

thought out and have a sharper edge. He did not want to allow his adversary to provoke him to react emotionally. As an accomplished "general," he chose his own battleground and did not allow himself to be trapped.

While appreciating the plight of the Jews fully and with all his sympathies, he did not hesitate to declare his views. "Can the Jews resist this organized and shameless persecution? Is there a way to preserve their self-respect, and not to feel helpless, neglected and forlorn? I submit there is. No person who has faith in a living God need feel helpless or forlorn.... If I were a Jew and were born in Germany and earned my livelihood there, I would claim Germany as my home even as the tallest gentile German might, and challenge him to shoot me or cast me in the dungeon; I would refuse to be expelled or to submit to discriminatory treatment...." He drew a parallel between the Jews in Germany and the handful of Indians in Transvaal in South Africa, who resorted to satyagraha without any backing from the world outside or the Indian Government.

But the Jews of Germany can offer satyagraha under infinitely better auspices than the Indians of South Africa. The Jews are a compact, homogeneous community in Germany. They are far more gifted than the Indians of South Africa. And they have organised world opinion behind them. I am convinced that if someone with courage and vision can rise among them to lead them in nonviolent action, the winter of their despair can in the twinkling of an eye be turned into the summer of hope. And what has today become a degrading manhunt can be turned into a calm and determined stand offered by unarmed men and women possessing the strength of suffering given to them by Jehovah.... The German Jews will score a lasting victory over the German gentiles in the sense that they will have converted the latter to an appreciation of human dignity. (*Harijan*, 26.11.1938.)

It is often argued that the Jews had been practicing nonviolence for the past two thousand years; that suggesting nonviolence to them had nothing new in it; and that nonviolence had been totally ineffective in their case. To this Gandhi's reply was: "The Jews, so far as I know, have never practiced nonviolence as an article of faith or even as a deliberate policy.... Have they no violence in their heart for their oppressors? Do they not want the so-called democratic powers to punish Germany for her persecution and deliver them from oppression? If they do there is no nonviolence in their heart. Their nonviolence, if it may be so called, is of the helpless and the weak...." (*Harijan*, 17.12.1938.)

In 1940 Gandhi repeatedly said that Hitlerism will never be defeated by counter Hitlerism. It can only breed superior Hitlerism raised to the nth degree. The European situation in 1939 and 40 had a clear lesson for him. "It fills me with the utmost nonviolence. I cannot think of a better thing to offer to Great Britain and the defeated nations than nonviolence. It is impossible for me to enthuse over the deeds of Hitler or of those who fought or failed to fight him. There is nothing to choose between the victory of Herr Hitler and the defeat of the others. But I have no doubts in my mind that even a patched up nonviolent army would take the winds out of Hitler's sails....!" (Tendulkar, Vol. 5, p. 285.)

On June 21, 1940, the Congress Working Committee felt unable to enforce such a faith in action when the time for it came.

I pleaded hard with the Committee: "If you have faith in nonviolence of the strong, now is the time to act upon it. It does not matter that many parties do not believe in nonviolence, whether of the strong or of the weak. Probably that is all the greater reason for congressmen to meet the emergency by nonviolent action...." But the members of the Working Committee felt that congressmen would not be