrete shape by Rajaji and no Congressman can take objection to it."

There is an obvious contradiction between these two views. First, let me clear up the position of the Congress in this regard. I do not have before me the resolution of the Working Committee which conceded the right of self-determination to territories; therefore, it is not clear to me in what circumstances that right was conceived to be exercised. As far as I remember the resolution, it went no further than merely stating that the Committee could not oppose the right of any territorial unit to claim self-determination. This might mean, at least, two things: first, that this right was to be exercised after the free Indian state had come into being, second, that it was to be exercised before the establishment of free India. There is a great difference between the two. In the first case, we start as a united nation,

with one common constitution, framed jointly: we make a serious attempt at living together, and only in the event of failure of the experiment of joint nationhood does a territorial unit exercise its right to separate. In the other case, the country is partitioned, probably under British aegis, two or more separate constitutions are framed separately and India starts as two or more national states. I find it difficult to believe that the Working Committee had in mind the latter meaning when it framed its resolution at Delhi.

If the Working Committee conceived the exercise of the right of self-determination in the manner described in the first case above, the contradiction between my views expressed in February and July is resolved.

So much for the position of the Congress. The question before me is, irrespective of the Congress view of the matter, what is my own view of it today? I have followed rather carefully the present controversy over Rajaji's formula. I am to some extent acquainted with Muslim communal opinion in the Punjab, through the columns of the *Inquilab*, *Ehsan* and *Shabbaz*. I have found no cause to change the opinion expressed in February last. And if the Working Committee meant to allow a territorial unit of the country to separate *before* the united Indian state had come into being and an experiment in living together had been made, I am opposed to that resolution. Further, if Rajaji's formula implies the same

procedure, I am opposed to it also. I am prepared to go no further than conceding the right to self-determination *after* the United States of India had come into being, and after a certain specified period had elapsed during which every part and section of the country and the people had a chance freely to fashion their lives in common with other parts and sections.

The question is : what happens if the Muslim League did not accept that position ? I do not for a moment believe that the League would agree to such a proposition: but I also never believed that our entire future progress was dependent on an agreement with Mr. Jinnah. I have described Mr. Jinnah elsewhere as Mr. Jaffar of his day. I still stick to that description. He is a conscious traitor to his country, and it is foolish to expect him to agree to anything that would be good for the country.

Some people are obsessed with the League's popularity with the Muslim mass. I do not believe that nationalist Muslim opinion can never become a force in the country, or that the Congress itself can never win the affections of the Muslim masses or its intelligentsia. The eagerness of those who want to come to terms with Mr. Jinnah at any price is largely induced by their anxiety for the immediate establishment of a national government. I do not think there is any possibility now, short of a national revolution, of any such government being formed in war-time. As for a national revolution, it is not reasonable

any more to place it within the range of war-time possibilities.

To my mind, our present task is to prepare for a post-war showdown with the British. All our present actions must suit that future task. I am not suggesting that Gandhiji should not meet Mr. Jinnah. That business has already gone too far now to cry a halt. It would have been better had no attempt been made in that direction, but now the only thing to do is to go with it to the bitter end. But in the negotiations Gandhiji should not go beyond agreeing to Muslim majority areas exercising their right of self-determination *after* freedom had been achieved, and the United Indian state had been formed. Mr. Jinnah would reject that, naturally. But the negotiations would have fulfilled their purpose if Gandhiji could succeed in getting down on paper the League's exact demands. Then the Congress and patriotic Muslim bodies could go to the Muslim masses both with Gandhiji's offers and Mr. Jinnah's demands. That clarification would, I believe, give a starting push to nationalist Muslim opinion.

Mr. Rajagopalachari talked the other day of bloodshed and civil war if Mr. Jinnah were not placated. On a different occasion he told Mr. Savarkar that it was easy to talk of maintaining the unity of the country through civil war, but would the British allow it ? One may ask Rajaji, following his own logic, would the British allow Mr. Jinnah to wage civil war ? To that Rajaji might reply, "No, the British would not do that

either, bnt then we must be prepared to have the British perpetually as our masters." That exactly is the trouble. Rajaji thinks, probably quite honestly, that unless we placate Mr. Jinnah, we can never hope to drive the British out of our midst. I do not agree with him. Looking back at the last fourteen years of our national history, it seems to me that the Congress never properly prepared for a mass struggle. All its civil disobedience movements, except perhaps the one started in 1930, were haphazardly begun and without much preparation. My short acquaintance with the actual functioning of the Congress in "peace" times has led me to believe that the Congress has been losing touch with the masses. If we leave aside such bodies as the A. I. S. A, and the A. I. V. I. A. which are non-Congress in consitution, or at least are non-combatant bodies, the Congress has no programme of work which puts it in daily and constant touch with the people. My experience is that Congress committees devote the greater part of their time and energy to elections—Congress elections and elections to local bodies and provincial legislatures. It is my firm conviction that if the Congress gave itself, say, five years to an intensive preparation for a struggle through constructive and educative work among the masses, and introduced vigour and energy into its organisation, it might be possible to launch a struggle that would sweep all opposition away and bring the British to their knees. I believe if this were done and, further, if an understanding were reached with

such bodies as the Muslim Majlis and Jamiat-ul-ulema, we should succeed in rallying a large section of the Muslim mass and intelligentsia, to the banner of freedom and nationalism. I believe further that if this were done, Mr. Jinnah's leadership would be no more than a deflated balloon, and the march of events would leave him gasping by the roadside.

Indian nationalism has not become such a spent-up force that it must lose all hope and commit suicide. Mahatma Gandhi is evidently impatient. But, I do not think he agrees with Mr. Rajagopalachari that we cannot rid ourselves of British rule without an agreement with Mr. Jinnah. His sturdy faith in Indian nationalism is, I believe, still as sturdy as it was in August 1942. Therein lies hope—hope that Gandhiji would not, like a despairing man, such as Rajaji who even sorrows over our failure to accept the Cripps' proposals, barter away Indian nationalism by giving Mr. Jinnah all that he may want. Gandhiji has still his last fight to fight with the British.

I should add that, if I too had despaired of Indian freedom without placating Mr. Jinnah, I would not have hesitated to give him all he wanted. Some people are fond of asking : "Will you have two Indias—both free, or one India, slave ?" I do not think these are the alternatives. I do not believe that without division of the country, we cannot be free. In fact, knowing Mr. Jinnah and the League, in case we accept Pakistan, I fear, we shall have both division and slavery.

I shall conclude with a few words as to why I am opposed to the division of the country before we have made a serious attempt to live together in a united and free India. I think such division will solve none of our present problems and will create others, more serious than those existing today. The Muslim states are bound to be British protectorates, the Muslim communal leaders themselves asking for that status. This would mean the existence of the third party on Indian soil, which will be a source of great worry to the Indian nation. I have no prejudice against the Muslims. If the political unity of the country were maintained I would be prepared to go to the farthest limit to assuage their fears of what is termed as Hindu domination. I love my country and do not care if its 400 millions are Muslims or Christains or Hindus. But I do care whether or not they are free and happy and prosperous. I believe firmly that before long they will be free and happy, and not long after, prosperous too.

August 20, 1944.

POLITICAL PLANNING

In the previous note I remarked upon the haphazard manner in which national struggles had been launched by the Congress in the past. For quite a while now a thought has been taking shape in my mind, of which the above observation is but a part. I have been in rather close touch with Congress activities since 1930. As I look back at the last fourteen years, the impression grows in my mind that the Congress never worked according to a plan. It had, of course, its constructive programme. But that was to keep the rank and file engaged and give the people something to bite at. But, in the matter of higher policy, the leadership merely drifted—or so it seemed to me. It lived from hand to mouth, as it were, and from day to day. As events came, it adjusted itself to them as best it could. But it never did such a thing, for instance, as to set a goal which it should reach, say, in three years, and then work towards it, keeping the ini-

tiative always in its hand and forcing events to follow in its wake. Such a basic political plan never seemed in the past to inspire Congress work.

This defect, I think, should be removed if in the future we are to be more successful than hitherto. When the war is over and ordinance rule comes to an end and the Congress is free to function "normally", the leaders must draw up a basic political plan for the succeeding years. They should anticipate events—world events and the events at home—and in that light and in the light of resources and energies available, a master plan should be laid down which should determine Congress work in the years to come. This plan need not be placed before the people, or even the entire Congress, but it must nevertheless be present in definite shape in the minds of the leaders. Let us say, the goal is to prepare the country within five years for mass civil disobedience in order to enforce finally the national demand. The minimum requirements for that action should then be determined and the Congress organisation so set in motion as to fulfil these requirements in the given time. This does not mean that the Congress, having fixed upon this master plan, should refuse to be drawn into any negotiations whatever. But whatever other course we may have to follow to suit rising exigencies, the under-current of all our activity must flow unchecked and undiverted to that central goal. When this is not done, we get lost in the immediate diversions, and when these lead nowhere we feel frustrated and become paralysed for action. If Gandhiji sees the Viceroy,

or instance, all hopes are centred on that, and when his talks bear no fruit, we are made impotent with impotent rage and despair. Then again, when Congress ministries are bundled into prison again, we find ourselves unprepared to move, indeed even ignorant of the very direction in which we should move.

If after the war we repeat this mistake, we shall deserve to wallow in our slavery for another quarter century.

August 24, 1944.

THE LIBERATION OF PARIS

It is a great day today. Paris has been liberated. The mother of revolutions, the heart of European culture, rises from the dust again. Paris resurrected is Europe resurrected. The world asks today, when will the Swastika, banished from Paris, cease to wave over Europe? For me that is no more an important question. Today I ask Paris if her resurrection means also the resurrection of liberty, fraternity and equality, or merely the resurrection of an empire and the system of profit and privilege. Will Paris, risen from the dust, allow Syria and Lebanon and Algiers, and the millions in the East to rise from the dust? Will the resurrection of Paris mean the resurrection of the people of France, or only of the two hundred families—old or new? Will France be ruled by her people or by the liberators and their Quislings? These questions I ask Paris today. On their answer depends the fate of Paris herself and France, and Europe and the world. Will the Red Cock crow again from the cradle of revolution? Who can tell? Paris can.

August 24, 1944.

INDIAN ECONOMICS

I have just finished the first volume of Jather and Beri : *Indian Economics.* A little earlier I had read Wadia and Merchant : *Our Economic Problem.* I also remember to have read Kale's *Indian Economics.* There appears to be a long list of books bearing the same or similar titles. All these books, at any rate those that I have read or seen, follow the same stereotyped pattern with minor variations as to the arrangement of chapters or inclusion of the latest statistics. They all start with a description of the country's area, population and resources. Then they plunge into a fragmentary presentation of facts concerning population, agriculture, industry, banking, trade, etc. These are little more than historical surveys and digests of the reports of various Royal or other Commissions and Committees, official statistics and past controversies. The picture that the reader gets of Indian Economics after reading all this material is disjointed, patchy

and unharmonised. He gets no understanding of Indian economy as a whole and its place in the modern world. What the reader wants is an organic, whole picture of Indian economic life, and he expects his economists to enable him to grasp its central facts and principles, without being led through a maze of material which merely dissects the disconnected limbs of that life. A detailed study of Indian industry and agriculture is of course important, but first we must understand Indian economy as a whole and in relation to the wider world. Take, for instance, the question of the relation of Indian economy to British economy and British rule. At least during the last 150 years Indian economy has grown or languished or withered in the context of that relationship. Now, an average Indian reader, and I am not excluding the students who sit at various University examinations, would like to know exactly what that relationship is and has been, how it has affected and shaped our economic life, what influence it has today and how it is exercised, and what course it is likely to follow in the future. No volume of Indian economics that I know of deals with these questions in an integrated manner. True, we read references to various British interests resisting or imposing this or that economic policy, but the subject as a whole is nowhere thought worthy of adequate treatment. Yet, this relationship with Britain—economic and political—has been the very matrix within which Indian economy has been formed or deformed. I suspect that most of our economists themselves have not

studied this problem from the standpoint of their country. The result of any such study is bound to be that Indian economy must be freed from the type of relationship that it has had with Britain so far. For most of our academic economists it must be rather difficult to state this conclusion in their writings. Some of them may even argue that academic study of problems, economic or otherwise, must be kept severely away from politics. Those who may advance such arguments should give up the teaching and writing of economics. They might study the waves of the sea or Indian bird life, but not Indian economic life. Those who do not appreciate the importance of the study of the very mould in which the economy of their country has been cast, do not begin to understand the A. B. C. of economics. Their talents are obviously better employed elsewhere.

August 30, 1944.

INDIAN ECONOMICS (*Contd.*)

Further, as I have said above, our economists should describe our economic life as a whole and not piecemeal. I know this is easier said than done. The temptation to follow the beaten track, to lump together disjointed chapters and call the medley Indian Economics is too great, because it is much the easier course to follow. I am hardly competent to say how *the* book on our country's economy should be written. A scholar who is not only a complete master of his subject but who also has a historical perspective and originality and synthetic ability, who does not approach the subject in the so-called detached academic manner but who has indentified himself with his country and is deeply concerned with its future, who, while not a propagandist, is yet courageous enough to state the truth as he finds it, and, not the least, who looks at economic life not in isolation from other aspects of life, that is who has a wide social outlook, may succeed where others have failed.

A real organic work on Indian economics written under existing circumstances must also relate the present with the past. This is sometimes attempted in the existing text-books but again in the same disconnected manner. For instance, in a chapter on land revenue we might be told what kind of system existed during the 'Moghul' or the medieval period or how the ancient Indians smelted iron ore. This is extremely unsatisfactory. Indian history is too long to be summarised within a few pages; yet if we have to understand the present, we must know the outstanding facts about our past. A detailed study of economic life at various periods of our history is a subject that properly falls within Indian economic history. It is a study that may not be exhausted even in hundreds of volumes. Yet in an organic work on Indian economics, it seems to me necessary to describe, as briefly as possible, the economic organisation during certain representative periods of our history. No doubt, great care should be exercised in presenting the picture of the past. Not details, nor merely the high-lights, but the main outline of the whole should be given, and while the picture should not be emotionally coloured, it should be dealt with sympathy and the understanding that comes from identifying oneself with one's subject. The next step should naturally be to describe the disintegration of Indian economy during the period of British conquest and British rule. Then one may show the lines on which regeneration of our economic life has been attemp-

ted and the trends and successes and failures that have marked this period. This would include a description of our present economic life in its national and international setting. Finally, one may end up with the prospect in view and the policies and measures necessary for a complete regeneration. Such a presentation of Indian Economics would be much more meaningful and purposesul to the average reader and the univer. sity student than the texts current, and might become a powerful instrument for the economic regeneration of the country. After this grounding, the reader, including the student, may follow up with a detailed study of any branch of Indian economy that he may be interested in.

I may add that it is true that every Indian economist will not present the same organic picture of Indian economy. But there is nothing in that to grieve at. It is natural and can only contribute to a better understanding of our problems and to more considered national judgments.

Most of the material for writing such a book on Indian economics is, I believe, available. Only the point of view, the organic composition, the capacity to get out of the beaten track are lacking. There are, several economists in India at present who, given the urge, are competent to fulfil this task. May one hope that some of them will put their hands to it ?

September 1, 1944.

A FEW MORE BOOKS

Kamalashanker has sent me "For Whom the Bell Tolls" by Ernest Hemmingway. I don't think I have read anything of Hemmingway's before. In this book there are a few "stills" from the movie of the same name. I may describe the book itself as a still from the Spanish Civil War. It describes the incidents of three days at a Republican guerilla centre in some mountains on the fascist side. The main character is Jordan, an American Professor of Spanish, whose grandfather was a Republican officer in the American Civil War.

The interest of the book is more human than political. Jordan's soliloquies, though sometimes tiresome, reveal to us Jordan the man. Jordan is no revolutionary, and though he admires the discipline of the communists, he is no communist and no dialectician. He is an idealist, who loves liberty and hates fascism, an idealist who is calmly prepared to lay down his life for his cause.

Jordan does make that sacrifice, and, in fact, till I reached the last pages of the book I was not inclined to attach much significance to it and Jordan's sexual transports with Maria did not seem to me to be such an extraordinary affair as to deserve so many pages of warm description. Jordan's leave-taking of Maria, his cool acceptance of death, his matter-of-fact fight to the last are such intense moments of living that they seem to empty death out of all its contents.

Pablo is nearly Jordan's rival for the hero's place in the work. Pablo is no hero, however. He is a guerilla leader turned gangster. That act of his of shooting to death his fellow guerillas at the blowing of the bridge can hardly be matched in its calculated and completely unscrupulous selfishness by any gangster, dead or alive. One hopes that Pablo was not a representative type of the Spanish guerillas. Hemmingway himself does not help us much on this point, though it is true that his other guerillas are not mean or unprincipled. Pilaw, the woman of Pablo, is a strong character and a great unlettered psychologist. Her success in enabling Maria to collect herself out of her disintegration was an achievement which the cleverest psycho-analyst might envy.

For the rest, through these human screens, Hemmingway allows us a dim glimpse into the tragedy of the Spanish debacle. The disorganisation of the Republicans; the fake propaganda-made leaders and the heresy-hunting of the

communists and their machinations; the made-up Passionaria legend—all that is there in glimpses. But they do not form the central theme of the book.

Hemmingway has no thesis which he is anxious to peddle. I think he is concerned mainly with telling us what the Spanish Civil War was like. But to do this he does not write history, nor does he discuss politics. He merely takes a few people who played a part in it—not a publicized part, but an ordinary part—and shows what they did, how they did it and, above all, what they thought and felt. The result—a three days' still from a three years' passionate struggle—gives us an insight into that European tragedy which is in many ways deeper than what the carefully worded histories give us.

Hemmingway writes simply, without affectation. But though he has simplicity, he rarely, if ever, achieves beauty. In fact, for beauty of expression and thought there is nothing in the book to match John Donne's words printed on a fly-leaf: words which suggest the book's title. "No man is an *Iland*, intire of it selfe: every man is a peace of the *contient*, a part of the *maine*; if a clod be washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse; as well as if a *Promontorie* were, as well as if a *Mannor* of thy *friends* or of *thine owne* were; any mans *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankinde*. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls: it tolls for *thee*."

The last book of which I wish to write today

is Erich Fromm's *The Fear of Freedom*. It is easily the most valuable book I have read here so far. I have not been able to understand the enthusiasm of some for psycho-analysis. A few biological urges and their suppression, inhibition or sublimation have been made the corner-stone not only of individual but also of social psychology. To me all this had more the appearance of magic than of science, and I always looked, if not upon Freud, upon Freudians with grave suspicion. For me, Behaviourism gave a far more satisfactory account of human psychology than the subconscious, the libido and the rest of the magic terms.

It was, therefore, very refreshing to read Fromm who appears to be not only a psychologist and psycho-analyst of the first order, but a social thinker of the same merit. It is true that he finds Behaviourism inadequate. But, in the first place, his criticism does not apply to such theoretical behaviourists as Weiss who never look upon the relationship between the individual and society as passive, or passive on the part of the individual and active only on the part of society; in the second place, I am in agreement with Fromm's criticism in so far as it applies to behaviourists like Watson who emphasise only the social or environmental conditioning of the individual and ignore the dynamic adaptation that the human organism makes to the environment.

The central theory of Fromm's psychology is that human psychology is the result of a dyna-

mic adaptation of the human organism to society. Human nature is neutral, but life has an urge to grow and expand and find fulfilment. It is this urge that is at the root of the dynamism that he emphasises. Fromm has great respect for Marx and is impatient of those who mis-represent or misunderstand him. Marxists have often overlooked the dynamism of the human organism and have emphasised only the role of society and social forces in moulding human psychology. We should be thankful to Fromm for his corrective, by which he has brought us nearer to Marx, for Marx was always conscious of the creative or active principle in human nature. He could not be the revolutionary he was, unless he recognised that not only history made man but also that man made history—a phrase common to both Fromm and Marx.

Fromm in this book, however, is not concerned with expounding his central theory. He is rather concerned with applying it to the problem of freedom. He has done a most brilliant job of it. Starting from the feudal age in Europe he traces the evolution of this problem to the present day. He shows that in the typical feudal order man—every man—was tied up to society by certain definite bonds. Thus while his freedom was in many ways restricted, he did not feel alone in the world. When, however, those ties were broken up, man, while he became free *from* external bonds, also was left alone. The growth of monopoly capitalism has increased man's isolation and helplessness, which give rise to what Fromm

calls the authoritarian character-structure. Using older psychological language, he calls this character-structure maso-sadistic. It is this psychological make-up of modern man in every industrialized society—and not only in the fascist countries—which makes *possible* (this is not to say inevitable) the rise of fascism. I shall not go into the details of Fromm's analysis, as I have decided either to appropriate Minoo's book or to buy a copy as soon as I go "out". I should, however, make a note of Fromm's conclusion. He says that the remedy of this malaise of the social mind is not reversion to the "primary" bonds of feudal society which gave a sense of wholeness to man's life, but progression into a state of democratic socialism (his own phrase) in which impalpable agencies will not "manipulate" man and in which man will not be buried in the mess and will live an affirmative co-operative life. Fromm is conscious that socialization of production means bureaucracy and manipulation of the individual, and he points out that the solution of this problem is one of the major tasks of the present. A balanced system of centralization and decentralization must be evloved so as to reconcile large-scale social planning with freedom for the individual.

October 2, 1944.

TODAY'S 'TRIBUNE' (*Oct. 1, 1944*)

A lump rose up to my throat and the eyes grew dim as I read Professor Einstein's tribute to Mahatma Gandhi. What a beautiful tribute, how beautifully expressed from the world's greatest philosopher-scientist ! "Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth." The world's greatest prophets might envy, if envy can ever be in the nature of prophets, these words of homage.

On the same page an Englishman, who is too candid to use his proper name and writes as "Candidus" makes a scurrilous attack on Gandhiji. Reading it I was reminded of the Hindustani idiom about spitting at the moon.

There are two other items of news that are encouraging. In a statement Mr. Huq says: "I do not agree with Mr. Rajagopalchari that the Mussalmans of India have lost a great chance

simply because Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Gandhi will not come to some settlement. The failure of Mr. Jinnah should not be considered to be the failure of the Mussalmans of India." Mr. Huq is proposing to call a conference of Muslim political organisations to consider the situation. The other item is a statement by the President of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, Maulana Saiyed Husian Ahmed Madani. The Maulana describes Pakistan as impracticable and injurious to the Mussalmans.

The trouble with Mr. Huq and with the nationalist Muslims generally is that they are neither well-organised, nor persistent in their efforts, nor always consistent in their opinions. Mr. Huq particularly has been swinging from one extreme to the other. He speaks today like a real nationalist; yet it was he who moved the Pakistan resolution at the Muslim League session at Lahore in 1940, and it was he who for a number of years went about the country making the most offensive and the most reactionary communal speeches. Since he was ousted from the League by Mr. Jinnah he has swung to nationalism. But even during this period he has not done anything whatever, apart from making an occasiolal statement, to rally nationalist Muslim opinion or to educate the communal Muslims. The other nationalist Muslims of the Azad Muslim Conference type have lacked faith, self-confidence and persistence. Instead of launching a bold campaign to win over the Muslim masses, they too have lately been only shouting the slogan of Congress-League unity. The communist Muslims have

largely been responsible for the lack of independent action on the part of the Azad Muslims and for converting the Azad Muslim Conference into a platform for demanding Congress-League unity. Whereas this conference should have boldly challenged the League, it ended up by lending indirect, but strong, support to it.

It is often said that to the Muslims religion is everything. I do not believe this. If this were so, the Muslims would be more influenced by the fatwas and opinions of their Ulema than of their politicians, nawabs, knights, khan bahadurs and such others. It does appear rather strange to me that though the Ulema of India, to their great credit, have been consistently nationalist, the League has succeeded in carrying the Muslim masses with it. Between Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani and Mr. Jinnah, there is no question as to who is the greater representative of Islam, yet it is the latter who is the Quaide-Azam and not the Maulana.

I think the real situation is something like this. Politics in India is largely a middle class affair—the middle classes of all communities. For the Muslim middle class, as for all other middle classes, it is not religion that is important, but jobs, power, position. Naturally over this class the Ulema have little influence. The Muslim masses on the other hand are truly religious, but the Ulema cannot reach them. In the field of politics it is the middle class that has the organs of public opinion in its control. The Ulema are

poor, the nawabzadas are rich; the Ulema are not learned in English, the knights are; the Ulema being anti-British cannot join the Viceroy's cabinet, the job-hunters can; the Ulema do not know political manoeuvring, the lawyer-politicians thrive on it. The result of all this is that while to the Muslim mass religion is everything or nearly everything—not forgetting their bread—it is not the Muslim divines who become their political leaders, but the vocal middle class for which religion—except in personal life—is largely a cloak.

October 1, 1944

PROF. BRIJ NARAIN & MR. JINNAH

I have great respect for Prof. Brij Narain, both as an economist and as a man with a keen sense of public service. As a writer he is refreshingly free from academic "detachment". I like him for that. He is frankly partisan, as everyone who has anything vital to say must needs be. But partisanship is not malice, and sometimes the learned professor says thing which betokens malice. Today's *Tribune* publishes the first instalment of a series by him on the "Bombay Plan". I have no quarrel with the main argument of this article. Indeed, as a socialist I enthusiastically support it. Our own approach to the communal problem has been identical with that of the learned professor.

But there is in this article an attitude towards Gandhiji that appears to me to be instilled with malice. Opposition to Gandhiji I can understand, as I have myself often been opposed to him and as, I am afraid, I may again have to be.

But malice is bad. Prof. Brij Narain quotes the following sentence from one of Mr. Jinnah's letters to Gandhiji: "It is for you to consider whether it is not your policy and programme in which you persisted which has been the principal factor of ruin of whole of India". The professor adds: "If a single individual is responsible for ruining the political life of the whole country, it is Mahatma Gandhi". This is an astounding statement for anyone to make. That an eminent Indian economist should make it, makes it a hundredfold astounding. What, if not malice, can prompt one to say such things ?

Prof. Brij Narain's charges against Gandhiji are that by reviving the ancient Indian cult of ahimsa—to which the Professor thinks the country owes her loss of independence—Gandhiji rendered great disservice to the cause of Indian freedom; and incidentally, by thus basing his politics on an exclusively Hindu ideal, he kept the Muslims away from the national movement. The second charge is that Gandhiji has turned the attention of the country to ante-diluvian economics—the economics of village self-sufficiency.

Before I take up these charges, I should like to point out that the professor must be anxious for some reason to throw bouquets at Mr. Jinnah. He has quoted Mr. Jinnah with great appreciation and has gone on to amplify his meaning. But the quotation was quite unnecessary, for Mr. Jinnah did not mean what the professor had to say. Let me remind the professor that whatever

Mr. Jinnah and the nawabs and knights of the Muslim League might say on the issue of non-violence as a theory, if these windbags ever took courage to fight the British for Pakistan or anything else, they would take up not the sword nor the rifle but the method of non-violence and would follow meekly in the footsteps of the much-maligned Mahatma. As for the constructive programme, there too if ever the League undertook any kind of day-to-day work among the Muslim masses, that work will not be the manufacture of bombs or tractors but some sort of imitation of that much-laughed-at constructive programme. The League has always imitated the Congress and here too it will do the same.

As for the professor's charges, they are not new. I do not agree with them as they have been stated, much less with the spirit behind them. I am no believer in non-violence. But I do not think that by teaching the unarmed Indian people the method of civil resistance, Gandhiji has done a disservice to the country. On the contrary, I consider this to have been his greatest service to the nation. Those of us who consider it feasible to use violence in our struggle for independence could never have hoped otherwise to drive such large masses of people in open opposition to the foreign power. I believe everyone who accepts the method of violence understands that in the existing conditions a movement and organisation based on this method can only be secret and for a long time restricted to a chosen few. The mass awakening and the mass

resistance that Gandhiji has brought about are therefore of the highest value for the fight for freedom.

Furthermore, it is futile for those who believe in violence to blame Gandhiji. If we have failed, it is not because of Gandhiji, but because of our own shortcomings and the weakness of our movement and organisation.

As for the argument that non-violence kept the Muslims away from the Congress, it is neither historically true nor logically so. Large masses of Muslims have always been with the Congress and are with the Congress. The recent growth of the League has nothing to do with this non-violence which men like Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani do not consider foreign or repugnant to Islam. To explain the recent estrangement of a section of vocal Muslim opinion from the Congress on the basis of non-violence is not only to over-simplify a complicated problem but also to distort it.

As for the economics of Gandhism, I am surprised that the learned professor should still be repeating the same old controversial cliches and be unaware of the recent developments in Gandhiji's economic thinking. I do not say that Mahatmaji's economic views are now entirely acceptable to me, but I think that the day has definitely been left behind when one merely cracked a few jokes at the spinning wheel and village

self-sufficiency and called it a critique of Gandhism. A re-examination, as that made by Dantwalla, for instance, should be seriously considered by all thinking men. But in doing this preconceived notions will have to be kept under control.

In this same article the learned professor quotes another passage from Mr. Jinnah's letters to Gandhiji : "We are a nation of a hundred millions, and, what is more, with our distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitude and ambitions—in short, we have our distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of International Law we are a nation."

"The words ring true. They cannot be dismissed as nonsense," says the professor and here again he is throwing quite undeserved bouquets at Mr. Jinnah. The words not only do not ring true, they are utter nonsense. First, if we grant that in respect of all those things that Mr. Jinnah has enumerated the hundred million Muslims of India—the Pathan, the Bori, the Khoja, the Mopsah, the Jat, the Rajput, the Bengalee—are one and distinct from other communities in India and, therefore, a nation, we will have to grant that all the Muslims of the world, the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans, the Iranians, the Chinese, the Javanese, too, constitute one nation. But that

would obviously be absurd. By virtue of common religion, Muslims do share certain values of life, but that common factor does not make them all one nation. All that Mr. Jinnah says in that eloquent passage is that Muslims, because they follow one religion, constitute a nation, a proposition which the history of Islamic nations so completely refutes. The Christians, Catholics and Protestants, share many common values and standards of life, but that does not make them all one nation.

Furthermore, is Mr. Jinnah's statement true in fact ? Do the Bengalee, the Moplah, the Pathan and the Khoja have common language, race, literature, art, names and nomenclature, architecture, customs, history, calendar, aptitude, ambition and tradition ? Anyone who knows the Muslims of Malabar, Bengal, Bombay and the Frontier cannot but say 'No' to this question. Again, is the Bengalee Muslim radically different from the Bengalee Hindu—to take only one example—in such matters as language, literature, dress, manners and customs, history, race, tradition, ambition, names and nomenclature, architecture, calendar, aptitude and so on ? No one who knows the people of Bengal will say that that Muslims and Hindus are different from each other in these respects, or that they differ much.

I have said above that I have no quarrel with Professor Brij Narain's main argument that if we emphasise common economic interests, stress the problem of a planned economic development of

the country, we shall succeed better in fighting the two-nation theory and communal separatism. He concludes today's article with these words: "There will be little talk of partition if planning were better understood in our country".

I do not wish to damp the professor's enthusiasm. I was myself at one time under the influence of that facile assumption. But experience has taught me, and I hope others, that mass psychology is not so easily susceptible to economic motives and appeals as one assumes, particularly when other powerful factors of an emotional nature held it in their grip. The professor thinks that the communal problem is one of correct understanding. This is a naive view. The professor does not seem to be fully aware of the sinister motivations of Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah and his knights understand fully the problem and purpose of planning, and they are determined to do their best to foil and obstruct it. I invite the professor to read with care the speech that Dr. Sir Ziauddin will soon deliver in the Central Assembly in opposition to the "Bombay Plan". The League gentlemen know that economic planning in India means a united central state for the whole country. Therefore, in their eyes planning is a scheme of Hindu domination which they must fight tooth and nail. That a planned development of the country as a whole would mean far greater prosperity and happiness for the Muslims of 'Pakistan' than what Pakistan separated from the rest of the country can ever hope to create is an

argument that has no value for the League even though it claims to represent the Muslims.

There is no magic solution of the communal problem. Neither the economic nor the political approach is sufficient in itself. Both approaches, as well as social and cultural approaches, are necessary and even then the task will be a heavy, uphill task. I wish Professor Brij Narain every success in his endeavour to tackle the problem from his own specialised point of view.

October 22, 1944.

A VISITOR COMES TO MY COSMOS

It was a great day for Europe when Paris was liberated. But Europe is far away and beyond my world. A sealed-off, walled-off, barred and bolted, fifteen-by-twelve bit of space—that is my world set in a cosmos of similar planets. A cosmos that is not of God's but man's creation; a cosmos presided over by disconsolate kites, shrieking and watching, watching and shrieking : a cosmos where nothing ever happens; that is, nothing happens that the eyes can see except perhaps Churchill's love affairs with his assortment of females—three black ones and one black and white, from whom he is reputed to have descended. Churchill is the local tom-cat. No, it was not spite that inspired me to call him thus. It was his face that only lacks a cigar to equate it with that other famous face that is the hope of Europe—of that Europe that is utterly dead but is frantically trying to live.

Yes, nothing happens in my cosmos that meets the eye. Yet, there are things that do happen

here—things that neither I nor the sun's eye can see. But while walls can shut off sight, ears can see through them. So, sometimes as the sun goes down and darkness falls over men's deeds, I hear both the howls of the captive and the thudding of the ogre's blows—the ogre who rules over this cosmos. No, the ogre is not an individual. He is like Brahman—all-pervasive. He is a spirit—the spirit of a system, a system that makes brutes of men.

When I hear those howls, a great many things happen to me. I find myself turning into a brute—a raging, tearing, brutal vengeance wells up within my being. I fight hard to keep my humanity. It is difficult, very difficult, and I am not sure I quite succeed.

Such is my microcosm. Europe, and its hopes and fears, are far away from me. The liberation of Paris was a great day— but for Europe. For me, as long as this ogre lives and rules—can there be happiness? And yet a great thing happened today—that nearly made me forget this evil Brahman of my cosmos. I was sitting at my table reading *Thorofare* and pretending to be a human being and a citizen of the world, when I heard the cell lock being opened. I thought it was some routine affair, still I rose and went up to the door, and whom did I see but Rammanohar,*

*Rammanohar Lohia was taken to the Lahore Fort in May or June 1944. He was tortured there for months and after they had finished with him and given him up as hopeless they brought him suddenly to my cell one day as my new companion. Thereafter he was brought to my cell practically daily for an hour every day, till we were both transferred to the Agra prison.

his eyes twinkling as ever through his glasses ? Was it a dream or magic ? Yet, there he was, solid enough to be real—though thinned somewhat. It was a great moment for me—greater than the liberation of Paris for Europe. The walls of my cosmos were shattered for the moment, and I was no longer a captive in the grip of the ogre, but a human being, transported to the human world.

So, things—real things that happen in the real world—do happen in my cosmos too—even though they take thirteen months in happening. I wonder how long this illusion of reality will last !

October 25, 1944.

PLANNED ECONOMY & DEMOCRACY

Minoo's pamphlet, "Co-operative in a Planned Economy," is rather disappointing—not on account of what he says but for what he leaves unsaid. That planning involves centralization and bureaucracy, and curtailment, if not total suppression, of democracy is granted on all sides today. The problem is to reconcile planning with democracy. It is clear that in the course of this reconciliation, both planning and democracy as we know them today will have to undergo important modifications. But we have to be careful that those modifications do not alter the essential character of either of these social institutions. That seems to be a difficult task, and till now no adequate solution is in view.

Minoo considers industrial co-operatives, forming a possible basis of planning from the bottom upwards, as a solution. This does not seem to be an adequate solution of the difficulty. Planning from the bottom cannot replace planning from

the top. Both would be necessary and the relation between the two may not be an easy matter for co-ordination.

Furthermore, it is futile to consider any kind of economic planning without considering the necessary and suitable political forms with which it must be associated. No one seems to be giving thought to this problem in this country, though economic plans are galore. The problem of political power and of political institutions is far more serious than one of drawing up economic plans for this or that period of time. The actual planning is a matter for experts, but the social direction and significance of it are a matter of politics.

Minoo would do well to work out this problem. He naturally dislikes the totalitarian political system, based on a single ruling party. We all dislike that system. But what do we propose to put in its place ? That system is well suited to planning from the top, whether productive property is owned by the State or by private corporations. In our country we do not want private corporations owning large-scale productive property. We want all such property to be the property of the State or of other public and social bodies such as municipalities and village panchayats. Alongside, we want co-operatives of small producers and of cultivators. What can be the political system that can smoothly pull such a train of economic institutions ? It is true political forms cannot exist without their corresponding economic forms. We have visualised the

economic forms. What political forms correspond to them ? Will there be more than one party ? Surely, that seems to be obvious enough. But will the parties be based on individual membership or on the co-operatives, workers' unions and village panchayats ? If on both, what will be their relationship ? In the executives and legislatures will the corporate bodies be directly represented, or indirectly through the political parties that might exist ? What will be the form of the executive and legislature from the bottom upwards ? How will power be distributed between them ? These and a host of other questions will have to be put and answered before this dilemma of planning and totalitarianism is solved. In our country the ignorance and backwardness of the masses will ever be an inventive to totalitarian tendencies. This will further complicate our task. I hope Minoo will not stop with the slogan of "planning from the bottom".

November 7, 1944.

MARSHAL STALIN

Marshal Stalin's speech to the Supreme Soviet on the occasion of the twenty-seventh anniversary of the Russian Revolution will be read by socialists throughout the world with consternation and sorrow. That speech could have been delivered almost in the same words by Churchill or Roosevelt. I am acquainted to some extent with Stalin's devices to cast Russian life and thought in the mould of nationalism. But I was not prepared to find him present a view of internationalism that is such a complete negation of all Marxian fundamentals. Perhaps this was due to my lingering faith in Stalin's socialism, for it should have been clear to me that a Russian nationalist could not but look at the world from the standpoint of Russian nationalism.

Stalin was telling the Supreme Soviet how war could be avoided in the future, because it was not enough to have just won this war. He said, replying to his own question, that there were two

kinds of nations in the world : peace-loving and war-loving. In the first category came Britain, America and the U. S. S. R., in the other Germany and Japan. Such being the international layout, the remedy was simple : first, the aggressors, that is, the war-makers, must be disarmed—militarily, economically and politically; second, the peace-lovers must set up an organisation for safeguarding peace, and at the disposal of the controlling body of this organisation must be placed a minimum armed force sufficient to nip aggression in the bud, wherever it made its appearance.

Any one who understands the nature of war and the causes of aggression will laugh at such a conception of war and peace and of international relations. A socialist will shed tears over it—at least he will want to. Stalin, the head of a professedly socialist state, talks like the imperialist and capitalist rulers of the world. All that Marx and Lenin taught about the nature and causes of war and the means of peace has been forgotten and the oppressed of the world betrayed.

I wonder how the Stalinists will embroider and embellish these apostatic words of the successor of Lenin.

November 8, 1944.

[*Note :*

This is the third petition I had made to the High Court on 2-1-45. It was heard on 31st January 1945 and I was transferred from the Lahore Fort to Agra Central Jail the next day. The petition, of course, was rejected on the ground that, as the Central Government had informed the court through the Assistant Solicitor-General, who was present at the hearing, that the Government had decided to transfer me to an ordinary jail outside the Punjab, and, as the charge of maltreatment and torture related to incidents that took place more than a year before, the court saw no reason to entertain the petition. The presiding Judge went further and remarked that the purpose of the petition had been served inasmuch as I was to be transferred soon to an ordinary prison. The purpose, however, had not been served at all. My main purpose in petitioning to the High Court was to bring out the dark and sordid facts relating to maltreatment of detenus in the C. I. D. Fort, Lahore, and to make it possible for a court of law to examine those facts and pronounce a judicial verdict. The Lahore High Court, however, proved to be too much under the thumb of the Provincial Executive, for it refused to take notice of the serious complaints made by me and Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, whose *habeas corpus* petition too was rejected the same day by the same court. The Provincial Government on its part had promulgated a special ordinance prohibiting any news of the hearing from being published in the press. In the court itself nobody except High Court advocates and barristers were allowed. For the rest the petition will speak for itself.

Jayaprakash Narayan]

To

The Hon'ble the Chief Justice,
High Court of Judicature,
Lahore.

Your Lordship,

At the risk of causing annoyance to Your Lordship, I beg again to make the following submissions with regard to my habeas corpus petition which was disposed of by Mr. Justice Munir on 4. 12. 44. Before I proceed to make my submissions I should like to express my thanks both to Your Lordship and Mr. Justice Munir for the rehearing of my petition which had been rejected once before.

(1) It is my misfortune that even at the second hearing, though I was represented by my counsels, my case failed o be presented correctly due to the fact that I had refused to instruct my counsel within the hearing of the police. It appears that I was under a misunderstanding and so was Mr. Kapoor, my counsel. I understood

from him that even if the Court refused to permit me to instruct him without the police listening in, I would get a chance again to interview him and instruct him if I then wanted to do so under the conditions prescribed. I had thought then that I would take advantage of that opportunity as a second choice and make the best I could of it. It is not clear from the Court's order why a second chance was not given me, even though Mr. Kapoor seems to have asked for it. Perhaps the language of the affidavit, which was rather categorical, was responsible. I wonder if the layman's language does not say things more clearly than legal forms of expression. However, I regret very much that I was unable in the end to instruct my legal adviser, with the result that my case could not be presented in the manner I wanted and to my better advantage. But I should like to make it clear that I am not making a grievance of it.

Here I should like, with Your Lordship's permission, to explain why I refused to proceed with my interview with Mr. Kapoor. Firstly, I was under the impression that a prisoner had a right under the law to see his legal adviser alone, or, at least, without any officers of the state being within hearing distance. I wanted to exercise that right. There were two other considerations. The learned Judge writing on this point observes, "Whatever information the petitioner had to give to Mr. Kapoor could only have been intended to be publicly communicated to this Court and could well have been given within the hearing of the

police. I do not see any real reason in the petitioner's not letting the police hear what they were bound to hear a few days later." I submit that this is a very partial view of the matter. Let me describe the situation at the interview: there were two police officers present and there was a police short hand writer sitting beside me. It was clear that whatever I or my counsel said, or the parts of it that interested the police, would be taken down verbatim. The whole affair looked more like a prisoner making a statement before the police than consulting his legal adviser. Now, when a defendant or complainant meets his lawyer, he does not merely lay before him facts that would be stated in the open court later, but also discusses all the points of his case. There are weak as well as strong points, there are pros and cons of every point, there is the manner of presentation of the case. All this requires a free and frank discussion between him and his wyer. I too wanted to discuss frankly my points in all their aspects and seek and give advice. But this was impossible with the police officers listening in and the stenographer taking notes. Such a thing would be impossible anywhere in this country, but specially so in this province, where the state of civil liberties is so low and where the "all-powerful Punjab C. I. D." is such a terror even to the law-abiding citizen.

There is a third point in this connection which I wish to urge. My counsel after receiving instructions from me was to argue my case before the Court and the Crown Counsel; the Advocate-

General was presumably to attack it. Now, if all the details of my instructions to Mr. Kapoor, including the notes of our discussion, were to reach the hands of the Crown Counsel before Mr. Kapoor had a chance to appear in the Court, would it have been considered giving me and my counsel a fair deal? I do not think there was anything to prevent the police from supplying a copy of the notes taken at my interview to the acting Advocate-General. I regret very much that these aspects of the question were not considered by the learned Judge.

(2) The second part of my submissions relates to certain facts incorrectly stated in the judgment on my petition. I do not know who supplied these facts to the Court. If it was my counsels, they are obviously not to blame because they could not have known them correctly. If, however, it was the Crown, I do not see why it should have been thought necessary to mislead the Court. Perhaps it is not vital to my case to correct these facts; yet it seems proper to me that the Court should be correctly informed.

I have never denied that I escaped from the Hazaribagh Central Prison in Bihar, but this was in the company not of one other prisoner but of five others. Further, this was not in 1943 but in November 1942. I was arrested at the Amritsar railway station as I was travelling by the Frontier Mail from Delhi to Rawalpindi, and the date was the morning of September 18, 1943. It is stated in the judgment that I was arrested at

Lahore on August 19, 1943, presumably under Rule 29 of the D. I. R., and on September 22 my detention was converted into one under Rule 26 of the D. I. R. The facts concerning my arrest are wrong; I do not know if the facts relating to my detention are true, because no orders were served on me at that time. Further, I am not a member of the Congress Working Committee, nor was I when I escaped from the Hazaribagh Prison. In fact, except for a brief period in 1936, I have never been a member of that Committee. I am particularly anxious to correct this information, as I do not wish the Working Committee of the A. I. C. C. to be in any manner associated with my recent activities and views.

In this same section, I should like to narrate the succession of Government orders as they were served on me. The first such order was that of the Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government asking the I. G. (or D. I. G.) Police to retain me in the Lahore Fort as a prisoner under the Bengal Regulations of 1818. This was about the middle of November, 1943, i.e., as it now appears to me, only a few days after Mrs. Purnima Banerji moved her application. I know nothing of the previous orders under Rules 129 and 26 of the D. I. R. The second order to be served on me was again an order of Mr. Bourne, directing this time that I be detained there as a Security prisoner. This was the order of July 1st, 1944, mentioned in the judgment. As for the order of Mr. Sahay, Jt. Secretary, Home Department, Government of India, I have no knowledge.

Some time later, an order of the Central Government of August 23, 1944, signed by Mr. Tottenham, was served on me directing that I be detained here in pursuance of an order already said to be in force under clause (b) of sub-section (1) of Section 3 of Ordinance III of 1944 and sub-section (4) of Section 3 of the same. The last order to be served on me was a few weeks ago and was dated November 30 and made by Mr. Tottenham directing that order No. III/4/43 M. S. of 27. 6. 44 shall continue in force.

Thus far the orders. Here I should like to bring to Your Lordship's notice a curious fact about the first order to be served on me. As I have stated already, this order, placing me in the category of a State prisoner, was served on me about the middle of November, 1943. I do not exactly remember the date, but I am certain that it could not be later than the early part of the third week of November. I was made at that time to sign the order paper in question and I believe I also put down the date. Months later, when it was finally decided by the Punjab Government (or may be the Central Government) to make available to me all the privileges to which a State prisoner is entitled in this Province, Mr. Robinson, Superintendent of Police, visited me on February 1, 1944, in order to communicate to me the Government's decision. I was informed, among other things, that I should get a monthly allowance of Rs. 50- and that the arrears of this allowance begining from the date I was made a State prisoner, would also be paid to me, plus an

initial payment of Rs. 50. He said that the sum in arrear, together with the initial amount, came to Rs. 125, which would be credited to my account. At the moment I did not stop to examine the figure he mentioned. Later, when I did my own calculation, the sum in arrears appeared to be Rs. 175 (initial payment Rs. 50, plus Rs. 25 for half of November, plus Rs. 50 for December and Rs. 50 for January). When I raised the matter with the local officer-in-charge, he told me that the official figure had beed computed as from the middle of December (i.e., initial payment Rs. 50, plus Rs. 25 for half of December plus Rs. 50 for January). When I poitned out to him that I was made a State prisoner about the middle of November, he naturally admitted the incorrectness of the official figure, but appealed to me on grounds that he did not make clear not to pursue the matter. I was not at all concerned about the fifty rupees, and there being no reason to attach any significance to the matter, I, of course, dropped it.

Looking back, however, it is clear to me that somebody had a definite motive in letting it appear that I was made a State prisoner not soon after Mrs. Banerji's application in the Lahore High Court, but much later, or possibly there was a different motive. But without the assumption of a motive of some sort, it does not appear that it could have been worth Mr. Robinson's while to be made deliberately to deprive me of a paltry sum of Rs. 50.

Here I should further like to draw Your Lord-

ship's attention to the rather strange fact that, whereas the dates of all the orders served or not served on me, including the alleged order of September 22, 1943, have been disclosed to the court and mentioned in the judgement, the date on which the order under the Bengal Regulations was made was apparently not stated, for it finds no mention anywhere in the present judgment.

I cannot say if this curious fact has any importance in relation to the subject-matter of my petition. I have stated it for what it may be worth. I should like again to say that I am not in the least concerned about the fifty rupees involved and wish to lay no claim to them.

I am unable to judge if this narration of facts in any manner affects the findings of Mr. Justice Munir. That is for Your Lordship or the learned Judge himself to determine and for my counsel to argue, if any new point for argument does arise.

(3) Coming to the main part of my petition, namely, the legality or otherwise of my detention, I must say I have not the least competence to discuss the matter. Yet I should like briefly to state my case. Before I do so I should like to express my satisfaction that the Court rejected the Crown's contention that no order made under Ordinance III of 1944 came within the jurisdiction of the courts.

My counsels, in the absence of any instructions from me, have tried to present the case as best

they could on the basis, I presume, of the information contained in my previous petitions. They attacked the order of my detention on two grounds, namely, that the authority making the order was not competent to do so; secondly, that the order was made for a *malafide* purpose. The first ground was rejected on the presumption that authority must have been delegated to the Joint Secretary to the Government of India to make such orders. The presumption may be right, probably it is, but there is no positive proof for it. The second ground was rejected on the basis that there was no reason to presume that interrogation was the sole purpose of my detention, and further, that in any case there has been no interrogation after December 10, 1943.

My own case briefly put is as follows. I freely admit that, according to the law forcibly imposed over this country, my activities, both before and after my escape from prison, would be found to be aimed at disturbing the public order and interfering with the effective prosecution of the war. That I consider these activities to have been in the best interest of my country. It is a political view with which the law and the courts, as they exist here, have no concern. And I do not raise this question here, except to draw attention to it in passing.

In view of this, when I was arrested and detained, I never doubted that it was, as the phrase runs, with the purpose of preventing me from acting so as to disturb the public order and

prejudice war efforts. It never was, nor is, my intention to seek release, or interference of the courts with my detention, on the plea that the charges against me were or are false. Yet I have caused Your Lordship and the Lahore High Court some inconvenience by making two petitions already, to which I am adding by writing a third.

My reasons even today, at least partly, are the same as were briefly indicated in my first petition. At the time Mrs. Purnima Banerji had moved her application I had no knowledge of it, nor did I know that I had myself a legal right to move an application under section 491 to prevent the illegal and intolerable treatment to which I was then being subjected. I had, however, on numerous occasions in the course of the so-called interrogation, expressed a wish to write to government about the matter, which I was not allowed to do. Indeed, looking back it seems to me that even if I had wanted to make a habeas corpus petition, I would have been disallowed, as I was disallowed to complain to Government. I believe it is only after the Pardiwala case that it has become possible for the prisoners in distress in this province to seek the protection of the law by means of a habeas corpus application.

It was months after Mrs. Banerji's application had been disposed of that I came to know vaguely about it, though its full purpose I have learnt only from the present judgment of Mr. Justice Munir. But I had learnt this much that her

petition was dismissed because when the Bengal Regulations were applied to me, section 491 ceased to have jurisdiction. So, when early in July I was converted again into a Security prisoner, I naturally suspected that the order under the Bengal Regulations was a hurried device to cloak some kind of illegality about my detention during those days. And the purpose of my petition made in the spirit of assisting the law was that the matter be investigated. In fact, in my second petition I had gone so far as to state that it was quite likely that current orders regarding my detention had been regularised, yet I had pointed out that it was necessary to find out if there was any irregularity at an earlier period. The irregularity I had in mind was of the type dealt with in the first point of my counsels, namely, that the order of my detention was not made by the proper authority or in accordance to the rules prescribed in the Ordinance. This question still remains undecided, because the attack of my counsels was concentrated upon the order of June 27, 1944 of the Central Government.

Mr. Justice Munir in his judgment writes: "When the petition came up for hearing on 17th December 1943, it was contended by the learned Advocate-General that since the petitioner was being detained under the Bengal State Prisoners Regulation, the Court by reason of sub-section (3) of section 491 of the Code of Criminal Procedure had no jurisdiction to entertain the application and that on that ground the application should be dismissed. This contention succeeded

and Mrs. Purnima Banerji's application under section 491, Criminal Procedure Code, was dismissed on 23rd December, 1943. These words themselves show that the Bengal Regulations were pressed into service only to defeat the application of Mrs. Benerji. This was either because there was an illegality involved in my detention, or, as now appears more probable to me, knowing the purpose of that application, because I was not being treated according to law, which fact the Government was afraid of being brought to light. In either case, the order under the Bengal Regulations was in the nature of a ruse meant to hide an illegal act, and I for one am anxious to explore every available aid of the law to right that wrong. That the wrong was committed more than a year ago, cannot by itself right it, nor, on that account, can the law refuse to take notice of it.

Coming now to the *malafide* point, while I agree with the judgment of the court that extortion of information was not the sole purpose of my detention. I do hold that the purpose of detaining me in the fort was certainly to extort information, and as such malafide. The learned judge has remarked upon the length of time that intervened between my arrest and the beginning of my interrogation. Firstly, the period of time was not so long as it has been supposed, because I was arrested on September 18 and not on August 19. Thus it was just over a month after my arrest that the interrogation started, and this period was necessary to collect all the relevant

records as more than one provincial government, apart from the Centre, was concerned. In fact, when the interrogation opened, there were officers of the Bengal and Bihar C.I.D.'s present in addition to those of the Punjab C.I.D. Secondly, the reason that the interrogation stopped on December 10 was not that the *malafide* intention of the Government had undergone a sea-change, but, in the first place, it was my own attitude, that is to say, my refusal to give the information desired; in the second place, it was the panic created in the Executive by the fact that Mrs. Banerji's petition had been admitted by the High Court which threatened to bring to light damaging facts. The reason again why the interrogation was not resumed later was, firstly, that the police did not expect to get anything out of me, and, secondly, the fact that I had in the meanwhile complained against the interrogation to the Home Secretary to the Punjab Government and to the non-official visitor, Nawab Muzaffar Ali Khan—both of whom saw me soon after I was made a State prisoner, and had also made a written complaint to the Punjab Government. Therefore, I maintain that one of the intentions, clearly a *malafide* intention of detaining me in the Fort was extortion of information regarding my activities and the national struggle that had begun on August 9, 1942. And this brings me to the fourth submission that I have to make.

(4) I have shown that my detention in this Fort was *malafide*, inasmuch as the purpose was to extort certain information. I wish now to

submit that, apart from this aspect of the matter, my detention here has been with a view, indirectly and vindictively, to inflict additional punishment on me, not in the least incidental to mere detention. The conditions of imprisonment in this Fort are such that, aside from wilful ill-treatment, of which I have had no cause to complain for the past some months, and, as compared with conditions in the jails, they constitute by themselves a severe form of punishment. This fact was brought to the notice of the Government by me some months ago, yet they refused to transfer me to a jail, presumably on the ground that no jail in the country was safe for me. This was a ridiculous plea, and I have naturally been driven to the conclusion that, whatever be Government's future intentions, their insistence on keeping me locked up in this Fort was prompted by the motive I have spoken of above. I am aware that it has been held that Government have power to determine the place and conditions of a security prisoner's detention. Without denying this fact I maintain that this power is not open to unlimited interpretation. That there must be recognized standards to limit this power, and that the limitations must be such as to require a Security prisoner, who is not under any punishment under the law, but is merely "detained" by executive order so as to be presented from certain activities, to be kept under reasonable conditions of comfort and well-being. To remain locked up alone for fifteen months day and night, except for an hour morning and evening for exercise, and to be deprived of all company

for the greater part of this period are forms of hardship and punishment that are not incidental to detention, nor known anywhere in the jails and detention camps, except as forms of punishment for prison offences and they cannot fall within the recognized standards of which I have just spoken.

(5) I come now to the last part of my submissions. I have stated above and in my previous petitions that between October 20 and December 10, 1943, I was subjected to harassment and torture. I shall first state the facts briefly. In this connection, I can do no better than quote from the letter I had written to the Punjab Government, through the Home Secretary in February last :—

"I was arrested on the 18th September of the last year at Amritsar and brought the same day to this Fort. After about a month of my detention here I was taken to the office where officers of the Punjab, Bihar, and Bengal C. I. D.'s were present. I was informed that I would have to answer certain questions that would be put to me and make a statement regarding my recent activities. I made it clear to the officers present that I was prepared to answer any questions that did not relate to my recent "underground" activities, and, as for a statement, I had no more to say than that I was an enemy of the British Empire in India (not of Britain or the British Commonwealth), that I was working for my country's independence and that I would continue to do so till either the object was achieved or death intervened. The interrogating officers on their part made me understand that I was not to be let off till they had obtained from me the information they wanted.

In this manner my so-called interrogation began. Thereafter I was taken to the office every day and made to sit

there for varying periods of time. For the first few days the hours were not too long. Even so I pointed out to the interrogators that forcing me to sit in the office for hours together and repeatedly asking me questions that I had declined to answer was a form of harassment to which they had no right to subject one. I was told that I was in the hands of the Punjab C. I. D. and the question of rights did hardly arise. Gradually the hours of "interrogation",—in plain language, harassment—were lengthened: from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. to mid-night. Often varied threats would be given to me in varied manners—some politely and mildly, some harshly and annoyingly. At this stage I made vigorous protests and asked repeatedly but fruitlessly to be allowed either to talk to the Superintendent-in-charge or to write to Government. It struck me as a remarkable system in which a prisoner could not even complain or petition to the Government which held him in custody; and I wish to bring this point to the notice of your Government with some emphasis, for in this system lie the germs of much mischief and injustice. To my mind, the right to petition should never be denied to a prisoner. I should mention here that about this time I made it clear to the interrogating officers, not in boasting but in all earnestness, that I was determined to risk my life if necessary, but would not submit to their pressure. No one knows his powers of resistance, but that was my sincere resolution and I did my best to persuade the officers to believe me.

The final stage in my harassment, which turned them into a form of torture, was to allow me no sleep during day or night. From morning till 12 p.m. I would be continuously kept in the office, then be taken to the cell for an hour, brought to the office again for an hour or two, taken back for an hour again and so on till the morning. The interrupted parcels of hours that I got in my cell could hardly bring me sleep, for just as I would be dozing off the time would be up and I would be brought out again. On paper this process perhaps does not appear to be so torturesome, but I can assure you in all honesty that when conti-

nued for days it is a most oppressive and nerve-racking experience. I cannot describe it as anything but torture.

In the second week of December, this torture suddenly stopped, as did the "interrogation." A few days later I was informed by you that my interrogation was over."

These were the facts, my Lord, and they have never been contested or denied by Government. I shall proceed now to quote further from the same letter, because what I said then is relevent to my present purpose. I said :—

"My grievance is that I have been tortured and treated in this fashion without any justification or warrant whatever. There is, or can be, no moral or legal sanction for it. Even the all-sweeping ordinances do not permit such practices nor vest the police with such powers. A prisoner is a most helpless creature, and whatever his crime, civilization safeguards against his ill-treatment. For his crime he may be hanged if the law required it, as a prisoner he may be punished according to prison rules, but he cannot be harassed and tortured for refusing to give information to the police. That a political prisoner should be so treated is still the more reprehensible. Here I should like to draw the attention of the Government to another aspect of the matter. I have no desire to appear vain or boastful, but in order to make my point I must say that, if the C. I. D. went so far with me, it can be imagined how much further it can go with persons, who perhaps worthier than myself, are yet not in the public eye or do not hold any position in public life. That such people should be completely at the mercy of the C. I. D. without even the right to petition to Government is a state of affairs that should not be permitted to continue.

Suppression of political opponents is of the essence of Nazism and Fascism and torture of political prisoners their most characteristic feature. I am conscious of the argument that those who believe in violence as a political method as

I do must be prepared to be forcibly suppressed. I grant that, but there are lawful means even for such suppression. A political revolutionary may be executed for his offences when found guilty by the established law, but he may not be put to any torture for the extortion of information. War is the deadliest, most brutal and violent form of political conflict. Yet a prisoner of war has certain rights and immunities which civilized society scrupulously respects. The same person who would be most mercilessly bayonetted to death in the field of battle would be immune from ill-treatment in the war prisoners' camp and would receive such amenities as the standards of the countries concerned and his own status would warrant."

This is what I wrote then, and I have repeated these words for Your Lordship's consideration.

There remains another aspect of this matter. During the interrogation it was suggested to me that the police had to do their work, and that in such work there was no room for human values and civilised conduct. The plea was unworthy of any civilized government or its police. But, even granting that human values and decent conduct did not have a place in police work, at least such work must be in accordance to law. My point is that the treatment meted out to me which I have described above was not lawful.

Before concluding this section I wish to suggest to Your Lordship that the D. I. R. and the ordinances have converted this Fort into a paradise for the police. A prisoner who is brought here is completely insulated from the world outside: he does not have to be produced before any magistrate or other court; the police can keep him here as long as they like and do with him

what they will. I have personal knowledge of three cases—those of Mr. Indra Prakash Anand, Mr. Jayachand Vidyalankar and Dr. Rammanohar Lohia—in which similar, or even severer, treatment was meted out. I am sure there must be hundreds of other cases. I wonder if Your Lordship as the highest guardian of justice in this province cannot offer protection in some manner to these unfortunate victims of the police, or rather of the Government.

I shall now sum up the submissions I have made. I submit

(i) that certain facts stated in the judgment are incorrect and that certain other facts that I have stated may affect the findings of the learned Judge;

(ii) that when I was hurriedly made a State prisoner, there was either some illegality about my detention which the Government were unwilling to have examined by the High Court, or it was sought to prevent the fact of my illegal treatment from being brought to light;

(iii) that my detention in the Fort was and is *malafide*.

(iv) that I was subjected to unlawful treatment, that is to say, to harassment and torture, between October 20 and December 10, 1943.

My prayer is that under section 491, Criminal Procedure Code, or any other suitable section of the law, I be permitted through my counsel to

present these points in Court so that decisions may be made regarding them. With regard to my last submission, I have two further prayers, namely, that Your Lordship may initiate such proceedings as may be necessary to bring to book those guilty of unlawful conduct; secondly, that I may be permitted to sue the Crown for the illegal treatment I received at the hands of its servants.

In order that I may seek the advice of, and instruct, my counsel, Mr. Jiwanlal Kapoor, Advocate, with regard to these points, I pray that I be allowed to interview him under such conditions as Your Lordship may deem suitable. I pray further that a copy of this petition may be made available to him so that he may take such steps in regard to it as he may find advisable.

Begging to be excused for taking so much of Your Lordship's time.

I remain,
Your Lordship's
Most truly,
Jayaprakash Narayan.

TO MINOO MASANI

8-2-'44.

Dear Minoo,

Accept my belated congratulations. I would not have been so tardy had it been possible earlier to write. I hope in spite of the obvious handicaps you are finding your work interesting. I have no doubt it will also be fruitful and add to Bombay's betterment. You have my utmost good wishes.

You will naturally be anxious to know all about me, but I am afraid I cannot tell you much. I have to be content to say that.....:.....
.....as you may know I am classed now as a State Prisoner under the Bengal State Prisoners' Regulations of 1818. I get a daily diet allowance of Rs. 3 and a monthly

allowance of Rs. 50 for sundries. I may write three letters a week and receive newspapers and books with the usual censorship safeguards.....

I am afraid I am going to give you a lot of trouble with regard to books. Prabha and most other friends being in jail, you will have to shoulder most of the burden of supplying me with intellectual fare. I wish to concentrate for the time being on Indian economics and the constitutional future of India. Both subjects are in your line and for the present I leave it to you to make a selection of a few books and send them as soon as you can. Later on, I shall make more specific demands.

I used to be a member of the Royal Asiatic Society's Library, Bombay Branch. Will you find out from them if they received the books that I had left at Hazaribagh and if they would take the risk of renewing my membership? If they received back the Hazaribagh books, my transit box would be with them. If they decline to renew my membership, please claim the box on the strength of this letter and keep it with you. If otherwise, send me their membership form and leave the box with them.

I am deliberately not writing to Yusuf, for I do not wish to trouble him when he is so ill. But please give him my love and tell him that though I am a Godless person, I nevertheless offer devout prayers for his early and complete recovery. I

shall write to him as soon as you advise me that I may do so.

With love,
Yours,
Sd/- Jayaprakash
C/o D. I. G., Police, C. I. D., Punjab,
Lahore.

Mr. M. R. Masani,
Mayor, Bombay Municipal Corporation,
Bombay.

(2)

Lahore,
16. 3. '44

Dear Minoo,

I had nearly despaired of hearing from you or any others to whom I had written; so you can imagine my happiness when your letter came on the 4th of this month. It was the first letter that I received in reply to the several I had written. My happiness was still the greater when I read of the books that you had sent—all of which I received in due course. Till these books came, Shakespeare, along with the Ramayan and the Gita, was my only reading, and while I agree with Longfellow about "the great poet who foreruns the ages, anticipating all that shall be said", our present world has got tied up in so many complicated knots that, though in essentials there is really nothing to add to the poet, yet the details, which in a world of superficial values have become almost more important than the essentials, have gone a little beyond his ken. So your books were a feast to me and I fell to them with

a shameless voracity. "The Imp" I found absolutely delightful and parts of it I read twice. Andre Maurois' writing retains its charm and delicacy in spite of the translation. The theme may be a little outdated, as when compared with the horrible reality of the present expressed by Koestler; yet I cannot help wishing that there were more Madame la Guichandies in this ununderstanding or perhaps hypocritical world. Koestler was perhaps better in "Darkness at Noon" and he seems to be taking Freud much too seriously. An ounce of truth that Freud possesses has been exaggerated by a certain type of intellectual and artists into a ton of science.....

I am well and, since the books arrived, usefully employed. As for you, yes, work always agreed with you. May you ever be overworked! When you write, don't fail to say how yourself is getting on. Give my love to friends whom you may meet.

As a matter of caution, I should like to add that nothing that I write to you or other friends should get into the press or be made public in any manner. I should not fancy being denied the rivilege of writing to you or others.

I had forgotten all about Shridharani. His book is good stuff for America, and he writes

well, sometimes brilliantly. But why place him along with Conrad or even Liss Yu Tang ? Whoever has done it must be either over-anxious to encourage him or singularly lacking in feeling for style—Conrad, one of the finest masters of English prose !

With love,
Yours,
Sd/- Jayaprakash

Mr. M.R. Masani,
Mayor, Bombay Municipal Corporation,
Bombay.

(3)

Dear Minoo,

It is an eventful day for me here when books arrive. Such a day was when I received the fifteen books, pamphlets and magazines that you have been so kind to send me. These will keep me busy for some time, though it seems you have inclined towards the lighter side a little too far this time ; but I have no doubt I shall enjoy them immensely—the thrillers as much as *The Agaria*. Of course, the first thing I did was to read through your pamphlet. I do not know if you will feel happy or begin to doubt your sanity, if I tell you that I nearly agreed with you hundred per cent ! Well, the world does change, don't it ?

Here are the titles I have received : (*1*) *The Agaria*, (*2*) *Socialism Reconsidered*, (*3*) *Planning of Science*, (*4*) *Four Days' Wonder*, (*5*) *Our Admirable Betty*, (*6*) *The Documents in the Case*,

(7) *Greek Tragedy*, (8) *Scenes of Clerical Life*, (9) *The Problem of Population*, (10) *Tariffs and Industry*, (11) *Private Worlds*, (12) *Confessions and Impressions*, (13) *Marcus Aurelius*, (14) *The Indian Council of World Affairs*, (15) *Filmindia*. Isn't that all you sent ?

When will you write or have you written already ?

What news of Yusuf ?

That was a ghastly accident in the docks, wasn't it ?

I am fairly well,

Yours with love,
Sd./ J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	21-4-44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by the
Supdt. of Police, C.I.D.

(4)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

In all these months there has been only one letter from you; and I believe I must have written thrice already. It is very unlike you to neglect your correspondence and I rather wonder what may be the cause. In any case, do you

mind dropping me a few words soon as you get this ? By registered parcel I am returning the following twelve books: (*i*) *Scenes of Clerical Life;* (*ii*) *The Agaria;* (*iii*) *A Time for Silence;* (*iv*) *There We shall hear singing again;* (*v*) *Private Worlds;* (*vi*) *Oar Admirable Betty;* (*vii*) *Confessions and Impressions;* (*viii*) *Four Days' Wonder;* (*ix*) *Chronicles of the Imp;* (*x*) *War and Indian Economy;* (*xi*) *Marcus Aurelius;* (*xii*) *Planning of Science.*

Please let me know when you have received them. You will perhaps want me to say something about these books. I shall do so briefly in the space available. George Eliot I rather found heavy reading, with tiresome asides to the gentle and discreet reader and as tiresome descriptions of men and material. Her style too I found dull-something like a slow, turgid river, deep perhaps, but looking at us with a serene, uninteresting face. In style I prefer something like the sparkling, bubbling, jumping stream, catching the rainbow in its spray, and laughing-everlastingly laughing. Ethel Mannin has movement and the trembling stream's joy of living, but her spume catches no rainbow. With her views I agree largely, though not sharing her enthusiasms equally. Bertrand Russell was my god too in my undergraduate days at Wiscousin, and I have always considered him, if not the best, the most emancipated mind of the century. But recently I had to move him down a peg or two and was deeply sorry to have to do so. By the way, did not Mannin marry Reginald recently ? Other comments must wait till the next week. How

is Yusuf now ? I am fairly well and hope that you are none the worse for the sweltering heat of your Urbs Prima. With regards,

Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	6-5-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C.I.D.

(5)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

I was very happy to get your letter of June 4 and to know that you have now received all my previous letters, including the comments, and the parcel of books that I returned. I was also glad to know that you liked my comments and so did some others. I have not yet received the new lot of books you have sent, but there is no doubt, I shall do so in course of time. By the way, I find from your list that you have again failed to include the kind of books I want most. Will you remember it next time ?

Kamalashankar has also been good enough to send me books from time to time. I have been particularly interested in two of his books: *Underground Europe Calling* and *All Our Tomorrows*. The latter is an impassioned work of a genuine

English patriot, with a patriotism of the grand, unselfish, Shakespearean type. One hopes fervently that Douglas Reed's appeal to the common man of Great Britain to shake off his spiritual nihilism and reclaim that democracy which he has allowed to slip out of his fingers succeeds. If such a miracle happened, what a day will dawn over Europe and the many continents of the world! But is this an age of miracles, Minoo ? I am well. Don't get ill again. It is a bad habit.

Yours, with love,
Sd./ J. P.

P. S. You may write as often as you please and so may other friends. There is no fear of the limit of letters I may receive every week being exceeded.

Sd/ J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	24-6-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C.I.D.

(6)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

It was a great pleasure to have your letter after long last. I had begun to imagine all kinds of things. But the flu—from which I hope you have fully recovered—and the accident explain

everything, and now I hope to hear from you oftener. I have written to you rather frequently in recent weeks, and some time back I also returned twelve books out of the two lots you had sent me. In some of the letters I had made brief comments on things that I had read—including your two pamphlets—and I should like to know whether you were allowed to read them.

Regarding the literature you send, the supply is adequate to the demand, but only quantitatively. As I wrote you in my first letter, I wished to devote my time especially to Indian economics and Indian constitutional problems. On these subjects you have sent me very little material. You ask me if I want any particular books. In my letter of 16th March, to which you have replied, I had given a list of 8 or 9 books which I wanted. I shall be obliged if you send me some of them.

It was good to know that Yusuf has been able to leave the Nursing Home. I wrote to him last week.

I share your feelings entirely about "The general jubilation", as you have termed it.

I hope you are keeping well. My health is O. K. The sciatica, though ever present, is not active. I *have* gained in weight, as you have been informed, and may gain a little more, for I am not trying to stop it yet.

With love,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	26-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C.I.D.

(7)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

This is just to complete my brief comments on the books I have returned to you. Elwin has done a careful piece of ethnological work. I cannot say more than that about it. If the Agaria is not as interesting as one expected it to be, it is the Agaria's fault and not Elwin's—they seem to be a most uninteresting people. Again, if I find the book lacking in certain respects, it is only because it is intended to be a supplement to the Baiga. At any rate, those aspects of Agaria life that Elwin has dealt with, he has done with great competence and equal sympathy and understanding—the ethnologists' most essential qualification. *Our Admirable Betty* and *Four Days' Wonder* were most amusing. Sergeant Zehedee won my heart outright and in the *Four Days' Wonder*, Hippo's younger brother, the artist, I liked best. *Marcus Aurelius* was poor poetry and rather faded philosophy—the palest reflection of the Gita, I thought. I do not imagine Phyllis Bottome intends it but the impression that her *Private Worlds* gives is that psychoanalysts are as helpless in understanding and ordering their emotional and inner life as laymen, perhaps more so. In any case, whereas normal individuals discover their loves for themselves, it seems brilliant psychiatrists must be brought together by other equally brilliant psy-

chiatrists. The scientists of Britain in their planning of science seemed to be hopelessly burdened with the past and too timid to venture upon the mysteries of the social order, without ordering which no planning whatever is possible. Well, I can go on endlessly talking about the books and their character, but must stop now and give you my greetings. I am anxiously awaiting your letter.

Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	11-5-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C. I. D.

(8)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

Your letter of July 12. I hope found Dindugal pleasant. But why Dindugal of all places ? I never knew it was a health resort. Anyhow, I hope you are fully restored to your normal health.

As I have been made a security prisoner again, my books are rationed now—10 a month. I have therefore been able to read only five of the lot you sent with your letter of 4th June. I shall return that lot as soon as I have read the remaining books. The last lot of ten books which you sent with your letter of July 12 must have

been received at the office, but naturally it will be sometime before I get them.

You ask if I am writing something. Well, I did intend to do a little serious writing, but it just does not seem possible. Nobody's fault, I I believe, but without adequate material I do not see how can I get a start and keep going. So I write occasionally either to amuse myself or to organize my thoughts when I feel agitated. All of it is of no use except for myself.

As for getting chubby-faced, well, I would have hated that, but under the present dispensation, no danger of it remains.

Well, cheerio,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Minoo, Prabha wants you to send her a few English books that she can read. She was reading sometime ago your "Our India".

Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring Officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	5-8-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

(9)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

I wrote you last week. I am writing again to say a few words about the books you sent. I have

also to thank Mrs. Naidu, Shanti Kumarji and for the good wishes they sent through you. Do give them all my very best regards and tell them that it made me very happy to be remembered by them. I hope Zub's wife has completely recovered now and their baby is grown into a charming little lady. Does she speak only American or also Urdu ?

Among the books (I have got only nine of them yet) I liked "Jail Journey" best as a piece of writing. I doubt if anything as raw and alive and vital has appeared in the English language in recent years.....

......"Plato's Mistake" I found delightful, and, in a different way, also "Prelude for War". "These animals are the property of Mr. Kane Lukes"—that was delicious, I thought. I won't mind having the *Saint Omnibus* around me. More in the next.

With greetings to you all,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	12-8-'44 5 p.m.	Jayaprakash Narayan

(10)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

This is the third one in three weeks. I hope you are not bored. I am returning nine of the books you sent me on June 4, namely : 1. *Jail Journey, 2. Make This the Last War, 3. The International Development of China, 4. Prelude For War, 5. Plato's Mistake, 6. Tomorrow, 7. Talking to India, 8. A week With Gandhi, 9. Uncle Sam's Empire. Tomorrow* is not a very exciting picture of international 'culture'. I was not much impressed with the reproductions from foreign writers, the intention of some of whom seems to be not to express themselves, but to disguise their meaning by cunning tricks with words. I think anybody who had really something to say would say it simply, and may be beautifully, if he also understands beauty and had learnt to express it. I find neither beauty nor meaning in some of the pieces collected. But that is my fault. Raja Rao's "Javni" is a good story and should read very well in Kannada. But in English—well, I don't know if the language does not fail utterly to do justice to what he wants to say. I cannot say how Conrad did it, nor how some in our own country do it, but it seems to me that a foreign tongue is a poor medium for creative writing. Our creative writers would do greater justice to themselves and enrich greatly the literature of their country, if they

could give up the temptation of writing in English. In a foreign tongue, we can but copy ideas, style, life; we can never create, innovate, experiment. Tagore is a second-rate English poet, but in Bengali he is a Colossus—unapproached and unapproachable....."Uncle Sam's Empire" has been misnamed—so it seems to me. The booklet is rather a bird's-eye review of the Old World discovering and dispoiling the New than an elucidation of the title it bears...You are going to have rather exciting days in Bombay in a short while. Let us hope the prayers of millions are at last heard and granted.

With love,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	17-8-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

(11)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

Do you know your last letter was dated July 12 and this is September 2 ? You can't say you have been too busy or that the rains have stopped you from writing! There was another friend who volunteered to write every fortnight, but he seems to follow not earthly but cosmic time... Well, I have really nothing new to say except that I thought I should complete my comments on your books. I should like particularly to

compliment Dantwala on his very thoughtful contribution to current social thought. But why was he in such a hurry ? Most books, including the best, are written around a single central theme. Dantwala has half a dozen themes which are all central but far from simple. He should develop his themes, and should not assume that the reading of his readers is as wide as his. I think he would render a great service to his country if he gave six months to rewriting his pamphlet, which in many parts is no more than synoptic, into a book, say, ten times larger... The gentlemen who thought they were "talking to India" were talking largely to themselves or to the shadowy shapes of their own minds or to Ahmed Ali, Mulk Raj Anand...etc. etc., which is the same as talking to themselves. There is little in these "literary talks" that would interest India, much less inspire her. It never seems to have occurred to these talkers, some of whom expect a great deal from this country, to give her something more solid than words. Words at best are sounds, but these words are hollow sounds, vapid, toneless, false...By the way, I have not heard anything yet of the books you sent with your letter of 12th July. You may write to the D. I. G. and find out. Of the previous eleven books, I have already returned nine; Dantwala's book I have kept with me; and the eleventh, your friend Fielden's *Beggar My Neighbour*, was probably considered objectionable because I did not get it. You may write about that too and find out.

With the best thoughts to you,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	2-9-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C. I. D.

(12)

C/o The Home Secretary
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

Your letter of August 9 reached me on September 9 ! I was greatly distressed that there should be such delay. I replied a few days later, but, as I understand now, the letter was not allowed to pass. So I am writing again. I understand you wrote me another letter on September 4, but that too has not been passed. Try again.

No, I was not too ill to write. In fact, I wrote you several letters last month. I can only hope they have reached you now.

I have been given five of the ten books that you sent in the last lot. The rest I'll get after I finish these. I shall return the books after I have read them, though I may keep one or two. Erich Fromm's "The Fear of Freedom" is easily the most valuable book I have read here.

I hope all is well with you. I am so so.

Cheerio,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer		Date	Name of Sender
Sd/-	29/44	29-9-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C. I. D.

(13)

C/o The Home secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

Your letter of Sept. 19. Yes, you have "put the record right", as you say, even though I have not received all your letters.

Yes, I did fall for Phyllis Bottome's "Heart of A Child." It is like some cool Himalayan stream that cleanses you right through.

Will you please send me a list of the five books you sent with your letter of Sept. 6 ? I shall be able to keep track of them better then.

It was very kind of you to think of my needs. But, in the first place, even security prisoners here do get a monthly allowance of Rs. 20/-. Secondly, I have at present enough private cash for my requirements. I may pinch an occasional book or two of yours, but more than that there is nothing that I want just now. However, I thank you very cordially for your enquiry.

With the best thoughts for you,

Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	21-10-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C. I. D.

(14)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

(1) I have returned the following books to your address : (*i*) *How India Pays for the War ;* (*ii*) *Why Pakistan and Why Not;* (*iii*) *Planning for India;* (*iv*) *Fear of Freedom;* (*v*) *Trial of Mussolini;* (*vi*) *Protective Foods;* (*vii*) *Thorofare;* (*viii*) *Towards Zero Hour;* (*ix*) *Polish Conspiracy;* (*x*) *Genghis Khan;* and (*xi*) *India since Cripps.* I am keeping your pamphlet on "Co-operatives in a Planned Economy" and Coupland. Sir Manilal Nanavati's book I'll return in a month. I have taken the liberty of sending 'Heart of a Child' to Prabha, who will return it to you after reading. There was a tenth book in the lot which included Coupland and other titles, but you had forgotten to tell me its name. "I just forget what was the tenth", you said. That unnamed book I never got. You may enquire in the proper quarters.....

.....Remember me to friends there and give them my greetings.

With love,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

P. S. Prabha wants me to thank you for the books you sent her. She can't write to you, because she may write only to her nearest relations.

Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of Sender
Sd/-	11-11-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

Passed by Supdt. of Police, C. I. D.

(14)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

Your letter of November 8 reached me on December 6 ! The next day arrived the five books you sent with the letter, for which thanks. I read the 'Stories of Rural Bengal' yesterday, but did not feel very enthusiastic about them. Some of the writers do not seem to have an intimate knowledge of their material. "Rural Bengal as seen from Calcutta" might be a better title for some of these stories. I am sure I'll find the other books more interesting. I am glad you have sent me Burnham's books,—I was rather anxious to read them.

You mention having received my letters of Sept. 29 and Oct. 21. I think I wrote you two more letters—of one I am certain in which I told you the names of the books I had returned, and

also something about some of the books. I do hope you received that letter as also the books. I have finished Sir Manilal Nanavati's book and I shall be returning it with the latest lot. Sir Manilal and Anjaria have done a most valuable piece of work, though I think some of the measures they advocate, even as first step, do not go far enough. I shall be obliged if you send me a copy of the promised volume on "Land Problem of India" as soon as it is published by the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics. I should also like you to send me an omnibus volume on business economics (British publication) and also any good on contemporary (or modern) economic theory.

With love,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	9-12-'44	Jayaprakash Narayan

(16)

C/o The Home Secretary,
Govt. of the Punjab,
Lahore.

Dear Minoo,

.....I have already written to you about the five books that I received from you—Burnham's and others. Since then I have received "Your Food" and "Gandhiji'—for

which all kinds of thanks.....For certain reasons my reading has considerably slowed down and the supply has, for the moment, outstripped the consumption. So, do not send any more books till I ask for them. This does not apply to the books I have already asked for. Burnham's "Managerial Revolution" has affected me rather strongly—in the sense that it has made me realise that the problem is much harder than what I had thought it to be : I mean the problem of democracy and economic planning. I have not, however, been much impressed by his somewhat dogmatic thesis about the three super-state centres of the world. Anyway, Burnham is one of the most clear-headed authors I have read. Are all ex-Trotskyists clear-headed ? What has happened to Yusuf ? There is no news from him or of him. I hope he has recovered enough to be able to move about. Do let me know about his health. What about yourself—thriving on work as usual ? I am very happy to see that the Tatas have not in the least affected your intellectual pursuits or your prolific ideations—not to speak of your equally prolific productions..... ..... We were nearly frozen here, but the weather is better now.

With love,
Yours,
Sd/- J. P.

Signature of censoring officer	Date	Name of sender
Sd/-	20-1-'45	Jayaprakash Narayan

(17)

Central Jail,
Agra, U. P.
8-2-'45

Dear Minoo,

I am very glad to tell you that, after sixteen and a half months, I have at last found deliverence—thanks to my *habeas corpus* petition to the Court—from the Punjab C. I. D. Fort, Lahore. I can't describe to you the great relief I feel—even a prison seems to be a place to be thankful for.

The very day I left Lahore came the last parcel of books that you were good enough to send, containing Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw, Part II of the Bombay Plan and Twenty Questions about Russia. I have read through the last and found it rather cheaply done, and the angle of criticism is not acceptable to me.

I think I would have enough quiet here to enable me to put in some work, and I should be glad if you sent me some serious (I can't find a better word at the moment) books. You remember I wrote you once that I was anxious to study Indian economic and constitutional problems., I should like to get everything you can find regarding the coal industry (including the miners). You may even send me a book on mining engineering. And what about some magazines? Is the New Statesman and Nation available? Can you have me put on their subscribers list ? It is one of the magazines approved by the Government of India. In

a previous letter I had asked you to send me an omnibus book on business economics (British publication) and the 2nd volume of Jathar and Bery and any good books on contemporary economic theory. I am reminding you of it.

And what happened to the enquiry I had asked you to make at the Royal Asiatic Society Library? Do let me know.

Here I can write only four letters a month—including two postcards. This means that my letters to you would be less frequent to compensate which you must write oftener.

With love,
yours,
Jayaprakash Narayan

Mr. M. R. Masani, Bar-at-Law,
Bombay House, Fort,
Bombay.