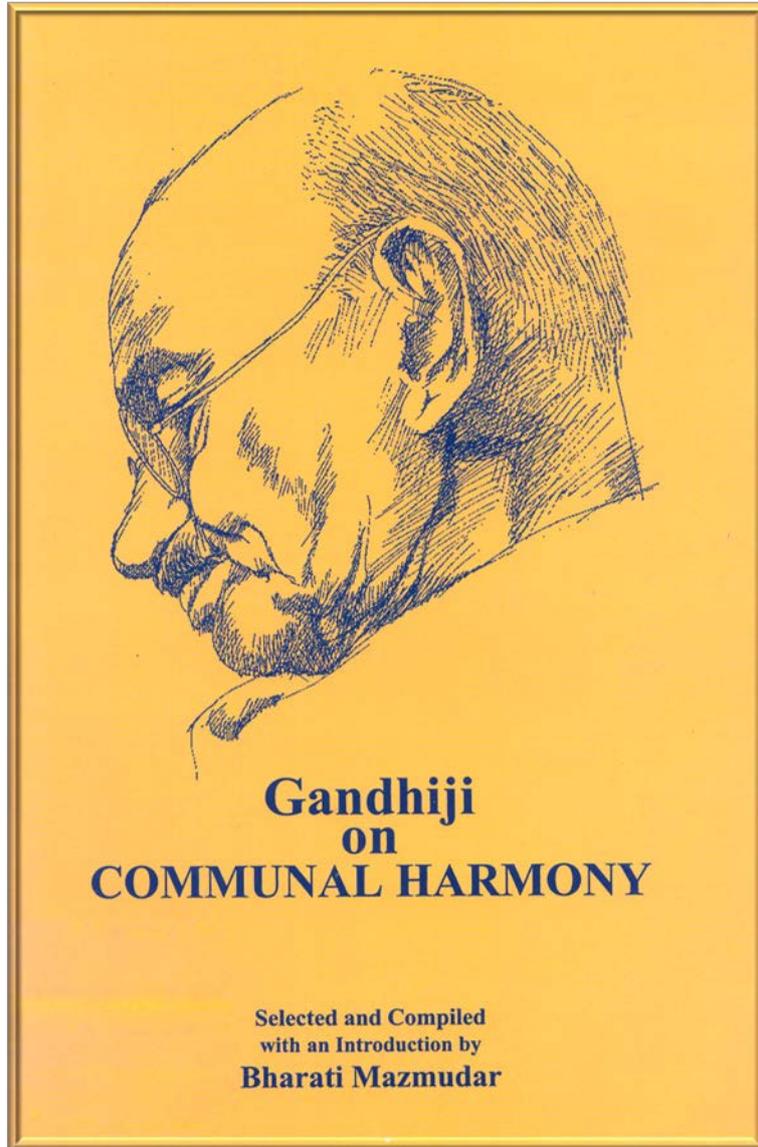


Gandhiji on  
**COMMUNAL HARMONY**



Selected and Compiled with an Introduction by

**Bharati Mazmudar**

**MANI BHAVAN GANDHI SANGRAHALAYA MUMBAI**

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## **Preface**

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

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

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President

Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sangrahalaya

**Usha Thakkar**

Hon. Secretary

Mani Bhavan Gandhi Sangrahalaya

6<sup>th</sup> April 2002

## **Introduction**

### **Bharati Mazmudar**

In 1915 when Gandhiji came back to India he followed the advice of his political guru Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Gandhiji visited almost every part of India in order to understand the socioeconomic condition of this country, and to serve the people well. During his travels he realised that India was full of diversity. It was a land of people following different religions and speaking different languages. It was necessary to bring them together. He observed that disputes often occurred between Hindus and Muslims. Riots took place when Muslims slaughtered cows and Hindus played music near the mosque. The relations between these two communities were continuously embittered by prejudice, mutual fear and suspicion. The British took advantage. Even Gandhiji thought that the British were responsible for this disharmony.

If we look at India's past, one would realise that before the British came Hindus and Muslims lived together peacefully and harmoniously. They were good neighbours celebrating their festivals together and supporting each other during critical circumstances. Hindu rulers appointed Muslims to high posts and Muslim princes honoured and gave responsible positions to Hindus.

It appears that politics succeeded in dividing these two communities. Gandhiji struggled hard to achieve communal harmony till his last breath. He promoted the practice of universal religion. He conducted prayer meetings and emphasised that reverence is more than tolerance. Respect all religions was his message. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews should leave as one nation and not as followers of different religions.

Even today we have communal riots. Divisive and antisocial forces continue to play havoc leading to political instability, social tensions, hindering our economic growth.

Police and military power has not been able to bring peace. Gandhiji's love force is perhaps the only solution.

Dr. Usha Mehta, a veteran Gandhian while talking about Gandhiji's relevance in present times had said, "Take for example the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. There is absolutely no harmony in these two communities today. People from both communities are taking recourse to violence. Innocent people are killed and property worth crores of rupees is destroyed. Gandhiji is absolutely relevant in this respect. People say that Gandhiji's non-violence has become absolutely impractical remedy, but violence has not solved any problem. During riots we have seen that violence has led to counter violence that too with almost vengeance.... So ultimately it is only dialouge and understanding of each other's religion and way of life that is wanted. It would help in creating the right atmosphere and would *prove effective remedy to violence.*"<sup>1</sup>

Gandhiji firmly believed that communal unity was essential for the freedom and growth of India. Let us go through the pages of the *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* to visualise the efforts made by the Father of the Nation for promoting positive harmony among all communities. History has taught us that mankind has progressed through reconciliation and not revenge.

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

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1. *India after Mahatma Gandhi*, Sheshrao Chavan. p. 93, Mahatma Gandhi Mission Trust, 1993.

## Gandhiji on COMMUNAL HARMONY

In 1915 when Gandhiji returned from South Africa he observed that there was no unity amongst the various communities in India. He tried his level best to achieve it. Expressing his views regarding cow protection Gandhiji said on 3-11-1917.

"The condition of bullocks in our cities is pitiable. Indeed, protection of the cow and her progeny is a very great problem. By making it a pretext for quarrelling with the Muslims, we have only ensured greater slaughter of cows. It is not a religion, but want of it, to kill a Muslim brother in order to save a cow. I feel sure that if we were to discuss the matter with our Muslim bretheren in the spirit of love, they also would appreciate the peculiar condition of India and readily co-operate with us in the protection of the cows. . . . Success in this will ensure several things simultaneously. Hindus and Muslims will live in peace, the cow will be safe, milk and its products will be available in pure condition and will be cheaper than now, and our bullocks will become the envy of the world." (14:59)

\* \* \*

"We cannot save the cows by killing Muslims. We should act only through love. Thus alone shall we succeed. So long as we do not have unshakeble faith in truth, love and non-violence, we can make no progress." (14:300)

\* \* \*

Talking about communal harmony on 8-4-1919 Gandhiji said:

"If the Hindu-Muslim communities could be united in one bond of mutual friendship and if each could act towards the other as children of the same mother, it would be a consumation devoutely to be wished. But before this unity becomes a reality, both the communities will have to give up a good deal, and will have to make radical changes in ideas held herefore. Members of one community when talking about those of the other at times indulge in terms so vulgar that they but acerbate the relations between the two. In Hindu society we do not hesitate to indulge in

unbecoming language when talking of the Mohomedans and vice-versa. Many believe that an ingrained and ineradicable animosity exists between the Hindus and Mohomedans.

"When both are inspired by the spirit of sacrifice, when both try to do their duty towards one another instead of pressing their rights, then and then only would the long standing differences between the two communities cease. Each must respect the other's religion, must refrain from even secretly thinking ill of the other. We must politely dissuade members of both communities from indulging in bad language against one another. Only a serious endeavour in this direction can remove the estrangement between us." (25:201-202)

\* \* \*

He made the members present take a vow as under:

"With God as witness we Hindus and Mohomedans declare that we shall behave towards one another as children of the same parents, that we shall have no differences, that the sorrows of each shall be the sorrows of the other and that each shall help the other in removing them. We shall respect each other's religion and religious feelings and shall not stand in the way of our respective religious practices. We shall always refrain from violence to each other in the name of religion." (15:203.)

\* \* \*

When the Khilafat issue greatly agitated the minds of Muslims during 1915-18, Gandhiji supported the Muslims. His speech at the Khilafat Conference held on 24-11-1919 was an effort to bring the two communities together.

"When it is said that the Hindus should join the Muslims in regard to the Khilafat question some people express surprise, but I say that, if Hindus and Muslims are brothers, it is their duty to share one another's sorrow. There can be but only one question and it is whether the Muslims are in the right and their cause is just. If it is

legitimate, then every child of the soil must sympathise with them as a matter of duty. We must not say that the question of Khilafat is exclusively for the Muslims to grieve over. No it belongs to all Indians." (16:308)

He further said :

"My humble opinion is that the issue of cow protection may not be raised on this occasion by the Hindus. If we are one people, if we regard one another as brothers, then Hindus, Parsis, Christians and Jews born in India have the clear duty of helping the Muslims, their fellow countrymen, in their suffering. That helps which demands a return is mercenary and can never be a symbol of brotherhood." (16:320)

\* \* \*

"To bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims will be no mean achievement. That eight crores of people live in genuine amity with twenty two crores of another community is a consumation greatly to be desired. It is certain too that for either to live suppressed by the other will do no good. We have therefore to promote mutual affection by living in equality and independence. The Khilafat movement alone provides the opportunity for this." (16:323)

\* \* \*

Preparing for the non-cooperation movement Gandhiji wrote in *Young India* on 12-12-1920.

"I have never forgotten Hume's frank confession that the British government was sustained by the policy of 'Divide and Rule'. Therefore it is that I have laid stress upon Hindu-Muslim unity as one of the most important essentials for the success of non-cooperation. But it should be a unity broad based on a recognition of heart." (19:105)

\* \* \*

On 11-2-1921 Gandhiji said:

"The English say that this unity is only apparent that Hindus and Muslims can never unite, that the basis of even this apparent unity is self-interest and they will again fall apart as soon as this is served. But this is nonsense. If Hindus and Mussalmans are determined to protect their unity, this cannot be.' (19:351)

Gandhiji even tried to depict communal harmony through the national flag.

"Hindu-Muslim unity is not an exclusive term, it is an inclusive term, symbolic of the unity of all faiths domiciled in India. If Hindus and Muslims can tolerate each other, they are together bound to tolerate all other faiths. The unity is not a menace to the other faiths represented in India or to the world. So I suggest that the background should be white and green and red. The white portion is intended to represent all other faiths. The weakest numerically occupy the first place, the Islamic colour comes next, the Hindu colour red comes last, the idea being that the strongest should act as a shield to the weakest. The white colour moreover represents purity and peace." (19:561)

\* \* \*

"Hindu-Muslim unity means simply this, that each and every community in the country, small or big, will be able to follow its own religion and live in freedom. In this unity lies the strength of 30 crores of human race. If Hindu-Muslim unity meant the kind of thing which happened in Europe, that the big nations swallowed the smaller ones under the pretence of defending them, I would not thus at the age of 52, run from place to place. I want neither the kingdom nor wealth.... My conscience tells me that my movement is such that even the smallest community in the country can live without fear. It will not be possible to harass any one, Parsis, Sikhs, Jews, or Christians and not even a glance can be cast even on a defenceless woman. This is the meaning of Swaraj." (20:23)

\* \* \*

"That unity is strength, is not merely a copy book maxim but a rule of life is no case so clearly illustrated as in the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. Divided we must fall. Any third power may easily enslave India so long as we Hindus, Mussalmans are ready to cut each other's throat. Hindu-Muslim unity means not unity only between Hindus and Mussalmans but between all those who believe India to be their home, no matter of what faith they belong.

"I am fully aware that we have not yet attained that unity to such an extent as to bear any strain. It is a daily growing plant, as yet in delicate infancy, requiring special care and attention. . . . What is a non-essential to a Hindu may be an essential to Mussalman. And in all non-essential matters a Hindu must yield for the asking. It is a criminal folly to quarrel over trivialities. The unity we desire will last only if we cultivate a yielding and a charitable disposition towards one another. The cow is as dear as life to a Hindu; the Mussalman should therefore voluntarily accommodate his Hindu brother. Silence at his prayer is a precious thing for a Mussalman. Every Hindu should respect his Mussalman brother's sentiment. This however is a counsel of perfection." (20:89)

"Everybody knows that without unity between Hindus and Mussalmans, no certain progress can be made by the nation. There is no doubt that the cement binding the two is yet loose and wet. There is mutual distrust. The leaders have come to recognise that India can make no advance without both feeling the need of trust and common action. But though there is a vast change among the masses, it is still not a permanent quantity. The Mussalman masses do not still recognise the same necessity for Swaraj, as the Hindus do. The Mussalmans do not flock to public meetings in the same number as Hindus. This process cannot be forced. Sufficient time has not passed for the national interest to be awakened among the Mussalmans.

"In every district Hindus must make special efforts to draw out their Mussalman neighbours. There will never be real equality so long as one feels inferior or superior

to the other. There is no room for patronage among equals. Mussalmans must not feel the lack of education or numbers where they are in minority." (20:436)

Inspite of Gandhiji's appeal for unity when riots were reported he was very much grieved. When the Moplahs revolted he said:

"My heart bleeds to think that our Moplah brethren have gone mad. I am grieved to find that they have killed officers. I am grieved to think that they have looted Hindu houses leaving many hundreds of men and women homeless and foodless. I am grieved to think that they have endeavoured forcibly to convert Hindus to Islam... . Their acts are not the acts of all the Muslims of India. Let our loyalty to Hindu-Muslim unity therefore remain firm and changeless. Our loyalty to that creed may still have to suffer greater shocks, but so long as we are satisfied, that there is nothing in Islam to warrant any of the things that these misguided Moplahs have done, and so long as we are satisfied and I am satisfied that no sensible Mussalman approves of these acts, or any single one of them, our loyalty to the creed of Hindu-Muslim unity need not suffer any shock whatsoever." (21:152)

\* \* \*

"Islam has undoubtedly suffered for the brutalities practised by the Moplahs, but Hinduism is suffering equally with Islam for thirsting for Moplah blood." (21:513)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji wrote an article titled 'Hindu-Muslim-Parsi' in *Navajivan*.

"He who picks holes in others only betrays his own weakness. Those Hindus and Muslims who always speak against Parsis are themselves weak, there is no doubt about it. If we see only our own faults, we shall ourselves rise and raise others too. Our great error has been that we forgot tolerance. . . . We started criticising Parsis severely, taking it for granted that they would never come around. We forgot that they had contributed to the Angora Funds and to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We lost

sight of the fact that many of them wore khadi and that even Parsi women had started wearing it. . . . We did not remember the sacrifices made by some of them.

"Hindus and Muslims should not desire, or act as if they desired, that members of the minority communities should come seeking their favour. It is our duty to take the initiative, and cultivate friendship with Parsis, Christians and members of the other minority communities." (21:521-522)

\* \* \*

At Sabarmati Ashram on 8-12-1921.

"My association with the noblest of Mussalmans has taught me to see that Islam has spread not by power of sword but by the prayerful love of an unbroken line of saints and fakirs. Warrant there is in Islam for drawing the sword; but the condition laid down are so strict that they are not capable of being fulfilled by everybody. Where is the unerring general to order Jihad ? Where is the suffering, the love and the purification that must precede the very idea of drawing the sword ? Hindus are atleast as much bound by similar restrictions as the Mussalmans of India. The Sikhs have their recent proud history to warn them against the use of force. We are too imperfect, too impure and too selfish as yet to resort to an armed conflict in the cause of god. As Shaukhat Ali would say, 'Will a purified India ever need to draw swords?' " (21:551.)

\* \* \*

Khilafat Conference: December 1921.

"The Khilafat Conference and Muslim League meet generally at the same time as the Congress. This enables Hindus and Muslims to learn great deal from each other; and to strengthen their friendship.

"Hakimji accepted the burden of Congress Presidentship and thereby strengthened Hindu-Muslim unity. The Khilafat camp and the Congress camp thus came so close to each other that nobody would think of them as separate camps. . . . When Hindus

and Muslims were becoming united in heart, where was the need for two separate political bodies? . . . Yet so long as Muslim opinion is not crystallised in favour of this course, it will be safe not to propose dissolution of the Muslim League.

"Though Hindu-Muslim relations are thus improving, we are not free from dangers. There still remain in our path many deserts to be crossed, many forests, valleys and hills. The road has yet to be cleared, metalled and rolled. It is still very necessary to employ all possible means to promote this unity. . . . The fact that the Hindus are in a majority should not frighten the Muslims and Hindus should rid themselves of the fear that, with the help of other Muslim nations, Indian Muslims will suppress the Hindus. . . . But the best method of strengthening it, is for both Hindus and Muslims to take it upon themselves to protect the minority communities. They should love and respect Parsis, Christians and Jews, protect them and never so much as dream of harassing them for forcing them to do anything. In this way, protecting and serving them will become a tradition among the Hindus and Muslims, and in the measure that the spirit of service grows among us, we shall become more united.

"If Hindus and Muslims attempt to pose as patrons or benefactors of each other, they will certainly end up as enemies. If, on the other hand, they regard themselves as each other's servants, the bond of mutual regard will grow stronger day by day and time will come when nothing can break it." (22:147-149)

\* \* \*

"If we desert our partner because he or she does not change his or her views the moment ours change, or does not understand them, that would be utterly barbarous practice. . . . We ought to remain friends with people even when our views differ. Otherwise what is the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity? What a great difference there is between the views of a Hindu and those of a Muslim. While one looks upon it as his dharma to face the east while praying, the other faces the west, while the one grows a shikha on his head, the other grows a beard! Despite this Hindu and Muslim respect each other." (22:389)

"Can anyone even dream that Hindus and Muslims can be truly united until they have fully realised the importance of peace? If the two can maintain peaceful relations so that they may help each other, they together can with love, win over the unsocial elements and other mischief makers. Those who believe that this cannot be done cannot possibly believe in true friendship between Hindus and Muslims. If these two major communities are not bound to each other by ties of mutual regard, I venture prophesy and say that one day they will fight it out to their heart's content. If the pride of both is humbled after this, the two will be able to overcome the third party; if, on the other hand, one of the two is defeated in fighting, it will be doomed to slavery. This way of looking at the matter will furnish us the key to an understanding of all our problems.

"That Hindus and Muslims should find themselves together in such large number in India, that they should have been enslaved by the third power and that subsequently both should be awakened —the significance of these facts is plain for all to see. For myself I see every moment of providence and god in it. Through peace lies victory and through violence the destruction of both." (23:76)

\* \* \*

On 12-3-1922 Gandhiji wrote a letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan from Sabarmati Jail.

"...Divided, we must ever remain slaves. This unity, therefore, cannot be mere policy to be discarded when it does not suit us. We can discard only when we are tired of Swaraj. Hindu- Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances. Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities, the Parsis, the Christians, the Jews or powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall someday want to fight each other.

"...This unity, in my opinion, is unattainable without our adopting non-violence as a firm policy. I call it a policy because it is limited to the preservation of that unity. But it follows that thirty crores of Hindus and Mussalmans united not for a time but for all

times can defy all the powers of the world and should consider it a cowardly act to resort to violence in their dealings with the English administrators. We hitherto feared them and their guns in our simplicity. The moment we realise our combined strength, we shall consider it unmanly to fear them, and, therefore, ever to think of striking them.

"But you and I know that we have not yet evolved the nonviolence of the strong and we have not done so because the Hindu-Muslim union has not gone so much beyond the stage of policy. There is still too much mutual distrust and consequent fear. I am not disappointed. The progress we have made in that direction is indeed phenomenal. Neither the classes nor the masses feel instinctively that our union is necessary as the breath of our nostrils." (23:88-89)

\* \* \*

Explaining the importance of tolerance Gandhiji said:

"Tolerance is the prime quality of a Swarajist. As long as this world endures, views are bound to differ from individual to individual. Swaraj will be shared in common by men holding different views. . . . We must respect the freedom of others as much as we value our own. ... If Hindus and Muslims want unitedly to secure Swaraj, they should learn this lesson by heart and act accordingly.

"They should tolerate each other's ideas and practices and each should refrain from interfering in the practices of other.

"Those who are the first to implement this principle will score a victory."(23:424)

\* \* \*

Playing music near a Masjid created problem in Visnagar. Gandhiji's appeal to both the communities was:

". . . According to Hinduism, no one is destined to perish, which means that there is the same atman in all beings. The Hindu does not insist that only those who believe

in the same ideas as he does will go to heaven. I do not know if Muslims believe that. But even if Muslims believe that Hindus being Kafirs are not fit to go to heaven, the Hindu religion teaches them to bear love for Muslims and bind them to themselves with that chain. For Hinduism look down upon no religion. On the contrary, it tells every man: 'Your good lies in following your own religion'."

"From the practical point of view also to believe that Hindu- Muslim unity is impossible is to accept slavery for all time. If any Hindu imagines that the seven crores of Muslims in India can be wiped out, I have no hesitation in asserting that he slumbers in profound ignorance.

"There are many villages in every part of the country in which Hindus and Muslims live like brothers and are even oblivious of the fact that in certain towns and villages in their neighbourhood the two communities are at loggerheads.

"Muslim history tells us that Islam's glory has not been maintained by the sword. The sword may have defended Islam, but Islam has never decided issues of justice and injustice by the sword. There has been no instance in the world till now of a religion which flourished merely on the strength of the sword. Though not a Muslim, I would certainly tell Muslims of Visnagar that it is a bad habit to draw sword on a slightest provocation and that it destroys religion. It is the fakirs, sufis and philosophers who won glory for Islam. It is proved by Muslim writings that they defended themselves or their religion not with the sword but by their soul force.

"I have read in the Koran that it is obligatory upon Muslims to say prayers, but I have neither read nor heard that it is their right or their duty to prevent others forcibly from playing music nearby. They can appeal to Hindus with love." (28:530-31)

\* \* \*

Even when Gandhiji was resting at Juhu he kept himself informed about the events and deliberated with the leaders on this issue of Hindu-Muslim tensions.

"People have been shouting about Hindu-Muslim unity for many years, yet where is it? This unity will not be brought about through speeches. Nor will feeble pen or tongue be able to do anything. Each community should realise that in unity lie the interests of all and the safety of the religions of each and should bear sincere love towards others. Fanaticism should give place to tolerance and most important of all we should learn the truth that no party can use force against another for the sake or in the name of religion. If Hindus and Muslims observe this in their relations with each other, that will be enough to make the other communities feel secure." (24:30)

\* \* \*

The Khilafat movement had almost brought two communities together; but as soon as the Khilafat agitation weakened communal riots broke out in several parts of the country. Gandhiji was very much worried and at times felt helpless to improve the prevailing atmosphere.

"For me the only question for immediate solution before the country is the Hindu-Mussalman question. I agree with Mr. Jinnah that Hindu-Muslim unity means Swaraj. I see no way of achieving anything in this afflicted country without a lasting heart unity between Hindus and Mussalmans of India. I believe in the immediate possibility of achieving it, because it is so natural, so necessary for both and because I believe in human nature. . . The Mussalmans are brave, they are generous and trusting, the moment their suspicion is disarmed. Hindus, living as they do in glass houses, have no right to throw stones at their Mussalman neighbours. . . If Hindus set their house in order, I have no doubt that Islam will respond in a manner worthy of its liberal tradition. The key to the situation lies with the Hindus. We must shed timidity or cowardice, we must be brave enough to trust, all will be well." (24:153)

"Hindu-Muslim tension is a grim reality. Removal of it is a stern national necessity. It cannot be brought about by ignoring or suppressing facts. Truth on such occasion must be told, no matter how unpalatable it may be." (24:181)

## HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Let me summarize the long statement<sup>1</sup> issued last week on this the greatest of all questions for the Indian patriot. The posterity will judge both the faiths by the manner in which the followers of each acquit themselves in the matter. However good Hinduism or Islam may be in the abstract, the only way each can be judged is by the effect produced by each on its votaries considered as a whole.

The following then is the summary of the statement.

### Causes

1. The remote cause of the tension is the Moplah rebellion.
2. The attempt of Mr. Fazl Hussain to rearrange the distribution of posts in the education department consistently with the number of Mussalmans in the Punjab and consequent Hindu opposition.
3. The *shuddhi* movement.
4. The most potent being tiredness of non-violence and the fear that the communities might, by a long course of training in non-violence, forget the law of retaliation and self-defence.
5. Mussalman cow-slaughter and Hindu music
6. Hindu cowardice and consequent Hindu distrust of Mussalmans.
7. Mussalman bullying.
8. Mussalman distrust of Hindu fair play.

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1. Vide "Hindu-Muslim Tension : Its Cause and Cure", 29-5-1924

## Cure

1. The master-key to the solution is the replacement of the rule of the sword by that of arbitration.

Honest public opinion should make it impossible for aggrieved parties to take the law into their own hands and every case must be referred to private arbitration or to law-courts if the parties do not believe in non-co-operation.

2. Ignorant fear of cowardly non-violence, falsely so called, taking the place of violence should be dispelled.
3. Growing mutual distrust among the leaders must, if they believe in unity, give place to trust.
4. Hindus must cease to fear the Mussalman bully and the Mussalmans should consider it beneath their dignity to bully their Hindu brothers.
5. Hindus must not imagine they can force Mussalmans to give up cow-sacrifice. They must trust, by befriending Mussalmans, that the latter will, of their own accord, give up cow-sacrifice out of regard for their Hindu neighbours.
6. Nor must Mussalmans imagine they can force Hindus to stop music or *arati* before mosques. They must befriend the Hindus and trust them to pay heed to reasonable Mussalman sentiment.
7. Hindus must leave to the Mussalmans and the other minorities the question of representation on elected bodies, and gracefully and whole-heartedly give effect to the findings of such referee. If I had my way I should appoint Hakim Saheb Ajmal"Khan as the sole referee leaving him free to consult Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis etc. as he considers best.
8. Employment under national government must be according to merit to be decided by a board of examiners representing different communities.

9. *Shuddhi or tabligh as such cannot be disturbed, but either must be conducted honestly and by men of proved character. It should avoid all attack on other religions. There should be no secret propaganda and no offer of material rewards.*
10. Public opinion should be so cultivated as to put under the ban all the scurrilous writings, principally in a section of the Punjab Press.
11. Nothing is possible without the Hindus shedding their timidity. Theirs is the largest stake and they must be prepared to sacrifice the most.

But how is the cure to be effected? Who will convince the Hindu maniac that the best way to save the cow is for him to do his duty by her and not goad his Mussalman brother? Who will convince the Mussalman fanatic that it is not religion but irreligion to break the head of his Hindu brother when he plays music in front of his mosque? Or, again, who will make the Hindu see that he will lose nothing by the minorities being even over-represented on the elective public secular bodies? These are fair questions and show the difficulty of working out the solution.

But if the solution is the only true solution, all difficulties must be overcome. In reality the difficulty is only apparent. If there are even a few Hindus and a few Mussalmans who have a living faith in the solution, the rest is easy. Indeed, even if there are a few Hindus only, or a few Mussalmans only with that faith, the solution would be still easy. They have but to work away single-heartedly and the others will follow them. And the conversion of only one party is enough because the solution requires no bargains. For instance, Hindus should cease to worry

Mussalmans about the cow without expecting any consideration from the latter. They should yield to the Mussalman demand, whatever it may be, regarding representation, again without requiring any return. And if the Mussalmans insist on stopping Hindu music or *arati* by force, the Hindus will continue playing it although every single Hindu should die at his post, but without retaliation. The Mussalmans

will then be shamed into doing the right thing in an incredibly short space of time. Mussalmans can do likewise, if they choose, and shame the Hindus into doing the right thing. One has to dare to believe.

But in practice it will not be thus; on the contrary, both will act simultaneously as soon as the workers become true to themselves. Unfortunately they are not. They are mostly ruled by passion and prejudice. Each tries to hide the shortcomings of his co-religionists and so the circle of distrust and suspicion ever widens.

I hope that, at the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, it will be possible to find out a method of work which will bring a speedy end to the tension.

It has been suggested to me that the Government are fomenting these dissensions. I should hope not. But assuming that they are, surely it is up to us to neutralize such efforts by ourselves acting truly and faithfully. (24:188-190)

\* \* \*

Riots in Gulbarga:

"Whatever the Hindu provocation, if there was any, the Mussalman outburst has an ominous look about it. The desecration of temples cannot be justified in any circumstances whatsoever. Maulana Shaukat Ali, when he heard of Shambhar and Amethi desecrations exclaimed in a fit of temper that the Mussalmans should not be surprised if the Hindus retaliate and someday find that their mosques have been desecrated. . . I know that many Hindus feel that I am responsible for many of these outbursts. For they argue, I contributed the largest share to the awakening of the Mussalman masses.... I am both an idolator and iconoclast in what I conceive to be the true sense of the terms. I value the spirit behind idol worship. It plays a most important part in the uplift of the human race. And I would like to possess the ability to defend with my life the thousands of holy temples which sanctify this land of ours. My alliance with the Mussalmans presupposes their perfect tolerance of my idols and my temples. I am an iconoclast in the sense that I break down the subtle form of

idolatry in the shape of fanaticism that refuses to see any virtue in any other form of worshipping the deity save one's own. This form of idolatry is more deadly for being more fine and evasive than the tangible and gross form of worship that identifies the deity with a little bit of stone or a golden image.

"True Hindu-Muslim unity requires Mussalmans to tolerate not as a virtue of necessity, not as a policy, but as part of their religion, the religion of others so long as they, the latter, believe it to be true. Even so it is expected of Hindus to extend the same tolerance as a matter of faith and religion to the religions of others, no matter how repugnant they may appear to their Hindu sense of religion.... Above all the Hindus may not break mosques against temples. Even though thousand temples may be reduced to bits, I would not touch a single mosque and expect thus to prove the superiority of my faith to the so called faith of fanatics." (25:45-46.)

\* \* \*

"The greatest obstacle in the way of our progress is intolerance. I am trying to overcome it. I am a small man. I am no superman. Had I been a superman, I would have eliminated intolerance. I have yet to acquire purity, love, humility and discrimination; otherwise you would have noted a spark in my eyes, a fire in my words, which would have instantly convinced you that such is not the way of peaceful co-operation." (25:57)

\* \* \*

Speech at Surat on 5-9-1924.

"How can a temple be protected if the priest runs away when it is being destroyed? I would say you should protect the image by allowing yourself to be killed. If the assailant sees that you are prepared to protect the image by getting killed, he will come to his own senses.

"You cannot protect the image by killing others. Muslims also cannot protect Islam by killing Hindus. There is no doubt that Islam will perish if it seeks to preserve itself

by killing others. No religion in the world can be protected by violence. ... When you win the weapon of truth, the Hindu-Muslim conflict will cease." (25:93)

\* \* \*

"I see no way of removing Hindu-Muslim tension, which is becoming a daily tension, save by all parties coming together on the Congress platform, and devising the best method of solving a problem, which seems to defy solution and to dash to pieces all the fond hope we had of securing a national freedom that is broad based upon mutual trust and mutual help." (25:122.)

\* \* \*

"The question of Hindu-Muslim unity is getting more and more serious every day. ... In the case of many of these disturbances, we hear the government agents being at the back of them. The allegation, if true, would be painful to me, not surprising. It should not be surprising if the government fomented the troubles, it being their policy, to divide us. . . . The suspicion or fear of their having set the Hindus and Mussalmans by ears is always entertained, because both have quarrelled so often. It is this habit of quarrelling that needs to be abandoned if we want to have Swaraj and retain it." (25:134)

\* \* \*

"If Hinduism teaches hatred of Islam or of non-Hindus, it is doomed to destruction. Each community should then put its house in order without bargaining with the other." (25:137)

\* \* \*

When Gandhiji found himself helpless to improve the situation, he undertook a self purificatory fast for 21 days in Delhi starting from 18-9-1924.

"The recent events have proved unbearable for me. My helplessness is still more unbearable. My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one

cannot remove, one must fast and pray. I have done so in connection with my own dearest ones. Nothing evidently that I say or write can bring two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast of 21 days commencing from today and ending on Wednesday, Oct 8th. I reserve the liberty to drink water with or without salt.

It is both penance and a prayer." (25:171)

\* \* \*

"Our Muslim brethren should know that India is the land of their birth, and that they cannot hope to free Islamic countries without first securing India's freedom. . . . Muslims of other countries tell me that Muslims of India are comparatively of a mild temper. Whether this is good thing or not, only the Hindus and the Muslims or the world can say. Personally I feel that we stand to lose nothing by their being mild. Being compassionate does not mean being timid or forsaking the use of arms. The really strong man is he who, though armed, does not strike the enemy but stands before him boldly ready to be killed." (26:174-175)

\* \* \*

Interview to the Press on the Hindu-Muslim problem, Bombay, on 5-3-1925.

"My views remain the same hitherto. Unity is inevitable. It will take longer than I had expected. The estrangement is undoubtedly growing. Let us hope that even in the midst of storm, some of us will remain calm. I am out for conquest. I as a Hindu will not therefore quarrel with the Musslamans, neither will I yield to threats, such as I see are reported to have been uttered at Peshawar. ... I hope they are incorrectly reported. But I must refuse to lose my head even if they, Zafar Ali Khan and Dr. Kitchlew, have said all that has been reported of them. I do not believe in the efficacy of retaliation. I would urge the Hindus not to be angry over such incidents. But I see there is no settlement to be had in the near future. ... I can see the chance of reconciliation between Hindus and Musslamans after a free and hearty fight, but I

see none with British arms restraining us. We must learn to restrain ourselves. My motto therefore is 'Unite now, today if you can, fight if you must. But in any case avoid British intervention'. . . . There is as much need for a change of heart among the Hindus and Musslamans, as there is among the British, before a proper settlement is arrived at." (26:232-233)

\* \* \*

Talking about solving Hindu-Muslim tangle, Gandhiji said at a public meeting in Madras on 7-3-1925.

"... My mind will eternally work at it till I find out a solution. But I must confess to you today that I cannot present a workable solution that you will accept. In the atmosphere surcharged as it is with mutual distrust I cannot persuade either the Hindus or the Musslamans to accept my solution. But for you I would like to leave this little single thought that those of you who have to deal with Hindus or Musslamans as the case may be, be straight forward, honest and fearless in your dealings with one another. In spite of the horizon which is black before you, do not lose faith, believing to one another remembering that the same Divine Spirit inhabits whether it is the Hindu body or Muslim body and try to be charitable, one towards the other." (26:244- 245)

On 19-3-1925 Gandhiji addressed a meeting at Pudupalayam. "... It is impossible to reach the fullest height that this nation is capable of unless we realize the value of the unity of all the races living in our midst." (26:347) \* \* \*

Addressing a public meeting in Madras on 22-3-1925, Gandhiji said:

"If the Hindus and Musslamans do not unite reasonably, they will unite forcibly, because one party cannot lead the country; and so long as there are some Hindus and some Mussalmans with whom the unity of all races is an article of faith, I have every hope that we shall unite and unite whole heartedly." (26:372)

\* \* \*

"In the carnage of Jallianwala Bagh, the blood of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs mingled freely. Those who seemed separate while alive, became one in death. Hindus and Muslims may fight and wrestle, may kill and be killed. Such disputes will be forgotten; but will the event of Jallianwala Bagh be ever forgotten?" (26:426)

\* \* \*

Answering to the question 'Why the Muslim community in India as a whole is so keenly interested in the affairs of Muslim countries abroad', Gandhiji wrote:

"In so far as the charge is correct, the Mussalmans take less interest because they do not yet regard India as their home of which they must feel proud. Many regard themselves quite wrongly, I think, as belonging to a race of conquerors. We Hindus are in a measure to blame for this aloofness on the part of Mussalmans. We have not come to regard them as an integral part of the nation. We have not set out to win their hearts. The causes for this unfortunate state of things are historic and were in their origin inevitable. The blame of the Hindus, therefore can be felt only now. The consciousness being of recent growth is naturally not universal and the physical fear of the Mussalmans in a vast number of cases makes it constitutionally difficult for the Hindus to adopt the blame and proceed to with the Mussalman heart."(26:442)

\* \* \*

Talking about National Week:

"On 13th April the nation was made to offer sacrifice in which Hindu, Mussalman and Sikh blood mingled at Jallianwala Bagh. . . . Since then much water has flown under the Sabarmati Bridge. The nation has passed through many vicissitudes. Today Hindu-Muslim unity seems to have been a dream. I observe that both are preparing to fight. Each claims that it is preparing in self-defence. Each is in a measure right. And if they must fight, let them fight bravely, disdaining the protection of police or the law courts. If they will do that, the lesson of 13th April will not have been lost upon them. If we will cease to be slaves, we must cease to rely for protection upon the

British bayonet or the slippery justice of law courts. Not to rely upon either, at the crucial moment is the best training for Swaraj." (26:443-444)

\* \* \*

Speech at All Bengal Hindu Sammelan in Faridpur on 2-5-1925.

"Firstly Hindu-Muslim unity is a vital question on which I have bestowed a good deal of thought. I pray to god that He might give us the peace we so much desire. Now the Hindus and Muslims are at loggerheads and fighting bitterly and there is no unity of heart. I tried my best to bring about the unity and I am not ashamed to own my failure. I only wished they fought like men, but of course not go to court and then only know that the community cannot exterminate the other nor the whole of India can be converted either into Hinduism or Mohommedianism. Thus the much desired for unity will come automatically" (27:10)

\* \* \*

Speech at Bengal Provincial Conference in Faridpur on 3-5-1925.

"... We have problems in India to deal with which no other nation on earth has. We have, if we are Hindus, to deal with our Muslim countrymen, with our Christian countrymen, with our Zoroastrian countrymen, with the Sikhs and so many sections and sub-sections of Hindus which dignify themselves by a name which does not belong to Hinduism. How are we to achieve the unity of purpose, the unity of action between the diverse elements except by means which are not open to any question, namely non-violence, and truthfulness. We will not be able to deal with our Muslim countrymen or with our Hindu countrymen on any other terms.

"The Muslim with his still later traditions thinks that he must establish or re-establish a Muslim empire. From these diverse elements and provincialism there is no scope for us except through non-violent and truthful means, because otherwise, we are sitting on a mine which is likely to explode at any moment. The slightest trace of dirt

in us is likely to make us perish and that is why I have insisted in season and out of season upon a policy not of religion, but a policy of non-violence and truthfulness.

"... It is the breath of my nostrils—non-violence and truthfulness; and I wish, I could infect every young man in this hall with that zeal and with that devotion for his non-violence and truthfulness." (27:29-30)

\* \* \*

"The conviction is daily going stronger that there is no peace for India, and indeed the world, save through non-violence. For me, therefore, the spinning wheel is not merely a symbol of simplicity and economic freedom but it is also a symbol of peace. For if we Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, and Jews unite in achieving the universalisation of the wheel in India, we shall not only have arrived at real unity and exclusion of foreign cloth, but we shall have acquired self-confidence and organising ability which render violence wholly unnecessary for regaining our freedom."(27:244.)

\* \* \*

Letter to Shuaib Qureshi on 26-6-1925.

"All you say about Hindu-Mussalman's quarrel is too true. I am following the course adopted by Prophet's companions in Osman's time. They withdrew to the caves when Islam was split up into rival factors. We may figuratively retire into ourselves whilst the two may be fighting like cats and dogs." (27:294)

"... Both Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. Both are fallen. And they are in a position of lovers, have to be, whether they will or not. Every act therefore, of a Hindu towards the Mussalman and vice-versa must be act of surrender and not mere justice. They may not weigh their acts in golden scales and exact consideration. Each has to regard himself ever a debtor of the other. By justice why should not a Mussalman kill a cow everyday in front of me? But his love for me restrains him from

doing so and he goes out of his way sometimes even to refrain from eating beef for his love for me, and yet thinks that he has done only just what is right.

"This talk therefore of justice and nothing but justice is a thoughtless, angry and ignorant outburst whether it comes from Hindus or Mussalmans. So long as Hindus and Mussalmans continue to prate about justice they will never come together. 'Might is Right' is the last word in justice and nothing but justice. . . . Hindus will have to learn to bear the sight of cow-slaughter and Mussalmans will have to discover that it was against the law of Islam to kill cow in order to wound the susceptibilities of Hindus. When that happy day arrives, we shall know each other's virtues. Our vices will not obtrude themselves upon our gaze. That day may be far off or it may be very near. I feel it is coming soon. I shall work for that end and no other."(27:348-349.)

\* \* \*

Speech at Bhagalpur on 1-10-1925.

"...You have referred to the Hindu-Muslim question in one of the addresses. I would like to say something about this question to my Hindu and Muslim brethren. But I regard myself to be a sensible man. I know my limitations well. I have fully realised that I have no longer that influence which I commanded over the Hindus and Mohammedans in 1921. Today I can persuade neither the Hindus nor the Mohammedans. I know it fully well that any good result can come only when both rid themselves of their madness. Call it God or Khuda there is a force before which our heads always bow. We ought to fear Him and determine our duty through that fear. There is no reason whatsoever to justify the Hindus and the Mussalmans to fight one another. I see neither religious grievance nor any justification for the fight. It is our madness alone which is responsible for it. If we want to get rid of this ignorance and become men, we must give up our pride and in fear of God purify our hearts and again try to unite and become one.

"I would like every Mussalman to know that it is only they who are mad who think of saving Islam by the help of the sword only. And to those Hindus who want to save Hinduism by help of the sword, my message is that, if you want to draw your swords, draw them by all means, but for the sake of God do not call in a third party to arbitrate." (28:272-273) \* \* \*

"However much I wish to avoid it, the Hindu-Muslim question will not avoid me. Muslim friends insist upon intervention to solve it. The Hindu friends would have me discuss it with them and some of them say I have sown the wind and must reap the whirlwind." (28:365)

\* \* \*

Letter to G.D. Birla on 16-4-1926.

"If the government has banned processions and it is necessary to take out one on some religious occasion, I would think it right to do so despite the government ban. But before starting the procession, I would apologise to the Muslims. If they do not respond to such a courteous gesture, I should go ahead with the procession and submit to any violence on their part. If I do not have the strength for such non-violence, I should provide myself with the means for fighting before taking out the procession. ... I do not believe that the Muslims are more markedly ungrateful than members of any other community; but I have observed that they lose temper more quickly.

"Those Hindus who do not approve of non-violent way or are not equipped to follow it should acquire the strength to fight it out physically.

"If the government takes sides with the Muslims, Hindus need not worry on that account. They should not care for the government. They should find for themselves, relying on their own strength without seeking its favour. When the Hindus have cultivated sufficient courage for this, the Government will on its own maintain impartial attitude and the Muslims will not then look for its support. In seeking

government's help, we neither serve our dharma nor give evidence of manhood."  
(30:298-299.)

Letter to a Muslim leader on 4-6-1926.

"... Regarding Hindu-Muslim question I have deliberately refrained from saying anything. What can I write? To whom can I tell the tale of my woe? I know very well that I have no influence whatsoever over the quarrelling elements.

"I cannot tolerate the killing of even a single Muslim or Hindu or for that matter of any human being. Nor can I tolerate the destruction of a mosque or a temple or a church. It is my belief that the same God that dwells in the heart of a Hindu is enshrined in the heart of every other person. And I also believe that a temple belongs to God as much as a mosque. I can never agree to the rule of blood. . . . But who listens to me? It is my firm belief, however, that god does not approve of this rule of blood for blood, temple for a mosque. A day will come when Hindus and Muslims will own their guilt, feel sorry for their behaviour and unite with each other. This is the culmination that I wish to witness in my lifetime." (30:531-532)

\* \* \*

On 21-7-1926 Gandhiji said:

"I look upon the Hindu-Muslim riots as a kind of surgical operation. It would have been excellent if we could have avoided it, but evidently we have been suffering from inflammation of this particular limb and the condition was no longer curable by bandaging the part. When this rioting is over, one day we shall certainly become united. And if this society is much too decayed to last, let it perish." (21-7-1926; 31:178)

\* \* \*

"...I venture to suggest that a real desire for peace between Hindus and Mussalmans is wholly inconsistent with the desire to retain British rule in India by force of arms. When British officials begin the work of peace between these two branches of Indian

family, they will have begun to live in India on sufferance. After all, the discovery that India is governed by 'divide and rule' policy was made, in the first instance not by an Indian, but, if I am not mistaken by an Englishman. It was either the late Allen Octavius Hume or George Yule who taught us to believe that the empire was based upon a policy of divide and rule.

"The division policy need not be always conscious and deliberate. Mussalmans against Hindus, non-Brahmins against Brahmins, Sikhs against both, Gurkhas against all the three, this game of permutation and combination has gone on ever since the advent of British rule, and will continue so long as the government considers its interests to be antagonistic to those of the people or its existence to be against the desire of the people." (31:2,90)

\* \* \*

"... Hindus think that they are physically weaker than the Mussalmans. The latter consider themselves to be weak in educational and earthly equipment. They are now doing that all weak bodies have done hitherto. This fighting therefore, however unfortunate it may be, is a sign of growth. It is like the Wars of the Roses. Out of it will rise a mighty nation." (31:368)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji's reaction after the murder of Swami Shradhanand on 26-12-1926.

"... This is a thing which should not have happened in India. India where both Hindus and Mussalmans are proud of their faiths. I have studied the Koran and with the same reverent attention as I give the Gita, and I say that Koran nowhere sanctions or enjoins such murders. The murder has been possible because the two communities look upon each other with feelings of hatred and enmity. Many Mussalmans believe that Lalaji and Malaviyaji are the sworn enemies of Islam as was Swamiji in their opinion. On the other hand, many Hindus regard Sir Abdur

Rahim and other Mussalmans as the enemies of Hinduism. To my mind both are wholly wrong.

"... We are all children of the same Father whom the Hindus and Mussalmans and the Christians know by different ' names." (32:460-62)

\* \* \*

"... I dare not touch the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has passed out of human hands, and has been transferred to god's hands alone.

"Let us ask the help from God, the All Powerful and tell Him that we His tiny creatures have failed to do what we ought to do, we hate one another, we distrust one another, we fly at one another's throat and we even become assassins. Let our heart's cry then ascend to His throne, and that let us wash His feet with tears of blood and ask Him to purge our hearts of all hatred in us. We are disgracing His earth, His name and His sacred land by distrusting and fearing one another. Although we are sons and daughters of the same motherland, although we eat the same food, we have no room for one another. Let us ask god in all humility to give us sense, to give us wisdom." (32:511)

\* \* \*

"... Hindu-Muslim unity had made a mission of my life. I worked for it in South Africa, I toiled for it here, I did penance for it, but God was not satisfied. God did not want me to take any credit for the work. And so I have washed my hands, I am helpless, I have exhausted all my efforts.

\* \* \*

"... Something within me tells me that Hindu-Muslim unity must come and will come sooner than we might dare to hope, that God will one day force it on us, inspite of ourselves. . . . In 1920 I said that not even the British Empire with all the resources of its armed strength, diplomacy and organisation could efface us, make us slaves, or divide Hindus and Mussalmans." (32:571-572)

\* \* \*

A friend wrote:

"You are responsible for the mischief that is going on in our midst. If you had not dragged the Hindus into the Khilafat agitation, the recent tragic events would not have happened. But you alone can save us now."

To this Gandhiji replied:

"... I do not repent on my part in Khilafat agitation. It was a duty I discharged towards Mussalman countrymen. The Hindus would have been wrong, if they had not helped there brethren in distress. However ugly the present look of the things may be, future generations of Mussalmans will recall with gratitude this great act of friendship on the part of Hindus. But the future apart, I believe in the proverb that virtue is its own reward. I should always defend my action on the Khilafat question.

"I am just as strong a believer as ever in unity and the necessity for it. If it could be achieved by giving my life, I have the will to give it and I hope I have the strength for it. I should with greatest the joy undertake an indefinite fast, as I nearly did at Delhi in 1924, if it would melt and change the stony hearts of Hindus and Mussalmans. But I have no sign from God within to undertake the penance.

"... I know too that neither assassination nor fratricidal acts can possibly save religion. Religion worth the name can only be saved by purity, humility and fearlessness of the uttermost type among its professors." (34:2-3)

\* \* \*

"... I have in my recent article on Hindu-Muslim unity given my deliberate opinion against any legal enactment with reference to any understanding that might be arrived at between Hindus and Mussalmans. No special legislation without a change of heart can possibly bring about organic unity. And when there is change of heart no such legislation can possibly be necessary. My effort which takes a form of prayer

in our present helpless condition is mainly devoted to procuring that change of heart." (34:175)

\* \* \*

"... You will realise that in the uplift of your brethren, in the reform of your social evils, in making your society a real force in the country and in establishing communal harmony, perfect and long lasting friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans—in all these lies also your duty to your country— and if you are to serve your country you must also serve the society to which you belong." (34:232-233).

\* \* \*

During the floods in Gujarat:

"No one can tell the heavy tolls of life exacted, of the immense property destroyed by the floods. But we did not abuse the floods. We practised Satyagraha against them. We purified ourselves. We did constructive work. We achieved Hindu-Muslim unity. We removed untouchability. We became self-reliant. We placed our all at the disposal of our brothers and sisters." (34:361)

\* \* \*

"... All were leaders and all were led. It was a spontaneous organisation that came into being on the advent of distress.

"The thing for the leaders to see to is, whether the lessons of the mighty deluge can be made permanent. Will the Hindu- Muslim friendship outlast immediate need? Will the yoke of the suppressed be lifted forever? Will the self be used to subserve the benefit of all in everyday transactions? Will the pre-deluge avarice remain under check in the face of the charity that is freely flowing Gujaratward?" (34:397)

\* \* \*

"Today the Hindu hand is on the Mussalman throat and Mussalman hand on the Hindu throat. But I would be false to my God and to my country if inspite of these

terribly black clouds overhanging us, I do not repeat in this ancient city of yours my absolute and unchangeable faith in the possibility and necessity of Hindu-Muslim union. I know as certainly as I am sitting here that God will bless all our plans and He is going to bring concord out of this terrible discord. And so, those of you who have the same faith burning in your breasts as I have, I invite you to join with me in sending up a heart-prayer to God to cleanse our heart and give peace to this thirsting land." (35:48)

Speech at farewell meeting at Colombo on 25-11-1927.

"... Without dwelling upon the political question I may be also permitted to express the hope that even as you have united in offering this welcome to a humble individual like me, you will unite for realising your political ambition, sink all your differences, think not in watertight compartments as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Mussalmans and what not, but think as one people of this great land and realise the highest of your political ambition. Personally, I have never been able to understand why a numerical minority should ever consider that it will not have its claim properly examined and given to it, if it is not separately represented. It has always seemed to me that an attitude of that character betrays want of national consciousness." (35:318)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji wrote in *Young India* of 1-12-1927:

"... My interest and faith in Hindu-Muslim unity and unity among all the communities remain as strong as ever. My method of approach has changed. Whereas formerly I tried to achieve it by addressing meetings, joining in promoting and passing resolutions, now I have no faith in these devices. We have no atmosphere for them. In an atmosphere which is surcharged with distrust, fear and hopelessness, in my opinion these devices rather hinder than help heart unity. I therefore rely upon prayer and such individual acts of friendship as are possible. Hence I have lost all desire to

attend meetings held for achieving unity. This however does not mean that I disapprove such attempts. On the contrary, those who have faith in such meetings must hold them. I should wish them all success." (35:353.)

Writing to Dr. M.A. Ansari on 25-12-1927.

"The true solution is that Mussalmans should forgo cow- slaughter and Hindus should forgo music before the mosque. They should be part of legislation by common consent." (35:420-21)

\* \* \*

Expressing his impressions of the Madras session of the Congress<sup>1</sup> in an interview to *Indian Daily Mail* on 30-12-1927 Gandhiji said:

"The Madras session was a unique one inasmuch as it seems to have laid the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity. This I say, not because of the quality of the resolutions, but because of the manner in which they were presented and accepted. Pandit Malaviyaji's happy speech and the still happier response made by Ali brothers appeared to me to be a good augury for future. .... I hope this spirit of cordiality and mutual trust will prove infectious and we shall be able to find such trust amongst the rank and file." (35:427)

". . . I know what would spare the Hindu's feeling in the matter of cow. It is nothing short of complete voluntary stoppage of cow-slaughter by Mussalmans whether for sacrifice or for food. The Hindu dharma will not be satisfied if some tyrant secured by force of arms immunity of the cow from the slaughter. Islam in India cannot make a better gift to the Hindus than this voluntary self denial. . . . For me music before mosque is not on par with cow-slaughter. But it has assumed an importance which it would be a folly to ignore. It is for the Mussalmans to say what would spare Mussalman feelings. And if complete stoppage of music before mosque will be the only thing that will spare the Mussalman feelings, it is the duty of all Hindus to do so

without a moment's thought. If we are to reach unity of hearts, we must each be prepared to perform an adequate measure of sacrifice." (35:437.)

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1 See Appendix A for the resolution on Hindu-Muslim unity passed by the Congress at Madras on 26-12-1927.

Speech to the Gujarati audience at Rangoon on 10-3-1929.

"Many have doubts about my conduct in respect of the Hindu-Muslim question. Many people hold that I have committed a grave blunder in joining hands with Ali brothers, and giving them importance. But even today I do not regret having established relations with them. I do not bargain for anything in return when I make friendship. A man who wishes to follow ahimsa day and night can never act otherwise, can never establish friendship in any other way. Even today if a crisis like that of the Khilafat were to arise I would stake my life over it, even today I would offer the same assistance to Muslims in their difficulty. You may say that there is a great awakening among the Muslims as a result of my activity, but is the awakening among the Hindus less? ... I do not believe I have done anything wrong in asking your service or money for the Muslims." (40:113)

\* \* \*

While organising a campaign for Swaraj Gandhiji presented certain points before the public regarding Hindu-Muslim unity:

"(2) I hold that there is no Swaraj without communal unity as without several other things I have repeatedly mentioned.

"(3) The present campaign is not designed to establish independence but to arm the people with the power to do so.

"(4) When the power has been generated and the time has come for the establishment of independence, Mussalmans and all other minorities will have to be placated. If they are not, there must inevitably be a civil war. But I live in the hope that if we succeed in generating power, our differences and distrust will vanish. These are due to our weakness. When we have the power from within we shall shed our weakness. . . .

"(6) The only non-violent solution I know is for Hindus to let the minority communities take what they like. I would not hesitate to let the minorities govern the country, . . . For under a free government the real power will be held by the people. . . . The mightiest government will be rendered absolutely impotent if the people realising their power use it in a disciplined manner, and for a common good. . . . We in India hanker after power, because our people are ignorant and will be exploited

"(8) There can be nothing to suspect in resisting the salt tax or the drink and drug devil or the inroads of foreign cloth through Khadi. I therefore do not hesitate to invite all to take their due share in the campaign. Those who will not, simply deny to themselves the opportunity of gaining the power of resistance to evil under every conceivable circumstance." (41:306-308.)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji answered some questions through the columns of *Navajivan* (Hindi), 19-12-1929.

"Congress of course belongs to Hindus and Muslims, but it is much bigger than that. The Congress belongs to every citizen of India, Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Sikh, Christian, Jew and others. Men and women who accept the ideals of the Congress Party can become its members. If any Congress member becomes the cause of Hindu-Muslim clashes such a person can be expelled from the Congress. He who is a Congress member, causes discord between the two communities, is an enemy not only of the Congress but of the country as a whole.

"Today we are afraid of each other. If this fear could be replaced by mutual trust all hatred and enmity would soon vanish. The best way to get over such weakness is not to follow any one in this matter, but to shed fear and suspicion from our own hearts. If even a few such men could rise today, then the Congress would come out unscathed." (42:295.)

\* \* \*

Explaining certain rules of Satyagraha Gandhiji mentioned:

In Communal fights

"(16) No civil resister will intentionally become a cause of communal quarrels.

"(17) In the event of any such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu, he will be generous towards Mussalmans and others, and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save non- Hindus from Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.

"(18) He will to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.

"(19) If there is a procession of Satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities." (42:493.)

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Speech at A.I.C.C., Lahore on 27-12-1924 at the Subjects Committee Meeting:

Talking about the attainment of complete independence Gandhiji said:

"... We must be now prepared for great struggles ahead. We must cease to have any more internal differences and dimensions. Another thing I want to make clear before you. Now that the Nehru report on the line of dominion status will be declared to have lapsed, there cannot and should not be any further fighting over it and I hope

the Sikhs and Muslims and all other sections who had one or other grievance against the Nehru Report will see no objections to join the Congress and unite within its fold for the battle of independence. Even if you have got unavoidable dimensions, still we should act unitedly within the Congress. If Mussalmans cut the throats of Hindus let them cut it. But the consolation there must be, that we have got freedom. Or if the Sikhs have got any quarrel either with the Hindus or Mussalmans, let them sink all such differences and unite within the Congress." (42:324)

\* \* \*

"Maulana Shaukhat Ali is reported to have said that the Independence movement is a movement not for Swaraj but for Hindu Raj, and against Mussalmans, that therefore the latter should leave it alone. On reading the report I wired to Maulana inquiring whether he was correctly reported. He has kindly replied confirming the report. The Maulana has launched a grave charge against the movement. It needs to be repudiated once for all. Whatever the movement is, it certainly is not for Hindu Raj, nor is it against Mussalmans. It bears within itself a complete answer to the charge. . . . How can the movement be anti-Mussalmans or for Hindu Raj when no one identified with it has slightest notion, till independence is reached, of possessing any political power? . . . Surely all are equally interested in securing repeal of salt tax. Do not all need and use salt equally? That is the one tax which is no respecter of persons.

"Civil disobedience is a process of developing internal strength and therefore an organic growth. Resistance to salt tax can hurt no single communal interest. On the contrary, it must, if successful, help the abstainor equally with the participants.

"The fact that those taking part in the movement are preponderatingly Hindus is unfortunately true. By proclaiming a boycott the Maulana is helping the process. Even so, there can be no harm, if the Hindu civil resisters are fighting not for themselves but for all—Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and others who will make the nation of the future free India.

"Secondly Mussalmans above all can help themselves and the nation by joining the struggle." (43:55)

\* \* \*

Extract from the speech at Borsad on 18-3-1930.

"Those who say that Hindus, Christians, Jews and others have not united speak an untruth. This salt tax applies equally to all— If it is the case whereas Hindus have to pay this tax, Muslims can get themselves exempted from it, they may very well do so. If anyone can save in this manner, I shall have to modify my dharma. I am prepared to get this tax abolished even if I have to prostrate myself on the ground in order to do so. Why should not everyone unite in order to have the tax abolished from which even buffalo and cow cannot escape?" (43:102)

\* \* \*

Speech at Broach on 26-3-1930.

"... I have never dreamt that I could win Swaraj merely through my effort or assisted only by the Hindus. I stand in need of the assistance of Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, Jews and all other Indians. I need the assistance even of Englishmen. But I know too that all this combined assistance is worthless If I have not one other assistance, that is from God." (43:125.)

\* \* \*

Speech at Council meeting of All India Muslim League, Delhi on 22-2-1931.

"... Today you may not accept that position of mine but my early upbringing, my childhood and youth has been to strive for Hindu-Muslim unity. No one may dismiss it today as merely a craze of my old age. My heart is confident that god will grant me that position to speak for the whole of India one day, and even if I die striving for it, I shall achieve peace of mind. . . . Hindu-Muslim unity is not a question of bargain that we should continue fighting for one, two or five seats. Unity can be achieved by

giving up mutual fear and mistrust. Unless our hearts are purified and we regard Hindus and Muslims as one, unity cannot be established.

"Rest assure that it is not a matter of loaves and fishes, but of trust and love. If Hindus and Muslims are two eyes of the country, there should be no occasion for quarrel and distrust— no one can say that one eye is better than the other. It is quite conceivable that two brothers may have different faith and yet both may live in harmony and peace. I wonder why people fight in the name of religion and for the sake of religion.

"I am ready to serve you in the matter of establishing Hindu- Muslim unity and now since you have made a way for me into your heart, I shall try to enter it. . . If Hindu-Muslim unity is achieved, the mission of my life would be fulfilled." (45:216)

\* \* \*

At a public meeting in Delhi Gandhiji said on 7-3-1931.

"The settlement that has been just arrived at will fail of effect without a real heart-unity between Hindus and Muslims. Without that unity our going to the conference will be of no avail. No one will pretend that the conference will help us to achieve that unity. A heart-unity can be achieved between pure hearts purged of distrust and that can be achieved only outside the conference." (45:270)

\* \* \*

Statement to the Press on communal problem issued on 6-4-1931.

. . .My own personal view is quite clear. It is that of full surrender to any unanimously expressed wish of the Mussalmans and the Sikhs. I would like the Hindus to see the beauty of the solution. It can come only out of consciousness of moral strength. It follows that before I can cultivate Hindu opinion on a particular formula, I must have that formula. That is not forthcoming. That which was given to the Congress deputation at the Muslim parties' meeting on the 4th instant was not a unanimous minimum." (45:394)

\* \* \*

Talking to the Sikhs on 8-4-1931 Gandhiji said:

"You cannot fight communalism by communalism. But mine is the only solution, communal or national. The moment you realise that we do not want a third power to arbitrate for us, we will for the moment agree to surrender everything not because it is the ideal solution or a just solution, but because it is the only expedient. And why do you fear willing surrender to a community as such?

"I suggest that you should meet the nationalist Muslims, discuss the situation with them and arrive at a solution which satisfies them and you and place it before the country." (45:399)

Replying to the Corporation Address in Bombay on 18-4-1931 Gandhiji said:

". . . You have referred to the question of communal unity. Let all of us Hindus. Mussalmans, Parsis. Sikhs. Christians, live amicably as Indians, pledged to live and die for our motherland. Let it be our ambition to live as children of the same mother, retaining our individual faiths and yet being one, like the countless leaves of one tree. You have blessed my endeavour to achieve communal unity. But it cannot be achieved by the efforts of a single individual." (46:13)

On 23-4-1931 Gandhiji wrote in Young India

"The thing to realise is that India can no longer be a dumping ground for everything English or foreign. The days of exploitation are over. We may or may not achieve communal unity. If we fail, we may not have immediate independence. But the world will find that all Hindus. Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians. Jews for whom India is their home, will fight unitedly to resist the exploitation of India's resources for the benefit of foreigners.

They will resist the ceaseless annual drain which starves all communities with ruthless impartiality." (46:27)

\* \* \*

Addressing a minorities committee meeting in London on 8-10-1931, Gandhiji said:

"It is with deep sorrow and deeper humiliation that I have to announce utter failure on my part to secure an agreed solution of the communal question through informal conversations among the representatives of different groups. I apologise to you Mr. Prime Minister and other colleagues for the waste of a precious week. My only consolation lies in the fact that when I accepted the burden of carrying on these talks, I knew that there was not much hope of success and still more in the fact that I am not aware of having spared any effort to reach a solution.

"But to say that the conversations have to our utter shame failed is not to say the whole truth. Causes of failure were inherent in the composition of the Indian Delegation. We are almost all not elected representatives of the parties or groups whom we are presumed to represent. We are here by nomination of the government. Nor are those whose presence was absolutely necessary for an agreed solution to be found here." (48:115)

Speech at a meeting in Birmingham on 18-10-1931.

"My case is that alien rulers have ruled India on the principle of 'Divide and Rule.' No alien Imperial rule could go on in India unless the rulers have coquetted with one and then with the other party. We will continue to be divided so long as the wedge of foreign rule remains there and sinks deeper and deeper." (48:185)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji gave a speech at Pembroke College, Cambridge, on 1-11-1931.

"You must realise that there is sullen discontent everywhere and everyone says, 'We do not want foreign rule.' And why this over anxiety about how we would fare without you? Go to the pre-British period. History did not record a large number of Hindu-Muslim riots. In fact the history of my own times shows a darker record. The fact is that the British arms are powerless to prevent riots, though they are powerful enough

to punish the guilty and the innocent. We hear of no riots in the reign of even Aurangzeb." (48:263)

\* \* \*

Letter to H.K.Hales, 31-10-1933.

.. Undoubtedly the Hindu-Muslim tension is bad. I simply do not know how it can be removed. I am making all individual effort that I am capable of, but that is saying very little

"Of course my failures do not baffle me. I treat each one of them as a stepping stone to success. But that is different from venturing out without the slightest prospect of success." (48:263)

\* \* \*

In his speech at Virajpet on 23-2-1934, Gandhiji said:

"This address asks me to do whatever is possible in order to unite Hindus and Mussalmans throughout India as you are united here. Of certain things which I hold as dear as life itself Hindu-Muslim unity, i.e., unity among all the races in India, is one, and as I did some years ago in Delhi I should be prepared, given the occasion and the inspiration, to take my life again for the same cause. My life is one individual whole, and all my activities run into one another, and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind. Seeking to realise oneness of life in practice, I cannot be happy if I see communities quarrelling with one another or men suppressing fellowmen." (57:204)

\* \* \*

Speaking at a meeting to commemorate the Prophet's death on 23-6-1934 at Poona.

" . . . You all read Koran. But how few put into practice what you read. You will perhaps report that if you do not live upto the precepts of the Koran, nor do the Hindus act according to the precepts of the Gita and you will be right. It only comes

to this that if both the communities followed the teachings of their respective faiths, communal quarrels would be a thing of the past. But at present some men in both communities appear to have taken leave of their senses and are absorbed in slinging mud at one another."(58:99)

In a statement to the Press on 17-9-1934:

". . .Personally I would like to bury myself in an Indian village, preferably in a frontier village. If the Khudai Khidmatgar are truly non-violent they will contribute the largest share to the promotion of non-violent spirit and of Hindu-Muslim unity, for if they are non-violent in thought, word and deed and are lovers of Hindu-Muslim unity, surely through them we should see the accomplishment of the two things we need most in this land. The Afghan menace which we dread so much should then be a thing of the past.

"I am therefore yearning to test the truth for myself of the claim that they have imbibed the spirit of non-violence and are believers in the heart-unity of the Hindus, Mussalmans and others." (59:9)

\* \* \*

"When I was addressing a mixed conference of Harijans and non-Harijans the other day, I happened to deplore the fact that at railway" stations one heard the cry 'Mussalman milk, Mussalman water', 'Hindu milk, Hindu water,' 'Hindu chapati, Mussalman chapati. I could bear though I did not believe in anything like it, but Mussalman and Hindu milk, with the making of which man had nothing to do, I could neither understand nor tolerate. I added that those who believed in the total removal of untouchability had to be free from superstitions like Mussalman and Hindu milk and water." (60:148)

\* \* \*

"There is no cause dearer to my life than the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and since I have taken up this cause I have staked my life on several occasions on this issue.

All those Muslim leaders who come in closer touch with me know that I have this object every moment in my eye and every minute a fire is kindling in my heart." (65:14.)

Writing about constructive programme Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan* on 15-5-1937:

"... Similarly it is one thing to regulate communal conduct by means of pacts between leaders, voluntary or imposed by the state, it is wholly different for the masses to respect one another's religious and outward observance. This cannot be done unless the legislators and workers would go out among the villages and teach them mutual toleration." (65:199.)

\* \* \*

Expressing his views regarding Hindi-Urdu language and its script Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan* on 3-7-1937:

I believe that

1. Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu are words denoting the same language spoken in the north by Hindus and Mussalmans and written in either Devanagari or Persian script.
2. Hindi was the name for this language used both by Hindus and Mussalmans before the word Urdu came to be used.
3. The word Hindustani also came to be used later (date not known to me) to denote the same speech.
4. Both Hindus and Mussalmans should try to speak the language as understood by the vast mass of the people in the North.
5. Ultimately when our hearts have become one and we all are proud of India as our country, rather than our provinces, and shall know and practise different religions as derived from one common source, as we know and relish different

fruits of the same tree, we shall reach a common language with a common script whilst we shall retain provincial languages for provincial use."(65:363).

Gandhiji answered the questions put up by Kriplaniji regarding solving the problem of Hindu-Muslim riots as under:

"... We are not practising non-violence with conscious understanding. Right now it is our duty to give it a fair trial once again. But we at any rate must be confident of our success. The test of our success is that no trouble should start from our camp. If it does we must admit that we cannot attain Swaraj through non-violence.

"For us, this problem is as important as the problem of achieving Swaraj. If non-violence can serve no purpose during such riots, we must put it completely out of our minds. But I am certain that it can definitely work. We are unable to solve the problem because of the third power in the country. Hence (it is said) let us first defeat the third power. Let us come to terms till then. After that the Hindus and the Muslims will confront each other and decide the issue. I have been hearing this since 1920. From that time I have been thinking over the problem. I will never accept such a situation. It is true that the presence of the third power is one reason for Hindu-Muslim differences. But I do not believe that these differences would be resolved merely by eliminating the third power. If we have not been able to extinguish (that fire) so far, it is time we searched some new way of doing it. I have only one way of attaining independence as well as Hindu-Muslim unity, and that is satyagraha. We adopted the path of satyagraha against the government for attainment of Swaraj. But we have done almost nothing with regard to this. (Hindu-Muslim question). We had parleys with Mr. Jinnah. We had talks with Ali brothers. We arrived at a couple of agreements. But all these do not go to make the path of nonviolence. All these are political methods. And then, they did not even make much headway. For they were not backed by any real strength. . . . Both the Hindus and Mussalmans have in their hearts scant respect for the Congress. Under the circumstances, how can agreement be successful? If in the event of a riot the goondas on both the sides

declare that they would not attack those with white caps, if we ourselves have confidence that the Congress workers would not be attacked, then we may say that we have achieved something.

"Mass contact with the Muslim community acquires a new meaning altogether. The real way of making mass contact with the Muslims is that we should seek opportunities to know them and serve them. Serving the Muslim masses without expectation is the only honorable and effective way of winning their hearts. I would like to give it a priority even if I have to suspend the political work. ... I know that there are quite a few Muslims who regard the Hindus as infidels and do not wish to associate with them. But all Muslims do not harbour such hatred in their hearts. There are enough Muslims who consider the Hindus as their compatriots and believe that it is only by living in amity that both the communities can look after their interests and make progress. But we should not be frightened even by those Muslims whose hands hold knives and whose hearts are filled with hatred. We must win their hearts too. So that even they find it impossible to kill us." (66:427-430)

\* \* \*

Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting on 27-3-1938.

". . . You have also to create a favourable climate for it. You should find a Muslim locality within your field of service and there create such an atmosphere. If anything untoward happens in this locality, you should accept the responsibility. Every individual cannot make the entire country his field work. After all we have to know our limitations. In a city like Bombay you cannot take the responsibility even for the whole city. You should find out how many Muslims live in the locality where you happen to reside, get yourself acquainted with them, save them, and do whatever you can.

"There should not be a single Muslim child whom you do not know. We should take each individual Muslim in your locality and build in his mind trust for us. If we

resolved this issue fully, we shall develop the strength to solve other problems as well, for this is the biggest hurdle in our way. A satyagrahi alone can render such service. Those whose help is to be sought in this work will have to be trained in self-confidence.' (66:434-435)

\* \* \*

"I would also say that I do not want Swaraj without Hindu- Muslim unity. I say this because I want that in independent India Hindus should not suppress Muslims, nor Muslims suppress Hindus. I want to see that all are equal. . . . Millions of people today aspire for Swaraj. Not even handful of people care for Hindu-Muslim unity. We will have to solve this problem independently. There are many difficulties because we seek the welfare of the Muslims while serving them. We do not want to encourage their selfishness by pampering them." (66:447)

\* \* \*

"If we have formed the notion that we should suffer the atrocities of the Muslims in mute submissiveness it is absolutely wrong. If until today I have not said that we must also resist injustice inflicted by them, here I say it now. We should now tell the Muslims also that they have been unjust and, if they beat us up for saying it, we should get beaten up." (66:450)

During his speech at A.I.C.C, Bombay, on 16-9-1940, Gandhiji said:

" . . .Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Ashraf have referred to the Hindu-Muslim problem. If strife is destined to be our lot who can avoid it? We should be prepared to risk anarchy and disorder. We should have the faith that non-violence will not lead to violence and even if it happens, we shall have the strength to control it. And that will be our real test. It is in the nature of ahimsa that it grows in strength as violence increases. I hope you will acquire such strength before my death. We can establish nonviolent swaraj only when we acquire non-violent strength and through such strength we can spread peace and goodwill throughout the world.

"I wish to give a message to the Muslim brethren. If eight crore Muslims oppose India's independence, India will never win independence. But I shall admit such opposition only when all adult voters from among the eight crore declare opposition to independence. But I consider this almost impossible. They may, of course, declare that they want independence without Hindu domination. It is worse than anarchy to partition a poor country like India whose every corner is populated by Hindus and Muslims living side by side. It is like cutting a living body into pieces. No one will be able to tolerate this plain murder. I do not say this as a Hindu. I say this as a representative of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and all." (73:25)

\* \* \*

" . . . When the war cloud is lifted and when India comes to her own, surely Congressmen would just as much welcome, a Muslim, a Sikh, a Christian, or a Parsi as premier, as they would a Hindu, and even a non-Congressman, no matter of what faith he may be," (73:32-33)

1-2-1941

Dear Sir Tej Bahadur

"I thank you for your kind letter<sup>1</sup>. Quid-e-Azam Jinnah says I can only talk to him as a Hindu for Hindus. I cannot do it. If I write to him that I want to meet him, he won't decline to meet me. But I know the result. He will immediately distort our meeting.

"He thinks that I am the greatest stumbling block I am, therefore, biding my time. As soon as I see my way, I would certainly seek an interview with him and everybody else. You may have seen how he has distorted the present civil disobedience as anti-Muslim. But of course you should pursue the subject after your own style with whomsoever you may think fit."

M.K.Gandhi

Writing in *The Hindu* of 27-4-1941

" . . .I admit that there is unfortunately unbridgeable gulf between the Congress and the Muslim League. Why do not British statesmen admit that it is after all a domestic quarrel? Let them withdraw from India and I promise that the Congress and the League and all other parties will find it to their interest to come together and devise a home-made solution for the Government of India. It may not be scientific, it may not be after Western pattern, but it will be durable. It may be that before we come to that happy state of affairs, we may have to fight amongst ourselves.

But if we agree not to invite assistance of any outside power the trouble will last perhaps a fortnight and it will mean even one day's destruction of human heads such as goes on in Europe today, for the simple reason that thanks to the British rule we are wholly unarmed." (74:14.)

\* \* \*

Letter written to Agatha Harrison on 22-10-1941.

" . . .Of communal unity there is no immediate hope, though I believe that it will come sooner than we expect. But that will bring no settlement with the British Government." (74:38)

\* \* \*

Speech at a prayer meeting in Simla on 13-5-1946.

" . . .Yesterday I had told you that even if the Congress and the Muslim league failed to come to an agreement, it would not necessarily mean that all was over. After all Hindus and Muslims are brothers. Some day they are certainly going to unite."  
(84:150)

\* \* \*

Speech at a prayer meeting on 4-11-1946.

".. .The Congress belongs to the people, the Muslim League belongs to our Muslim brothers and sisters. If Congressmen fail to protect the Mussalmans where the Congress is in power, then what is the use of a Congress Premier? Similarly if in a League province the League premier cannot afford protection to the Hindus, then why is the League Premier there at all? If either of them have to take the aid of the military in order to protect the Muslim or Hindu minorities in their respective provinces, then it only means that none of them actually exercise any control over the general population when a moment of crisis comes.

"Tomorrow is the day of Bakri-Id. It is not an occasion when we should quarrel with one another. . . How nice it would be if from tomorrow Hindus and Mussalmans and every community in India start living with each other as friends, and the military or the police find no occasion to use their arms at all.

"We always put the blame on goondas. But it is we who are responsible for their creation as well as encouragement." (86:75-76)

\* \* \*

In an interview to United Press Of India on 6-11-1946 Gandhiji said at Sodepur:

"... In any event people will have first to learn to do without the protection of the military or the police during communal troubles. The function of the police is to protect the citizens against thieves and robbers, of the military generally to defend the country against the foreign aggressor where the people have not learnt the matchless bravery of non-violence.

"In order to live at peace with one another, we have to imbibe the virtue of toleration of the manners, customs and dresses of the different communities living in India."  
(86:84.)

\* \* \*

Talking to relief workers of Chandpur on 7-11-1946.

" . . . I will proclaim from the house tops that it is the only condition under which you can live in East Bengal. You have asked for Hindu officers, Hindu police and Hindu military in the place of Muslims. It is a false cry. You forget that Hindu officers, Hindu police and Hindu military have in past done all these things—looting, arson, abduction, rape." (86:89)

" . . . You will see I am not, as I have already said, asking you just now to unlearn the use of arms or to follow my type of heroism. I have not made it good even in my own case. I have come here to test it in East Bengal. I want you to take up the conventional type of heroism. You should be able to infect others —both men and women—with courage and fearlessness to face death when the alternative is dishonour and humiliation. Then the Hindus can stay in East Bengal not otherwise. After all Musslmans are blood of our blood and bone of our bone." (86:91)

"To run away from danger instead of facing it, is to deny one's faith in man and god and even one's own self. It were better for one to drown oneself than live to declare such bankruptcy of faith." (86:97)

\* \* \*

At a prayer meeting at Chaumuhani on 7-11-1946.

"I have not come to excite the Hindus to fight the Mussalmans. I have no enemies. I have fought the British all my life. Yet they are my friends. I have never wished them ill.

"I have studied the Koran. The very word Islam means peace. The Muslim greeting 'Salam Alaikum' is the same for all, whether Hindu or Muslim or any other. Nowhere does Islam allow such things as had happened in Noakhali and Tippera. . . . The Muslims are in such overwhelming majority in East Bengal that I expect them to contribute themselves as guardians of the small Hindu minority. They should tell

Hindu women that while they are there, no one dare cast an evil eye on them."  
(86:98-99)

\* \* \*

"By learning to die bravely, let us turn our wrath against ourselves. I am not interested in getting the police substituted by the military or the Muslim police by the Hindu police. They are broken reeds." (86:100)

\* \* \*

"For a thousand Hindus to surround hundred Mussalmans or for a thousand Mussalmans to surround a hundred Hindus and oppress is not bravery but cowardice. Fair fight means even numbers and previous notice. That does not mean that I approve of their fighting. It has been said that Hindus and Mussalmans cannot stay together as friends or co-operate with each other. No one can make me believe that, but if that is your belief, you should say so. I would in that case not ask the Hindus to return to their homes. They would leave East Bengal, and it would be a shame for both the Mussalmans and the Hindus. If on the other hand, you want the Hindus to stay in your midst, you should tell them that they need not look to the military for protection but to their Muslim brethren instead. Their daughters and sisters and mothers are your own daughters, sisters and mothers and you should protect them with your lives.

"I am told and I believe that there are many good Muslims who would welcome the Hindus back but the goondas stand in the way. I wish to tell you that if good Muslims spoke out with one voice and acted according to their profession the so called goondas would become ineffective and would mend their ways." (86:107.)

At a prayer meeting at Ramgunj on 25-11-1946.

". . . It is not a question of giving monetary aid, but of restoring confidence by respect shown to the culture of others. I shall ask my Mussalman friends to treat this as their sacred duty. The Prophet once advised Mussalmans to consider the Jewish places

of worship to be as pure as their own and offer it the same protection. It is the duty of the Mussalmans today to assure the same freedom to their Hindu neighbours Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah had said that every Muslim must show by his conduct that not a single non-Muslim need be afraid of him, the latter would be guaranteed safety and protection. For thus alone can the Mussalman command honour and respect."  
(86:161)

\* \* \*

Prayer meeting was held in Patna on 5-3-1947.

" . . . This is not the way to attain freedom. If Muslims believe that they would annihilate the Hindus or if Hindus believe that they would annihilate the Muslims, I would like to ask them what they would gain thereby? Muslims will not serve Islam if they annihilate the Hindus; rather they would thereby destroy Islam. And if the Hindus believe that they would be able to annihilate Islam it means that they would be annihilating Hindu Dharma.

"I consider myself a follower of Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and every other religion, because I am a true Hindu. All religions are equal and they are founded on the same faith. Various religions are like different leaves on the same tree, with slight differences in shades and shapes. Scriptures have said that one who condemns other religions, condemns one's own religion. I consider myself a representative of all true religions." (87:45)

\* \* \*

On 6-3-1947 Gandhiji said in a prayer meeting:

"Holi will be celebrated tomorrow. If we wish to celebrate it in a religious spirit, we must meet and greet each and every Muslim in true spirit. With our overflowing love we should reassure the Muslims that Hindus are their brothers and that there can be no difference between us.

" . . .We should not terrorise each other. If at all, we should overawe each other with love and affection. Some Muslim friends say that the Ministry here may allot some houses or land to the Muslims under political compulsion. But this will not do much good so long as the Hindus and Muslims do not sincerely love or trust each other. They say that Hindus and Muslims have been living together here for centuries, used to refer to one another as paternal or maternal uncles, and attend wedding and funeral ceremonies. Today, however, they have turned into sworn enemies. ... I had to hang my head in shame when I heard this from Muslim friends. . . .When we hear the slogans shouted by another person we think that the other fellow is preparing for a fight, and we also start getting ready for it. If we go on fighting like this and wreak vengeance for one place upon another, rivers of blood will flow all over India and still the spirit of vengeance will not subside.

"As long as the Hindus and Muslims together do not assure me that their hearts have been cleansed and that I could leave them without any anxiety, I will not leave this place. I shall continue to stay here as long as the Muslims do not come to me and reassure me that the Hindus have become better than they were in the past."

(87:48-49)

\* \* \*

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

"It is no justification to argue that the Hindus damaged the Mosque because the Muslims were desecrating the temples. Hindus worship idols, while the Muslims do not. But every human being does worship something or other.

"God resides everywhere, not only in the Bible, and the Koran, in a mosque or in a temple, but in the nose, ear, nail or even a single hair of the body of man. I have been taught ever since my childhood that God resides everywhere. He is subtler than the air. It is one and the same thing whether one worships Him in a mosque, a temple, or a church.

"Those who desecrated the mosque were not men but devils, because mosques, temples or churches are all houses of the Lord . . . If Muslims are about to desecrate a temple, it becomes my duty to prevent them from their vandalism, irrespective of my not being an idol worshipper. I should hug the idol and request them not to demolish the temple. I should lay down my life to protect the idol but refuse to hand it over to them. My entreaties will impress them, they will realise that I mean no harm to them and they will become my friends." (87:74)

\* \* \*

" . . .We should not spread poison. On the other hand we should try to prevent it from spreading. If someone commits murder we should be sorry because the murderer after all is our own brother. There must be something wrong in us, that is why our brother could stoop to such a sin." (87:78)

\* \* \*

Gandhiji while speaking at a prayer meeting in Delhi on 23-9-1947 said:

" . . .It would not be proper to say that India was built by the Hindus since their number is much larger. It has been built by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, by the Parsis and the Christians.

All have contributed to making India what it is today." (89:223)

\* \* \*

In Delhi on 13-1-1948.

" . . .My wish is that Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, and Muslims who are in India should continue to live in India and India should become a country where everyone's life and property are safe. Only then will India progress." (90:417)

\* \* \*

" . . .Delhi is the heart, the capital of India. The leaders from the whole of India have assembled here. Men had become beasts. But if those who have assembled here,

who constitute the cream among men cannot make the whole of India understand that Hindus, Muslims and followers of other religions are like brothers, it bodes ill for both the Dominions. What will be the fate of India if we continue to quarrel with one another? . . . The situation demands courage of the highest order from us." (90:445)

## APPENDIX - A

### RESOLUTION ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

#### PART A-POLITICAL RIGHTS

This Congress resolves:

1. That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation in various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted;
2. That, with a view to giving full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures such representation of the communities should be secured for the present, and if desired, by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature:

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

In the decision of reservation of seats for the Punjab, the question of the representation of Sikhs as an important minority will be given full consideration;

3. a. That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that the reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Congress, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with

other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces;

b. (i) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Congress is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted in the constitution of the Congress;

(ii) The Congress is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly;

(iii) This Congress is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by reconstituting Andhra, Utkal, Sind, and Karnatak into separate provinces;

4. That in the future constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed and no legislature, Central or Provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with the liberty of conscience;

'Liberty of conscience' means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others;

5. 5. That no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding inter-communal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment

"Intercommunal matters" means matters agreed upon by such a joint Standing Committee of both communities— of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislature concerned appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

## **PART B-RELIGIOUS AND OTHER RIGHTS**

This Congress resolves that:

1. Without prejudice to the rights that Hindus and Mussalmans claim, the one to play music and conduct processions wherever they please and the other to slaughter cows for sacrifice or food wherever they please, the Mussalmans appeal to the Musslamans to spare Hindu feelings as much as possible in the matter of the cow and the Hindus appeal to the Hindus to spare Mussalman feelings, as much as possible in the matter of music before mosques.

And therefore, this Congress calls upon both the Hindus and Mussalmans not to have recourse to violence or to law to prevent the slaughter of a cow or the playing of music before a mosque.

2. This Congress further resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time and manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration of jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations.

The resolution was moved by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and was seconded by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

## APPENDIX - B

### LETTER FROM T.B.SAPRU

January 28, 1941

Dear Mahatmaji

I thank you for your letter of the 25th of January, which I received yesterday. I am glad to know that my article in the *Twentieth Century* had attracted your notice.

I read in the papers that you had gone to Bombay to see Mr. Jinnah but I do not know what exactly passed between you and him there. I met Mr. Jinnah by the merest accident at Dr. Berger's Clinic in Bombay on the 6th or the 7th of August last. He came up to me and asked me to have tea with him. Accordingly I went to him the next day and I had a conversation with him lasting for about one hour and a half. He told me what had transpired between you and him at Delhi and of the differences which arose between you and him in the presence of the Viceroy. My impression was that though there was a general conversation between you and him on some of the political demands of the Congress, the communal question did not specifically form the subject of discussion.

You are, if I may say so, quite right in saying that we have to settle our domestic troubles ourselves and that without thinking whether the British will accept our joint demands or not. That has always been my view. I am afraid, the communal situation has been allowed too long to deteriorate from bad to worse and I very strongly feel that that is *the one question* to which everyone of us (and particularly you with your influence) have to address ourselves. For so long as these differences last among ourselves, I am afraid, real self-government is difficult to achieve and still more difficult to maintain.

During the Christmas Week Nawab Mohammad Ismail and Nawab Liaquat Ali Khan were here in connection with the session of the Provincial Muslim League. The former who is an old friend of mine, came to see me and I met the latter at the house

of a common friend. We talked freely and pleasantly and the impression left on my mind was that though the task of settlement would present great difficulties, it was by no means hopeless. I had no talk with Mr. Jinnah on the question of Pakistan. I believe the word 'Pakistan' is a convenient phrase which has been adopted by the Muslim League to cover a multitude of political and constitutional ideas. If it means a partition of India then I do not mind saying that I am very strongly opposed to it. If it means reconsideration of certain political ideas and readjustment of some constitutional provisions then I should not rule out their discussion. In any case, however, for the purpose of conversations intended to achieve communal settlement, it would not be right for any party to impose on the other any kind of conditions precedent. I can see no reason why Mr. Jinnah should decline to meet you. Not only would it be rude on his part to decline to meet you but it would also put him positively in the wrong, if he were to adopt that sort of attitude.

You say in your letter that "he does not want a settlement till he has so consolidated the League position that he can dictate his terms to all the parties concerned including the rulers" and that you "often feel like writing to him but lose courage when it comes to the point of taking up my pen." You are, however, a man of infinite courage and you are big enough to rise superior to petty considerations of a conventional character. I see no reason why you should not write to him a perfectly courteous letter— as you always do—telling him that in the interest of the country you should like to have an opportunity of meeting him and discussing the whole situation so as to see whether an honourable settlement, which will be satisfactory to all the parties concerned, is possible. If he makes a satisfactory response, I think, you should take the step forward. That will heighten and strengthen your position and the position of the Congress and of the Hindus at large. If he makes no response to your request or adopts a truculent attitude that is bound to recoil on his head and on the party which he represents. My own belief is that the farther away

the parties can be from each other, the greater is the misunderstanding and the more difficult the task of reconciliation.

You then say in your letter: "But if you have faith why don't you see him without being asked by anybody?" As a private individual I should have no objection at all to meeting him or anybody else but the real difficulty that I feel about my position is that I cannot pretend to represent the Congress or the Hindus. I can write to him (and am quite willing to do so) suggesting that he should meet you or that if you write to him saying that you want to meet him, he should receive you and talk to you. I should not, however, write to him without your permission. If you will permit me, I can also write to Nawab Mohammed Ismail, who, I know, is a very good man and who, I feel, will sincerely welcome peace and harmony. You may be sure that whether I write to Mr. Jinnah or to Nawab Ismail or to anyone, I am not going to commit you or anyone to any position. I can only throw out a suggestion for the initiation of conversations. Hitherto I have written no kind of letter on the subject to Mr. Jinnah or any other Muslim friend and I have scrupulously avoided during the last one year and a half writing to the Viceroy or any British official at Delhi or Simla. Last time, I saw the Viceroy was in September 1939. Holding the views that I do, I feel very strongly that it is no use my seeing him or writing to him in the midst of these differences, which divide one party from another and one set of politicians from another. It is because of this feeling that both in the statement that I issued last month to the Press and in my article in the *Twentieth Century* I have laid emphasis on the desirability of a communal settlement and of your meeting Mr. Jinnah. Speaking for myself I do not attach much importance to the general criticism of British policy that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have given a veto to the minorities. Whether they have done so or not, it is up to us to set our house in order and once we have done that, I think, we shall have gained the strength which it will be impossible on political grounds for anyone at Delhi, Simla or Whitehall to resist.

It is my misfortune that on some political questions I differ from many of my countrymen and have very strong convictions but I should do everything that lay in my power to pave the way for the communal settlement to which I attach far greater importance than I do to mere academic discussions of this political theory or that. In short, if you permit me, I am quite willing to write to Mr. Jinnah and some other Muslim friends. I would much rather that you took the lead at a suitable opportunity of calling a conference than that any outsider or common friends howsoever well-intentioned assumed responsibility for such a conference. Some friends have written to me about it but I am not yet convinced that it would do any good for any private individuals to call such a conference or to wait on the Viceroy. This must be left to you and Mr. Jinnah and I feel strongly that if you take the lead in this matter, good may result.

With my best regards,

Mahatma M. K. Gandhi

Sevagram

Wardha

Yours sincerely

T.B.Sapru