

**THE WAY IS THE GOAL:
GANDHI TODAY**

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Gandhian Conflict Norms

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1. Goals and Conflict

1.1 Act in conflicts!

Act now!
Act here!
Act for your own group!
Act out of identity!
Act out of conviction!

1.2 Define the conflict well!

State your own goals clearly!
Try to understand your opponent's goal!
Emphasize common and compatible goals!
State the conflict-relevant facts objectively!

1.3 Have a positive approach to conflict!

Give the conflict a positive emphasis!
See the conflict as opportunity to meet the opponent!
See conflict as opportunity to transform society!
See the conflict as opportunity to transform yourself!

2. Conflict Struggle

1.1 Act non-violently in conflicts!

Do not hurt or harm with deeds!
Do not hurt or harm with words!
Do not hurt or harm with thoughts!
Do not harm the opponent's property!
Prefer violence to cowardice!
Do good even to the evil-doer!

2.2 Act in a goal-consistent manner!

Always include a constructive element!
Use goal-revealing forms of struggle!
Act openly, not secretly!
Aim the struggle at the correct point!

2.3 Do not cooperate with evil!

Non-cooperation with evil structure!
Non-cooperation with evil status!
Non-cooperation with evil action!
Non-cooperation with those who cooperate with evil!

2.4 Be willing to sacrifice!

Do not escape from punishment!
Be willing to die if necessary!

2.5 Do not polarize!

Distinguish between antagonism and antagonist!
Distinguish between person and status!
Maintain contact!
Empathy with your opponent's position!
Be flexible in defining parties and positions!

2.6 Do not escalate!

Remain as loyal as possible!
Do not provoke or let yourself be provoked!
Do not humiliate or let yourself be humiliated!
Do not expand the goals for the conflict!
Use the mildest possible forms of conflict behavior!

3. Conflict Resolution

3.1 Solve conflict!

Do not continue conflict struggle forever!
Always seek negotiation with the opponent!
Seek positive social transformations!
Seek human transformation!
- of yourself!
- of the opponent!

3.2 Insist on the essentials, not on the non-essentials!

Do not trade with essentials!
Be willing to compromise on non-essentials!

3.3 See yourself as fallible!

Remember that you may be wrong!
Admit your mistakes openly!
Consistency over time not very important!

3.4 Be generous in your view of the opponent!

Do not exploit the opponent's weaknesses!
Do not judge the opponent harder than yourself!
Trust your opponent!

3.5 Conversion, not coercion!

Always seek solutions that are accepted!
- by yourself!
- by the opponent!
Never coerce your opponent!
Convert your opponent into a believer of the cause!

A brilliant and again very explicit analysis by Gandhi of the similarities between socialism and capitalism. What Gandhi points out is that there are factors beyond ownership patterns, and the social use of factories, that play such a central role in socialist analysis. The real disease is the search for ever higher levels of efficiency, which is also the "great God" under socialism, because the factory system has to be able to pay for itself, including the enormous institutional "burden", meaning context which surrounds it. By the latter Gandhi would today probably have meant "technocracy"; that particular combination of bureaucracy, corporations and intelligentsia found in all modern societies, capitalist or socialist, materially non-productive, but very costly indeed. To Gandhi the Western social *structure* in its capitalist and socialist manifestations, and the Western civilization as a culture of greed stand out as the basic antagonisms as they set rooted in India. And his very strong verbal attacks are directed against them, not as the most concrete antagonist.

APPENDIX II

GANDHI IN HIS OWN WORDS GANDHI CONFLICT NORMS

1. Goals and Conflict
2. Conflict Struggle
3. Conflict Resolution

Goals and Conflict

N₁₁ Act in conflicts!

"People do not gain the training by preaching. Non-violence cannot be preached. It has to be practised".

Harijan, 20-3-1937

Gandhi was a man of action, and this is a clear admonition to go beyond preaching into practice, into action.

"But a Satyagrahi cannot wait or delay action till perfect conditions are forthcoming. He will act with whatever material is at hand, purge it of dross and convert it into pure gold."

Harijan, 21-7-1946

Gandhi's point, of course, is also that perfect conditions in space, in time, in social spaces will never come; one more reason for simply starting acting with no delay!

N₁₁₁ Act now!

"Let them not confine themselves merely to preparedness for emergencies, but for the daily walk of life in all its departments, personal, domestic, social, economic, political, religious."

Harijan, 23-4-1938

Action starts now, it is not a question of waiting for the dramatic peaks. Everyday, in all parts of social life there is something to be done.

"The Socialists and Communists say they can do nothing to bring about economic equality today. They will just carry on propaganda

in its favour and to that end they believe in generating and accentuating hatred. They say, when they get control over the State they will enforce equality. Under my plan the State will be there to carry out the will of the people, not to dictate to them or force them to do its will. I shall bring about economic equality through non-violence, by converting the people to my point of view by harnessing the forces of love as against hatred. I will not wait till I have converted the whole society to my view but will straightaway make a beginning with myself."

Harijan, 31-3-1946

Gandhi's general norm *act now!* is here directed against socialists and communists, and not without justification. Marxist theory tends to be that nothing real, can be done unless the state machinery has been conquered; "totally from the communist point of view, at least to some extent" from the socialist point of view. Gandhi wants to start not only now but also here, expressing what today perhaps might be called "green socialism" rather than "red" or "pink" socialism.

"I regard a Muslim or any non-Hindu as my blood brother, not in order to please him but because he is born of the same Mother Hind as I am. He does not cease to be my brother because he may hate or disown me."

Harijan, 8-9-1946

Here Gandhi uses a concept to define his "own group". "Mother Hind", which includes Muslims. From a Muslim point of view the fact still remains that they were a minority and that not all Hindus behaved non-violently, even very far from it; nor did all Muslims.

"But I would have no hesitation in conceding the demand of Pakistan if I could be convinced of its righteousness or that it is good for Islam. But I am firmly convinced that Pakistan demand as put forth by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful. Islam stands for the unity and brotherhood of mankind, not for disrupting the oneness of the human family. Therefore, those who want to divide India into possibly warring groups are enemies alike to India and Islam."

Harijan, 6-10-1946

Islam stands for unity and brotherhood, even for peace — but it also draws a line between the believers and the non-believers. The role of Britain in wanting this division of her former colony is not referred to by Gandhi directly.

N₁₁₂ Act here!

"Its universal applicability is a demonstration of its permanence and invincibility. For me, the law of *satyagraha*, the law of love, is an eternal principle. I co-operate with all that is good, I desire to non-cooperate with all that is evil, whether it is associated with my wife, son or myself."

Dhawan, p. 120

What Gandhi does in this quotation is to draw the line of possible *satyagraha* action very, very close to himself. *Satyagraha* is not necessarily something distant to be brought against authorities, local, national, foreign only, but to be practised in all relations. He might actually have gone one step further in the same connection: *satyagraha* can also be used against oneself, meaning in that case self-purification, e.g. through fasting.

N₁₁₃ Act for your own group!

"It is wrong to fast for selfish ends, e.g. for increase in one's own salary. Under certain circumstances it is permissible to fast for an increase of wages on behalf of one's group."

Harijan, 21-4-1946

Thus, the rule to act for one's own group does not only rule out action for others that are remote to oneself, but also *satyagraha* for entirely selfish ends. *Satyagraha* may be undertaken to purify oneself, to convert the antagonist, to help transform one's own adherents including oneself, but not merely for one's own material ends.

"My work in India is still in the experimental stage. In such circumstances any foreign adventure on my part would be altogether premature. I should be fully satisfied if the experiment demonstrably succeeds in India."

Young India, 11-12-1924

Although Gandhi frequently pronounced himself on foreign conflicts he never participated. He certainly had more than enough in the subcontinent. But there was a deeper message in his non-involvement: he did not feel that he was one of them, whereas he felt at home in the conflicts on Indian soil. On the other hand, he does not rule it totally out: "foreign adventure" is only "premature" meaning that conditions might arise whereby it would be meaningful.

"Sympathetic strikes must be taboo until it is conclusively proved that the affected men have exhausted all the legitimate means at their disposal."

Harijan, 11-8-1946

This may sound strange to anybody used to Western strike strategies. However, the idea is simply that for non-violent action to work there has to be a direct link between the two parties. One may strike out of sympathy for other groups than one's own, but then the strike is in fact directed against somebody unrelated to the original conflict and this creates an artificial negative relationship.

"This messenger of peace will cultivate through personal service contacts with the people in his locality or chosen circle, so that when he appears to deal with ugly situations, he does not descend upon the members of a riotous assembly as an utter stranger liable to be looked upon as a suspect or an unwelcome visitor."

Harijan, 18-6-1938

In other words, Gandhi is not suggesting that in order to act in conflict and be a "messenger of peace" a person necessarily has to be a member of the group for which he acts. But he has to do so out of identity, through a long lasting relationship of personal service and contact with the people, and not only in his own locality but also in his "chosen circle" (a very Gandhian expression). He should never be an "utter stranger". He should also have a cause by being one of them.

"Volunteers may not take sides in any communal quarrels. Wherever there is a violent eruption, volunteers are expected to die in the attempt to quell violence.

Perfect discipline and perfect cooperation among the different units are indispensable for success."

Young India, 3-4-1930

This is the model of how the outside volunteer with strong identification acts: he takes no side, except against violence.

"Lord Hunter: Your leading lieutenant in Delhi, Swami Shraddhananda — Mr. Gandhi interrupting: I would not call him my lieutenant, but an esteemed co-worker."

Young India, 21-1-1920

Another type of identity: with one's own group in the struggle, trying to avoid hierarchies that might themselves be violent.

N₁₁₄ *Act out of identity!*

"The would-be member of a peace brigade should come into closer touch and cultivate acquaintance with the so-called *goonda* in his vicinity. He should know all and be known to all and win the hearts of all by his living and selfless service. No section should be regarded as too contemptible or mean to mix with. *Goondas* do not drop from the sky, nor do they spring from the earth like evil spirits. They are the product of social disorganization, and society is therefore responsible for their existence. In other words, they should be looked upon as a symptom of corruption in our body politic."

Harijan, 15-9-1940

A clear, structure-oriented statement. The evil-doers from below, the social bandits, the *goondas* are also seen as a product of the wrong social structure. To get the structure right, as a first step, one has to associate with them, recognizing the responsibility for their existence. With this statement Gandhi lays the basis for social work on India.

N₁₁₅ *Act out of conviction!*

"He (the *satyagrahi*) must believe in truth and non-violence as his creed and therefore have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his sufferings."

Harijan, 25-3-1939

A very concentrated statement indeed. There must be belief in non-violence, in the inherent goodness of human nature. Belief can be used to release goodness if it is based on truth and love, and proven by suffering. There has to be some kind of "inner calling" otherwise non-violence reduces to a technology. Further, there has to be compassion, there has to be empathy. In short: *conviction*.

"There is no road, except through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon."

Harijan, 14-3-1936

What Gandhi is stressing here the deep inner connection between the creed inside a person and the way the person lives. If the creed is beautiful and the life is a "living sermon", then that is the road. To which goal? In a sense less important, any road travelled in this manner will lead to a worthy goal, according to Gandhi.

"It is not any single isolated act which can be called Satyagraha apart from the spirit behind."

Young India, 24-9-1925

What Gandhi is saying here is quite clear: *satyagraha* action has to spring out of an *ahimsa* spirit. If it does not it becomes conflict technology, a clever way of behaving without any inner basis which can keep it firm and strong from mind to mind and heart to heart.

"How can I, the champion of *ahimsa*, compel anyone to perform even a good act? Has not a well-known Englishman said that to make mistakes as a free man is better than being in bondage in order to avoid them? I believe in the truth of this."

Harijan, 29-9-1946

This is a variation on the theme just mentioned. *Ahimsa* has to come out of conviction, and in a voluntary manner. Nobody can be forced to be non-violent.

"Let there be no fool-hardiness about it. You should go because you feel you must and not because I ask you to."

Harijan, 27-10-1946

It is this inner "must" which Gandhi is gambling on, perhaps over-estimating in his visions the presence of that "must" in everybody.

N₁₂ *Define the conflict well!*

No particular quotation is used here. In a sense Gandhi had two (or more) parallel lives. On the one hand he was superactive in the many conflicts. On the other hand he produced running commentary on his conflicts. All through his life he was explicit in defining the conflicts, even undertaking meticulous empirical studies. "Be explicit!" means be willing to verbalise — life is not only conflict action.

N₁₂₁ *State your own goals clearly!*

"Strikers must fix an unaltered minimum demand, and declare it before embarking upon their strike."

Young India, 22-9-1921

The key words here are "unaltered", "minimum", "declare", "before". The opponent shall know what he is up against: the *satyagraha* should be predictable.

N₁₂₂ *Try to understand your opponent's goals!*

N₁₂₃ *Emphasize common and compatible goals!*

"And immediately we begin to think of things as our opponents think of them, we shall be able to do them full justice, I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless for a Satyagrahi it is absolutely essential. Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably. In our case there is no question of our agreeing with them quickly as our ideals are radically different. But we may be charitable to them and believe that they actually mean what they say."

Young India, 19-3-1925

Again an expression of the unity-of-man doctrine. If we all are parts of the same unity then our vision of truth must somehow be parts of a more total vision. This does not mean that we are right — we may both be partially right and partially wrong. However, we have no right to reject out of hand the position of the adversary. We may then even come to agree with them, but this will not happen in "our case" because the ideals are so different. Charitable, however, we may become!

N₁₂₄ *State conflict relevant facts objectively!*

"Take your own salary. It is over 21,000 rupees (about £ 1750) per month, besides many other indirect addition.... You are getting over 700 rupees a day against India's average income of less than two annas (two pence) per day. Thus you are getting much over five thousand times India's average income. The British Prime Minister is getting only ninety times Britain's average income. On bended knee, I ask you to ponder over this phenomenon. I have taken a personal illustration to drive home a painful truth. I have too great regard for you as a man to wish to hurt your feelings. I know that you do not need the salary you get. Probably the whole of your salary goes for charity. But a system that provides for such an arrangement deserves to be summarily scrapped. What is true of the Viceregal salary is true generally of the whole administration.... Nothing but organized non-violence can check the organized violence of the British government...."

Fischer, p. 265

As a piece of political rhetoric this could have been written within any anticolonial movement, any liberation movement anywhere. Only two things differ from the general rhetoric: the faith in non-violence as a way of checking the "organized violence of the British government", and the indication (hypocritical?) that the Viceroy gives all his salary to charity? This quotation illustrates the thesis that Gandhi certainly also was a politician in the way we usually know homo politicus. But he tries to see the facts from both sides.

N₁₃ *Have a positive approach to conflict!*

Again, no particular quotation is given. His whole conflict philosophy ties *satyagraha* in an undetachable way to *sarvodaya*, the positive outcome, that is to be approached in a positive manner.

N₁₃₁ *Give the conflict a positive emphasis!*

"Non-payment of taxes without the necessary discipline will be an act of unpardonable madness. Instead of leading to *Swaraj*, it is likely to lead to *no-raj*."
Young India, 19-1-1922

The basic point in a conflict is not to destroy a system or structure, but to substitute for the wrong system another system. Hence non-cooperation will never be enough. Parallel to it there has to be "the necessary discipline", in other words some type of alternative truth. Gandhi reveals himself here certainly not as an anarchist in the sense of accepting to rule at all. His anarchism is actually quite disciplinary but with the point of gravity at the local level of social organization.

N₁₃₂ *See conflict as opportunity to meet the opponent!*

"And, when parties quarrel as Hindus and Muslims do, let one or the other or both realize that, if India is to be an independent nation, one or both must deliberately cease to look to British authority for protection."
Harijan, 15-9-1946

In other words, the two parties have to get used to the idea that they have to settle issues between the two of them, not leaning on a third party and the authority even power of that party. For the conflict struggle this means that one always has to meet the other party, maintain contact, not proceeding via authorities. And for the

final phase of conflict resolution this means that one always has to be ready to seek negotiations with the opponent.

N₁₃₃ *See conflict as opportunity to transform society!*

"I contend that there is no sacrifice involved in emptying the schools. We must be specially unfit for non-co-operation if we are so helpless as to be unable to manage our own education in total independence of the Government. Every village should manage the education of its own children. I would not depend upon Government aid."
Young India, 11-8-1920

Here Gandhi is more specific although the basic thought is as mentioned above. He who wants to become independent must prove to himself and others that he is able to be independent, for instance by every village managing "the education of its own children". Of course, there can hardly be any more complete challenge of governmental authority than to make it superfluous. And in so doing discipline will certainly be necessary. The question, in practice, is whether that discipline generated by an opposition movement will also be *sufficient*. For this to happen one minimum condition would be that the constructive element brought into the struggle from the very beginning, planned even before the struggle starts.

N₁₃₄ *See conflict as opportunity to transform yourself!*

"I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed; but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. It is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure to me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next."
The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 16

These are the words that could have been spoken inside any religion or system of moral commitment. It is the words of a person like anyone of us, aware of his/her shortcomings, yet trying to ascend, using the ladder/mountaineering metaphor for one's own moral uplift. What is not mentioned in the quotation are all the people left behind when the moral giant approaches the sky. Do they feel inspired, or small? With which consequences?

2. Conflict Struggle

N₂₁ *Act non-violently in conflicts!*

"History is really a record of every interruption of the even working of the force of love or of the soul."

Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule, Chap. XVII

"History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of nature. Soul-force, being natural, is not noted in history."

Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule, Chap. XVII

This is a beautiful expression both of Gandhi's philosophy of history and of his way of seeing the "force of love or of the soul" as normal and natural in human affairs. Any glance at a textbook in history will tend to confirm his view. What is recorded is violence in one form or another, as a set of discrete events; and what is unrecorded is the even working of everyday life. History is a collection of stories of dramatic and usually negative events, just like journalism. However, it does not have to be that way. The "force of love" could be lifted out of the darkness and into the history books (and the newspapers), and thereby possibly make people more optimistic, more prone to make use of such forces.

"The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. Therefore, the greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of this force is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on."

Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule, Chap. XVII S-p. 16

Gandhi's point is very important. If there had been nothing but the "force of arms" — with our knowledge that efforts to obtain balance of force tend to lead to arms races, and that arms races tend to lead to wars — humankind would simply not have survived. It has survived; hence, there must be other forces working in the world, and they must even be stronger. Gandhi refers to them as the "force of truth" and "force of love".

"My reverent study of the scriptures of the world has led me to the belief that all register emphatic and unequivocal testimony in favour of non-violence being practised by all not merely singly but collectively as well. In all humility I have often felt that having no axes to grind and having by nature a detached mind, I give a truer

interpretation of the Hindu, Christian, Islamic or other scriptures. For this humble claim I anticipate the forgiveness of Sanatanists, Christians and Musalmans."

Mühlmann, p. 233

Of course, this theological comment by Gandhi is very far from humble. But it is a good expression of how he sees himself as trans-religious as having discovered the common theme in them all because he stands outside or above them. There should be more people like that!

Concerning Islam, Gandhi says:

"... I would like to say that I claim to have studied the life of the Prophet and the Koran as a detached student of religions. And I have come to the conclusion that the teaching of the Koran is essentially in favour of non-violence."

Harijan, 13-7-1940

It would have been interesting if Gandhi had been more explicit when it comes to method: how did he come to this understanding? What were the problems, how, for instance, does Gandhi think *jihad* (often wrongly interpreted as meaning "holy war") is to be understood in Islam?

"My ethics not only permit me to claim but require me to own kinship with not merely the ape but the horse and the sheep, the lion and the leopard, the snake and the scorpion."

Young India, 8-7-1926

Ahimsa extends to all forms of life, and Gandhi's selection of non-human life is interesting. Plants are not included — as a vegetarian he was after all subsisting on them. But all kinds of animals are included whether they look like human beings or not, are domestic or not; even those considered dangerous to man. It should be noted, however, that one animal is not mentioned, the cow, being in a category all of its own, sacred and an object of worship, not only kinship.

"I have been practising with scientific precision non-violence and its possibilities for an unbroken period of over fifty years. I have applied it in every walk of life, domestic, institutional, economic and political. I know of no single case in which it has failed. Where it has seemed sometimes to have failed, I have ascribed it to my imperfections. I claim no perfection for myself. But I do claim to be a passionate seeker after Truth, which is but another name for

God. In the course of that search, the discovery of non-violence came to me. Its spread is my life mission."

Harijan, 6-7-1940

The statement is clear. It is the statement of a believer in his own method. The problem with the statement, of course, is that the truth of non-violence becomes a dogma: non-violence never fails, only those who try to carry it out because of their imperfections — including Gandhi himself. In this Gandhi is also the True Believer, who clings to his dogma come what may. On the other hand, he is also very explicit when it comes to the concrete conditions for becoming more perfect in non-violent struggle; consequently the statement is not quite empty.

"What does a brave soldier do? He kills only if necessary and risks his life in the act. Non-violence demands greater courage and sacrifice. Why should it be comparatively easy for a man to risk death in the act of killing and almost superhuman for him to do so in the act of sparing life? It seems to be gross self-deception to think that we can risk death if we learn and practise the art of killing but cannot do so otherwise. But for the hypnotism induced by the repetition of an untruth we should not grossly deceive ourselves."

Harijan, 14-4-1946

The objection to Gandhi's statement here is, of course, that to kill in order not to be killed oneself might provide more motivation out of sheer fear, than to be killed so as not to do any killing oneself. Self-preservation, after all, is a basic motive. However, Gandhi might have answered that this is within a highly individualist conception of the world, not a unity-of-man conception where killing somebody else already is killing yourself.

"It is an appeal to the heart of man. Often reason fails. It is dwarfed by self. The theory is that an adequate appeal to the heart never fails. Seeming failure is not of the law of Satyagraha but of incompetence of the Satyagrahi by whatever cause induced. It may not be possible to give a complete historical instance. The name of Jesus at once comes to the lips. It is an instance of brilliant failure."

Harijan, 30-6-1946

This is a very frequent theme in Gandhi: *satyagraha* can never fail, only the *satyagrahi* — because he has not made "an adequate appeal to the heart". The last sentences indicate high requirements for an effort to be adequate, and even so it may become a "brilliant failure".

Taken as a whole the statement seems to indicate that Gandhi's approach to *ahimsa* is not essentially empirical; a point made several times above.

"The non-violence of my conception is a more active and more real fighting against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. I contemplate a mental and, therefore, a moral opposition to immoralities. I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectations that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer instead would elude him. It would at first dazzle him, and at last compel recognition from him, which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him."

Young India, 8-10-1925

This is one of the clearest statements from Gandhi about how he thinks non-violence is working. Crucial in this connection is the expression "disappointing his expectations". The weakness is clear: Gandhi underestimates how quickly the surprise effect may evaporate. The "tyrant" gets used to the (to him) strange behaviour of the non-violent group and is not disappointed. He may even be pleased mobilizing his think tanks to study how to counter *satyagraha*. This however, does not mean that non-violent behaviour cannot "compel recognition from him".

"Asked as to how it would be possible to destroy Hitlerism by non-violence, Gandhiji said that was what we had to find out. Otherwise, if one depended upon superior violence in order to destroy violence of the Hitleran type, then small nations would have hardly any chance of survival. It was only when a nation individually refused to be beaten by Hitlerism or any combination of forces of violence, and stuck to its post at the cost of its life, but not at the cost of its honour, that it had a chance of survival. So that non-violence alone was the only guarantee of protection against the heaviest odds. Unless we could develop this courage and this type of resistance, democracy would never survive."

Harijan, 19-1-1947

This is a more pragmatic argument for non-violence: small nations depending on violence for their defence "would have hardly any chance of survival". Gandhi does not mention the classical equally pragmatic answer to that objection: small nations flock together and build alliances so as to offer equal or superior counter-violence. Switzerland is an example of a nation denying the idea that small nations cannot defend

themselves violently; Malta is an example of a country depending neither on alliances nor on military defensive protection (it does not have non-violent defence either). Gandhi's programme was not followed in his own country, it remains an untested possibility for the future when every thing else has failed.

"The moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter-bombs even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence. Hatred can be overcome only by love. Counter-hatred only increases the surface as well as the depth of hatred."

Harijan, 7-7-1946

The quotation is as taken out of the peace debate of the early 1980s! It is even very modern: Gandhi is indicating that a counterforce strategy will not work, a bomb can be made invulnerable (through hardening in bunkers, dispersion, by being hidden in submarines under icecaps and so on — recent perversions of violent strategies unknown to Gandhi). In saying this Gandhi predicts more than the quantitative arms race. He actually predicts a qualitative arms race unless some element of love can come into the relationship. And right he was — at least so far.

"Their slogan today is no longer merely 'Asia for the Asiatics' or 'Africa for the Africans' but the unity of all the exploited races of the earth. On India rests the burden of pointing the way to all the exploited races. She won't be able to bear that burden today if non-violence does not permeate us more than today. I have been trying to fit ourselves for that mission by giving a wider bend to our struggle. India will become a torch-bearer to the oppressed and exploited races, only if she can vindicate the principles of non-violence in her own case, not jettison it as soon as independence of foreign control is achieved."

Harijan, 19-5-1946

Again we can see here how Gandhi is trying to make an ally out of Indian national pride: "On India rests the burden". Written in 1946 he is extremely modern in anticipating a Third World concept, defined considerably better by him in terms of "exploited races on the earth" than by those who try to calculate it in terms of gross national product per capita. And there is also an implicit prediction in what he says. As long as India remains non-violent she remains great; as soon as she engages in more ordinary games — like the invasion

of Goa 1961 by the army — she becomes ordinary. In other words, these are not the sayings of somebody alienated from India. Gandhi reveals here not only political strategy, but also a strong national identification:

"If Delhi acted truthfully and non-violently, the effect of its action would be felt all the world over."

Birla House,
New Delhi, 20-1-1948

Here we see once more his faith that if non-violence is really carried out as it should then the effect will be universal. In a sense Gandhi was right: India became famous through his action and those of his countless followers; whether "Delhi" is the correct word for that actor is another question.

N₂₁₁ *Do not hurt or harm with acts!*

"Such courage comes from the belief that God sits in the hearts of all and that there should be no fear in the presence of God. The knowledge of the omnipresence of God also means respect for the lives of even those who may be called opponents or goondas."

Harijan, 18-6-1938

This statement, of course, is related to Gandhi's general philosophy of *ahimsa* based on the "omnipresence of god". He calls not only for not killing, but for "respect for the lives" — and how could it be otherwise if he sees God as omnipresent, meaning also that there is that of me in him and that of him in me?

"...every act of injury to a living creature and endorsement of such an act by refraining from non-violent effort, whenever possible, to prevent it, is a breach of *ahimsa*."

Young India, III, p. 812

One notices in this quotation the touch of the lawyer: It is not only the act of commission of injury, but also the act of omission by not making use of non-violence which would constitute a breach of *ahimsa*. Gandhi says, in fact, that it is not enough to abstain from violence, one also has to engage in active non-violence in order to be non-violent.

"To deprive a man of the use of an only village well is notice to him to quit that village. Surely, non-co-operators have acquired no

right to use that extreme pressure against those who do not see eye to eye with them."

Young India, 16-2-1921

Violence is more than killing; physical violence is any kind of deprivation of basic needs.

"The secret of success lies, therefore, in holding every English life and the life of every officer serving the Government as sacred as those of our own dear ones. All the wonderful experience I have gained now during 40 years of conscious existence, has convinced me that there is no gift so precious as that of life. I make bold to say that the moment Englishmen feel that although they are in India in a hopeless minority, their lives are protected against harm not because of the matchless weapons of destruction which are at their disposal. But because Indians refuse to take the lives even of those whom they may consider to be utterly in the wrong, that moment will see a transformation in the English nature in its relation to India, and that moment when all the destructive cutlery that is to be had in India will begin to rust."

Young India, 2-6-1920

This is a more moderate statement about how *satyagraha* can work. It may even be that Gandhi was correct in his assessment. Precisely because of the factor he mentions, that British lives were respected, not because Indians were not in a position to hurt and harm — even to kill — but because they did not want to do it, the British empire collapsed at its most precious point, India (and, as we have argued, with the British empire Western colonialism in general). But then it should also be pointed out that Gandhi is here playing on a psychological contrast: not non-violence as such in its own right, but non-violence even when violence *might* have been the alternative is the factor supposed to work.

N₂₁₂ *Do not hurt or harm with words!*

"In the method we are adopting in India, fraud, lying, deceit, and all the ugly brood of violence and untruth have absolutely no room. Everything is done openly and above board, for Truth hates secrecy. The more open you are the more truthful you are likely to be.

Young India, 21-12-1931

Ahimsa has to be complete, deep into the person in all directions. The person has to open him/herself in order to be permeated by truth.

And the basic carrier of Truth is the word, of untruth (fraud, lying, deceit) the violent words.

N₂₁₃ *Do not hurt or harm with thoughts!*

"To kill any living being or thing save for his or her or its own interest is *himsa*, however noble the motive may otherwise be. And a man who harbours ill-will towards another is no less guilty of *himsa* because for fear of society or want of opportunity he is unable to translate his ill-will into action."

Dhawan, p. 67

This is a rich statement about non-violence. Two points are being made very clearly. First, *ahimsa* is not limited to human beings, it also extends to "any living being", possibly meaning animals and plants — and then even "thing" is mentioned, whatever that may mean in precise terms except that it may rule out sabotage. Second, it is not enough to be non-violent in action; the tendency to "harbour ill-will" towards other people is just as bad. It is not non-violence not to be violent for fear of society or want of opportunity; non-violence is something you *will* not something you *have* to do.

N₂₁₄ *Do not harm the opponent's property!*

"The evil resides not in bridges, roads, etc., which are inanimate objects but in men. It is the latter who need to be tackled. The destruction of bridges, etc., by means of explosives does not touch this evil but only provokes a worse evil in the place of the one it seeks to end." "One used to hear it in the old days in defence of terrorism. Sabotage is a form of violence. People have realized the futility of physical violence but some people apparently think that it may be successfully practised in its modified form as sabotage. It is my conviction that the whole mass of people would not have risen to the height of courage and fearlessness that they have but for the working of full non-violence. How it works we do not yet fully know. But the fact remains that under non-violence we have progressed from strength to strength even through our apparent failures and setbacks. On the other hand terrorism resulted in demoralization. Haste leads to waste."

Harijan, 10-2-1946

Thus, to Gandhi sabotage is also violence. The major point seems to be that if one starts doing violence to property, then the non-violent discipline is eroded and sooner or later violence will be done to persons.

There may be some truth to this. On the other hand: objects, such as bridges and roads, are also used by the evil-doer to do evil. Their non-cooperation might also be useful in the struggle to prevent him from doing evil.

N₂₁₅ *Prefer violence to cowardice!*

"I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. Thus when my eldest son asked me what he should have done, had he been present when I was almost fatally assaulted in 1908, whether he should have run away and seen me killed or whether he should have used his physical force which he could and wanted to use, and defended me, I told him that it was his duty to defend me even by using violence."

Young India, 11-8-1920

This does not imply any acceptance of violence. It is stated clearly that violence is only acceptable when the alternative is cowardice. The best, of course, would have been for the son to have defended the father non-violently. One might note the word "duty" in the last sentence: there are strong obligations in Gandhi's way of thinking! And these obligations are to be met, preferably non-violently, definitely not be run away from.

N₂₁₆ *Do good even to the evil-doer!*

"I accept the interpretation of *ahimsa*, namely, that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of *ahimsa*, requires you to resist the wrong-doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically. Thus if my son lives a life of shame, I may not help him to do so by continuing to support him; on the contrary, my love for him requires me to withdraw all support from him although it may mean even his death. And the same love imposes on me the obligation of welcoming him to my bosom when he repents. But I may not by physical force compel my son to become good. That in my opinion is the moral of the story of the Prodigal son."

Young India, 25-8-1920

This is a very complete statement of the doctrine of *ahimsa* in its dialectic doubleness. It means love, even for the evil-doer; and it means exactly for that reason resistance and withdrawal of cooperation when he does wrong. The reference to a famous story from the New Testament is just one more example of how heavily influenced Gandhi was by the soft, mild, tolerant line in Christianity.

N₂₂ *Act in a goal-consistent manner!*

"The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same invisible connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree."

Hind Swaraj, 1930

A beautiful comparison. But some people might perhaps say that the relationship is not quite so unambiguous. The seed carries genetically the programme of the tree. The means are already an expression of the programme, and that programme may certainly carry over into the end whatever the professed programme for the end might be. However, there is this important difference: human beings are capable of changing their programmes more than (or at least so we assume) seeds and trees. The ends may become discontinuous to the means, although Gandhi is certainly right that the means will always colour the ends.

"I have often said that, if one takes care of the means the end will take care of itself. Non-violence is the means; the end for every nation is complete independence. There will be an international league only when all the nations, big or small, composing it are fully independent. The nature of that independence will correspond to the extent of non-violence assimilated by the nations concerned. One thing is certain. In a society based on non-violence, the smallest nation will feel as tall as the tallest. The idea of superiority and inferiority will be wholly obliterated."

Harijan, 11-2-1939

Very basic to Gandhi thinking: the means in the struggle have to be chosen in such a way that they are totally consistent with the goal. They have already to embody the goals. The goal cannot possibly be a world of violence, hence the means cannot be violent either. The goal is independence, hence one has to act in an independent manner, as if one is already independent. But that means non-violence. Hence the level of independence would be an expression of the level of non-violence. And that level can be the same for small nations as for big. It is not a question of amount of armament or other tools

of violent behaviour. Small nations could also choose the violent road to independence. Their defence may also become as tall as bigger nations by having the same willingness to sacrifice, the same adamant desire for freedom, the same tenacity. To this, however, Gandhi might have retorted that these are exactly the psychological components out of which non-violence can also be made. And that violence is better than submission anyhow. Incidentally, in this quote Gandhi is also saying something very important about a future "international league". The United Nations came 6 years later, with independence making "the smallest nation--as tall as the tallest."

"There remains the question as to whether in an ideal society, there should be any or no government. I do not think we need worry ourselves about this at the moment. If we continue to work for such a society, it will slowly come into being to an extent, such that the people can benefit by it. Euclid's line is one without breadth but none has so far been able to draw it and never will. All the same it is only by keeping the ideal line in mind that we have made progress in geometry. What is true here is true of every ideal."
Harijan, 15-9-1946

Here Gandhi indicates the significance of having some goal in mind although it will never be attained. It is an ideal to be approximated, yet that ideal is an indispensable mental construction. We shall not only steer towards that goal, but let the goal steer us.

"Garibaldi was a great man. He brought deliverance to Italy. And Mussolini did make her look great. But where is she today? Look at Japan, look at Germany. The very violence which brought them to the pinnacle of power has razed them to the ground. And has not the atom bomb proved the futility of all violence?"
Harijan, 10-3-1946

This is the other side of the coin: Gandhi's intuition, illustrated by his examples, is that what is built by and on violence might in turn become very violent. He uses the Axis power as an example, and then looks forward into the future, through that horrible prism, the atom bomb, used by the U.S.A. on behalf of the Allies. One notices, in passing, Gandhi's careful "plague on both your houses" approach.

N₂₂₁ *Always include a constructive element!*

"Constructive work, is for a non-violent army what drilling, etc., is for an army designed for bloody warfare."
Young India, 9-1-1930

This parallel is a good one in so far as both constructive work and drilling will instill discipline. But it is less fortunate in terms of the consequences: something constructive for the non-violent army, and something highly destructive for the army "designed for bloody warfare". Gandhi has probably been thinking of discipline as a common element, of welding a solid force out of a number of highly individualistic individuals. Not only wells drilled, slums cleared, literacy campaigns, health work; human beings also have to be drilled and constructive work does that to them.

N₂₂₂ *Use goal-revealing forms of struggle!*

"The attempt made to win *swaraj* is *swaraj* itself."
Dhawan, 1946

In other words, if you want to become independent behave independently! Just to begin is already a major part of the struggle.

N₂₂₃ *Act openly, not secretly!*

"No secret organization, however big, could do any good. Secrecy aims at building a wall of protection round you. *Ahimsa* disdains such protection."
Harijan, 10-2-1946

These are actually rather strong words. To abstain totally from secrecy when a campaign strategy is being worked out is very difficult. However, Gandhi aims for nothing less: possibly because above all he is against manipulation. The step from secrecy to manipulation is a short one because secrecy will almost always be accompanied by vague threats of the "just wait till I have shown you how nasty we can be" variety. And then secrecy is no model for ideal society, it is goal-concealing rather than goal-revealing.

N₂₂₄ *Aim the struggle at the correct point!*

"If the milk drivers of New York have a grievance against its Municipality for criminal mismanagement of its trust and if, in order to bend it, they decided to cut off the milk supply of the babies of New York, they would be guilty of a crime against humanity."
Young India, 10-4-1924

What Gandhi says here is a devastating indictment of the striking practice in the West. Non-cooperation should be directed against the evil structure, and those who commit wrong acts; it should always be constructed in such a way that it does not hit others. In practice, in a complicated society, this is of course most difficult. But one could imagine Gandhi saying that if something is wrong with the municipality of New York, then those who have grievances have to be mobilized and act in different, well directed ways and also build their own support structures, not just strike regardless of where the consequences might turn up.

N₂₃ *Do not cooperate with evil!*

"I have therefore ventured to suggest the remedy of non-co-operation ... which, if it is unattended by violence and undertaken in an ordered manner, must compel it (the Government) to retrace its steps and undo the wrong committed.

Dhawan, p. 249

Again one senses the lawyer in Gandhi, and the strong commitment, in spite of all, to existing social order. Non-cooperation yes, but with absolute non-violence, and in an orderly manner. The first point is an obvious part of the doctrine of non-violence. But is the second point so obvious? Is not orderly non-violence sometimes an act of cooperation? A demonstration carried out in complete understanding with the police, is that really an act of protest or rather a pact with the police? Was Gandhi here too much of a lawyer, even of a British subject?

"I am by instinct a co-operator; my very non-co-operation is intended to purge co-operation of all meanness and falsity, for I hold such co-operation is not worth the name."

Young India, 19-1-1921

The "cooperation" Gandhi is thinking of here refers to any social interaction, between high and low, colonizer and colonized, high caste, low caste and casteless, men and women and so on. Gandhi wants to purge. He wants the interaction to be pure and clean, only then can it be referred to as cooperation. In more social science jargon he is probably thinking of purging social relations of exploitative, degrading elements and of promoting cooperative relations that are truthful to the basic needs of all parties in the relationship.

N₂₃₁ *Non-cooperation with evil structure!*

"Merely to refuse military service is not enough. To refuse to render military service when the particular time arrives is to do the thing after all the time for combating the evil is practically gone. Military service is only a symptom of the disease which is deeper. I suggest to you that those who are not on the register of military service are equally participating in the crime if they support the State otherwise.... Each man, old or young, takes part in the sin by contributing to the maintenance of the State by paying taxes. Refusal of military service is much more superficial than non-cooperation with the whole system which supports the State. But then one's opposition becomes so swift and so effective that you run the risk of not only being marched to jail but being thrown into the streets."

Young India, 31-12-1931

This statement sounds as if it were taken straight of the debate inside the pacifist community today, between the minimalists who only refuse military service and the maximalists who turn against the modern state as such. It is quite clear where Gandhi stands: with the maximalists. This also means that to him the line between accepting and refusing military service is less important than the line between accepting and refusing the modern (industrial/urban) state.

"If India now strives to revive her cottage industry and handspinning and refuses to buy any foreign cloth or even cloth manufactured by Indian mills, and Lancashire or Indian mills suffer, thereby, non-co-operation cannot by any law of morals be held to be an act of violence. India never bound herself to maintain Lancashire. Visitors to taverns or houses of ill fame would be held even as benefactors of keepers of taverns or questionable houses, if they ceased to visit those places even without notice and even if their abstention resulted in the starvation of the keepers of those houses. Similarly, if customers of money-lenders ceased to borrow and the latter starved, the former cannot be regarded as violent by reason of their withdrawal. But they might be so considered if they transferred their custom from one money-lender to another through ill-will or spite and without just cause."

Young India, 27-5-1926

This is a clear statement of non-cooperation with an entire structure, "India never bound herself to maintain Lancashire". There is such a thing as an evil structure; economic exploitation of India through

"foreign cloth or even cloth manufactured by Indian mill"; "taverns or houses of ill fame"; "money-lenders". They exercise violence, consequently non-cooperation with them is not violence even if they are harmed by the non-cooperation. However, on many other occasions Gandhi points out that the persons should not be harmed, only the enterprises that constitute the structure.

N₂₃₂ Non-cooperation with evil status!

"I refuse to call the profession of the sepoy honourable when he has no choice as to the time when and the persons or people against whom he is called upon to use his sword."

Young India, 27-10-1921

What is said here is essentially that a sepoy (soldier) cannot himself decide what to do. He cannot refuse to be violent once he has signed up as a sepoy, hence he has to refuse to become a sepoy—if he wants to be non-violent. It is the whole status that has to be emptied not the single act. Once he has entered it he is stuck and should carry out orders with discipline. In other words, Gandhi's stand is relatively absolutist—perhaps impractical in its unwillingness to draw finer distinctions. Today, for instance, it makes sense for soldiers to be against atomic weapons, even if it produces headaches for military planners who have to plan with at least two types of soldiers.

"As it is, the Indian soldier is as much subject to fear as the layman. He fills the recruiting ranks because he believes that there is no other means of livelihood. The Government has made the profession of killing attractive by a system of special rewards, and by a system of skilfully devised punishments that has made it well-nigh impossible for the soldier, once he is in, to get out without difficulty."

Young India, 18-5-1921

What Gandhi is indicating here is that the status and the soldier is woven into a structure, so that it may in fact be very difficult to get out of the status without also rejecting more comprehensive parts of the social structure in which it is embedded. Hence, be socially conscious!

N₂₃₃ Non-cooperation with evil action!

N₂₃₄ Non-cooperation with those who cooperate with evil!

"Most people do not understand the complicated machinery of the Government. They do not realize that every citizen silently but

none-the-less certainly sustains the Government of the day in ways of which he has no knowledge. Every citizen therefore renders himself responsible for every act of his Government. And it is quite proper to support it so long as the actions of the Government are bearable. But when they hurt him and his nation, it becomes his duty to withdraw his support."

Young India, 28-7-1920

Here Gandhi makes the distinction between good and bad acts of the government. It is not the government as such that necessarily is wrong, only some of its acts. Cooperation as long as possible, but not after that, never with unbearable actions! And that implies non-cooperation with those in the Government who cooperate with the part that produced the evil action.

N₂₄ Be willing to sacrifice!

"If a father does an injustice it is the duty of his children to leave the parental roof. If the headmaster of a school conducts his institution on an immoral basis, the pupils must leave the school. If the chairman of a corporation is corrupt the members thereof must wash their hands clean of his corruption by withdrawing from it; even so if a Government does a grave injustice the subjects must withdraw cooperation wholly or partially, sufficiently to wean the ruler from his wickedness. In each case conceived by me there is an element of suffering whether mental or physical. Without such suffering it is not possible to attain freedom."

Young India, 16-6-1920

Not cooperating with evil, withdrawing under certain circumstances from any type of cooperation, will always be accompanied by some kind of suffering, "whether mental or physical". There was a social tie; the tie is cut through withdrawal. There is physical suffering in terms of certain goods and services no longer being available. And there is mental suffering in terms of human relations that no longer function as they used to do. In short, Gandhi is pointing to the costs in the form of suffering as a necessary sacrifice to attain freedom, or social transformation in general.

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

Young India, 11-8-1920

Here Gandhi fails to make explicit that this suffering has to be communicated to the "evil-doer". The latter may know that there is little or no submission to his will, whether this comes from the soul or the body. But he may protect himself effectively against the suffering by not seeing it, not hearing it, not knowing it.

"The Satyagrahi strives to reach the reason through the heart. The method of reaching the heart is to awaken public opinion. Public opinion for which one cares is a mightier force than that of gunpowder.
Young India, 19-3-1925

This is one of the mechanisms, Gandhi hopes to make use of through suffering: public opinion. But again the suffering has to become known. One way of making it known is through mass media. But that presupposes popular participation, which in the case of the newspapers means not only literacy but also interest in newspapers. Obviously it also presupposes absence of heavy censorship. Gandhi was able to get around both of these because rumours of his actions spread immediately, almost all over the country. But when one of Gandhi's successors, J. P. Narayan tried to exercise individual *satyagraha* during the emergency in India in the 1970's there was little or no reaction. People simply did not know. J. P. Narayan did not have Gandhi's jungle drum communication, and worked against a heavier censorship.

"The lawbreaker breaks the law surreptitiously and tries to avoid the penalty, not so the civil resister. He ever obeys the laws of the State to which he belongs, not out of fear of the sanctions but because he considers them to be good for the welfare of society. But there come occasions, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonour. He then openly and civilly breaks them and quietly suffers the penalty for their breach. And in order to register his protest against the action of the law givers, it is open to him to withdraw his co-operation from the State by disobeying such other laws whose breach does not involve moral turpitude."

Young India, 14-1-1920

Of course, there are many differences between civil and criminal disobedience. But one of them is—and that was to Gandhi a major criterion—the willingness to take the punishment implied by the disobedience. In doing so one demonstrates clearly willingness to sacrifice, and that disobedience is engaged in not for personal gains, but for higher goals. According to Gandhi this will never lead to anarchy,

because it is done according to an underlying, hidden law and order, more morally valid than the code expressed by the laws broken.

N₂₄₁ *Do not escape from punishment!*

"Will it not be better for the prisoners to refuse to do any work in the gaols at all? I am afraid that the suggestion comes from a misapprehension of the moral position. We are not out to abolish gaols as an institution. Even under Swaraj we would have our gaols. Our civil disobedience, therefore, must not be carried beyond the point of breaking the unmoral laws of the country. Breach of the laws to be civil assumes the strictest and willing obedience to gaol discipline because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach. And immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach. He ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation to chaos and anarchy."

Young India, 15-12-1921

Punishment is to be accepted. *Satyagraha* is not directed against punishment as such; that would only lead to anarchy. Quite another matter is that prisons might be immoral the way they are made. But in that case a *satyagraha* against prisons should be launched, with the acceptance of the sanctions that that might imply.

"We must not regard gaolers and warders as our enemies but as fellow human beings not utterly devoid of the human touch. Our gentlemanly behaviour is bound to disarm all suspicion or bitterness."

Young India, 15-12-1921

Implicit in what is being said here is that punishment should be accepted. But inside the prison non-violence continues. The guards are to be regarded as fellow human beings, as reachable through "gentlemanly behaviour". It is non-violence within non-violence, conflict within the conflict.

N₂₄₂ *Be willing to die if necessary!*

"It is not because I value life low that I countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for *Satyagraha*, but because I know that it results in the long run, in the least loss of life and, what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice."

Harijan, 27-5-1939

Unfortunately, this could also have been said by a military commander sending thousands, millions into death arguing that it would in the longer run lead to less loss of life. However, the number who actually did lose their lives for *satyagraha* was rather low whereas millions lost their lives in violent, communal struggle. As distinct from so many war leaders Gandhi himself suffered the consequence of this command, not in his struggle with the British, but with the Hindus. He did not hide in a bunker, underground or in some mountain.

"Commenting on the doings of the White hooligans who were said to have beaten to death an Indian, whom they mistook for a *Satyagrahi*, Gandhiji remarked, 'It is a sad event. Nevertheless, I feel happy. A *Satyagrahi* must always be ready to die with a smile on his face without retaliation and without rancour in his heart. Some people have come to have a wrong notion that *Satyagraha* means only jail going, perhaps facing lathi blows and nothing more. Such *Satyagraha* cannot bring independence. To win independence you have to learn the art of dying without killing.' "

Harijan, 14-7-1949

These are strong words. But they are certainly not stronger than any army officer in principle would be willing to pronounce in order to encourage the heroism of his soldiers. What Gandhi says is that the matter is serious, that struggle is no plaything. There are real personal risks involved. He may also have said this as a filtering mechanism to avoid followers who, when the going is tough, would drop out immediately.

"I want both the Hindus and the Mussalmans to cultivate the cool courage to die without killing and being killed rather than, in a cowardly manner, flee from danger. For the latter, in spite of his flight, does commit mental *himsa*. He flees because he has not the courage to be killed in the act of killing."

Young India, 20-1-1921

This command is very strong indeed, maybe too strong. Also, it runs against what is possibly a more important command in Gandhi's political thought: depriving the evil-doer of the object of his evil action. By not escaping one makes oneself available to atrocities! It can certainly be argued that that is not only mentally but also morally an act of cooperation with violence.

N₂₅ *Do not polarize!*

Again there is no particular quotation. This is general social science jargon for the action implication of the unity-of-man doctrine. That which is together should not be split apart more than absolutely necessary, in order to practise non-cooperation with evil. The norms that follow are all specific expressions of that general principle.

N₂₅₁ *Distinguish between antagonism and antagonist!*

"A *satyagrahi* must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill-will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For it should be an article of faith with every *Satyagrahi* that there is none so failed in this world but can be converted by love."

Young India, 8-8-1929

One may say that Gandhi here is asking for the almost impossible: are people really capable of distinguishing between the actions and the actor? And, does this not mean that Gandhi in a sense detaches the actor from his acts and thereby makes him less responsible, in a sense more childlike? Gandhi would probably say: to the contrary, he is responsible, and he should bear the burden of his responsibility when exposed to *satyagraha*. But we never say that he is beyond redemption because deep down he is a human being like all of us!

"The essence of non-violence technique is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not antagonists themselves."

Harijan, 29-4-1939

It can hardly be said more clearly: get rid of the conflict issue, save the parties to the conflict! Of course, most people will agree with this, but be less optimistic than Gandhi when it comes to the feasibility of such a programme. What Gandhi points to is that for that programme to be feasible one has to act according to this particular norm from the very beginning and be non-violent.

"Vilification of an opponent there can never be. But this does not exclude a truthful characterization of his acts."

Young India, 7-5-1931

This is very clear expression of the old distinction in many religions between *peccato* and *peccatore*, between sin and sinner, evil and evil-doer.

But the problem still arises how one can in practice characterize the acts without the actor perceiving this as characterization of himself.

"You argue that he is, after all, a fellow man; you do not know what prompted him to steal. You, therefore, decide that, when you can, you will destroy the man's motive for stealing. Whilst you are thus reasoning with yourself, the man comes again to steal. Instead of being angry with him you take pity on him. You think that this stealing habit must be a disease with him. Henceforth, you, therefore, keep your doors and windows open, you change your sleeping-place, and you keep your things in a manner most accesible to him. The robber comes again and is confused as all this is new to him; nevertheless, he takes away your things. But his mind is quite agitated. He inquires about you in the village, he comes to learn about your broad and loving heart, he repents, he begs your pardon, returns you your things, and leaves off the stealing habit."

Hind Swaraj, Chap. XVI

This is Gandhi as a criminologist. One senses exactly the same reasoning, the distinction between criminal (*peccatore*) and the crime (*peccato*); the desire to see the criminal act as a product of social circumstances and not of basically evil persons (since such persons do not exist). Gandhi's optimism when it comes to changing the pattern of evil action is evident.

N₂₅₂ *Distinguish between person and status!*

"I draw a sharp and fundamental distinction between boycotting the Prince and boycotting any welcome arranged for him. Personally I would extend the heartiest welcome to his Royal Highness if he came or could come without official patronage and the protecting wings of the Government of the day."

Young India, 4-8-1920

Gandhi draws "a fundamental distinction" between the status and the person: boycott the Prince, heartiest welcome to the person. But then he has to come as a person, without the status attributes typical of a Prince of Wales! Did the Prince of Wales and the British authorities get the message?

N₂₅₃ *Maintain contact!*

"Non-co-operation being a movement of purification is bringing to the surface all our weaknesses as also excesses of even our strong

points. Social boycott is an age-old institution. It is coevil with caste. It is the one terrible sanction exercised with great effect. It is based upon the notion that a community is not bound to extend its hospitality or service to an excommunicate."

Young India, 16-2-1921

Maybe a distinction between social boycott and person boycott could have been useful here? Gandhi evidently rejects personal boycott; one should meet the antagonist. But at the same time there is some opening for some social boycott although it is seen as a "terrible sanction".

N₂₅₄ *Empathy with your opponent's position!*

N₂₅₅ *Be flexible in defining parties and positions!*

"But there is no such a thing as compulsion in the scheme of non-violence. Reliance has to be placed upon ability to reach the intellect and the heart—the latter rather than the former."

Harijan, 23-7-1938

There is little doubt as to what Gandhi means by this: to reach out to the other human being even during a conflict, to look him/her into the eye, to establish a genuine sense of community, over and above the sound and fury of the struggle. In insisting on this Gandhi is not asking for the impossible but certainly for the difficult. This would require much training, particularly by people who tend to become angry and self-righteous in conflict. Much flexibility in the way the other party is perceived is required.

N₂₅₆ *Do not escalate!*

N₂₅₆ *Use the mildest possible forms of conflict behaviour!*

"I am resorting to non-co-operation in progressive stages because I want to evolve true order out of untrue order. I am not going to take a single step in non-co-operation unless I am satisfied that the country is ready for that step. Namely, non-co-operation will not be followed by anarchy or disorder."

Young India, 18-8-1920

Careful evaluation before the next step is taken! In this quote Gandhi emphasizes the importance of his own side's readiness. The conflict process must never get out of hand.

N₂₆₁ *Remain as loyal as possible!*

"It is not that I harbour disloyalty towards anything whatsoever, but I do so against all untruth, all that is unjust, all that is evil.... I remain loyal to an institution so long as that institution conduces to my growth, to the growth of the nation. Immediately I find that the institution, instead of conducing to its growth, impedes it, I hold it to be my bounden duty to be disloyal to it."

The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 80

What Gandhi says here is that the truth of the pudding is in the eating. No institution is holy and sacred in and by itself, only in so far as it contributes to human and social growth. The problem, of course, is, who is to decide? Most people would agree that those on top of the institutions are not always the right people to pass judgments: a parliament passing an inhuman law or regulation may defend itself by passing it once more. The system of courts, particularly the Supreme Court, is supposed to decide in such matters. But they may also be parts of the system. Hence, disloyalty remains as the "bounden duty".

N₂₆₂ *Do not provoke or let yourself be provoked!*

N₂₆₃ *Do not humiliate or let yourself be humiliated!*

"It is often forgotten that it is never the intention of a *satyagrahi* to embarrass the wrong-doer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The *satyagraha's* object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrong-doer."

The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 78

Never "embarrass", never provoke, never humiliate. There is, of course, an element of hypocrisy in this statement. However much the intention may be to appeal to the heart, a listing of the types of actions *satyagrahis* engage in will certainly lead to the conclusion that the "wrong-doer" is going to be at least somewhat embarrassed. In other words, this is a strong appeal to the *satyagrahi* to let the correctives enter as clearly as possible, particularly the idea of seeking contact with the opponent and treating him as fully as possible as a human being while at the same time refusing to obey when obeying his commands would be wrong. Show him a way out, don't paint him into a corner!

N₂₆₄ *Do not expand the goals for the conflict!*

The reader is referred to the quote in connection with N₁₂₁. The word unaltered cuts in both directions!

N₂₆₅ *Use the mildest possible form of conflict behaviour!*

"Since *Satyagraha* is one of the most powerful methods of direct action. a *Satyagrahi* exhausts all other means before he resorts to *Satyagraha*. He will, therefore, constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his cause calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to *Satyagraha*. But when he has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon *Satyagraha*, he has burnt his boats and there is no receding."

Young India, 20-10-1927

In the listing of forms of *satyagraha* (Chapter 3) this point has been very strongly made: ordinary appeals and debates are initial steps. We may then discuss whether they come before *satyagraha* or are the lowest rungs of the *satyagraha ladder*. At any rate, many would go one step further and say that violence is even more powerful than *satyagraha* and for that reason should never be used unless *satyagraha*, non-violence in other words, has been made fully use of first. The violence used by the African National Congress at present is usually justified by the many years of non-violence that preceded the violent acts, perhaps up to and including the massacre of Sharpeville in 1960.

3. Conflict resolution

N₃₁ *Solve conflicts!*

Again one of those general formulations with no direct quotation. Gandhi's unity-of-man doctrine and his strong sense of the dialectic of history has immediate implications: get on with business! Get the problems solved, meaning really solved! There is too much suffering in the world, and not only of "the last one". The concrete meaning is found in the quotes that follow.

N₃₁₁ *Do not continue conflict struggle forever!*

"Suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and when the limit is reached, to prolong it would be not only unwise but the height of folly."

The Mind of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 76

Gandhi is here no doubt arguing against ritualistic suffering, or ritualistic *satyagraha* for that matter. He does not say when "the limit is reached",

only indicates that there is a limit. In other words, one should have the courage to cancel an action when it serves no rational purpose.

N₃₁₂ Always seek negotiation with the opponent!

"It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. And this knowledge saves me from attributing motives to my opponents or critics. The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view of one another and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant. I very much like this doctrine of manyness of reality."

CWVG, VI, p. 109

A very clear expression of various aspects of Gandhi's doctrine. The famous elephant metaphor, deeply embedded in Indian thought, has actually two aspects to it. Not only does one of us perceive only one aspect of the elephant, reality-blinded as we are one way or the other, but also that there is that reality, there is the elephant! And there must, or might, be a way of perceiving the elephant in its entirety— one of them being by comparing and combining the partial images. The inescapable conclusion is dialogue, cooperation, and—possibly— compromise. In any case— negotiation to compare views!

N₃₁₃ Seek positive social transformations!

"How will you satisfy yourself that anarchy will not follow?" /from non-cooperation/"For instance, if I advise the police to lay down their arms, I shall have satisfied myself that we are able by voluntary assistance to protect ourselves against thieves and robbers. That was precisely what was done in Lahore and Amritsar last year by the citizens by means of volunteers when the military and the police had withdrawn."

Young India, 18-8-1920

Gandhi wants to evolve "true order out of untrue order". In other words, he wants social transformation to take place, and this is as important or more important than in non-cooperation. Hence, the conflict must never proceed too quickly even if this may be efficient in terms of paralyzing institutions governed by the other side. Building the alternative is always equally or even more important.

N₃₁₄ Seek human transformations!

— of yourself

— of the opponent

"One general principle, however, I would like to enunciate. A Satyagrahi should fast only as a last resort when all other avenues of redress have been explored and have failed. There is no room for imitation in fasts. He who has no inner strength should not dream of it, and never with attachment to success. But if a Satyagrahi once undertakes a fast from conviction, he must stick to his resolve whether there is a chance of his action bearing fruit or not. This does not mean that fasting cannot or can bear fruit. He who fasts in the expectation of fruit generally fails. And even if he does not seemingly fail, he loses all the inner joy which a true fast holds."

Harijan, 21-4-1946

The last sentence probably holds the cue to Gandhi's theory of fast: the "inner joy", in other words transformation of oneself. One cannot really hope that fasting will "bear fruit" in the external sense of having social impact. But if correctly carried out fasting will definitely transform oneself. Hence it has to be individual not imitative, and out of inner strength so as to withstand the disappointment that might come if there are no external effects.

"Fasting cannot be undertaken mechanically", he proceeded "It is a powerful thing but a dangerous thing if handled amateurishly. It requires complete self-purification, much more than what is required in facing death with retaliation even in mind. One such act of perfect sacrifice would suffice for the whole world. Such is held to be Jesus example."

Harijan, 27-10-1946

Maybe the basic point about fast for Gandhi actually is self-purification, rather than conversion of the antagonist? It could even be that fasting is some type of *satyagraha* against oneself, which then in the perfect case becomes an act of sacrifice that will stir the world. Again one is struck by the use of Christ as an example. Gandhi knew that he was courting death from an assassin's bullet and might have been said to follow in the footsteps of Christ.

N₃₂ Insist on the essentials, not on non-essentials!

N₃₂₁ Do not trade with essentials!

"...full surrender of non-essentials is a condition precedent to accession

of internal strength to defend the essential by dying.”
Harijan, 10-11-1940

The distinction between essentials and non-essentials, how is that thin line to be drawn? I would imagine that above all the “essentials” are fundamental human needs; with the need for survival, for elementary material well-being in terms of food and clothing and housing, and health and education; for identity and freedom. The concrete details about how this is organized may belong to the non-essentials.

N₃₂₂ *Be willing to compromise on non-essentials!*

“I am essentially a man of compromise, because I am never sure that I am right.”
Dhawan, p. 109

It should be pointed out that this non-dogmatic attitude in Gandhi does not apply to non-violence as an approach, but to the concrete agreements, efforts to solve conflicts, descriptions of social conflicts, and so on. In the essential intuition Gandhi hardly saw himself as fallible.

“A *satyagrahi* never misses, can never miss, a chance of compromise on honourable terms, it being always assumed that in the event of failure he is ever ready to offer battle. He needs no precious preparation, his cards are always on the table.”
Harijan, 23-3-1940

Many elements of Gandhi’s thinking on conflict behaviour are present here. Everything should be on the table, clear the beginning. Willingness to compromise. But willingness might not be enough, there may also be failure – in which case the struggle continues.

N₃₃ *See yourself as fallible!*

“Truth rules out prejudice, evasion, secrecy and deception as well as exaggeration. Suppression or modification of reality. It requires that we should never be afraid of confessing our mistakes or retracing our steps. Truth also implies mutual toleration and avoidance of dogmatism and bitterness; for truth as discerned by man is always relative and fragmentary. While, therefore, it is a good guide for individual conduct, imposition of that conduct upon others will be an insufferable interference with their freedom of conscience.”
Harijan, 11-2-1939

Again an expression of the unity-of-man doctrine. Any individual, any group is only a part of that unity and can never claim to have understood reality completely. Truth is “always relative and fragmentary”. It cannot be imposed upon others. As a consequence we must always keep open the possibility that we are wrong and then openly admit so when this is the case. Truth is what matters, and it is given to nobody to understand truth fully, and certainly not to have a monopoly on it. In this there is also the idea of reciprocity. If you want others to be willing to admit their mistakes then you should yourself be willing to do so. Actually, you should require more of yourself than of the antagonist if for no other reason because you have more command over yourself and because you may not fully understand the other side. You will certainly feel that the other party is wrong on some basic points, otherwise there would not have been a conflict. Hence, also keep open the possibility that you yourself might be factually or morally mistaken.

N₃₃₁ *Remember that you may be wrong!*

“No man has ever been able to describe God fully. The same holds true of *ahimsa*. I can give no guarantee that I will do or believe tomorrow what I do or hold to be true today.”
Harijan, 3-3-1946

The many-sidedness of truth and God precludes any total comprehension. Hence there will be changes in views, everybody is by definition fallible. To proclaim the opposite implies that one has given up the ongoing search for God. Today’s truth may be tomorrow’s falsehood.

N₃₃₂ *Admit your mistakes openly!*

“The *satyagrahi* must always hold himself open to a new conviction, and whenever he discovers himself in the wrong he must confess his mistake at all costs and atone for it.”
Dhawan, p. 127 referring to *Autobiography II*, p. 232

A strong demand put on the *satyagrahi*: When he has done something wrong (relative to his own moral commandments), then he has to be honest and confess it. Difficult, but it will certainly clear the air.

N₃₃₃ *Consistency over time not very important!*

“I hear and read many charges of inconsistency about myself. But I do not answer them as they do not affect anyone but myself.”
Young India, 17-11-1921

Here Gandhi evidently is wrong: as a leader of an enormous movement of course his inconsistencies concerned everybody, although possibly as a strategic, doctrinal problem rather than an inner moral one.

"I would like to say to the diligent reader of my writings and to others who are interested in them that I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after Truth I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment, and, therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject."

Harijan, 29-4-1933

In other words, Gandhi preserves for himself the right to grow, also after death, and with that right comes, of course, some changes in the perception of truth. Evidently Gandhi sees this growth as progressive otherwise he would not have recommended the later of his views. One should also note his reference to growth after death, a Hindu/Buddhist idea rather than Christian/Muslim.

"There is no cause for distraction, grief or alarm. It would be surprising, if in a great national upheaval, we did not find men honestly recanting old views and enunciating new. Change is a condition of progress. An honest man cannot afford to observe mechanical consistency when the mind revolts against anything as an error."

Young India, 19-12-1929

To Gandhi consistency is not only not very important, consistency may also stand in the way of one's own progress. Social change presupposes some inner changes, at least for the "honest" man. Evidently this has to do with a much higher level of tolerance of contradictions in Hindu and Buddhist thought than in general Western thought where so much is geared toward overcoming contradictions, or at least not admitting them. *Contradiction=error* seems to be the Western formula.

N₃₄ *Be generous in your view of the opponent!*

"In the dictionary of the non-violent there is no such word as an external enemy. But even for the supposed enemy he will have nothing but compassion in his heart. He will believe that no man is intentionally

wicked, that there is no man but is gifted with the faculty to discriminate between right and wrong, and that if that faculty were to be fully developed, it would surely mature into non-violence."

Harijan, 13-10-1940

Again an expression of Gandhi's basic optimism with regard to all human beings. There is in this quotation a well-known idea from Christianity, Chinese philosophy and many other sources of moral insight. Basically, deep down, we not only have capacity of moral judgement but tend to judge the same way. "Do unto others as you would like them to do unto!?" should, however, make one remember Shaw's dictum: "Careful, their tastes may be different."

N₃₄₁ *Do not exploit the opponent's weaknesses!*

"I did not consider Englishmen, nor do I now consider them, as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I considered and still consider them to be as capable of high motives and actions as any other body of man, and equally capable of making mistakes."

Young India, 17-11-1921

It is the old theme applied to Englishmen—the distinction between antagonism and the antagonist. And it is a clear example of being generous in view of the antagonist. One does not exploit a mistake made by an other person, one points it out to him, since anybody is "capable of making mistakes".

N₃₄₂ *Do not judge the opponent harder than yourself!*

"He who when being killed bears no anger against his murderer and even asks God to forgive him is truly non-violent. History relates this of Jesus Christ. With his dying breath on the cross, he is reported to have said: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." We can get similar instance from other religions but the quotation is given because it is world famous."

Harijan, 28-4-1946

A very strong statement of the unity-of-man doctrine, of tolerance, forgiveness, of not judging others. Also a strong statement of the influence Christianity has on Gandhi, although he is somewhat apologetic about it. Had he survived by some minutes the assassin's bullets Gandhi would probably have said the same.

N₃₄₃ *Trust your opponent!*

"A *satyagrahi* bids good-bye to fear. He is therefore never afraid of trusting the opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the *satyagrahi* is ready to trust him for the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed."

Satyagraha in South Africa, p. 246

Again an example of Gandhi's insistence on faith in human beings. And also an example of the difference between Gandhi's thinking and Western thought. The faith is equally deep, but empirical. Non-violence, in order to work, may have to work slowly. One action takes time, twenty-one actions may take very much time, and even that may not be enough according to Gandhi. A long time perspective is needed!

N₃₅ *Conversion, not coercion!*

"Then it is often forgotten that it is never the intention of a *Satyagrahi* to embarrass the wrong-doer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The *Satyagrahi's* object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrong-doer."

Harijan, 25-3-1939

A *satyagrahi* is supposed to make the opponent feel basically safe, not threatened or embarrassed, not coerced. Not only should the road to a mutually accepted solution be open. It should not be entered out of fear, only out of some inner conviction.

N₃₅₁ *Always seek solutions that are accepted!*

— by yourself

— by the opponent

"The end of non-violent 'war' is always an agreement never a dictation, much less humiliation of the opponent."

Harijan, 23-3-1940

The solution has to be accepted, psychologically, internally. With this one can readily agree. But one cost should be taken into account: it takes time. Thus, Gandhi would not accept the "dictatorship of the majority" implicit in democratic voting although it is very efficient. It "saves" a lot of time that otherwise would be used for endless discussions by drawing a line saying: this is the end, this is our agreement.

But it is a dictation, and may also serve to humiliate the opponent. Consensus is the goal, and the sign that the conflict is over.

N₃₅₂ *Never coerce your opponent!*

"Our criticism will therefore be if we believe him to be guilty of untruth to meet it with courtesy, of bullying with calm courage, of violence with suffering, of arrogance with humility, of evil with good. "My follower" would seek not to condemn but to convert."

Young India, 7-5-1931 S-p. 84

This is a clear statement of Gandhi's conversion philosophy. And also tactic: stand as an example to the opponent of decent human behaviour and you will not fail to have an impact on him, even if it may take some time.

N₃₅₃ *Convert your opponent into a believer of the cause!*

"It is the acid test of non-violence that, in a non-violent conflict, there is no rancour left behind, and in the end the enemies are converted into friends. That was my experience in South Africa, with General Smuts. He started with being my bitterest opponent and critic. Today he is my warmest friend."

Harijan, 12-11-1938

Clearly, it does not always work like this. Gandhi may have forgotten that there are always more than two parties to a conflict. He may develop good relations to General Smuts. But how were his relations to the black South Africans, to the Zulus, for instance? He may develop better relations to the Muslims in India. But how does that affect his relations to upper caste Hindus? After all this was the community from which Gandhi's assassin was recruited.