

Letter to Adolf Hitler, July 23rd, 1939

Letter to Adolf Hitler

As at Wardha, C.P., INDIA,

July 23, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity. But I have resisted their request, because of the feeling that any letter from me would be an impertinence. Something tells me that I must not calculate and that I must make my appeal for whatever it may be worth.

It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to a savage state. Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Any way I anticipate your forgiveness, if I have erred in writing to you.

I remain,

Your sincere friend,

M.K.Gandhi

HERR HITLER,

BERLIN,

GERMANY

Hitler never even read Gandhi's letters, let alone replying to them.

Gandhi wrote two letters to his 'Dear Friend' Hitler, but none of them got delivered to him.

Reason: both the letters were intercepted midway by the British authorities and they never saw Hitler's hands.

He wrote the first letter a month before Hitler invaded Poland (which marks the beginning of World War II).

Gandhi and Hitler were two of the most dominant personalities of the 20th century - starkly opposite in their philosophy and action, yet they ended up changing the course of history. They never met each other. But Gandhi wrote two letters to him and addressed him as a "friend". he explained why he called him a friend:

"dear friend, that I address you as a friend is no formality. I owe no foes, - is the opening of the second letter written on December 24th, 1940.

In both letters , he appealed to Hitler asking him to end World War II-

The first letter was written as a request of some friends, while the second one was written as signal of frustration at the expansionist behaviour of Hitler.

Hitler was not the one who paid attention to Gandhi's advice. Barely a month later, on September 1st , 1939, Hitler's armed forces invaded Poland marking the beginning of WW II.

In the second letter Gandhi reproached (disapprovava, redarguiva) him severely for the war though he said: -----" we have **no** doubt about your bravery or devotion to your fatherland,

nor we believe that you are the monster described by your opponents"----- " but your own writings and pronouncements and those of your friends and admirers leave no room for doubt that many of your acts are monstrous and unbecoming of human dignity, especially in the estimation of men like me who believe in universal friendliness"---

Hitler had built his political career on his misplaced notion of racial supremacy of Aryans, who are considered as the composer of Rig Ved and an essential part of Indian nation. Hitler might have expected Indian leaders to support his war especially in the view of the fact that Britain was one of Germany's enemies.

At that time Gandhi was in fact struggling against the British colonial rule. But Gandhi left no room for such speculation in the mind of Hitler. ---- " we would never wish to end the British rule with German aid"-----

Hitler's downfall started in the second half of 1941 and after suffering a series of defeats at the hands of allied forces - led by France , the UK , British India and later joined by the URSS and the USA - Hitler committed suicide on April 30th, 1945. His war influence was later rejected by Germany, the country he ruled. Gandhi had predicted the same in his letter to Hitler --- " If not the British , some other power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. You are leaving no legacy (eredità culturale) to your people of which they would be proud"--

How different history would have been, if Hitler had read those letters and followed Gandhi's advice!!!