

## WELCOME

*(Editorial from "People's War," Vol. II, No. 46, May 14, 1944).*

Gandhiji, the beloved leader of the greatest patriotic organisation of our people, the mighty National Congress, is back in our midst.

We share the nation's feeling of relief, an unbearable load is off our chest. We offer Gandhiji our respectful greetings.

Like all our countrymen, we are anxious about his health. We have no doubt that once again his iron will, the best of our doctors' skill and the whole nation's heart-felt desire will triumph over old age and disease. Gandhiji will win back normal health and resume his post at the head of our national forces.

Every son and daughter of India, every patriotic organisation of our land, is looking to the greatest son of our nation to take it

out of the bog, in which none is safe, into which all are sinking and from which none can get out on his own.

Gandhiji's first statement will make history not only for our country, but for freedom-loving humanity. The imperialist bureaucrats have gone out of their way to underline that he has been set free only on medical grounds. They obviously want to carry on with deadlock. They prevented the free alliance and brotherly co-operation between India, Britain and the United Nations. They mean to stick to their outworn guns that are pointed the wrong way. Despite them, Gandhiji has to steer a course through which our nation may emerge free in a free world.

We look forward to the first pronouncement of Gandhiji that will authoritatively restate the Congress policy for the day. His letters to Linlithgow killed the imperialist slanders against the Congress. His comrade-in-arms, Sarojini Devi, spoke for him as only she can, till she was gagged. His faithful followers, the Congress leaders of Assam and U.P., have carried forward his banner. But Congressmen as a whole are not of one mind. They are justifiably bitter against the Government, but unfortunately confused about what to do. Gandhiji alone can unite and rouse them to action. We hope that Gandhiji will see that there is no time to lose when the Japanese aggressors aided by their puppet Bose have already marched inside the borders of our Motherland.

The more unqualified and inspiring Gandhiji's call to our people to resist the Fascist aggressors, the more speedily the peoples of Britain and America will demand that Wavell settle with him. It is becoming apparent to all honest men abroad that Mountbatten and Stilwell on their own are not succeeding against the Japs. Everyone knows that Gandhiji can ensure the whole-hearted support of India to Allied Arms. The lead that Gandhiji will give our nation now will determine how broad and swift will be the rally of democratic forces abroad for immediate settlement with India.

Within the country, the second biggest political organisation—the League—is as fed up with the deadlock as is the Congress. Every Leaguer is looking to Gandhiji, to see what he does to accept their right of self-determination and negotiate with their leader Mr. Jinnah, so that they too may throw in their full weight against the bureaucracy and establish united front for National Government. But Mr. Jinnah would not offer his hand of co-operation unless he felt assured that Gandhiji is prepared to concede self-determination to Muslim nationalities. Only Gandhiji

can rise above past prejudices, recognise after due discussion, but sooner than most, the inherent justice of the League demand, and promptly forge the irresistible weapon of National Unity on the basis of self-determination for Muslim nationalities and National Government for the whole country.

Gandhiji made the Congress powerful by making Congressmen serve the people in times of need. Today, not in one locality but all over the country, not one section of the people but all, are in dire distress because of the rise not only in food prices, but in all necessaries of life. We look to Gandhiji to denounce hoarding and speculating as a sin against the nation and to lead Congressmen into food work as the best way to serve the people, and to tell Congressmen that not to unite with all to get people their food is not patriotism but sectarianism.

Gandhiji made the Congress the biggest common patriotic organisation that any enslaved nation has ever been able to raise by focussing attention on that single task before the nation that was of the utmost importance for the time being and for which the people could do something on their own despite the rule of an alien bureaucracy. Bengal is not only threatened by the Jap marauders, but by a second famine; millions are dead and tens of thousands are dying today of disease and hunger. We look to Gandhiji to rouse the people outside Bengal to save Bengal, and themselves to escape the fate of Bengal by looking after their own food and taking care of the hoarder amongst them.

Our greetings to Gandhiji are an ardent appeal to instil his own boundless patriotic faith in his followers of the Congress, to do all he can to unite the Congress and the League, to launch the final patriotic crusade of our ancient nation for food for our people, freedom for our country and for brotherly alliance with the freedom-loving nations of the world. We 25,000 Indian Communists, pledge to him our wholehearted support.