

## GANDHI ON PEACE

ANSWER TO "THE COSMOPOLITAN" (1935)

Harijan 18-6-1938

[Of New York. This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", which says this was "Gandhiji's answer given three years ago . . . fresh enough to be repeated today."]

"Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace is to disbelieve the godliness of human nature. Methods hitherto adopted have failed because rock-bottom sincerity on the part of those who have striven has been lacking. Not that they have realized this lack. Peace is unattainable by part performance of conditions, even as a chemical combination is impossible without complete fulfilment of the conditions of attainment thereof. If the recognized leaders of mankind who have control over engines of destruction were wholly to renounce their use, with full knowledge of its implications, permanent peace can be obtained. This is clearly impossible without the great Powers of the earth renouncing their imperialistic design. This again seems impossible without great nations ceasing to believe in soul-destroying competition and to desire to multiply wants and therefore increase their material possessions. It is my conviction that the root of the evil is want of a living faith in a living God. It is a first-class human tragedy that peoples of the earth who claim to believe in the message of Jesus who they describe as the Prince of Peace show little of that belief in actual practice. It is painful to see sincere Christian divines limiting the scope of Jesus' message to select individuals. I have been taught from my childhood and tested the truth by experience that the primary virtues of mankind are possible of cultivation by the meanest of the human species. It is this undoubted universal possibility that distinguishes the humans from the rest of God's creation. *If even one great nation were unconditionally to perform the supreme act of renunciation, many of us would see in our lifetime visible peace established.*"

Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol 62, pp. 175 f.

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“LETTER TO EDITH HUNTER

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,

August 26, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Here is my message. You can do with it what you like.

Attainment of real world peace is impossible except for greater scientific precision, greater travail of the soul, greater patience and greater resources than required for the invention and consolidation of the means of mutual slaughter. It cannot be attained by a mere muster-roll signed by millions of mankind desiring peace. But it can, if there is a science of peace, as I hold there is, by a few devoting themselves to the discovery of the means.

Their effort being from within will not be showy but then it will not need a single farthing.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MRS. EDITH HUNTER

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Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 66, pp. 72 f.