

## *1. LETTER TO JOSEPH J. GHOSE*

[Tuesday, January 24, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR MR. GHOSE<sup>2</sup>,

I thank you for your letter. I have just received the following wire from my son to whom I sent your letter as soon as I got it:

Ghose's letter astounding. Allegations false. Allahabad volunteers best behaved.<sup>9</sup>

Is there likelihood of your having been misinformed? It is likely that my boy has been misled. I cannot imagine his deceiving me. I should, with your assistance, like to reach the bottom of this difference of opinion. I may add that my boy is very careful and his judgement is as a rule sound. I believe too that he thoroughly understands the spirit of the struggle. Will you not see him and discuss the matter with him? I am asking him to meet you.

I am not disposed to stop all picketing. I think it has moral value if it is absolutely peaceful.

You had certainly a perfect right to punish the boys who did not obey you. And boys who disobey must take the risk of being rusticated.

I am sorry you are having all this trouble.

*Yours*

From a photostat: S.N. 7656

## *2. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

*Tuesday [January 24, 1922]*<sup>3</sup>

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your telegrams. That Sherwani has been struck off the rolls is quite welcome. After all, he is not going to practise until we have the reins of Government in our own hands.

I have sent a copy of your telegram to Ghose. You may see him by appointment and explain to him the whole thing. I send you a copy of the letter I have written to him.

We do not want to hide any of our faults.

<sup>1</sup> From Ghose's reply dated January 31, 1922 (S.N. 7810)

<sup>2</sup> Joseph J. Ghose; then Head Master, Modern High School, Allahabad

<sup>3</sup> The news of Sherwani having been struck off the rolls was wired to Gandhiji by the addressee on January 23. The Tuesday following was January 24.

I am leaving for Bardoli on Thursday night. Afterwards, I shall have to stay there most of the time.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7656

### 3. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

SABARMATI,

*January 25, 1922*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I still think that the Conference<sup>1</sup> has done much good. It has cleared the air and defined our position as never before. Sir Sankaran's<sup>2</sup> action will be forgotten. But the attitude of non-co-operators will, I think, be remembered to their credit.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C. Vijayaraghavachariar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 4. NOTES

#### AN ENGLISH LADY BLESSES

"An English lady" who sends her name and address, writing from Calcutta, says:

It elevates one to see the admirable way in which Mr. Gandhi shows us the truth and opens our eyes to the atrocious things that our so-called noble Government are doing daily. The letter that an "English missionary" has written is admirable.<sup>3</sup> I am afraid, there are many more like her, but are too proud to come forward and acknowledge the noble work that Mr. Gandhi is doing. His patience and work are like the spring that lies hidden far below. No matter what the world may preach, God will give him a harvest greater than he expects. It is only those who work in silence reap the harvest. Millions are

<sup>1</sup> The Leaders' Conference, also known as the Malaviya Conference, was held in Bombay on January 14 and 15, 1922; *vide* "Speech at Leaders Conference, Bombay", 14-1-1922; 15-1-1922.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Sankaran Nair, Chairman of the Leaders' Conference, quit it on January, 15, when the Committee appointed by the Conference held meeting in Bombay. For Gandhiji's interview regarding this, *vide* "Women's Part", 15-12-1921.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "In God's Hands".

watching and judging him. But there is One above all, watching and judging each struggle in his daily life, and when his toil and struggle are over, his work and name will live for ever. His name will be worshipped by millions who have gained freedom by his hard work. God bless and spare him and his tear wife, and give them both health and strength to go on until this struggle is over, which will not be long.

It is not without hesitation that I share this letter with the reader. Although written impersonally, it is so personal. But I hope there is no pride in me. I feel I recognize fully *my* weakness. But my faith in God and His strength and love is unshakable. I am like clay in the Potter's hands. And so in the language of the *Gita*, the compliments are laid at His feet. The blessings such as these, I confess, are strength-giving. But my reason for publishing this letter is to encourage every true non-co-operator in the non-violent path he is pursuing, and to wean the false ones from their error. This is a terribly true struggle. It is not based on hate though men of hate are in it. It is a struggle which is based on love, pure and undefiled. If I felt any hate towards Englishmen or those who in their blindness are associated with the blind administrators, I have the courage to retire from the struggle. A man who has the least faith in God and His mercy, which is His justice, cannot hate men, though at the same time he must hate their evil ways. But having abundant evil in himself and ever standing in need of charity, he must not hate those in whom he sees evil. This struggle, therefore, is intended to make friends with Englishmen and the whole world. It cannot be by false flattery, but by plainly telling Englishmen of India that their ways are evil and that we will not co-operate with them so long as they retain them. If we are wrong in so thinking, God will forgive us, for we mean no ill to them and we are prepared to suffer at their hands. If we are right, as sure as I am writing this, our suffering will open their eyes even as it has opened those of "an English lady". Nor is she the only one. I meet Englishmen during my travels. I do not know them, but they greet me cordially and wish me success and pass on. True, as against scores who thus bless me, there are hundreds that curse me. These curses also I am bidden to lay at His feet. They come from ignorance. Many Englishmen and even some Indians consider me and my activity to be mischievous. Non-co-operators must tolerate even these. If they get angry and retaliate, they lose the battle, whereas if they suffer, they win without fail and without delay. *The whole of the delay is due, !I am convinced, to our shortcomings.* We have not been always non-violent. We have, contrary to our pledge, harboured ill will. Our opponents, the English administrators, their co-operators, the talukdars, the rajas have distrusted us and have felt afraid of us. We are bound by our pledge

to clothe them with the fullest protection. Whilst we may not help them in the exploitation of the poor and the weak, we must not harm them. Though they are in a hopeless minority, they must be made to feel safer in our midst than they are behind the bayonets. If we were in a hopeless minority, ours would be an easier position—we would long ago have proved our faith. As it is, our numbers embarrass us. The dissatisfaction with the present regime is common to us; but not the burning faith in non-violence. We must not be satisfied till we have rendered impossible the disgraceful scenes that took place in Madras. We must not, with non-violence on our lips, obstruct court proceedings. Either we seek imprisonment, or we do not. If we do, we must let the Government take us away as fast as they wish. The struggle is prolonged to the extent that we fail to understand the implications of non-violence.

#### ADMITTED AS A BOARDER

If anyone has any doubt about the true inwardness of the struggle, I hope the following<sup>1</sup> from Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen will help to dispel it. At the time of being sentenced, he was Secretary of the District Congress Committee of Chittagong.

I have been admitted as a boarder in His Majesty's Hotel for two years and a half. During the last 4 or 5 years I was always thinking of bidding adieu to my profession as a lawyer . . . and retiring to Hrishikesh in the Himalayas for spending the rest of my days there in religious pursuits as a recluse. So long I could not . . .

Now the All-Merciful Father has showered His immense blessings on me by suddenly taking me off from the midst of worldly bustles and vouchsafing unto me complete rest within the prison walls . . .

I am now fully convinced, my dear Mahatmaji, that this temporary rest will . . . qualify me for the attainment of the highest object of human life—*the eternal nirvana*.

I assure the reader that Prasanna Babu's wish to attain supreme happiness in jail is not an idle dream. I know Hrishikesh. It certainly holds blackguards on earth as it holds saints. I know the prison life. Only a pitch black wall separated one of the greatest murderers of South Africa and me. We were both in isolation cells by design, for we were both considered dangerous to society. I had to suffer most in that cell for nearly two months. But I learnt most when I suffered most. It was the time of the fattest harvest. Whilst the suffering lasted, it was difficult to bear. But it is now one of the richest treasures in life's memory. We have today converted the jails into heavens of

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

refuge for liberty-loving men. They can be easily turned into abodes for attaining *nirvana*. The prison cell where Socrates drank the poison cup was undoubtedly the way to bliss. He lives today through the memory of that ineffaceable scene.

#### “SWARAJ ASHRAM”

Prasanna Babu pictures the jail as a means to attain the highest state. Babu Tarun Ram Phookan calls his jail “Swaraj Ashram.” Sjt. Phookan is an Assam leader. I may inform the reader that he is a first class shot and a fine sportsman. But he has learnt the secret of suffering. Writing from the Silchar Jail he says:

I think I was doing enough mischief from the Government point of view to justify my arrest and imprisonment. I am obliged to you and also to the officials concerned for the peace and safety secured for me here. I trust you will soon be able to secure peace and safety for those outside the jail. We will accept them when they come in all humility but, I hope not in humiliation. We should seek no temporary peace, but permanent peace based upon equality and on the principle of common participation for common benefit, for, I believe that sort of peace only can be lasting. Peace on any other terms is sure to leave a sting behind which will be beneficial neither to the governed nor to the governors.

If we play the game manfully, honourably and without malice or bitterness, it does not much matter, in my humble opinion, whether we win or lose; for selfless sufferings, if there be any, will not and cannot be lost eternally.

The letter is countersigned by the Superintendent of the jail. Motilalji warns me from his hotel in Lucknow against embarking upon any premature and patched up peace. He is willing to be in jail indefinitely. There are many Swaraj Ashrams cropping up in our midst. But there are none so true as the jails. They are built not with money but with stout hearts.

#### IN BURMA

The nationalist wave is spreading. I have made room for two articles on Burma. Swami Shraddhanandji<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Abbas Tyabji gave me glowing accounts of the national awakening in that land of elephants and wonders. The spoliation of Burma by the British is a sad chapter in their sad history. And sadder still to me is the fact that Indians have not hesitated to take part in the spoil. I have never been able to take pride in the fact that Burma has been made part of British

<sup>1</sup> Mahatma Munshiram (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhananda; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj; took prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab

India. It never was and never should be. The Burmese have a civilization of their own. The Buddhism of Burma is quite different from the Buddhism of India, as European Christianity is totally different from Christ's Christianity. I wish to say nothing in disparagement of either. The message of Jesus was too strong for the European mentality. The message of the Buddha was too strong for the Burmese mentality. Both the nations have profited by the messages they received to the extent of their receptivity. But there is no doubt that Europe has still to understand the deep meaning and the mysteries of the mission of Jesus, as the Burmese of the Buddha. This the latter can only do, if they are enabled to progress along their own lines. It is, therefore, a matter of the keenest joy to me that there is a wonderful awakening in Burma. There is no doubt that the Burmese, if they persist in their effort, can solve their simple problem much more quickly than we can with diversity of bewildering complications.

#### IN AMBALA

The Punjab is truly working wonders. The Sikh must take and they fully deserve, the credit for producing the non-violent atmosphere. Their pertinacity, their amazing sacrifice at Nankana Sahib,<sup>1</sup> the imprisonment of their best leaders and the Government's complete surrender, have filled the Punjab with pride and hope and the spirit of sacrifice and non-violence. The reader will not, therefore, be surprised to read the following from Lala Duni Chand of Ambala:<sup>2</sup>

Lala Duni Chand has nursed Ambala for years. He had, before non-co-operation days, a very lucrative practice of which he used to devote the largest part to the many public works which he had initiated. He had, therefore, no difficulty in getting round him a band of self-sacrificing young men to work with him. He is now having them to go to jail without any difficulty. Swaraj is the visible immediate fruit of sacrifice. The citizens of Ambala are, therefore, feeling the advent of swaraj. The awakening among the women of the Punjab as elsewhere is an event whose value we are not at the present moment able to measure adequately. If the truth is to be told, it was Mrs. Duni Chand who paved the way for Lala Duni Chand's sacrifice. She it was who prepared him for it. Nor is Mrs. Duni Chand's the only instance. I have the privilege of knowing several sisters who are responsible for their husband's greatness.

<sup>1</sup> In February 1921; *vide* "Sikh Awakening", 13-3-1921.

<sup>2</sup> The letter not reproduced here, described the non-co-operation activities and arrests of volunteers in Ambala district.

#### IN ROHTAK

As in Ambala, so in Rohtak. The pages of *Young India* have made the public familiar with the sacrifice of Lala Sham Lal. Only his was undertaken in spite of his wife and parents. He had to battle against tremendous difficulties. But he bore them all. He has now the honour of being arrested in common with other friends. These men are the pride of their country. They are not fanatics. They are hard-headed business men who have given up their businesses at the call of country and religion. They are no breakers of peace. They are the keepers of it. And a government must be on the very verge of bankruptcy that finds it necessary to lock up such citizens.

#### IN AMRITSAR

Lala Girdhari Lal, President, District Congress Committee, Maulana Mahomed Daud Gaznavi, President, Khilafat Committee, Master Sunam Rai, President, City Congress Committee, and Sardar Ravell Singh, President, District Sikh League, were arrested and are now convicted because they had the audacity to arrange a public meeting in the teeth of the Seditious Meetings proclamation. Amritsar has already contributed a good number. Now all the presidents have been taken away. They have got two years' rigorous imprisonment each and Rs. 500 fine each, or three months more in default. They have all been taken to Mianwali Jail. The beauty of it is that no matter where you look, no Congress Committee is without its officers. The people have learnt that in a well-managed organization the officers live for ever, though individual holders of office may die, be imprisoned, or desert. The idea itself is really magnificent connoting as it does the unity of man and his estate.

#### IN LAHORE

The capital of the Punjab is doing no less. Lala Duni Chand of Lahore says in a letter dated 14th instant:<sup>1</sup>

Such work is bound to renovate the nation. It is little wonder, therefore, that the Punjab Government have threatened measures "more systematic and rigorous than any which have hitherto been adopted" in order to deal with civil disobedience. The notice in question says:

It will be impossible to allow any incitement to pass unnoticed, or to tolerate any dabbling in this form of mischief by Government servants or pensioners. It will, unfortunately, be necessary to add substantially to the

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here. The letter described the holding of a public meeting and women's activities for the propagation of khaddar.

burdens of the province by the entertainment of such additional police and executive staffs as may be necessary for the maintenance of order.

The notice argues:

Successful, it (civil disobedience) could only be an education of the criminally inclined among the population in methods which they would be naturally ready to put into practice against any kind of government, present or future; unsuccessful, it could only throw back the course of progress and establish well founded doubts of the political maturity of those who deliberately introduced so dangerous a poison into the veins<sup>1</sup> of their motherland.

The writer of the notice has overargued the Government case and thus overreached himself. The notice has merely resulted in stiffening the backs of the people. In the first place, civil disobedience is not and cannot be instilled into the minds of the criminally inclined people. The educated class, the women, and students are hardly criminally inclined. And even the peasantry cannot be classed among “the criminally inclined”. If the people had not learnt to be peaceful, they would not have stood the assaults and insults that Dr. Gokul Chand Narang and his fellow-commissioners have so graphically described in their able and closely reasoned report on the allegations of assaults<sup>2</sup> committed by the police on the 13th day of December 1921 in Lahore. Secondly, the civil disobedience is not aimed at all Government, present or future. It is aimed only at the present Government which has criminally defied the will of a whole people. Thirdly, why is it mischievous or poisonous to tell people not to obey a Government which has systematically emasculated the people? Are the people to continue to be party to humiliations imposed upon them by an irresponsible bureaucracy?

But let us look at Dr. Gokul Chand Narang’s report. In my opinion, it provides abundant justification for disciplined civil disobedience, if the people are to live as free men. The Committee has found that:

1. The volunteers were carrying on peaceful work.
2. The police “with long brass bound lathis” suddenly came down upon the volunteers and the public and belaboured them without warning.
3. The volunteers on refusing to disperse in spite of injuries received by them were arrested, discharged and rearrested and after a few hours’ detention about one o’clock at night were deliberately set

<sup>1</sup> The source has “views.”

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* “Notes”, 22-12-1921, under the sub-title, “Remarkable Proof”.



down at separate places far away from their homes.

4. The volunteers were filthily abused by the custodians.

How are the people to deal with such legalized criminality? Are they meekly to submit to it or are they as self-respecting men to disregard authority by disobeying orders? If the things Dr. Gokul Chand Narang has described happen in a city like Lahore, what must be the plight of poor villagers? If the newspaper reading public were not utterly ignorant of the village life and indifferent to the hardships of villagers, the fetish of law and order in whose name unspeakable horrors are perpetrated would have been destroyed long ago. The campaign of civil disobedience is designed to evolve true law and order which the public will consider it a privilege and a duty to obey.

#### IN BENGAL

Things are no better in Bengal. In the name of "law and order", meetings are being forcibly broken up. Pandit Ambika Prasad Bajpeyi, editor of *Swatantra*, Pandit L. N. Garde, editor of *Bharatmitra*, are the latest additions to the roll of honour. The trial of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is dragging its weary length. In the Barisal Jail, six political prisoners are reported to be consigned to solitary cells for alleged breach of discipline. They are said to have been ordered to be put into fetters. Naren Babu, President of the Perojpur Sub-Divisional Committee, complained that the prisoners were "pulled by the ears". Khan Bahadur Maulvi Nemayet-ud-din who visited the prisoners is reported by the *Patrika* to have said that the cell prisoners were likely to suffer mental derangement if they were not removed from the cells. No doubt, even this inhumanity is to be defended in the interest of "law and order". Well may even Sir Hormusji Wadia declaim against such "law and order".

Thank God, that in spite of the trials Bengal is passing through, Babu Hardayal Nag, the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and Vice-President of the Khilafat Committee, was able to issue the following manifesto:

I again congratulate the citizens of Calcutta on their calm and cool behaviour at the public meetings held yesterday. Civil disobedience is in its experimental stage. Its success entirely depends upon the success of non-violence. Naturally some crowds gathered. It is most satisfactory to note that the crowds never displayed any attitude of retaliation under the baton charge of the police. Our national workers calmly and fearlessly went on with the proceedings of the meetings in spite of police interference. As a matter of fact, there was no disturbance of any sort and non-violence triumphed once again in the public squares of Calcutta.

A Bengali friend writes to ask whether Bengal which has produced the fierce school of anarchists will keep non-violent to the end. Manifestos such as the above and the self-restraint of the people to which it refers do indeed fill me with hope. The anarchists were after all lovers of their country. They were sick unto death of the unmanliness with which not long ago we submitted to every wrong and insult. They were tired of the "policy of mendicancy". But the fiercest anarchist's breast must swell with pride when he sees round him the wonderful manifestation of unexampled courage that is being shown by men and women, young and old. "Mendicancy" has given place to dignified self-assertion and civil defiance of authority that has entrenched itself behind arrogant repression. No other method could possibly hasten the country's progress by an inch or a second. We want more, not less, of the spirit of non-violence to enable us to finish the struggle. And I am sure that if there is still any one with a belief in the necessity of violence for India's salvation, he cannot but be deeply stirred by the quiet courage Bengal is exhibiting today.

#### AN EMBARRASSING RELEASE

Babu Bhagwandas has been suddenly and unconditionally released long before his time. He has my sincere sympathies. I was hoping to inform the public that Babu Bhagwandas was making literary researches and was quite happy in his solitude. Naturally he feels the discrimination made ostensibly in his favour but really against him. As he says in a public letter, if he deserved to be discharged, many others did likewise. Of those arrested in Banaras, he was certainly the arch offender. He drafted the notice about hartal, he had it printed, he instigated Prof. Kripalani to hawk the notices. Why should the author of all this mischief be discharged before his time? Thus cogently argues Babu Bhagwandas. But I doubt not that he will have many opportunities of courting the attention of the authorities. If the forcible dispersals of public meetings in Bengal, Punjab and elsewhere be all index of the mind of the authorities, we have to go through much greater heat than we have as yet done. The treatment we are receiving is after the Turkish bath style. In order to make it bearable the Government are taking us through a graduated series of heated chambers.

#### THE POLICE CONFERENCE

The address delivered by Babu Purna Chandra Biswas, Deputy Superintendent of Police, as President of the All-India Police Conference held some time back in Calcutta, has not drawn the same amount of public attention as its importance deserves. Purna

Babu has lucidly stated the whole case for the police. There is no doubt about the unpopularity of the police in India, and the present outrageous acts of repression have probably added to it. But we must not forget that the police are mere instruments wielded by the Government. The President says:

Here in India, the laws are made by Government and the people are of opinion that the laws are made to rule them, to control their natural aspirations and not for their benefit. We maintain the dignity of these laws and enforce them. That is one reason why we are so very unpopular.

Again—

With the inauguration of the Reforms Scheme, the people have begun to realize that it is the laws that are unpopular and not the police, and that our only fault is that we are to carry out these unpopular laws.

The idea of ruling the people, of dominating them, of controlling the natural aspirations, as the President says, runs through the whole system of bureaucratic organization in India. And as that work is done more directly through the agency of the police, it is interesting to read the confession of a distinguished member of that service on the matter:

When I speak of our unpopularity, I cannot refrain from uttering, though unpleasant it may be, that our conduct rules and the attitude of our superiors rather accentuate our estrangement from the public. We cannot accentuate our arrangement from the public. We cannot freely mix with them, independently invoke their hearty co-operation and sympathy, for which there is the greatest need for our duties; if we do so, we are, on flimsiest pretexts, looked upon with suspicion by superiors, even penalized and our promotions are stopped. I ask, comrades, who are responsible for this? I can at once say, we have absolutely no fault except that we belong to this unpopular department, and it is our superior and conduct rules that widen this gulf.

But though the Government utilizes the Indian police in this way, does it treat them any the better on that account? The ban of racial inferiority sits upon them as tightly as upon the general mass of the people, as the long list of their grievances will show. It is producing restlessness in the service, indications of which are not wanting. The President thus cautiously expresses it:

What will be the effect, if the subordinate police refuse to obey the command of their superior officer for dispersing or firing on a riotous mob? You may laugh at the idea, I too know that such a thing is impossible or, at least, undesirable. But no one knows how things change. You must not forget that the people of the country are no longer afraid of jail, and this spirit has also been imbibed by the subordinate police.

Purna Babu had to pay for all this outspokenness. He was summoned before Sir Henry Wheeler and ordered abruptly to join

duty. But the delegates mildly demonstrated against the order and Purna Babu was triumphantly brought back from his train and taken in a procession to the Conference to finish the proceedings.

#### A CONTRADICTION

The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of Delhi has taken the trouble of controverting the allegations<sup>1</sup> made in *Young India* of the 5th instant about jail treatment. In so far as the reply controverts specific charges about the Delhi Jail, I remain unconvinced. In so far as it refutes general charges, it is irrelevant. One may safely presume that food in the Delhi Jail, as also clothing, are no better than in the other jails. We have the testimony of Messrs Santanam and Desai to support Lala Shankarlal as to the quality of food issued. The wearer alone knows where the shoe pinches. Lala Shankarlal has made no charge about flogging. The correspondent, who sent his allegations, does not mention flogging in the Delhi Jail. He had only heard of flogging in some jails. Well, it has been officially admitted so far as the Punjab and Bengal are concerned. So far as Allahabad is concerned, Mr. Mahadev Desai's serious allegations remain uncontradicted. Discharge of prisoners in a state almost of nudity in Banaras also remains unchallenged. The shocking disclosures made by Dr. Gokul Chand tell their own tale. In all these circumstances, the Delhi Chief Commissioner's report can carry no weight in India. Nothing will please me better than to be able to admit that all my informants were wrong, and that there was no inhumanity in the treatment of prisoners-in the Indian jails. Of the apologies, the written *Independent* is bringing out facts to show how they are extorted. Corroboratioin of a startling character comes from Bengal. And I am not prepared to disbelieve the charge brought by Lala Shankarlal about the Delhi Jail. Have not the Government stated that if the prisoners apologize they will be discharged? The days are gone of summary dismissal of charges, which are made after due sifting and with some sense of responsibility. No one in India will be perturbed or taken in by the language the Chief Commissioner has seen fit to use. He says, "The allegations contained in the article are couched in language so extravagant, that they are unlikely to convince the intelligent reader." This is what I venture to call riding a high horse. The officials will have to come down from their pedestal of seclusion and exclusion, and mix and think with the common folk, if they wish to become their servants and friends. The Chief Commissioner would have done better if he had said that whilst hardships were inevitable in the initial stages, the authorities were doing their best to isolate the

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment".

political prisoners and were giving them better treatment. This would have been a becoming and truthful statement. For, whether it is true of the Delhi Jail or not, I thankfully admit that in AGRA, for instance, things have considerably improved. A large number of political prisoners from different places have been concentrated there, and are being humanely treated. The question of larger humanity still remains. The usual offenders are equally entitled to clean, sufficient clothing, clean and sufficient food and decent sanitary accommodation ensuring privacy. All these were lacking when Mahadev Desai was treated as an ordinary prisoner. It is not much comfort to find that he and his companions are now treated well. It was a bad use the U.P. Government made of his generous nature to have published the certificate of good treatment he issued when he began to be specially treated. I abide by every word that I published in *Young India* (5th January) of the inhumanity of treatment on his admission to the Naini jail.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

### 5. FRAUGHT WITH DANGER

Jhajjar is a tahsil town in the Rohtak district with a population of about 11,000. It has got a municipality with 4 nominated and 8 elected members. The President is elected. Yet the Municipality was not sympathetic towards popular activities. Therefore, the local Congress workers, rightly or wrongly, issued a notice upon the Municipality without any permission from the District Congress Committee, that if it did not make itself popular within 15th to 22nd January, the Congress Committee would take possession of the Town Hall. The Municipality ignored this notice altogether. On the other hand, the local leading worker, Pandit Sri Ram, was charged under Section 107, and sent to prison for a year by the D.C. on the 15th January, the first day of the allotted period. The Pandit unveiled a portrait of the Lokamanya<sup>1</sup> in the Town Hall on that day, for which the D.C. had given previous permission upon an application from the Municipality. After Pandit Sri Ram's imprisonment, the President of the local Congress Committee and the volunteers took possession of the Town Hall on the 16th. A regular guard of volunteers was set up. The volunteers took possession also of the four gates of the town and disturbed the octroi arrangement. As soon as this news reached Rohtak, I started for Jhajjar, for Lala Shyamlal was not present there, having gone to Ferozepur-Jhirka to attend a Congress Committee meeting. The people are even bent on violence. I advised them at night to remain non-violent, which produced some effect. But an influential preacher of non-violence is necessary to convert them. On the 18th night, at 8 p.m., some respectable citizens of the town called together the Congress workers and Municipal Commissioners

<sup>1</sup> Bal Gangadhar Tilak

and tried to settle the matter amicably. All the elected members excepting the President, who was absent, and two nominated members of the Municipality, agreed to resign. And it was decided also that the Town Hall would be under the control of the Congress Committee. However, the matter will be finally settled at noon today. The volunteers are still guarding the premises. The people have proclaimed by *panchayati* a social boycott of the six witnesses who stood against Pandit Sri Ram, viz., the Tahsildar, *Thanedar*, *Lambardar*, and the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Municipal Committee. The Town Hall was erected with public subscription in memory of the late Queen Victoria. For some 5 or 6 years it remained uncared for, but now for the last ten years or so, the Municipality has taken charge of the building. If the settlement arrived at the conference of the 18th night is not observed, popular excitement will grow which may, I fear, ultimately lead to violence. The local leaders and volunteers are unbending. I am writing this at 10 a.m. on the 19th. Please guide us as to what to do by wire or by letter to the address at Rohtak.

Thus writes (the original is in Hindi) Lala Daulatram Gupta, acting President of Rohtak District Congress Committee. The action of the Congress workers in Jhajjar is audacious and inspiring. But it is fraught with the greatest danger. It has reached the border line of violence and indiscipline. I can fully appreciate the noble desire of the people to possess their own property. Municipalities are perhaps the greatest fraud palmed off upon India. The Government has hitherto used them for consolidating its power. But where the citizens are united, they can attain the municipal home rule in a moment. I have not yet described the quiet, orderly and evolutionary revolution that is going on in three big municipalities in the Bombay Presidency, viz., Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad. Of that, some other time. It is not as yet a completed picture. But Jhajjar will outpace the three municipalities, if it remains steady and absolutely non-violent. Possession of the Town Hall can be retained without any ado, if the citizens of the place are unanimous. It cannot be retained, if there is real opposition. Any outbreak of popular violence will be a crime of the first magnitude, because it would be wanton and unprovoked. India, in the language of Maulana Abul Kalam, is the greatest Gurdwara; it is the largest Town Hall. And if we have not yet succeeded in possessing it, we may wait for the occupation of the Town Hall of Jhajjar. The Congress officers must surrender it, (1) if there is the slightest fear of violence, (2) if the elected members oppose the act of occupation, (3) if the Committee at Rohtak, or failing that, the Committee at Lahore vetoes the occupation, (4) if the police demand it at the point of the bayonet, unless the occupiers are prepared to die at their post without retaliation or resentment, and if the other citizens are certain not to get excited, impatient and violent.

The occupation appears to me to be a hasty act, but if it can be

defended non-violently, the defect can be cured.

There is no harm in surrender. We shall gain strength by retracing every false or hasty step. What may have been taken wrongly, must be given up, and can be retaken by methodical work. In the case of Jhajjar, if the Town Hall has to be surrendered, it can be retaken by the elected members, who are in a majority, passing a resolution giving the use to the Congress Committee. If the elected members will not do so, the electors may, by a requisition, call upon the elected members to give effect to their views.

Social boycott of the witnesses who gave evidence against Pandit Sri Ram is clearly a mistake and will defeat its own end. We must not resort to social boycott of our opponents. It amounts to coercion. Claiming the right of free opinion and free action as we do, we must extend the same to others. The rule of majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority. We must patiently try to bring round the minority to our view by gentle persuasion and argument. Having been trained only to do things by order and under fear of punishment, we are likely, in the consciousness of strength we are daily acquiring, to repeat the mistakes of the rulers in an exaggerated form in our relations with those who may happen to be weaker than we are. That will be a worse state than the first.

I am aware that, by discussing Lala Daulatram Gupta's letter publicly, I am exposing the actors in the little drama in Jhajjar to misrepresentation and risk. The authorities can easily distort and exaggerate the facts related, as they are often prone to do. But as the matter is of great importance, and as the workers have exposed themselves to greater risks than I can possibly expose them to, I have felt it my duty publicly to discuss the pros and cons of the act of occupation which, though fraught with danger, commands one's admiration for its bravery. Non-co-operators have burnt their boats. They have no secrets. But correspondents who wish to write in confidence are welcome to do so. I shall respect their confidence. But as all my work is done in open daylight, and as my post passes through the hands of many helpers, I would like to discountenance confidential correspondence as much as possible. Though the Government, be it said to their credit, have generally not tampered with my correspondence, the correspondents must also note that like all correspondence mine is equally at their mercy.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

## 6. BEWARE OF OURSELVES

I gladly publish, though not without sorrow, a letter<sup>1</sup> from a Madras correspondent on the recent occurrences in that city. Evidently, the hooliganism was far more serious than described in the first impressions given by Dr. Rajan.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Rajagopalan is justified in blaming the non-co-operators.

It is difficult to distinguish between hooligans and non-co-operators when hundreds or thousands take part in smashing cars, swearing at innocent passengers or threatening a cinema-keeper. Non-co-operators cannot “have the cake and eat it too”. They claim to be millions. They claim to have almost the whole of India at their back. We must either regulate our procedure in accordance with our creed or dissociate ourselves entirely from all mass activity, even if it involves self-ostracism. We have still many hartals to go through. Let Delhi, Nagpur and other places beware. I would advise them not to have any hartals at all, if they cannot, with certainty, avoid the disgraceful scenes enacted in Bombay and unfortunately repeated in Madras. I hope that the Madras Congress Committee will sift the matter thoroughly and take all the blame that attaches to it. After the frightful experience of Bombay, Madras should have been fully insured against all risk of mob violence. Mr. Rajagopalan’s letter is fortified with another from an active non-co-operator. As he makes detailed charges giving names, I simply content myself with giving a few extracts. The writer says:

An eye-witness to the mad excesses of that day, I shall be false to my creed of non-violence if I do not deplore the hartal as a miserable failure. The racial bitterness of the Puliantope days has revived. You have probably read the bitter speeches of the “non-Brahmin” leaders in their confederation. At a time when you are straining your every nerve to bring the Moderates round to your point of view, we in Madras have succeeded in widening the gulf between

<sup>1</sup> The letter, from V. R. Rajagopalan of Presidency College, Madras, is not reproduced here. The following are some excerpts: “. . . The Madras non-co-operators behaved in such a way that all were shocked. They molested those who wanted to go and see the Prince. Trams were blocked and the inmates were pelted with stones . . . The few tram-cars which had the audacity to run . . . were stopped, glass panes were broken, footboards were smashed to pieces, and one was about to be set on fire . . . Some girl-guides and lady students who were going in tram-cars were spat at, were abused in the most violent and vile language, and were molested . . . Scouts were deprived of their turbans and were also pelted with stones . . .”

<sup>2</sup> Vide “Hooliganism in Madras”, 19-1-1922



us and the non-Brahmins on the one hand, and the Adi Dravidas on the other. The least that we can do by way of reparation is a frank confession of our weakness, and a religious endeavour from now to promote inter-communal unity, specially between the *Panchamas* and others.

I do not hesitate to criticize the Government for sparing neither man, woman nor child. But the Government have no creed of non-violence to fetter their discretion. Their creed is terrorism in the last resort. But non-co-operators have to be above suspicion. Madras leaves much to be desired if the two letters referred to by me at all tell a true story. I have little doubt that it is in the main true. The non-co-operators and their friends have certainly not left man, woman or child free from their unholy attention. It was a bad augury of swaraj to have interfered with women, to have molested the poor scout boys, and otherwise played havoc with the liberty of the people, no matter how provoking their participation in the welcome to the Prince was.

We have more to fear from ourselves than from the violence or mistakes of the Government. The latter, if we use them aright, do us good, as they have already. Our own violence or untruth will be veritable death for us. If we are not able to set our own house in order, we shall certainly destroy ourselves. Non-co-operation will be a byword of execration and reproach.

In this connection I cannot help noticing a cutting given to me from the *Rangoon Daily News*. It runs:

We are credibly informed that the wife of Nizamuddin, hackney carriage owner, East Rangoon, got a divorce from her husband on Thursday last on the ground that he disobeyed the *fatwa* in taking his *gharries* and persuading others to ply at the time of the Prince's visit.

I make bold to say that whoever granted the divorce (assuming the truth of the statement) grievously erred against the law of Islam and decency. Divorces are not so lightly granted in Islam. If hartals can be brought about by means such as the foregoing statement suggests, they can do no good whatsoever. They are no free expression of public opinion. But I am less concerned with the expedience of hartals than with the good name of Islam and non-co-operation. The law of non-co-operation demands perfect toleration and respect for the opposite opinion and action. The law of Islam, in so far as a non-Muslim can speak of it, requires equally strict toleration. Nothing could have so deeply hurt the Prophet as the intoleration of the people of Mecca during the early period of his ministry towards the new faith he was preaching. He could not possibly, therefore, at any time have been party to intolerance. "There

shall be no compulsion in religion” must have descended to him when some of his new converts were more zealous than wise in the preaching of the new faith.

Whether we are Hindus or Mussulmans or what, does not matter. The spirit of democracy which we want to spread through out India cannot be spread by violence whether verbal or physical, whether direct, indirect, or threatened.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

## 7. POLES ASUNDER

The debate in the Assembly and the Council of State affords the clearest possible justification for my distrust of the Government and, therefore, any round table conference at the present moment.<sup>1</sup> The Government supporters consider the Congress demands to be impossible and repression to be the only way possible to put down non-co-operation. If I believed the Congress demands to be impossible and the use of force to be justifiable for putting down the pursuit of impossible ideals, I should also vote with the Government. I have, therefore, no difficulty about understanding and even appreciating the attitude of the Government and its supporters

But I oppose the Government and thoroughly distrust it, because I so thoroughly understand its attitude. India can never attain freedom by going along the route the Government will take her.

Let us see.

Why is the Khilafat demand impossible? All that the Congress asks in effect is that the Government of India and the Imperial Government, if they wish to retain the people’s co-operation, should work with them in getting the demands fulfilled. They should, therefore, perform that part of the obligation which rests with them, and vigorously prosecute the rest as if it was their own grievance. What will the Imperial Government do if France were to attempt to deprive England of Dover, and India were secretly to help France or openly to

<sup>1</sup> The following are excerpts from the report of this debate in India in 1921-22: “ . . . The Delhi session of the Indian Legislature began in the middle of January . . . Among the most dramatic debates of the session was that initiated in the Legislative Assembly on Mr. Iswar Saran’s motion for the immediate abandonment of the so-called “repressive” policy of Government. . . On the Government side, Sir William Vincent and Dr. Sapru made convincing and forceful speeches . . . Both the original motion and various amendments to it were decisively negatived. The Council of State endorsed the Assembly’s approval of the policy of the Executive by rejecting a motion for a session of the two Houses to settle the lines of a round table conference . . .’

show indifference or hostility to England's struggle to retain Dover? Can Indians be expected to sit idle when the Khilafat is vivisected?

What is impossible about the Punjab demand? Why do they talk about the legalities of the case? If they will take care of the moralities, legalities will take care of themselves. As a boy, I learnt a legal maxim that where there is a conflict between Law and Equity, the latter should prevail. It is not with me a copy-book maxim. But I am told it is immoral to ask for the deprivation of a pension, which is but deferred pay. Why has Sardar Gauhar Singh been deprived of his "deferred pay" and why are the other pensioners threatened if they should take part in the present agitation? Does a servant who vilifies his employer receive pay or pension? Have Sir Michael O'Dwyer or General Dyer ever admitted their "error of judgment"? Why should the children of the murdered men of Jallianwala Bagh, or the men who were brutally flogged or made to crawl, although they had done no wrong, pay those who were responsible for these barbarities? I do not know a single principle of ethics, save that of might, that can justify the continuation of pensions to servants who are unrepentant. The viewpoints of the two parties are so different that what appears to be just and moral to the one, appears unjust and immoral to the other. I venture to claim that in asking for the stoppage of pensions, the Congress is just without being vindictive. It waives prosecution of impeachment. It waives penalties. It merely refuses still further to participate in the wrong by continuing to give pensions. The truth is that the Government still considers the two offenders to be distinguished servants of the Crown. *That* attitude has to be changed before a repetition of the Punjab becomes impossible.

As with the Punjab so with swaraj. It appears to the Government impossible to return to India what is hers. Reforms by instalments is the motto. The underlying idea is not to give anything unless it is absolutely necessary. The differences are so great that I dread to think of swaraj before the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are put away. They seem so simple in the statement. But they are as difficult as swaraj because their redress means obedience to India's will.

This is all cold logic. There is nothing impossible about the demands. The impossibility consists in the unwillingness of the power holders to part with the power that should never have been theirs

Why should there be repression at all if only the Government will do their duty? Assume that violence is a certainty if mass civil disobedience is precipitated. Are the people to be balked of their rights for fear of violence? It does not strike the cooperators that they uphold injustice and add insult to it, when they accuse

civil resisters of precipitating a crisis. The Government are deliberately inviting a crisis. They are precipitating violence by removing everyone who has any influence over the people and who can keep them non-violent. Co-operators do not see that the action of the Government is like that of a man who refuses to give food to a hungry man and then threatens to shoot him whilst he is attempting to help himself.

In the midst of an enervating atmosphere such as ours, the duty before non-co-operators is clear. They must keep exemplary patience. They must not be goaded into precipitate action. They must refuse battle where they are not ready. It is no business of the Government to keep us non-violent or to help us to remain so. Even their method of restraining violence is exasperatingly violent. In one respect, however, we must feel thankful to them, for their protest and criticism amount to nothing but this, that we I do not know how to practise our creed and that we are incompetent to inflict successful violence, even if we would. Let us admit both these arguments. We must be true to our creed. Then it is common cause that the Government must lay down arms. And let those who do not believe in the creed at least see that *India is neither ready nor willing to meet violence with violence*. I wish those who believe in the necessity of violence for India's freedom will realize the truth of my position. They must not think that because *they* are ready and willing to do violence, India is likewise ready or willing. I claim that India is unready, *not* because she is helpless but because she is unwilling. Therefore, non-violence is unexpectedly succeeding, whereas violence, in spite of the vaunted talk of human nature, would have failed. India's past training for ages, I mean the training of the masses, has been against violence. Human nature in India has advanced so far that the doctrine of non-violence is more natural for the people, at large than that of violence. Let us also remember that the experiences of Bombay and Madras prove my proposition. If the people of India were violent by nature, there *was* enough in Bombay and Madras to give rise to an unquenchable conflagration. A little violence, like dirt, is enough to disturb or soil a peaceful or clean surface, but either being a foreign addition is soon removed. To train India for violence and thus to wrest swaraj by violence is a work of ages. I verily believe that this wonderful manifestation of energy and national consciousness is purely and simply due to the advent of non-violence. People have come to their own. Let no hasty action arrest its progress.

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## 8. NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

The idea of non-payment of taxes is in the air. The Andhras have made us more familiar with the cry than any other part of India. Whilst the Congress has given provincial autonomy to every province, I have ventured to warn the provinces against embarking upon a non-payment campaign till I had tried the experiment myself in some area under my own supervision.<sup>1</sup> I abide by that warning. I must also draw attention to the fact that we are not to start offensive civil disobedience till the 31st instant, or if it is sooner, till the Malaviya Conference Committee knows the result of its negotiations and knows that the proposed Round Table Conference is not to come off. Therefore, any suspension of taxes at the present moment can only be regarded as temporary holding back pending the result of the negotiations carried on by that Committee. But 31st January will be soon upon us. And it is necessary to consider the question of nonpayment of taxes in all its bearings.

On this subject a friend who is in deep sympathy with the national movement, and who is a fairly accurate student of it, thus expresses his apprehensions:

I have often thought to what extent the non-violent non-co-operation movement transgresses the religious limits, when it embarks on civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. I look upon the non-violent non-co-operation as essentially a spiritual movement. I know Mr. Gandhi does not think it otherwise. Will not the programme of the non-payment of taxes transgress the religious limit and lead to violence and bring into the movement people who are not as yet saturated with the principle of non-violence? Is not Mr. Gandhi holding out, however unconsciously, a material bait for his spiritual movement by which he means to conquer the Government? Recent events have shown that the temper of violence and the belief in violence are not eliminated from our character in the mass. And, therefore, it would be a leap in the dark fraught with disastrous consequences to carry out the programme of civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. I am, therefore, most anxious that Mr. Gandhi should not begin civil disobedience in this form as yet.

The validity of the objection lies in the statement that the non-payment campaign will bring into the movement people who are not as yet saturated with the principle of non-violence. This is very true, and because it is true, non-payment does “hold out a material

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Letter to K. Venkatappayya”, 17-1-1922.

bait". It follows, therefore, that we must not resort to non-payment because of the possibility of a ready response. The readiness is a fatal temptation. Such non-payment will not be civil or non-violent, but it will be criminal or fraught with the greatest possibility of violence. Let us remember the experience of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when the peasants, after they had taken the pledge of non-violence, told him that if he advised them to do violence, they would be certainly ready to do so. Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of civil non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation (which can only be temporary) of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes. They must be told what happened in holy Palestine. The Arabs who were fined were surrounded by soldiers. Aeroplanes were hovering overhead. And the sturdy men were dispossessed of their cattle. The latter were impounded and left without fodder and even water. When the Arabs, stupefied and rendered helpless, brought the fine and additional penalty, as if to mock them, they had their dead and dying cattle returned to them. Worse things can and certainly will happen in India. Are the Indian peasantry prepared to remain absolutely non-violent, and see their cattle taken away from them to die of hunger and thirst? I know that such things have already happened in Andhra Desh<sup>1</sup>. If the peasantry in general knowingly and deliberately remain peaceful even in such trying circumstances, they are nearly ready for non-payment.

I say "nearly ready", for non-payment is intended to transfer the power from the bureaucracy into our hands. It is, therefore, not enough that the peasantry remain non-violent. Non-violence is certainly nine-tenths of the battle, but it is not all. The peasantry may remain non-violent, but may not treat the untouchables as their brethren; they may not regard Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, Parsis, as the case may be, their brethren; they may not have learnt the economic and the moral value of the charkha and the khaddar. If they have not, they cannot gain swaraj. They will not do all these things after swaraj, if they will not do them now. They must be taught to know that the practice of these national virtues means swaraj.

Thus civil non-payment of taxes is a privilege capable of being exercised only after rigorous training. And even a *civil* disobedience is difficult in the case of a habitual offender against the laws of the

<sup>1</sup> Andhra Province

State, so is Civil non-payment difficult for those who have hitherto been in the habit of withholding payment of taxes on the slightest pretext. Civil non-payment of taxes is indeed the last stage in non-co-operation. We must not resort to it till we have tried the other forms of civil disobedience. And it will be the height of unwisdom to experiment with non-payment in large or many areas in the beginning stages.

I hear the talk even of refusing payment of rent to zemindars. It must not be forgotten that we are not non-co-operating with zemindars, whether Indian or foreign. We are engaged in a fight with one big zemindar—the bureaucracy—which has made of us and the zemindars themselves serfs. We must try to bring round the zemindars to our side, and isolate the big zemindar. But if they will not come to us, we must be patient with them. We may not even proclaim a social boycott against them. That is to say, we may not refuse social service such as dhobi, barber, etc., to them. In areas under permanent settlement, therefore, there can be no non-payment campaign except in respect of cesses that might be payable directly to the Government. But the mention of zemindars merely shows the difficulties that beset us in the pursuit of no-tax campaign. All things considered, therefore, it is my deliberate opinion that the no-tax movement for the objects of the Congress should be for the time being left to me; meanwhile, workers can develop their own districts along constructive lines. They can discover various other methods of offering mass civil disobedience, and then, as the people become purified and enlightened, lead them on to non-payment.

As for the Andhras, where preparations on an intensive scale have already been made, I do not wish to damp the ardour of the worker. If they are satisfied that the people in the selected areas fulfil all the tests laid down at Delhi, and that they are capable of endless suffering without retaliation, I have nothing to say but to pronounce “God bless the brave Andhras”. They must know the responsibility will be entirely theirs for any mishap that may occur. They will not be blamed by anybody if they do not take up the no-tax movement.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

## 9. *TERRORISM RUN MAD*

I am giving the following summary of accounts<sup>1</sup> of repression gathered from various sources. In everyone of the cases, the reports are from the most responsible men one could think of. And yet some of the indecent savagery described by my correspondents seems almost to be unbelievable. But anything is possible in this land of affliction. I ask the reader to remain unmoved like me and rejoice with me in these sufferings. I invite every reader to pray with me that God will keep His promise not to try us beyond endurance and will always arm us with courage and patience to bear lightly the sufferings it may please Him to send us to. Nothing happens without His will. Let us keep to the pledge of non-violence and refrain from anger or ill will towards those that persecute us. Let us not also give *unnecessary* cause for irritation to the authorities. The irritation that comes from our lawful conduct such as refusal to shout *Sarkar ek hai*, or in abject fashion to bring our open palms together in the presence ever of the mightiest, as has happened to Jairamdas, we must give ever at the point of death.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

## 10. *HINDUS AND MOPLAHS*

Though the letters on the Moplah trouble and the Mussulman attitude by Messrs Keshav Menon and others have already appeared in the Press, contrary to my wont I publish the two communications<sup>2</sup> for

<sup>1</sup> Published in *Young India*, under following titles: "Desecration in Assam", "Inhumanity in Barisal", "Flogging in Sultanpur", "The Wail of Meerut", "Lawless Law in Chittoor" and "Filth at Narsinghpur Conference".

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here. The following are some excerpts from these:

"The resolution passed by the Khilafat Conference at Ahmedabad about the Moplahs of Malabar, and the telegram . . . by Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib . . . published in the Servant of Calcutta on 20th December, compel one to doubt if the Mohammedans or even Hindus outside Malabar have any correct knowledge of the happenings in this unhappy district. . . one would have expected a kind word from our Mohammedan friends for the unfortunate Hindu victims of the Moplah atrocities.... the Khilafat Conference, while congratulating the Moplahs for the sacrifices of their lives in the cause of their religion, has not a word of condemnation for the atrocities committed by them on the Hindus . . . a true satyagrahi has no option but to proclaim the truth . . . Truth is infinitely of more paramount importance than Hindu-Muslim



the importance that attaches to them. Possibly the fact of their publication in the pages of *Young India* will be some balm for the wounds that the Moplah madness has inflicted on the Hindu heart. The writers were entitled to give vent to their pent up feelings.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani is one of our most courageous men. He is strong and unbending. He is frank to a fault. In his insensate hatred of the English Government and possibly even of Englishmen in general, he has seen nothing wrong in anything that the Moplahs have done. Everything is fair in love and war with the Maulana. He has made up his mind that the Moplahs have fought for their religion. And that fact (in his estimation) practically absolves the Moplahs from all blame. That is no doubt a travesty of religion and morality. But to do irreligion for the sake of religion is the religious creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani. I know it has no warrant in Islam. I have talked to several learned Mussulmans. They do not defend Hasrat Mohani's attitude.

I advise my Malabar friends not to mind the Maulana. In spite of his amazingly crude views about religion, there is no greater nationalist nor a greater lover of Hindu-Muslim unity than the Maulana. His heart is sound and superior to his intellect, which, in my humble opinion, has suffered aberration.

The Malabar friends are wrong in thinking that the Mussulmans in general have not condemned or have in any way approved of the various crimes committed by the Moplahs. Islam protects, even in war, women, children and old men from molestation. Islam does not justify jihad except under well-defined conditions. So far as I know the law of Islam, the Moplahs could not, on their own initiative, declare jihad. Maulana Abdul Bari has certainly condemned the Moplah excesses.

But what though the Mussulmans did not condemn them? Hindu-Muslim friendship is not a bargain. The very word friendship

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unity or swaraj . . . atrocities committed by the Moplahs on the Hindus are unfortunately too true . . . A few prominent Mussulman leaders, it is true, have condemned the Moplahs atrocities . . . But, how far have the Mussulmans in general, exerted to undo the wrongs committed by their co-religionists in Malabar?"

" . . . Maulana Mohani justifies the looting of Hindus by Moplahs as lawful by way of commandeering in a war between the latter and the Government . . . Maulana perhaps does not know that . . . There was no adversary to the Moplahs at the time whom the Hindus could possibly have helped or invited, and the attack on them was most wanton and unprovoked. . . Maulana justifies the other barbarities committed by the rebels on the ground that they were more by way of retaliation on the Hindus who were suspected to have invited the military or aided them.... Does not the Maulana realize that such opinions emanating from him are bound to have disastrous consequences?"

excludes any such idea. If we have acquired the national habit, the Moplah is every whit a countryman as a Hindu. Hindus may not attach greater weight to Moplah fanaticism than to Hindu fanaticism. If instead of the Moplahs, Hindus had violated Hindu homes in Malabar, against whom would the complaint be lodged? Hindus have to find out a remedy against such occurrences, as much as the Mussulmans. When a Hindu or a Mussulman does evil, it is evil done by an Indian to an Indian, and each one of us must personally share the blame and try to remove the evil. There is no other meaning to unity than this. Nationalism is nothing, if it is not at least this. Nationalism is greater than sectarianism. And in that sense we are Indians first and Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians after.

Whilst, therefore, we may regret Maulana Hasrat Mohani's attitude on the Moplah question, we must not blame the Mussulmans as a whole, nor must we blame the Maulana as a Mussulman. We should deplore the fact that one Indian does not see the obvious wrong that our other brethren have done. There is no unity, if we must continuously look at things communally.

Critics may say, "All this is sheer nonsense, because it is so inconsistent with facts. It is visionary." But my contention is that we shall never achieve solidarity unless new facts are *made* to suit the principle, instead of performing the impossible feat of changing the principle to suit existing facts. I see nothing impossible in Hindus, as Indians, trying to wean the Moplahs, as Indians, from their error. I see nothing impossible in asking the Hindus to develop courage and strength to die before accepting forced conversion. I was delighted to be told that there were Hindus who did prefer the Moplah hatchet to forced conversion. If these have died without anger or malice, they have died as truest Hindus because they were truest among Indians and men. And thus would these men have died even if their persecutors had been Hindus instead of Mussulmans. Hindu-Muslim unity will be a very cheap and tawdry affair, if it has to depend upon mere reciprocation. Is a husband's loyalty dependent upon the wife's, or may a wife be faithless because the husband is a rake? Marriage will be a sordid thing when the partners treat their conduct as a matter of exchange, pure and simple. Unity is like marriage. It is more necessary for a husband to draw closer to his wife when she is about to fall. Then is the time for a double outpouring of love. Even so is it more necessary for a Hindu to love the Moplah and the Mussulman more, when the latter is likely to injure him or has already injured him. Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking. It must be an indissoluble tie.

And I hold that what I have put before the country in the

foregoing lines is . simple selfish idea. Does a Hindu love his religion and country more than himself? If he does, it follows that he must not quarrel with an ignorant Mussulman who neither knows country nor religion. The process is like that of the world-famed woman who professed to give up her child to her rival instead of dividing it with the latter—a performance that would have suited the latter admirably.

Let us assume (which is not the fact) that the Mussulmans really approve of all that the Moplahs have done. Is the compact, then, to be dissolved? And when it is dissolved, will the Hindus be any better off for the dissolution? Will they revenge themselves upon the Moplahs by getting foreign assistance to destroy them and their fellow Mussulmans, and be content to be for ever slaves ?

Non-co-operation is a universal doctrine, because it is as applicable to family relations as to any other. It is a process of evolving strength and self-reliance. Both the Hindus and Mussulmans must learn to stand alone and against the whole world, before they become really united. This unity is not to be between weak parties, but between men who are conscious of their strength. It will be an evil day for Mussulmans if, where they are in a minority, they have to depend for the observance of their religion upon Hindu goodwill and *vice versa*. Non-co-operation is a process of self-realization.

But this self-realization is impossible; if the strong become brutes and tread upon the weak. Then, they must be trodden under by the stronger. Hence, if Hindus and Mussulmans really wish to live as men of religion, they must develop strength from within. They must be both strong and humble. Hindus must find out the causes of Moplah fanaticism. They will find that they are not without blame. They have hitherto not cared for the Moplah. They have either treated him as a serf or dreaded him. They have not treated him as a friend and neighbour, to be reformed and respected. It is no use now becoming angry with the Moplahs or the Mussulmans in general. Whilst Hindus have a right to expect Mussulman aid and sympathy, the problem is essentially one of self-help, i.e., development of strength from within. It would be a sad day for Islam if the defence of the Khilafat was to depend upon Hindu help. Hindu help is at the disposal of the Mussulmans, because it is the duty of the Hindus, as neighbours, to give it. And whilst Mussulmans accept help so ungrudgingly given, their final reliance is and must be upon God. He is the never-failing and sole Help of the helpless. And so let it be with the Hindus of Malabar.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

## 11. REPRESSION IN ANDHRA

By the time this is in print, probably all eyes will be turned towards Andhra Desh. Its plucky people are preparing to offer mass civil disobedience in certain tahsils and are consequently deferring payment of tax for the time being. I have warned the Andhra Committee that if the Round Table Conference comes off, those who are deferring payment of taxes due will have immediately to pay them and that they should prepare for the difficult fight only if the people are thoroughly disciplined for nonviolence and are otherwise able to conform to the conditions named by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Venkatappayya, however, informs me that the people are disciplined and ready and that they can fulfil the conditions laid down. The Government of Madras are evidently seized with nervous fear over these suspensions. They are drafting additional police to Guntur and making demonstrations. They are suspending the operation of the ordinary method of tax collection and have threatened to adopt a summary procedure. They are reported even to be arming themselves with extraordinary powers. In those circumstances, I offer no apology for presenting the readers of *Young India* with the following report<sup>2</sup> of repression received from the Secretary of the Provincial Committee. The report covers the period between 3rd January to 15th January. The report enables the reader to understand the inwardness of the movement and the measure of sacrifice the Andhra people are preparing for. May God give them courage, powers of endurance and wisdom to do the right thing at the right time.

*Young India*, 26-1-1922

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to K. Venkatappayya", 17-1-1922, and "Telegram to K. Venkatappayya and Others", Before 20-1-1922.

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here

## 12. SPEECH AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, AHMEDABAD<sup>1</sup>

January 26, 1922

I am going today to Bardoli for the preparation of successfully carrying out the programme of civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes. I shall be back here in a week, maybe a month, or a year, or perhaps I may not return at all. But one thing is certain: we shall either win swaraj for India or we shall die. India is slowly getting to be a holy land, aye, a purified country. When truth is on our side, is defeat ever possible? There is salvation or *moksha* today. [Lay] down your life gladly for truth. If some-body asked me, “Where is Brahman<sup>2</sup>, what is it like?” then I shall change this query and say, “Where is truth or satya, what is it like”? Truth is Brahman. Everybody after getting up early in the morning should pray to God at least for a minute: “Oh! Almighty God! Give me strength to die for my religion, to die for the whole world”. There is no salvation in death when dying, there is salvation in death when dying willingly, when dying gladly. Remember what Shri Krishna told Arjuna about the *Sthitaprajna*<sup>3</sup> in the second chapter of the Gita. Try to live like that. There is pleasure and happiness in living, if God gives us strength to die willingly and gladly while suffering innumerable ! hardships and tyrannies. God has given me strength to die for my country and for my religion.

There is a sort of contentment in self-denial. Last night I was reading a book by Prof. Vaswani<sup>4</sup>. When writing about self-denial he has given the instance of Rana Pratap Singh<sup>5</sup>. His thoughts are very beautiful. The self-denial of Pratap was very great. After the fall of Chittor and when he found it impossible to recapture it, what was the promise that he exacted from his loyal standards? That was the promise of self-denial on their part: “Until Chittor secures its

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji’s comments on this report, *vide* “Notes”, 9-2-1922, under the sub-title “Too Sacred for Publication”

<sup>2</sup> The Absolute

<sup>3</sup> The man of steady intellect

<sup>4</sup> T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); sage from Sind, author and founder of the Mira educational institutions, Poona

<sup>5</sup> Of Mewar, who fought bravely against the Moghul power in India for many years and never submitted to it

independence, we-shall not enjoy any luxuries, we shall sleep on mother earth, we shall eat only roots and nuts, we shall give up all earthly happiness and practise complete self-denial". That was their resolve. I call Rana Pratap Singh a *Sthitaprajna*. Let everyone practise self-denial and be a *Sthitaprajna*.

*The Hindu*, 2-2-1922

### 13. NORTH-SOUTH

From the discussions about a settlement which took place in the two Houses of the Central Legislature, we can see that our position and that of the Government are as far apart as the North Pole and the South. This is precisely why I have said that negotiations with the Government at this juncture are useless. The Government is still power-drunk. It still hopes to suppress [the movement] with the power of its guns. It has no faith in the strength of our convictions or in our capacity for sacrifice. And, as long as the Government hopes to suppress us, even if it agrees to negotiate with us for a settlement, it will be in the manner of a master negotiating with his servant.

The supporters of the Government say that our demand is so absurd that it cannot possibly be conceded. Calling something impossible<sup>1</sup> does not make it impossible. Or, rather, in one case, the thing may be impossible for want of inclination and in another for lack of ability.

The Government has never been able to explain what is impossible in the demand about the Khilafat. Its impossibility lies wholly in the Government's guilty intention, its unwillingness to grant the demand. What is there impossible in the British vacating Arabia? What impossibility or obstacle can there be in returning its territory to Turkey? If the British people cannot tolerate this, then India will have to consider whether she should not sever the British connection completely. The Government's unwillingness to satisfy the Khilafat demand certainly cannot be advanced as a valid argument.

The same is true about the Punjab issue. Which demand of ours about the Punjab is impossible for the Government to concede? As regards pension, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Sir Michael O'Dwyer were on the same footing as officers. Yet the Government did not consult

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Appendix "Extracts from Sir Sankaran Nair's Letter", 17-1-1922.

anyone when stopping Maulana Shaukat Ali's pension, while it cannot bring itself to stop the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. The reason is not far to seek. Those whom the Government believes to be good men and pillars of its rule, we regard as enemies. It does not wish to forget the past services of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, while in our opinion these services are of no value at all, and the thought of their disloyalty to India shown in the Punjab in 1919 is even today painful to us.

This is also true about the demand for swaraj. We want swaraj today, whereas the Government asks us to wait till we are fit for it.

Thus, there is a great gulf between us on every issue. There is no possibility of its disappearing till we are fully tested. If, therefore, a conference for a settlement is held before the two sides have come to see eye to eye, one may welcome it, but let no one hope for a happy outcome.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 29-1-1922

#### *14. ENROLMENT OF VOLUNTEERS*

It is observed that the work of enrolling volunteers is not going on as vigorously as it ought to be. The Provincial Congress Committee office does not overflow with candidates wishing to be enrolled as volunteers, as its ticket-counter was raided during the Congress Week. There used to be, such a demand for tickets for admission to the meetings of the Subjects Committee that the President and the Secretary went almost crazy. Whom should they oblige and whom not? Why should not enrolment of volunteers, too, proceed with the same speed?

Some say that if the condition regarding khadi is omitted, enrolment will be faster. Personally, I do not believe that it will be so. No one who wishes to enrol himself as a volunteer will object to khadi. It can never be that a volunteer who offers to take a pledge to be ready to die will hesitate to wear khadi or that he will not buy khadi worth Rs. 5 or Rs. 10, if necessary. A man will even borrow this amount and become a volunteer. Do not some men incur debts in order to indulge their addictions? Why, then, should it not become an addiction with us to go and enrol ourselves as volunteers?

Some say that, if the pledge about untouchability is omitted, a large number will come forward to be enrolled. This, too, is

notcorrect. There is, I believe, little question here of expense or inconvenience; the main thing required is a change of heart. We cannot enter the heaven of swaraj, leaving the untouchables behind. This objection, however, merely illustrates the saying: "Unwilling to dance, one finds fault with the courtyard."

Moreover, neither I nor even the Working Committee has the power to grant exemptions from conditions. The resolution was passed by the Congress and can be modified by it alone. And I for one regard the very idea of getting it modified as cowardice.

Again, every condition included in the pledge is a matter of principle. How can anyone alter principles? The exemption provided for at the Delhi session relates to the condition of wearing hand-woven cloth produced in one's own district. The Working Committee can permit a district in the Punjab which cannot itself produce woollen cloth, to import cloth of hand-spun wool from another district or province. But can anyone grant exemption in the matter of untouchability or non-violence or in regard to the question of unity among Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others? Those who really want to enrol themselves as volunteers and are eager to go to jail can observe all the conditions easily.

Hence, if we get the names of only a few volunteers in Gujarat, I shall merely conclude that more persons do not want to register their names, or that most people do not like the manner in which the movement is being carried on.

But it is far better that people should not register their names because of lack of faith in the conditions in the pledge than that they should ignore those conditions and register. Only those who are prepared to fulfil *in toto* the conditions of the pledge should register their names, no matter if their number is small. A few sincere people may by and by become many. But it will certainly not benefit us ultimately to have a large number of volunteers who have enrolled themselves half-heartedly. It is the duty of a workman, when a building is under construction, to take regular measurements and check whether it is coming up according to plan.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 29-1-1922

## 15. GOVERNMENT'S CIVILITY

There is advantage in seeing the virtues even of an enemy. There certainly is goodness in it. But a complacent person who believes that the enemy can have no virtue will invite defeat.



The Government knows that there is the possibility of a real struggle in Bardoli. The Collector, therefore, has issued an “explanation”, which is interesting. The Government could have called it a “notification”, instead of giving it the civilized title of “explanation”. It has, however, chosen to offer an “explanation” to the people. There cannot be greater civility even in the bulletin of the Provincial Congress Committee than is to be found in this “explanation”. The very arguments advanced are those which a non-co-operator would use.

The explanation is signed by “H. B. Shivdasani”. He is, of course, one of us. It should not be surprising if he has issued such a courteous explanation on his own initiative. Indian officers would not be doing anything extraordinary if, though servants of the Government, they learn to be civil.

If, however, the language of the explanation has been chosen by an English officer, and deliberately, I regard the fact as an important change and as an auspicious beginning for our struggle. It is not a small thing that both the parties can fight, standing firm on their ground and yet with courtesy and without ceasing to be civilized. We would like such a fight to go on for ever. Our poets showed their culture in their descriptions of even the battles between Rama and Ravana. They have depicted Mandodari<sup>1</sup> as a virtuous wife. After Meghnada’s<sup>2</sup> death, Ramachandra gave all facilities desired by Sulochana<sup>3</sup>. Valmiki<sup>4</sup>, the father of poets, as also the devotional poet Tulsidas<sup>5</sup>, have unreservedly praised the *tapascharya* of Ravana and others.

It is my ambition that we should fight such a civilized war. No other manner of fighting will become a non-co-operator. Incivility is a kind of violence. As long as we, who profess to be under the pledge of non-violence, remain bound by that pledge, we are positively obliged to maintain civility, both Hindus and Muslims. And if one side maintains civility up to the end, it is certain ultimately to influence the other party. I feel inclined to see the beginning of such civility in this explanation. The Government is welcome to take possession of our fields or shoot us in a civilized manner.

After this preface, I give the “explanation” below:<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ravana’s wife

<sup>2</sup> Ravanass soil

<sup>3</sup> Meghnada’s wife

<sup>4</sup> Author of the first *Ramayana*

<sup>5</sup> Author of the *Ramacharitamanasa* in Hindi

<sup>6</sup> Not reproduced here

While welcoming this explanation, I merely wish to say that not a single *Patidar* of the Bardoli taluka has been kept in the dark. All men and women have been told that the Government

1. can sell the entire-crop,
2. can give away for a song a crop worth lakhs,
3. can remove even cattle, and household utensils,
4. can confiscate even *Inami* lands,
5. can imprison people,
6. can cut off railway, telegraphic and postal communications, surround the Bardoli taluka, and try to wear out the people by blockading them thus. The people may fight only if they can bear all these hardships.

Further, the people of Bardoli have also been told that, if on the whole they remain firm in their determination, adhere to truth, preserve complete peace, shed all fear, remain united among themselves, keep up complete non-co-operation, maintain friendly relations with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and do not regard them as untouchables, adopt complete swadeshi and wear only hand-spun, hand-woven cloth and spin and weave the required cloth in Bardoli itself, then not even a hair of theirs will be touched and they will not only get back their confiscated lands but will also end others' sufferings and, themselves becoming free, play a big part in liberating the whole country.

In this struggle, there is no place for hypocrisy, outward show and falsehood, and nothing should be kept hidden. All should fight with their own strength or rely on God. People should, therefore, take every step after careful consideration. The cultivators of the Bardoli taluka are thoughtful men. I believe that they are prepared to suffer anything and to be ruined for the sake of their country, and that is why I pay them compliments everyday.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 29-1-1922

## 16. USUAL PRACTICE

### NEW YEAR FOR CONGRESS

Congressmen ought to realize that those who wish to keep the Congress alive should pay up the annual tax. If everyone not not pay even four annas, then the Congress cannot meet this year. The organization will pass under the control of those who pay this sum. Just as the strength of the Congress is in its voluneers, so also is it in its

four-anna members. What counts is not the four annas but the membership. I am afraid that a crore of members were not enrolled on the Congress register last year. Whether or not this number was enrolled, if the Congress is a living organization and if the people have come to take interest in it in the course of one year, then this time more people should come forward to get themselves enrolled. The greater the number of members, the greater the strength of the Congress.

Moreover, this year young persons of the age of 18 also can get themselves enrolled. Both men and women are entitled to do so. I earnestly hope that no man or woman who has attained the age of 18, to whom swaraj is dear and who wishes to secure swaraj through non-violence and truth, will fail to get his or her name enrolled at the taluka or the village Congress office. If people have genuine enthusiasm and feeling for the Congress, it should not at all be necessary to engage volunteers for this work. By paying the small sum of four annas, people declare their faith in the Congress.

#### CONGRESS FUNDS

When people get their names registered in this way, the Congress of course gets some money from the fee collected. But the principal benefit of the money so received goes to the respective taluka [Congress] committee. The Congress plainly needs money for other expenditure. Let us take the instance of Gujarat itself. It may be said that a good amount was collected in Gujarat last year. We spent all that we had collected. It was of course necessary to do so, and this was exactly what was expected. There have to be fresh collections for the new year. Certainly, money is required for activities such as swadeshi, uplift of the *Antyajias*<sup>1</sup>, education, etc. If we do not again collect money this year, our work cannot proceed. I hope, therefore, that those who wish to encourage the activities of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee will themselves send in their own contributions. Anyone who desires may earmark his contribution, that is to say, he can send it to be credited to any specific account which he chooses. I hope that those readers of *Navajivan* who wish to contribute will send as much as they can. The contributions of those who send them through *Navajivan* will be acknowledged in the paper. I must remind everyone that the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has published a statement of accounts regarding every pie. The expenditure incurred has been only as sanctioned by the sub-committees of the [G.P.C.] Committee. The best justification of the money spent are

<sup>1</sup>A backward Hindu Community, traditionally looked upon as untouchables, later described by Gandhiji as Harijans, God's folk

the Vidyapith, the schools affiliated to it and the Swadeshi Department with its branches, in which the entire collection has been invested. The days when people's money was spent over foreign newspapers and in such other ways are gone. If we wish to support the two big activities, the Vidyapith and swadeshi, we have no choice but to collect funds.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 29-1-1922

## 17. MY NOTES

AHMEDABAD, NADIAD AND SURAT

The fight of these municipalities is developing very well. The way it is developing holds a lesson for the country. If the citizens of these three cities extend full support to their representatives, they will be able to demonstrate what local self-government is. It is easy to develop local self-government into national self-government. The means for securing both are the same. The effect of both is also the same. For winning local self-government, residents of the particular area have to make sacrifices, while for national self-government all the people in the country have to do so. Who can stop these three municipalities from becoming absolutely independent? Instead of people paying taxes to the municipalities set up by the Government, there is nothing illegal in their paying them only to representatives freely elected by them, nor need they fight anyone in doing so. Power, then, will of itself fall into their hands. There will be the same representatives, the same building, the same employees and the same laws even (if you choose); all you have to do is not to recognize the Government's authority. This is called peaceful revolution or new birth. The people have merely to examine their hearts. The way in which the municipalities have functioned till now only shows that, really speaking, the people have taken no interest in their work. All sorts of men got into them in the name of the people and served only themselves or the Government. I do not mean that the people did not benefit at all from such municipalities. They have got street lights, their latrines are kept clean, and they have also received medical facilities. Yet the people have not come to feel that the municipalities are their own. The people of Ahmedabad never came to look upon the Municipality's income as their own, as they do the *mahajans*<sup>1</sup>. The members hardly took interest in its meetings. Now in all the three cities they have started attending meetings and taking keen interest in

<sup>1</sup> Traditional repres native bodies looking after the affairs of a community or a professional or business group

the proceedings. They have not acquired full self-confidence as yet, else they would be masters of the entire administration. The only difference is that today, if the people do not pay taxes, action can be taken against them while, after the control of the Government has disappeared, they may pay only if they choose. Only taxes paid in this way are paid voluntarily.

We are no strangers to such a tradition. Till recently, we used to pay our community levies with pleasure. We pay the *mahajans'* taxes first. Only, there was no political awakening till now; people did not take interest in that field. Unlike now, men of affairs of all communities did not take up such work. When all communities start taking interest in it, swaraj will be a certainty, without our making the slightest effort for it. There is oppression only when a few desire to rule the many. This is a general rule. The many do not have to coerce a few, or the subtle violence implicit in the very fact of a majority suffices for the purpose. India is the only country in which the mass of the people, though they have become conscious, regard themselves as weak.

Is there anything which these municipalities cannot do? Are we not capable of looking after the lighting of our cities, their streets, latrines, homes for the disabled, etc.? Who kept the latrines of Khadi Nagar clean? Who built the township, planned roads in it, set up catering arrangements, provided for medical attendance and guarded the huts at night? Who controlled all that traffic there? Reckon up in terms of time, work and the number of men, and you will get the measure of swaraj achieved. We ourselves assume, without reason, that we lack ability. Can anyone else point out a remedy?

I earnestly hope that the residents of the three cities will take the utmost interest in the work of the municipalities, encourage their representatives and emerge victorious in the unnecessary dispute with the cities which the Government has started, and thus win their freedom.

#### OUR PROTECTION

Since we want to be independent of the protection afforded by the Government's power, we have necessarily to think out how we might ensure our protection. So far, the Government's police, its military, its guns and swords protected us. Who will do so when the Government leaves? Who will protect us from the danger of robbers and dacoits? So long as such questions are asked, we are fit neither for swaraj nor do we deserve to be called men.

Why cannot we protect our cities and villages right now? The seven-and-a-half lakh villages of India ask no such questions. They

are not protected by the Government. Villages manage to protect themselves and those which are unable to do so get robbed even today. Even the Government has not protected villages, no one can protect them, against internal disorders. They ought to be ready to protect themselves or train themselves for the purpose.

From every town and village, persons should come forward as volunteers whose job it would be to protect the people and who would do night-patrolling. In this matter, too, no one can restrain us. Only, the people themselves need to get ready for this work.

It requires not arms but courage. One who is awake is in less danger of being robbed. Obviously, all cannot keep awake day and night, and hence some should be ready to do night-patrolling. Lights and patrolling, these two, are enough to keep cities safe.

In addition to this, we should also take other steps for reforming people. We should seek out thieves and, instead of punishing them, try to educate them. Once we have met a thief personally, he will not probably dare to commit thefts again. Those for whom stealing is a profession are likely to give trouble, but the effect of the general purification is sure to be felt by them too. It is for sadhus to reinforce this. If they become true sadhus, they will certainly attach the utmost importance to this work. Sadhus should mix among members of communities which regard robbery, dacoity, etc., as their profession and should rescue them from their evil ways. They should persuade them to take up other work. The point is that we should regard even these people as brothers instead of as enemies, and serve them. The habit of stealing is also a kind of disease. Presuming that, being a psychological disease, it is more difficult to treat, we have not undertaken its diagnosis and treatment. We treat a person who has indigestion or fever, or is sick. Why, then, do we not treat one who steals, prevaricates or deceives, as if he were ill? Why do we not seek a remedy other than sending him to jail? Why do we not punish one who is ill in body, instead of treating him with medicine? Personally, I believe that both deserve compassion or both merit punishment.

But, in our indolence, we have stopped thinking and so we assume that the rule, "Jaggery for one and oil-cake for another"<sup>1</sup>, is an immutable law. When we have come forward to win swaraj for India through non-violent non-co-operation, we shall indeed have to seek remedies for even robbery, and other like dangers through peaceful methods, and such remedies are certainly possible.

The Government too teaches us this. Since it punishes, it also

<sup>1</sup> A Gujarati saying

enlists, to some extent, the help of institutions like the Salvation Army for reforming communities which are given to robbery and other evil ways. We are in a better position than the Government to undertake this task; for we have the whole class of sadhus and fakirs for the purpose. If its members cultivate the qualities of true sadhus and fakirs, they can be of the utmost help in this work. Let no one think that organized efforts are necessary for this purpose. Inhabitants of every village or town in which national awakening has taken place should, without waiting for a lead from others, make arrangements for their protection and undertake the work of reforming [the thieves]. If this is satisfactorily done even at a few places, the practice will spread to other villages.

#### AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S BLESSINGS

An Englishwoman writes from Calcutta:<sup>1</sup>

I naturally feel embarrassed in publishing this letter. It contains compliments to me. But I hope that I have no vanity in me. I can see my weaknesses. However, I have unshakable faith in God and His power and mercy. I am merely clay in the hands of the Great Potter. My duty, therefore, is to offer up that praise to Him. For me, the only meaning of this lady's blessings is that they may strengthen me.

My aim, however, in publishing this letter is that it may inspire sincere non-co-operators to remain firm on the path of non-violence and to dissuade those among them who are misguided from taking to the path of violence. I believe that our non-violence is sure to produce others the effect which it has had on these Englishwomen<sup>2</sup>.

But, then, hatred must be eliminated from our struggle. This has its source in love, not hatred or anger. We wish to turn even enemies into friends. I am sure that if we work without hatred, even stony hearts will be melted by our capacity to suffer. The cause of the delay lies in our own deficiencies. If we continue to suffer with a calm mind, we shall gain complete victory in a very short time.

But we did wrong things in Madras, as also in Bombay. Our minds are not free from anger. Even now our non-violence is not that of the strong, it is only a sign of our weakness. If we recognize our numerical strength, we shall become watchful. As Maulana Mahomed Ali says, thirty crores need not fear one lakh. If they do, the fault must

<sup>1</sup> For the letter, not reproduced here, *vide* "Notes", 26-1-1922, under the sub-title "An English Lady Blesses".

<sup>2</sup> The correspondent and another Englishwoman whom she had mentioned in her letter and who had written earlier in the same strain. Her letter was published in *Young India* of 12-1-1922.

be theirs. When they have shed fear, they will have swaraj in their hands. Moreover, if thirty crores seek to gain their object by threatening a lakh, there will be no greater sinners than they. We can, therefore, show even our manliness only by suffering.

Even if only a handful of us Indians have awakened and the rest are slumbering, we should not have recourse to violence. In that case, we should know that our task is to awaken the slumbering.

Thus, from whatever point of view we consider our position, we shall see that we have to work in a spirit of non-violence and love. As things are, however, on the one hand we wish to go to jail and, on the other, seek to intimidate courts by our shouting. I still receive complaints that at some places, when a non-co-operator's case is being heard, people fill the court-room to capacity. No wonder, then, if courts change their venue and sit in jail.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 29-1-1922

## 18. AWAKENING IN A ANDHRADESHA

*January 29, 1922*

To the date of writing, the following two telegrams<sup>1</sup> have been received at the *Young India* office from the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee:

1. The Andhra Provincial Congress Working Committee met yesterday at Guntur. . Several ryots from different parts of the district. . also attended the meeting. . . A graphic description was given how many male adults, including very aged men, enlisted themselves as volunteers in each one of the 50 villages in the neighbourhood of Pedarandipadu and how everyone, fully clad in khaddar, has been serving and observing strict non-violence in spite of provocation sometimes given by the military drafted there, the attachments of movables and high-handed removal of carts and bulls even without a show of restraint. They have also stated that in almost all villages, all the village officers. . . have resigned their appointments. Accounts of resignations of village officers in other areas also were given. The Working Committee after prolonged deliberation as a measure of special caution adopted the following resolution: "This Committee is of opinion that the Guntur District Congress Committee should, instead of carrying on the campaign of non-payment of taxes in several talukas simultaneously as previously resolved by them, limit the area and appoint a committee to investigate as to how far the Delhi conditions are satisfied in the said area and resolve on the question of final

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here



refusal of taxes in accordance with the opinion of the said committee.”

2. Guntur Congress Committee met day before yesterday. . .for the purpose of considering, amongst other things, the resolution of the Working Committee of the Provincial Congress Committee of the 25th on the question of non-payment of taxes. . . Leading ryots from different talukas in the district and some Congress workers also attended the meeting. Having been invited to explain the situation in their respective talukas and *fircas*, representative ryots gave accounts of the progress of the movement among the people. Most of them showed their determination to carry on the campaign in spite of all difficulties, while some expressed that some of the conditions of the Delhi resolution had not been fully satisfied in the *fircas* to which they belonged, and that there was need for further preparation in the matter of untouchability, and in one or two even in respect of non-violence. Mr. Prakasam<sup>1</sup> addressed the meeting dwelling at some length on the responsibility of the step taken up by the people of the District. He quoted and explained the letter of Mahatmaji regarding non-payment of taxes published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 26th<sup>2</sup>. Mr. Venkatappayya stated that the necessity for conveying this arose out of the letter addressed to him by Mahatmaji and subsequent correspondence with him. Delhi resolution referred to areas where intensive preparations had been made....

The following is the Associated Press message about the Government preparations:

In regard to the state of affairs in Guntur where civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes campaign and resignation of village officers are in operation, Madras Government propose to undertake emergency legislation in the direction of amending Madras Revenue Recovery Act (2 of 1864) mainly to do away with intervening period allowed under the present Act between distraint and attachment of property and to bring at once to sale effects of ryot who refuses to pay his dues. Other steps will also be taken by Government on the executive side, such as institution of disobeying area [*sic*] subject to such exemptions as may be ordered by the Government in favour of persons who shall, by date to be prescribed, have paid into Government treasury or to officer appointed for the purpose taxes due from them. Where land is bought in by Government owing to combination to prevent bidding, opportunity will be taken to provide land for members of depressed classes. With regard to resignations of village officers, the Government say they cannot be accepted under the circumstances and if officers refuse to carry on duties, they must be dismissed.

<sup>1</sup> T.Prakasam (1876-1957); editor, *Swarajya*; was called “Andhra Kesari,”—Lion of Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras

<sup>2</sup> Evidently a slip for “23rd”; *vide* “Letter to K Venkatappayya”, 17-1-1922, published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-1-1922.

In my opinion, the Government has the right to take precautionary measures of the kind foreshadowed. It has the right to suspend ordinary legislation when it is threatened with combined suspension of its revenue. That a wise Government would not exasperate public opinion into refusal to pay taxes is, of course, true. But a Government that rides roughshod over popular opinion, cannot be expected to allow itself to be extinguished without an effort. The least, therefore, it would do is to protect its revenue collection. Nor is it possible to cavil at the proposed transfer of confiscated property to the members of the depressed classes. Such an arrangement should suit both parties. Non-co-operators have undertaken to be non-violent, to risk the loss of their all for the purpose of gaining their end and must, therefore, allow their belongings to be sold. The Government, on the other hand, must try, if it can, to break the movement of non-payment and to apply all remedies just enough to secure collection. The proposal to allow the depressed classes to bid for and purchase forfeited lands is ideal. What can be better than that the forfeited lands should be temporarily occupied by the very classes whom we want to see raised from their depressed state?

I use the adverb “temporarily”, for the present occupiers must have faith in their mission to know that they must get swaraj and that under swaraj they must be restored to their original status with honour added thereto. The depressed classes, who are being used as pawns in the game by the Government, cannot be adversely affected by dispossession, for, it will be the primary care of the swaraj Government to see them well-settled! happy and contented.

So much for the necessary Government measures. The panic that has possessed them shows a guilty conscience. They do not rely upon their popularity to secure payment. They have to rely upon the bayonet and persecution to do so. They are arresting popular leaders and goading the people to violence so as to enable them to justify “bloody” measures.

And therein lies the test of the Andhras. They have hitherto proved their bravery and sacrifice. Their chosen leaders have gone to jail. Their cattle have been taken away from them and they have remained still. The worst, however, is yet to come. When the Government military [*sic*] is opened on them, they are expected to expose their willing breasts, not their unwilling backs, to the bullets and still not harbour revenge or resentment. They must let their utensils and belongings be taken away from them whilst, like Draupadi or Prahlad<sup>1</sup>, they are praying to God and proving their faith

<sup>1</sup> A devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father, the demon-king, Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi.

in Him.

Non-payment is a privilege. It is meant not to enrich the resisters, but by their voluntary poverty to enrich the nation. And they can exercise the privilege only if they have purified themselves, only if they are wearing hand-spun khaddar to the exclusion of foreign cloth and, if being Hindus, they have washed themselves clean of the taint of untouchability and are prepared to treat the untouchable as a privileged brother. They must not grudgingly touch him, but they must lovingly embrace him and serve him. The touch must be a token of true penitence even as we expect the Government to be truly penitent regarding the many wrongs done to us. No niggardly acceptance of the inevitable will appear pleasing to God. It must be a thorough change of heart. We must share our schools with them, we must share our public places with them. We must nurse them in their sickness as we would nurse a brother. We must not be their patrons. We must not twist religious texts against them. We must expunge texts that are of doubtful origin and are capable of interpretation against their human rights. We must gladly give up custom that is against reason, justice and religion of the heart. We must not ignorantly and superstitiously cling to bad custom and part with it when we must, like a miser parting with his ill-gotten hoard out of pressure and expediency.

I have dwelt at length upon untouchability because I have received wires and letters warning me against accepting assurances of compliance with the Congress condition about untouchability. They tell me that the Andhras are not ready to give up untouchability. I urge the leaders to be strictly on the watch. The slightest deviation from the right path will irreparably injure our cause. God requires the purest sacrifice. Hinduism is on its trial equally with Islam and Christianity. Hindus will be false representative of their religion of the Upanishads, which recognizes no privilege but that of merit and which accepts nothing that does not appeal to the heart and reason.

The Andhras are a virile people proud of their traditions. They are a devoutly religious people capable of sacrifice. Much is expected of them by the country and I have every hope that they will not be found wanting. They will lose nothing by waiting if they are not ready for exact fulfilment of all conditions. But they will lose all and ill-serve the country if they go to battle without full preparation.

*Young India*, 2-2-1922

## 19. SPEECH AT BARDOLI TALUKA CONFERENCE <sup>1</sup>

January 29, 1922

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is my third visit to Bardoli. The first time I came here, I merely inspected the preparations made by the brothers and sisters of this taluka. At that time, there was no responsibility on you or me. The second time<sup>2</sup> I came here, a great responsibility had fallen on both you and me, as the All-India Congress Committee had already passed its resolution on civil disobedience and Bardoli's preparedness was to be assessed in terms of that resolution and announced to the country. I certainly could not say that Bardoli was actually ready. I had returned after my last visit with the impression that Bardoli could get ready. I had toured the villages of the taluka, questioned people and gathered information. As a result of my inquiries, I could not say that the progress of the taluka in regard to swadeshi and untouchability was satisfactory.

If there are separate schools for the untouchables elsewhere, it may not matter, but here untouchability must positively be considered a sin. You cannot rest satisfied with having separate schools for *Antyajas*. It is your duty to persuade the *Antyajas* of those villages which have national schools to enrol their children in those schools and you should let them sit with your children. Before we pass today's resolution, such villages ought to agree to this. I have, however, learnt after coming here that they have not done so. During my last visit, I had gone to Wankaner town of this taluka; I saw at that time that the children of *Antyajas* did not attend the national schools. The workers of the place had at that time undertaken to remedy this deficiency. But, as the President said today, the *Antyaj* children in Wankaner have still not started attending the national schools. I know that this is not due to any aversion-towards *Antajas*, but only to the workers' negligence. If we want swaraj and justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab, then it is not enough that we feel no aversion; we cannot show negligence either.

The position about swadeshi is the same. Even in this matter, the brothers and sisters of Bardoli taluka have not done all they should have done. You are not yet in a position to produce all the khadi you

<sup>1</sup> Delivered while moving the resolution on civil disobedience

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Speech at Bardoli", 3-12-1921.

require for yourselves. You still do not have as many handlooms as you require for weaving the khadi you need. All the sisters of Bardoli have not yet taken a vow to spin daily for a minimum of two or three or four hours and produce yarn which is good and can be used in weaving, and to get it woven. Certainly more spinning-wheels are plying in Bardoli taluka today than fifteen days or a month ago and it is also true that more yarn is being produced, but this is not enough. If you want to get credit for securing swaraj for the whole of India, if you wish to save the honour of Bardoli, you will have to spin in your taluka more yarn, and of finer quality, than you are doing at present.

I believe that you do feel that the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis and the Christians are all brothers, though I know that all taint has not yet left the minds of the Hindus and the Muslims. The smaller communities still do not have a sense of security. The fear of Hindu-Muslim friendship has not disappeared from the minds of minorities like the Parsis, the Christians and others. Swaraj necessarily means the rule of the majority. If, however, a large mass of people get more power and misuse their increased power, that will not be swaraj, that will be oppression or tyranny. If that happens, the tyrants are sure to be destroyed. What is happening in the country today is quite the opposite of this. A handful of men are tyrannizing over crores. The tyranny of the English, however, is bearable. When a handful of Englishmen tyrannize over crores of Indians, then these crores also co-operate to make that tyranny possible. If we had power in our hands, I do not think that we, too, would not oppress small and weak communities exactly as the British oppress us.

If a handful of people want to rule over crores, they can either do so through terror or by oppression, or else they may live as fakirs and control things as well as they can. But to become such fakirs requires a philanthropic instinct and selflessness. In their absence, a few can impose their rule on the many only by resorting to wickedness.

The British Empire has at the present time fallen a prey to greed and avarice. It was greed which brought it here. The East India Company was drawn here by its greed. After coming here, it saw that trade could not be carried on without political power. It saw here mines of gold and silver, namely our bodies and the clothes thereon. To plunder that gold and silver, its Government stripped us naked. It removed our clothes by holding out temptations to us through tyranny and all manner of oppression.

They have taken possession of thousands of *bighas*<sup>1</sup> of land in

<sup>1</sup> A measure of land

Bengal, Champaran and Assam and raise crops<sup>1</sup> on them. But even there, the labour is entirely our people's. All trade is done either through intimidation or deceit. This Empire, thus, has been ruling over us by resorting to all the four methods *sama*, *dama*, *bheda* and *danda*.<sup>2</sup> But to blame it for this is a sign of unmanliness.

If, following in the footsteps of this Empire, 81,000 Hindus and Muslims, out of a population of 84,000 in Bardoli taluka, oppress the 3,000 Parsis, Christians and others, harass them, what will the world say about us? The world will call down curses on us as Krishna did on the tyrannical Yadavas<sup>3</sup>, and we shall perish.

If we have acquired confidence in our own strength, we do not need arms or guns for establishing *Ramarajya*; all that is needed is awakening and knowledge.

Surely, you do not believe that the Government rules over you by the power of its guns. In a population of 85,000 there are only a few officials who represent the Government. They rule you wholly with your consent, by skilfully winning your confidence. But the moment you feel that you do not want to live in subjection to those officials, that if they want to stay on they are welcome to remain as your servants, then the 85,000 of you will win your own freedom. I have come here in the hope that you will be able to do this. To win freedom, it is necessary neither to kill a single official nor to abuse any. All that you need to do is to tell them plainly that you do not wish to co-operate with them.

Lord Willingdon once said<sup>4</sup> in the course of a reply to a welcome address that no one in India could say "No", that everyone knows only how to say "Yes, Sir", "Yes, my lord". Now that we have learnt to say "No" as advised by him and declare that we do not want to co-operate with him, he has become angry. If your connection with us is to be preserved [we tell him], let it be civilized dealing, as between friends, based on mutual respect. If instead, you want to remain as our masters, then we do not want to co-operate with you. Such co-operation is no co-operation; what you desire is our slavery.

The key to success in our fight is unity. Hindu-Muslim unity itself means protection of Parsis and Christians, and it implies the corollary that we will not harass any Government official, but maintain

<sup>1</sup> Of jute, indigo and tea

<sup>2</sup> Conciliation, bribery, division, and punishment

<sup>3</sup> Lord Krishna's kinsmen. With the advent of the *Kaliyuga*, they were possessed by the spirit of evil and, after an orgy of drinking, fought among themselves and were all killed.

<sup>4</sup> Vide "Speech at Gurukul Anniversary - Meaning of Swadeshi", 20-3-1916.

proper relations with every one of them, treating him as a friend. Maintaining proper relations simply means that we do not insult an official, do not hate him, do not address him slightly but accord him the respect due to his position. We should tell him that we do not want to be enemies with him, but that we do not want his rule either. Apart from this, we may tell him, there is no quarrel between us. He cannot rule anyone in our town with a show of force. The official, too, must be convinced that he and his children can, without any fear, go into your villages any hour of the day or night and need not carry a pistol.

I have come here believing that you understand all this. If we do not sincerely practise such non-violence but are mere hypocrites, then I want to prophesy that we shall lose the game in no more than a month. If Hindu-Muslim unity is an outward show and if inwardly we harbour distrust of each other, the Muslims will think of asking for help from the Afghans, or the country may turn to Japan or may ultimately approach the British and ask them to carry on the Government. It would be far better that we die than find ourselves in such a plight. In such circumstances, the only thing for a person like me is *hijarat*, that is, leaving the country. It is not that *hijarat* is advised only in Islam. Tulsidas has said that one should run away from a place where sinners live. The wicked are also to be saluted, but from miles away. As long as we can, living in this country, chant the *mantra* of swaraj, there is dignity in our work. When, however, we find that we have no supporter left in the country we shall have a right to leave it.

Having regard to the condition of the country, we have only one way of saving ourselves—the way of non-violence.

I explain all these matters before proposing the resolution in order that no one from among you may raise his hand in support of it without understanding it. Swaraj cannot be won by raising one's hand. The only way in which we can get it is by sacrificing our lives, our property and possessions and bearing the loss of our household utensils and cattle.

If, till such time as all women have started spinning, the men do not take it up and they idle away their time, we are as good as dead: we are certainly ready to die, but we want to die purposefully and after purifying ourselves. For that, we should always carry a rosary in our hand, and the spinning-wheel is the only true rosary. This incantation should go on all the time in our hearts: "India is naked and I wish to clothe her." Those who spin at this time are doing God's work. If all of you men are ready to give one, two or three hours [daily] to the

spinning-wheel, if you are ready to carry on with a loin-cloth in case khadi made in Bardoli taluka is not available, then only may you support this resolution.

I was told this morning, in the course of a discussion with Shri Vithalbhai and some delegates, that Bardoli was not yet ready. This shows that we are not trying to deceive God. He can never be deceived. A human being can be deceived, but we do not deceive any; and we shall not deceive ourselves either. So I decided to announce Bardoli's preparedness only after 15 days. But I thought that I should meet the representatives of all the towns before drafting the resolution, in order that those who are ready may not be disappointed. Those who said that they were not ready were volunteers engaged in active work, and their reply showed their caution. Afterwards, we met the representatives and, from among all those who were there, the representatives of 25 villages said that they were quite ready that very day. I told them that they would have to admit *Antyaj* children to their schools the very next day, that the Gita did not mention five *varnas*<sup>1</sup>. I asked them if they were ready to assimilate this fifth *varna* to one of the original four. This simply means that we should treat the *Antyajas* in the same way in which we should treat the *Dublas*<sup>2</sup> and others. This equality of treatment is not to be brought about by subjecting the *Antyajas* also to the same sort of ill treatment to which you perhaps subject the *Dublas* and others. Just as we permit *Dubla* children to attend our schools and enter our homes so must we permit *Antyaj* children too; if the former can draw water from our wells, so should the *Antyajas*. What we do as a matter of duty, we should not do grudgingly; if any thing, we should adopt a liberal attitude. If there is anyone among those present here who thinks that he may mix with *Dheds* for the time being in order to make use of a madman like Gandhi, to him I say that he will be deceiving God, me and you all. If you have such hypocritical intentions, then rest assured that you will perish at the hands of the *Antyajas* themselves.

Do not conclude that I am a polluted person, a reformer. A rigidly orthodox Hindu, I believe that the Hindu Shastras have no place for untouchability of the type practised now. I certainly do not want to enter into a discussion about the Shastras. I am only placing before you the substance of the Shastras as I have understood them. This form of untouchability is a violation of dharma. Anyone who practises it will surely be called to account by the God of Death and he will have to suffer. Even a plea of ignorance will not save him. It is

<sup>1</sup> Divisions of society; the *Gita* mentions the traditional four in Chapter IV

<sup>2</sup> A backward community in South Gujarat



not stated anywhere in the Hindu Shastras or in the scriptures of other religions that one who sins in ignorance does not have to suffer the consequences. Only, such a person has to suffer a little less than another who sins deliberately, but suffer he must. Such is the inexorable law of karma. Do not think that, from the practical point of view, it would be wise today to mix with *Antyajas*. If you really believe that there is no dharma in doing so, then say it in so many words. That will not pain me. I will go elsewhere to beg and ask the people if they are ready to start civil disobedience on this condition. If no one comes forward, then I alone will offer civil disobedience.

It is necessary to explain clearly the condition of non-violence also. Muslims and some students of the *Gita* tell me that it is a religious duty to use the sword on some occasions. Lord Krishna himself urged Arjuna to battle. For me, however, non-violence is the highest dharma. I do not mind if you think of it as a practical necessity. But the removal of untouchability is an absolute duty. When I ask you to eradicate untouchability, I do not mean that you should eat and drink in the company of *Antyajas* or have marriage ties with them or drink water out of a jug used by one of them, without cleaning it. The Hindu religion does not compel anyone to use any article from which another has eaten. By this resolution, you bind yourselves to treat the *Antyajas* in the same way as you treat the Sudras. Raise your hands in support of this resolution only if you have understood this.

There is no doubt at all about your enthusiasm. It is because of your enthusiasm that you have been asking people to come here. But it is only when you get rid of untouchability and adopt swadeshithat I shall believe that you are ready to go to jail and to let your lands be auctioned, that you desire to liberate your country. Surely, anyone who sets out to free a big country like India must make correspondingly big sacrifices.

No one should believe that, since I shall be camping here, I shall save you. On the contrary, there is trouble wherever I go; the hearts of us all are in turmoil. I have not come to see that you live in peace, I have come to shake you out of it. There is no peace except through the sacrifice of peace. But the peace sacrificed is our own. When our hearts are in turmoil, when we have endured long and painfully in the fire of suffering, only then shall we get real peace.

Perhaps you believe that it will suffice if you go to jail; but jail-going by itself will not avail us. The Government will remove your crops. I am certainly going to advise you to commit legitimate theft.

The Government has ten heads and twenty arms.<sup>1</sup> When you decline to pay land revenue, the very next day the Government's mounted troops will be on the scene. We will not, then, fight with the soldiers. Let them take our Crops of cotton, grain or vegetables and anything else they can carry away with them. If, however, the Government leaves the crops standing, we will certainly remove them home. If this is regarded as theft, then let the Government punish us, even kill us. Mohanlal Pandya<sup>2</sup> stole onions thus on my advice and became famous as the onion-thief. But that was legitimate theft. The Government will seize your cattle. Do not abuse the man who may come to lead them away; instead, hand them over to him yourselves. Only if you behave thus will you be considered fit for withholding payment of land revenue. You will have to be ready to bear all this loss. If the Government can profit by seizing your property, it will mean that you will have to bear the loss of property worth ten lakhs rather than pay revenue of two lakhs.

Are you prepared for all this? If you are, I will propose the resolution. If anyone wants to ask a question or has not understood something, he should get his doubt resolved.

Q. We can bear it if our property is attached, but what should we do if the Government's men outrage the modesty of our wives and daughters?

A. We have lost our faith in ourselves and in mankind. Although I am in such a condition at present that even a fifteen-year-old boy can knock me down, my wife and I live together because I have the strength to protect her. I challenge any young man or even an Afghan to attempt any outrage on her. I have the strength to die and, as long as one has this strength, one need have no fear at all. You may ask what one should do if they bind one's hands and feet or point a pistol at one. The houses of many who had pistols with them have been robbed and their women have been outraged, their spick and span pistols [in working order] notwithstanding. One does not need a pistol to protect oneself, one needs only courage.<sup>3</sup>

1. As explained by me, do you regard promoting friendship of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis and the Christians as your sacred duty?

2. Those who believe that, looking to India's present condition,

<sup>1</sup> Like Ravana, in the *Ramayana*

<sup>2</sup> An active worker in Kheda satyagraha.

<sup>3</sup> At this point. Gandhiji waited for more questions to be asked. Then, to ascertain the representatives' preparedness, he put questions. According to the report in *Gujarati* weekly dated February 5, 1922, the audience expressed support by raising hands at the end of every question.

only one method, that of non-violence, can bring us swaraj and secure justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab, may raise their hands.

3 Those who believe that the country cannot reach her goal without adopting swadeshi and those brothers and sisters who have decided to give up the use of foreign or mill-made cloth, and have resolved that they will not use khadi made outside Bardoli taluka, may raise their hands.

4. Do you believe that the practice of untouchability is contrary to dharma? Further, are you ready to let *Antyaj* children sit with yours in national schools?

5. Without minding it if your crops, your cattle and property are seized and you are reduced to beggary, are you ready to lose your all and to go to jail—and all that without getting angry—for the sake of the country's honour?

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-2-1922

## 20. BARDOLI'S DECISION

*January 30, 1922*

Bardoli has come to a momentous decision. It has made its final and irrevocable choice. Vithalbhai Patel, the President, addressed a conference<sup>1</sup> of the representatives of the Taluka in a speech impressive for its warning. He certainly did not mince matters. There was an audience of khaddar-clad representatives numbering 4,000. There were five hundred women, a large majority of whom were also in khaddar. They were interested and interesting listeners. It was an audience of sober, responsible men and women with a stake.

I followed Vithalbhai and went through every one of the conditions of mass civil disobedience laid down by the Congress.<sup>2</sup> I took the sense of the meeting on every one of the conditions, separately. They understood the implications of Hindu-Muslim-Parsi-Christian unity. They realized the significance and the truth of non-violence. They saw what the removal of untouchability meant; they were prepared, not merely to take into national schools, but to induce untouchable children to join them; they have had no objection to the untouchable drawing water from the village wells. They knew that they were to nurse the untouchable sick as they would nurse their ailing neighbours. They knew that they could not exercise the

<sup>1</sup> Held on January 29, 1922

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the preceding item.

privilege of non-payment of revenue and other forms of civil disobedience until they had purified themselves in the manner described by me. They knew, too, that they had to become industrious and spin their own yarn and weave their own khaddar. And lastly, they were ready to face forfeiture of their movables, their cattle and their land. They were ready to face imprisonment and even death, if necessary, and they would do all this without resentment.

There was an old dissentient voice on the question of untouchability. He said, what I said was right in theory, but it was difficult in practice to break down the custom all of a sudden. I drove the point home but the audience had made up its mind.

Before the larger meeting I had met the real workers, about fifty in number. Before that meeting Vithalbhai Patel, some workers and I conferred together and felt that we would pass a resolution postponing the decision for about a fortnight, to make the swadeshi preparation more complete and removal of untouchability more certain, by actually having untouchable children in all the sixty national schools. The brave and earnest workers of Bardoli would not listen to the postponement. They were certain that more than 50 per cent of the Hindu population were quite ready about untouchability and they were sure of being able to manufacture enough khaddar for their future wants. They were bent on trying conclusions with the Government. They bore down every objection raised by Vithalbhai Patel, and Abbas Tyabji, with his hoary beard and ever smiling face, was there to utter the warning. But they would not budge an inch from their position and so the resolution<sup>1</sup> which I give below was unanimously passed:

After having fully understood and considered the conditions as essential for the starting of mass civil disobedience, this Conference of the inhabitants of the Bardoli Taluka resolves that this Taluka is fit for mass civil disobedience.

This Conference is of opinion:

(a) That for the redress of India's grievances, unity among Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis, Christians and other communities of India is absolutely necessary.

(b) That non-violence, patience and endurance are the only remedy for the redress of the said grievances.

(c) That the use of the spinning-wheel in every home and the adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven garments to the exclusion of all other cloth by every individual are indis-

<sup>1</sup> Originally framed in Gujarati

ensable for India's freedom.

(d) That swaraj is impossible without complete removal of untouchability by the Hindus.

(e) That for the people's progress and for the attainment of freedom, readiness to sacrifice movable and immovable property, to suffer imprisonment and, if necessary, to lay down one's life, is indispensable.

This Conference hopes that the Bardoli Taluka will have the privilege to be the first for the aforesaid sacrifices, and this Conference hereby respectfully informs the Working Committee that unless the Working Committee otherwise decides or unless the proposed Round Table Conference is held, this Taluka will immediately commence mass civil disobedience under the advice and guidance of Mr. Gandhi and the President of the Conference. This Conference recommends that those tax-payers of the Taluka who are ready and willing to abide by the conditions laid down by the Congress for mass civil disobedience, will refrain, till further instruction, from paying land revenue and other taxes due to the Government.

Who knows the issue? Who knows whether the men and women of Bardoli will stand the repression that the Government may resort to? God only knows. In His name has the battle been undertaken. He must finish it.

The Government have acted hitherto in a most exemplary manner. They might have prohibited the Conference. They did not. They know the workers. They would have removed them long ago. They have not done so. They have not interfered with any of the activities of the people. They have permitted them to make all preparations. I have watched their conduct with wonder and admiration. Both sides have up to the time of writing behaved in a manner worthy of chivalrous warriors of old. In this battle of peace, it ought not to be otherwise. If the battle continues in this fashion, it will end only in one way. Whoever has the ear of 85,000 men and women of Bardoli will gain the day.

The Working Committee has to sit and pass its judgment upon Bardoli's decision. The Viceroy has still choice and will have yet another choice given to him. No charge of hurry, want of preparation or thoughts, no charge of discourtesy will it be possible to bring

against the people of Bardoli.

Therefore,

Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,

Lead Thou me on;

The night is dark, and I am far from home;

Lead Thou me on.

*Young India*, 2-2-1922

## 21. TO THE PATELS OF BARDOLI

BARDOLI,

*January 30, 1922*

The Taluka Parishad had committed itself to a very serious and solemn duty and has taken a grave responsibility upon its shoulders. We trust that in this sacred work of regenerating the country, the *Patels*<sup>1</sup> of Bardoli will do their duty to the utmost. Many of them have expressed their readiness to give up their posts. We hope that from now on every Patel will look upon himself no longer as a *Patel* in the service of the Government but as a *Patel* in the service of the community. We, therefore, expect that their letters of resignation will be placed in our hands without delay.

We have not yet lost hope that the Government will repent of its sins and purify itself and so we do not propose to forward the letters of resignation immediately to the Government. But the moment civil disobedience is announced, we intend to forward them. Meanwhile, we should go ahead with preparations as if we had decided to start civil disobedience immediately. We expect, therefore, that every *Patel* will hand over his letter of resignation to us without delay.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

VITHALBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-2-1922

<sup>1</sup> Village headmen who help in the collection of Government dues from tic cultivators

## 22. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SURAT<sup>1</sup>

*January 31, 1922*

Dr. Choithram<sup>2</sup> has told you that there is a possibility of the Government arresting me in about ten days and hence you expressed a desire to meet me. But I must say that now I have no desire at all to go to jail. I would rather be killed by a bullet, or die by hanging. And I also wish that many other Gujaratis should ask for a similar death. For some time past, I have been praying to God for this very thing—that He may give me death at the hands of this Government.

I cannot hear the reports or bear the thought of the sufferings of our people in different parts of the country. Some have their belongings seized and some are flogged. The Government disperses meetings by force. How can we tolerate all this? Courting imprisonment is not the way to stop what is happening. The remedy lies in another Jallianwala Bagh and I wish that, if the Government's oppression does not stop immediately, we should have many repetitions of the Jallianwala Bagh in Gujarat.

But there should be one big difference. The people had collected in the Jallianwala Bagh for a holiday, they had no idea at all that they might be shot down. They had no such desire. Had they known that they might be shot down, perhaps no one would have even gone there. As for us, however, I wish that we should face the bullets willingly. Let some General Dyer stand before us with his troops. Let him start firing without warning us. It is my prayer to God that, if that happens, I should continue to talk to you cheerfully even at that time just as I am doing now and that you should all remain sitting calmly then, under a shower of bullets, as you are doing now. It would be a great thing for Gujarat if, at that time, your ears and backs were turned towards me but your chests and your eyes faced the direction from which the bullets came and you welcomed them. Gujarat has talked A lot, has passed enough resolutions; but, while almost the whole of the country has been suffering, we have had practically to suffer nothing. This does not mean, I know, that we have lagged behind others in

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji's account of the circumstances in which he delivered this speech, *vide* "My Speech at Surat", 5-2-1922.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Choithram Gidwani Congress leader from Sind; President, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later Member of Parliament

doing our duty. We are not in jail because the Bombay, Government will not arrest people. I hope this means that our lot is not just being imprisoned but being killed by bullets.

If we do not constantly wish that it be so, there is danger of our becoming self-conceited. We should, moreover, purify ourselves more and more every day while cherishing this desire. The mutual ill will among Hindus and Muslims must disappear. The two communities still fear and distrust each other and the Parsis and the Christians fear Hindus and Muslims. The citizens of Surat have done much, but they have a lot more to do yet. Here, too, the men and women continue to run after luxuries. The people are still disinclined to take up the spinning-wheel. They still love silk or fine cloth, foreign or mill-made cloth. Some are ready to wear a long shirt and cap of khadi, but find a dhoti of khadi too heavy to wear. Though our prejudice against the untouchables is waning, we are not yet ready to regard them as our blood-brothers. How many among us would be ready to suck out the poison if one of them was bitten by a snake? How many would offer to attend on any of them who might get fever just as we would serve our brother or sister, mother or father in such a condition?

Why should we blame the Government? If we must blame anyone, we should blame ourselves, reproach ourselves for not having improved, despite bitter experiences, and carried out the required degree of self-purification, for not having shown enough selflessness and made enough sacrifices. I often feel that we shall not be able to rid ourselves of our numerous evils and fears till we have shown in action that we can die in large numbers. As we have not suffered much till now, I pray for myself and for Gujarat that we may have to go through more suffering than what the other provinces have had to bear. Only the new Bharat that will be born as a result of that suffering will be a fit country to live in, and only with such strength can we help to heal the wounds in the hearts of our Muslim brethren. Through such suffering alone can we secure Justice for the Punjab and in such strength lies swaraj.

Let the Government, therefore, arrest me if it chooses to do so. One need not at all feel unhappy if it does, need not be disturbed or lose one's head. I actually hope that, when I am arrested, the weaknesses which still remain in us will disappear, that the register of volunteers will also get filled with your names, my brothers and sisters, and all of you will start wearing hand-woven khadi made from



hand-spun yarn and become absolutely fearless. The Surat Municipality has shown great courage. The citizens should give their representatives full support. It is not enough that you have made education independent [of Government control]. There is no danger of imprisonment or such other punishment in making the entire Municipality independent. All that is required is resourcefulness, self-confidence and mutual trust. We should ourselves clean our latrines and roads. We should ourselves look after the needs of the poor among us and attend on the sick; we should collect necessary funds for these purposes and see that they are properly managed.

In all this, where is the need for Government's help or for its laws? Unfortunately, we had no confidence in ourselves. The mahajans had become dishonest. The people, too, had become obdurate. This was to the advantage of the Government. If the citizens of Surat voluntarily pay to the mahajan such taxes as they themselves fix, and if the latter spends the money on the activities I have mentioned and maintains full and clear accounts, you will have in the *mahajan* an independent municipality. Today's municipality is but a caricature of the *mahajan*. To have the Government's municipality is to exchange dependence for independence.

I hope that the citizens of Surat will stand firm in their decision, that they will do much more than what they have done and thereby bring glory to their city, to Gujarat and to India.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 5-2-1922

### 23. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR <sup>1</sup>

*Tuesday Night [January 31, 1922]<sup>2</sup>*

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

You will see my letter<sup>3</sup> to the Viceroy. It is being posted to him tomorrow. I am going to delay publication till the 4th. That meets your requirement also. I do not think I could do more.

I hope you will find the letter to be unexceptionable. It gives the Viceroy more than he could possibly require. He need not call a round table conference. The more I think of it, the more clear it is to me that he cannot call the conference but he can easily adopt my suggestion, if he wishes so.

I am sending a copy to Malaviyaji.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Hindu*, 10-2-1922

### 24. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

*[January 31, 1922]<sup>4</sup>*

BHAISHRI SHANKARLAL,

Enclosed is a copy of the letter being sent to the Viceroy.<sup>5</sup> That letter will go to Delhi by tomorrow's post. It will be released to the Press on the 4th morning. Get some copies made and give one to Sir Stanley Reed on my behalf and another to Brelvi. It will be well to deliver both on the 3rd. Give the enclosed copy to Vithlbhai. If he has not reached office, show it to Jayakar. If he has, let him himself take the letter to Jayakar.

<sup>1</sup> Sent in reply to a letter dated January 30, 1922 from Jayakar and Natarajan, Secretaries of the Leaders' Conference which had met at Bombay on January 14 and 15. In this letter they had enclosed copies of their correspondence with the Viceroy who had turned down their proposals as a basis for a round table conference, and had asked Gandhiji to postpone his programme in Bardoli pending further communication in about three days' time.

<sup>2</sup> From Jayakar's *The Story of My Life*.

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

<sup>4</sup> From the contents it is evident that Gandhiji wrote the letter on this date; vide "Letter to M.R. Jayakar", 31-1-1922.

<sup>5</sup> Vide "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

I am leaving for Bardoli tomorrow morning. Send a telegram at Bardoli if you have anything to communicate. Unless I send another telegram, the letter should appear in the Press on the 4th. It will be good if you can get it translated into Gujarati under your supervision and give it for publication. If it is possible, I shall myself do it. There is still time for it.

Dayalji wishes that if you are not needed there for two or three days, you should do some work in Bardoli. But I think, Jayakar and others will want a lot of help from you there. But come if you can free yourself.

Today both Hakimji and Dr. Ansari came; so did Dr. Choithram and Chhotani Mian.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 32697

## 25. *LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM*

*[Before February 1, 1922]*<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

My heart goes out to you. I do not want to hurt you with a harsh word or a kind word harshly uttered. I want your week of silence to be a week of privilege. Do not think of helping Ba during the week. But use the wheel. It is a real companion. Study Hindi and think deep. Write what you like. Do not read much just now.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3201

<sup>1</sup> The silence mentioned in the text was presumably the first occasion when the addressee undertook to observe silence for a week which expired on or before February 1, 1922, for, on February 1 his second silence had begun; *vide* "Letter to V. A. Sundaram", 1-2-1922.

## 26. LETTER TO VICEROY<sup>1</sup>

[BARDOLI,  
February 1, 1922]<sup>2</sup>

TO  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY  
DELHI  
SIR,

Bardoli is a small tahsil in the Surat District in the Bombay Presidency, having a population of about 87,000 all told.

On the 29th ultimo it decided under the presidency of Mr. Vithalbhai Patel to embark on mass civil disobedience, having proved its fitness for it in terms of the resolution<sup>3</sup> of the All-India Congress Committee which met at Delhi during the first week of November last. But as I am perhaps chiefly responsible for Bardoli's decision, I owe it to your Excellency and the public to explain the situation under which the decision has been taken.

It was intended under the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, before referred to, to make Bardoli the first unit for mass civil disobedience in order to mark the national revolt against the Government for its consistently criminal refusal to appreciate India's resolve regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj.

Then followed the unfortunate and regrettable rioting on the 17th November last in Bombay, resulting in the postponement of the step contemplated by Bardoli.

Meanwhile repression of a virulent type has taken place with the concurrence of the Government of India in Bengal, Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab, the Province of Delhi and, in a way, in Bihar and Orissa and elsewhere. I know that you have objected to the use of the word "repression" for describing the action of the authorities in these provinces. In my opinion when action is taken which is in excess of the requirements of a situation, it is undoubtedly repression. The looting of property, assaults on innocent people, the brutal treatment of prisoners in the jails including flogging can in no sense be described as legal, civilized or in any way necessary. This official lawlessness cannot be described by any other term but lawless

<sup>1</sup> This was published in the newspapers on February 4, 1922, For the Government's reply *vide* Appendix "Government of India"Communique"on Gandhiji's Letter to Viceroy", 6-2-1922.

<sup>2</sup> From *India* in 1921-22

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

repression. Intimidation by non-co-operators or their sympathizers to a certain extent in connection with hartals and picketing may be admitted but in no case can it be held to justify the wholesale suppression of peaceful volunteering or equally peaceful public meetings under a distorted use of an extraordinary law which was passed in order to deal with activities which were manifestly violent both in intention and action, nor is it possible to designate as otherwise than repression, action taken against innocent people under what has appeared to many of us an illegal use of the ordinary law, nor again can the administrative interference with the liberty of the Press under a law that is under promise of repeal be regarded as anything but repression.

The immediate task before the country, therefore, is to rescue from paralysis freedom of speech, freedom of association and freedom of the Press. In the present mood of the Government of India and in the present unprepared state of the country in respect of complete control of the forces of violence, non-co-operators were unwilling to have anything to do with the Malaviya Conference whose object was to induce Your Excellency to convene a round table conference. But as I was anxious to avoid all avoidable suffering, I had no hesitation in advising the Working Committee of the Congress to accept the recommendations of that Conference.<sup>1</sup> Although in my opinion the terms were quite in keeping with your own requirements as I understood them through your Calcutta speech and otherwise, you have summarily rejected the proposal.

In the circumstances, there is nothing before the country but to adopt some non-violent method for the enforcement of its demands including the elementary rights of free speech, free association and free Press. In my humble opinion the recent events are a clear departure from the civilized policy laid down by Your Excellency at the time of the generous, manly and unconditional apology<sup>2</sup> of the Ali Brothers, viz., that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. Had the Government's policy remained neutral and allowed public opinion to ripen and have its full effect, it would have been possible to advise postponement of the adoption of civil disobedience of an aggressive type till the Congress had acquired fuller control over the forces of violence in the country and enforced greater discipline among the millions of its adherents. But this lawless repression (in a way unparalleled in the history of this

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolution", 7-1-1922.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Draft of Ali Brothers Apology", 30-5-1921.

unfortunate country) has made the immediate adoption of mass civil disobedience an imperative duty. The Working Committee of the Congress has restricted it to only certain areas to be selected by me from time to time, and at present it is confined only to Bardoli. I may, under said authority, give my consent at once in respect of a group of 100 villages in Guntur in the Madras Presidency, provided they can strictly conform to the conditions of non-violence, unity among different classes, the adoption and manufacture of hand-spun khadi and untouchability.

But before the people of Bardoli actually commence mass civil disobedience, I would respectfully urge you as the head of the Government of India, finally to revise your policy and set free all the non-co-operating prisoners who are convicted or under trial for non-violent activities and to declare in clear terms a policy of absolute non-interference with all non-violent activities in the country whether they be regarding the redress of the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs or swaraj or any other purpose and even though they fall under the repressive sections of the Penal Code or the Criminal Procedure Code or other repressive laws subject always to the condition of non-violence. I would further urge you to free the Press from all administrative control and to restore all the fines and forfeitures recently imposed. In thus urging I am asking Your Excellency to do what is being done today in every country which is deemed to be under civilized Government. If you can see your way to make the necessary declaration within seven days of the date of publication of this manifesto, I shall be prepared to advise postponement of civil disobedience of an aggressive character, till the imprisoned workers have, after their discharge, reviewed the whole situation and considered the position *de novo*. If the Government makes the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall therefore have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

*I remain,  
Your Excellency's faithful  
servant and friend,  
M. K. GANDHI*

*Young India*, 9-2-1922

## 27. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

BARDOLI,  
February 1 [1922]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad the silence has agreed with you and that you are again silent.

*Yours,*  
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3190

## 28. A NOTE

[Before February 2, 1922]<sup>2</sup>

. . . .<sup>3</sup> They were not willing to sit waiting for the Saheb. So these two workers, after waiting for almost five hours, sent a message: "We cannot wait any longer," and got up to leave. "Don't you know you are at the bungalow of the Agent Saheb? You will be regarded as prisoners." At last they were called in. Then a gust of wind blew in the form of heated arguments. "We are public workers, and so cannot obey your orders." "In what way are you public workers? You are a public nuisance", the Agent Saheb said heatedly. The workers were not wanting in repartee.

The meeting was held. The hunting must be stopped. The feelings of the Mahajans would be hurt if that did not happen. There should be a call for a strike. People must observe fast on the day of the hunt.

There was a strike, but both of them were arrested. They were released by the Governor's order. There is also the news that the Sardar's interview in connection with the hunting was cancelled. If it has been cancelled, I must congratulate the Governor Saheb.

For the Hindus, hunting is a matter that touches their sacred religion. My impression is that even Islam forbids hunting for mere enjoyment. There are many utterances in the Koran bearing on

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* letters to V. A. Sundaram dated Before February 1, 1922, and 3-2-1922.

<sup>2</sup> From "Notes", 2-2-1922 under the sub-title "Political Agencies", which has reference to Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Mehta's arrest in connection with the agitation against hunts arranged for British officials. This was obviously written before their arrest as Gandhiji says here that they should "go to jail" for it.

<sup>3</sup> The first page of the note is missing in the source.

kindness to living creatures. Be that as it may, how can the Hindus tolerate hunting for fun?

But Rajas have always indulged in the practice. Even Ramachandra went hunting. But who can say? It is like talking about untouchability. Who knows the history of how untouchability was practised when it was in vogue? Today it prevails in a ghastly, ruthless form and deserves only to be wiped out. Similarly, we do not know why Ramachandra went hunting and what its purpose was. But we do know the principle of the religion of kindness. What is opposed to it is opposed to the scriptures. Whatever was opposed to the public opinion was also, for the kings, opposed to the scriptures. Affected by the words of a mere washerman, Ramchandra abandoned Sita.

Hence, hunting can never be for pleasure. If there have to be games, let there be games of ball and stick, and so forth even for the king. But hunting is against religion. It would be creditable for a Kathiawadi if he adheres to this religious principle and fights for it. It is desirable that other things are not mixed with this religious struggle.

It would have been all right if the question had not been raised at all. But having been raised, it has got to be seen through to the end. But now the thing has been set aside.

The Agent has created a new issue. Who would put up with an order that people belonging to a particular region stay out of that region? Can those of Kathiawad leave within twenty-four hours? All this to what purpose? Those living in Kathiawad cannot thus go away. And now, Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Mehta should humbly convey to the Agent that they cannot abide by such an order. A person has a birthright to live where he is born. Kathiawadis have the birthright to reside in Kathiawad. We know that the ruling chiefs have fenced round their own little territories and are tossing around people born in the same soil. But for the Kathiawadis, the Agent himself has created this wonderful situation. Let the two workers go to jail for this. If other kathiawadis would also like to solve the problem, they too should go to jail. For a Kshatriya, a war foisted on him is a matter of religion. And the work we are doing in India today is aimed at the regeneration of the Kshatriyas and the Brahmins. The religions of the Vaishyas and Shudras remain. But, for want of enlightened knowledge and valour, the religion of the Vaishyas is reduced to business-mindedness and the religion of the Shudras, which is the religion of service, is reduced to slavery. The result is that all the four religions have almost been eliminated. The religion of a Kshatriya is not to kill but to die, not escape from fear of death. Knowledge means knowing the distinction between the spiritual and the unspiritual. Giving more



or all our time for the realization of our eternal soul rather than to the transient body is knowledge, and opposing every activity opposed to one's soul to the point of death is valour. To a certain extent, within their limitation, even the Vaishyas and the Shudras should also possess both these qualities.

If the Kathiawadis are willing to cultivate these two qualities, they should not keep themselves away from this struggle. There would be no harm in it if at present they confined themselves to this struggle. It would be no small gain. A large number of Kathiawadis should sacrifice their lives in this great fight or get toughened in battle. But if the greedy Kathiawadis are not content with this indirect benefit, they may as well start a sacred struggle in Kathiawad. They must remember that for this the atmosphere is not favourable in Kathiawad. That land is not ready for the struggle. There are no roads charted in the jungles of Kathiawad and therefore the task is difficult and a great sense of discrimination is required. If they put the Princes in an inconvenient position, it is likely to harm both the sides. Hence, my advice would be that Kathiawad should carry the present struggle to its end and then the Kathiawadis should offer sacrifices in this great struggle. There is always more water in a lake than in a well. Hence, it would be wise if they feel content that they have exercised patience. But, if they wish to start a sacred struggle to improve their economic, moral and political condition in Kathiawad itself, they are entitled to do so. I am merely writing as a prudent Bania about the timid, careful, neutral and calculating Kathiawadi.

Any Kathiawadi can tell me that I am looking at Kathiawad of the past; that I do not know the resurgent Kathiawad pulsating with new life. That may be so, but again my Bania sense suggests to me that perhaps I who hold the strings of the whole of Kathiawad, understand it better than those who see all strings, whether thick or thin, as the same things.

After giving this much warning and realizing that any advice is meant just to be heard, I wish that the Kathiawadis should do their duty in the light of their understanding and ability and that God help them. If they succeed, a critic like me would compliment them. And if they make mistakes, if they are defeated and disheartened, he would rudely remind them with the words "Did I not say so?" and then stand aside. Hence, we may lend our ear to everyone, but do only what we have decided. That alone is the first, middle and the last lesson of swaraj. He who follows the dictates of his own mind always knows God and fears Him.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 11287

## 29. NOTES

### FROM THE BIG BROTHER

The reader will appreciate the following letter<sup>1</sup> from Maulana Shaukat Ali to his son:

I do not think that I need add anything to the letter by way of supplementary instructions. Besides laying down the instructions, it serves another useful purpose. It sets at rest all doubts as to the Brothers' attitude.. I know that they are not implacable. They are most reasonable but, thank God, they are also firm. They will yield not an inch out of their weakness. They will yield everything to reason. Being godfearing they are capable of entering into their opponents' real difficulties. Given perfect sincerity in the opponent and readiness to do the right and acknowledge the wrong, no opponent need fear or distrust them. But to think of placating Mussulmans without placating the Brothers is to attempt to ignore Islam in India.

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here. Writing from jail in Karachi, Shaukat Ali had described conditions in jail, declared his determination to resist the humiliating ones and had suggested the following instructions for workers going to jail: "... I would suggest that all workers be told beforehand about the following:

1 They must be courteous to all, especially to their fellow prisoners and Indian warders who are weak and helpless and made to do dirty work. We must lift them up and give them real courage and teach them patriotism and discipline. Along with this we must have full confidence in ourselves and in our capacity for suffering.

2 We must ask for clean food, clothing and bedding. But this is the least important thing in my opinion. The more important things come later.

3 We must do as much work as we can easily accomplish without detriment to our health- If forced to do more than our strength or circumstances permit, we can really retaliate by refusing to work, the only weapon in our hands . . . *We must teach this Government, both outside the jail and inside of it, that it cannot coerce or force us to do things against our wishes.* . . There are some very humiliating practices which we *must* refuse to perform:

(a) Every evening all clothes are taken off and only in a little slip we show that we have not concealed anything in our groins.

(b) Jail parade, where you are made to do things which kill self-respect and, in the name of discipline, humiliate you.

(c) Paying the call of nature with many people round about you and a warder watching you, and so forth.

(d) *Azan* must be openly said by each 5 times daily at prayer time [Whether or no the jail authorities objects to this] . . ."

## FRIGHTFULNESS IN MEERUT

Kazi Bashiruddin Ahmed, Secretary, District Khilafat Committee writes:<sup>1</sup>

It is not without deep grief that I reproduce this letter and the one that follows. I feel humiliated and ashamed to find that human nature can stoop so low. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statements of my correspondents.

My advice to all these brave co-workers is: "Abide by your pledge of non-violence; forgive the persecutors; they are evidently mad; they do not know what they are doing; never mind the abusive language; it fouls the utterer, not the unwilling listener; the assaults do injure our bodies, but they can only do us good if we can only bear them manfully and without resentment." For me this exhibition of unmanly lawlessness on the part of the police is one more proof of the corrupt nature of the system. Barbarism has been cultivated and human nature deliberately degraded for the sake of sustaining power, usurped in the commercial interest of a minority intent upon exploiting and draining this poor country which I fondly believe was once rich in men and material.

## INHUMANITY IN BANARAS

Here is the substance of a telegram that was to be sent from Banaras but which was returned by the telegraph office as objectionable:

Authorities beating and sending people naked home in cold midnight; foul abuse and obscene jokes with boy volunteers. Patriots should afford relief in this direction before talking of conference or compromise.

The reader will note the stinging rebuke to the "patriots" for thinking of conferences and compromises whilst such inhumanities are being perpetrated. The facts briefly set forth in the telegram are supplemented with details in a covering letter, but I am not free as yet to give them. Professor Kripalani, who is the instigator of the wire, is himself in his jail taking measures that may result in the cessation of the degrading inhumanities described in the telegram.

For those who are outside jails the course is clear. Irritation and excitement will do us no good. We must recognize the gravity of the problem. The greater the dirt, the greater the need for self-purification and self-sacrifice. We can gain nothing by vilifying the police. They are creatures of circumstances. Their training has not

<sup>1</sup> His letter, not reproduced here, described civil disobedience activities in Meerut and the barbaric behaviour of the police.

improved the nature they brought with them, probably it has been made worse.

It is for the first time they are handling their cultured countrymen with a high purpose. We must not expect a sudden change in the police. Patience and gentleness will convert them into decent men with fellow-feeling. For me swaraj commenced when the best of us found themselves inside prison walls. Ever since it has been a steady accession of strength and a steady reformation. The latter is not to begin after a settlement but it will be the result of real and ever growing reformation. Shall we not blame ourselves, too, for the police brutality? Have we not too long neglected them, too long feared them, thought ill of them and considered them to be past redemption? If we were to retain the same attitude of mind, we shall find so many groups to be beyond hope, that we shall have only ourselves left as paragons of perfection and patterns of virtue. In other words, there would be no swaraj at the end of such exclusive assumption of virtue. Let us, therefore, take a portion of the blame ourselves for the vices of the police and the weakness of our general surroundings. But our patience will be justified only if we exchange for love of ease and comfort, love of pain and suffering. In spite of the gruesome news served out to us from day to day, we can afford to be happy if we have done our little best in the cause. We must after all leave the result in the hands of God.

#### PUNJAB OFFERING

The impartial Punjab Government have given the opportunity to Jullundur, which seemed to be left out, of covering itself with honour. They have arrested its leading worker Lala Hans Raj, a barrister belonging to an old noble family which has rendered many a service to the Government. Lala Hans Raj's offence consists in his having dared like Lala Duni Chand of Ambala personally to picket the liquor licence auction. One would have thought it to be a merit for a barrister to exchange his brief for moral reform. But in India Government look at things differently. Lala Hans Raj will, however, be none the worse for his jail experiences. His grateful countrymen will put a higher valuation upon his services as a national prisoner than as a successful barrister.

Lala Duni Chand left with his son a letter to be sent to me from which I copy the following:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The excerpt, not reproduced here, contained news of Duni Chand's arrest for picketing an auction sale of liquor contracts in Court premises and of arrests of other volunteers for picketing liquor shops.

Mrs. Duni Chand sends a small letter saying how glad she 'was to part with her husband, weak in body though he was, for she knew that he was serving the people.

#### INTERFERENCE WITH RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

It has fallen to the lot of Pandit Arjunlal Sethi to suffer religious persecution in jails. When he underwent a long term of imprisonment in Jeypore he had to hunger-strike for being disallowed to perform religious ceremonies. He is now serving in Sagor Jail. His son who is in Ajmer says:

Inhuman treatment is reported to be meted out to my father. He has been suffering from bad pneumonia. In spite of his illness, he was made to grind. It was when he was thus pressed that he had tendered an apology which he withdrew immediately he came to his senses. Nowadays he is being forced to take eggs and wine. He has lost in weight.

I do not know how far this news is true. The son has not been able to see his father. If the information received by him is correct it is a case of pure torture. Anybody can see that he is too frail to be given the task of grinding. To force a patient to take brandy or eggs is a crime against religion. I know a young civil resister in South Africa, Revashanker Sodha, had eggs forced down his throat. He bore down his persecutors by simply vomiting out the liquid as soon as it was forced down. The authorities had not the heart to repeat the cruelty in the face of such fixed determination. Needless to say the brave lad recovered in spite of his refusal to take eggs and is today hale and hearty. Opinions may differ as to the wisdom of rejecting foods prescribed by doctors. But here we are not concerned with the medical aspect. I hold that a man has a perfect right to refuse to be cured at the cost of what he believes to be his religious conviction specially when he is under duress.

#### "MOTHERLAND" AT BAY

Maulvi Mazharul Haq's<sup>1</sup> *Motherland* has been called upon to lodge security. It has proved too independent for the Bihar authorities. It has mercilessly exposed their delinquencies. It has dared to think aloud. Frankness must be muzzled. The editor has proudly declined to lodge security and has declared his intention of bringing out his paper as a handwritten sheet. He should command the services of a number of volunteers to make copies of his thoughts from day to

<sup>1</sup> 1866-1930; Nationalist leader of Bihar; one of the founders and later, president of the Muslim League; supported Gandhiji during Champaran satyagraha and the non-co-operation movement

day. Compression of news and thoughts will perhaps be better valued by the reader, if only for the special effort it will cost so many workers to copy. The value of an elegantly written copy of the *Gita* is any day greater than of the printed copies. I notice in the *Chronicle* that the *Bande Mataram* security of Rs. 2,000 has been forfeited. I presume, it too will have to join the ever increasing army of handwritten newspapers. It is merely a question of time when every non-co-operating newspaper will be suppressed. The printing can be suppressed but the suppression of writing is difficult. But I observe that the Orissa authorities served notice on leaders not to write notices about recruiting volunteers, etc. To suppress the written word, the Government will have to imprison the bodies of offending writers. Then will the thought be entirely free. And the silent word of a true and tested man is more potent than the written or the printed word of one whom the people do not know or recognize as their own. Let no non-co-operator with the wonderful lesson of the past three months of repression and the consequent awakening, for a single minute feel disturbed by the suppression of newspapers conducted in the interest of non-co-operation.

#### MORE WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS

*Swaraj* of Allahabad which had its security forfeited has come out as a written newspaper. It is edited by Babu Ramkrishna Laghate. It is elegantly written. The art of calligraphy is going out of fashion by reason of the introduction of printing and typewriting. The issuing of written newspapers, if it has to be continued long enough, is bound to result in the revival of the beautiful art. Some of the old manuscripts are "things of beauty and joy for ever". Gauhati, too, has come out with a written newspaper. It is written both in Hindi and Assamese and is issued bi-weekly. The price is three half *paisas*. Of all the three written newspapers the Gauhati copy is the clearest for reading. It is called the *Congress*. In point of calligraphy *Swaraj* is the best. The *Independent* print is indistinct. Either the Roneo or the tracing on the Cyclo must be bad. All the three papers will have to train a special staff of volunteers or paid workers so as to be able to issue copies that can be deciphered as easily as the printed sheet. And they will have to cultivate the art of compressed expression. I feel sure that, compactly written as all the three newspapers are, there is room for further compression without making the thought obscure. The object must be to give the reader what he cannot-get elsewhere in the shape of thought or facts. The managers must see every copy and

destroy all unreadable faint impressions even as a printer does. I remind the conductors of these admirable papers that the *Satyagrahi*<sup>1</sup> which had a short-lived career consisted only of one side of a foolscap sheet.

#### DEFERRED PAY

The Government have found no difficulty in stopping the deferred pay, as pensions are nowadays called, of Mr. Vinayakrao Joshi of Dharwar for no other reason than that he has tried to serve his country, whereas Sir Michael O'Dwyer who never loses an opportunity of vilifying educated Indians and of insolently patronizing the masses as if they were little children always needing the attention and care of an elder, and General Dyer, who still believes that he performed a simple duty when he massacred the innocent men in Jallianwala Bagh, continue to draw pensions. We are told that there are legal difficulties in stopping their pensions and that if the legal obstacle can be surmounted, it would be immoral to take away their pensions. Verily there is one law for an Indian, another for an Englishman; one law for a patriot, another for a persecutor. What is moral in the case of one is immoral in the case of the other! I congratulate Mr. Joshi on his spirited reply to the Government and on his patriotic courage in forgoing his pension when it became a matter of choice between service of his country and retention of his pension. Mr. Joshi's sacrifice strengthens India's cause. His material loss is Indians' moral gain.

#### POLITICAL AGENCIES

Repression is slowly spreading its net in all directions, and nowadays precedes the Prince's visit as if to prove to the people the might His Royal Highness represents. As he is expected in Indore, Babus Badrilal Aryadutta and Chhotelal have been deported from Indore Camp by the Agent to the Governor-General. Orders have also been issued prohibiting public meetings within the Residency area. It may be that public life is not so well organized in these Residencies as in British India proper. But if it is, I have no doubt about the duty of the residents of the Camp. If they can retain the non-violent spirit and if they are at all well organized, they should hold meetings notwithstanding the orders, and risk deportation or imprisonment. In my opinion those who are deported should return to be arrested. A

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji's unregistered newsweekly first issued On April 7, 1919, in defiance of the Press Act during the agitation against the Rowlatt legislation. Its publication was stopped when Gandhiji suspended civil disobedience; *vide* Vol. XV.

similar story comes from Kathiawar. It seems that the Princes of Kathiawar have arranged shikar parties and other non-political but expensive amusements for H.E. the Governor. The subjects of the States are angry, not over the Governor's visit, but over the expensive amusements arranged in his honour. Probably the Governor does not even appreciate them. Why should these functionaries always want amusements? It is not as if they are without any whilst they are working at headquarters. Indeed these amusements themselves must become a task for at least some of them. Neither party can be natural at these shows. They must put on their best behaviour and observe their respective distances. They must always act both officially and correctly even when they are meeting unofficially. In the circumstances, it would certainly save a great deal of time and expense if these amusements were cut down and the visits limited to State business only. Moreover, the shikar parties offend vegetarian Kathiawar. The people of Kathiawar cannot but resent, even when they say nothing, the waste of animal life for no purpose whatsoever. I am told that in order to draw the beasts of prey, goats have to be sacrificed for days in advance. Such shikar, over which so much innocent blood is spilt and is without any risk of life or limb on the part of the shikari, is robbed of all charm and becomes a mild copy of the law that prevails between the Government and the people in India, whereby the public are always the sport of the Government which never runs any risk. It is not the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth but it is the law of bullets against brickbats, life for a scratch. When the hunter runs no risk, it is not good sport but is downright cruelty. But the Agent to the Governor in Kathiawar evidently could not tolerate protest meetings even against the extravagance of the Princes and has therefore, it appears, prohibited public meetings and arrested Messrs Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Ravjibhai Mehta.

All this activity in the Agencies is a new development. I congratulate those who are arrested. The law of non-violence is just as imperative in the Agencies and the States as it is in the pure British Area. What is more, the residents in the States must not embarrass the latter in respect of or in the interest of the movement of non-co-operation with the Government. They may fight against their local grievances but even then not in the intensive non-co-operation manner except under very grave circumstances and except when public opinion is with them. In the States the subjects cannot claim to have exhausted all their resources with the Princes themselves. They must form public opinion, carry on agitation and otherwise organize themselves. I often hear the talk that the Congress became useful only when non-co-operation came in. This is an utterly wrong view of the



situation. The Congress agitation paved the way for non-co-operation. The latter was the fitting corollary to the previous Congress activities. The Congress has always been in India the greatest demonstrative and effective agency for ventilating people's grievances. It has always been a true register of popular strength and weakness. The States subjects, too, must have their Congresses and Conferences quite apart from the British Indian prototype and probably differently managed. They may learn from the mistakes of the parent body but they have to go through that preliminary discipline. A mere unexaggerated exposure of a wrong is by no means a small matter. Wrong like vice flourishes in secrecy. It dies of sunlight. Therefore let the subjects of the States organize themselves quickly and in a methodical manner without mixing up and spoiling their local matters with the National Congress. The State subjects can work as so many are doing in the Congress and for the Congress outside the States area.

#### A WARNING VOICE FROM BENGAL

There is a friend, an old and tried servant of the nation, who never fails to inform me of threatening clouds that appear time and again on the horizon in Bengal. This time he warns me against countenancing a general non-payment movement. He thinks that precipitate action is quite likely in Bengal as most of the leaders are in jail. I cannot complain but I cannot help noting that the imprisonment of leaders is due to the criminal folly of the Government which has treated the real peace-makers as if they were peace-breakers. The Government are inviting violence. They are, as if of a set purpose, preparing the country for violence. But here again I must not complain. I admit that most of us had expected all this and more, and yet we came to- the conclusion that we had to take our courage in both our hands and move forward without faltering. Our trust then was, as it today is, in God.

But I know that we must take every possible precaution to avert every unexpected crisis. I have therefore strongly advised and advise again that wisdom requires that all parts of India should wait for the experiment which I have undertaken personally to supervise. Bengal has done much. She has worked wonders, she has suffered much, is still suffering and is still keeping herself under great restraint. I would appeal to all the Bengal leaders to rest on their oars and not to take a single new step. Let them by all means assert the right of free speech and free association. But there is no occasion for embarking on mass civil disobedience, or non-payment, which is one phase of it. The workers will have taken the masses through a richer discipline by

advising them to pay the rents due for the current period.

#### WHAT ABOUT ANDHRA?

“Then why have you advised Andhra in favour of non-payment? Have you not committed a breach of your own compact with the Malaviya Conference not to start mass civil disobedience up to 31st instant?” asks another friend. (*These notes are being written on the 30th*). Well, I have not advised the Andhras to start mass civil disobedience. I could not prevent them from preparing for it. Their suspension was merely to a period inside the due date for the purpose of feeling their way. The Government have certainly precipitated matters. But the Andhra people are shrewd and I hope they know the art of humility. In spite of the Government provocation, I have every hope that they all will be humble enough not to undertake mass civil disobedience unless they find that they are absolutely ready, and are sure of being able to fulfil all the conditions laid down by the Congress, non-violence being by no means the least of them. I would certainly be better pleased if no other part of India, not excluding Andhra, was to try the experiment till the result of mine was definitely known.

#### DANGER OF MASS MOVEMENT

Whilst there is every reason for self-gratification over mass awakening, it would be foolish to ignore its undoubted dangers. I have just read a notice in the papers that a girl has been pretending to be my daughter and receiving on that account all kinds of attention. I do not mind owning, I should be proud to own, thousands of good, restrained girls as my daughters. They will do credit to me and the country. The world would recognize them as members of an ever increasing family by adoption. As it is, I have to remark for the tenth time that I do not possess the good fortune to have a daughter. There is a tiny “untouchable” girl whom I do proudly call my adopted daughter. She has brought happiness to me and I hope by the time she has grown up she will bring truth and humility to her future field of service. Today she is a veritable “devil”. She believes in all play and no work. She finds it hard to work without the ebony ruler which used to keep her straight in her parental home. But I do not mind this charming idler of seven years claiming me as father. There are also some grown up girls who permit me the pleasure of claiming them as my daughters, but then they make it difficult for me to live up to the standard they exact from me. They are ever in danger of my being a discreditable father to them. But I must inform all the girls of India that I decline to run the risk of being discredited by their forcible

adoption; I want certainly to adopt all the exacting girls like the ones whose names, too, I dare not give to the world.

But the reported forcible adoption of me by a girl is a comparatively harmless pastime. I hear that a gentleman by name Motilal Puncholi hailing from Udaipur claims to be my disciple and to preach temperance and what not among the rustics of the Rajputana States. He is reported to be surrounded by an armed crowd of admirers and establishing his kingdom or some otherdom wherever he goes. He claims, too, miraculous power. He or his admirers are reported also to have done some destructive work. I wish that people will once for all understand that I have no disciples. I have for the time being at any rate no existence apart from the Congress and the Khilafat committees. All my activity is referable to these two organizations. None works in my name; none has authority to use my name save under my own writing. No one has any writing from me to do any work save the Congress or the Khilafat work. And nobody has any authority from me to use any arms, even sticks, against any person.

I understand that these brave but simple rustics have been induced to refuse payment of taxes due to the State to which they belong. They are even told that I have asked the tax-payers belonging to the Sirohi State not to pay more than Rs. 1¼ each. Now I know nothing of all this. No one has consulted me about the matter. Pandit Ramakant Malaviya, Chief Minister of the State, has kindly brought the matter to my notice and he tells me that great mischief is being done in my name. If my writing reaches these countrymen at all, I would like to tell them that they should lay all their grievances before the State authorities and never resort to arms. If they wish to withhold payment of tax which they consider excessive, it is their right. But it is a right never to be exercised lightly. They must cultivate public opinion and let their case see the light of day. If they do not take these precautions they will find everything and everybody arrayed against them and they will find themselves heavy losers in the end.

*Young India*, 2-2-1922

### 30. DR. RAY ON CHARKHA

It gives me real pleasure to publish in full the following translation<sup>1</sup> of a closely reasoned preface of Sir P. C. Ray to a Bengali booklet on charkha. Valuable as his wonderful chemical researches

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here

and organization of industries have been, I have no doubt that his organization of the home spinning will be more valuable and wonderful still. The chemical researches have brought renown to India, the industries with which he has identified himself have brought Bengal a few lacs of rupees and provided work for talented Bengalis, but the introduction of home spinning means banishment of starvation or semi-starvation and degradation from millions of Bengali homes, of famines and consequent diseases and the introduction in these homes of the sunshine of smile which a contented stomach brings. I entirely endorse Dr. Ray's remarks that Bengal gained nothing during the first swadeshi agitation by bringing cloth from Bombay or Ahmedabad instead of Manchester or Japan. In order to enable us to feel the full and immediate effect of swadeshi, we must manufacture yarn and cloth in our millions of scattered homes. Swadeshi will bind them as nothing else can.

*Young India*, 2-2-1922

### 31. INDIANS ABROAD

To  
The Editor, *Young India*  
sir,

. . . our countrymen in Kenya have to face a great agitation by the European Colonists, while the condition of our helpless brethren in Fiji is growing worse everyday. The troubles and difficulties of the e people are too numerous to be related here.

At this time . . . it cannot be expected, that the Indian public will be able to devote a great deal of attention to the problems of Indians abroad, still it is our duty to do something for these unfortunate countrymen Of ours in the Colonies. . . .

. . . We have decided to do propaganda work for the Colonial Indians in an organized way We shall be thankful if our countrymen in the Colonies will send to us regularly accounts of their difficulties, which will be circulated here through the English and vernacular papers. Any suggestions for the proper organization of this work will oblige us.

*We are, etc.,*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM  
SABARMATI

TOTARAM SANADHYA<sup>1</sup>  
BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

I hope that these earnest workers will get all the assistance they

<sup>1</sup> He had spent many years in Fiji and written a book describing his stay there. Later, he joined Gandhiji's Ashram at Sabarmati.

are asking for. I feel humiliated to think that in spite of expert knowledge of the condition of our countrymen beyond the seas, I am doing nothing specially for them. I take comfort in the thought that there are two specialists, besides Charlie Andrews, who are interesting themselves in the matter. For me, the swaraj work includes the service of the pariahs of the Empire.

*Young India, 2-2-1922*

### 32. A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY'S GENERALIZATIONS

TO

Mr. M. K. Gandhi

SIR,

Until a few days ago I had no personal experience of the results of your propaganda in India. But on 13th January, the day of the arrival of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in Madras, whilst I was driving through the streets of Georgetown, I was set on by a band of rowdies shouting *Gandhiji ki jai*", pelted with bricks and tiles, had dry earth poured over me and was forbidden to proceed on my journey. Also one of the lamps of my carriage was lifted out of its socket and carried off . . What I suffered was also the fate of Many other, only some suffered much more seriously. I am fortunate to have escaped without bodily injury. . .

My experience has enlightened me as to some things. I would like to communicate them to you.

You profess to be working for the good of India. So many others profess, Christian missionaries for instance, of whom I am one, so also the British Government. Both of these can point to a past with an immense accomplishment of benefit achieved for this country and its people. . . .

I would like to ask you what have you accomplished of definite improvement in the country and positively good result?. . . Hitherto, you have been the rouser up of troubles. For those in the Punjab, It was you who were the font and origin, and no one else. Also you have put ideas into the minds of Mohammedans of Khilafat wrongs. As regards the Khilafat, whether to wrong or to right, neither India, its people, nor Government have anything whatever to do, nor desire any. It is a matter entirely outside India. You profess to promote swaraj, yet have offered no constructive ideas of what that is to be, except the puerile and impracticable ones of khaddar and charkha, mere childish notions of what is to benefit the whole of a great nation. How do you intend to carry out swaraj? Are you in any way at all preparing yourself or anyone else for its responsibilities? What are you actually inaugurating of deeds of practical arrangements? You talk of something that is to eventuate in

some vague way. All are sounding words, undefined and indefinite.

Have you studied history and noted the progress of nations? Have you at all noted that progress is made by growth and gradual development; and not by revolution and destruction? Do you ever notice how God works through nature, that the life of plants and animals grows by slow advance, by evolution not revolution. Do you ever watch the sky and the movement of the stars? Those that can be seen to move rapidly are falling and in process of destruction and ruin. The suns and systems which continue through the ages can scarcely be seen to move at all. Have you waited for the dawn of morning to come in? Does it roll up like the shutter of a shop? To ascend a mountain the climber has to take slow and painful steps one after another. To descend quickly he needs only step over the precipice and he is at the bottom in a few seconds. Think Mr. Gandhi, think.

I believe you wish the good of India, as many others do, but your present methods are on the wrong road. For India to be fit for swaraj it must grow into it, not be manufactured. The process of growth has been going on. The British Government and people were helping it to grow and will continue the good work, and will rejoice when at last all the burden and responsibility is off their shoulders. But,—it is a big alternative,—the results of your method of attempting to attain swaraj, even so far as only already evident, ought to show you that you have adopted the wrong course. The disorders which you have stirred up in the Punjab, Bombay, Malabar and elsewhere, the riotings, robberies, cruelties, arson, murders, all these should open your eyes to the fearfully mistaken method you have chosen. Why are you still so blind? You are stirring up evil forces which you cannot control, and rejecting to unite with good forces, which can control and can make for forward movement. While claiming independence you are only too clearly showing that you are incapable of using it. Turn again, O Mahatma! turn again, if you are really a great soul. Enter the strait and narrow path of self-renunciation and stern discipline and co-operative enterprise. Cease mere shouting and waving of flags. Do something positively good yourself, and not be merely a mouth to find fault with the good that others, imperfectly it is true, but with earnest and unselfish purpose, are at least attempting to do.

*Yours sincerely,*

G. H. MACFARLANE

MADRAS,

25th January, 1922

This letter<sup>1</sup> is a set-off to the two letters from two English ladies recently published in these columns.<sup>2</sup> They are also Christian

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "In God's Hands" and "Notes",

missionaries. It is clear that Mr. Macfarlane has not followed or studied the movement. A missionary of all people should know that it is most dangerous to generalize from particular instances. No doubt it was cowardly on the part of the Madras mob to have assaulted Mr. Macfarlane and robbed him of his lantern. Every sensible man has condemned the madness. Every sensible man admits that it has harmed the cause, for the reason that violence has been done out of false sympathy for non-co-operation whose basis is non-violence.

But are the things that have happened in Bombay and Madras, new experiences in the world's history? Have they not frequently happened in Europe? Have they not repeatedly happened in England and Scotland? Do not enraged mobs express themselves precisely as the Madras and the Bombay mobs have? Have not the Irish done much worse things than the Bombay and the Madras mobs? And have they not got what almost amounts to swaraj because of their hooliganism?

I detest the hooliganism of Bombay and Madras, but from a different standpoint. I detest also the Irish hooliganism. There is, however, a difference between the Irish hooliganism and the Bombay and the Madras copy. The Irish was practical and honest. It was practical because it was not out of tune with the Irish atmosphere. It was honest, because the Irishmen made no secret of their doctrine. The Indian hooliganism is both unpractical and dishonest; unpractical, because so far as I know the Indian mind, hooliganism cannot flourish in India. The Indian mind is not attuned to it. It is dishonest, because the Indian movement professes to be absolutely, though expediently, non-violent. Non-co-operators must not handle what they cannot keep non-violent.

But Mr. Macfarlane is so horrified at the hooliganism of Madras that he considers India to be unfit for swaraj. On the contrary I hold that even hooliganism may be a better state than the existing unnatural and dishonest condition. It has got to be ended at any cost. Only, the present leaders cannot handle a violent movement. The majority of them have neither the desire nor the qualifications for it. They are making a Herculean effort to keep it non-violent.

Mr. Macfarlane claims that India has immensely benefited under the existing system of Government. In my opinion the sum

total of its activity has been moral, material, and political injury to India. The moral standard is lower today than it used to be. The immorality of the present age is refined and therefore illusive and more dangerous. Materially, there is deeper pauperism today than before. Politically, India is so emasculated that her people scarcely know their degradation.

The writer asks to know the accomplishments of the movement. It has brought about a tremendous awakening among the people. Whereas they had given up hand-spinning entirely, today thousands of homes are spinning hundreds of thousands of yards of yarn. Whereas hand-spun garments had gone out of use, today thousands of men and women are wearing khaddar which has resulted in driving away hunger from thousands of homes. The people know that swaraj means their power over the purse, the law, the police, and the military. They know that there can be no peace till the Punjab wound is healed and the Khilafat wrong is redressed.

The nations have progressed both by evolution and revolution. The one is as necessary as the other. Death, which is an eternal verity, is revolution as birth and after is slow and steady evolution. Death is as necessary for man's growth as life itself. God is the greatest Revolutionist the world has ever known or will know. He sends deluges. He sends storms where a moment ago there was calm. He levels down mountains which He builds with exquisite care and infinite patience. I do watch the sky and it fills me with awe and wonder. In the serene blue sky, both of India and England, I have seen clouds gathering and bursting with a fury which has struck me dumb. History is more a record of wonderful revolutions than of so-called ordered progress—no history more so than the English. And I beg to inform the correspondent that I have seen people trudging slowly up mountains and have also seen men shooting up the air through great heights.

Swaraj is India's birthright. The British system has balked her of it. India is struggling to regain her lost liberty, and in doing so she is trying not to repeat but to make new history. In the process she betrays a woeful desire to repeat it as in Bombay, Madras and Malagaon. Malabar is not to be mixed up with the movement. Independence necessarily means freedom to err. Lastly, I assure the writer and others who think like him that the movement is not one of ill will but of goodwill towards all. Time alone can prove the truth of it. The agony does not permit us to see the new birth concealed beneath it. Let us watch, wait, and pray.

*Young India, 2-2-1922*



### 33. PRACTISING LAWYERS AND VOLUNTEERING

TO

The Editor, *YOUNG INDIA*

SIR

1. Is it permissible for practising lawyers to enrol themselves as volunteers?

Writing about lawyers in *Young India* dated the 12th instant,<sup>1</sup> you observe, "But the Congress<sup>2</sup> has purposely opened an honourable door for them. The original draft was perhaps uncertain as to any but full non-co-operators being entitled to sign the volunteers' pledge. The conditions for them are easy of fulfilment being mostly matters of belief."

On the other hand, in a report of your conference with the Bengal delegate at Ahmedabad,<sup>3</sup> published in *The Tribune* of 20th January 1922, the following passage occurs:

"Questioned as to how a practising lawyer can serve the country according to the resolution, Mahatmaji said:

A practising lawyer can certainly wear khadi but he cannot be a volunteer.

P: I fear that work shall stop in some places for want of men.

MAHATMAJI . . . You will certainly get their help in connection with your work among the untouchables, or for temperance work or in connection with swadeshi, but they cannot be members of the Volunteer Corps. The Volunteer Corps is being formed in defiance of Government notification and only those are fit to go to jail who are pure-minded men." Is this report in any way materially incorrect or has there been lately a change in your views on the subject? To the ordinary practising lawyer the matter is not quite free from difficulty. For, whilst the Congress resolution<sup>4</sup> is comprehensive enough to include co-operators and non-co-operators, lawyers and laymen alike, it seems quite inconsistent, almost hypocritical, on the part of a practising lawyer to enrol himself as a volunteer.

For one thing, it is entirely against the spirit of all the Congress resolutions on non-co-operation and your own interpretations of them, that a man, who has failed to obey the call of the country, should appear before the public in any prominent form of public activity.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "About Lawyers"

<sup>2</sup> Held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

<sup>3</sup> For the report as published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 14-1-1922, *vide* "Interview with Bengal Delegates" 29-12-1921

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

2. Clause (4) of the pledge<sup>2</sup> requires every volunteer to wear only “hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth”. Is the word khaddar used here in its narrow literal sense, signifying hand-woven cotton cloth or is it used in a more comprehensive sense as to embrace all kinds of fabrics, woollen, cotton, silken etc., made out of hand-spun yarn and woven with the hand?

*I am, etc.,*

RAMDAS CHHOKRA

BAR-AT-LAW

LYALLPUR

In publishing the foregoing I have removed all the critical part. As I read the Congress resolution, it is certainly open to lawyers to join the Volunteers' Corps. I know that the wording was purposely changed by the Subjects Committee to find room for incomplete non-co-operators. I have not read the report of my conversation with the Bengali delegates in the Khadi Nagar. But I do not remember having said that lawyers could not become volunteers as contemplated by the Congress resolution. My notes in *Young India* were written almost the same time as the conversation. What I distinctly remember having said is that lawyers cannot become office-bearers. They could not become members of executive committees. But the Volunteers' pledge is for the purpose, among others, of nullifying the effect of the disbandment notices of the Government. In my opinion a lawyer who conscientiously signs the pledge is sufficiently pure for the purpose of going to jail. And the very fact of his readiness to go to jail, ensures suspension of practice for the period of imprisonment. Suspension contemplated by the non-co-operation resolution is meant to last till swaraj is attained, which a lawyer may not be able to brave, though he may not mind, by signing the pledge, the risk of loss of practice should he have to go to jail. In the one case suspension is a certainty, in the other a possibility—very remote if a large number took the pledge. The gain in lawyers signing the pledge is great. They show their open sympathy with the cause, in a limited sense perhaps, and they definitely and in their own persons advance the cause of swadeshi. I would give much to see the lawyers having the courage of discarding their totally unnecessary foreign cloth and foreign cut and taking up the khaddar dress and thus identifying themselves with the wonderful manifestation of the mass spirit. All the cloth that is hand-spun and hand-woven whether wool, silk or cotton is khaddar. But it is expected that no one will take to silk or woollen khaddar

except when it is required by climatic or other urgent considerations. The fashion certainly should be as Dr. Ray says,<sup>1</sup> to wear the coarse khaddar. Let me repeat what I have said before, that khaddar that is coarse to look at is, like tussore silk, soft to the touch, and protects the skin much better than the soft-looking khaddar.

*Young India*, 2-2-1922

### 34. TO KHOJA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

A Muslim friend has written a long letter about the poor progress of swadeshi among the *Khojas*<sup>2</sup>. I reproduce the following portion from it:<sup>3</sup>

I have not addressed a special appeal to the *Khojas* till now, as I had no occasion to do so. We cannot ignore even a group of five men in this national and religious struggle, not to speak of a group of 2,50,000. We should accept what people give and then appeal to them for more. The *Khojas* are in fact a prominent community. They have money and also ability; some of them are men of wide outlook. They have some liberal-hearted gentlemen among them. Sometimes I even meet open-hearted men and women belonging to that community. Some of them, I know, read *Navajivan* carefully and regularly. If I could, I would certainly draw the *Khoja* brothers and sisters towards non-co-operation or, if not to that, at least towards swadeshi.

Swadeshi is such an all-embracing and simple duty which everyone can discharge that no Indian should ever forsake it. An eight-year-old Telugu girl writes: "Having faith that swaraj can be won through the spinning-wheel, I ply it regularly and spin. I believe that we shall get swaraj if we do this."

I have told this girl in reply that my faith in the spinning-wheel is the same as before. I certainly believe that, only if the people start spinning daily as a matter of religious duty, give up foreign cloth, wear khadi and all the time pray to God for help while spinning and do no more, we shall win swaraj.

Those people, therefore, who do not understand all the items in the non-co-operation programme, or if they understand them, do not have the strength to act as required, should at any rate start following the swadeshi-dharma immediately. Many *Khoja* sisters have told me

<sup>1</sup> In his preface to the booklet *Charkha* by Satis Chandra Das Gupta

<sup>2</sup> A community among Muslims

<sup>3</sup> Not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to address a special appeal to the two and a half lakh *Khojas* and persuade them to adopt Khadi and spinning.

that, owing to the custom of wearing silk and fine cloth, the poorer among them are not able to attend *Khoja* gatherings. Some fail, out of timidity, to give up foreign cloth and some are so much enamoured of silk clothes and fine muslin that they turn up their noses at the very thought of khadi. People who thus despise anything belonging to their own country practically become foreigners though native born. Those people, especially, who give up the use of swadeshi cloth—cloth woven by women from whatever quality of yarn is available—should certainly be regarded as traitors to the country.

If all Hindus and Muslims behave in this manner, how can the country's poverty be abolished? What occupation but stone-breaking will poor women then have? Even a famous chemist like Dr. P. C. Ray has been convinced that famine will vanish from Bengal not through his researches in chemistry but through the spinning-wheel. He has only recently got designed a spinning-wheel called the Khulna spinning-wheel and supplies such spinning-wheels to the famine-stricken people through his numerous factories. He no more gives them free rice but tells them that they should spin in order to get rice. In this way, he has been introducing the spinning-wheel in the poverty-stricken villages of Khulna. He has taken a pledge that, if the four villages there with which he is in very close contact do not, within six months, spin enough yarn to meet their requirements, he will have nothing to do with them. This saintly chemist now wears only khadi and takes pride in doing so. He feels ashamed to wear anything except khadi.

*Khoja* brothers and sisters should ponder over such examples and follow them. I know that in a small community like the *Khojas*, among whom poverty is practically unknown, it is difficult for anyone to adopt simplicity all at once. They make donations to charities and feel that they have done their duty. I shall say this to them. "Why do you believe that you are a small community? Do you not include yourselves among the thirty crores [of Indians]? You certainly have your share of their joys and sorrows. As long as even one brother out of these thirty crores is only skin-and-bone and even one sister has to sell her honour for want of employment, you, I and all others should feel ashamed." I hope, therefore, that the *Khojas* and such other communities which have not yet appreciated the importance of swadeshi will come to appreciate it immediately and that the spinning-wheel and khadi will be introduced in all *Khoja* homes, be they rich or poor. and I hope also that not only will no one feel

ashamed to wear khadi but actually everyone will look upon it as a real ornament.

[From Gujarati]  
*Navajivan*, 2-2-1922

### 35. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BARDOLI  
*February 3, 1922*

I envy your spinning-wheel and *Ramayana*. The latter, I hope, is not a wretched translation of Valmiki, but the original of Kamban<sup>1</sup> of which I have read so much in Pope's<sup>2</sup> Tamil Hand-book.<sup>3</sup>

*Jail diary*

### 36. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

BARDOLI,  
*February 3 [1922]*<sup>4</sup>

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I have your notes. Of course you do not expect me to write to you often. I am prayerfully following your development under silence. You will certainly benefit by it. One meal may be called a semi-fast, often it is no fast at all. But it mat[ters] little what it is called. You are going through discipline and that is enough.

If you are not giving regularly three to four hours to the spinning I [shou]ld strongly advise you to do so now.

I entirely agree with you that to perfect oneself is to serve one's country to perfection. And perfect service of the country is possible only when it is not inconsistent with the service of whole humanity. The ways of perfection are many. Some attain it by silent meditation and some by act[ive] work. The motive in either case must be love of

<sup>1</sup> Author of the Tamil *Ramayana*

<sup>2</sup> G. U. Pope (1820-1908); did missionary work in South India; author of *First Lessons in Tamil, A Handbook of the Ordinary Dialect of the Tamil Language and other works*

<sup>3</sup> On p. 176 of his *Handbook* (7th Edition, 1911) G. U. Pope refers to Kamban as "a great master of Tamil rhythms"

<sup>4</sup> The original has "1921", but on February 3, 1921, Gandhiji was not at Bardoli, nor was the Bardoli problem an issue under discussion; the year 1921, therefore, is evidently a slip for 1922

service.

You need not, therefore, worry about Bardoli so long as you are sure that what you are doing is in the same direction.

*Yours sincerely,*

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3202

### *37. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

BARDOLI,

*February 3, 1922*

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you got my reply to your letter. I make use of your letters regularly.

I do not see any difficulty as long as you do everything with the permission of the jailor. There can be still less difficulty when it is necessary to break the jail rules deliberately and openly. I have already written to explain when the rules may be disobeyed.

You must have seen that a decision has been taken that Bardoli should make the start. I have now, according to our practice, sent an ultimatum to the Viceroy which expires on the 11th. This means that we have got to do something tangible on that day. My letter must have reached the Viceroy today. If he concedes the demands put forth in it, civil disobedience will be suspended for the time being. The demands are that the Viceroy should withdraw his notification, should release the prisoners and declare that our peaceful activities will not be interfered with. If he concedes these demands, we would resume our work of organizing our movement peacefully. Freedom of the Press is covered by our demands. The Viceroy will not perhaps grant this demand, but he will have to ultimately, if Bardoli shows its strength of self-sacrifice and if the other parts of the country remain peaceful.

You must now be running self-government there. You should elect the president and other office-bearers and see to it that everyone accounts for every minute of his time.

Ramdas and Krishnadas are with me. Gangabehn too has come. In a few days, I shall call some weavers, spinners, etc., from the Ashram. True, weaving activity here is progressing rather too slowly.

Vithalbhai will most probably stay here.  
Your health ought to become very good

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7866

*38. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

BARDOLI,  
*February 4, 1922*

MATHURADAS  
93 BAZARGATE ST.  
BOMBAY

YOU ACTED MOST WISELY.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.  
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

*39. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

BARDOLI,  
*February 4, 1922*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your wire. I did not expect better results about East Africa, nor do I expect more from South Africa at present. The Indians will all the same hold their own somehow. Whilst you should do all you can, I would like you to see with me that it is not to be expected that the condition in the colonies can possibly improve before it has considerably improved in India. You can have no notion of the wicked deeds that are happening in India in the name of Law and Order. They are really worse than in the Punjab. Fortunately now the people are knowingly submitting—not out of their weakness but out of their strength. There is room still for improvement I know. Hence the decision of Bardoli.

If there is anything on which we must talk, you will come over to Bardoli. It is 1½ hours' journey from Surat. There is a good train from Colaba to Surat at 9.20 p.m. reaching Surat at 6 a.m. You reach Bardoli at 10 a.m.

You must read my letter<sup>1</sup> to the Viceroy.  
With love,

*Yours,*  
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2609

#### *40. ANGAD'S MISSION OF PEACE*

It is a rule of civilized fighting that a warrior, having mobilized all his strength, acts with the utmost modesty. From then onwards, he never forsakes courtesy. At the commencement of every battle, he gives due Warning to the opponent, cautions him and requires him to rectify his mistake and remove the cause of the conflict.

Rama made such an appeal to Ravana. On arriving at Setubandh Rameshwar<sup>2</sup>, he collected together his army of vanaras<sup>3</sup> and held a discussion as to who should convey the warning to Ravana. To many, of course, this step seemed unnecessary, while some saw weakness in it. To make an appeal to a proud person like Ravana amounted to feeding his pride. Rama listened to these arguments attentively and explained to his army that Rama's soldiers should not worry whether the peace mission would have any effect on Ravana or not. They should only think of what civilized behaviour required of them. If this made Ravana prouder, he would become all the more over-confident. What would Rama lose by that? He was bound to become the stronger for having given due warning and done his duty. He chose the strong, patient, and courteous Angad and sent him on a peace mission to Ravana. The latter, of course, got irritated. Was he likely to listen to reason? In the end, however, he lost his kingdom and his life.

Following this same principle of civilized behaviour, we have sent a courteous peace offer to the Viceroy. He is not likely to pay attention to it. How does that affect us? Actually, his not paying attention to it will greatly increase our strength. The world, too, will turn more definitely in our favour. Our world of course means our brothers who still think that we are misguided and who support the Government.

This time the issue is different. Before we secure a settlement about the Khilafat, the Punjab or swaraj, we have to settle accounts with the Government and its supporters in regard to another matter.

<sup>1</sup> Of February 1, 1922

<sup>2</sup> A town on the southern tip of India

<sup>3</sup> Monkeys



This Government has always maintained its control by distracting the people's attention. The real disease is ignored and attention is focussed on something else. The Bengalis' disease was the grievance about partition. If they were driven by that disease to throw bombs, the Government described this bomb-throwing as their disease and tried to make the people forget the original disease. Using the bomb-throwing as an excuse, it tried systematically to harass innocent citizens and to emasculate the people. A like disease was the Rowlatt Act. In the excitement caused by that disease, the Punjab became delirious. The Government perpetrated a massacre in order to cure the province of this disease, and in this way tried to conceal the original disease. Now, the country suffers from the triple fever of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. It is in agony with suffering. A fire within sometimes leads to insanity. Taking this insanity to be the real malady, the Government has adopted a policy of repression. Thus, it has become a rule with it to make the people forget the real malady, to look upon its effects themselves as the disease and to follow a policy of repression to cure them of that.

We have now learnt by experience that we should give the Government no opportunity to deceive the people. We may not mind whether or not it cures the real malady, but we should not let it assume the evils resulting from that disease to be the disease itself and try to suppress them. The Government has maintained its rule till today by doing exactly this. If the people are hurt by any mistake of the Government or by its arbitrary actions, and even lose their head in consequence, then in suppressing them the Government will try to make the public forget its high-handedness; this we should not permit it to do. If we can wrest from it this weapon for ever, it will not be able to adopt autocratic methods. Once repression becomes impossible autocracy will give way to the reign of public opinion.

Fortunately, the Government itself has focussed attention on this issue by resorting to repression. We should forthwith take up the challenge. The Government may harass us as much as it likes but a fourth demand has been added to the earlier three, and it should get priority over them. We should create conditions in which it would be impossible for the Government to resort to repression.

Repression means gagging us, dissolving our associations and suppressing our organs of public opinion. How can we bear Lalaji's *Bande Mataram* being forced to stop publication? Can we see Mazharul Huq Saheb's *Motherland* being suppressed? Jafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar*, Habib Khan's *Siyasat* and Radhakishan's *Pratap*—all these have been suppressed. The *Independent* was suppressed long ago, and so was the *Swaraj of Prayag*. The remedy for all this

must surely be in our hands. Such repression ought not to be allowed to go on.

A government which does not wish to submit to public opinion will always try to silence protests by the people. If it fails in the attempt, that will be its defeat. In the peace offer, therefore, which has been dispatched from Bardoli, the demand that the Government should stop repression is given the first place. When we can express our views freely, when our organs are allowed to be published and we can form our associations in freedom, we are as good as free; three-fourths of swaraj will have been then established. A vigorous expression of public opinion will by itself suffice to bend the Government. It is certainly part of the meaning of swaraj that we should have freedom of action and expression. Only murder will be outlawed then. Even under swaraj, we shall not get the right to murder anyone.

It has been indicated in that peace offer that, if the Government releases all persons imprisoned for peaceful activities and stops repression, we shall suspend civil disobedience for the present. In aggressive civil disobedience, an individual or a group respectfully disobeys even innocent man-made laws on purpose to defy authority. The civil disobedience which we are carrying on all over the country today has been forced on us and, therefore, it is defensive. One simply cannot avoid it. This means that we express our view though the Government gags us, hold meetings though these are prohibited, publish newspapers when orders are passed for their closure. All this is defensive Civil disobedience. We have been offering it and will certainly go on offering it as long as arbitrary orders continue to be issued. But the other type of civil disobedience, which is not for self-defence but is meant to harass the Government, which is a form of revolt, we may call off if the Government abandons its policy of repression. I feel that we should suspend it on this condition. For, if the Government removes the restrictions over our speech, our pen and our associations, it will have to concede our other demands in a short time.

That is to say, the task before Bardoli today is to secure the release of our fighters and compel the Government to give up repression. If Bardoli achieves this, it will have done its job fully.

If, however, the Viceroy does not concede even this, what will Bardoli do? If he does not concede even the right to express public opinion, how can we avoid launching aggressive civil disobedience? A man may be on the defensive up to a certain limit, but beyond that he may even start an offensive. Aggressive civil disobedience may be

looked upon as a kind of non-violent offensive.

We have explained all this to the Viceroy. By making this peace offer, we have shown the highest culture. The offer means that, if the Viceroy grants by the 11th instant the demand made on behalf of Bardoli, the civil disobedience to be started by the latter will be postponed for the time being. After the fighters are released, we shall carry on the fight as all of us together may decide to do. Personally, I believe that, if our demand is accepted, there will be little need for us to start mass civil disobedience. The acceptance of our demand can mean nothing else. I, therefore, think that the demand for freedom of speech, writing and association is unlikely to be accepted.

Bardoli should go ahead with all its preparations. Deficiencies which still remain should be removed and every man and woman should pray to God for strength to bear loss of life or property.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 5-2-1922

#### 41. MY SPEECH AT SURAT

I like to give summaries of others' and my own speeches and I know I have the ability to do this, but I rarely get time for that. It happens that I have the time and the inclination to give a summary of my speech at Surat on the 31st.<sup>1</sup>

On that day, there was a meeting of the Working Committee in Surat. It was attended by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mian Chhotani, Dr. [M.A.] Ansari, Dr. Choithram [Gidwani], Shri Kaujalgi and Shri Vithalbhai Patel, all members, and me. Taking advantage of this occasion, they had arranged a meeting for the citizens of Surat. It had been decided that I should not attend the meeting and so I was busy with my work. Meanwhile, Shri Dayalji came and informed me that the audience demanded my presence. The reason was that Dr. Choithram had needlessly dropped a remark at the meeting that I might possibly be arrested within ten days. On the audience insisting that, in that case, they would like to see me, Shri Dayalji came to persuade me and I went.

Generally, I go to a meeting prepared with an outline of what I am going to say. This time, however, I had not thought about anything at all. But the thought which had been in my mind for some time past came up vividly before me and I put it before the citizens of Surat in such emphatic language as I had not used before. I think

<sup>1</sup> For the speech, *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", 31-1-1922.

every Gujarati should know what I said.

I should like to see that same thought in everyone's mind. I, therefore, wanted to give my Surat speech for the benefit of all.

There was a time when I felt how good it would be if I were in jail. But now my desire to go to jail has nearly vanished. I feel that imprisonment is only a rest and a luxury for me. I have no fear at all that, if the Government imprisons me, it will harass me in jail. Other prisoners have had to suffer more or less, and so their imprisonment had and continues to have value to that extent. And so this is what I said.<sup>1</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 5-2-1922

#### 42. HOPES HELD OUT

Bardoli has held out great hopes. May God grant the people of Bardoli courage and good sense! Just as a pledge was taken in the masjid in Pretoria in South Africa, just as this was done at Muzaffarpur for Champaran, just as the mill-hands of Ahmedabad took a pledge under a tree on the river-bank, just as the *Patidars* of Kheda took a pledge at Nadiad, so the representatives of the *Patidars* of Bardoli took a pledge under a tree and they and others did so once again in the Conference *pandal*.

In the same way as the previous pledges were fulfilled somehow, will not God help us to fulfil this one too? Some will fall and others will take their place; in the end, however, will not our hopes be fulfilled? Truth always wins, and it is the divine law that, as long as there is even one person prepared to lay down his life to vindicate truth because it is truth, so long is the victory of truth certain even though crores may be ranged against it. This law admits of no exception. But then, have I made a mistake in trusting Bardoli? I go on making mistakes and every time God rectifies them. People deceive me a thousand times; even so, how can I distrust them? As long as I see the slightest excuse for trusting people, I will certainly trust them. It is foolish to continue trusting after one has had definite ground for not trusting. But to distrust a person on mere suspicion is arrogance and betrays lack of faith in God. It is faith that keeps the world going.

<sup>1</sup> For the speech, vide "Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", 31-1-1922

If I knew that certain people always deceived me and yet I went on trusting them, there would be no limit to my foolishness. The people of Bardoli have been so frank with me that I felt it a sin to distrust them. I was sceptical when I sat down for discussion with their representatives, but they inspired trust in me.

The people of Bardoli are simple-minded and trustful; they do not care for comforts. They are neither very rich nor very poor; they are not violent, nor are they cowards. They are not quarrelsome but affectionate. There are no serious disputes among them. They have maintained cordial relation with officials. Since they have no local grievances, their request to be allowed to fight is altogether unselfish. They have worked hard to make themselves fit and spared no effort to that end. They have not become perfect in the matter of swadeshi, but they are trying honestly to be so. They have shaken off untouchability to an extent to which no other part of the country has done. I, therefore, believe that, if any taluka is fit [for civil disobedience], Bardoli certainly is.

Some people may feel that the people of Bardoli are known to be rather meek and so they will soon get tired of going to jail, will be afraid to face death and will lose all courage when the Government starts seizing their properties. My experience right to this day has been that it is the meek who patiently submit to suffering. Aggressive people cannot bear suffering. They make others suffer.

And is not this struggle itself meant for the meek? It is planned not to turn the meek into aggressive people but to make them brave and to teach the aggressive to be humble, while preserving their courage. If the struggle can be won only by aggressive people courting imprisonment, we may take it that we are already defeated for, in that case, it is they who will rule. If that happens, we shall have to say that God is the support, not of the meek, but of the aggressive. Then Europe's doctrine of might being right will hold good even here. Is it for this that the Ali Brothers, Das, Lalaji and Motilalji have gone to jail?

We wish to eschew an aggressive spirit, as also hypocrisy, arrogance, violence, untruth, brute force, etc., and to ensure victory of non-violence, straightforwardness, humility, simplicity, truth and soul-force. Therefore, the first quality we should look for is what we call meekness. When meekness is infused with courage, it shines at its best. I expect this to happen in Bardoli too.

However, Bardoli has much more to do yet than what it has already done. It will have to work harder still. I heard these new words in Bardoli—“*Ujla lok*”<sup>1</sup> and “*Kaliparaj*”<sup>2</sup>. The former include *Patidars*, *Vanias*, Brahmins and others. The latter include *Dublas* and others. The people who have taken interest in and joined this struggle are the so-called respectable classes, and especially the *Patidars* among them. It is believed that the people of the *Kaliparaj* classes will follow the others and it seems likely that they will do so. But that will not be enough. Even the people of the *Kaliparaj* classes should learn to think of the country’s good. They also should share in the [national] awakening. That they do not do so means that they live in utter slavery. The very distinction of respectable people and *Kaliparaj* classes should disappear. That people should think of themselves as higher or lower in relation to some others is an intolerable state of affairs. God alone is high and we are all low. If there are any grades in God’s court, they must be according to one’s deeds. Those who have served more will be high, those who have served less will be low. That is to say, in God’s court a servant will become the leader. If a Sudra becomes a man of knowledge, there will be no Brahmin like him. He alone is a Brahmin who has no other use for his knowledge than service to others. If any Sudra can rival a Brahmin in service, the latter will be a Brahmin only in name. A Brahmin should have courage, practical wisdom and the spirit of service in a superlative degree, for he possesses knowledge. With the help of his knowledge he can display these three virtues to best effect. If, however, a Brahmin is timid, lacks practical wisdom and, giving up service, starts playing the leader, then he is no man of knowledge; he is an egotist. Hence the respectable and the *Kaliparaj* classes in Bardoli will have to reverse their roles. It will be best if the very word *Antyaj* is never used in Bardoli.

Volunteers, therefore, should now try to bring the *Kaliparaj* classes gradually into the movement. It is not enough, moreover that we admit *Antyaj* children into our schools or permit them to draw water from our wells. We shall have to help the *Antyajas* to rid themselves of the bad habits they may have contracted. It is as necessary to draw their attention to the need for a daily bath and such other rules, to persuade them to give up flesh-eating and to hold the

<sup>1</sup> Literally, fair-complexioned people

<sup>2</sup> Literally, dark-complexioned people

cow in reverence, as it is to mix with them.

The same about swadeshi. One cannot condone the wasting of even one hour by a resident of Bardoli. Men women and children, all should give their spare time to carding, spinning and weaving. The spinning-wheel, at any rate, should be introduced into every home. It is necessary to remove the almost complete dearth of weavers. The greater the number of young men who learn weaving, the better it will be. Bardoli will be an ideal taluka in every way only when we see attractive khadi being woven in every village or town in it.

There should not be a single village in Bardoli taluka in which the Congress flag does not fly. These are not tasks which can wait till we have won swaraj. Doing this-work is swaraj. There will be swaraj when people learn to Keep good relations among themselves, to obey one another and respect laws made by themselves.

There is no doubt that the evil of drink exists in Bardoli. People generally think that persuading drink-addicts to give up drinking is a difficult task. The difficulty proceeds from our lack of will. If we reason with friends who drink and open their eyes to the harm done by liquor, they will certainly listen to us.

All this work can be done only if we get a good number of volunteers.

Doing these things is a preparation for jail. It is possible that if we work in this way, we may not have to go to jail at all. Our fitness for going to jail consists in our purity and hence the residents of Bardoli should work unremittingly and remove whatever deficiencies still remain. Only then can the taluka be considered fit enough to shoulder the burden of the whole country

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 5-2-1922

### *43. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF BARDOLI*

BARDOLI

*Sunday, Maha Sud 8 [February 5, 1922]*

LEAFLET NO. 1

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF BARDOLI,

I intend to address, as regularly as possible, open letters to you.

It is not a light responsibility which you and I have undertaken. You have taken upon your shoulders a burden for the whole of India. You aspire to stand first in the test.

You wish to make the heaviest sacrifices and, with that end in view, you have been working for complete self-purification.

May God fulfil your wishes. But, then, God's grace does not descend upon us unless we strive.

I have just learnt that *Antyaj* children have already been enrolled in 18 national schools. I was indeed very happy to hear this. As long as there is a single national school without *Antyaj* pupils, it cannot be said that the resolution of the Parishad<sup>1</sup> has been carried out.

Similarly, spinning-wheels must be introduced into every home. No man or woman who has joined non-co-operation may wear anything except hand-spun khadi.

I hope that no intelligent person in the Bardoli taluka will pay land revenues no matter if the Government attaches property, imposes *chothai*<sup>2</sup>, carries away cattle or takes away the utensils on daily use. This is the minimum suffering we should bear.

What are we to do, someone may ask, if our lands are confiscated and we are rendered homeless? I do not think that the Government, if it wants to rule in a civilized manner, will confiscate lands. There is no doubt, however, that it has the power to do so if it chooses. We must be ready to become homeless. But anyone who fights for swaraj must have the faith that he will regain his land after swaraj is won. Even in an armed fight, the fighters have the confidence that they will get back their land when they win. How, then, can this peaceful struggle have any other result? But, while the struggle is going on, we should be ready even to lose our lands.

The very basis of this struggle is faith in oneself; that is, faith in God. I pray that all of you should have that faith.

*Your servant and well-wisher*

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

*Gujarati*, 12-2-1922

<sup>1</sup> The Bardoli Taluka Conference held on January 29, 1922

<sup>2</sup> One fourth of the assessment exacted as fine for failure to pay revenue dues



#### 44. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 5 [1922]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your welcome letter. You were certainly right in your attitude. Let the Government do what they choose. Please keep me informed of what goes on. At this stage I am not publishing the news. As you see I am in Bardoli preparing for mass civil disobedience. You must have read my letter to the Viceroy.

With love to you all,

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 74

#### 45. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BARDOLI,  
February 5, 1922

I interviewed Mahatmaji on Sunday<sup>2</sup> morning. He was quite hale and hearty and was about to begin in his daily round the item of spinning. His son Ramdas brought him a spinning-wheel and Mahatmaji as he went on turning the wheel replied to my questions . . . .

QUESTION: What has led the Working Committee to lay emphasis on foreign propaganda now, thus reversing the decision of the Nagpur Congress? ANSWER: The question is wrongly put. The Nagpur Congress did not taboo foreign propaganda by way of dissemination of news and the Working Committee has now called upon me to submit a scheme for dissemination of news in foreign countries and now I am taxing my wits to see what more the country can do beyond its sufferings to disseminate news in foreign countries.

How do you intend to organize the propaganda?

The question I answered by my reply to the first, that I have got to think out whether anything can be done by way of supplementing propaganda through sufferings. My own impression is that sufferings constitute the best and the most eloquent propaganda. However, as the Working Committee has put the burden on my shoulders, I shall

<sup>1</sup> The letter to the Viceroy mentioned in the text is evidently that of February 1, 1922.

<sup>2</sup> February 5

endeavour honestly to try and see whether anything more can be done.

Does not the fact that such a radical journal as the *Nation* of London should misread the situation in India and suggest your deportation show that there is abysmal ignorance in England regarding the true significance of your movement and that the Nagpur Congress decision was to a large extent responsible for this state of things?

I do not think so. In my opinion the British public and also other foreign countries are better informed today than they were before the Nagpur Congress. But ignorance such as the *Nation* has betrayed will always be there, when newspapers have to deal with events all the world over. In my opinion such ignorance is inevitable and we shall never be able to overtake it except by being more or less indifferent to what they say but doing everything that we can by our action to avoid the possibility of ignorances. Let me give an illustration. When I am deported or even executed the eyes of the whole world would be opened to the enormity of the wrong but not till then. Today English journals are entitled to distrust both my actions and my motives but when I am no longer on the scene to challenge ignorance by my speech these publicists will find it necessary to inform themselves better—that has been my experience. I could not interest South Africa or even India in the question relating to the status of the British Indians till people began to suffer and I have, therefore, learnt that it is no use talking to people who do not want to listen. Our sufferings will create a receptive atmosphere.

What do you think of the suggestion made recently in the *Chronicle* that an alliance of understanding should be come to with the leaders of suffering subject nations like Egypt and Ireland to fight the imperialism of the Western Nations by non-co-operation propaganda?

I should love to see such an alliance but that will come in its own time. It is my humble opinion that we are not getting sufficiently advanced in the direction to form a useful alliance. I do not believe in paper alliances. They will come naturally when we are ready.

Do you think that the defeat of the Bengal Government on the resolution for the withdrawal of repression and release of political prisoners will compel the Government to abandon repression or do you expect it to defy the Council? If the Councils are defied, do you not think that the Reforms will be shown once more to be a farce and will it not be a deliberate blow to the self-respect of the co-operators to continue a minute more in the Council?

It is as likely as not that the Government will recede from their untenable policy because of the resolve of the council. Had there been no non-co-operation such a resolution would have been treated with indifference, but now if they defy the Council, Government will have nothing but naked brutality to fall back upon and I cannot make such

interpretation of their action. In my opinion the very fact of repression such as is now going on is positive proof of the farcical nature of the Reforms. But flouting the Council's opinion will certainly be an ocular demonstration to the Councillors of their own impotence.

What do you make out of the release and re-arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai?

I can only pity a government which resorts to such shortsighted folly, of re-arresting Lala Lajpat Rai. It can only stiffen the attitude of the Punjabis and of Indians in general.

Do you expect to be arrested the moment Bardoli begins mass civil disobedience and are you convinced after your stay in Bardoli for over a week that the movement will not collapse in your absence?

It is very difficult to say what government will do to me when the time-limit expires. But I certainly do not expect the people of Bardoli to collapse immediately I am arrested. But if they do collapse, Government's action in arresting me will be certainly justified, by reason of any such weakening. If India is really ready then my arrest like the arrests of all other workers must result in non-co-operative activities being stimulated and the atmosphere of non-violence being retained. Personally I have no misgiving on the point, but it is difficult for anybody to say with certainty what will happen after my arrest. There is so much superstition regarding my supposed powers, human and superhuman, that sometimes I feel that my imprisonment, deportation and execution would be quite justified. This belief in the possession of superhuman powers by me is really a bar to national progress and Government will deserve the thanks of reasonable humanity, if they remove me from the people's midst and do not afterwards become mad themselves, but deal with justice and without terrorism. But recent events do not fill me with any such hope about the Government.

Are you convinced, apart from the resolution at the Bardoli Conference<sup>1</sup>, that Bardoli is really fit to undertake such a step? Has Bardoli become self-sufficient so far as production of pure khadi is concerned?

So far as I can see I certainly think that Bardoli is fit. No taluka is so much insured against non-violence as Bardoli and this assurance has undoubtedly counted with me a great deal in making up my mind. It has not been self-sufficient as yet, but it will be so presently. People are willing but further organization is necessary.

Can you still maintain in face of cases of assaults and flogging that still many more sufferings on an extensive scale in the present movement is the only shortest cut to swaraj with minimum sufferings?

<sup>1</sup> Of January 29, 1922

I have no doubt about it, because painful as the sufferings are, they would be still more if there was retaliation on the part of people. If people remain sufficiently non-violent, Government efforts would be exhausted for want of reaction. It is a scientific truth which admits of no exception. Therefore, whatever sufferings the people might have to go through now they would be hundred times greater if they offered violence against Government violence.

May I know if the sufferings of hundreds of young men in jails weigh upon your decision to take steps regarding mass civil disobedience? Do you not think that they should be honourably acquitted as early as possible having gained all that they fought for?

Certainly, and therefore it is that I have made their release and stoppage of all barbarity the exclusive issue for mass civil disobedience at the present moment.

Do you not expect Government to baffle your attempts by conniving at your civil disobedience activities at least for a long time to come? Can they not forgo their land revenue or postpone it till some distant day rather than precipitate an undesirable situation? What steps do you propose to take in that case?

Government can certainly do that. If they do, I will respect their wisdom and restraint by refraining from taking any irritating action. But that really means that, Bardoli having attained its freedom, her example would be infectious and, unless Government want to yield to popular opinion, they will make it a point of prestige to collect revenue at the point of the bayonet.

Do you believe the Muslims of India will stick to the irreducible minimum of the Congress demands with the same zeal even after the Khilafat question is settled to their satisfaction?

I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind about it, if only because what is gained in the matter of the Khilafat can only be retained by a self-governing India untrammelled by any dictation from Downing Street.

Do you notice any special characteristics of the peasantry of Bardoli?

It notice nothing special except the beautiful simplicity and innocence of the Bardoli farmers.

Was the letter recently addressed to the Viceroy due to any sort of Inspiration from any of the members of the Malaviya Conference?

It was entirely my own creation. As a matter of fact the members of the Working Committee were for a moment surprised at what they considered was change of front, though I thought that I had sufficiently prepared the ground in the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. There is no change of front in the manifesto, but it is simple adaptability to the exigencies of the situation. Supposing you are

making for a point and an impassable barrier has been placed in your way by the enemy. Your point of attack is naturally shifted and you will concentrate all your forces upon the barrier before you make further progress. That is precisely what I have done with the full approval of the Working Committee.

What do you expect those of the Moderates who took part in the Malaviya Conference to do in the event of the failure of the Viceroy to satisfy your conditions?

I would certainly expect them to rally round the standard of free speech, free association and a free Press and I expect them to ally themselves with non-co-operators at least to that extent, unless they find another and more expeditious method of forcing justice on the issue raised by me. So far as I understand there is no difference of opinion in the country.

Do you think the Viceroy will give effect to those conditions?

He ought to.

May I know, if you do not mind, what is going to be your first move in respect of mass civil disobedience?

My first move naturally would be to consolidate the movement for non-payment and then I shall have to see in what other directions I can offer civil disobedience without any danger of violence. You will remember I have the whole of the statutebook to break through save those resolutions which are also a part of the moral government of the universe.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 7-2-1922*

#### 46. SILENCE DAY NOTES

[February 6, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

I do not think South Africa Indians are ready for sacrifice nor is the pinch so great there—

East Africa Indians if they have any grit whatsoever should offer every form of passive resistance they can—

Churchill could not have made that speech without having India

<sup>1</sup> *Young India* of February 16, 1922, carried an article by C. F. Andrews on Churchill's speech mentioned in these notes. On February 4, Gandhiji invited Andrews to Bardoli for a talk; vide letter to Andrews of that date. On February 8, Andrews wrote to Gandhiji (S.N. 7896) saying that he had been unable to discuss all that he wished to "on-Monday" Gandhiji's "quiet day." These notes must therefore have been made on Monday, February 6.

Office squared. The Viceroy—nothing could be better than that the Viceroy and Montagu should resign on this question<sup>1</sup>.

But the Indian members too should do likewise, if they have any sense of self-respect—But I am sorry to say I have little hope at the present moment.

Water question is settled here. The “untouchables” can fetch water at the same wells—

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You need not send my note on spinning if you strongly disapprove of it. We shall discuss it.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2633

#### 47. *LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR*

BARDOLI,

*February 6, 1922*

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I have received your letter and your telegram also. I observe that my action in writing to the Viceroy has not pleased the Committee. I am sorry. I thought that I was careful enough if I did not start civil disobedience for nearly a fortnight. I did not understand that it was not right even to write to the Viceroy. I purposely-waited for three days before publishing the letter as was your desire.

I have been most careful too regarding what should, in my opinion, be done by those who sympathize with the prisoners and with the objects of the movement. Please convey this to the Secretaries of the Conference.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

*The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 556*

<sup>1</sup> The question of barring Indians from holding land in the Highlands and reserving it for Europeans only.

#### 48. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, February 6, 1922

You again, failed to come. I take this to be due to laziness on your part. Whatever decisions you make you must carry out.<sup>1</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, p. 43

#### 49. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

[February 6, 1922]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. PARASRAM<sup>3</sup>,

I have your letter. Is any work in connection with the spinning-wheel being done in Allahabad?

Blessings from  
BAPU

MASTER PARASRAM  
ANAND BHAVAN  
ALLAHABAD

From the Hindi original: C.W. 5994. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

#### 50. REJOINDER TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

[BARDOLI,

February 7, 1922]<sup>4</sup>

I have very carefully read the Government's reply to my letter to His Excellency. I confess that I was totally unprepared for such an evasion of the realities of the case as the reply betrays. I will take the very first repudiation. The reply says:

They (the Government) emphatically repudiate the statement that they

<sup>1</sup> The addressee had agreed to Gandhiji's suggestion to spend the weekends at Bardoli.

<sup>2</sup> From the postmark

<sup>3</sup> Parasram Mehrotra was at this time working in the office of the *Independent*, later he became a member of Gandhiji's Secretariat and Hindi teacher in the Ashram.

<sup>4</sup> This rejoinder was dictated by Gandhiji immediately on his seeing the Government's *communique* dated February 6, 1922, (*vide* Appendix "Government of India "Communique" on Gandhiji's Letter to Viceroy") in the newspapers at Bardoli on February 7, 1922, and was telegraphed to Associated Press at Delhi.

have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the Non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and a free Press.

Even a cursory glance at my letter would show that, whilst civil disobedience was authorized by the All-India Congress Committee meeting held on the 4th November at Delhi, it had not commenced. I have made it clear in my letter that the contemplated mass civil disobedience was indefinitely postponed on account of the regrettable events of the 17th November in Bombay. That decision was duly published, and it is within the knowledge of the Government as also the public that Herculean efforts were being made to combat the still lingering violent tendency amongst the people. It is also within the knowledge of the Government and the public that a special form of pledge was devised to be signed by volunteers with the deliberate purpose of keeping out all but men of proved character. The primary object of these volunteer associations was to inculcate amongst the masses the lessons of non-violence and to keep the peace at all non-co-operation functions. Unfortunately the Government of India lost its head completely over the Bombay events and perhaps still more over the very complete hartal on the same date at Calcutta. I do not wish to deny that there might have been some intimidation practised in Calcutta, but it was not, I venture to submit, the fact of intimidation but the irritation caused by the completeness of the hartal that maddened the Government of India as also the Government of Bengal. Repression there was even before that time, but nothing was said or done in connection with it but the repression that came in the wake of the notifications proclaiming the Criminal Law Amendment Act for the purpose of dealing with volunteer associations and the Seditious Meetings Acts for the purpose of dealing with public meetings held by non-co-operators came upon the non-co-operation community as a bombshell. I repeat then that these notifications and the arrests of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in Bengal, the arrests of Pandit Motilal Nehru and his co-workers in the U.P. and of Lala Lajpat Rai and his party in the Punjab made it absolutely necessary to take up—not yet aggressive civil disobedience—but only defensive civil disobedience otherwise described as passive resistance. Even Sir Hormusjee Wadia was obliged to declare that if the Bombay Government followed the precedents set by the Governor of Bengal, U.P. and Punjab, he would



be bound to resist such notifications, that is, to enrol himself as a volunteer or to attend public meetings in defiance of Government orders to the contrary. It is thus clear that a case has been completely made out for civil disobedience unless the Government revises its policy which has resulted in the stopping of public meetings, public associations and the non-co-operation Press in many parts of India.

Now for the statement that the Government “have embarked on a policy of lawless repression”. Instead of an ample expression of regret and apology for the barbarous deeds that have been committed by officials in the name of law and order I regret to find in the Government reply a categorical denial of any “lawless repression”. In this connection, I urge the public and Government carefully to consider the following facts whose substance is beyond challenge:

1. The official shooting at Entally in Calcutta and the callous treatment even of a corpse;
2. The admitted brutality of the Civil Guard;
3. The forcible dispersal of a meeting at Dacca, and the dragging of innocent men by their legs although they had given no offence or cause whatsoever;
4. Similar treatment of volunteers in Aligarh;
5. The conclusive (in my opinion) findings of the Committee presided over by Dr. Gokul Chand Narang about the brutal and uncalled for assaults upon volunteers and the public in Lahore;
6. Wicked and inhuman treatment of volunteers and the public at Jullundur;
7. The shooting of a boy at Dehra Dun and the cruelly forcible dispersal of a public meeting-at that place;
8. The looting admitted by the Bihar Government of villages by an officer and his company without any permission whatsoever from anyone, but as stated by non-co-operators at the invitation of a planter and the assaults upon volunteers and burning of khaddar and papers belonging to the Congress at Sonapur;
9. Midnight searches and arrests in Congress and Khilafat offices.

I have merely given a sample of many “infallible proofs” of

official lawlessness and barbarism. I have mentioned not even a tithe of what is happening all over the country, and I wish to state without fear of successful contradiction that the scale on which this lawlessness has gone on in so many provinces of India puts into shade the inhumanities that were practised in the Punjab if we except the crawling order and the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. It is my certain conviction that the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh was a clean transaction compared to the unclean transactions described above, and the pity of it is that because people are not shot or butchered, the tortures through which hundreds of inoffensive men have gone-through do not produce a shock sufficient to turn everybody's face against this Government, but as if this warfare against innocence was not enough, the reins are being tightened in the jails. We know nothing of what is happening today in the Karachi Jail, to a solitary prisoner in the Sabarmati Jail and to a batch in Banaras Jail, all of whom are as innocent as I claim to be myself. Their crime consists in their constituting themselves trustees of national honour and dignity. I am hoping that these proud and defiant spirits will not be bent into submission to insolence masquerading in the official garb. I deny the right of the authorities to insist on high-souled men appearing before them almost naked or pay any obsequious respect to them by way of salaaming with open palms brought together or rising to the intonation of "*Sarkar ek hai*". No godfearing man will do the latter even if he has to be kept standing in stocks for days and nights as a Bengal schoolmaster is reported to have been.

For the sake of dignity of human nature I trust that Lord Reading and his draughtsmen do not know the facts that I have adduced or, being carried away by their belief in the infallibility of their employees, refuse to believe in the statements which the public regard as God's truth. If there is the slightest exaggeration in the statements that I have made I shall as publicly withdraw them and apologize for them as I am making them now, but as it is I undertake to prove the substance of everyone of these charges if not the very letter, and much more of them before any impartial tribunal of men or women unconnected with the Government. I invite Pandit Malaviyaji and those who are performing the thankless task of securing a round table conference to form an impartial Commission to investigate these charges by which I stand or fall.

It is the physical and brutal ill treatment of humanity which has

made many of my co-workers and myself impatient of life itself, and in the face of these things I do not wish to take public time by dealing in detail with what I mean by abuse of the common law of the country but I cannot help correcting the misimpression which is likely to be created in connection with the Bombay disorders. Disgraceful and deplorable as they were, let it be remembered that of the 53 persons who lost their lives over 45 were non-co-operators or their sympathizers, the hooligans, and of the 400 wounded, to be absolutely on the safe side, over 350 were also derived from the same class. I do not complain. The non-co-operators and the friendly hooligans got what they deserved. They began the violence—they reaped the reward. Let it also not be forgotten that with all deference to the Bombay Government it was non-co-operators, ably assisted by Independents and Co-operators, who brought peace out of that chaos of the two days following the fateful 17th.

I must totally deny the imputation that “the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act was confined to associations, the majority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation.” The prisons of India today hold some of the most inoffensive men and hardly any who have either resorted to violence or intimidation and who are convicted under that law. Abundant proof can be produced in support of this statement as also of the statement of the fact that almost wherever meetings have been broken up there was absolutely no risk of violence.

The Government of India deny that the Viceroy had laid down, upon the apology of the Ali Brothers, the civilized policy of non-interference with the non-violent activities of non-co-operators. I am extremely sorry for this repudiation. The very part of the *communiqué* reproduced in the reply is in my opinion sufficient proof that the Government did not intend to interfere with such activities. The Government did not wish it to be inferred that “speeches promoting disaffection of less violent character were not an offence against the law” I have never stated that breach of any law was not to be an offence against it, but I have stated, as I repeat now, that it was not the intention of the Government then to prosecute for non-violent activities although they might amount to technical breach of the law.

As to conditions of the Conference the Government reply evidently omits to mention the two words “and otherwise, after the

words “Calcutta speech” in my letter. I repeat that the terms as I could gather from “the Calcutta speech and otherwise” were nearly the same that were mentioned in the resolutions of the Malaviya Conference. What are called unlawful activities of the N.C.O. party being a reply to the notifications of the Government would have ceased automatically with the withdrawal of those notifications, because the formation of Volunteer Corps and public meetings would not be unlawful activities after the withdrawal of the offending notifications. Even while the negotiations were going on in Calcutta the discharge of *fatwa* prisoners was asked for, and I can only repeat what I have said elsewhere that if it is disloyal to say that military or any service under the existing system of Government is a sin against God and humanity, I fear that such disloyalty must continue. The Government *communique* does me a cruel wrong by imputing to me a desire that the proposed Round Table Conference should be called “merely to register” my “decrees”. I did state in order to avoid any misunderstanding the Congress demands as I felt I was in duty bound, in as clear terms as possible. No Congressman could approach any conference without making his position clear, and I expected the ordinary courtesy of not considering me or any Congressman to be impervious to reason and argument. It is open to anybody to convince me that the demands of the Congress regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj are wrong or unreasonable, and I would certainly retrace my steps and so far as I am concerned rectify the wrong. The Government of India know that such has been always my attitude.

The *communique* strangely enough says that the demands set forth in my Manifesto<sup>1</sup> are even larger than those of the Working Committee; I claim that they fall far below the demands of the Working Committee, for what I now ask against total suspension of civil disobedience of an aggressive character is merely the stoppage of ruthless repression, the release of prisoners convicted under it and a clear declaration of policy. The demands of the Working Committee included a round table conference. In my Manifesto I have not asked for a round table conference at all. It is true that this waiving of a round table conference does not proceed from any expedience but it is a confession of present weakness. I freely recognize that unless

<sup>1</sup> Vide “Letter to Viceroy”, 1-2-1922.

India becomes saturated with the spirit of non-violence and generates disciplined strength that can only come from non-violence, she cannot enforce her demands and it is for that reason that I now consider that the first thing for the people to do is to secure a reversal of this mad repression and then to concentrate upon more complete organization and more construction, and here again the *communique* does me an injustice by merely stating that civil disobedience of an aggressive character will be postponed until the opportunity is given to the imprisoned leaders of reviewing the whole situation after their discharge, and by conveniently omitting to mention the following concluding sentences of my letter:

If the Government make the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall, therefore, have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to the clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

I venture to claim extreme reasonableness and moderation for the above presentation of the case.

The alternative before the people therefore is not, as the *communique* concludes, “between lawlessness with all its disastrous consequences on the one hand and on the other the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized Governments.”. “Mass civil disobedience” it adds, “is fraught with such danger to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity.” The choice before the people is between mass civil disobedience with all its undoubted dangers and lawless repression of lawful activities of the people. I hold that it is impossible for any body of self-respecting men, for fear of unknown dangers, to sit still and do nothing effective whilst looting of property and assaulting of innocent men are going on all over the country in the name of law and order.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7885

## 51. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF WORKING COMMITTEE <sup>1</sup>

*Confidential (Not for publication)*

BARDOLI,  
February 8, 1922

DEAR FRIEND,

This is the third time that I have received a rude shock when I have been on the eve of embarking upon mass civil disobedience. The first was in April 1919 the second in November last<sup>2</sup>, and now again I am violently agitated by the events in the Gorakhpur District. What has happened in Bareilly and Saharanpur where volunteers have been attempting to take possession of Town Halls has added considerably to the shaking. The civil disobedience of Bardoli can make no impression upon the country when disobedience of a criminal character goes on in other parts of the country, both for the same end. The whole conception of civil disobedience is based upon the assumption that it works in and through its completely non-violent character. I may be a bad student of human nature to believe that such an atmosphere can ever be brought about in a vast country like India, but that would be an argument for condemning my capacity for sound judgment, not for continuing a movement which is in that case bound to be unsuccessful. I personally can never be party to-a movement half violent and half non-violent, even though it may result in the attainment of so-called swaraj, for it will not be real swaraj as I have conceived it. A meeting of the Working Committee is, therefore, being called to consider the question on the 11th instant at Bardoli, first whether mass civil disobedience should not be suspended for the time being; and secondly, whether if it is suspended it should not be discontinued for a definite and sufficiently long period to enable the country to do organizing constructive work and to establish an indisputably non-violent atmosphere. I want to have the guidance of all the friends I can. I would like you to send me your opinion

<sup>1</sup> The following are excerpts from the introductory note in the source: "The civil disobedience at Bardoli, . . . was to have been started On the 12th February, 1922, on the expiry of the time-limit granted to the Viceroy . . . . But Mahatmaji suddenly changed his whole plan of action on the 8th, and . . . circulated a private letter to the members of the Working Committee indicating this change . . ."

<sup>2</sup> Vide "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

even though you may not be able to attend, either by letter, if it reaches in time, or by wire.

I am sending this letter only to the members of the Working Committee, but I would like you to consult all the friends you meet and if any of them wishes to come to take part in the deliberations please bring or send him or them.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 223-4

## *52. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR*

*Wednesday, February 8, 1922*

DEAR DR. KELKAR<sup>1</sup>

I think the money was paid to the Committee for swadeshi only. I do wish you will get the expert appointed and set about working soon. Please show this to Mr. Dastane<sup>2</sup>. I note what you say about the preacher. I am on my way to Bombay for a day.

*Yours sincerely*

M. K. GANDHI

DR. KELKER  
C/O DR. NULKAR  
JALGAON  
E. KHANDESH

From a photostat: G.N. 6107

## *53. LETTER TO HERMANN KALLENBACH*

BARDOLI,

*February 8 [1922]<sup>3</sup>*

MY DEAR LOWER HOUSE,

You will pardon me, I know, for writing to you so rarely. But how can I pardon you for not writing? You cannot plead want of time.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M. S. Kelkar; claimed to cure all diseases by the use of ice; known popularly as "Ice Doctor"

<sup>2</sup> A Congress worker of Khandesh in Maharashtra

<sup>3</sup> From the contents

I am making use of the enforced leisure I have got just now. I am waiting for the Bombay train which is late.

My life you know. Ramdas is not my companion and nurse. Devdas is attending to important work in another province. He has shaped wonderfully. Harilal is in prison. I am expecting to be deported. Even execution has been suggested. It sounds all funny. But I know that not a blade of grass moves without His will. And what does it matter what happens so far as we know it will be by His will. Ours is but to do.

How nice it would be when you can come and work side by side as of yore. Life is here changed. It is extraordinarily simple. But it has its charms.

Do please write occasionally. I would like you not merely to read but to study *Young India*.

I often meet Andrews. If I had leisure I would describe all my companions. But here is the train. Mahadev Desai whom I had commissioned to write to you is in jail and so are several thousands.

With love,

*Yours,*

UPPER HOUSE

[PS.]

Ramdas is here whilst I am writing this. Permanent address Ahmedabad.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

## 54. NOTES

### FROM HIS SOLITARY CELL

Here is a titbit from C. Rajagopalachari from Vellore Jail:

. . . I am allowed to write one letter a month and to receive similarly one letter a month, and am completely shut out from all politics, news and newspapers. . .

My asthma persists, though by keeping my stomach light I hold the upper hand over the enemy. I have gone down from 104 to 98 lbs. but that does not matter. . .

Your eyes would flow with delight if you saw me here in my solitary cell spinning.

This is a curious Government. The same law is supposed to reign in the country and yet what is a crime in Bengal is not a crime in



Madras. And the treatment in a Madras Jail is not the same as in a U.P. jail. George Joseph in the Agra Jail has all the comforts and privileges including newspapers. Rajagopalachari in Vellore Jail must live in solitude and have no newspapers. Rajagopalachari does not mind the deprivation of newspapers. I know that I would esteem it a privilege to be without any, but difference in treatment is obvious. Rajagopalachari's loss of flesh is a more serious matter. This, of course, may not be due to want of nourishing food but if the solitary cell is anything like I know, it must be almost death to an asthmatic patient. When you are locked up in a cell you are in a box with a few holes for just enough ventilation to keep you alive. There is little light and no cross ventilation. The air in a short time becomes thick and foul with your own exhalations. And you are doomed to re-breathe your own emissions. The least that humanity demands is that C. Rajagopalachari should have, if he has not, all the fresh air he can get day and night.

#### FROM DELHI JAIL

Mr. Asaf Ali writes a descriptive letter from the Delhi Jail. I copy from it extracts of public interest:<sup>1</sup>

. . . it is a matter of no little surprise to me that my health has appreciably improved since my incarceration....

. . . The discomforts of prison life Will be throughout our lives the most cherished of our memories like the scars of warriors....

Kindly remember me to Pandit Motilalji and Jawahar if you write to them as I cannot and please give my love to my Akka, I mean Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

The reader will remember that civil disobedience in Delhi was started by Mr. Asaf Ali and fifty-two other volunteers.

#### SHERWANI DISBARRED

The Allahabad High Court has not enhanced its prestige by disbarring Mr. Sherwani who had disbarred himself long before the Court took action. It is clear that some one must have instigated the Court to take action. Whoever did so has ill-served the High Court of Allahabad. The proceedings against Mr. Sherwani cannot frighten a single lawyer. They must have made some ashamed of being practitioners in a court which punishes a man for his political creed. The Court in my opinion was bound to take public notice of the fact

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

of non-co-operation and therefore of the fact that Mr. Sherwani was precluded by his creed from offering any defence in the lower court.

#### LALAJI'S REARREST

The Punjab Government could not do even a simple act of penitence gracefully. They were advised that the judge who convicted Lalaji and his companions did not know the law. They had therefore to release them. Instead of all being released together they were released separately and some at midnight. But that was by no means the most graceless part of the performance. Lalaji was rearrested immediately after his discharge. By this action the Punjab Government have shown themselves more vindictive than penitent. The release they could not help, nor could they help their pettiness. They did not want Lalaji to be free for a single moment and therefore they rearrested him. Although an under-trial prisoner, his people including his son are not allowed to see him. They knew that Lalaji would not escape "justice" if they served on him a summons. But such a natural and courteous step was too simple for the Punjab Government. I congratulate Lalaji on his rearrest and sympathize with Pandit Santanam, Malik Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand for their premature discharge.

#### PENSION OR DEFERRED PAY

I have now procured paragraph 351 of Section 1, Chapter 15 of General Rules regarding ordinary pensions, under which Mr. Joshi of Dharwar has been deprived of his pension. The rule reads as follows:

Future good conduct is an implied condition of every grant of a pension. The local Government, the Government of India, and the Secretary of State in Council reserve to themselves the right of withholding or withdrawing a pension or any part of it, if the pensioner be convicted of serious crime or be guilty of grave misconduct.

The decision of the Secretary of State in Council on any question of withholding or withdrawing the whole or any part of a pension under this Regulation shall be final and conclusive.

To a layman, it is one and the same thing whether you call it pension or deferred pay or anything else. It cannot be given to a servant who has proved faithless in the discharge of his duty or who, on the termination of active service, by his future conduct proves undeserving. A servant on pension has, perhaps, need to be more careful about his conduct than a servant in active service for the

simple reason, that whilst on duty he is under watch, off duty he is on trust. Judged by this standard and considered as a public servant, Mr. Joshi has not only done nothing reprehensible but has done what any honourable man will do, that is to say, in the evening of his life put such talents as he has unreservedly at the disposal of the public, although in law he is entitled to pass his time in rest and retirement. A government responsive to public opinion cannot be treated as different from the public. The interest of the latter must be the paramount consideration of the former; therefore, if Mr. Joshi is now, in the light of existing facts, throwing in his lot with the public he is as much serving the Government as the country. If Sir Michael belonged to the same public service and was bound by the same code of honour as Mr. Joshi or Maulana Shaukat Ali, it is Sir Michael O'Dwyer who stands condemned out of his own mouth and who, in terms of the regulation I have quoted, ought to be deprived of the pension of which by constant and venomous vilification of his paymasters he is proving himself totally unworthy. That Sir Michael may really believe what he says and may honestly hold the opinion that educated Indians are idiots or traitors to their country and that the uneducated masses deserve to be treated no better than the cattle, is beside the point. God alone knows a man's motive. But man can only Judge another by his acts. And just as non-co-operators are very properly and rigidly judged not by their motive as it is set forth in their pledge or declared from a thousand platforms, but by their acts and those of their associates, so also must public servants on pension or otherwise be judged by what they do and not by what they think or say they think.

#### THE ALI BROTHERS

I reproduce the following telegram<sup>1</sup> received from Karachi by post because it would not be sent by the authorities:

Maulana Mahomed Ali reduced 25 lbs. in jail. . . .

Medical Officer recommended groundnuts or extract of cheese by way of food for Maulana Mahomed Ali on account of diabetes. Superintendent not disposed but after all provided groundnuts worth one anna per day and on Maulana's insistence raised it to two annas. This serves as his morning meal.

. . . Maulana Shaukat Ali, Doctor Kitchlew, Maulvi Nisar Ahmed, Pir Gulam Majid were asked on Saturday the 28th to submit to search of their person, a practice commonly followed in jail in case of convicts. This consists in making the-prisoners absolutely naked with the exception of a

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

*langoti*<sup>1</sup> made loose. The prisoners in this condition are asked to raise hands and open their mouths as though to show if there was anything hidden anywhere. This humiliation Maulana Shaukat Ali and his companions were saved so far. On Saturday the 28th on being asked to submit to this they refused. On Monday the 30th their person was forcibly searched and as punishment for refusing voluntarily to submit to this indignity, humiliation, the forenamed leaders have been confined to solitary cells for one month . . .

Maulana Mahomed Ali protests and demands like treatment.

The leaders in jail ready to obey all jail rules except those that offend against their religion or against their sense of honour and dignity as Indians or human beings.

The jail authorities were up to the last moment asked by the leaders to refer the matter to Government but they refused to wait<sup>2</sup>.

It is evident that instructions have gone forth that the policy of wise discretion is to give place to the policy of cast iron rigidity of enforcement of prison rules. Imagine Maulana Shaukat Ali or any of the high-spirited prisoners standing almost naked before the jailor and in the presence of one another and submitting to what to them must be a most humiliating examination. I can understand the necessity and utility of such examination of confirmed criminals for whom alone the ordinary prison regulations are framed but it is nothing short of lunacy to enforce obedience to such regulations on the part of men who apart from their political agitation have been regarded as orderly citizens and in some cases even as distinguished public men. To enforce some of the present regulations in respect of such prisoners is hopelessly to ignore the reality and to court trouble. Ordinary discipline must be exacted from the best of men when they happen to be in prison, more so when they court imprisonment. Discomfort of jail life they must expect and cannot grumble at. Respect for the jail officials must be exacted from them if they will not give it voluntarily and gracefully. But discipline must not take the form of humiliation. Discomfort must not be torture, and respect must not take the form of crawling on one's belly. And therefore, on pain of being put in irons, in solitary confinement or of being shot, non-co-operating prisoners must decline even in the name of discipline to stand naked before the jailer, must decline in the name of discomfort to wear stinking clothes or to eat food that is unclean or indigestible and must similarly decline even in the name of respect to open out their palms or to sit in

<sup>1</sup> Loin-cloth

<sup>2</sup> Write

a crouching position or to shout *Sarkar if hai* or “Sarkar Salam” when a jail official is passing. And if the Government is now intent upon putting us through the fire in the jails and subjects us to physical pains in order to bend us, we must respectfully decline to be humiliated and must fall back upon God to give us strength to withstand studied humiliation and to suffer physical tortures instead. Let the proud Brothers and their comrades purify the Karachi Jail. Let the proud Sindhi Professor Kripalani sanctify the Banaras prison, for I understand that Professor Kripalani and his pupils who are undergoing imprisonment in Banaras have found it impossible to countenance the unutterable humiliations that those non-co-operators who have been brought to the Banaras Jail have been subjected to. It passes comprehension that in the United Provinces, where the treatment of political prisoners is supposed to be ideal, whilst it is certainly all that could be desired in Agra and Lucknow, that in Banaras and elsewhere it should be otherwise. Does it mean that the local officials are out of control and disregard orders from headquarters and have become a law unto themselves? Let the public imagine from these incidents what untold sufferings the criminals must be undergoing in the jails of India. I am not inclined to believe that political prisoners are alone specially singled out for that treatment. On the contrary, I believe that the real criminals are much worse treated for they are easily cowed down in jails, and jailors and warders being almost irresponsible become despotic and subject criminals to heartless treatment. We who have in our ignorance or selfishness hitherto supported a system of government under which a microscopic minority has brought under subjection millions of human beings will have to answer before our Maker for many a crime against humanity committed nominally in the name of law and order, but really in the interest of this minority—crimes that have never seen the light of day and of which we could not have even heard but for the immolation of non-co-operators.

In the face of the humiliation sought to be imposed upon the prisoners, it seems petty to have to criticize the meanness of authorities in Karachi in withholding from Maulana Mahomed Ali even the diet prescribed by the Jail doctor and necessitated by the disease which the Maulana is suffering from. I am really hoping that the information about the refusal to supply the Maulana with cheese or enough groundnuts is not correct and that there is a reasonable explanation for it.

But be the treatment what it may, the course before those who are not in prison is clear. We must not be irritated into taking a false or a hasty step. We are dealing with a system that is rotten to the core and that has debased humanity whether English or Indian. We are really dealing with a disease. I refuse to think that either Englishmen or Indians are fiends by deliberation. On the contrary, I am confident that they do not know what they are doing. It is certain that they do not think that they are doing anything wrong and it is highly probable that many of them even consider that terrorism is a part of humane treatment in given circumstances, even as many of us in our impatience do things in ordinary relations which we cannot justify except under the plausible plea of necessity.

Since writing the foregoing I have received the further news that the Brothers have refused to be voluntarily searched, that search was forcibly made, that they were “punished in cells” (meaning, I presume, solitary confinement) and that the men in charge were behaving in an ungentlemanly manner. I should be extremely sorry to find all this to be true. There was reason to believe that the Government attitude towards known public men in the prisons would be perfectly gentlemanly and that they would not be subjected to any indignities. If the reported ill treatment of the Ali Brothers proves to be true, the Government will have themselves to thank if the agitation against them reaches white heat.

It is evident that God wants non-co-operators to be tried through and through. I know that the Brothers are brave enough to stand the fiery ordeal and come out scatheless. All the Karachi prisoners are picked men, well able to take care of themselves. The public will nevertheless feel keenly the indignities that are being heaped upon the Brothers, Dr. Kichlew, Pir Gulam Majid and their companions. Notwithstanding all this senseless irritation and provocation we must be self-restrained. Our final salvation lies in the strictest adherence to our pledge. If we feel keenly let us be still more non-violent, not less so; let us further concentrate on civil disobedience, let us lose no time in fulfilling the conditions necessary for civil disobedience. Let Hindus, Mussulmans and other races come still closer, let us rid ourselves of the remnants of foreign cloth still in our possession, let us bestir ourselves to manufacture more hand-spun khadi. Our progress depends upon calmly fulfilling the programme mapped out by ourselves and not wasting a single minute in idle fretting and fuming.

Let us not worry about the ill treatment of those who are in jail. The Government have made no terms with us as to treatment. We have unconditionally surrendered our bodies to them even to be hacked to pieces without a quiver if God will give us the strength. We must not lose temper on any account.

#### FALSE CHARGES

In their feverish anxiety to support the policy of repression, the officials in charge of the defence of that policy have not hesitated to make use of statements that cannot be supported. Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb writes to me saying that he has never contemplated, approved of or incited to violence after he entered into the national compact to observe the strictest non-violence in connection with the movement of non-co-operation. He says that he has both preached and practised it fully and conscientiously. The unregistered *Independent* says:

Maulana Abdul Bari I writing in the daily *Hamdam* contradicts the statement made by Sir William Vincent in the course of the Censure Debate that he (the Maulana) was a votary of violence. He denies having made any speech during the last four months. In his latest written address read before a meeting of the Muslims, he strongly advocated non-violent non-co-operation as the only means open to the Indian Muslims for the redress of the Khilafat wrong. He has not lost hope, he says, in the non-violent Congress and Khilafat programme in the end forcing the hands of the British Government to redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs and enabling India to remain as a free partner of the British commonwealth of self-governing nations.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes as follows about the charge brought against him:

Sir Ludovic Porter, Finance Member of the Government of the United Provinces, is reported to have made the following remarks in his speech delivered in the U.P. Council On the 23rd January:

"I allude to Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. His final effort was a speech somewhere in the west of the Provinces in which he quoted word by word the sedition section, i.e., the promotion of disaffection against the Governments by law established, and the section which deals with promoting hatred between classes of His Majesty's subjects, and he said that the object of his life was to carry out this promotion of sedition and disaffection."

This is incorrect. On no occasion and in no speech have I quoted the sedition section or any other section of the Penal Code word by word or in any other manner. I do not carry about a copy of the Indian Penal Code with me and I have not thought it worthwhile to learn any of its sections by heart. What I

have stated, however, on more than one occasion is that I considered it my business, as it was the business of every Indian, to promote disaffection against the present system of government in India. And I was thus continually sinning against Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code. I have never, I trust, said anything which might lead people to think that I desire to promote "hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects". I have endeavoured to the best of my ability, whenever an occasion offered itself, to do the very reverse of this. And indeed if it were otherwise I would be a bad non-co-operator and utterly unworthy of being a humble follower of the great leader whose mission it is to demonstrate anew to the world the invincible might of love and truth

It never occurred to these officials who have libelled the character of two honourable public men that if they have preached or approved of violence, the charges should be fully proved against them by incontestable evidence. Will Sir William Vincent apologize to Maulana Bari and Sir Ludovic Porter to Pandit Jawaharlal ?

#### A COMEDY OF ERRORS

Not knowing any other Lala Shyam Lal but of Rohtak I have committed a bad blunder and have paid premature compliments to Lala Shyam Lal of Rohtak instead of his namesake who is also a *vakil* but of Hissar. I apologize to Lala Shyam Lal of Hissar and accept of him, what Lala Shyam Lal says in his letter, that all the flattering remarks I have made about him apply to the Hissar friend "with greater force". Lala Shyam Lal of Rohtak adds:

His example is inspiring. Soon after his arrest, his noble wife has thrown herself into the work and this has given great impetus to the Congress activity in the Hissar District.

#### CAUTION ABOUT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Writing of his own District Lala Shyam Lal says:

The District Magistrate here does not believe in making arrests unless there is apprehension of a breach of the peace. The result is that our volunteers are having their own way. No foreign cloth is being imported. No liquor contract has been sold.

Lala Shyam Lal then inquires whether in the districts where no arrests are made people should go out of their way to court arrest. I thought that I had made the position absolutely clear in previous issues. Whilst we may do nothing to avoid arrest in the ordinary course of our duty, we must not go outside our beat in order to



compel arrest. That would be either aggressive civil disobedience or criminal disobedience. The latter is out of question. The former, i.e., aggressive civil disobedience is a right to be exercised when necessary and when we are thoroughly ready, and is also a duty we must discharge if we are ready and circumstances require the performance of it. But aggressive civil disobedience whether mass or individual is a most dangerous weapon though also most effective among all the peaceful weapons at our disposal. I am myself satisfied that the country as a whole is not ready for this form of self-assertion. We have to go through much greater and stricter discipline. We have to understand the exact, I was almost going to say, the spiritual value of obedience to laws and discipline which may be irksome and even repugnant to us. Assertive civil disobedience is a right that accrues to us only after severe *tapasya* through which we have not yet gone. Any premature resort to assertive civil disobedience therefore may precipitate a crisis we neither anticipate nor want, and which we must avoid by every means we can think of. The least therefore that we must do is to await the result of the experiment I personally wish to conduct. It is a new thing and surely simple prudence requires us to watch that experiment. Indeed, if aggressive civil disobedience, whether mass or individual, is attempted in other parts of India, it is likely to embarrass me and damage country's cause. I invite the attention of all non-co-operators to the resolution of the Working Committee which now makes it incumbent upon all the Congress organizations to refrain from aggressive civil disobedience except with my express consent and so far as I can see the only exception I am likely to make will be in favour of a group of 100 villages in Andhradesha. But even there I have informed Sjt. Konda Venkatappayya that if it is at all possible for him to avoid taking the offensive I would appreciate it and that he would resort to it only if he found that retracing would be demoralizing and if humanly speaking he was certain of non-violence being observed throughout Andhradesha and also certain that the other conditions laid down by the Congress strictly fulfilled. I have a suspicion that in many parts of India the condition about the hand-spun khadi is not being strictly out and that we are not yet everywhere cured of the disease of untouchability. In my opinion the ability to go to jail is of far less consequence than ability and the readiness to observe in their fullness the conditions about Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian unity, about untouchability and hand-spun khadi. Without a due fulfilment of

these conditions, we shall find that all our going to jail is bravado and so much wasted effort. Self-purification is the main consideration seeking the prison. Embarrassment of the Government is a secondary consideration. It is my unalterable conviction that even though the Government may not feel embarrassed in any way whatsoever by the incarceration or even execution of an innocent, unknown but a purified person, such incarceration will be the end of that Government. Even a single lamp dispels the deepest darkness. Non-co-operation is not allopathic treatment, it is homoeopathic. The patient does not taste the drops given to him. He is sometimes even incredulous, but if the homoeopathy are to be trusted, the tasteless drops or the tiny pills of homoeopathy are far more potent than ounce doses or choking pills of allopathy. I assure the reader that the effect of purifying non-co-operation is more certain than the effect of homoeopathic medicine. I do wish, therefore, that everywhere non-co-operators will insist upon due fulfilment of all the conditions of civil disobedience. One may be a lawyer, title-holder, even a councillor and yet properly eligible for civil disobedience if he is sincerely non-violent in thought, word and deed, wears hand-spun khadi as a sacred duty, shuns untouchability as an intolerable evil and believes in the unity of all races and classes of India, as for all time essential for the well-being and the attainment, as also retention, of swaraj.

#### AGGRESSIVE V. DEFENSIVE

It is now necessary to understand the exact distinction between aggressive civil disobedience and defensive. Aggressive, assertive or offensive civil disobedience is non-violent, wilful disobedience of laws of the State whose breach does not involve moral turpitude and which is undertaken as a symbol of revolt against the State. Thus, disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the State, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship and do not require to be altered, would be assertive, aggressive or offensive civil disobedience.

Defensive civil disobedience, on the other hand, is involuntary or reluctant non-violent disobedience of such laws as are in themselves bad and obedience to which would be inconsistent with one's self-respect or human dignity. Thus formation of Volunteer Corps for peaceful purposes, holding of public meetings for like purposes, publication of articles not contemplating or inciting to violence in

spite of prohibitory orders, is defensive civil disobedience. And so is conducting of peaceful picketing undertaken with a view to wean people from things or institutions picketed in spite of orders to the contrary. The fulfilment of the conditions mentioned above is as necessary for defensive civil disobedience as for offensive civil disobedience.

#### A WELL-DESERVED SNUB

Mr. P. V. Hanmantrao of Tanjore is reported to have apologized and asked the Madras Government for discharge. The latter have properly asked for security on the ground that a non-co-operator has betrayed the trust reposed in him. The Madras Government say that Mr. Subramania Siva, a prisoner who was ailing and who applied for his discharge, undertook not to take part in politics for some time and has now turned round and denies having apologized. Mr. Subramania Siva is a well-known public worker. I hope he will clear himself by making a full statement and if he apologized in a weak moment I hope he will have, like Mr. Yakoob Hassan, the courage of making a manly confession. Everybody knows that he is suffering from a fell disease and the public will certainly overlook his weakness if he apologized in the circumstance. He must also keep his promise, if he made it, of not taking part in politics for one year. Non-co-operators cannot afford to be weak, they cannot hide their weakness. Above all they must be scrupulously honest and must rigidly perform all their promises even though they might have been made in a weak moment, unless their performance involves any immorality.

#### AMONG CHRISTIAN CIRCLES

The talk, I hear, is going the round among Christian circles that I have said in private conversation that, had India been equipped for the use of arms, I would certainly have resorted to and advised the use of arms. I had fondly hoped that such a thing could never have been said and believed of me in India. I assure my Christian and other readers that I have never made any such statement to any person whatsoever. On the contrary, it has been my belief and practice for over forty years deliberately to practise the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, not to retaliate. There are more instances than one in my public life when with the ability to retaliate, I have refrained from doing so and advised friends to do likewise. My life is dedicated to the spread of that doctrine. I read it in the teaching of all the greatest teachers of the world, Zoroaster, Mahavir, Daniel, Jesus, Mahomed, Nanak and a host of others. Indeed, I am not sure that we do justice to

Moses when we impute to him the doctrine of retaliation in the sense that he made it obligatory on his followers to exact tooth for a tooth. It may be my wish that is father to the thought. But I do think that in an age when people were unrestrained in their appetite for the enemy's blood, Moses restricted retaliation to equal measure and no more. But I must not lead the reader into religious discussion. Whilst, however, non-violence is now, has ever been, and I pray to God, it ever may be my final creed for all occasions, it is true that there are thousands in the ranks of non-co-operation with whom non-violence is an expedient or a policy to which they are not committed for all time and all circumstances. They believe that for India, as she is constituted, there is no method but that of non-violence for regaining her freedom. And this they believe not merely because she has no arms or training in them but also because with her diverse creeds and races there is nothing for her but constant internecine strife, if her children began the habit or invoking the god of war for every occasion. The best of us are beginning to see more in the doctrine of non-violence than when we first approached it.

In this connection my attention has also been drawn to a paragraph in the *Dnyanodaya*. Sadhu Sundar Singh, it is there stated, "made quite plain his profound disapproval of Mr. Gandhi's method telling him in so many words that they can lead India to nothing but ruin and useless suffering". I am sorry that the Sadhu's name has been thus dragged into the controversy. But now that it has been, in justice to the Sadhu and the cause, I must say that so far as *my* recollection goes, not only did he not disapprove of my methods in "so many words" but he entirely approved of them and agreed that India had no other choice. We had the closest communion. The Sadhu came purposely to understand some things about which he had no first-hand knowledge. He did not know, for instance, what the implications of the Hindu-Muslim friendship were and where the minorities stood and whether the movement could remain non-violent to the end. We had long discussions over all these and other matters and he certainly left on me the impression that for a religious man there was no course left open. The greatest difficulty undoubtedly is about the masses keeping non-violent to the end. With men nothing may be possible, for God nothing is impossible. I would fain have avoided any reference whatsoever to our conversation. But the friends who have brought the matter to my notice tell me that Sadhu Sunder Singh is on the waters and that the paragraph in question is being exploited to wean Indian Christians from the movement. It has to

stand or fall on its own merits. No certificate can save it if its professors betray their trust; no condemnation can injure it permanently if the professors remain true to it to the end. But I felt that I could not withhold from the public what I knew about Sadhu Sunder Singh's views.

#### IS A NEW AGE DAWNING?

Mr. Pearson has answered the question in the affirmative in his article, the first part of which I am publishing in this issue. Some may consider the article to be too hopeful. It is, however better to be hopeful than despondent. The best proof perhaps of the dawning of a new age is to be found in the wonderful reception that Europe and America accorded to the Poet of Asia<sup>1</sup> who represents the new spirit and the new hope. He was not honoured for his birth or even for his learning. He was honoured for the new message for which he stands. But it seems almost too much to hope that the dawn will come before the sordid spirit of imperialism, for which Britain seems to stand, is completely broken up. Britain must cease to be an Empire and become truly a Commonwealth or die before the new age is ushered. She is today the greatest menace to the peace of the world if only because some of her best men sincerely believe that she is the one Power that is keeping the peace today. They refuse to see that an armed or imposed peace is no peace. Unless therefore somehow or other Britain changes her policy and therefore her heart, a world war more serious even than the Anglo-German must precede the dawn. Let us pray and work for the necessary change of Britain's heart.

#### TOO SACRED FOR PUBLICATION

There are things one does not like to see published, not because there is anything secret about them but because they are too sacred for publication. Sometimes the published version gives an impression totally different from the spoken word even though the reporting may be ever so accurate. When I call a little child a fiend in perfect good humour or with a frown, it would not do to report me as having called some one a fiend without giving long explanations as to the why and the how. Some such disservice has been done by the manifestly friendly reporter of a conversation and a discourse at Satyagraha Ashram as reported in *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 2nd instant.<sup>2</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore

<sup>2</sup> The conversation, as also reported in *The Hindu*, 2-2-1922, read: "The night

dislike such things being reported. In a swift conversation there are many things understood. An accurate report of such a conversation is impossible without copious footnotes. I am for instance reported as having said that Shantiniketan is for material progress and Satyagraha Ashram exists solely for spiritual progress. When the Poet sees this he will either laugh at it if he remembers that I could not possibly say or mean any such thing about Shantiniketan, or he will be angry and despondent that even I should be so hopelessly ignorant and inartistic as not to see the spirituality of Shantiniketan. The Poet, I feel sure, is not likely to do me the injustice of thinking me capable of holding the belief imputed to me. I could say to the Poet, as indeed I have done, that Shantiniketan lacks discipline. He had laughed over it and even endorsed my criticism and justified it saying he was a Poet and Shantiniketan was for his amusement. He could only sing and make others sing. I was free to introduce all the discipline I liked but he was only a Poet. The reader must know that I have lived at Shantiniketan for more than once. I am permitted to regard it as a home of retreat. My boys have had shelter there and at the Gurukula when I was away in England.<sup>1</sup> My conversation with the Hindi teacher was on the basis that both he and I were lovers of Shantiniketan. How can Shantiniketan be otherwise than spiritual when the author of pure spiritual poetry is the dominating spirit there? I am not so dull as to think that a place where Devendranath Tagore<sup>2</sup> lived could be devoid of spirituality. The readers of *Young India* are aware that I receive spiritual draughts from Shantiniketan from time to time sent by Badadada who is incessantly watching over me and praying for the success of my mission. I hasten to inform the reader that I regard

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before Mahatmaji called the old occupants to his side and asked their opinion about the Ashram. Different opinions were expressed. Some found the rules of the Ashram strict, others wanted them still more strict. Then the teacher of Hindi at Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, who was formerly at the Shantiniketan, said, 'We from U.P. do not like the food for the evening meal and to get up in the morning at four. Well, it is absolutely impossible for me.' Bapuji smiled and said, 'You see your Shantiniketan is for material progress, while Satyagraha Ashram exists solely for spiritual progress. You say at Shantiniketan there is more individual liberty, but I do not call that liberty I call it licence. It is nice to get up early. It is after prarthana every morning that I write for *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I can concentrate ever so well in the morning than at any other time. You see it is not difficult to get up early if you go to bed early. As for me, you know that ten o'clock is my bed time'."

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to Mahatma Munshiram", 8-2-1915.

<sup>2</sup> Father of Rabindranath Tagore

many professors and teachers of Shantiniketan as highly spiritual and good men whose association I have valued as a privilege. I must further inform the reader that I consider Bengal to be the most spiritual among our provinces. The whole of my conversation which is unfortunately reported was carried on in a humorous strain. I have often claimed among lovers of Shantiniketan greater spirituality for Satyagraha Ashram than Shantiniketan. But such competition and claim must not be interpreted into an assumption of superiority. I am most desirous to keep Satyagraha Ashram veiled from the public. We are there a band of humble unlettered workers knowing our own failings, trying to understand them still further and undoubtedly intent upon finding the truth and wanting to live and die for it. Comparisons between kindred but not identical institutions must never be made. But if a comparison must be made, in spite of the early rising and the discipline of Satyagraha Ashram, I would vote really and sincerely for Shantiniketan as an elder brother. It is older by far in age and I know it is so also in wisdom. But there is that “but”. The inmates of Shantiniketan must beware of the race that the little place in Gujarat is running.

Having said so much of Shantiniketan by way of reparation, I have no time or space left for giving my version of the morning discourse<sup>1</sup> nor must I attempt it. It came from the very depth of my soul. I could not report it myself with the same force. I heard a sister give it in one sentence. It was so true. I wish the unknown friend had never thought of reporting it. The report does not convey the central truth of it.

#### IN HOLY BANARAS

What is going on in Banaras is graphically described in the following telegram:<sup>2</sup>

. . . volunteers sentenced twentieth six weeks rigorous for distributing notices inviting volunteers, enlistment. Till now treated simple imprisonment. Second instant imposed labour. Refused. Confined solitary cells, besides insanitation. Starving waterless. . . . Kripalaniji, others, even ordinary criminals protest hunger strike since third today . . . position anxious.

#### IN ANDHRA

The reader will peruse with profit a note prepared by Mr. Narsinha Rao regarding the preparation in Andhra for civil

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Speech at Satyagraha Ashram, Ahmedabad”, 26-1-1922

<sup>2</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

disobedience. I supplement it with the following from Deshabhakta K. Venkatappayya written on the 2nd instant :<sup>1</sup>

IN POONA

Mr. N. C. Kelkar and his courageous band are making headway. The Government will not imprison them. They have now imposed a fine of Rs. 50/- on Mr. Kelkar for picketing. This of course he has refused to pay. If Mr. Kelkar and the others continue to picket in spite of the fines, they must suffer material ruin. I hope they will all stand that test. To put up with loss of property is as necessary as loss of life for the national uplift.

IN THE SABARMATI JAIL

As if there was design in the move, an echo of the Karachi Jail comes now from Sabarmati Jail. Jairamdas [Daulatram] will not salaam in the degrading manner prescribed, he will not submit to the search. He is, therefore, confined to a solitary cell, he is deprived of light and sandals. It is said that he will have still further penalties imposed on him, if he does not yield. He may be put in irons and kept standing for three days. Such penalty has been paid before now by our forefathers, it has been paid in all times and in many lands. I hope that God will give strength to the prisoners who have challenged the authorities and that they will not surrender though they should have to die.

*Young India*, 9-2-1922

### 55. *THE ONLY ISSUE*

It was not without deep thought and prayer that I wrote the letter to His Excellency the Viceroy. It is not a threat because every word in it is meant. It is a heartfelt prayer to the tyrant to desist from evil. Lord Reading is not the tyrant. The system of which he is himself an unconscious and helpless victim is the tyrant. But every system becomes embodied in a person. Today it is personified in Lord Reading, no matter how unconscious he is of it. I have invited him in all humility seriously to consider the position and ask himself whether the official lawlessness can in any case be justified. Let him turn to the

<sup>1</sup> The letter, not reproduced here, described non-co-operators' activities at Guntur and Nellore.



week's summary<sup>1</sup> to which the old heading "In Cold Blood" is restored. It is all true if the witnesses are not all liars. Should these things be?

But what of defiance of authority? Must defiance (non-violent at least) indeed of authority be met by barbarous and wicked abuse of it?

If the Viceroy cannot or will not see such an incredibly simple issue must India sit still? Defensive civil disobedience must continue at any cost. If the whole of India were to say that even peaceful public meetings may not be held without permission, that peaceful volunteer associations may not be formed without permission, and that newspapers cannot be published without permission, that prohibition cannot be accepted. For a man may not be expected to ask for another's leave to breathe or eat or drink. The three things I have mentioned are the breath, the food and the drink of public life.

*Young India*, 9-2-1922

## 56. IN A TANGLE

Sir Henry Wheeler has given us an accurate expression for describing the position of the Bengal Government and for that matter even the Government of India. He considered the debate in the Bengal Legislative Council on the resolution calling upon the Government to cancel all the repressive notices and to discharge all the prisoners convicted under them "a hopeless unreality". For him who perhaps does not know what is going on in Bengal except what his subordinates choose to tell him, the debate may be "a hopeless unreality". The fifty Councillors who have first hand knowledge of things as they are, refused to be misled by Sir Henry's oratory. To them, the position taken up by the Bengal Government was "a hopeless unreality". The lawlessness in the country described by Sir Henry Wheeler existed only in his imagination. What was real did not in their estimation need the drastic measures that the Bengal Government had taken. The Councillors knew that such lawlessness as existed in Bengal was disciplined, civil, non-violent and necessitated by the thoughtless action of the authorities. Sir Henry Wheeler failed to drive home to his audience his conviction that Chitta Ranjan Das,

<sup>1</sup> Of accounts of atrocities committed by the police published in *Young India*, 9-2-1922

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shyam Sundar Chakravarti and now even Babu Hardayal Nag, the aged President of the Provincial Congress Committee, had any mischievous intention. With the imprisonment of these trusted leaders of the people and many other innocent workers in their minds, the terrifying description given by Sir Henry Wheeler appeared to the members as unreal as it possibly could be and failed to frighten them into rejecting the resolution. The Councillors deserve congratulations for the courageous stand they took up for Freedom of opinion, because the lawlessness that Sir Henry Wheeler complained of amounts to no more than insistence in defiance of prohibitory orders upon the exercise of the right of free speech and free association.

Forcible dispersal of peaceful meetings, search and seizure of Congress and Khilafat papers and assaults upon the public were such a grim reality with the Councillors that they had no choice left to them but to support the resolution. It is worthy of note that Sir Henry Wheeler's amendment was by no means of an uncompromising nature. He offered a non-official committee to go into the matter, but the Councillors very properly rejected the compromise. They were not prepared to have the evidence of the own senses disputed by any committee. The Bengal Government must now find itself in a tangle. If it releases the innocent prisoners and recalls its precious notices, the Congress and Khilafat organizations must go on with redoubled vigour. If it refuses to carry out the resolution, it must forfeit the support of the Moderates to a large extent. Of course, it can live without that support, as it has done all these long years. But it must know that a new era has dawned upon India. The people are no longer amenable to repression. They are becoming increasingly conscious of their strength. They are becoming increasingly inured to sufferings. No government in the world can possibly repress into submission a people strong and willing enough to suffer.

What is true of Bengal is true of Bihar. The Bihar Council also has spoken in no uncertain terms. The Council of the United Provinces has accepted a compromise, but even there the Government has really no case. It has become difficult for me in spite of doubling the size of *Young India* to quote all the reports of terrible repression received from almost every part of India. It is not now mere imprisonment. It is shameful disregard and equally shameful distortion even of repressive news.

Sir Henry Wheeler has given us also another good expression — “tyranny of words and phrases”. He would not be tyrannized by the word “repression”. He says every law is repressive and that the public should not be frightened by the word but that they should look at the reality. Let us then face the reality and go behind the tyranny of the phrase “Law and Order”. Sir Hormusji Wadia eloquently reminded the Malaviya Conference that many a dark deed was done in the time of the Bourbons in France and elsewhere in the sacred name of “Law and Order”. If we would get rid of the magic spell of those two words, we would find that lives and property of the people of India have been rendered unsafe by the acts of the administrators of “Law and Order”. It is a sign of the times that the people, even Councillors, refuse to live under the “tyranny of words and phrases” and be deceived by the hopeless unreality of the Government’s position. Non-co-operation is a strong solvent and we shall soon find that both the Government and the people will have to come to grips with hopeful realities and get out of the maze of hopeless unrealities in which both have hitherto lived.

*Young India*, 9-2-1922

### 57. VIOLENCE IN THE CAMP

Doctors Rajan and Shastri, two of the best workers of Madras, have been arrested together with two others evidently in the cause of, shall I say, intemperance. The Madras Government have discovered a method of breaking up Congress and Khilafat organizations without resort to the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. They will do better than Bengal and the United Provinces. They will avoid the reproach of having enforced the Acts which have become the object of criticism in the country. And I hear that in Madras, at any rate, it is the redoubtable Sir Thyagaraj Chetty more than Lord Willingdon who is bent upon breaking up these organizations. For non-co-operators, who are against measures and not men, it is one and the same thing whether the actor is an Indian or an Englishman. It is my certain conviction that Englishmen who serve under Swaraj Government will be as good as Indians. And we are sorrowful witnesses of the fact that some of our countrymen can, under the existing system, become just as efficient administrators of a vicious system as Englishmen. We have, therefore, to fight the system irrespective of men. We, who have been victims for four generations

of dual law, one for Englishmen and another for ourselves, must not be guilty of it ourselves. Let Madras, therefore, be tried and purified even under Sir Thyagaraj Chetty's rule.

If we are true to ourselves, we shall be able effectively to deal with all our opponents, whether they be our own countrymen or Englishmen. But a letter received from Dr. Rajan four days before his arrest emphasizes the warning given to us by recent happenings that we have to beware more of ourselves than of our opponents. Here is his letter evidently not written for publication nor for privilege. It is both a confession and a criticism. Writes Dr. Rajan:

One of your young friends, G. V. Kripinidhi by name, wrote the editorial in the *Swarajya* on the 15th instant entitled "To Our Shame" regarding the hartal troubles in Madras. Mr. Prakasam was absent, away at Bombay. The day prior to the hartal I was able to prevail on the organizers that the volunteers should be made to do police duty and protect those that opened their shops and that went to the Prince's visit. But later, Mr. Prakasam insisted that they must remain indoors. There was bitter comment against that article and I felt it my duty to support the leading article, a copy of which I send for your perusal.

Just two days ago, Mr. Singaravelu Chettiar, President Madras District Congress Council, held a public meeting on the Madras beach. The first resolution congratulated the citizens of Madras on their successful hartal and the second resolution condemned the excesses committed that day. Mr. Prakasam did not agree with your criticism of my letter to you and said in his speech that my letter did not give you sufficient data to draw the conclusions you have drawn. I wired to Mr. Singaravelu not to have this ugly meeting but evidently no notice seems to have been taken of it. It is indeed a great pity that I am not strong enough to induce our non-co-operators to see their mistakes, while they are gloating over their success that the public of Madras have redeemed the pledge given to you regarding the hartal. Yet the grim fact remains that violence and undue coercion have made the hartal a failure for non-violent non-co-operation. Whilst this struggle for non-violence exists against the violence of our own men, one may well hesitate to take a single step forward in civil resistance. I have often written in the local press about the weakness of our party in the fact that some of our non-co-operators do not have the same faith in non-violence as they should have.

Salem has been the target of attack by the local Government this week. Almost all the workers, speakers, volunteers, including myself and Ramaswamy Naiker, have been served with 144 asking us not to hold any

public meeting or advocate abstention from drink. Civil disobedience (individual) has been started, and already three non-co-operating *vakils* and fifteen others have disobeyed and are in Jail. Yesterday three more disobeyed the order and twelve have been arrested. The Chairman of the Municipality and four practising *vakils* have been served with notices under 144 preventing them from addressing any meeting. Today at Madura 17 volunteers have been arrested for picketing. So far there has been no violence anywhere. I have not yet offered disobedience but I intend doing during the course of the week or after 1st February.

I am rather taken aback at my own change—from a revolutionary of the India House of 1908 to the non-violent non-co operator of 1922. It is indeed a change but this change of heart, the peace of suffering, the perfect unconcern of the mind with which it is faced, seem well nigh impossible but for living examples. Years ago I would have fumed and fretted against any restraining orders. I would have vowed vengeance against the policeman that served the notice, against the official that issued the illegal and mad order, but today I have not got any ill will against them, but would be thanking the official for having given one more proof, feeble as it is, to the many glaring instances of the utter disregard of truth and righteousness of the present administrative machinery which has made monsters of mild and good men, and I have nothing but pity for the erring official. Even for his sake suffering seems to be the only remedy open to us at this juncture.

Hostile papers make capital out of your writing in the *Navajivan* that “you are at sea” with regard to swaraj. It has given room to misconceptions. It may be that the Associated Press has advantageously extracted only portions of it. It strikes me as if you are unduly pessimistic. I do not know whether you felt exactly on the verge of hopelessness about non-violence and untouchability. Progress in our present condition is possible only under limitations and till the restricting limitations are shattered no robust growth is possible. Swaraj will break our limitations and give us sufficient light and air. Any scheme of swaraj must aim at breaking these barriers of progress, and it is a question which should come first. There is no use letting more of our countrymen getting Europeanized and ridicule the charkha as the wonderful Madras ministry has done. The national deterioration must stop. I think it would be better if you could reproduce the whole of your article of the *Navajivan* in *Young India* with any comment you think necessary thereon. I have unnecessarily made this letter lengthy. Kindly excuse trouble.

I need not remark now upon the fact that nowadays people are being singled out for imprisonment for the sake of their non-violence

if they are also influential. I reproduce the letter for the warning it contains. There is little doubt that there are some among us who do not implicitly believe in non-violence even while they are under the pledge, i.e., they do not mind the assistance of those who would do violence. They seem to believe that violence can run parallel to non-violence and the two together accelerate the progress of the country towards its goal.' Such an attitude besides being hypocritical is positively against the country's interest. Two *opposite* forces may run parallel but they *cannot both go in the same direction!* If non-violence was a camouflage or a preparation for violence, an accidental or intended outbreak of it might be by way of trial a great gain even during the pendency of so-called non-violence. But that is not India's religious battle. God is witness above and He is just enough to chastise every double dealing. Our present belief is that India cannot gain anything by violence and must gain her three ends by non-violence alone unsupported by violence. If therefore we will win, there must be on the part of non-co-operators an unequivocal and emphatic mental and vocal condemnation of every act of violence done out of sympathy for their cause. Let those who do not believe in non-violence or believe in both running together form a party of their own and fight out the issue. That would make a non-co-operator's task difficult but not so difficult as when he has to fight an enemy in his own camp. His system must be kept pure. Any impurity from within will be an organic disease and may prove fatal. No attack from without can ever prove fatal. The first and indeed the only condition of success therefore is that we must be true to ourselves.

The confession, therefore, that Dr. Rajan has made is an invigorating process. It strengthens him and the cause for which he stands. Non-co-operation is a vicious and corrupt doctrine, truly an "ugly" word, if it does not mean down-right self-purification. Stubborn and implacable resistance against internal corruption is enough resistance against the Government. As soon as the process of self-purification is complete, we shall miss the system we appear to be fighting.

There is nothing in the *capital* that is being made out of my writing in the *Navajivan* referred to by Dr. Rajan. I observe that the *Swarajya* has already published a fair translation of the whole article which was written after careful thought. It explains itself.

*Young India*, 9-2-1922

## 58. NOTE ON TERMS OF AGREEMENT WITH COMMITTEE <sup>1</sup>

[February 9, 1922]

1. As regards Mass Civil Disobedience,  
Mr. Gandhi intends advising the W.C.<sup>2</sup> to stop it till 31st December 1922.
2. As regards other items,  
Mr. Gandhi to advise the W.C. to restrict picketing of liquor and cloth-shops to such means as are devoid of provocation or defiance of law, and in particular
  - (1) to confine it to places where atmosphere of perfect non-violence is maintained;
  - (2) to employ as agents only men of responsibility and beyond a certain mature age;
  - (3) motive of picketing to be not provocation or defiance of law, but promotion of the merit of the question itself.

This is not necessarily to be under the same time limit, as this will be implied in the resolution on M.C.D.<sup>3</sup>

3. Volunteers,  
not to be listed for Mass Civil Disobedience, nor for defying the law, but for carrying on the activities of social, moral and economic reform.
4. Preparatory activities of an offensive, hostile or provocative character to be suspended pending R.T.C.
5. The terms offered at the Representative Conference in Bombay to remain open.

Gandhiji says cls. 4 & 5 are not necessary, as they are implied in 1-3, but if it is necessary at any time for a R.T.C. to give these as assurances, the same will be given.

From a photostat: S.N. 7909

<sup>1</sup> The Committee appointed by the Leaders' Conference of January 14 and 15, 1922. In *The Story of My Life*, Jayakar writes in his entry for February 9, 1922: "... I noted down certain terms on which he [Gandhiji] and the Committee had agreed and I gave those terms to him. He is as honest as usual and-admitted them ..."

<sup>2</sup> Working Committee

<sup>3</sup> This is in Gandhiji's hand.

## 59. MY NOTE

### OPRESSION IN BALIA

I reproduce below the vivid description of the oppression now going on in Balia which Chi. Devdas Gandhi has given.<sup>1</sup> Balia is one of the poorer districts of the United Provinces. The people there are energetic, simple-minded and trusting. They are patriotic. I often planned to go there, but I have not been able to do so. Since the district is on the Bihar border, its people are more like the Biharis. I can picture to myself the oppression they suffer. My heart bleeds when I think of it. I feel unhappy that I could not go there. If I survive the anguish which I feel now, I hope to go on a pilgrimage to Balia. May this hope of mine comfort the people of Balia. The sacrifices of towns like Balia will surely liberate this country. May God grant the people there still greater strength to bear suffering, and may the example of Balia serve to make Gujarat more eager to suffer!

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 9-2-1922

## 60. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,  
February 9, 1922

DEVIDAS GANDHI  
CONGRESS OFFICE  
GORAKHPUR

YOUR WIRE. SEND FULL ACCURATE REPORTS<sup>2</sup>. KEEP PEOPLE  
NON VIOLENT. GET ALL INFORMATION. TELL WORKERS AM  
DEEPLY GRIEVED. KEEP CALM. GOD WILL BLESS YOU. RETURN-  
ING BARDOLI TONIGHT

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7898

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Gandhiji, which is not translated here

<sup>2</sup> About the Chauri Chaura incidents



## 61. NOTE ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN GUNTUR <sup>1</sup>

[Before *February 10, 1922*]

If Andhra stops civil disobedience, I shall be glad. But if it cannot stop, I shall not mind it provided of course that complete control is attained over forces of violence and all conditions are fulfilled.

M. K. GANDHI

Andhra Government Records

## 62. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS, BARDOLI <sup>2</sup>

[*February 10, 1922*]<sup>3</sup>

I regard those who have assembled here as some of the best workers in the country. In fact, I can see the condition of India at the present time truly reflected by this small assembly. What I have heard now confirms me in the belief that most of those who are present here have failed to understand the message of non-violence. This convinces me that the country at large has not at all accepted the teaching of non-violence. I must, therefore, immediately stop the movement for civil disobedience.

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 226-7

<sup>1</sup> Found in the source under the following description: "The note in pencil sent by Mahatma Gandhi to the President of the Guntur District Congress Committee through Sri B. Pattabhi Sitaramayyah regarding the no-tax campaign in the Guntur District". The report is dated February 10, 1922.

<sup>2</sup> The source says: "... Mahatmaji summoned ... the whole body of workers, and all those who were present at Bardoli today, to discuss with him the propriety or otherwise of starting civil disobedience in the face of the terrible happening at Chauri Chaura. He asked for the opinion of everyone present, ... almost everyone, young and old, declared ... that if Mahatmaji retreated after throwing out a challenge to Lord Reading in the manner he had done by his rejoinder to the Government *communiqué*, the whole country would be disgraced before the world. Only three persons dissented from this view ..."

<sup>3</sup> From the source

### 63. WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTIONS AT BARDOLI <sup>1</sup>

[February 12, 1922]

The working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant and passed the following resolutions:

1. The Working Committee deplores the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura in having brutally murdered constables and wantonly burnt the Police *Thana* and tenders its sympathy to the families of the bereaved.

2. In view of Nature's repeated warnings, every time mass civil disobedience has been imminent some popular violent outburst has taken place indicating that the atmosphere in the country is not non-violent enough for mass disobedience, the latest instance being the tragic and terrible events at Chauri Chaura near Gorakhpur, the Working Committee of the Congress resolves that mass civil disobedience contemplated at Bardoli and elsewhere be suspended and instructs the local Congress Committees forthwith to advise the cultivators to pay the land revenue and other taxes due to the Government and whose payment might have been suspended in anticipation of mass civil disobedience, and instructs them to suspend every other preparatory activity of an offensive nature.

3. The suspension of mass civil disobedience shall be continued till the atmosphere is so non-violent as to ensure the non-repetition of popular atrocities such as at Gorakhpur or hooliganism such as at Bombay and Madras respectively on 17th November 1921 and 13th January last.

4. In order to promote a peaceful atmosphere, the Working Committee advises, till further instructions, all Congress organizations to stop activities specially designed to court arrest and imprisonment, save normal Congress activities including voluntary hartals wherever an absolutely peaceful atmosphere can be assured and for that end all picketing shall be stopped save for the *bona-fide* and peaceful purpose of warning the visitors to liquor shops against the evils of

<sup>1</sup> Presumably drafted by Gandhiji. These resolutions were passed by the Working Committee; which met at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, and were subsequently adopted by the A.I.C.C. on February 25; *vide* "Resolution at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Delhi", 25-2-1922, and Young *India*, 2-3-1922.

drinking, such picketing to be controlled by persons of known good character and specially selected by the Congress Committees concerned.

5. The Working Committee advises, till further instructions, the stoppage of all volunteer processions and public meetings merely for the purpose of defiance of the notifications regarding such meetings. This, however, shall not interfere with the private meetings of the Congress and other Committees or public meetings which are required for the conduct of the normal activities of the Congress.

6. Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that ryots are not paying rents to the zemindars, the Working Committee advises Congress workers and organizations to inform the ryots that such withholding of rents is contrary to the resolutions of the Congress and that it is injurious to the best interests of the country.

7. The Working Committee assures the zemindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their legal rights, and that even where the ryots have grievances, the Committee's desire is that redress should be sought by mutual consultations and by the usual recourse to arbitrations.

8. Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that in the formation of Volunteer Corps great laxity prevails in the selection and that insistence is not laid on the full use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and on the full observance by Hindus of the rule as to the removal of untouchability, nor is care being taken to ascertain that the candidates believe fully in the observance of non-violence in intent, word and deed, in terms of the Congress resolution, the Working Committee calls upon all Congress organizations to revise their lists and remove from them the names of all such volunteers as do not strictly conform to the requirements of the pledge.

9. The Working Committee is of opinion that unless Congressmen carry out to the full the Congress constitution and the resolutions from time to time issued by the Working Committee, it is not possible to achieve its objects expeditiously or at all

10. The foregoing resolutions will have effect only pending the meeting to be specially convened of the All-India Congress Committee and thereafter subject to confirmation by it, the Secretary to call such meeting as early as possible after consultation with Hakim

THE NEW PROGRAMME

Whereas the Gorakhpur tragedy is a powerful proof of the fact that the mass mind has not yet fully realized the necessity of non-violence as an integral, active, and chief part of mass civil disobedience, and whereas the reported indiscriminate acceptance of persons as volunteers in contravention of the Congress instructions betrays want of appreciation of the vital part of satyagraha, and whereas in the opinion of the Working Committee, the delay in the attainment of the national aim is solely due to the weak and incomplete execution, in practice, of the constitution of the Congress and with a view to perfecting the internal organization, the working Committee advises all Congress organizations to be engaged in the following activities:

1. To enlist at least one crore of members of the Congress.

*Note (i):* Since peace (non-violence) and legitimacy (truth)<sup>2</sup> are the essence of the Congress creed, no person should be enlisted who does not believe in non-violence and truth<sup>3</sup> as indispensable for the attainment of swaraj. The creed of the Congress must, therefore, be carefully explained to each person who is appealed to, to join the Congress.

*Note (ii):* The workers should note that no one who does not pay the annual subscription can be regarded as a qualified Congressman. All the old members are, therefore, to be advised to re-register their names.

2. To popularize the spinning-wheel and organize the manufacture-of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.<sup>4</sup>

*Note:* To this end all workers and office-bearers should be dressed in khaddar, and it is recommended that with a view to encourage others they should themselves learn hand-spinning.

3. To organize national schools.

<sup>1</sup> In the modified version passed by the A.I.C.C., these paragraphs form Resolution I and those that follow appear as Resolution III and have been assigned to February 12; *vide Young India*, 2-3-1922.

<sup>2</sup> Here the A.I.C.C. resolution has: "Since peaceful and legitimate means"

<sup>3</sup> The A.I.C.C. resolution has "believe in such means"

<sup>4</sup> Here the A.I.C.C. resolution adds: "and popularize its use by house-to-house visits".

*Note:* No picketing of Government schools should be resorted to; but reliance should be placed upon the superiority of national schools in all vital matters to<sup>1</sup> command attendance.

4. To organize the depressed classes for a better life, to improve their social, mental and moral condition, to induce them to send their children to national schools, and to provide for them the ordinary facilities which other citizens enjoy.

*Note:* Whilst, therefore, where the prejudice against the untouchables is still strong separate schools and separate wells must be maintained out of Congress funds, every effort should be made to draw such children to national schools and to persuade the people to allow the untouchables to use the common wells.

5. To organize the temperance campaign amongst the people addicted to the drink habit by house-to-house visits and to rely more upon appeal to the drinker in his home than upon picketing. 6. To organize village and town *panchayats* for the private settlement of all disputes, reliance being placed solely upon the force of public opinion and the truthfulness of panchayat decision to ensure obedience to them.

*Note:* In order to avoid even the appearance of coercion, no social boycott should be resorted to against those who will not obey the *panchayat's* decisions.

7. In order to promote and emphasize unity among all classes and races and mutual goodwill, the establishment of which is the aim of the movement of non-co-operation, to organize a social service department that will render help to all, irrespective of political<sup>2</sup> differences, in times of illness or accident.

*Note:* A non-co-operator, whilst firmly adhering to his creed, will deem it a privilege to render personal service, in case of ill-ness or accident, to every person whether English or Indian.

8. To continue the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund<sup>3</sup> and to call upon every Congressman or Congress sympathiser to pay at least one hundredth part of his annual income for the year 1921. Every province to send every month 25 per cent of its income from the

<sup>1</sup> Here the A.I.C.C. resolution has: "to draw students from government and aided schools".

<sup>2</sup> This word is dropped in the A.I.C.C. resolution

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Speech on Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund", 31-12-1920.

Tilak Memorial Fund to the All-India Congress Committee.

9. The above resolutions shall be brought before the forthcoming session of the All-India Congress Committee for revision, if necessary.

10. In the opinion of the Working Committee a project is necessary for the purpose of finding employment for those who may give up Government service and to that end the Committee appoints Messrs Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani, Jamnalal Bajaj and V.J. Patel to draw up a scheme for consideration by the said<sup>1</sup> special meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.<sup>2</sup>

*Young India*, 16-2-1922

#### 64. CONDITIONS FOR SWARAJ

We have discussed the conditions for swaraj several times before now. But, as long as we have not learnt to observe them, we must continue to think about them and tell ourselves that there can be no swaraj till then. If we do this, we shall escape many dangers. We shall then get angry only with ourselves and will refrain from doing wrong things.

The Congress has pointed out these conditions many times in different ways and has at last made them obligatory on those who enlist themselves as volunteers. The result is that we do not get volunteers in sufficient numbers now, and even those who come forward do not observe the conditions fully.

If a patient does not take the medicine in the way prescribed by the *vaid*<sup>3</sup>, the fault is his, not the *vaid*'s. Similarly, if we do not observe the conditions for swaraj, we ourselves are to blame.

At the moment, however, we need not go into the question of who is to blame. We are concerned only with how we may win swaraj. Just as a patient will not recover without taking the right medicine, so also swaraj cannot be won without observing the necessary conditions. Swaraj cannot be won merely by people becoming volunteers. It will be won only by volunteers observing the conditions laid down for

<sup>1</sup> The A.I.C.C. resolution has "next".

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph forms Resolution II in the modified version passed by the A.I.C.C. and, along with Resolution I, has been assigned to February 11.

<sup>3</sup> Physician practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine

them. If recruits are required to have a minimum height of five feet, any pigmies of four feet who manage to get in will certainly not help to win the battle but will become a burden, and may possibly be the cause of their side being defeated. Similarly, if some volunteers inclined to violence join those who observe the condition of non-violence, they can only do harm. When enlistment as volunteers is open only to those who wear nothing but hand-spun khadi at home and outside and on all occasions, how can persons who wear khadi containing mill-made warp, or who wear pure khadi only at the time of enrolment and while on duty as volunteers, help to win swaraj? These persons resort to deception right from the start. The condition about khadi, which should seem easy, is felt to be difficult. What involves the minimum of expense is looked upon, it seems, as very expensive.

Perhaps people do not believe that swaraj can be won through khadi. If that is so, they should not have voted in favour of khadi at the Congress and at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. If we are not serious even about what we do, we shall not advance any distance worth speaking of. The work we have done will also be wasted.

If we are demanding swaraj for the sake of the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low, for the sake of victims of famines and for all those who live by begging, if we wish to banish hunger from the country, then we shall find that we cannot do without hand-spun khadi, for by no other means can we provide the homes of such people with the necessities of life.

The same about untouchability. Anyone who believes that untouchability is a part of Hinduism has no right to become a non-co-operator. This Government has made a science of social distance. Go where we will, we are treated as untouchables, We are treated as fit only to receive kicks and abuses, as fit to be kept at a distance. Our right place is in jail. All these are signs of our being treated as untouchables. We mark all of them in our behaviour towards the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis*. What right, then, do we have to swaraj as conceived by the Congress, and how can we get ourselves enrolled as Congress volunteers? A Hindu who thinks that untouchability is part of his dharma should see in a moment that he has no right at all to remain a non-co-operator. And, if all those who regard themselves as Hindus are not sincerely ready to give up untouchability, I at any rate will declare, though I may be in a

minority of one, that there can be no swaraj, that Hinduism will perish, unless this sinful practice is abolished. To cling to the sin of untouchability as a part of dharma and at the same time to hope to preserve Hinduism, protect the cow, practise non-violence and have equal regard for all, —I believe all this to be impossible. Just as crops will not ripen without sunshine, so we shall certainly not reap the harvest of swaraj till the darkness of untouchability has vanished.

There can be no swaraj without fearlessness. And yet the Hindus fear the Muslims and the latter fear the former. The Parsis and the Christians fear them both. How, then, can we get swaraj? How can anyone who has not shed all fear, that is to say, does not look upon all Indians as his brothers and sisters, be considered as a lover of swaraj? How is he fit to join the Volunteer Corps?

Hence, I would certainly tell the Gujaratis at any rate that, if they wish to have swaraj at an early date, they ought to fulfil all the conditions explained above. No matter if they are practising lawyers, title-holders or members of any council, if they observe these conditions they can join the Volunteer Corps. On the other hand, if a person has given up practice, relinquished a title, left a Government school or resigned from a council but he does not observe even one of these conditions, then he is not a swarajist. He cannot join the Volunteer Corps and he is not fit to go to jail. His going to jail or sacrificing his life will not bring swaraj. It may happen that his going to jail may help to end this Government; in that case, however, it will be replaced by a government worse than this.

But I cannot conceive of such a government. I, therefore, believe that we shall not get swaraj by going to jail if we do not observe the conditions explained above. It is true that by going to jail and by facing beatings, we get certain kind of fearlessness, but swaraj cannot be won by fearlessness only. Just as one gains *moksha*<sup>1</sup> if one has fearlessness along with knowledge and discrimination, so also swaraj can be won only if, in addition to being fearless, we understand and observe the conditions for swaraj. Those who killed Lachhman Singh<sup>2</sup> and his associates were men who feared nothing. But no one regards them as swarajists. We shall not win swaraj by collecting together such desperadoes. And even if we can imagine for a moment that it can

<sup>1</sup> Deliverance from phenomenal existence

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Sikh Awakening", 13-3-1921.



bewon, then it will be a government by desperadoes, from which the true non-co-operator will run miles away.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 12-2-1922

### 65. GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

The Government's reply<sup>1</sup> to our offer<sup>2</sup> of peace will pain the reader. Nowhere is there any sign of repentance or an admission of error. From the beginning to the end, the Government claims itself to be innocent and attempts to prove the non-co-operators to be the guilty party.

I thought of two explanations after reading that reply. Either they have deliberately told lies in it or those who drafted the reply have so much faith in the officials that they are not at all prepared to believe that the latter can do any wrong. I have rejected the first explanation out of regard for human nature at any rate, and accepted the second.

Both attitudes are terrible. One must guard against either mistake—telling lies and doing wrong deliberately, or being blind to one's errors and continuing to be under the delusion that one is entirely innocent.

I believe the Government's error is of the latter type, for I believe that man errs unintentionally more often than otherwise. If non-co-operators do not readily see their errors, why should we not believe the same to be true about the Government? Our duty is to use a microscope to see our faults and employ a telescope to observe those of others, the error barely visible even so. The man or woman or the society that adopts this principle will always be happy. One who looks upon his own defects as mountain-huge will have very little time to point out the faults of others. A person will then feel miserable for his own mistake and, since he does not, by his very nature, wish to be unhappy, we will soon remove his mountain-like defects.

I wish to follow this same rule and to use a telescope to see the Government's mistakes. The reader should keep in mind one

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Appendix "Government of India "Communique" on Gandhiji's Letter to the Viceroy", 6-2-1922.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

characteristic of the telescope. It shows us only distant objects, and those too as dim and small images; objects close at hand, it does not allow to be seen at all. I know that I have always overlooked the Government's minor mistakes. But now the Government has crossed the limit. In its reply, it has sought to make out some of its wrong actions as prompted by its virtues and has ignored those which could not possibly be so represented. For example, about the notices it has issued banning meetings and speeches, it says that the ban had to be imposed only because of the mischievous activities of the non-co-operators. The truth, however, is that the Government has been able to offer no evidence which would justify this ban. Even so, it was possible to advance an argument in support of it and, therefore, a wrong action was represented as good. But how can seizure of property, beating up of people, burning of khadi and raids on Congress offices at night be defended? No matter what crimes people commit, how can the Government's officials unlawfully seize property or beat up people? The Government, therefore, has altogether ignored this charge. A similar policy of exaggeration or silence has been adopted in the letter in regard to other serious matters too. I do not wish to take the readers' time by analysing the reply from this point of view. A reply was of course expected, and I even knew that it would contain nothing important. But I was certainly not prepared for the shamelessness that I find in the actual reply. I had thought that it would contain something to conciliate the Moderates. But they also have been ignored and, for the non-co-operators, the position remains the same as before. For thinking people can there be any evidence more convincing than this reply of the Government's attitude of regarding us as untouchables?

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 12-2-1922

## 66. GORAKHPUR'S CRIME

Gorakhpur is most probably the biggest district in the country. Its inhabitants are a spirited people. From the news which has appeared in papers, it seems that they have showed their spirit in the wrong way. They set fire to a police station,<sup>1</sup> killed 21 innocent

<sup>1</sup> On February 4, 1922

policemen and burned their bodies; a young son of a sub-inspector was also among the killed. According to newspaper reports, people went to disperse a Friday market which was being held there. At first a few men went to the spot, but they were turned back. Thereupon a big crowd went there! This included some volunteers too.

I and other thoughtful non-co-operators will have to hang our head in shame for this incident. There is other news also which raises doubts in our minds about peace being preserved.

This augurs ill for the beginning which Bardoli was to make. The two methods—of peace and violence—cannot be employed at the same time. If the people want to employ violence, those employing peaceful methods will have to chalk out another path for themselves. The votaries of peace will have to non-co-operate both with the Government which worships violence and those among the people who do the same.

If the people of Gorakhpur district had no interest in the movement, we shall have to admit that the non-co-operators have had much less effect than we thought they had. On every important occasion, some such obstacles block our path. When our people die, my heart does not beat fast or, if it does, I can control it. When, however, even one co-operator is killed, I am humiliated and feel apprehensive about our progress. Everyone who believes exclusively in the method of peace ought to feel as I do.

I am writing this on my way to Bombay.<sup>1</sup> I am proceeding there on the invitation of *Bharatbhushan* Pandit Malaviya. The Working Committee meeting convened in Bardoli will take place on Saturday<sup>2</sup>. The reader will have this article in his hands on Sunday. As I do not wish to take upon myself the responsibility for suspending mass civil disobedience, I want to consult the Working Committee.

I always stand firm in my dharma. It can be tested only at such times. As long as I see the spirit of non-violence spreading, I would be ready to run many risks; when, however, I see that my movement is being exploited by others, I simply cannot take even one step further.

I am awaiting more news from Gorakhpur. I place my thoughts before readers because I want every one of them to help me. This is a new kind of struggle. Those who have faith in methods of peace must

<sup>1</sup> February 8, 1922; *vide* "Letter to Dr. M. S. Kelkar", 8-2-1922.

<sup>2</sup> February 11, 1922

search their hearts. They will have to devote themselves exclusively to propagating non-violence. This struggle is intended not to spread hatred but to end it. It is not intended to create barriers between people but to bring them together. It is not one in which we may use a combination of means, but is one in which we have to use discrimination and distinguish between right and wrong.

I am certainly the one most responsible for the crime of the people of Gorakhpur district, but every genuine non-co-operator is also responsible for it. All of us should be in mourning for it. But the matter can be further discussed only when we have more details. May God save the honour of India and of non-co-operators.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 12-2-1922

## 67. MY NOTES

### WHY "FAITHFUL SERVANT"

A gentleman writes to say:

You have signed your letter to His Excellency the Viceroy as "Your faithful servant and friend". I hope the word "servant," crept in through oversight and that you yourself did not write it.

I hope that this gentleman will not be displeased to know that I deliberately used the word "servant". I look upon His Excellency the Viceroy as a nobleman holding a high office and do not wish to give up the language of civilized usage in addressing him. Non-co-operation does not imply uncivilized behaviour. Non-violent non-co-operation means civilized non-co-operation. An uncivilized person has no right to resort to non-co-operation. Moreover, we should go out of our way to be courteous to those against whom we employ non-co-operation, lest they take offence and feel that we bear a personal grudge against them. This is what the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation means. As a non-co-operator, therefore, I was bound to use civilized language in my letter to the Viceroy. I have also deliberately used the word "friend" along with the word "servant". By using this word, I have indicated that, although I am a servant, I am not a slave. One can be an enemy though one may use the word "servant". By using the word "friend", I have indicated that it is a religious principle with me not to look upon anyone as an enemy. I have also, by using it, refused to hold myself inferior to the

British and conveyed my intention of corresponding with them only on terms of equality. I indicated my faith in non-violence by using the word “faithful” and assured him that there was no danger of my becoming hostile to him or to his people. In this way, although the words used with my signature are part of civilized usage, they have been used intentionally and serve some purpose.

“DO NOT KNOW HOW TO DO IT”

A friend writes with reference to the boycott of a reception to the Prince of Wales at some place:<sup>1</sup>

The description is very apt. This is no way of preserving peace. We ourselves are now responsible for hindering our progress. Just as a person who overeats cannot help suffering from indigestion, similarly one who has a biting tongue cannot prevent violence from breaking out. A glutton does not welcome indigestion; similarly, the man with a sharp tongue may not approve of violence. Nevertheless, if both these persons do not know where to stop or do not keep within limits, the results will be other than what they want. The reason why the spirit of violence still lurks in some places is that we have not yet taken measures to overcome it. Thought is reflected in words and words in their turn inevitably lead to action. If we do not control thought and restrain speech, it is useless to attempt to prevent their inevitable result. It is for this reason that it had to be stated clearly in the Congress resolution this time that violence should be eschewed even from thought; Maulana Bari Saheb, for instance, says in a letter of his that he does not permit violence to affect him even in his thoughts. It is not enough to say that such are the orders of the Congress or that Gandhi has said so. We shall readily find arguments in support of the principle only if we, too, think in the same way.

Moreover, when people wanting to honour the Prince were described as “donkeys” or “monkeys”, those who used such terms were clearly guilty of violence in speech; they abused others, showed their anger and violated the pledge which they had taken. They forsook civilized manners. We should never use such terms to describe our rivals or opponents. Our language should always breathe the spirit of peace. To hope that anyone who joins the procession may be

<sup>1</sup> The passage is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that public speakers *who* pleaded with people to preserve peace were undoubtedly sincere in their desire but did not know the right language to persuade them to do so.

divorced by his wife is to wish that he should be punished. What would be the country's plight if, following this advice, the wives of all those who attended the function in the Prince's honour left them? That would be nothing but coercion.

If we desert our partner because he or she does not change his or her views the moment ours change, or does not understand them, that would be an utterly barbarous practice. If it came to prevail, the world could not endure for a single moment. We ought to remain friends with people even when our views differ. Otherwise, what is the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity? What a great difference there is between the views of a Hindu and those of a Muslim! While one looks upon it as his dharma to face the east when praying, the other faces the west; while the one grows a *shikha* on his head, the other grows a beard ! Despite this, Hindus and Muslims respect each other, bear with each other and neither seeks to use force against the other. If, then, Hindus and Muslims have sincerely pledged themselves to act in this manner, how can the non-co-operators of the present day use force against those who co-operate? If, however, the former do use force against the latter, non-co-operating Hindus are bound to fight with non-co-operating Muslims. Hence, I believe genuine Hindu-Muslim unity to be impossible till non-co-operators decide to win over co-operators only by friendliness.

#### OPPOSITION TO "NAVAJIVAN"

A lover of *Navajivan* writes from Veraval:<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to understand the opposition to Navajivan and khadi caps in Kathiawar. However, anyone who recalls what Shri Amritlal Thakkar<sup>2</sup> had to put up with in Veraval will not be surprised by the incident described above. I think that the circulation of Navajivan in Kathiawar means the spread of good thoughts. The khadi cap and the khadi dress signify prosperity for Kathiawar. It would save sixty-five lakhs of rupees if its population of twenty-six lakhs used annually, on an average, cloth worth two and a half rupees and produced khadi of that value. Everyone can figure out for himself how much the economic condition of Kathiawar would improve if this amount continues to accumulate year after year in the

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here.

<sup>2</sup> 1869-1951; a member of the Servants of India Society and a leading worker in the cause of the depressed classes and aboriginal tribes

homes of the people in Kathiawar. From this calculation, other equally encouraging figures can also be deduced. If we take each family as consisting of five members, its annual income will increase by twelve and a half rupees. When we calculate the average, we know that each individual does not save the exact amount but that the whole community benefits to that extent. This would mean that the poor families of Kathiawar which need money and are obliged to live in straitened circumstances would get the benefit of this saving of sixty-five lakhs; or, it could also be taken to mean that the people of Kathiawar have a pile of sixty-five lakhs of rupees lying unguarded before them and everyone may help himself to as much of it as he can. This, of course, would be civilized looting. Moreover, as the amount would be distributed through the spinning-wheel, the money would reach only the homes of the poor who needed it. That there should be any opposition to khadi which produces such happy results and to *Navajivan* which propagates khadi, non-violence and truth, is a reflection on our times. In Kathiawar, there can be only one answer to such opposition, viz., that all Kathiawaris should start wearing khadi exclusively. If this is done, the Port Commissioner will find it difficult to ban khadi. Again, as the income from *Navajivan* is used only for public purposes, I can even state disinterestedly that, if every literate person starts subscribing to *Navajivan* the ban imposed in Veraval will also have to be lifted. When large numbers start doing a thing, it is almost, if not quite, impossible to stop them even by threatening to shoot them.

#### ABOUT NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A gentleman writes to warn us in regard to national schools and says that no attention is being paid to primary schools. If, he says, nothing further is done after converting these schools into national schools and children go without education, parents will feel disgusted and withdraw their children; they may even leave them again to the kindness of the Government. Of course, there is much truth in this. There is a great difference between grown-up students who know their responsibilities and children under ten years. Immediate arrangements should be made for the education of children of tender age. In places where civil disobedience is not in progress, people have no reason either for not attending to these matters. In such places, work is but a part of the preparation for civil disobedience, for we shall become fit for it not by public demonstrations but through work. Preparation for

civil disobedience means intensifying constructive and productive activities such as popularizing khadi and the spinning-wheel, improving the quality of yarn and increasing its output, increasing the number of weavers, improving the quality of slivers, banishing drink, placing national education on a sound foundation, mixing with untouchables and so on. It is from these that the strength for civil disobedience is derived. Such work should indeed proceed vigorously in places where no civil disobedience is going on. Similarly, the various bodies of the Congress should be strengthened. The work of enrolling members and collecting four annas from each member should be carried on energetically. Congress offices should be established in every town and village and in each of them five office-bearers should be immediately appointed. We shall never be ready for civil disobedience throughout the country if all this work is not attended to.

I hope, therefore, that the provincial committees will issue directions to the volunteers about the work to be done by them.

#### GIFT OF GOOD HEALTH

The gentleman who has drawn our attention to primary schools has also something to say about preserving health. According to him, I have not written enough about the physical benefits of *brahmacharya*<sup>1</sup> and about exercise. The correspondent belongs to Surat. He says that the people of Surat are keen enough but, being weak in body, they cannot come forward to endure imprisonment and such other hardships which satyagrahis have to suffer. How can we expect them to submit to beatings?

The gentleman is right in drawing our attention to this. However, it is difficult to write repeatedly on a subject like *brahmacharya*. I believe, moreover, that it should not be practised merely for the sake of good health. To do so is to pay a rupee for an article worth a pie. I have taken it for granted that anyone who engages himself in promoting the other activities in the swaraj-programme will readily understand the necessity of practising *brahmacharya*.

Nevertheless, the importance of *brahmacharya* cannot be overemphasized. Not only does a person who does not practise it cease to be a human being, he is not even on a level with the animals.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "living in the *Brahman*, the Absolute"; in common usage, celibacy, as an essential condition for attaining this state



The latter instinctively observe *brahmacharya*. An animal has neither the sensation of taste nor does it enjoy sensual pleasures. It is governed by the limits of its nature. Hence, in often comparing a person who does not practise *brahmacharya* to an animal, we insult the latter. The man who violates the laws of *brahmacharya* ends up by becoming impotent. It is for this reason that we come across, as symbols of our shame, newspaper advertisements in big letters both in English and in Gujarati of medicines supposed to increase one's virility. The fact that they can afford advertisements which take up so much space is itself an indication of our miserable plight. *Brahmacharya* should be a property of man's nature, as it is of the *atman*. The *atman* of anyone who does not practise *brahmacharya* is, so to say, in a state of darkness. One whose *atman* is awakened will never put his body to an extremely unclean use and one which has painful consequences.

Good thoughts, by themselves, make the practice of *brahmacharya* possible and easy. If the reader thinks quietly for a moment in solitude and calls up before his eyes the full picture of the degradation involved in violating the law of *brahmacharya*, will he not feel disgusted? However, when a man yields to base thoughts, he forgets himself, gets intoxicated without taking liquor and, in that unconscious state, takes pleasure in a base activity, forgets the bitter experience which follows the momentary pleasure and is his old self again.

A *brahmachari* cannot possibly be weak. His mind, his body and his soul are at his command. He has no need for brute strength. Many seem to think that a *brahmachari* is a man of such strength. He has indeed unlimited capacity for enduring physical suffering. It can be said of his body that it knows no fatigue. Such *brahmacharis* are rare.

To a *brahmachari* exercise is part of his daily routine. He should have plenty of fresh air. There is hardly any other outside agent which is as much responsible for our remaining weak as impure air. A young man whose occupation does not require physical exertion must have a daily walk of at least two hours by way of exercise. He should walk in a clean and quiet place, at a normal pace, holding his body straight looking towards the ground and his mind at peace. If, while walking, the person cleanses his heart and mind with pure thoughts as his lungs with fresh air, he is sure to become stronger both physically and mentally. a

*brahmachari*, should not be merely a moderate eater but a spare eater. Even though he is active, he gets less exhausted than others and, therefore, he requires the minimum quantity of food. It is necessary for him to eschew spices and sweets altogether. What we describe as rich food should also be avoided. Pulses are poison to those who do brain work. They hardly need eat anything besides wheat, milk, some green vegetables and, if they can afford, a little fruit.

I feel, however, that I have gone beyond the limits I had set for myself. There are many points connected with *brahmacharya* and all these cannot be dealt with in a single note. Even so, I have set down the foregoing views in commenting on the suggestion made by the correspondent from Surat, with the idea that they may be of some value to those brothers and sisters who look upon this movement as a holy one.

#### “ACTIVE AND “RESERVED”

The Congress has classified its volunteers into two categories — *Active*<sup>1</sup>, which means “working regularly”, and *Reserved*<sup>2</sup>, which means “in excess of immediate needs”. There seems to be some misunderstanding about the meaning of these two terms. Some people seem to believe that active workers are those who make speeches and organize demonstrations, go touring villages and towns, while reserved workers are those who spin.

This is surely a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of the terms. “Active” workers are those volunteers who can give, and do give, all their time to Congress work. “Reserved” workers are those who have specially enlisted themselves as volunteers because the Government treats it as a crime to do so, but who do not really expect to take up active work and will come forward to get arrested in order simply that they might be in jail. In other words, “Reserved” workers continue to earn their living but court imprisonment when that becomes necessary, while “Active” workers devote themselves wholly to Congress work whether or not they are required to court imprisonment. Such workers either have their own means or the Congress may employ them as paid workers if it considers this necessary. They may also go out and make speeches and so on when the occasion demands it. However, so long as these workers are not entrusted with some special duty, they should occupy themselves in spinning, carding and weaving khadi. They must at any rate

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji uses the English terms.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

spin, whether or not they take up the other two activities. This has been made compulsory in the Delhi resolution.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, spinning and making others spin are the two principle constructive activities laid down by the Congress. Hence, it will be to the benefit of the people if Congress volunteers and leaders acquire proficiency in this work. The organization has to suffer much through volunteers who avoid their responsibilities in these two matters. Thousands lose their earnings because of them. If we have a large number of people who are proficient in this work, we can improve the strength, the fineness and the evenness of the yarn which is produced. But we have only a handful of persons who are wholly devoted to swadeshi, who love spinning and are proficient in it. According to me, therefore, the first duty of the “Active” volunteer is to acquire complete proficiency in spinning and, after doing so, devote all his spare time to this work.

Even if we develop strength to endure any amount of suffering, the gates of swaraj will never open to us if we do not know the key to India’s economic freedom and use it. We should learn to suffer with an intelligent purpose. We should know why we should go to jail. As long, therefore, as we have not become honest about swadeshi and have not realized its importance, we should entertain no hope of winning swaraj, we have no right to get it nor the capacity to manage it. The most important item on our programme, I am convinced, is spinning and making others spin.

#### ABOUT “ANTYAJAS”

What is true about khadi is also true about *Antyajas*. How can we ever get swaraj if untouchability is not abolished? How can we even accept it? We have no right to complain about the Government’s treatment of us as long as we hope to lord it over the *Antyajas*. God rewards or punishes us according to our deeds. As man is ignorant and weak, he does justice by for-giving others. As God is omnipotent and omniscient, He does justice by meting out the punishment that one deserves. If we deceive ourselves in this matter, God will see to it that we remain without swaraj. A young man gives us a warning about this, which I give in his own words.<sup>2</sup>

#### FROM A POET OF GUJARAT TO THE POET OF ASIA

Everyone knows that poet Nanalal<sup>3</sup> has resigned his job. He has

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “The All India Congress Committee”, 10-11-1921.

<sup>2</sup> The passage is not translated here.

<sup>3</sup> (1877-1946) an eminent Gujarati poet

addressed the following letter to the great poet, Rabindranath Tagore.<sup>1</sup>

We are glad that Shri Nanalal has addressed this letter to the Poet and that he has resigned his job. Let him remain neutral. However, Gujarat will certainly ask him whether, after having addressed this letter, he is not bound to see that neither he nor others rest in peace till the desired result is achieved. His first task is to get together all those in Gujarat who are neutral.

#### IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

A gentleman who describes himself as “a well-wisher of the Bardoli Taluka” has put to me in all frankness some fifteen questions. I do not reproduce the questions for want of space. However, I shall try to answer them in such a way that the reader will easily be able to guess the questions.

1. When I came to Bardoli earlier, I had asked the people to make better preparations. This time, going there after two months, I accepted the preparations as adequate, for I saw that more work had been done than what I had seen two months ago. I found there better preparations in regard to untouchability than anywhere else, and I am less afraid of violence breaking out in this taluka than in any other. Moreover, I am all admiration for the workers of this taluka.
2. I am convinced that this taluka observes better than any other the conditions which have been laid down. Moreover, why should we discuss a taluka which has simply not offered itself?
3. Relatively, a larger number of persons wear hand-spun cloth and the number is daily increasing.
4. The number of spinning-wheels in operation is enough to meet the taluka's requirements of yarn regularly.
5. Very little foreign cloth is sold in the taluka now. People have not got rid of their stock of such cloth but, I regret to say, have stored it away.
6. There must be hardly any persons in this taluka who look upon it as a sin for anyone to let oneself be touched by a *Dhed* or *Bhangi*.
7. People are carrying out the various items of the non-co operation programme fairly satisfactorily.

<sup>1</sup> Not translated here. Nanalal had said that a fight between the Government and the non-co-operators seemed inevitable and that it was the duty of those who were neutral in the struggle to see that both sides respected the rules of civilized fighting.

8. I think that in this taluka there is relatively less of hypocrisy, show, deceit, falsehood, etc. This is my reason for-selecting it to start the struggle.

9. It is a great sin to force anyone to join even in the best of undertakings.

10. I hope that very few persons will pay revenue dues. It will be a sin if a non-co-operator speaks rudely even about the few who do.

11. Bardoli is a small taluka; the virtue of its people lies in the fact that they are unsophisticated, know nothing about political matters and are as meek as sheep. They have discrimination and can judge right and wrong. They understand the difference between worldly good and the higher good. Those who think see nothing to fear in this struggle. The goat does not go to the butcher of its own free will; if, then, the men and women of Bardoli—whether in their credulity or of their own free will and faith—go to jail without being forced to do so, if they let their property be attached and meet death without anger in their hearts, the world will worship them. They will win swaraj for India and win undying fame for themselves in history.

12. The very fact that I have selected a taluka like Bardoli even though Ahmedabad happens to be my permanent headquarters and has so much more of wealth, shrewdness, intelligence, business activity and a spirit of venture, reveals the especial beauty of this struggle. Swaraj can be won only if a humble and meek taluka like Bardoli gives proof of quiet courage. This is a struggle of the poor, of the innocent. In it, we should see people meek as sheep shedding their fear of one as strong as a tiger. This can happen only if Bardoli fights. I cannot fight with confidence through Ahmedabad or Bombay despite their wealth. I would constantly be afraid of being deceived or of violence breaking out in these places. In Bardoli, I have nothing to fear. God alone knows what would happen to me if I am deceived by Bardoli.

13. Shri Vithalbhai's speech about civil disobedience was intended to express not his lack of faith but his support. In that speech he uttered a note of warning and expressed doubts whether peace would be preserved till the end; now that civil disobedience is about to be started, what objection can he have?

14. I do not think that non-co-operation is a dangerous type of war. I am certain that simple but peaceful villagers can do better in it than people living in big cities. There will certainly be reason for fear, and

there will be ridicule too, if people take to their heels the moment repression starts; however, people who, though they do not fight shy of imprisonment, resort to violence are more dangerous and, even worse than that, will bring greater disgrace. We shall not lose the battle because of people who run away, but the atmosphere in the country is such that, out of fear of those who resort to violence, people may even give up in the end all talk of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 12-2-1922

## 68. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

*Silence Day [February 12, 1922]*<sup>1</sup>

CHI. DEVDAS,

Of course, I constantly think of you, but do not find time to write to you.

I got your wire; I hope you received mine sent from Bombay.

I have started a fast today. It will end on Friday. Surely, I could not have done less, could I? To start civil disobedience in an atmosphere of incivility is like putting one's hand in a snake-pit. Please do not be nervous on account of my fast. In any case do not take that as an example. It is the woman giving birth to a child who suffers the pains, others only help. I too, wish to give birth to the ideals of non-violence and truth, so that I alone need bear the pains of fasting, etc. You and others may carry out self-purification to help me in my task and go on doing your appointed tasks. You personally are of course doing this. You have no share in these sins.

Keep sending me all the news from there regularly.

You will be glad to know that Harilal's sentence has not been reduced. I had not liked the news<sup>2</sup>. He is happy there. Malaviyaji left for Bombay yesterday. He was present at the Working Committee meeting.

I am sending you the following telegram:

"Your wire. Working Committee has indefinitely postponed Mass Civil Disobedience, other minor activities offensive character.

<sup>1</sup> The five-day fast undertaken as a penance for the Chauri Chaura disaster began on the evening of Sunday, February 12, 1922

<sup>2</sup> Earlier, news had been received that his sentence was reduced

Am fasting till Friday evening by way of penance and warning people who with my name on lips have brutally hacked constables to death. Strongly advise wrong doers confess guilt and deliver them-selves authorities. Do not fast yourself, do not worry, but work and pray.”

Send telegrams and write letters to me regularly. Malaviyaji should reach there within a couple of days.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]  
*Navajivan*, 7-10-1923

### 69. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[February 12, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have embarked on a fast from today for Gorakhpur’s sin. It will end on Friday. This was the least I ought to have done. The civil disobedience has been suspended for the present. I have your letter. What you did was well enough. I will not enter into further discussion on the matter just now.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

CHI. PRABHUDAS  
C/O KHUSHAL GANDHI  
NEAR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL  
RAJKOT SUBURB

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33053

### 70. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[February 12, 1922]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Fasts are my lot. I consider myself fortunate for that and regard fasts as good omen. Crimes will certainly take place in this world. We are no doubt responsible for them but they are an indirect responsibility. However, there are certain crimes for which we are directly responsible. We have but to atone for those. One such crime is that of Chauri Chaura. So, I have decided to fast till Saturday

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Gandhiji’s fast; he started the five-day fast on this date.

<sup>2</sup> From the contents; vide “Letter to Devdas Gandhi”, 12-2-1922.

morning.<sup>1</sup> None of you should feel nervous. If you feel that there is need to do something in the provinces. . . .<sup>2</sup> Those who feel like observing partial fast may do so. Everyone should do his duty there as if nothing has happened.

Now let us wait and see when collective non-violent disobedience is resumed. It will not be this year—that is what I feel.

Now Ba need not go there this week. Look after Nirmala and the children . . . it seems that the woman inmate of the Ashram has good relations with Nirmala, but you can have a better idea of that.

Jamnadas will go there. Let him come here if he wants to. During his stay there, he should learn to translate my articles from *Young India*. I understand about. . . .<sup>3</sup>

What arrangements have you made for Saraladevi? Doctor has given other articles. How do you intend to use them?

The useful portion of this letter.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32887

### 71. TELEGRAM TO ZAHUR AHMED <sup>4</sup>

[After *February 12, 1922*]<sup>5</sup>

THANKS      WIRE.      MISREPRESENTATION      INEVITABLE.      BUT      GOD  
WITH US. LET US DERIVE STRENGTH FROM HIM RATHER THAN  
FROM PUBLIC SUPPORT.

GANDHI

*Seven months with mahatma gandhi, p. 235*

<sup>1</sup> The five-day fast was started by Gandhiji on February 12, 1922 as penance for the Chauri Chaura violence.

<sup>2</sup> A few words at these places are illegible in the source.

<sup>3</sup> As supplied in the source. Gandhiji, who was arrested on March 10, was tried and sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment on March 18, 1922.

<sup>4</sup> Of the Central Khilafat Committee

<sup>5</sup> The source mentions that this telegram was sent in reply to Zahur Ahmed's telegram informing Gandhiji of the "current agitation" in Bombay against his decision to suspend civil disobedience. This decision was ratified by the Working Committee at its meeting at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, 1922.



## 72. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

*Monday, February 13, 1922*

Could not help [fasting]. The fast will end on Friday evening. To do anything less than this seemed impossible. This is the least that I could do. This will be no suffering for me at all. Do not worry. Take good care of your health. Do not start a fast yourself. It is only the woman in childbirth who has to bear the pains. Others can but help. Today I have sent a telegraphic message to the Associated Press.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, p. 45

## 73. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

*Monday [February 13, 1922]<sup>1</sup>*

BHAI SHANKERLAL,

I have started a fast<sup>2</sup> at Naradev to last till Friday evening. Do not be perturbed. In no case start a fast. Absorb yourself in your work. Yesterday I wanted to talk to you but I could not see you. See about that cheque. Whatever anyone may say, we have to shoulder our responsibility.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

SHANKERLAL GHELABHAI BANKER

SEVASHRAM

MIRZAPUR

AHMEDABAD

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11541

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to the fast, which Gandhiji had begun on Sunday evening, that is, February 12, 1922

<sup>2</sup> This was undertaken as a penance for the violent incidents at Chauri Chaura; *vide* "The Crime of Chauri Chaura", 16-2-1922.

## 74. LETTER TO CHIMANDAS I. JAGTIANI

BARDOLI,  
*February 14, 1922*

MY DEAR CHIMANDAS<sup>1</sup>,

I have your letter.

I quite agree with you in the remarks you have made about the atmosphere in India. You will see that the Working Committee has come to the right conclusion. I am only hoping that all the different Committees will heartily co-operate. If they do we should have no difficulty whatsoever. Maganlal<sup>2</sup> is here, and I shall talk to him about a weaver for you in Sind. He told me he had already written offering the services of a demonstrator. A demonstrator is one from whom intelligent people can learn themselves. A teacher is more than a demonstrator. He must have the gift of imparting knowledge. There are not many such in the Ashram, but a demonstrator who is thoroughly competent can be easily spared. You and some others can pick up the art from him.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

CHIMANDAS, ESQ.  
CONGRESS WEAVING ASHRAM  
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 5736

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Chimandas Isardas Jagtiani, a Congress leader from Sind

<sup>2</sup> Maganlal Gandhi (1883-1928); son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement and later of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati demonstrator. He must have the gift of imparting knowledge.

## 75. TELEGRAM TO SYED MAHMUD <sup>1</sup>

[On or after *February 14, 1922*]

RESOLUTIONS PASSED ON MERIT NO TRUCE WHATSOEVER.  
HOPE BENGAL WILL FULLY CARRY OUT W.C.'S RESOLU-  
TIONS AND ADVISE PAYMENT CHOWKIDAR OTHER TAXES.

From a photostat: S.N. 7913

## 76. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI

*February 15, 1922*

DEVDA  
CONGRESS COMMITTEE  
GORAKHPUR

MIND PRESS REPRESENTATIONS CORRECT AND  
FORGET SEND ME FULL LETTER AM QUITE  
BRIGHT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7918

## 77. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL HAMILTON

BARDOLI,

*February 15, 1922*

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Hodge<sup>2</sup> writes to me to say that you would like to have an hour's chat with me, and he has suggested that I should open the ground which I gladly do. I will not take up your time by trying to interest you in any other activity of mine except the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Syed Mahmud (b. 1889); Congress leader from Bihar; jailed during freedom movement; Secretary, Central Khilafat Committee; member of Parliament. The telegram was sent in reply to Syed Mahmud's telegram of February 14, 1922, which read: "Working Committee's decision published today greatly surprising. People in Bengal and Bihar are disappointed. Great anxiety prevails. Bengal may not perhaps obey. Pray wire if any truce is made."

<sup>2</sup> A friend of Gandhiji and the addressee

spinning-wheel. Of all my outward activities, I do believe that the spinning-wheel is the most permanent and the most beneficial. I have abundant proof now to support my statement that the spinning-wheel will solve the problem of the economic distress in millions of India's homes, and it constitutes an effective insurance against famines.

You know the great scientist, Dr. P. C. Ray, but you may not know that he has also become an enthusiast on behalf of the spinning-wheel.<sup>1</sup> India does not need to be industrialized in the modern sense of the term. It has 7,50,000 villages scattered over a vast area 1,900 miles long, 1,500 broad. The people are rooted to the soil, and the vast majority are living a hand-to-mouth life. Whatever may be said to the contrary, having travelled throughout the length and breadth of the land with eyes open and having mixed with millions, there can be no doubt that pauperism is growing. There is no doubt also that the millions are living in enforced idleness for at least 4 months in the year. Agriculture does not need revolutionary changes. The Indian peasant requires a supplementary industry. The most natural is the introduction of the spinning-wheel, not the handloom. The latter cannot be introduced in every home, whereas the former can, and it used to be so even a century ago. It was driven out not by economic pressure, but by force deliberately used as can be proved from authentic records. The restoration, therefore, of the spinning-wheel solves the economic problem of India at a stroke. I know that you are a lover of India, that you are deeply interested in the economic and moral uplift of my country. I know too that you have great influence, I would like to enlist it on behalf of the spinning-wheel. It is the most effective force for introducing successful co-operative societies. Without honest co-operation of the millions, the enterprise can never be successful, and as it is already proving a means of weaning thousands of women from a life of shame, it is as moral an instrument as it is economic.

I hope you will not allow yourself to be prejudiced by anything you might have heard about my strange views about machinery. I have nothing to say against the development of any other industry in India by means of machinery, but I do say that to supply India with cloth manufactured either outside or inside through gigantic mills is an economic blunder of the first magnitude, just as it would be to

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Dr. Ray on Charkha", 2-2-1922.

supply cheap bread through huge bakeries established in the chief centres in India and to destroy the family stove.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours faithfully,*  
M. K. GANDHI

*Young India*, 6-4-1922

## 78. LETTERS TO S. A. BRELVI

BARDOLI,  
*February 15, 1922*

I appreciate the affection underlying your telegram<sup>2</sup>. I could not break the fast in the middle of it, a fast that was so solemnly undertaken, but I assure you that I am not feeling it at all. All my activities are going on just as usual, and by providing me with shorthand assistance Mr. Bomanji<sup>3</sup> has just at the proper moment made my way so easy.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-2-1922

## 79. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BARDOLI,  
*February 15, 1922*

MY DEAR MAHADEV

I have not heard from you for a long time, nor of you or anybody in your jail. Please let me know if you are permitted to write. Do not stop writing because you cannot do so in Gujarati. As I do not

<sup>1</sup> The following are excerpts from Sir Daniel Hamilton's reply: "... with reference to your remarks regarding the charkha I may say from my own personal knowledge of Indian rural life, that given a fair chance, with the help of modern finance, not only the spinning-wheel but the handloom can compete successfully with steam power, the reason being that the four months' labour which is now largely wasted in the agricultural off season costs nothing. No yarn or cloth can be cheaper than that which costs only the price of the raw material.

... I quite agree with your opinion regarding the evils of the huge factory system. ... What I want to see grow up in India, and I think it is what you want also, is a swaraj; whose power will be measured in terms of healthy life rather than in terms of unhealthy money. ... Meantime, I hope you will not be too hard on the Government.... I should like to think of you not as the destroying angel of the old regime, but as the Master Builder of the new. . ."

<sup>2</sup> The telegram from S. A. Brelvi, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, expressed anxiety about Gandhiji's health during his fast following the Chauri Chaura tragedy.

<sup>3</sup> S. R. Bomanji

know what latitude you are permitted in the jail, I have not written to Govind although he is constantly before me in my mind. I had his charming letter. Malaviyaji has permitted me to reproduce his letters to Govind and Krishna Kant which I shall be doing some time.

I hope you all appreciated the suspension of mass civil disobedience. You will read the whole of my reasons in the forthcoming issue<sup>1</sup> of the *Young India* if you are permitted to get that paper. You will not worry about my fast. By the time you receive this, the little fast will have been over. I had really intended to undertake a much bigger thing, but I felt that this would be enough for me as also for those erring ones to whom it is addressed.

Malaviyaji, Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Natarajan were here on Saturday last. Malaviyaji stopped two days, the others one day. Devdas is still at Gorakhpur doing very good work. Pyarelal and Parasram are in Allahabad. I am staying on in Bardoli for some time. Maganlal and some others from the Ashram are in Bardoli in order to extend the operations of the handloom and the spinning-wheel.

This is the third day of my fast. It is early morning, and I am dictating this letter. I do not feel any the worse for the fast. I therefore do not expect any very great weakness on Friday.

Yours,  
BAPU

SJT. MAHADEV H. DESAI  
C/O THE SUPERINTENDENT  
DISTRICT JAIL  
AGRA

From a photostat: S.N. 7921

## 80. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BARDOLI,  
February 15, 1922

QUESTION: Have you resolved on any definite programme of activity on your own part in the immediate or near future?

ANSWER: If your question refers to my personal programme, for the time being I propose to remain in Bardoli and watch the effect upon all the people of the constructive programme placed before them by the Working Committee, which, I am hoping, will be accepted by the All-India Congress Committee. There is enough work and enough variety for every real worker, but you will notice that it

<sup>1</sup> Of February 16, 1922

resolves itself into two things: spread of non-violence and spread of khaddar. The one is to mark a definite inward change and the other to mark a definite outward advance. India cannot hold her own against the world without non-violence, and she cannot become economically free without the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel.

Do you mean to go on any tour of India in the near future?

So far as I can see, not in the immediate future except that I shall have to go to Delhi to attend the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

People say that you will be compelled by circumstances to abandon all political activities and devote the rest of your life to tackling social problems like untouchability, intemperance and so on. Is there any such likelihood?

Not so far as I can see the present temper of the nation. In spite of the aberrations which I have noted India's has become solidly non-violent. I think, both the classes and the masses, and so long as Congressmen continue to endorse the programme laid down and not reject the gospels of non-violence and the spinning wheel, I am not likely to abandon my present vocation. For me there is no distinction between politics and religion. Politics are a sham without a religious backing; and if I am today immersed in the political life of the country it is because politics, i.e., the political conditions of the country are the predominant part of the national life. No advance is possible without touching the political life at one point or another.

In view of the danger of violence would it not be better to give up all idea of mass civil disobedience and concentrate on items of less risk such as defiance of notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and perfect the organization in at least one city, say Calcutta, and fill the jails?

I do not think that it is necessary to give up the idea of mass civil disobedience. There is nothing wrong in the idea. It is not only not an immoral thing but it is a right of the people which can never be surrendered. It simply means that the masses should be trained to act non-violently. What is there wrong in that ideal? I confess that I am not going to embark upon mass civil disobedience hastily. I would want almost absolute assurances before I think next time of embarking upon mass disobedience myself. After all, the civil disobedience in South Africa was mass civil disobedience; there were no untoward incidents in that campaign. The disobedience in Kaira in 1918 was also mass civil disobedience and there was not a single instance of violence. Mass civil disobedience for the whole of India and in the name of India is merely an extension of a successful programme. I would certainly not have stopped the Bardoli programme had there been no danger of it being thoughtlessly copied

by other parts of India. I am certain that in spite of outbreaks of violence in other parts of India, the people of Bardoli would have kept fully non-violent but that would not have served the national purpose. If Bardoli had to offer mass civil disobedience for local grievances I would certainly not have been stopped.

If you can effect a breach in one place or break a single link you will break the whole chain. Will it not, therefore, be advisable to concentrate on the fight for municipal rights and bring Government to its knees?

You cannot do it through a single programme. It will certainly help, but to attain swaraj through mere municipal reform would be a slow process. I am certainly hoping that Ahmedabad and Surat will give a good account of themselves and demonstrate the utter futility of the coercion which the Government of Bombay has thoughtlessly attempted and whilst, if Ahmedabad and Surat succeed, their success will indirectly help the national movement, it will not solve the question of swaraj. Swaraj movement means mass education which you cannot impart directly through a few cities perfecting and achieving independent government. Indeed the disciplined opposition that Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad are pluckily offering has become possible because of the general awakening. When the experiment is completed and if it becomes successful, the people will see how the citizens of these three places will have shown grit, constructive ability, capacity for suffering and all other noble qualities that go to make a nation great. But that experiment by itself cannot give India swaraj within the time contemplated by the Congress programmes.

Are you going to organize municipal fight in Ahmedabad and Surat?

I am not; but I am hoping that the citizens of both these places will not give up a struggle which they have commenced in right earnest.

There is a class of people who have begun to think that your idea of India attaining a non-violent condition is Utopian; and they say that even if after two years' incessant effort on your behalf to teach non-violence to your countrymen the country becomes pacific and you begin your civil disobedience campaign, any single mad cap by a violent deed of political complexion can disturb the harmony. They add that you cannot expect all the 315 millions of the Indians to be non-violent even after centuries of preaching: "The great prophets like Buddha, Chaitanya, Nanak, Kabir who preached only love and non-violence have not succeeded even after 2,500 years in making India entirely non-violent. Violence is bound to exist so long [as] humanity is not raised to the condition of angels and saints. Even if the country remains quiet for a long period to come, what guarantee is there that oppression may not engender violence on the part of some individuals? The mob-mind when outraged



beyond control is bound to be inflamed and go mad. Should the whole country, for the crimes of a few individuals, set at rest the longing for swaraj, a satisfying solution of the Khilafat and justice to the Punjab atrocities?"

In the face of such hard facts, is it not wise to accept violence as inevitable and only try to check it and not stamp it out completely from the surface of India? Many say that the risk will always be there and civil disobedience without such risk will never be practicable. They urge that you yourself said the Choice is between lawless repression and mass civil disobedience with all its dangers. May I know what you have got to say in reply to this?

This sermon in question betrays woeful ignorance of the struggle and the bearing of non-violence upon it. I do not mean you are ignorant. You are merely the mouthpiece for people who are sceptics. I should certainly despair of success if I attempted anything that Jesus, Buddha or Mahomed failed to achieve. On the contrary my attempt is exceedingly humble or simple. I do not believe that India cannot be taught to see the very simple truth that for her to think of attaining swaraj by an armed conflict is an impossible dream for several generations. There is no country on the face of the earth so ill fitted for an armed conflict as India. It may be that the forces of violence may not be sufficiently controlled in order to conduct a campaign of non-violent mass civil disobedience. If that is the conclusion at which all the leaders arrive it does not mean that India cannot attain her freedom by non-violent means. There are many forms of civil disobedience open to a satyagrahi; but I confess that mass civil disobedience is the shortest cut. If it proves to be impossible I have no doubt that a milder programme of civil disobedience can be conceived so as to give the people a training in self-sacrifice. From this the masses will learn the law of suffering, in its application to the nation, as they today practise it for domestic affairs. There is certainly no swaraj without going through the fire and suffering and it gladdens my heart to read reports that I daily receive of people undergoing incredible suffering without retaliation for the sake of the nation.

I have, therefore, absolutely no misgivings on the point. I am not trying to achieve the impossible. Violence there always will be, and I should not be perturbed by stray cases of violence. I have advised suspension of civil disobedience because the violence practised near Gorakhpur was not individual, not in connection with any private wrong but from a vague sense of political wrong. I do not despair of the people bearing the necessity of self-restraint on occasions such as at Chauri Chaura which led to popular violence. Under much graver provocation the masses have remained calm during the year almost all over India; as when public meetings have been forcibly broken up. These were all occasions for outbreak of

mob fury but the people have kept exemplary restraint. I believe that slowly but surely the spirit of non-violence is spreading. It is really not so difficult or impracticable as the string of questions put to me suggests. The incident at Chauri Chaura would have been impossible if the Congress and the Khilafat organizations were perfect. It is all a question of perfecting the Congress organization. And it is the ABC of political science that you can do little unless you have got a fairly good organization. The Government succeeds because it can offer organized violence. The Congress will succeed when its organization which is based on non-violence is also perfected. The constructive programme mapped by the Working Committee is an attempt in that direction. It should also be remembered that non-violence being an organic charge can be organized in much less time than violence. Think of what India has done in the way of non-violence during the 18 months—calculate the generations that must elapse before you can teach India the use of arms!

Have you no fear that the machinery of Congress organization will be loosened and there will be absence of zeal on account of repeated disappointments?

I have absolutely no such fear for the simple reason that earnest workers must realize as they have realized already, that there must be in all organic growth constant adaptability to changes that take place in the environment.

Have you no fear, Mahatmaji, that as the result of the suspension people might lose faith in your principle of non-violence?

I have none.

What about the prisoners at least 15,000 of whom have gone to jail in expectation of the early attainment of swaraj? Will not that question alone drive you to discover some form of resistance at least to get them released?

The issue has been changed by the Gorakhpur tragedy. The Congress must, for the time being, sacrifice the prisoners. They must suffer for the popular misdeeds at Gorakhpur.

Do you think the fanatical portion will not get out of hand through indefinite suspension of mass civil disobedience?

I hope not. If the fanatical portion will get out of hand it will demonstrate lack of Congress discipline and, therefore, justify suspension of mass civil disobedience.

Do you now expect the Moderates to rally to the Congress in any appreciable numbers?

I certainly hope that many Moderates will take the opportunity now offered of rallying round the Congress standard.

When the moment for beginning civil disobedience will arrive do you hope to commence it at Bardoli?

If mass civil disobedience has ever to be embarked upon I am certainly expecting that the honour will be given to Bardoli. But I am hoping that by that time not merely Bardoli but many other places will be ready for self-sacrifice.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-2-1922

## 81. NOTES

### THE ALI BROTHERS

Much information has been received during the week about the Brothers. I have seen, too, the contradiction by the Government. Moreover, the Brothers and Dr. Kitchlew were produced in the balcony of the jail to an impatient and angry crowd that had heard all kinds of ugly rumours including the reported death of one of the Brothers. If the Magistrate's version is strictly correct, the reports from Karachi are exaggerated. But after the production by the authorities of Mr. Mahadev Desai's certificate of character, although they knew that Mr. Desai had suffered grievously before the certificate, I discount the Magistrate's half contradiction. It is at the same time true that there has been inaccuracy in the Karachi reports. We now see that they have not been as inhumanly treated as the reports would lead one to believe. But the authorities are themselves to blame if they would observe needless secrecy about jail treatment and will not permit relatives to meet them. Surely if they have nothing to hide, they should not hesitate to permit relatives of prisoners to see them, not as a privilege, not for the prisoners' sake, but for their own sake when the anxious relatives suspect treatment worse than the authorities are prepared to admit.

### SABARMATI PRISONERS

Take for instance the Sabarmati prisoners. I understand that the information<sup>1</sup> given by me last week is quite accurate and that the ill treatment refers not merely to Mr. Jairamdas but to Maulana Hassan Ahmed and two Dharwar prisoners who are in the same jail. The Maulana and one of the Dharwar prisoners, Mr. Dabhade, are old men near sixty. To punish them in the manner they were being punished for their objection to be searched, is surely inhuman and cannot be justified even in the interest of "law and order" about which the

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Notes", 9-2-1922; under the sub-title "In the Sabarmati Jail".

Government betray such feverish anxiety. Here is an extract from my correspondent's letter:

Mr. Jairamdas has grown thinner. He was allowed to read *The Times of India* and the *Sind Observer* by the Inspector General of Prisons, but the Bombay Government by an order has stopped the papers. The Inspector General had allowed him to get books from outside and allowed the use of lamp upto 10 p.m., but the higher authorities have prohibited these too. Recent Government orders are that no concessions be shown to political prisoners and the rule of daily search be put into force in their case. Maulana Hassan Ahmed and two other prisoners have also refused to be searched; so they were all punished with handcuffs at night. This was for three nights. Other punishments were to follow if they did not submit. It would be no surprise if whipping also is resorted to. Owing to handcuffs they cannot get proper sleep and cannot answer calls of nature during night. During the day-time they are put to work. Maulana Hassan Ahmed cannot say his prayers owing to handcuffs which are put on from 6 p.m. to 6 am. Mr. Jairamdas was allowed shoes in the beginning. This has been disallowed.

Let the Government deny these serious allegations if they dare.

#### DELEGALIZING CONGRESS OFFICES

The following from the Congress Secretary, Faridpur, speaks for itself:

It is not an easy matter to advise what to do when one is subjected to the terrorism of the kind described. It is a matter simply of not being "washed out". It is possible that the landlords will take fright and not give us their houses for offices. We must then hold them in the open whilst we are kept free. If they take us all to jail and keep us together, we must hold consultations there and evolve swaraj in the jails, as they are doing in Agra, by spinning, by having mixed prayer meetings and mixed hymns, and otherwise acting together in so far as the jail regulations will permit. When they are tired of beating us they will certainly take to shooting us. And when they do that and if we do not quail and can sing out "eyes front", we have established swaraj, because we have attained infinite capacity for suffering.

#### "AS IN ALL OTHER COUNTRIES"

I would not have pictured such a grim prospect before us but for the callous defence, offered by Sir William Vincent, of almost every charge brought by me in proof of lawless repression categorically denied by the Viceroy. It is evidently now considered

<sup>1</sup> The letter, not reproduced here, described how Congress offices had been "broken up", volunteers beaten and landlords warned not to let out houses for unlawful assemblies or offices.

necessary to throw off the veneer of polish which used formerly to be given by total repudiation of uncomfortable facts. As such a thing has become practically impossible in view of the courage with which the public has now come forward to expose every wrong, the Government have taken up the bold attitude of defending every atrocity. Sir William evidently considers the members of the Assembly to be specially gullible. For, after treating them to general denials, telling them it is not the province of the Assembly to review the measures of the Provincial administrations, he thus defends the gravest of the charges:

There are two particular charges however to which I must draw attention. One relates to the dispersal of unlawful assemblies by force and I want to make it quite clear that, where it is necessary to disperse unlawful assemblies and such assemblies refuse to disperse when ordered to do so by competent authority, it is the intention of the Government that "as in all other countries" they should be dispersed by force when this is necessary. In such cases force is the only remedy. In the second place attention is drawn, in this statement of Mr. Gandhi's, to the question of searches and arrests by night. The Government of India will give no undertaking that searches and arrests will not be made by night or by day as may be found necessary.

This is as frank as one could wish. It does not much matter that the use of force against unarmed men and midnight trespasses are resorted to in the name of ordinary processes. It merely sustains the charge that this Government is ordinarily bad and intolerable. The open avowal was indeed necessary, for the jails having lost their terror, the next thing to do was to set up a system of corporal punishments and open robbery so as to make the people realize what refusal to submit to the will of the administrators meant for them. We must therefore expect greater use, not less, of corporal punishments and nocturnal raids. When we get used to these as our common lot, the next natural step is day and night shooting. And I have recently been preparing the non-co-operators to expect that final reward reserved for lovers of freedom. Willing death is deliverance. According to Hindu belief the highest known form of freedom, i.e., salvation, is possible only when a man voluntarily surrenders his body and becomes totally indifferent to bodily wants. Political freedom of a disciplined character is a prelude to the higher type. It is therefore in the fitness of things that we should voluntarily surrender our possessions including our bodies for the attainment of national freedom.

Sir William defends the assaults and looting because they are resorted to in "all other countries". I take leave to deny that peaceful assemblies, no matter how unlawful, are ever dispersed by force in any

other country or that it has been ever before done even in India. Such assemblies are dealt with by summoning the conveners, and if necessary the audience, and imprisoning them. Abolition of corporal punishment is the first step to civilized government. Let the public bear in mind the fact that these public meetings take place not to preach or practise violence but to test a precious public right. Speakers and spectators may be arrested but certainly not assaulted and dragged.

As if Sir William felt the shame of his brutal confession, he wound up his brazen defence by irrelevantly dragging in the Gorakhpur incident, to prove that volunteers who sign the pledge of non-violence are not all non-violent. The brutal conduct of the Chauri Chaura crowd was indefensible. One does not know whether it contained volunteers. Let the volunteers who do violence be punished by all means; but no such mob misconduct can possibly excuse the use of force against innocent and inoffensive men

But non-co-operators must beware of being enraged by such lawlessness of the Government. They have to live it down by patient suffering and not even mental retaliation. The incidents I am collecting from week to week are intended to prove the infinite capacity of the Government to use force. We must, therefore, develop an equally infinite capacity for suffering if we are to replace Government by force by Government based upon popular will. Force will be used even under popular Government, but it will then, "as in all other countries" be used against those only who seek to thwart the public will by force. Mr. Montagu puts the Moderates clearly on the wrong track by telling them that European Governments are based on force. It would be impossible in London or Paris to disperse peaceful crowds even though they might have gathered together in breach of a law, unless they have gathered to use or to preach the use of force.

#### SUSPENSION

But Chauri Chaura has opened up a new duty before non-co-operators. The resolutions of the Working Committee reproduced elsewhere<sup>1</sup>, call upon non-co-operators for the time being to suspend all civil disobedience activities, mass as well as individual. Till the All-India Congress Committee has met, all civil disobedience must stop whether defensive or offensive. I am hoping that the All-India Congress Committee will confirm the action of the Working Committee. In my opinion, mass civil disobedience must be stopped

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

for a long time, at least to the end of the year. It is evident that we have not obtained the necessary control over the masses. Individual offensive civil disobedience too must stop for some time. But the Working Committee leaves untouched all normal Congress activities which are necessary for our purpose, although they may be prohibited. Thus we must enrol volunteers in strict conformity with the pledge, though not for defiance of the notifications, but for actual Congress work. So must we carry on khaddar propaganda. It will be noticed that the Working Committee has discounted picketing foreign cloth shops for the time being. The only-picketing permitted is in connection with liquor shops and that too by persons of proved good character. I hope therefore that all workers will loyally abide by the resolutions of the Working Committee and enthusiastically take up the constructive work sketched by it. The programme of construction should bring together all parties with the common goal—the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj.

#### A SILENT WORKER

Andhradesha has lost one of its finest silent workers. K. Hanumantharao laboured for the great educational institution<sup>1</sup> at Masulipatam which is the pride of Andhradesha. He lived for it and died for it. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya<sup>2</sup> writes the following touching letter<sup>3</sup>:

The friends of the deceased have lost no time in issuing an appeal for one lac of rupees for a memorial to the deceased. It is not intended to use the money in vain show but to put on a sound footing the financial condition of the institution for which the deceased slaved day and night. I heartily commend the appeal not only to every Andhra patriot but also to many others who knew Hanumantharao or visited his noble institution.

#### AGHA MAHOMED SAFDAR

Although the successor of Lala Lajpat Rai, Agha Mahomed Safdar, was arrested and tried and released by the Sialkot Magistrate, it was not to be expected that he would remain free for any length of time. He has now been re-arrested and is to be tried in Lahore. He was arrested whilst he was about to address a meeting at Ghartal, a village 18 miles from Sialkot. The audience consisted of over one thousand villagers. There was no violence. And the meeting was continued by

<sup>1</sup> The Andhra Jatheeya Kalasala

<sup>2</sup> 1880-1959; medical practitioner, politician and author; editor, *Janmabhumi*; President, Indian National Congress, 1949; Governor of Madhya Pradesh

<sup>3</sup> Not reproduced here; it described the passing away of Hanumantharao and appealed for funds for the institution for which he had worked

the companions of the Agha Saheb as if nothing had happened.

#### SIKH HONOUR

The Sikh awakening seems to be truly wonderful. Not only has the Akali party become a party of effective non-violence but it is evolving a fine code of honour. The Gurdwara Committee is now insisting on the release of Pandit Dina Nath, a non-Sikh who was arrested in connection with the keys affair<sup>1</sup>. I must re-produce the courageous notice<sup>2</sup> issued by the Committee.

#### AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

Ahmedabad and Surat Municipalities have been superseded—not because they have been found inefficient but because they have been too efficient and too independent.<sup>3</sup> These two municipalities and that of Nadiad have been putting up a brave, dignified and orderly fight against the Government interference and undue control. Their crime consisted in freeing primary education from Government control. They gave up Government grant. Be it noted that the elected councillors who have commanded a majority have always acted after close consultation with the rate-payers. But that is just what the Government evidently does not want. It makes the public opinion effective.

The duty before the councillors and the electors is quite simple. They must still retain control of primary education. The rate-payers may refuse to pay the rates to the nominated committee that the Government may impose upon the citizens and they must pay for the national education of their children. The councillors must keep together and put up as it were a national municipality in so far as it is practicable. In my opinion there is hardly a department, for the running of which enlightened citizens require Government aid. There is no earthly reason why the Ahmedabadis, the Nadiadis and the Surtis should not be able to sweep and light their own streets, educate their own children and look after their sick and their water-supply without hanging on to the Government. The police control they do not possess. The only thing for which they may need Government assistance is in enforcing payment of rates. Replace Government force by force of public opinion and you have the sanction for collecting rates. More money is raised in Ahmedabad by voluntary contributions than by enforced rates. The public will watch

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "The Gurdwara Movement".

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here

<sup>3</sup> Early in February, the Ahmedabad Municipality was suspended and the Collector took over its work.



the duel between nominated committees and popularly elected representatives in awakened constituencies.

CROWDED OUT

An important letter about the Delhi Jail treatment confirming the information given in these pages has been crowded out this week together with much other important matter.

*Young India*, 16-2-1922

## 82. THE CRIME OF CHAURI CHAURA

God has been abundantly kind to me. He has warned me the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which and which alone can justify mass disobedience which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, wilful yet loving, never criminal and hateful.

He warned me in 1919 when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. Ahmedabad, Viramgam, and Kheda erred; Amritsar and Kasur erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan miscalculation<sup>1</sup>, humbled myself before God and man, and stopped not merely mass civil disobedience but even my own which I knew was intended to be civil and non-violent.

The next time it was through the events of Bombay that God gave a terrific warning. He made me eyewitness of the deeds of the Bombay mob on the 17th November. The mob acted in the interest of non-co-operation. I announced my intention to stop the mass civil disobedience which was to be immediately started in Bardoli. The humiliation was greater than in 1919. But it did me good. I am sure that the nation gained by the stopping. India stood for truth and non violence by the suspension.

But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did give the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura. I understand that the constables who were so brutally hacked to death had given much provocation. They had even gone back upon the word just given by the Inspector that they would not be molested, but when the procession had passed the stragglers were interfered with and abused by the constables. The former cried out for help. The mob returned. The constables opened fire. The little ammunition they had was exhausted and they retired to the *Thana* for safety. The mob, my informant tells me, therefore set fire to the *Thana*. The self-imprisoned constables had to come out for dear life

<sup>1</sup> Vide "The Duty of Satyagrahis", 6-7-1919.

and as they did so, they were hacked to pieces and the mangled remains were thrown into the raging flames.

It is claimed that no non-co-operation volunteer had a hand in the brutality and that the mob had not only the immediate provocation but they had also general knowledge of the high handed tyranny of the police in that district. No provocation can possibly justify the brutal murder of men who had been rendered defenceless and who had virtually thrown themselves on the mercy of the mob. And when India claims to be non-violent and hopes to mount the throne of Liberty through non-violent means, mob-violence even in answer to grave provocation is a bad augury. Suppose the “non-violent” disobedience of Bardoli was permitted by God to succeed, the Government had abdicated in favour of the victors of Bardoli, who would control the unruly element that must be expected to perpetrate inhumanity upon due provocation? Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes a non-violent control over the violent elements in the country. Non-violent non-co-operators can only succeed when they have succeeded in attaining control over the hooligans of India, in other words, when the latter also have learnt patriotically or religiously to refrain from their violent activities at least whilst the campaign of non-co-operation is going on. The tragedy at Chauri Chaura, therefore, roused me thoroughly.

“But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?” spoke the voice of Satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink. “Surely it is cowardly to withdraw the next day after pompous threats to the government and promises to the people of Bardoli.” Thus Satan’s invitation was to deny Truth and therefore Religion, to deny God Himself. I put my doubts and troubles before the Working Committee and other associates whom I found near me. They did not all agree with me at first. Some of them probably do not even now agree with me. But never has a man been blessed, perhaps, with colleagues and associates so considerate and forgiving as I have. They understood my difficulty and patiently followed my argument. The result is before the public in the shape of the resolutions of the Working Committee.<sup>1</sup> The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound, and I venture to assure the doubters that the country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error.

The only virtue I want to claim is Truth and Non-violence. I lay no claim to super human powers. I want none. I wear the same

<sup>1</sup> Passed at its meeting at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, 1922

corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears and am therefore as liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has upto now blessed them in spite of the imperfections.

For, confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before, I feel stronger for my confession. And the cause must prosper for the retracing. Never has man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path.

It has been urged that Chauri Chaura cannot affect Bardoli. There is danger, it is argued, only if Bardoli is weak enough to be swayed by Chauri Chaura and is betrayed into violence. I have no doubt whatsoever on that account. The people of Bardoli are in my opinion the most peaceful in India. But Bardoli is but a speck on the map of India. Its effort cannot succeed unless there is perfect co-operation from the other parts. Bardoli's disobedience will be civil only when the other parts of India remain non-violent. Just as the addition of a grain of arsenic to a pot of milk renders it unfit as food so will the civility of Bardoli prove unacceptable by the addition of the deadly poison from Chauri Chaura. The latter represents India as much as Bardoli.

Chauri Chaura is after all an aggravated symptom. I have never imagined that there has been no violence, mental or physical, in the places where repression is going on. Only I have believed, I still believe and the pages of *Young India* amply prove, that the repression is out of all proportion to the insignificant popular violence in the areas of repression. The determined holding of meetings in prohibited areas I do not call violence. The violence I am referring to is the throwing of brickbats or intimidation and coercion practised in stray cases. As a matter of fact in civil disobedience there should be no excitement. Civil disobedience is a preparation for mute suffering. Its effect is marvellous though unperceived and gentle. But I regarded a certain amount of excitement as inevitable, certain amount of unintended violence even pardonable, i.e., I did not consider civil disobedience impossible in somewhat imperfect conditions. Under perfect conditions disobedience when civil is hardly felt. But the present movement is admittedly a dangerous experiment under fairly adverse conditions.

The tragedy of Chauri Chaura is really the index finger. It shows the way India may easily go if drastic precautions be not taken. If we are not to evolve violence out of non-violence, it is quite clear that we must hastily retrace our steps and re-establish an atmosphere of peace, re-arrange our programme and not think of starting mass

civil disobedience until we are sure of peace being retained in spite of mass civil disobedience being started and in spite of Government provocation. We must be sure of unauthorized portions not starting mass civil disobedience.

As it is, the Congress organization is still imperfect and its Instructions are still perfunctorily carried out. We have not established Congress Committees in every one of the villages. Where we have, they are not perfectly amenable to our instructions. We have not probably more than one crore of members on the roll. We are in the middle of February, yet not many have paid the annual four-anna subscription for the current year. Volunteers are indifferently enrolled. They do not conform to all the conditions of their pledge. They do not even wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. All the Hindu volunteers have not yet purged themselves of the sin of untouchability. All are not free from the taint of violence. Not by their imprisonment are we going to win swaraj or serve the holy cause of the Khilafat or attain the ability to stop payment to faithless servants. Some of us err in spite of ourselves. But some others among us sin wilfully. They join Volunteer Corps well knowing that they are not and do not intend to remain non-violent. We are thus untruthful even as we hold the Government to be untruthful. We dare not enter the kingdom of Liberty with mere lip homage to Truth and Non-violence.

Suspension of mass civil disobedience and subsidence of excitement are necessary for further progress, indeed indispensable to prevent further retrogression. I hope, therefore, that by suspension every Congressman or woman will not only not feel disappointed but he or she will feel relieved of the burden of unreality and of national sin.

Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves.

And so, for me the suspension of mass civil disobedience and other minor activities that were calculated to keep up excitement is not enough penance for my having been the instrument, however involuntary, of the brutal violence by the people at Chauri Chaura.

I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere about me. My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence. And for me there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary

mental co-operation.

I know that the mental attitude is everything. Just as a prayer may be merely a mechanical intonation as of a bird, so may a fast be a mere mechanical torture of the flesh. Such mechanical contrivances are valueless for the purpose intended. Again, just as a mechanical chant may result in the modulation of voice, a mechanical fast may result in purifying the body. Neither will touch the soul within.

But a fast undertaken for fuller self-expression, for attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh, is a most powerful factor in one's evolution. After deep consideration, therefore, I am imposing on myself a five days' continuous fast, permitting myself water. It commenced on Sunday<sup>1</sup> evening; it ends on Friday evening. This is the least I must do.

I have taken into consideration the All-India Congress Committee meeting in front of me.<sup>2</sup> I have in mind the anxious pain even the five days' fast will cause many friends; but I can no longer postpone the penance nor lessen it.

I urge co-workers not to copy my example. The motive in their case will be lacking. They are not the originators of civil disobedience. I am in the unhappy position of a surgeon proved skillless to deal with an admittedly dangerous case. I must either abdicate or acquire greater skill. Whilst the personal penance is not only necessary but obligatory on me, the exemplary self-restraint prescribed by the Working Committee is surely sufficient penance for everyone else. It is no small penance and, if sincerely carried out, it can become infinitely more real and better than fasting. What can be richer and more fruitful than a greater fulfilment of the vow of non-violence in thought, word, and deed or the spread of that spirit? It will be more than food for me during the week to observe that comrades are all, silently and without idle discussion, engaged in fulfilling the constructive programme sketched by the Working Committee in enlisting Congress members after making sure that they understand the Congress creed of truth and non-violence for the attainment of swaraj, in daily and religiously spinning for a fixed time, in introducing the wheel of prosperity and freedom in every home, in visiting "untouchable" homes and finding out their wants, in inducing national schools to receive "untouchable" children, in organizing social service specially designed to find a common platform for every variety of man and woman, and in visiting the homes which the drink curse is desolating, in establishing real

<sup>1</sup> February 12, 1922

<sup>2</sup> It was held on February 24 and 25 at Delhi

*panchayats* and in organizing national schools on a proper footing. The workers will be better engaged in these activities than in fasting. I hope, therefore that no one will join me in fasting, either through false sympathy or an ignorant conception of the spiritual value of fasting.

All fasting and all penance must as far as possible be secret. But my fasting is both a penance and a punishment, and a punishment has to be public. It is penance for me and punishment for those whom I try to serve, for whom I love to live and would equally love to die. They have unintentionally sinned against the laws of the Congress though they were sympathizers if not actually connected with it. Probably they hacked the constables—their countrymen and fellow beings—with my name on their lips. The only way love punishes is by suffering. I cannot even wish them to be arrested. But I would let them know that I would suffer for their breach of the Congress creed. I would advise those who feel guilty and repentant to hand themselves voluntarily to the Government for punishment and make a clean confession. I hope that the workers in the Gorakhpur district will leave no stone unturned to find out the evil-doers and urge them to deliver themselves into custody. But whether the murderers accept my advice or not, I would like them to know that they have seriously interfered with swaraj operations, that in being the cause of the postponement of the movement in Bardoli, they have injured the very cause they probably intended to serve. I would like them to know, too, that this movement is not a cloak or a preparation for violence. I would, at any rate, suffer every humiliation, every torture, absolute ostracism and death itself to prevent the movement from becoming violent or a precursor of violence. I make my penance public also because I am now denying myself the opportunity of sharing their lot with the prisoners. The immediate issue has again shifted. We can no longer press for the withdrawal of notifications or discharge of prisoners. They and we must suffer for the crime of Chauri Chaura. The incident proves, whether we wish it or no, the unity of life. All, including even the administrators must suffer. Chauri Chaura must stiffen the Government, must still further corrupt the police, and the reprisals that will follow must further demoralize the people. The suspension and the penance will take us back to the position we occupied before the tragedy. By strict discipline and purification we regain the moral confidence required for demanding the withdrawal of notifications and the discharge of prisoners.

If we learn the full lesson of the tragedy, we can turn the curse into a blessing. By becoming truthful and non-violent, both in spirit and deed, and by making the swadeshi i.e., the khaddar programme complete, we can establish full swaraj and redress the Khilafat and the

Punjab wrongs without a single person having to offer civil disobedience.

*Young India*, 16-2-1922

### 83. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,  
*February 16, 1922*

DEVDA  
CONGRESS COMMITTEE  
GORAKHPUR

CONDITION FIRST CLASS. I TOO DID NOT UNDERSTAND  
YOUR TELEGRAM. COULD NOT MAKE OUT THE  
HORRORS YOU REFERRED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7924

### 84. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

*Friday [February 17, 1922]*<sup>1</sup>

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am sorry that there are no letters from you. I can understand that you should be busy all the while, but at a time like this I do expect to have detailed reports from you. If I get them, I can know the situation and also think about further steps. Amongst the multifarious duties of a soldier, submitting the report of his work to the general is one.

The fast will end today in an hour's time. Except that I feel weak, I have suffered nothing. I am sure you get copies of *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

I shall be in Delhi on the 24th. I shall leave here on the 22nd. You may take it that I shall be at Delhi on the 24th and 25th. After that, I may have to go to Calcutta. Nothing is certain. Ba is of course here.

Hope you are well.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

<sup>1</sup> The letter was written on the last day of the five-day fast undertaken on account of the Chauri Chaura incidents.

[PS.]

This is what has appeared in the *Times*. You may give a reply if you think one is called for. Send to me the reply you give. Return the cutting also to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7682

### 85. *LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI*

SABARMATI JAIL,  
[March 18, 1922]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

It did not seem correct that I should go away without having written to you. Take good care of your health. My spinning wheel....<sup>1</sup> I, therefore, wish you all success in your endeavour.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S. N. 33015

### 86. *DEVINE WARNING*

A man is pardoned if he errs once; if he errs a second time, even then a liberal-minded person will pardon him. But what if he errs thrice? What else will he merit except dismissal?

We describe anyone who gets cheated once as simple, and anyone who gets cheated twice as credulous. If, now, a person allows himself to be cheated thrice, what but a fool should we call him?

Bardoli's civil disobedience has vanished like a dream. God meant to stop it at the very moment when it was to start. There is nothing to wonder at in this. If for one like Rama the hour of coronation turned out to be the hour for going to the forest<sup>2</sup>, why speak of Bardoli? It is only when we have had the experience again and again of things which had once appeared real to us having faded away into dreams, that we shall learn the true meaning of swaraj. At present, only one meaning of swaraj seems true to me. Swaraj is nothing but the sincere effort to win it. The thing itself will seem to

<sup>1</sup> A few sentences here are illegible in the source.

<sup>2</sup> King Dasharatha was forced by Kaikeyi, his youngest queen and Rama's step-mother, on the strength of an old promise he had made to her to abandon the proposed installation of Rama on the throne and to send the prince, instead, to live in the forest for fourteen years. Rama willingly honoured his father's word.



move further away from us the more we run after it.

This is true of every ideal. As a person becomes ever more truthful, truth runs farther away from him because he knows that what he mistakenly thought to be truth was not really the truth.

Hence, one who follows truth—one who acts rightly—is ever humble; he sees his shortcomings more clearly day by day. *Brahmacharya* is ever running away from a person who tries to observe it, for he discovers that, deep down, desire is still strong in him. He is never satisfied with being able to observe physical continence. *Moksha* also recedes farther away from an aspirant. This fact inspired the profound expression “*neti*”<sup>1</sup>. A number of great *rishis*<sup>2</sup> in ancient times set out to seek *moksha*, to realize the *atman*. In its pursuit, they descended into many valleys and climbed many hills, jumped over thorny hedges and discovered, at the end of the journey: “It cannot be this” Who knows how many of them caught afaint glimpse of *moksha*? And yet they were so discerning, so intelligent that, as we know, they were not deceived.

I, therefore, see ever more clearly that for us *swaraj* lies in our struggle to win it.

In 1919, Ahmedabad and Viramgam, Amritsar and Kasur showed my error and *satyagraha* was suspended.<sup>3</sup> Last November, I witnessed in Bombay man’s barbarism and again suspended mass civil disobedience.<sup>4</sup> Even then I did not learn the lesson completely. Now it is Chauri Chaura which has punished me. Who knows how many more such blows are in store for me! If now people reject my leadership and regard me a fool, they will not be to blame.

If I do not know human nature, why do I meddle with such affairs ?

I just cannot hold myself back. I also cannot but admit my error when I see it. I would welcome being dismissed, I would be very happy indeed to be counted a fool, but I will certainly not defile my soul by retaining the filth of error in my body.

“If the king gets angry, the city will shelter me; if God is displeased, where shall I turn?” I do not know if Mira actually composed any song with this line, but she certainly lived her life in that spirit. We may bear the world’s reproaches, but we should not be

<sup>1</sup> Literally, “not this”; descriptions of God in the Vedas often conclude with this assertion of the inadequacy of every description of Divine reality

<sup>2</sup> Seers

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* “Press Statement on Suspension of Civil Disobedience”, 21-4-1919.

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* “A Deep Stain”, 18-11-1921.

guilty in the eyes of God. We should heed His warning.

Had we proceeded with the proposed civil disobedience in Bardoli despite the divine warning from Gorakhpur, we would have certainly regretted the step. The people would have suffered much and our regard for truth and non-violence would have been discredited. We are-known as cowards and then we would have been regarded as liars as well. If other parts of India remain peaceful, then only should Bardoli start disobedience—that was what I said, that was the condition. If Bardoli had started civil disobedience despite the violation of that condition, then it too would have sinned.

If anyone argues that such peace will never be preserved in the country, we may not contradict him. This is, however, an argument for giving up the path of satyagraha and civility. Let the country do anything it likes after renouncing the path of civility; our duty is only to see that it does not follow untruth while talking of truth and does not commit violence while talking of non-violence. Bardoli has observed those conditions well enough, and so have I. By acting thus, both have served the people and I personally have proved my fitness as a servant. By admitting errors, the people will rise higher, not fall lower.

Truly, it is God Who has saved our fair name. I should have taken a warning from the Madras incidents. I should also have done so from the letters I received from our opponents and from non-co-operators. I did not take the warning; but, then, if a person who enjoys God's kindness does not get warned by a sign, God warns him by beat of drum and, if he does not understand the warning even then, He warns him by thunder and lightning and by a downpour of rain. By doing a duty which requires no great effort, we have escaped big dangers.

If we have had to bend, to retreat, it is in order that we may advance. A person who strays from the path must first return to the point where he left it. After he has returned to it, his progress will be resumed. That is to say, we, who were slipping down when the Working Committee passed its resolution, began to rise again after that.

But this did not satisfy me. I, therefore, felt it necessary to undertake further atonement. My agony had begun the moment telegrams about Gorakhpur were received. But it was necessary that I go through bodily suffering as well. Considering the magnitude of my error, I should not have contented myself merely with a five days' fast. I wished to fast for 14 days. But I let it be five days. If this atonement is insufficient, I shall have to pay the balance sooner or

later, along, with compound interest. Anyone who repays his full debt in time saves himself from having to pay a greater amount later.

Atonement should not be advertised. But I have publicized mine, and there is a reason. My fast is atonement for me but, for the people of Chauri Chaura, it is a punishment. The punishment inflicted by love is always of this nature. When a lover is hurt, he does not punish the loved one, but suffers himself; he bears the pangs of hunger and hits his own head. He is unconcerned whether or not his loved ones understand his suffering.

But I have also made my fast public by way of warning to others as well. I have no alternative left to me. If a non-co-operator deceived me—and I regard almost the whole of the country as a non-co-operator—he may have my body. I fondly believe that the country wants me to live. If that is so, by undertaking bodily suffering I suggest to the country that it should not deceive me. If it likes, it may well disown me after rejecting the condition of non-violence. But, so long as it accepts my services, it will have to accept non-violence and truth.

This time I have been content with a fast of five days. If, however, the people refuse to take the warning, five days may become fifteen and fifteen become fifty and I may even lose my life.

I am writing this article on the third day of my fast<sup>1</sup>. I am perfectly clear in my mind that the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis, the Christians and the rest will get swaraj only by following the path of non-violence and it is by following the same path that they will serve the cause of the Khilafat and get justice in regard to the Punjab. It was accepted at the Congress session and in the Khilafat conferences. If, despite this, we give it up, we shall be fighting not for our dharma, not for God, but for *adharma* and for Satan.

We should not follow the bad example of others, not even that of Gazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha. “If a short man runs with a tall one he may not die, but he will certainly fall ill” is a true saying. Even a wise man acts in accordance with his nature, and so does the rest of the world. What, then, can one gain by coercion ? I speak the truth when I say that India will never come to rule an empire through physical strength. It is doing violence to her nature to expect her to win anything through such strength. By her very nature, India is a lover of peace. That is why, whether she knows it or not, she has gone crazy over non-violent non-co-operation based on truth. No one came

<sup>1</sup> Which commenced on February, 12

forward to follow the bad example of the mad men of Ahmedabad and Viramgam. No one, likewise, will imitate the example of the mad folk of Chauri Chaura. Such madness is not in India's nature, it is only a disease. On the other hand, Mustafa Kamal Pasha succeeded with his sword because there is strength in every nerve of a Turk. The Turks have been fighters for centuries. The people of India have followed the path of peace for thousands of years. We shall not discuss at the moment which people did the better thing. Both violence and non-violence have a place in the world. The *atman* and the body, both succeed. Whether eventually the *atman* wins or the body, this is not the occasion to consider. If we wish to discuss it, we may do so after we have won swaraj. Let us, at present, employ the easiest means to gain it. India's nature cannot be changed in a moment. I am convinced that those who wish to free the country with the help of the sword will need ages to succeed in their effort.

If even the Muslims of India try to follow in the footsteps of Mustafa Kamal Pasha, they will taint the fair name of Islam. Islam attaches the utmost importance to peace. Patience is far better than anger, than the use of physical force. The people of India have followed peace and truth for a long time. Let them win swaraj this very day by adopting them again; if they discard these, they had better remain slaves. One cannot in the same moment proceed towards both east and west. The path followed by the West is one of violence and atheism; it looks like it for the present at any rate. The path followed by the East, it has long been proved, is one of peace, dharma and of faith in God. The centre of the West at the present day is England. That of the East has been India since time immemorial. The world thinks that England rules an empire and India is her chief maid-servant. Our present effort is to win deliverance from this slavery. If this land of Bharat wishes to end her slavery, she can do so only with the help of her old weapons of non-violence and truth.

There is at the present time not a single country on the face of the earth which is weaker than India in point of physical strength. Even tiny Afghanistan can growl at her.

With whose help does India hope to fight with England? Japan's? If it fights with the help of Kabul, or of some other country, it will have to accept the slavery of that country. Hence, if the country wishes to be free in this generation, it can count on no help other than

God's. And God protects only those who follow truth and non-violence. Thus, the divine warning from Gorakhpur wants us to understand this if we wish to see our dreams come true. We must cultivate the spirit of non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 19-2-1922

### 87. WHAT ABOUT THOSE IN JAIL?

A gentleman has written a long letter to me from which I take the following:<sup>1</sup>

There is another letter expressing exactly similar views. I am sure others, too, have felt this doubt. What wonder if they have? But such doubts show that these doubting Thomases have not yet understood the significance and the-beauty of the struggle. The charge against Pandit Malaviya has been levelled simply out of ignorance. Panditji had no hand at all in the suspension of civil disobedience. I resolved on it as soon as I heard in Bardoli about the Gorakhpur incident. I even wrote letters to that effect from Bardoli. I consulted colleagues and decided to convene a meeting of the Working Committee. Thereafter I went to Bombay. There is nothing surprising if 'Panditji also wants the same thing. But the decision was taken, independently of him, by the Working Committee and me.

Now let us turn to its merits. Is it right for us to try to get the prisoners released even by breaking our pledge? Not to give up truth even if, in consequence, we lose a kingdom and a throne, even if we sacrifice our family and our life—that is real satyagraha. If we secure the prisoners' release by forsaking truth, they themselves will feel ashamed. They wish to be released only after swaraj has been won. They want to be released with honour. They have gone to jail in order to suffer, looking upon this suffering as happiness and upon happiness outside jail as suffering. If, therefore, the step we took seemed right otherwise, we could not have refused to take it out of consideration for the prisoners.

Moreover, could we have secured their release by going on with civil disobedience? The power we had to get them released was the power of our non-violence. Bardoli could show its strength only if

<sup>1</sup> The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether Pandit Malaviya felt no concern for the many leaders and thousands of non-co-operators who were in jail, and why he was trying for a settlement while they were still in prison.

peace was preserved elsewhere in the country. Non-violence and violence cannot go hand in hand. Night and day cannot exist together. Thus, in whatever way we look at the matter, we reach the same conclusion, that we had no choice. but to suspend civil disobedience.

That does not mean that we have nothing to do now. If a Kshatriya does not succeed along one path, he looks for another, a straight one. From the point where he discovers that he has gone astray, he returns to the original spot and again tries his strength. We have to do the very same thing. No one will forget the prisoners.

I know the anguish in Panditji's soul. He is as keen to get the prisoners released as we are. He, too, wants to get them released without loss of honour to the country.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 19-2-1922

## 88. MY NOTES

### TO THE PEOPLE OF BARDOLI

You have done well. It is not for any fault of yours but because of Gorakhpur that civil disobedience has been suspended. However, as we all belong to India, Gorakhpur's crime has its effect on us too.

To a soldier, it is all the same whether he is asked to fight or to stop fighting. He goes forward or stops as he is ordered. The people of Bardoli should stop as the Working Committee has ordered them and prove themselves true soldiers by immediately paying up the revenue.

Civil disobedience may be suspended, but satyagraha is never suspended. It should be the very breath of our life. Hence, we should honour the resolutions which the Working Committee has passed in order that we may remain wedded to truth and to prove that we are so wedded.

Although the people of Bardoli were impatient to start civil, disobedience, they did indeed have their shortcomings. I want you to overcome these and make yourselves more fit for offering civil disobedience.

During my stay in Bardoli, I saw that the *Kaliparaj* communities live almost in a state of slavery. It is the duty of the advanced communities to bring them out of their state of ignorance. They will deserve being called advanced communities only if they do so. The spinning-wheel should be introduced into the homes of the *Kaliparaj*

communities. Their children should all attend national schools and they themselves should be given some general education.

I want the people of Bardoli to fulfil all the conditions laid down by the Congress and so make themselves more fit [for civil disobedience].

Only the *Kaliparaj* communities drink. You should go and meet them in their homes, talk to them with love and persuade them to give up drinking. In order that they may do this, they should be given milk, buttermilk or sweet water.

You can establish *panchayats*<sup>1</sup> this very day and settle your disputes among yourselves. You can improve your schools and give all-round education to your children there. You can add to your income and secure economic freedom by introducing the spinning-wheel in every home and training up weavers and carders in each village, and with only the profits from these activities you can run your courts and your schools, carry on propaganda against drinking and promote swadeshi.

The Congress has also pointed out to you the way to do all this. One means is for every man and woman to become a member of the Congress, and another is for all of you to contribute one per cent of your last year's income to the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

You can win a good measure of freedom by working in this way, and now you will be regarded as fit to offer civil disobedience only if you can win that freedom in a planned manner.

#### TO EVERY GUJARATI

What applies to the citizens of Bardoli applies to all Gujaratis. The idea behind suspending civil disobedience is to make ourselves more fit for it. We should, therefore, earnestly take up the constructive programme laid down by the Congress.

I know that the Kheda district of Abbas Saheb, which has been full of enthusiasm will be greatly disappointed. Those who were getting ready for individual civil disobedience will now find it painful to pay up the taxes. They can, however, prove themselves true soldiers only by not looking at the matter in that light and, instead, by paying up the taxes and devoting themselves to constructive work. We can now see that it is more difficult to persuade everyone to become a member of the Congress and collect from him one per cent of his last year's income than to make him agree to go to prison. When we have completed "all these tasks, not only Bardoli but the whole of Gujarat

<sup>1</sup> Representative bodies looking after the affairs of a village

may start civil disobedience.

TO CITIZENS OF AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

National civil disobedience has been suspended but a golden opportunity lies before you. You have a local grievance. You can give a good proof of the mettle of the people in your city. The Government appointed the Committees<sup>1</sup> against your wishes. Personally, I have been much grieved by your fellow-citizens coming forward to serve on them. This, however, should cause no disappointment. They will not be able to function without the co-operation of citizens. No children, of course, will attend the schools run by the Committees unless you send them there. Nor need you pay taxes against your wishes. Let there be, on the one hand, the Committees appointed by the Government against your wishes and, against them, let there be your city's *mahajan*. People will then know what support the Committees have.

You can carry on this work with the utmost civility and in a perfectly peaceful manner. After discussing matters with the Committees, take up all the responsibilities which you can shoulder and leave those which you cannot. I am eager to watch a civilized competition between the two. There is no doubt that even if one party takes care not to overstep the limits of propriety, the other, too, will have no choice but to act in like manner. If, therefore, the citizens work without ever using harsh language, they will certainly win. The first duty of the residents of these cities is to see that not a single one of the national schools passes out of their control. For this, enthusiastic workers and funds are all that is needed. If we cannot find these, we are bound to be defeated.

SATYAGRAHA BY DHASA DURBAR

Desai Gopaldas is the Durbar<sup>2</sup> of a town called Dhasa in Kathiawar. The people of that place lead a very happy and simple life. The relationship between the Durbar and his subjects is as cordial as between father and son. The movement for swadeshi, the removal of untouchability and similar activities are proceeding in Dhasa with great vigour. Being a *Patidar*<sup>3</sup>, however, Shri Desai could not restrain himself when Abbas Saheb took charge of the Kheda district; he left the management of affairs in Dhasa to his wife and plunged into the movement in Kheda. Everyone has seen the correspondence

<sup>1</sup> For the circumstances which led to the Government action, *vide* "Municipalities in Trouble", 15-12-1921.

<sup>2</sup> Ruler of a small principality

<sup>3</sup> A community in Gujarat, consisting chiefly of peasant-farmers



between him and the Commissioner. Everyone of his letters bears testimony to his spirit of satyagraha. The nation will advance only through such sacrifices. The atmosphere in Japan changed overnight when the nobles offered their lands and all their other possessions for the service of the people. The poor also understood the importance of that sacrifice and all engaged themselves in national work. Similarly, when a large number of Durbars and zemindars in India start making sacrifices for the people, the resulting union between the rich and the poor will be a sight for the world to see. Today, it is the poor and those belonging to the middle class who are chiefly carrying on the non-co-operation movement. There is even some danger for the country in this. The somewhat delicate situation in which we find ourselves today will also end if the upper classes take full part in the movement. This requires courage and a Kshatriya spirit. Shri Desai has displayed these. I hope that others will take a lesson from his example.

#### THE CASE OF GOVINDJI VASANJI

Shri Govindji Vasanji, the proprietor of the well-known sweets-shop of Bombay, is in jail. I wanted to comment on this case earlier, but could not do as I did not have the relevant papers. I have just got them.

Shri Govindji will have to enjoy rest in jail for six months. I welcome the sentence all the more for being one of hard labour. It is my experience that those sentenced to simple imprisonment do not really serve a term of imprisonment. Those sentenced to hard labour alone can do so. The former are likely to get bored, while for prisoners undergoing rigorous imprisonment, time passes happily. The mind can turn the prison into a palace; on the other hand, if it constantly dwells on thoughts of imprisonment, it could make prison a place of misery. Anyone who finds prison life hard is no non-co-operator. Mirabai welcomed the cup of poison as nectar.<sup>1</sup> Holding a cup of poison in his hands, Socrates addressed to his dear pupil a discourse on the immortality of the soul which the world will ever cherish. His gentle language bears testimony to the fact that there was no trace in his heart of any ill will or anger for the warder who gave him the cup or the judge who sentenced him to take poison. The history of the world provides many such instances.

It is not only in regard to political offences that non-co-

<sup>1</sup> Her husband, incensed at her spending most of her time in devotion to Shri Krishna in the company of sadhus and mendicants, is said to have sent her a cup of poison, wanting her to end her life and stop bringing discredit to him and his family.

operators are to refrain from taking part in court proceedings. They may not defend themselves in courts from which they have decided to keep away even if they are charged with base crimes. The misfortune lies in having committed a crime, not in the fact that the world regards one as guilty. Many sinners conceal their sins from others and, passing for eminent religious leaders, live a burden to the world; such persons win no great reward in life. We look upon them as impostors.

We do not regard everyone who has been sentenced by a court as a criminal; on the contrary, all who have had experience of courts know that many innocent persons are punished and the guilty often escape punishment. As a lawyer, too, I have come across many such instances. Going to a court is like playing a game of *chopat*. For some, the dice may turn up favourably, for others, unfavourably. There is no reason to believe that they alone are worthy men who are favoured by the dice. Every player of *chopat* will readily recall instances in which the player always got the wrong number up, and failed to get the right number despite his most anxious efforts. It was not because of lack of skill in gambling on their part that the Pandavas lost while Duryodhana won.<sup>1</sup> Poor Yudhisthira spared no efforts.. The Pandavas, however, were destined to attain immortal fame, to prove afresh that dharma always involved suffering. They were, therefore, defeated. But the world reveres the defeated Pandavas.

Shri Govindji's world consists of his friends. What do his friends think about him? I have not yet met a single friend of his who believes him to be guilty. Even now I see before me his face bathed in tears. When I did not even know that he might be prosecuted or that some action might be taken against him, he came to see me in order to remove any suspicions that I might have and, with tears in his eyes, told me that he had taken no part whatever in inciting anyone. "You will certainly believe that I, who often spend my time with Parsi friends and who owe my money to Parsi patrons, would at least have the sense to realize that I would be guilty in the eyes of the world and of God, were I to incite anyone against Parsis." These are the words he uttered on that day, in a voice choked with emotion. He related much else in the same strain and convinced me of his innocence.

I believe that he would have been acquitted if he had defended himself. Some able lawyers had offered to take up his case, but his brave mother refused their services. "My son is a satyagrahi. I know

<sup>1</sup> Yudhisthira, the eldest of the Pandavas, played against Duryodhana guided by Shakuni, Duryodhana's maternal uncle, and lost successive games with increasingly heavy stakes till he had forfeited their share of the kingdom and their personal liberty. The story is told to the *Mahabharata*.

that he is innocent. It is possible that he may go to jail if he does not defend himself. However, he would bring shame upon me and upon our family by breaking his pledge. I do not want him to be defended.” By arguing thus, that brave mother saved her son. Shri Govindji might perhaps have succumbed had it not been for his mother’s courage and her blessings. But he chose to go to jail and so kept his pledge. There have not been many such instances in which non-co-operators did not defend themselves though charged with offences which would cast a slur on their good name. Shri Govindji Vasanji merits congratulations. I look upon his example as one which deserves to be followed by others.

No one should ask why, if I believe that Shri Govindji would have been acquitted if he had defended himself, we should refuse to take part in court proceedings and why people should not be free to defend themselves when charged with non-political offences. It is because of such temptations that falsehood, deceit, etc., have so far prospered in the world. No one has asserted that British law-courts never give justice. But is there any Indian who does not know that it is almost impossible to get justice in these courts when the case has any political implications? Tilak Maharaj strove hard to vindicate his reputation. At that time, we did not consider it wrong to defend ourselves in courts; on the contrary, it was the right thing to do. Tilak Maharaj, however, did not succeed. In the Punjab, Lala Harkishan Lal and others poured out money like water in order to pay lawyers; could they save themselves? Again, we know that Lala Lajpat Rai, Chitta Ranjan Das, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others are completely innocent, and also that they could not have saved themselves even if they had engaged eminent lawyers. It is for this reason that, where the Government is blind in its intoxication of power, it is one’s dharma to sacrifice even the few benefits that one may derive from it. Law-courts are one of the strong pillars which sustain a government. In ordinary circumstances, people may even accept the help which this pillar can give, but thoughtful people should not be tempted by such help.

#### TO “BHATIA” SISTERS AND BROTHERS

A *Bhatia*<sup>1</sup> gentleman writes as follows:<sup>2</sup>

The *Bhatias* have not spared themselves in serving the nation. Being well-to-do, they have contributed large sums. Some *Bhatia* sisters have been giving their time and serving the country very well.

<sup>1</sup> A business community in Kutch

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here.

However, the rich still seem to find it difficult to adopt khadi. They have no reason for this. Those who are sincerely filled with zeal for service of the country will render whatever service is necessary. There is no other service as valuable as helping the swadeshi movement, that is, plying the spinning-wheel and using khadi. This dharma, though easy to follow and free from all risks, is very important in its results. It will not at all seem unusual if the rich in the country follow the dharma of wearing khadi. One reads in English history that the British people, including the nobles, gave up the use of lace and such other things which were imported from outside and for years carried on with thick, coarse cloth made in England itself. Anyone who realizes that khadi alone can end starvation in the country, can preserve the virtue of her women and can prevent famines—will such a person ever use foreign or mill-made cloth? I hope that *Bhatia* brothers and sisters will give up their indifference and whole-heartedly embrace the dharma of wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 19-2-1922

## 89. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>

BARDOLI,

*February 19, 1922*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I see that all of you are terribly cut up over the resolutions<sup>2</sup> of the Working Committee. I sympathize with you, and my heart goes out to Father<sup>3</sup>. I can picture to myself the agony through which he must have passed but I also feel that this letter is unnecessary because I know that the first shock must have been followed by a true understanding of the situation. Let us not be obsessed by Devdas's youthful indiscretions. It is quite possible that the poor boy has been swept off his feet and that he has lost his balance, but the brutal murder of the constables by an infuriated crowd which was in sympathy with non-co-operation cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that it was a politically-minded crowd. It would have been criminal not to have heeded such a clear warning.

<sup>1</sup> Sent to Jawaharlal through his sister, as he was then in jail; *vide* the following item.

<sup>2</sup> Of February 11 and 12

<sup>3</sup> Pandit Motilal Nehru

I must tell you that this was the last straw. My letter<sup>1</sup> to the Viceroy was not sent without misgivings as its language must make it clear to anyone. I was much disturbed by the Madras doings, but I drowned the warning voice. I received letters both from Hindus and Mohammedans from Calcutta, Allahabad and the Punjab, all these before the Gorakhpur incident, telling me that the wrong was not all on the Government side, that our people were becoming aggressive, defiant and threatening, that they were getting out of hand and were not non-violent in demeanour. Whilst the Ferozepur Jirka incident<sup>2</sup> is discreditable to the Government, we are not altogether without blame. Hakimji complained about Bareilly. I have bitter complaints about Jajjar. In Shahajanpur too there has been a forcible attempt to take possession of the Town Hall. From Kanouj too the Congress Secretary himself telegraphed saying that the volunteer boys had become unruly and were picketing a High School and preventing youngsters under 16 from going to the school. 36,000 volunteers were enlisted in Gorakhpur, not 100 of whom conformed to the Congress pledge. In Calcutta Jamnalalji tells me there is utter disorganisation, the volunteers wearing foreign cloth and certainly not pledged to non-violence. With all this news in my possession and much more from the South, the Chauri Chaura news came like a powerful match to ignite the gunpowder, and there was a blaze. I assure you that if the thing had not been suspended we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle but essentially a violent struggle. It is undoubtedly true that non-violence is spreading like the scent of the otto of roses throughout the length and breadth of the land, but the foetid smell of violence is still powerful, and it would be unwise to ignore or underrate it. The cause will prosper by this retreat. The movement had unconsciously drifted from the right path. We have come back to our moorings, and we can again go straight ahead. You are in as disadvantageous a position as I am advantageously placed for judging events in due proportion.

May I give you my own experience of South Africa? We had all kinds of news brought to us in South Africa in our jails. For two or three days during my first experience I was glad enough to receive tit-bits, but I immediately realized the utter futility of interesting myself in this illegal gratification. I could do nothing, I could send no message profitably, and I simply vexed my soul uselessly. I felt that it was impossible for me to guide the movement from the jail. I therefore simply waited till I could meet those who were outside and

<sup>1</sup> Of February 1, 1922

<sup>2</sup> The shooting of December 23, 1921

talk to them freely, and then too I want you to believe me when I tell you that I took only an academic interest because I felt it was not my province to judge anything, and I saw how unerringly right I was. I well remember how the thoughts I had up to the time of my discharge from the jail on every occasion were modified immediately after discharge and after getting first-hand information myself. Somehow or other the jail atmosphere does not allow you to have all the bearings in your mind. I would therefore like you to dismiss the outer world from your view altogether and ignore its existence. I know this is a most difficult task, but if you take up some serious study and some serious manual work you can do it. Above all, whatever you do, don't you be disgusted with the spinning-wheel. You and I might have reason to get disgusted with ourselves for having done many things and having believed many things, but we shall never have the slightest cause for regret that we have pinned our faith to the spinning-wheel or that we have spun so much good yarn per day in the name of the motherland. You have *Song Celestial* with you. I cannot give you the inimitable translation of Edwin Arnold, but this is the rendering of the Sanskrit text. "There is no waste of energy, there is no destruction in this. Even a little of this dharma saves one from many a pitfall." "This dharma" in the original refers to Karma Yoga, and the Karma Yoga of our age is the spinning-wheel. I want a cheering letter from you after the freezing dose you have sent me through Pyarelal.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

*A Bunch of Old Letters, PP. 23-5*

## 90. LETTER TO HARI G. GOVIL

BARDOLI,  
*February, 19, 1922*

DEAR MR. GOVIL,

I have your letter, I am glad you recognize the truth of non-violence.

We should deal patiently with those who do not understand it. It is a new experiment and we shall have to be extremely patient if we would make headway. Impatience also is a form of violence.

I have no message for the world till the message I am humbly trying to deliver to India is truly delivered and imbibed. If it is successfully delivered in India, I know that my physical presence will now here be necessary to emphasize it, but that it will permeate the

whole world without the shadow of a doubt. But every worker abroad who endeavours to study the movement and interpret it correctly helps it.

We can gain absolutely nothing by exaggeration or distortion of facts.

Just as non-violence required exemplary patience, it also requires exemplary truthfulness and a fine appreciation of one's own limitations.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi and Non-Violent Resistance : The Non-cooperation Movement in India, Gleanings from American Press, pp. 14-5.

### *91. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT*

[BARDOLI ,

*February 19, 1922]*

MY DEAR SARUP<sup>1</sup>,

If you think that the above<sup>2</sup> can give the prisoners in Lucknow any solace, please read it to Jawaharlal when you see him next. Do tell me otherwise how things are shaping there. Some one of you is I hope coming to Delhi. Ranjit sent me one of father's letters to you to read.

*Yours,*

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal tells me, letters addressed to you are likely to be delayed; hence this is being sent through Durga.

*A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 23-5

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit; sister of Jawaharlal Nehru

<sup>2</sup> The preceding item

92. *TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

Bardoli,  
*February 20, 1922*

DEVDAAS GANDHI  
CONGRESS COMMITTEE  
GORAKHPUR

CERTAINLY COME DELHI IF POSSIBLE.<sup>1</sup>

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7945

93. *LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, A.I.C.C.*

BARDOLI,  
*February 22, 1922*

TO  
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE  
OF THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE, DELHI  
SIR,

At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Surat on 31st January last, the following resolution was passed:

The Working Committee records its firm conviction that dissemination of correct news about Indian political situation in foreign countries is absolutely essential<sup>2</sup> and refers to Mahatma Gandhi all the correspondence on the subject of foreign propaganda now with the Working Secretary, with a request that he should prepare a definite scheme in that behalf at an early date so as to enable the next meeting of the Working Committee to consider it.

Having considered the resolution and the papers forwarded to me by the Secretary, I beg to report as follows:

In my opinion it is not only undesirable but it may prove even harmful to establish at the present stage any agency in any foreign country for the dissemination of correct news in such country about the political situation in India, for the following reasons:

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was about to leave for Delhi after his five-day fast, to attend A.I.C.C. meeting there to be held on February 24 and 25.

<sup>2</sup> In December 1920 it was decided to suspend foreign propaganda and to wind up the British Congress Committee and its journal *India*, published from London; vide "Speech on Foreign Propaganda, Nagpur", 29-12-1920.



First, because it would distract public attention and instead of making the people feel that they have to rely purely on their own strength, it will make them think of the effect of their actions on foreign countries and the support latter can render to the national cause. This does not mean that we do not care for the world's support, but the way to gain that support is to insist upon the correctness of every one of our actions and rely upon the automatic capacity of Truth to spread itself.

Secondly, it is my experience that when an agency is established for any special purpose, independent interest ceases to a certain extent and what is distributed by the agency is previously discounted as coming from interested quarters.

Thirdly, the Congress will not be able to exercise effective check over such agencies, and there is great danger of authoritative distribution of wrong information and wrong ideas about the struggle.

Fourthly, it is not possible at the present moment to send out of India any person of importance for the sole purpose of disseminating news in foreign countries, for such men are too few for the internal work.

I am therefore of opinion that the work of publishing the Congress Bulletin should be better organized, if necessary, by engaging a special editor for the purpose and by sending the Congress Bulletin regularly to the chief news agencies of the world. The editor should be instructed to enter into correspondence with these newspapers or news agencies which may be found to interest themselves in Indian questions.

It is my firm opinion based upon experience gained through the conduct of the journals I have edited in South Africa and here that the more solid the Congress work and the sufferings of the Congress men and women, the greater the publicity will the cause attain without special effort. From the exchanges of letters and correspondence that I receive day by day from all parts of the world in connection with the conduct of *Young India*, I observe that never was so much interest taken in Indian affairs throughout the world as it is today. It follows that the interest will increase in the same proportion as the volume of our sufferings. The very best method of disseminating correct information about the political situation, therefore, is to-make the Congress work purer, better organized and to evoke a greater spirit of suffering. Not only is curiosity thereby intensified, but people become

more eager to understand the inwardness and the exact truth about the situation.

*I remain,*  
*Yours faithfully,*  
M. K. GANDHI

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

## 94. NOTES

### AN EXCELLENT CHOICE

In selecting Sardar Kharak Singh as the successor to Aga Mahomed Safdar as President of the Provincial Congress Committee, the Congress Committee has made an excellent choice. It could not have done better. In honouring Sardar Saheb the Committee has honoured itself. The election of Sardar Kharak Singh is also a delicate compliment paid to the Sikhs for their bravery, sacrifice and patriotism. Nowadays the office of President of a Congress Committee, a Khilafat Committee or a Gurdwara Committee is no sinecure. Prosecution for some offence or another under the ordinary or extraordinary laws imposed by the Government upon the people of India almost follows as a matter of course in many provinces. With the exception of a few provinces, some office bearers of the various Committees have contributed their quota to His Majesty's hotels. I congratulate Sardar Kharak Singh, therefore, upon his courage in taking up the reins of office at this stormy period of the nation's career.

### SATISFACTORY FOR BOTH PARTIES

The imprisonment of leaders seems to satisfy both the Government and the public. It is obvious that they satisfy the Government, otherwise they would not have performed the thankless task of imprisoning leaders. They believe that thereby they will be able to suppress the non-co-operation movement. It is equally obvious that the people are satisfied with these imprisonments because the movement, wherever they take place, is making headway. The latest instance comes from Nellore. Although this place was doing steady work it was not pulsating with vitality as it must be doing now. An esteemed worker writes:<sup>1</sup>

. . . here too the authorities have been co-operating with the people to push up our movement. Recently, they have rendered us a distinct service by awarding

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

a year's rigorous imprisonment to the President, Secretary and three other members of the District Congress Committee. The Secretary is Mr. Ram Reddy, when you last came to Nellore. He belongs to the most influential family of the Reddy community and his prosecution has carried our gospel to far-off nooks and corners which would have otherwise been impenetrable ....

Mr. Venkatappaya wrote to me only the other day fearing that the Government would not go on with Mr. Reddy's prosecution because he was a most influential leader in his district. He was afraid because the dropping of the prosecution might have damped the rising enthusiasm of the people. The Government have, however, dispelled Mr. Venkatappaya's fears, and Mr. Reddy's imprisonment seems to have galvanized Nellore into activity it has never seen before.

#### ONLY "SIX MONTHS SIMPLE" FOR THE PRESIDENT

If Begum Abul Kalam Azad and the Maulana himself complain about the inadequacy of the sentence pronounced upon the Maulana Saheb, what must be the feeling of the President<sup>1</sup> of the Congress and his devoted partner on having heard that he together with Mr. Sasmal was to have only 6 months' simple imprisonment? Why on earth the trial should have been dragged and judgment postponed if such an untheatrical sentence was to be pronounced, only the Government can tell. The gossip that was sent to me along the rails was that the Government were seeking a suitable opportunity for discharging both the Maulana and the Deshbandhu. The latest gossip which is supposed to be authentic, I dare not disclose. Nor is it of importance for the reader to know. We must take, not even excluding the President, our lot as it comes to us. I am receiving biting letters from correspondents accusing me of simplicity, of hard-heartedness, of faintheartedness and all such kindred weaknesses. Some correspondents tell me that I have sold the cause of the prisoners. Others tell me I have thrown all my non-co-operation views to the winds and I have been faithless to the President of the Congress. Fortunately, many years of service have given me a fairly tough hide and these shafts do not pierce it, but I do assure all these impatient critics that not a particle of the principle of non-co-operation has been surrendered by the resolutions. On the contrary, refusal to suspend mass civil disobedience in the face of grave warning from Nature would have meant a complete surrender of the fundamental principle of non-co-operation. The discharge of prisoners I purposely brought to the surface when it became a point of national honour, because with the change of issue from the immediate attainment of the triple goal to the immediate attainment of

<sup>1</sup> C. R. Das, the President-elect

the three-fold freedom the demand for the discharge of prisoners became a natural consequence. But Chauri Chaura has raised another immediate issue, viz., terrible penance and a fierce process of purification, and this penitential purification requires the sacrifice of the imprisoned workers and the temporary sacrifice of many of our activities which have revived the nation. But such things happen in all wars, much more frequently in spiritual warfare such as ours is claimed to be. I call it spiritual in the sense that we have resolutely declined to make use of physical force for the attainment of our end. We were in danger of being drifted away from our moorings, and it was necessary for us to return, but the return is merely meant to give us greater purity, greater perception and therefore greater strength, and if non-co-operators have to become seasoned soldiers for the nation's battle, they will doubtless understand the value of waiting and preparing. He who waits for preparation or otherwise, advances the cause as much as the warrior who stands three feet deep in the trenches. All our sufferings will have been lost upon us if we do not realize these elements of the science of war, whether it is spiritual or physical.

#### MALABAR RECONSTRUCTION

Mr. Madhava Rao and others of the Servants of India Society and the Secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association have jointly issued a series of questions regarding reconstruction in Malabar. The questions have been elaborately framed and cover all the departments—economic, industrial, educational, civic and general. I propose to deal with only one. In my opinion it solves all the other questions. It will be found a most difficult task to organize loans or the other things in connection with the resettlement of the afflicted people of Malabar. If, however, the people in want are supplied with spinning-wheels, most of the questions will be automatically solved. The thing can be done with the least capital possible, and it would be a permanent addition to the industries of Malabar wood, which is so much required for the spinning-wheels, is a matter of no consequence in Malabar, and many by-industries will receive strength and encouragement without any extra effort. I would, therefore, heartily commend to the organizers of the reconstruction scheme this one single proposition as the central truth round which all the other propositions should be made to revolve. They will then find that any scheme so constructed will lead to economy, efficiency and the least waste.

#### IDEAL FATHER AND SON

Some weeks ago, I dealt with the imprisonment of the three Malaviyas and in doing so showed with what humility and with what

respect for his revered father, Govind Malaviya, when he simply could not resist the voice of conscience, courted imprisonment in spite of Panditji's wish to the contrary.<sup>1</sup> The public will be pleased to have the following translation of the letter Panditji wrote to Govind Malaviya who has sent a copy to me. The original is of course in Hindi.

With blessings to Govind. May you live long.

I have received your letter. I am sorry I could not acknowledge it earlier because of my distractions. I am not displeased with you. Please be quite at ease on this score. I certainly did not approve of the picketing of the Modern High School. A school is not like an abode of sin or a case distributing poison such that it would be justifiable to picket it so as to prevent children from going there, but both you and Krishna were quite right in going to the public meeting and giving to the audience the message of the Congress. The policy adopted by the Government is altogether improper. I am hoping that it will be reversed. Do keep yourself perfectly happy. Mr. Gandhi sent me the letter you addressed to him about your imprisonment.

The foregoing is dated the 13th January.

The following was sent by Panditji to Krishna Kant Malaviya bearing the same date:

I am sorry I have been so busy that I could not write to you or to Govind these many days. I am writing now at 11 p.m.

You were perfectly right in addressing the meeting. Do not allow your mind to be oppressed with any idea that I disapproved your having done so. I said at the All-India Congress Committee (or rather at the Subjects Committee) meeting at Ahmedabad that if the Government would not withdraw the notification declaring Congress volunteers "unlawful associations", such volunteers would be justified in disregarding the notification and in going to jail for it.

The Conference which I have convened along with others will take place to-morrow. The enclosed letter will show you the object of the Conference. Mr. Gandhi is here and so are Sir Sankaran Nair, Sir Visveswarayya and many others. We have had many hours of preliminary discussion today. I expect some good will come out of it.

Keep yourself perfectly cheerful. Do not let any of your fellow sufferers be under the impression that I had any hand in the alteration of your sentences from rigorous into simple imprisonment for six months. I did not complain to anyone about your sentences, though I did feel pained at the brutality of the sentences.

I intended to see you both in the jail on my return to Allahabad. But now that you have been removed to Agra, I may not be able to see you for some

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Notes" 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "The Malaviyas".

time. However, that is of little consequence. There is very heavy work before me during the next few months which will gratify your heart. More hereafter.

In sending me a copy of the letter Govind remarks that the circular letter convening the Conference was not delivered to Krishna Kant. He also asked me not to publish the two letters without Panditji's permission. As both the letters I considered to be of public interest, I felt that they should be printed, and having obtained the necessary permission I have shared them with the public. To me both are precious letters. They are an illustration of what a family life should be. There is mutual toleration between the different members of the same family and perfect independence retained by and given to the younger ones. What is more, the letters reveal the nobility of Panditji's character. If he is not in jail today it is not because he is afraid of it but because he has not yet seen his way clear to it. Who that is in intimate touch with him does not know that he is borne down with anxiety and torn asunder by an eternal conflict of duty? I have often felt that if he was carried away to prison it would be a positive deliverance for him from constant anxiety and worries attendant upon a public life such as his.

I have reproduced the letters in order to plead for general toleration on the part of non-co-operators. I want the readers to share with me the belief that though Panditji has a record of public service unequalled by any living Indian, there are men among the Independents and the Moderates who find themselves estranged against us, not because they are weak but from a stern sense of duty. If we would only cultivate the necessary spirit of humility, charity and toleration towards our opponents and will not impute unworthy motives, I know that we would win many over to our side who are today ranged against us because of our intoleration. When a majority becomes intolerant it is feared, distrusted and in the end detested, and very-properly so. If non-co-operators have, as I believe they have, the vast masses with them, surely it behoves them to be tolerant, kind and respectful towards the minority even whilst they retain their own viewpoint as stubbornly as ever. Intoleration is weakness and justifies the charge often brought against us that the movement, although it is not intended to, does engender hatred. I hope the two letters I have reproduced will put non-co-operators on their guard.

The Gorakhpur tragedy was nothing but a forcible illustration of intoleration. We often forget that one of our duties consists in converting even the police and the soldiery to our views. We will never do so by terrorism. The mob inhumanity to the police has added to

the corruption that is rampant amongst them and has now called forth the reprisals which shock us. Let us bear in mind the fact that a corrupt government and a corrupt police presuppose the existence of corruption among the people who submit to government and police corruption. After all, there is considerable truth in the statement that a people deserve the Government that they have. It does not need a religious belief in the doctrine of non-violence to make us see that we have to win the Police and the Military, largely consisting of our own countrymen, over to our side by kindness, toleration and even submission to their brutality. Surely, in a majority of cases they know not what they are doing.

#### ESSENCE OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

A friend, a Congress official, writes from Simla:<sup>1</sup>

. . . certain members, belonging to different Congress organizations, have found out certain novel methods of disobeying law by staging certain plays which have been proscribed by the Government, for instance *Zakhm-i-Punjab* which was staged sometime ago in Multan and very recently in Simla, resulting in arrests in both the cases. Now may I ask your opinion about this form of disobedience practised before the date fixed in the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, viz., 15th January 1922? Further, were the actors in these plays justified in informing the Government in a spirit of defiance beforehand that they were going to stage a proscribed play and by such action inviting arrests?

Furthermore, I will draw your attention to the stormy literature which is issuing forth from Delhi and other places and is being recited by small boys and by certain irresponsible volunteers containing matter which is obviously inconsistent with the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. May I ask if this kind of propaganda instead of proving helpful will not bring about mischievous results?

The staging of the play was certainly not justified if it was done before the 15th January. It was also not justified if it was done without the consent of the Provincial Congress Committee. Every form of civil disobedience was subject to the previous sanction of the local Congress Committee. The staging of the play was also unjustified if the play itself was calculated needlessly to excite passions and to induce hatred. Assuming that all the conditions I have named were fulfilled, the managers were quite right in giving previous information to the Government in a dignified manner, because the essence of civil disobedience is that it is public and made specially known to those interested in arresting.

As to the “stormy literatue”, it is a sad thing that pamphlets

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

such as the writer alludes to are being published and so largely patronized. The writer has mentioned two such booklets. I am, however, not printing the names. Some other correspondent sends me one of the booklets also for my edification and advice. The title as well as the contents are objectionable and breathe nothing but hatred. It is our duty to bring every wrong to public notice, but there are ways and ways of doing the thing. No point is gained by putting things offensively. The offence contained in the fact itself. To embellish such facts is to detract from the demerit, and at the present moment when people are under the pledge of non-violence, publication of such literature is highly reprehensible. It spreads anger and makes the task of offering civil disobedience more and more difficult.

#### I HAVE LOST ALL CREDIT

A friend from Lahore without giving his name sends me the following thundering note:<sup>1</sup>

On Tuesday the 11th I read the *Tribune* and the resolutions therein, passed at the emergency meeting of the All-India Congress Working Committee. . . .

The people are of this opinion that you have turned your face and become fickle-minded. They will co-operate with the Government without any hesitation and join the ceremony Of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. . . .

Some merchants are under the impression that you have removed all the restrictions from all liquor shops and *videshi* cloth.

Truly speaking, each and every one in Lahore city is holding meetings . . . and . . . are condemning the action of the All-India Congress Committee.

I now for my sake ask you these questions:

1. Will you now give up the lead of this movement ? If so, why ?
2. Will you be good enough to let me know why you have given such instructions to all Provincial Congress Committees? Have you given an opportunity to Pandit Malaviya for a round table conference for a settlement or has Pandit Malaviya agreed to embrace your movement in case the Government has not turned true to its words ?
3. Grant a compromise is arranged and the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are redressed and In the case of swaraj the Government may only extend the reforms, will you be satisfied with that or continue your activities till you have got the full dominion status?
4. Suppose no decision is arrived at. Will Pandit Malaviya and all others who are connected with this conference come to your side or will their fate remain in the balance just as now?

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here



5. In case no decision is arrived at, will you give up the idea of civil disobedience, if there is danger of violence?

6. Is your intention now to disband the present Volunteer Corps and enlist those who know spinning and wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar?

7. Suppose violence has made its appearance when you have started your mass civil disobedience, what will you do at that time? Will you stop your activities at the very moment?

There is much more criticism in this letter than I have reproduced. The writer tells me that the people are so disgusted that they now threaten to become co-operators and are of opinion that I have sold Lala Lajpat Rai, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, the Ali Brothers and others and tells me that if I give up the leadership there are thousands who will leave this world by committing suicide. I may assure the citizens of Lahore in particular and the Punjabis in general that I do not believe what is said of them. I used to receive such letters even during the Martial Law days because of the suspension of civil disobedience, but I discounted all the news and on my reaching the Punjab in October<sup>1</sup>, I found that I was right in my analysis of the Punjab mind and I discovered that there was no one to challenge the propriety of my act. I feel still more confident of the correctness of the decision of the Working Committee, but if it is found that the country repudiates my action I shall not mind it. I can but do my duty. A leader is useless when he acts against the promptings of his own conscience, surrounded as he must be by people holding all kinds of views. He will drift like an anchorless ship if he has not the inner voice to hold him firm and guide him. Above all, I can easily put up with the denial of the world, but any denial by me of my God is unthinkable, and if I did not give at this critical period of the struggle the advice that I have, I would be denying both God and Truth. The telegrams and letters I am receiving from all parts of the country thanking me for my decision—telegrams from both non-co-operators and co-operators—confirm my belief that the country appreciates the decision and that the Lahore writer has given undue prominence to some heated bazaar talk which was bound to take place after the Bardoli decision which all of a sudden disturbed all previous calculations. I can understand the effect of the first shock, but I am also sure that when the people begin to analyse the implications of non-violence, they will come to no other conclusion than that of the Working Committee.

And now for the questions of the correspondent:

1. I am not likely to give up the lead of the movement unless I

<sup>1</sup> 1919

have a clear indication that the people want me to. One method of giving that indication is an adverse vote of the Working Committee or the All-India Congress Committee.

2. I assure the public that Pandit Malaviyaji had absolutely no hand in shaping my decision. I have often yielded to Panditji, and it is always a pleasure for me to yield to him whenever I can and always painful to differ from one who has an unrivalled record of public service and who is sacrifice personified. But so far as the decision of suspension is concerned, I arrived at it on my reading the detailed report of the Chauri Chaura tragedy in the *Chronicle*. It was in Bardoli that telegrams were sent convening the Working Committee meeting and it was in Bardoli that I sent a letter<sup>1</sup> to the members of the Working Committee advising them of my desire to suspend civil disobedience. I went thereafter to Bombay at the instance of Panditji who, together with the other friends of the Malaviya Conference, undoubtedly wished to plead with me for a suspension and who were agreeably surprised when I told them that so far as I was concerned my mind was made up, but that I had kept it open so that I could discuss the point thoroughly with the members of the Working Committee. The suspension has no reference to a round table conference or to any settlement. In my opinion, a round table conference is bound to prove fruitless. It requires a much stronger Viceroy than Lord Reading has proved to be to perceive the situation in the country and then to describe it correctly. I certainly feel that Pandit Malaviyaji has already come into the movement. It is not possible for him to keep away from the Congress or from danger, but the Bardoli decision was arrived at purely on its merits and I could not have been shaken from the original purpose had I not been unnerved by the Chauri Chaura tragedy which was the last straw.

3. Nothing short of a full Dominion status is likely to satisfy me personally and nothing short of complete severance will satisfy me if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs remain unredressed, but the exact form does not depend upon me. I have no clear-cut scheme. It has to be evolved by the people's representatives.

4. At the present moment there is no question of a settlement. Therefore, the question as to what Panditji and all others will do is premature if not irrelevant. But assuming that Panditji holds any conference and that its resolutions are ignored by the Government, Panditji and others will act as all self-respecting men do in such circumstances.

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to Members of Working Committee", 8-2-1922.

5. I can never give up the *idea* of civil disobedience, no matter what danger there is of violence, but I shall certainly give up the idea of *starting* mass civil disobedience so long as there is a certain danger of violence. Individual civil disobedience stands on a different footing.

6. There is no question of disbanding any Volunteer Corps, but the names of those who do not conform to the Congress pledge have certainly to be removed from the list if we are to be honest.

7. If we have understood the essential parts of non-violence, we can but come to one conclusion that any eruption of widespread violence—and I call the Chauri Chaura tragedy widespread for the purpose—automatically stops mass civil-disobedience. That many other parts of the country have nobly responded to the spirit of non-violence is good, but it is not good enough to continue mass civil disobedience even as a most *peaceful* meeting is disturbed if one man obstructs or commits violence. Mass civil disobedience for becoming successful requires a non-violent environment. The reason for restricting it to one single small area is to prevent violence elsewhere. It, therefore, means that mass civil disobedience in a particular area is possible when the other areas passively co-operate by remaining non-violent.

#### MORE WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS

The Sikh friends have come out with the *Azad Akali* both in Gurumukhi and in Urdu. Their effort is more readable and more artistic even than the Gauhati paper which I praised only the other day. Every sheet is so clear. Then there is the *Assam Congress Bulletin*, a weekly just started at Tezpur. This is purely in English. The print is not so clear as in the *Azad Akali*. I do not get the time to go through all these newspapers, but I hope that the editors of these written newspapers take special care in the selection of news, that they do not put in a single fact which cannot be fully substantiated and that they do not indulge in criticism that is calculated to excite hatred, seeing that such newspapers cannot be controlled by any Government in the world, so long as there are people ready and brave enough to write them. They must be specially restrained in the choice of language. It would be terrible if written newspapers were to indulge in undisciplined language. So long as the country is under the spell of non-violence, every word uttered or written in anger or malice retards our progress.

#### BAN ON KHADDAR CAPS

It was a pleasure to me to receive the following from Maulvi Zafarulmulk Alavi of Lucknow who is at present undergoing

imprisonment in the Fatehgarh Jail. The reader may not even remember that he was among the earliest victims. His arrest had created a sensation as it was unexpected. A man of literary tastes, he was living in practical retirement. He was fearless and truthful in his writings. Hence his arrest. From his letter the reader will see with what scrupulous care he is discharging himself in the jail. Like so many other non-co-operation prisoners, he is helping the authorities in preserving jail discipline. Let the letter<sup>1</sup> speak for itself:

I have purposely refrained from writing to you during the last 15 months that I spent here, as I was thoroughly satisfied with my lot...

There have, however, arisen some points in connection with the jail life of non-co-operators which I should like to bring to your kind notice . . .

The other point is rather serious. Two non-co-operators who were lately made simple prisoners and are therefore allowed to put on their own clothes, have been prohibited from wearing the Gandhi cap. . . .

I spoke to the officer concerned and was assured that personally he was not particular about it. In fact he had merely carried out the wishes of the District Magistrate. . . .

According to the jail regulations, all simple prisoners wear their own clothing . . . Thus it is clear that this prohibition is only an innovation of very recent date and is simply obnoxious and humiliating. . . .

The Inspector General of U.P. Jails is about to visit this jail very shortly and the matter will be referred to him who is likely to settle it satisfactorily, if his discretion has not already been tied by an order of the local Government. In that case, of course, it will be our duty to disobey the order at all costs.

The difficulty, however, about khaddar caps is one of principle on which there can be no surrender. The simple imprisonment prisoners have the right to wear their own dress. It is therefore an insult to them to deprive them of their caps. I hope that the Inspector General has solved the difficulty as expected by the Maulvi Saheb.

It is no pleasure to have to fight the Government in the jails. They might be treated as neutral ground where the animosities may be buried. Death closes many a controversy. Imprisonment is civil death. Is it not possible to keep the political animosities outside the prison walls? But I know it is too much to expect this Government, which lives on pretensions of decency, to observe the laws of the game even behind the iron bars. Liberty will be all the dearer for the price that is being exacted of us.

As I write these bitter lines, the voice within me asks whether I

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

am doing justice to the Government! Do I not know that the prisoners are having a royal time of it in the Agra Jail? But the answer swiftly comes—all jails are not Agra Jails. Whatever is given is extorted. Whatever can possibly be denied is withheld. I hear Pandit Motilalji saying to me: “What is my comfort worth if my next-door neighbour, who does not happen to be a well-known barrister, does not get the creature comforts that I get!”

#### SIND PRISONERS

Mr. Virumal Begraj who is a great social reformer and the soul of Sukkur writes while being taken from Sind to an unknown destination :<sup>1</sup>

It is the greatest revelation that workers are being replaced as fast as they are arrested. It is the surest sign of the vitality of the movement.

#### DR. KICHLEW—No. 776

Dr. Kichlew’s letter<sup>2</sup> reproduced elsewhere will be read with mingled satisfaction. We can envy his gain in weight, his buoyancy, but we cannot congratulate the Bombay Government on the treatment of political prisoners.

Dr. Kichlew rightly calls attention to the fact that when in the Punjab he was charged with a more serious offence, he had decent treatment, whereas now when the charge is in reality nothing, he and his fellow-prisoners are treated as common felons. But the interest of the correspondence will centre in Col. Wedgwood’s<sup>3</sup> frank letter which Dr. Kichlew has sent for publication. “Gandhi-ism” referred to by Col. Wedgwood is nothing but a return to truth and simplicity. Truth must always be simple. And nothing that is simple and truthful admits of violence. “Gandhi-ism” is a revival of the old maxims which are common both to the East and the West. “Live and let live” is what non-co-operation stands for. The modern motto is hideous exclusiveness based upon violence. Equality and Fraternity are mere lip-phrases and mutual intercourse is not based on mutual love but is on mutual repulsion and consequent preparedness to do violence. It is, however, too early yet to talk of “Gandhi-ism”. India has to stand the test and vindicate the supremacy of non-violence over violence before

<sup>1</sup> The letter, not reproduced here, mentioned that, while the writer and others had been sentenced to imprisonment, their “young friends” were carrying on all national activities.

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here

<sup>3</sup> A British Labour leader and Member of Parliament who visited India in December 1920 and attended the Nagpur Session of the Congress.

the ideal can be approximated.

#### A CORRECTION

In *Young India* of 2nd February I reproduced a letter from Pandit Arjunlal Sethi's son regarding Pandit Sethi's treatment in the jail.<sup>1</sup> I have now learnt that the son was misinformed and that no brandy or eggs were administered to Arjunlalji. He is reported also to be properly fed and clothed. Whilst correspondents have generally sent most accurate accounts, too much care can never be exercised in transmitting news. Correspondents should always err on the side of under-statement. Exaggeration not only discredits us but it produces a contrary effect on the opponent, whereas accuracy of statement brings home the guilt to the person accused, whether he confesses it or not. I have invariably found that a truthful exposure of wrong has always brought about some mitigation. I have found also that exaggeration has generally increased its intensity. Truth softens even an untruthful person. Untruth can only harden him, for he is a stranger to truth.

#### RATHER FREE THAN SOBER

Just as I am writing these notes, my assistant puts into my hand a cutting from the *Leader* containing the text of Pandit Gopinath Kunzru's letter describing in the calmest manner possible what befell him and his friend when they were purchasing in Agra brandy from a liquor shop for outward application for a patient. The volunteers would not allow them to take the brandy in spite of all the assurances of *bona fides* given by Pandit Kunzru. This is not only not non-violence but is unadulterated violence. Peaceful picketing does not mean that so long as no physical violence is used, any kind of pressure could be exercised. The volunteers, if they had remained true to their pledge, would have allowed safer passage to Pandit Gopinath and his friend. The picketers, duty is merely to warn drinkers against the vice of drink, not molest them or otherwise prevent them, if they will not listen. If we may force temperance upon the people believing it to be good for them, the English administrators and their Indian supporters are certainly performing an analogous operation. They too force the present system on us well believing that it is good for us. If the swaraj volunteers may, therefore, take such liberties as they have undoubtedly taken in respect of Pandit Gopinath

<sup>1</sup>Vide "Notes", 2-2-1922, under the sub-title "Interference with Religious Liberty".

Kunzru, they are seeking not to change the *system* but to change masters. I would rather have India to be free than sober if freedom has to be sold to buy sobriety.

#### FOREIGN CLOTH

On the one hand instances such as the foregoing make one cautious about even liquor picketing. On the other, complaints have reached from two places regarding the stopping of the picketing of foreign cloth shops by the Working Committee. All suspensions are to depend upon the decision of the All-India Congress Committee. But whilst one wishes the total prohibition of the use of foreign cloth, if the picketing is at all forcible, I for one cannot possibly vote for it. The clearest issue before the country is whether we are to have non-violence in thought, word and deed or whether we are to have mixed activity. But I need not speculate further, because the fate will be decided by the time these notes reach the subscribers.

#### FROM FAR OFF SILCHAR

Here is another letter<sup>1</sup> from Babu Tarun Ram Phookan from Silchar Jail which he this time calls Sadhana Ashram.

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

### 95. A GREAT STATEMENT

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's statement to the Court has been just received by me. It covers thirty-three closely-typed foolscap sheets. But it is worth reading. The original is naturally in the Maulana's polished Urdu. The English translation is not bad, but one could wish it was-possible to get a better translation. The statement has much literary beauty. It is elaborate and eloquent. It is bold and uncompromising but subdued. A sarcastic vein runs through the whole of it. It is an eloquent thesis giving the Maulana's views on the Khilafat and nationalism. I hope that it will be possible to procure printed copies of the statement. I would advise the Maulana's secretary to have the statement carefully revised.

As I laid down the statement I felt more clearly than ever the necessity of boycott of law-courts. But for the boycott, we could never

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here. Phookan had expressed his growing conviction that unless people were prepared to suffer without the desire for retaliation, they would fail in their fight.

have evolved the fearless strength that we have. Instead of the noble declarations of the President, Lalaji, Panditji, we would have had pettifogging lingual quibbles which cannot raise a nation. Without the boycott we could never have had the Maulana's statement which in itself constitutes good political education.

What a change between 1919 and 1922—nervous fear of sentences and all kinds of defences in 1919; utter disregard of sentences and no defence in 1922! In 1919 the nation could have done no otherwise; in 1922 it could have done no less without deserving execration of the world. The effect of the boycott is not to be measured by the number of suspensions of practice. The true measure is to be found in the departure of the halo that only two years ago surrounded the courts of law. They still remain the haunts of money-changers and speculators. They are no longer repositories of national or even individual liberty. That is to be found in the stout hearts that the nation is fast developing.

The Maulana's statement is hardly meant for, though addressed to, the Court. It is meant for the public. It is really an oration deserving penal servitude for life. Well might the Maulana laconically exclaim after his one year's rigorous imprisonment: "This falls far short of what I was waiting for."

The following extracts<sup>1</sup> which I have culled from the statement will enable the reader to form his own conclusions.

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

## 96. MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

Begum Abul Kalam Azad sends me the following telegraphic message<sup>2</sup> by letter post:

Judgment has been delivered today in the case against my husband, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He has been sentenced to only one year's rigorous imprisonment. This is astoundingly less than what I was waiting for. . . . I make bold to inform you that I offer my humble service to fill up the gap caused by his absence in the rank of national workers in Bengal. All those activities which he performed will still continue to be carried on normally. . . . Before this, during his last four years' internment, I have gone through a first test, and I am confident that in this my second trial, I will with God's grace

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here

<sup>2</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here



come off triumphant. . . . From today I will discharge all the duties connected with the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committees with the assistance of my brother. My husband has asked me to convey to you his loving and reverent greetings and the Following message: "At the present juncture both the sides—the Government and the country—are wholly unprepared for any compromise. The only duty before us is to prepare ourselves. Bengal will, in the next stage, also retain the lead which it has established today. Kindly add the name of Bengal to that of Bardoli Taluka. And if any time comes for a settlement, do please not give to our release the importance which is unfortunately being attached to it today. Have the terms of settlement fixed with the single end in view of our national aspirations, unconcerned with the question of our release."

I have not yet received the telegram although the letter of advice tells me that it was sent both to Ahmedabad and Bardoli. I am able to give the telegram to the public only because the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee has very kindly sent me a copy by letter post at the instance of the Begum Saheba. It is a matter of no small comfort that ladies occupying the highest station in life, are coming forward one after another to step into the breach created by the withdrawal of male national workers. I tender my congratulations to Begum Abul Kalam Azad for her having offered to take her share in the public work. The readers will take to heart the message of the Maulana. It is perfectly true that neither the Government nor the country is today prepared for any compromise. The Government will not be till we have suffered long and suffered more. Bengal has certainly led in the direction. Bardoli has yet done little. Twice has it been baulked of its privilege by cruel Nature, but it is a matter of no consequence whether it is Bengal or Bardoli which leads, so long as we get rid of a system which, as is daily becoming more and more clear, is based upon terrorism. In the present mood of the country there is little danger of the vital interests being sacrificed, as the Maulana fears, to the momentary pleasure of securing the release of How prisoners.

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

## 97. *SHAKING THE MANES* <sup>1</sup>

How can there be any compromise whilst the British Lion continues to shake his gory claws in our faces? Lord Birkenhead<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is one of the articles for which Gandhiji was tried and sentenced in March 1922.

<sup>2</sup> 1872-1930; British lawyer, politician and scholar; Lord Chancellor and later, Secretary of State for India

reminds us that Britain has lost none of her hard fibre. Mr. Montagu tells us in the plainest language that the British are the most determined nation in the world, who will brook no interference with their purpose. Let me quote the exact words telegraphed by Reuter:

If the existence of our Empire were challenged, the discharge of responsibilities of the British Government to India prevented and demands were made in the very mistaken belief that we contemplated retreat from India—then India would not challenge with success the most determined people in the world who would once again answer the challenge with all the vigour and determination at its command.

Both Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Montagu little know that India is prepared for all “the hard fibre” that can be transported across the seas and that her challenge was issued in the September of 1920 at Calcutta<sup>1</sup> that India would be satisfied with nothing less than swaraj and full redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. This does involve the existence of the “Empire”, and if the present custodians of the British Empire are not satisfied with its quiet transformation into a true Commonwealth of free nations, each with equal rights and each having the power to secede at will from an honourable and friendly partnership, all the determination and vigour of “themost determined people in the world” and the “hard fibre” will have to be spent in India in a vain effort to crush the spirit that has risen and that will neither bend nor break. It is true that we have no “hard fibre”. The rice-eating, puny millions of India seem to have resolved upon achieving their own destiny without any further tutelage and without arms. In the Lokamanya’s language it is their “birthright”, and they will have it in spite of the “hard fibre” and in spite of the vigour and determination with which it may be administered. India cannot and will not answer this insolence with insolence, but if she remains true to her pledge, her prayer to God to be delivered from such a scourge will certainly not go in vain. No empire intoxicated with the red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this “British Empire”, which is based upon organized exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe. Little do these so-called representatives of the British nation realize that India has already given many of her best men to be dealt with by the British “hard

<sup>1</sup> In the Special Session of the Congress

fibre". Had Chauri Chaura not interrupted the even course of the national sacrifice, there would have been still greater and more delectable offerings placed before the Lion, but God had willed it otherwise. There is nothing, however, to prevent all those representatives in Downing Street and Whitehall from doing their worst. I am aware that I have written strongly about the insolent threat that has come from across the seas, but it is high time that the British people were made to realize that the fight that was commenced in 1920 is a fight to the finish, whether it lasts one month or one year or many months or many years and whether the representatives of Britain re-enact all the indescribable orgies of the Mutiny days with redoubled force or whether they do not. I shall only hope and pray that God will give India sufficient humility and sufficient strength to remain non-violent to the end. Submission to the insolent challenges that are cabled out on due occasions is now an utter impossibility.

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

### 98. *MILL CLOTH*

If hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, whether cotton, wool or silk is to be the order of the day, what is the place of mill cloth in the national economy, is the question often asked. If millions of villagers could receive, understand and take up the message of the spinning-wheel today, I know that there is no room for mill cloth whether foreign or Indian in our domestic economy and that the nation will be all the better for its entire disappearance.

This statement has nothing to do with machinery or with the propaganda for boycott of foreign cloth. It is purely and simply a question of the economic condition of the Indian masses.

But unless Providence comes to the rescue and miraculously and immediately drives the masses to the spinning-wheel as to a haven of refuge, the Indian mills must continue to supplement the khaddar manufacture for a few years to come at any rate. It is devoutly to be wished that a successful appeal could be made to great mill-owners to regard the mill industry as a national trust and that they should realize its proper place. The mill-owners cannot wish to make money at the expense of the masses. They should on the contrary model their business in keeping with the national requirements and wipe out the reproach that was justly levelled against them during the Bengal

Partition agitation<sup>1</sup>. Even now complaints continue to come from Calcutta and elsewhere that Indian mills are charging for their dhotis more than Manchester although their dhotis are inferior to the Manchester. If the information is correct it is highly unpatriotic and such a policy of grab is likely to damage both the cause and the country. At the moment when the country is going through the travail of a new birth, surely it is wicked to charge inordinate prices and thus not merely to stand aloof from the popular movement but actually to be callously indifferent to it.

The mill-owners might also, if they will take a larger view of the situation, understand, appreciate and foster the khaddar movement and study the wants of the people and suit their manufactures to the new needs of the country.

But whether they do so or not, the country's march to freedom cannot be made to depend upon any corporation or groups of men. This is a mass manifestation. The masses are moving rapidly towards deliverance and they must move whether with the aid of the organized capital or without. This must therefore be a movement independent of capital and yet not antagonistic to it. Only if capital came to the aid of the masses, it would redound to the credit of the capitalists and hasten the advent of the happy day.

Nor was it otherwise before. India's history is not one of strained relations between capital and labour. The conception of four divisions is as religious as it is economic and political. And the condition has not been affected 'for the worse by the admixture of Islamic culture which is essentially religious and therefore beneficial to the poor. Islam seems to forbid the hoarding of capital as it literally forbids usury.

And even at the present moment it is not possible to say that capital is standing out. It was the modest capitalist who subscribed so liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But it has to be admitted with pain that the bulk of the mill-owners unfortunately stood out. Manufacture of piece-goods is the largest industry in the country. It is time for it to make its choice. Will it . . . <sup>2</sup> or will it drift?

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

<sup>1</sup> In 1905

<sup>2</sup> Some words are missing here in the source.

## 99. NO END TO MY SORROWS

The Manager of the *Lokamanya* has forwarded to me the following interview between the representative of that paper and M. Paul Richard. He asks me to publish it and to offer my remarks upon it. I do so not without great hesitation and reluctance, but often a public worker has no choice. He has to overcome reluctance as also hesitation. It was sorrowful for me to have to correct what was an honest but gross misrepresentation of my views about Shantiniketan.<sup>1</sup> There are some things which one holds sacred and which one does not care to discuss in public. The interview that I am now asked to publish adds to my many sorrows. Here is it:

QUESTION: After the last postponement of civil disobedience at Bardoli, the number is increasing among the non-co-operationists who do not understand the mind of the Mahatma. What do you think about it?

ANSWER : Everything is easy to understand in the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi if one remembers that his true aim is not what people generally think, but what he has expressed to me a few days ago, saying, "I do not work for freedom of India, I work for non-violence in the world and that is the difference between me and Mr. Tilak. Mr. Tilak was telling me, 'I would sacrifice even truth for freedom of my country' but I am ready to sacrifice even freedom for the sake of truth." In the light of these words you can understand the reason of the actual postponement of national programme, until the spirit of violence has been shaken everywhere in India; that means probably until the end of the world !

The mind of Mahatmaji can be expressed in a word "Non-violence at any cost"; just as the mind of Mrs. Besant and of the Moderate party can be expressed by the motto "Law and Order at any cost"; and such is also the will of the Government. But the will of the national soul behind and above all is "At any cost a new Law and a new Order".

This will of the new spirit in India, Asia and all over the World is the only one which by any way is sure to triumph.

I had a rare time with M. Paul Richard. We had many happy hours together. I could see at once that our views of life were fundamentally different in some respects, but that did not matter in the slightest degree to me. We met each other as distant acquaintances. We parted as the best of friends and though it is now my lot to

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Notes". 9-2-1922, under the sub-title, "Too Sacred for Publication".

criticize what M. Paul Richard has said, my regard for his learning, for his humanity and his philosophy remains undiminished. But I cannot help expressing my deep regret that he should have related what was sacred conversation between him and me and that in an attenuated form. He makes me cut a sorry figure in that interview. It is not possible to deny the substance of it, and yet torn from its context and put in the language of M. Paul Richard it makes me look so utterly ridiculous. The Maharashtra party and I are endeavouring to understand each other. We are coming daily nearer. That party would rightly resent any reflection on my part upon the career or the character of one of the greatest of Indians and one who rules that party's hearts as no other man rules the hearts of any other set of men. M. Paul Richard and I were engaged in a deeply religious discourse. I was trying to give to him the fundamentals of my own faith. I was arguing upon the sharp difference that both he and I observed between us, and whilst I was elucidating my point I came upon the differences between the Lokamanya and myself in a reverent spirit. After many a frank chat with the Lokamanya I had come to see that on some vital matters we could never agree. Drawing illustrations from his inexhaustible store of Sanskrit learning, he used to challenge my interpretation of life and frankly and bluntly would say, truth and untruth were only relative terms, but at bottom there was no such thing as truth and untruth just as there was no such thing as life and death. Whilst I could not resist the abstract presentation, I detected a flaw in its application to actual life and I put it before him in all reverence. In my opinion, we never misunderstood each other. At Sinhagad where both he and I were trying to take rest we came closer together.<sup>1</sup> I noticed that he was fearless and sincere in the enunciation of his views and he tried to live up to them. I could discover also the reasons for the marvellous hold he had on millions of his countrymen. I have claimed no superiority for myself. I only know that we fundamentally differed, but my respect for him grew with greater contact, and I believe that his affection for me also grew as time went on. The remarks, therefore, that were made to M. Paul Richard were made, I assure the reader, in no disparagement of the character of the illustrious deceased and I hope that the bald presentation of that difference in the interview will not in any way

<sup>1</sup> Tilak had a discussion with Gandhiji at Sinhagad on May 1, 1920; *vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 2-5-1920.

acerbate the members of the great Maharashtra party whose hearty co-operation in the national struggle I value so highly and in order to conciliate whom I go many a mile so long as I have not to sacrifice my principle.

M. Paul Richard's presentation of my views about non-violence is really a caricature. I have no doubt that he understands me in the manner in which he has represented me. There is undoubtedly a sense in which the statement is true when I say that I hold my religion dearer than my country and that therefore I am a Hindu first and nationalist after. I do not become on that score a less nationalist than the best of them. I simply thereby imply that the interests of my country are identical with those of my religion. Similarly when I say that I prize my own salvation above everything else, above the salvation of India, it does not mean that my personal salvation requires a sacrifice of India's political or any other salvation. But it implies necessarily that the two go together. Just in the same sense I would decline to gain India's freedom at the cost of non-violence, meaning that India will never gain her freedom without non-violence or through violence. That I may be hopelessly wrong in holding the view is another matter, but such is my view and it is daily growing on me. I have so often remarked that whatever may be true of other countries, India's salvation lies only through the path of non-violence. If M. Paul Richard had understood me correctly he would have pacified his interviewer by saying that I believed that India could gain her liberty quickly only through non-violence and that therefore so long as the country accepted my guidance the country would have to be satisfied with my limitations and therefore permit me to guide her so long as the country believed that, as it is circumstanced, it had no means open to her for gaining her end except by non-violence and truth. M. Paul Richard has made the position worse by remarking that if India's freedom depends upon non-violence it will never be attained. It passes comprehension how he could have omitted to take notice of the phenomenal progress made by the country in the direction of freedom. Indeed, I claim that India is substantially free today, she has found the way, she is asserting herself, she has thousands of her children—men and women—who have learnt the sovereign virtue of sacrifice without retaliation, and it is my certain conviction that if only workers will work out the constructive programme placed before them with industry and honesty, I have not a shadow of a doubt that we shall gain all the three ends in no time. I

do not for one moment believe that the Congress workers cannot control forces of hooliganism that exist in the country. Only we have not tried whole-heartedly to gain control.<sup>1</sup>

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

### 100. OUR LAXITY

A reliable correspondent writes to me saying that in Allahabad and Benares the volunteers have been enlisted without regard to their qualifications. Hardly 50 could be found dressed in hand-spun khaddar from top to toe. Some more could be found wearing khaddar for outer covering, all the rest being foreign cloth. The same correspondent says that some of the volunteers do not mind an occasional drink and that they are not tested as to their belief in non-violence and that in many instances the local Congress officials have lost control over them. It has been officially reported that there are 96,000 volunteers enlisted in the United Provinces. If it is a fact that there are so many volunteers on the roll and that the vast majority of them do not conform to the Congress conditions, they are worse than useless. The complaints mentioned by me are formidable, yet as a matter of fact, I have not exhausted them all. The same news comes from Calcutta, again from a reliable source. My informant tells me that hundreds who have gone to jail know nothing about the pledge, are not dressed in khaddar, are not dressed even in Indian mill cloth but have gone to jail wearing foreign cloth, and that they have had no training in non-violence. A correspondent from Rohtak writes bitterly complaining that in many parts of that district the volunteers do not obey instructions and make the position of Congress officials most difficult and embarrassing.

If one-tenth of these complaints is true I fear that we have not been able to cope with the wonderful awakening and to bring under control all the new additions to the Congress organization. It is possible that it is nobody's fault that this is so. The Government precipitated a crisis by hurling the notifications about public meetings and volunteers at us. The challenge had to be and was taken up. New and inexperienced men found themselves clothed with office and they were called upon to deal with a crisis which would have taxed to its

<sup>1</sup> M. Paul Richard's reply to this article was published in *Young India* 16-3-1922, under the title, "His Sorrow Is My Sorrow".



utmost the capacity even of the experienced leaders withdrawn from public guidance.

There is much to be said in favour of this argument. No one need therefore be blamed, but we must not blink the facts. On the contrary we must face them sternly, boldly and set our own house in order. No army in the world has yet marched to victory, which has not consisted of soldiers possessing the qualities expected of them. An army of peace has greater need to exhibit the qualities laid down for its soldiers. It would not do to retort that the standard is too high. A recruiting officer who takes recruits below the standard renders himself guilty of dishonesty, in he takes such recruits knowingly. All he can do is to report to the headquarters that he cannot get recruits on the conditions' prescribed, but on no account will he be justified in departing from them.

The conditions laid down by the Congress were read by myself in detail to the whole audience last December in the Congress *pandal*.<sup>1</sup> They were exhaustively discussed by the All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee and then they were explained by me to the delegates and visitors from the different provinces at numerous informal discussions. The plea of impossibility of fulfilment cannot therefore be accepted. The delegates knew what they were about. They were nearly 6,000. They came to represent their respective constituencies and there should have been no difficulty about the fulfilment of the conditions.

I should personally be satisfied with 300 volunteers thoroughly understanding and complying with the conditions, but I should not care to lead a struggle with 30,000 volunteers who know nothing of and care less about the conditions. The reason is obvious. In the one case I have at least 300 stalwarts to support me, in the other case I have to carry a burden of 30,000 men, not volunteers, who are a drag upon me. The 300 would help me, would obey instructions, but 30,000 will certainly not carry out instructions and may throttle me. We must therefore once for all make up our minds that all the resolutions which are passed by the Congress Working Committee have to be fulfilled literally. They are part of a swift and practical programme upon whose due fulfilment rests the future of India, the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj.

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Speech at Congress Sessions Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

Resolutions by themselves mean nothing if they are not to be carried out in full. We used to complain when our resolutions which were in days gone by addressed to the Government were not carried out by it. Who is to complain when the resolutions voluntarily and deliberately passed by us are not carried out by ourselves? I, therefore, strongly advise all Congress and Khilafat organizations to see that they are strictly enforced in their respective jurisdictions. If they do not, it is they who will endanger the movement and no one else. It is for us to make or mar the future.

*Young India, 23-2-1922*

### *101. PRISONERS IN DELHI JAIL*

With the exception of one irrelevant paragraph I am giving the letter<sup>1</sup> as received without even removing the picturesque though inoffensive adjectives. It must be clear to any impartial observer that a mere denial by interested parties, however highly placed they may be, will not be enough to remove the bad taste in the mouth left by these revelations.

*Young India, 23-2-1922*

### *102. GOVERNMENT DENIALS*

#### 1. ON BEHALF OF THE BIHAR GOVERNMENT

The Bihar Publicity Officer sends me the following for publication in reply to my statement in my rejoinder to the Government of India's reply to my manifesto addressed to H.E. the Viceroy:

In the manifesto dated the 7th February issued by Mr. Gandhi from Bardoli, mention is made of certain acts of "lawless repression" by the Government, which in his opinion justify resort to civil disobedience. Among these instances is the following item: "looting, admitted by the Bihar Government, of villages by an officer and his company without any permission from anyone". The reference is evidently to the Dhanaha Thana incident, and the plain implication of this statement is that the looting was carried out under the orders of the officer in charge of the police company and

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here. This letter from Hadi Hassan, Secretary, District Congress Committee, Delhi, described the maltreatment of non-co-operator prisoners in Delhi Jail, in reply to a Press *communiqué* issued on the subject by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

that this fact is admitted by the Bihar Government. The instance of the statement made by the Chief Secretary in the Legislative council to which Mr. Gandhi evidently-refers is as follows:

“On the 27th December 1921, on receipt of information from Mr. Mackinnon, Manager of the Baikunthpur Factory, that certain village were in a very disturbed state, the military mounted police marched through Pipariah, Bairatwa, Chanderpore and Sihulia. The allegations of looting in village Pipariah appeared on the finding of the District Magistrate to be entirely without foundation. Some looting, however, did take place in the other three villages. The District Magistrate was of opinion that the looting which occurred was in no way systematic but sporadic, a few *sowars* slipping down side-lanes and taking articles from owners. The Inspector in charge knew nothing about it till the villagers of Sihulia came up and complained; when the property was, under the orders of the Inspector, restored on the spot. The Inspector General of Police has been requested to take disciplinary action against those *sowars* against whom there was definite evidence of having taken part in looting, and the Sub-Divisional Officer, Bettiah, is to take cognizance of any offences that may be disclosed during the “enquiry.”

The statement made by Government makes it clear that the published reports of the looting were much exaggerated and that such looting as took place was the act of individual *sowars*. It also shows that Government will not countenance any breach of discipline like that of which the *sowars* were guilty on this occasion.

Mr. Gandhi's manifesto certainly tries to put a very different complexion on the whole affair.

I gladly publish the note, but I must confess that it carries no conviction to me. The substance of the statement of the Chief Secretary is not half as damning as the original which I have read and which appears in *The Searchlight* (27-1-1922). The crossfire to which the Chief Secretary was exposed in the Bihar Council is a study in hedging and fencing. The Chief Secretary is unable to deny that the officer himself did not take part in looting. These villages of Champaran I know very well. They have no winding lanes. Looting does not cease to be looting when the looted property is restored. The admissions wrung from the Chief Secretary by the Councillors leave on the reader's mind the impression that there is more behind the admissions than appears on the surface. Let one add, too, that the officer and the *sowars* went in spite of prohibition against the mounted police parading without any magistrate accompanying them. No explanation is still forthcoming as to why the officer rode out with his *sowars* and what action has been taken against him for the breach

of discipline which the Government have been compelled to admit. Let it be noted too that the villagers had nothing to deserve the looting expedition. As the summary admits "on receipt of information from Mr. Mackinnon, Manager of the Baikunthpur Factory, that certain villages were in a very disturbed state, the military mounted police marched through Pipariah, etc". I know what these marches mean to the villagers of Champaran. I am most anxious to be convinced that officialism has not reached the state of degradation which popular reports describe and which the Government are reluctantly obliged to admit in part or in full. But all my effort in that direction, I regret, has proved fruitless.

*Young India*, 23-2-1922

### *103. RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, DELHI*

*February 25, 1922*

The following resolution was passed on the 25th ultimo at the session of the All-India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

The All-India Congress Committee having carefully considered the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at its meeting held at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant, confirms the said resolutions with the modifications<sup>1</sup> noted therein and further resolves that individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or aggressive character may be commenced in respect of particular places or particular laws at the instance of and upon permission being granted therefore by the respective Provincial Committee; provided that such civil disobedience shall not be permitted unless all the conditions laid down by the Congress or the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee are strictly fulfilled.

Reports having been received from various quarters that picketing regarding foreign cloth is as necessary as liquor-picketing, the All-India Congress Committee authorizes such picketing of a *bona-fide* character on the same terms as liquor-picketing mentioned in the Bardoli resolutions.

The All-India Congress Committee wishes it to be understood that the resolutions of the Working Committee do not mean any abandonment of the original Congress programme of non-co-opera-

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* footnotes to "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

tion or permanent abandonment of mass civil disobedience but considers that an atmosphere of necessary mass non violence can be established by the workers concentrating upon the constructive programme framed by the Working Committee at Bardoli.

The All-India Congress Committee holds civil disobedience to be the right and duty of the people to be exercised and performed whenever the State opposes the declared will of the people.

Note: Individual civil disobedience is disobedience of orders or laws by a single individual or an ascertained number or group of individuals. Therefore, a prohibited public meeting where admission is regulated by tickets and to which no unauthorized admission is allowed, is an instance of individual civil disobedience, whereas a prohibited meeting to which the general public is admitted without any restriction is an instance of mass civil disobedience. Such civil disobedience is defensive when a prohibited public meeting is held for conducting a normal activity although it may result in arrest. It would be aggressive if it is held not for any normal activity but merely for the purpose of courting arrest and imprisonment.

*Young India*, 2-3-1922

#### 104. TEST FOR AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

The residents and city-fathers of Ahmedabad and Surat<sup>1</sup> are about to be put to a test. How far we have imbibed the spirit of public service, to what extent the citizens look upon one another as members of a family, in what degree they possess the qualities of firmness, respect for their pledged word, self-sacrifice and perseverance—all this will be seen now.

If all the representatives of the citizens display these qualities, there can be only one result—the committees nominated by the Government will remain idle for want of work.

There can be no better proof of the hollowness of the Reforms than the supersession of these two big municipalities. Had the city-fathers acted arbitrarily, it might perhaps have been right to deprive them of their power; but in this case the Government knows, and so does the Indian “minister” for Local Self-Government, that

<sup>1</sup> *Vide “My Notes”, 19-2-1922, under the sub-title “To Citizens of Ahmedabad and Surat”.*

the citizens and their representatives are of one mind in this dispute, that both wish to preserve the autonomy of the Education Department. Despite this, the Government and “our” minister have superseded the municipalities, instead of taking whatever remedies are available under the law, and have thereby flouted public opinion. It has been thus proved that the Reforms confer altogether arbitrary powers on the Government and that the people would derive no benefit at all from them.

But, instead of considering the advantages or disadvantages of the Reforms, it would be more appropriate here to consider what is in the interest of the citizens. The pledge which they have taken should be honoured. If they accept defeat on such simple issues, I would say, and the world too would say, that they are not fit for local self-government. As our fitness for swaraj is to be proved by winning it, so also it is to be proved by displaying our capacity to preserve it. We shall be considered strong only if we can defend the country against external aggression. Only that person’s body is considered healthy who remains healthy even when attacked by germs from outside. Education is the central issue in this battle. The citizens may or may not protect their rights in other matters; but they would be completely defeated if they accept defeat in the field of education. If this happens, it will be proved beyond doubt that the citizens have not learnt to think or act independently. If the people give in, that would prove that the representatives, being resourceful, went on fighting the Government and the citizens enjoyed watching the fight, but that the latter did not bother in the least to think or act independently.

It is, therefore, the primary duty of the citizens of these two cities not only to retain complete control over their children’s education, but also to put it on such firm foundation that no one should be tempted to go to a Government school.

We shall discover, if we make this attempt, that anything which is not done spontaneously will not last long. Only if the citizens are true non-co-operators will they refuse to send their children to Government schools. If they care for the quality of their children’s education, they will put it on a sound foundation. Likewise, educated persons in Ahmedabad and Surat will give their services for teaching, the citizens will offer convenient accommodation for schools and meet various other requirements and thus demonstrate to the

Government-nominated committees that they are ready for any number of sacrifices for the sake of their children's education.

We have to face the urgent problem of funds for this educational programme. It is my considered view that the citizens have the right to refuse to pay the educational cess they have been paying. Whether or not they insist on this right, it should not be difficult for the residents of Ahmedabad and Surat to collect the required amount. By collecting it, they will demonstrate their strength and unity. Money given for the purpose of education is no philanthropy. It is investment of the best kind. Parents will get full return on it. I hope that the residents of the two cities will manage all these things without delay. If Ahmedabad and Surat succeed in these tasks, there is not a shadow of a doubt that they will provide a splendid example for the rest of the country to follow. It cannot but have a profound effect on the kind of swaraj the country will have.

If these two cities can achieve this without rousing the least hatred or resentment and without violation of peace to the slightest extent, we shall have demonstrated effectively how non-violent non-co operation should be carried on.

I should like the citizens to assert their independence in other matters also; however, it is my considered advice to leaders to move slowly and take every step after careful deliberation.

I hear it said that the citizens have lost heart because of the suspension of civil disobedience in Bardoli and the loss of control over the municipalities. If this be so, they have not understood the meaning of non-co-operation nor have they understood the nature of their own fight. In non-co-operation, resolutions such as those passed at Bardoli are quite normal. In a great war, one strategy after another is adopted and abandoned. The aim behind all is one and the same. It is sometimes as necessary to abandon a strategy as it may have been to adopt it. There is no room for defeat in a satyagraha struggle, whereas there is every possibility of one in an ordinary battle; but, even when defeated, the troops do not lose courage. We Indians have been accused of being unable to stand a defeat. Defeat in a single battle sees us running away in confusion. I cherish an earnest hope that India will give a lie to this accusation. As for the Bardoli resolutions, I do not regard them as signs of our defeat at all. I look upon them, rather, as sure signs of our regard for truth and our courage.

Moreover, the struggle in Ahmedabad and Surat is a local one.

It must not be affected by the Bardoli resolutions. Why, again, should there be any disappointment because of the supersession of the municipalities? Our actions were deliberately intended to bring about this result. The underlying purpose of the struggle is to see that at every step the Government places itself in a false position. It is designed to expose its autocratic ways. The net result of the nomination of committees by it is that the municipalities of Ahmedabad and Surat are now completely in the non-co-operation camp. The citizens alone can now check their advance in that direction. It is true that we have lost control over a few buildings and other things. What does that matter? The representatives of the people can meet under a mango tree. It is not necessary for them to meet in granite buildings for transacting their business. The new committees cannot insist on getting the latrines cleaned against the will of the people; nor on lighting the streets.. The citizens can demonstrate within one week that the committees can do only what they permit them to do. I, therefore, see no reason for the least feeling of frustration. Such a feeling can only be a sign of our ignorance.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 26-2-1922

## 105. MY NOTES

### IN THE CALCUTTA JAIL

Harilal Gandhi writes from the Calcutta Jail:<sup>1</sup>

The news which appeared in the papers, that the sentences of the prisoners in Calcutta Jail have been reduced by half, has turned out in many cases to be without foundation.

#### HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY PAY “CHOTHAI”?

The leading *Patidars* of Karamsad<sup>2</sup> had come forward to offer civil disobedience with such courage that they were prepared to be ruined. Now that they are required to pay up the revenue dues under the Bardoli Resolution, they feel unhappy. To add to this, the Government officials, in their vindictiveness, demand *chothai* which the *Patidars* simply cannot bring themselves to pay.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here.

<sup>2</sup> In Anand taluka, which was preparing to offer civil disobedience under the leadership of Abbas Tyabji



But did we ever expect any decency from the Government? Is it ever likely to miss an opportunity of victimizing people? Decency on our part consists in permitting them to have their revenge without getting angry ourselves. We should not even petition the officials to waive the demand.

To pay such fines is part of our atonement. If people are prepared to be ruined, what objection can they have to paying a fine?

But those who pay such fine may rest assured that, when we have swaraj or when there is a settlement, their fines will be refunded if they demand that they should be. I would particularly advise those from whom *chothai* is demanded that they should pay it up and keep an account of the payment.

The path of satyagraha has its own laws; it requires discrimination and readiness to suffer. We should not hope that we shall have our revenge on such officials when our turn comes. If anyone punishes us but we do not retaliate, the other person's fund of hatred will be exhausted. It is a universal law that an action which meets with no reaction finally spends itself. One who has understood this law will never think of taking revenge.

#### CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN JHARIA

I had told the delegates who had assembled for the Congress week that the people should not plunge into active civil disobedience in Jharia, and I had said that I would write a note on this in *Navajivan*. I beg forgiveness of these gentlemen for having forgotten to do so. The circumstances in Jharia are exceptional. There are thousands of workers there. Besides them, only well-to-do Marwari, Gujarati, Bengali and other business people who have dealings with them live there. To start active civil disobedience in this place will certainly mean arousing the working class. Even individual civil disobedience is likely to cause excitement among them. I have, therefore, given my emphatic advice against starting active civil disobedience in this place at present. To introduce civil disobedience among workers would be inviting trouble. In such places, therefore, activities like promoting the use of khadi, popularizing the spinning-wheel and carrying on propaganda against drinking should be greatly intensified and, since Jharia is a mine of wealth as much as, and because, it is a centre of coal mines, it should provide the money required for all the activities in Bihar. Ramjas Babu and other rich gentlemen of the place can give the fullest help in such work. If they solve the Bihar Provincial

Congress Committee's difficulties about money, spread the use of khadi among workers, themselves spin and persuade the latter to spin and weave, see that they give up drinking and make them aware of their duties and then of their rights, I would think that they had fully served the cause of non-co-operation.

#### PLEADING IN AGENCY COURTS

A friend writes to ask me if it is true that I have expressed the view that every non-co-operator can practise in Agency courts. I have given such advice to no one. However, with reference to the cases of Shri Mansukhlal and Shri Manilal Kothari which have recently come up in Kathiawar, I have indeed said that they can defend themselves in Agency courts and engage counsel. Both of them are subjects of Indian States and are trying to uphold their own and others' rights in these States. They are not non-co-operators with regard to matters arising out of circumstances in Indian States. Hence, if they wish to take up the problems of these States they will have to be ready for fighting in courts and for similar steps, otherwise they will run the risk of having the worst of both the worlds.

This certainly does not mean that a lawyer who has joined non-co-operation may appear in cases in Agency courts or that a non-co-operator may himself resort to legal proceedings in them, nor does it imply that he can engage a lawyer in any matter arising out of his actions as a non-co-operator within the jurisdiction of an Agency; but it does mean that, if a non-co-operator has money claims in an Indian State, he can take the matter to a State court and engage a lawyer for the purpose. We are not offering non-co-operation against the Indian States or the law-courts there; hence dealings with the latter need not be avoided altogether.

But all such things are full of complications. Non-co-operators, therefore, should take care not to place themselves in such difficult situations. It is for this very reason that I have often said earlier that, for the present, it is not desirable for non-co-operators living in Indian States to get involved in local problems, otherwise they will run the risk of getting completely entangled in them. However, according to the present policy in regard to non-co-operation, I think there can be no objection to anyone who does not mind being so entangled or who involuntarily gets involved in such a dispute, fighting out the matter in a court of law.

The foregoing gentlemen have been arrested in connection with

matters relating to Indian States and the Agency officer has attacked the rights of the subjects of Indian States. I see no objection to their taking legal steps in this matter. Though both of them are non-co-operators in British India, they have been arrested in Kathiawar and they can, therefore, get released on bail and defend themselves.

It may be objected that an Agency, too, is part of the British Empire. Someone may argue that what I have said seems reasonable enough so far as courts in Indian States are concerned, but that it is difficult to accept that position with regard to courts in the Agencies. There are two aspects of this. Just as the Agency is part of the British Empire, it is also part of the Indian States concerned. Agencies exist because Indian States exist. Hence, it is permissible for one to go to Agency courts in matters relating to Indian States, but a person cannot defend himself, or get himself released on bail, if he had gone to the Agency to preach non-co-operation and was arrested for that reason. This is why I have been advising people from the very beginning that non-co-operation should not be introduced in Indian States, that people should work there to promote only such activities as swadeshi which give no cause for objection, and these, too, from a purely economic and moral point of view, and consequently that we should have no Congress Committees, etc., in Indian States and that those who wish to join the Congress may get themselves enrolled in any Committee in British India.

There is a way of resolving all these difficulties in an unexceptionable manner. We shall never go wrong if we always follow it. If in any step we wish to take we are motivated by any kind of fear or self-interest—for instance the fear of imprisonment—we should not take that step. A non-co-operator must be fearless and unselfish; if he is truthful, non-violent, fearless and unselfish, he will make no mistake. He will consult his conscience and then go ahead unhesitatingly.

#### INSTANCE OF OPPOSITE KIND

In the note above, we considered instances of conduct which might appear to be contrary to the principle of non-co-operation. A correspondent from Indore reports an opposite instance. He says that, at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Indore, three gentlemen, Pandit Arya Datta, Sheth Chhotalal and Sheth Badrinayan, all residents of Indore Cantonment, were ordered to leave the area. They disregarded the order and were arrested in consequence. They neither engaged lawyers nor defended themselves and are now

undergoing sentence of simple imprisonment for a month. Thus, in this instance, people were arrested and imprisoned for offering non-co-operation as advised by the Congress. The same correspondent reports further that fourteen other volunteers have also been arrested. An athlete named Ramnarayan kept up his self-control even when beaten up by a soldier, though he had strength enough to fight back.

#### NOTION OF BEING DEFILED IS LIKE A SUPERFLUOUS LIMB<sup>1</sup>

An *Antyaj* friend from Amreli writes:

There is intense contempt for Antyajas in the land of your birth. The less said about the evil of untouchability in Kathiawar, the better I have been as far as Porbandar. There is less of it by one or two per cent in Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Amreli; but, on the whole there is much more of it in Kathiawar than in Gujarat.

What if it happens to be my land of birth? A man does not show that he is a good son by drowning himself in his father's well. As I quote this extract from the letter, I feel ashamed of the land of my birth. That Kathiawar, the home of a lover of God like Narasinh Mehta<sup>2</sup>, which was witness to the excellence of Sudama's character, where Swaminarayan<sup>3</sup> preached his mission and Arjuna's chariot-driver<sup>4</sup> cast a spell over men and women, if the wise people of that very same Kathiawar regard *adharma* as dharma, cherish prejudices about touching and not touching as if they were sacred and hold human beings in contempt, can anything but degradation be the result?

If, however, I give up hopes about Kathiawar, I would have to give up faith in my own self. I have not forgotten the fact that young men from Kathiawar had undertaken to clean the latrines in Khadi Nagar.<sup>5</sup>

A number of young men there are engaged in serving Antyajas. The value of such service should be judged not by adding, but by multiplying, the numbers of the instances. If this is done Kathiawar will be absolved of the charge which is often levelled against it. The solution of this problem depends on the patience and civility of its young men and their spirit of religious earnestness. If they disregard propriety and criticize their elders disrespectfully, they will not

<sup>1</sup> The line is attributed to Akha, a Gujarati poet of the 17th century.

<sup>2</sup> Who freely mixed with so-called untouchables in devotional gatherings

<sup>3</sup> Swami Sahajananda (1781-1830), founder of a *Vaishnava* sect called *Swaminarayana*

<sup>4</sup> Shri Krishna

<sup>5</sup> At the time of the Congress session in Ahmedabad in December 1921

succeed in propagating their views about ending untouchability. When young men scrupulously follow dharma in all other respects while regarding untouchability as contrary to dharma, they will not fail to have an impact on society.

#### MOTILAL TEJAVAT AND THE "BHILS"<sup>1</sup>

In order to look into this matter, Shri Manilal Kothari went at my request to Shirohi and other places. It seems from the reports received from him that Shri Motilal Tejavat has been working mainly to persuade the *Bhils* to give up drinking and flesh-eating. It is beyond doubt that his activities have brought about an awakening among the *Bhils*. There would have been no ground for criticism if he had stayed at one place so that the *Bhils* could meet him, instead of roaming around accompanied by groups of them. I reproduce below the letter<sup>2</sup> he has sent to me through Shri Manilal.

This letter betrays ignorance about some matters. The British have nothing to do with the issue and the matter ought to have been brought to the notice of the States concerned in a proper manner. Shri Manilal says that in Palanpur, Danta and Shirohi States, he, Manilal, had received full co-operation from the authorities. Shri Motilal and the *Bhils* also listened to him and he was sure that they wished to carry on their work in a wholly peaceful manner. I hope that the *Bhils* will be satisfied if the States listen to their complaints and redress their grievances. Assuming that Shri Motilal has been at fault in some matters, both the Rulers and the subjects are likely to benefit if this is overlooked and the States take advantage of the good effects of his work among the *Bhils* and pay attention to improving their condition.

#### PICKETING FOREIGN CLOTH

The letter which I received from Jharia, reminding me of my promise to write about civil disobedience, contains an item of sad news also. The correspondent says that the merchants there have not kept their pledge of not importing foreign cloth. It seems that the value of a merchant's pledge is as low now as it was high in ancient times. Reports of the pledge having been broken in this manner have also come in from Calcutta. In these circumstances, one wonders what one should do if not picket the shops. I have no doubt whatsoever that we have a right to resort to peaceful picketing. I have been opposing such picketing because I know that picketing which is supposed to be

<sup>1</sup> A tribe in Gujarat and Central India

<sup>2</sup> Not translated here. It said that Tejavat had introduced satyagraha among the Bhils and this had displeased the authorities in the States. Neither they nor the British officials paid attention to his pleas.

peaceful is not always so. Moreover, I feel that picketing is improper till there is a general feeling against the use of foreign cloth. It is also possible that people will not tolerate the picketing of a practice against which public opinion has not been fully aroused. This is one side of the case.

The other side is that, where a pledge has been broken, we must have some effective means of putting to shame those who have done so and warning the people against them. There are two such remedies which can be employed with civility. The first is picketing and the second is breaking off social relations with the guilty party. The idea behind both is the same. Society has a right to sever connections with a merchant who refuses to honour a *hundi*<sup>1</sup> which has matured. Such boycott does not involve putting a person out of the caste or refusing one's services to him; it merely involves severing business connections. But such a step is not always feasible and so picketing remains the only practical and simple way. I am writing this on Tuesday, on the eve of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.<sup>2</sup> It is yet to be seen what it decides. I would, however, tell the citizens of Jharia that they have a right to resort to perfectly peaceful picketing if there has been a clear violation of the pledge. Before exercising the right, it is necessary that they should meet those gentlemen who have broken the pledge, plead with them and give them due warning. It should be borne in mind in regard to all restrictions that they are imposed in order to ensure preservation of peace. Where there is not the slightest danger of peace being violated, it is permissible to resort to picketing even though it has been disallowed. Who could stop a respected person like Ramjas Babu from picketing the shop of a merchant who has broken his pledge? Of course, this is on condition that even he may not do picketing with a band of one thousand volunteers. Where picketing is resorted to not with a view to intimidation but in order to make the person feel ashamed of himself, the pickets should be few and not many and should be, moreover, well-known persons of good character.

However, I humbly request all merchants to see that they do not put the people or Congress volunteers to the trouble, or oblige them to take upon themselves the responsibility of picketing. Foreign cloth is rapidly going out of use in the country and this has saved hundreds of

<sup>1</sup> Draft or bill of exchange

<sup>2</sup> The A.I.C.C. met in Delhi on 24-2-1922.

thousands of rupees. Many thousands of these have found their way into the homes of the poor. How can they break their pledge for their selfish interests and obstruct a movement which is profitable both from the economic and religious points of view? How can they themselves be happy that their shops should have to be picketed? A merchant should compare himself to a chaste wife. Both should be ashamed of being guarded. Just as a chaste wife who goes astray inflicts a painful wound on society, similarly a merchant breaking his pledge strikes a violent blow at it. Will merchants not take part in this holy *yajna* even to the extent of carrying out their pledge?

#### WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN AHMEDABAD

I have before me a report of the work done by women volunteers who are engaged in promoting trade in khadi in Ratanpole<sup>1</sup>. It contains a conversation which took place between them and merchants dealing in foreign cloth, and another with women customers.

The result of their conversation with women customers was that the latter went away without making any purchases and promised not to buy foreign cloth in future. They reasoned with the merchants, but failed to win them over. The latter tried to put off the volunteers: "We must dispose of what we have in stock; after that, we will not buy any more foreign cloth". Everyone knows that this means nothing. A person who decides that he will give up smoking or drinking after finishing the cigarettes in his pocket or the drink that is still left in the bottle will never succeed in giving it up. One can break oneself free only when one throws away the cigarette or the liquor in one's possession. A person who wants to dispose of his stock will never see that stock exhausted. Then again, one merchant argued: "Who will make good our losses if we stop selling now?" This betrayed lack of sense. What can we expect from anyone who is not prepared to put up with such a small loss for the sake of the country? Who makes good the loss when there is a fall in the demand, when the market is slack or when there has been a robbery? I do not understand what sacrifice is involved in giving up a trade which, we have realized, should be abandoned for the good of the country.

What, however, should the women-volunteers do in such circumstances? They should plead politely, say no harsh words but patiently argue about the advantages and disadvantages of the matter

<sup>1</sup> A business street in Ahmedabad

and, if they do not succeed even then, keep quiet and not provoke unpleasantness by arguing further. It is much better to put faith in the understanding and patriotism of customers who come to purchase small quantities rather than hope for anything from those who have large stocks of foreign goods.

#### “NAVAJIVAN” IS NOT BANNED

Last week, I published a report from a correspondent to the effect that the authorities in Veraval had banned *Navajivan*. Another correspondent writes to say that this report is without any foundation and that, in fact, he himself distributes *Navajivan* among the people and no one prevents him from doing so.

#### ACCUMULATED STOCKS OF KHADI

The reader must have seen the “advertisement” which appeared in *Navajivan* about the Khadi Karyalaya of the Congress. It was felt afterwards that there could be no advertisements in *Navajivan* and that any exception to this rule would be improper, and so further insertions were discontinued. The Khadi Karyalaya has protested against this. I must make it clear that the *Navajivan* has charged no money for that insertion. Both parties are right. It is difficult to insert even unpaid advertisements, since we want to use all available space in the *Navajivan* for reading material. How is one to decide which goods to select for advertising? But then, it may also be said that *Navajivan* exists for the sake of khadi, and for this reason I want at the moment to give more importance to it than can be given merely by an advertisement. No stocks of khadi should remain unsold in any part of Gujarat. So long as there are still people in Gujarat who wear foreign cloth, or even millmade cloth, how can we claim that it uses khadi? I, therefore, hope that merchants and consumers will buy up all the stocks of khadi lying with the Khadi Karyalaya and so enable it to get new stocks. Khadi for coats is priced at eight annas a yard and for shirts at seven annas a yard. I advise readers who can reduce this burden to write to the All-India Congress Committee and reduce it.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 26-2-1922



## 106. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELHI,  
February 26, 1922

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of a Press interview made the following important statements:

He said that the proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee were a perfect study.

I am not in a position to divulge all that happened in that Committee; not that there is anything to hide or to be ashamed of. One thing was absolutely clear that there was deep disappointment and even strong resentment against the Bardoli resolutions<sup>1</sup>. Coming as they did close upon the rejoinder<sup>2</sup> to the Government *communique*<sup>3</sup>, it was difficult for the members to understand or appreciate the reason for a departure from the steps contemplated in my letter<sup>4</sup> to the Viceroy. There was even a suspicion, not audible but certainly very visible, that I was labouring under the influence of Pandit Malaviyaji. I was able to show that my own opinion was arrived at totally independently of Malaviyaji and before I met him after the Chauri Chaura tragedy. Personally nothing would please me better than to be able to confess that I had yielded upon any point to Panditji's persuasions. On this matter of non-co-operation and civil disobedience it has always been a matter of grief to me to differ from Panditji. However, I mention this merely to show the intensity of feeling.

It speaks volumes for the loyalty of the members of the All-India Congress Committee to the Congress and for the discipline observed by them that in spite of their bitter disappointment and resentment they subsequently and after a full debate substantially confirmed the Bardoli resolutions. I must confess that I myself do not like the wording of the covering resolution. It is unnecessarily explanatory; the definitions, the reiteration of Congress policy and civil disobedience seem to me to be out of place; but when it became a matter of soothing ruffled feelings and of avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations I felt that it was better to be tautological and

<sup>1</sup> Of February 11 and 12

<sup>2</sup> Of February 7

<sup>3</sup> Of February 6; *Vide* Appendix "Interview to C. Rajagopalachari", 3-4-1922.

<sup>4</sup> Of February 1

verbose as the covering resolution undoubtedly is than to appear to be obscure or ambiguous.

For once I can generally endorse the interpretation put upon the Bardoli resolutions by Sir William Vincent. He is quite correct in saying that the Bardoli resolutions do not in any shape or form mean a reversal of the policy or the modification of the Congress programme of non-co-operation and that it is merely a suspension of mass civil disobedience, and a suspension, till further instructions, of other activities of an aggressive character. It could not be otherwise. The Bardoli resolutions were addressed to the people and were intended to be of a penitential nature and also to prove incontestably to the people who are in sympathy with the movement that the sympathy of those who believe in violence not only not required but is held to be injurious to the cause.

I would however warn my critics and I know, some of them, although very friendly, have become very sensitive of fate. I warn such critics against reading into the covering resolution any radical notification of the Bardoli resolutions except in two particulars. One is the restoration of permission to resort to *bona fide* picketing of foreign cloth under direct supervision of local Congress committees, to be carried on by persons of known good character. Complaints were bitter against foreign cloth merchants as to their indifference to the growing popular dislike, even on the part of those who use it, for foreign cloth, as also to the breach of solemn promises made by these merchants that they would not import any more foreign cloth. The people have rightly resented the unpatriotic and selfish attitude of the merchants who in their desire to amass wealth have utterly disregarded the popular feeling against any further importation of foreign cloth into this country. It would be a grave mistake to suppose that this opposition to foreign cloth is based upon any ill will. Dislike of foreign cloth is a proof of national consciousness, of a supreme economic fact and this statement received additional support from the opposition that is growing against the use of cloth manufactured by mills of India. There can be no question of ill will against those who are engaged in the mill industry of India. But till the nation realizes, as I think it will, that the masses can as little afford to buy cloth manufactured in mills as it can afford to buy food cooked in hotels, it is impossible to withstand that unanimous demand for picketing foreign cloth shops. I can only hope that the merchants of India who

have all these long years been engaged in a trade which has brought about the daily growing pauperism of the masses will rise to the occasion and even like the Japanese Samurai recognize the necessity of a little sacrifice. I consider the sacrifice of foreign cloth trade slight for the simple reason that the merchants can find a respectable living if they turn their attention to organizing the khaddar manufacture and the khaddar trade and thus render even peaceful picketing wholly unnecessary. If they would only co-operate I would love to divert the energy of the best men and women in the country from picketing foreign cloth shops to becoming expert spinners, weavers, and carders and manufacturers of khaddar as fast as they can.

The second modification is that the power of reverting to individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or of offensive type has been again given by the All-India Congress Committee to the provinces. It does not therefore mean that the provinces are required immediately to resort to individual civil disobedience but it gives each province full powers to do so if circumstances required it and if the necessary non-violent atmosphere is present in that province. Whilst the provinces have thus their autonomy which was granted to them in November last at Delhi<sup>1</sup> restored to them, I would strongly advise them not to exercise those powers without the greatest deliberation or with undue haste. Indeed I would advise them, unless circumstances render civil disobedience absolutely imperative, to take a little rest, and purge their volunteers, register of all the names of those who did not believe in every single detail of the requirements of the Congress pledge.

It would really add to the strength of the movement if the provinces before re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience would put their house in thorough order and ensure perfect non-violence, non-violence not merely in deed but in thought and word. Whilst it is perfectly true that the country as a whole has made remarkable progress in the cultivation of a non-violent spirit it cannot be denied that there is still great room for the improvement and that we are living in a state of perpetual suspense. The ideal atmosphere for civil disobedience, whether individual or mass, is undoubtedly an atmosphere of perfect calm. Civil disobedience must not be demonstrative. Each one who is arrested has to go to prison unattended by demonstrative escort. There is still a desire on the part

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

of crowds to flock to courts or to follow civil resisters as they are being taken to jails.

There are many other things which I can mention and which require attention. Whilst therefore each province is free to do as it likes so long as it fulfils the conditions laid down for individual civil disobedience, my own advice is that they should not make haste.

QUESTION: Do you think that within a short interval of suspension of certain activities and their restoration by the All-India Congress Committee the atmosphere had cleared to an extent as would justify the resanctioning of those activities?

ANSWER: I thought the resolution itself was perfectly clear on the point. If you will look at the Bardoli resolutions you will find a stiff-condition laid down for mass civil disobedience. You will see that individual civil disobedience is treated in the resolution in a different way. Its suspension is only till further instructions, meaning clearly that whilst mass civil disobedience was being suspended it was considered necessary by the Working Committee to suspend other activities and to understand the situation thoroughly for itself, [and] for that purpose to refer the matter to the All-India Congress Committee. Now the only change made by the All India Congress Committee is that instead of itself fixing the time for re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience it throws the responsibility on the provincial Congress committees. What these committees will do I do not know. I have myself advised, as you will observe, against immediately re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience but if a province considers that its atmosphere is not in any shape or form affected by the Chauri Chaura tragedy so that there is no danger whatsoever of violence breaking out, and further if a province finds that it can comply with all the conditions whose fulfilment is required by the Congress, that province will certainly have the right of re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience. The All-India Congress Committee therefore has not passed any judgment as to whether the interval is enough or whether there should be a long delay. Each Province is called upon to judge for itself, and seeing that provinces were jealous of their rights and resented even suspicion about their ability to manage their own affairs in the matter of civil disobedience the All India Congress Committee could not possibly resist the demand for the restoration of provincial autonomy.

But how is it that even after receiving the third warning from God you have so soon granted the provincial autonomy which at least in the case of U.P. was not exercised properly?

The third warning now deters me from immediately embarking upon mass civil disobedience, I would think 50 times before embarking upon mass civil disobedience. The deprivation of provincial autonomy was intended only to be temporary and was resorted to in order to gain control over the organizations and to test the measure of responsiveness, and, the fact that the provinces have responded in the noble manner they have done put the All-India Congress Committee upon its honour. It would have been resented by the provinces if autonomy was not restored, nor is it possible to say that the Chauri Chaura tragedy would not have occurred if there were no provincial autonomy. Whilst from the Congress standpoint condemnation of the acts of the mob can be regarded as too severe, from the public point of view, I can safely say that blame can at least be evenly distributed between the Congress organizations and the Government. What I mean is that the Government by deliberately withdrawing the leaders known for their belief in non-violence and for their ability to manage Congress affairs put undue strain upon the masses, surely, judged by the ordinary standard. It is not a matter for surprise that such an awful tragedy should occur, nor is mob frenzy a speciality in the Gorakhpur district or in India, because such mob frenzy has before taken place in all parts of the world. The Congress condemnation, therefore, is due to the Congress pledge of non-violence.

Considering the progress in respect of the conditions laid down by the Congress, can you say how much time it will take before swaraj is attained?

It is very difficult for me to forecast the time for the simple reason that there are many things which enable me to fix one day and many other things which prevent me from giving any date whatever.

Have you ever used the power of dictatorship?

Never. Nor has the legal occasion arisen for the exercise of these powers, because they can be exercised only when the Congress organization is paralysed through Government repression.

Suppose you are arrested, are you going to nominate a successor dictator?

No. I have absolutely no power to nominate. The power has not yet accrued to me inasmuch as the Congress organization is in a fair working order.

*Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-3-1922*

## 107. NOTES

### CONGRESS A FETISH

We must avoid the Congress becoming a fetish. I love the idea of everybody becoming a Congressman and everybody yielding willing and intelligent obedience to the Congress resolutions. But I abhor the idea of anybody becoming a Congressman merely because it is an old or a great institution or yielding obedience to its resolutions whether one likes it or not. The rule of majority has a narrow application, i.e., one should yield to the majority in matters of detail. But it is slavery to be amenable to the majority no matter what its decisions are. Thus notwithstanding the Congress resolution, it is wrong, in my opinion, to withdraw from Councils or not to covet election thereto, if one believes that Councils are even a tolerably good institution. It is similarly wrong for a lawyer to suspend practice merely because the Congress says so. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I therefore believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority so long as it does not act in the name of the Congress. A practising lawyer may become a Congressman; he cannot be called a non-co-operator. He cannot and should not, therefore, be on the All-India Congress Committee. Similarly one who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar or a title holder or a Councillor may not be called non-co-operator though all these may be Congressmen.

But not only do I think that a Congressman is not bound by the resolutions which he does not approve of, he is also entitled always to go beyond the Congress resolutions, provided that he does not violate the creed and if he does not act in the name of the Congress. Supposing that the restrictions put by the Congress do not suit a particular province, that that province has even voted against them, that that province finds that it can look after itself, it has every right to go forward and justify its rebellion by success. The Congress only finds the highest common factor, but it may conceivably be far short of the requirements of a particular province. That province may, if it has confidence and if it is not likely to jeopardize any Congress interest, certainly go on with its own programme on its own

responsibility and at the risk of a vote of censure from the Congress. This, in my opinion, is what the spirit of democracy requires. What I have stated is an illustration of domestic civil disobedience. Thus and thus only shall we save ourselves from false idolatry.

#### FOR KHILAFAT COMMITTEES

I continue to receive complaints from many quarters that the Khilafat members do not comply with the conditions of the Congress pledge for volunteers and that they raise religious objections. I venture to point out that all the religious objections were considered by distinguished Ulemas at the Congress and the pledge was framed in consultation with them. I would, therefore, urge Khilafat Committees to give their full co-operation to the Congress. Indeed, every Mussulman who belongs to a Khilafat Committee should deem it his duty to belong also to the Congress. There can be only one national organization. That organization is the Congress, and Mussulmans should make it as much their own as the Hindus. That is the least required to demonstrate Hindu-Muslim unity.

#### KHADDAR INDISPENSABLE

I regret to find that Jamiet-ul-Ulema<sup>1</sup> has sent the Working Committee a pledge for the volunteers which is highly unsatisfactory. That pledge does not insist upon khaddar for personal wear. Every condition is an integral part of the Congress pledge and I hold it to be as essential as Hindu-Muslim unity. Break up the unity and you break up swaraj. Give up khaddar and you will find it *impossible* to lift the masses from the economic and moral degradation. Unity between races and the re-enthronement of the spinning-wheel in India's sixty million homes give you the requisite strength to fight the Government, if you are non-violent. I gladly concede that you can easily fight the Government with arms without the unity and without the spinning-wheel. The result will be not swaraj, but one plunderer giving place to his superior and between the two a greater grinding of the masses. I invite both the Hindus and the Mussulmans who love India to fight such a prospect even unto death. I therefore urge the Jamiet to give immediate effect to the request of the Working Committee. The Khilafat Committees have been giving, on the whole, great strength and assistance to Congress organizations. As time goes forward, the co-operation should grow stronger. There is just a danger of the two

<sup>1</sup> A religious organization of Muslims

organizations running in opposite directions. Each must help the other as the one eye requires full co-operation of the other.

There will no doubt be variety of work in the two organizations. But on cardinal matters, i.e., non-violence, khaddar and unity among all the races, there is no room for variety or degrees. I understand that the Jamiet has been told that khaddar is not always available. Of course it is not available in some places where the workers have not carried out their trust. But they should know that in Bombay and Ahmedabad and in many other places khaddar can be had in any quantity required. These are the prices at which the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee, Ahmedabad, supplies khaddar:

Khaddar suitable for suiting 9 as. per yard

Khaddar suitable for shirting 7 as. per yard

#### NEEDLESS NERVOUSNESS

I am sorry that I find a nervous fear among some Hindus and Mohammedans that I am undermining their faith and that I am even doing irreparable harm to India by my uncompromising preaching of non-violence. They seem almost to imply that violence is their creed. I touch a tender spot if I talk about extreme non-violence in their presence. They confound me with texts from the *Mahabharata* and the Koran eulogizing or permitting violence. Of the *Mahabharata* I can write without restraint, but the most devout Mohammedan will not, I hope, deny me the privilege of understanding the message of the Prophet. I make bold to say that violence is the creed of no religion and that whereas non-violence in most cases is obligatory in all, violence is merely permissible in some cases. But I have not put before India the final form of non-violence. The non-violence that I have preached from Congress platforms is non-violence as a policy. But even policies require honest adherence in thought, word and deed. If I believe that honesty is the best policy, surely whilst I so believe, I must be honest in thought, word and deed; otherwise I become an impostor. Non-violence being a policy means that it can upon due notice be given up when it proves unsuccessful or ineffective. But simple morality demands that whilst a particular policy is pursued, it must be pursued with all one's heart. It is simple policy to march along a certain route, but the soldier who marches with an unsteady step along that route is liable to be summarily dismissed. I become therefore incredulous when people talk to me sceptically about non-violence or are seized with fright at the very



mention of the word non-violence. If they do not believe in the expedient of non-violence, they must denounce it but not claim to believe in the expedient when their heart resists it. How disastrous it would be, if not believing in violence even as an expedient, I joined, say, a violence party and approached a gun with a perturbed heart! The reader will believe me when I say that I have the capacity for killing a fly. But I do not believe in killing even flies. Now suppose I joined an expedition for fly-killing as an expedient. Will I not be expected before being permitted to join the expedition to use all the available engines of destruction whilst I remained in the army of fly-killers? If those who are in the Congress and the Khilafat Committees will perceive the simple truth, we shall certainly either finish the struggle this year to a successful end or be so sick of non-violence as to give up the pretension and set about devising some other programme.

I hold that Swami Shraddhanandji has been needlessly criticized for the proposition he intended to move. His argument is absolutely honest. He thinks that we as a body do not really believe in non-violence even as a policy. Therefore we shall never fulfil the programme of non-violence. Therefore, he says, let us go to the Councils and get what crumbs we may. He was trying to show the unreality of the position of those who believe in the policy with their lips, whereas they are looking forward to violence for final deliverance. I do say that if Congressmen do not fully believe in the policy, they are doing an injury to the country by pretending to follow it. If violence is to be the basis of future government, the Councillors are undoubtedly the wisest. For it is through the Councils that, by the same devices by which the present administrators rule us, the Councillors hope to seize power from the former's hands. I have little doubt that those who nurse violence in their bosoms will find no benefit from the lip profession of non-violence. I urge, therefore, with all the vehemence at my command that those who do not believe in non-violence should secede from the Congress and from non-co-operation and prepare to seek election or rejoin law-courts or Government colleges as the case may be. Let there be no manner of doubt that swaraj established by non-violent means will be different in kind from the swaraj that can be established by armed rebellion. Police and punishments there will be even under such swaraj. But there would be no room for brutalities such as we witness today both on the part of the people and the Government. And those, whether

they call themselves Hindus or Mussulmans, who do not fully believe in the policy of non-violence should abandon both non-co-operation and non-violence.

For me, I am positive that neither in the Koran nor in the *Mahabharata* there is any sanction for and approval of the triumph of violence. Though there is repulsion enough in Nature, she *lives* by attraction. Mutual love enables Nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere because there is mutual regard among the individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe., even as we have extended the family law to form nations—a larger family. God has ordained that India should be such a nation. For so far as reason can perceive, India cannot become free by armed rebellion for generations. India can become free by refraining from national violence. India has now become tired of rule based upon violence. That to me is the message of the plains. The people of the plains do not know what it is to put up an organized armed fight. And they must become free, for they want freedom. They have realized that power seized by violence will only result in their greater grinding.

Such at any rate is the reasoning that has given birth to the *policy*, not the *dharma*, of non-violence. And even as a Mussulman or a Hindu believing in violence applies the creed of non-violence in his family, so are both called upon without question to apply the policy of non-violence in their mutual relations and in their relation to other races and classes not excluding Englishmen. Those who do not believe in this policy and do not wish to live up to it in full, retard the movement by remaining in it.

#### ADVICE TO PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES

It is thus clear what I would like the Provincial organizations to do. They must not for the present disobey the Government orders so far as it is at all possible. They must not, before they have searched their hearts, take forward action but bring about an absolutely calm atmosphere. No imprisonment courted in anger has availed us anything. I agree with the Mussulman view which is also the Hindu view that there is no imprisonment for the sake of it. All imprisonment to be useful has to be courted for religion or country and that by men and women clad in khaddar and without anger or violence in their hearts. If the provinces have no such men and women, they should not embark on civil disobedience at all.

## CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

Hence it is that the constructive programme has been framed. It will steady and calm us. It will wake our organizing spirit, it will make us industrious, it will render us fit for swaraj, it will cool our blood. We shall be spat upon, laughed at, sworn at, may be even kicked and cursed. We must put up with it all inasmuch as we have harboured anger in our breasts even though we have been under the pledge of non-violence. I must frankly state that unless we can retrieve our steps deliberately, cultivate non-violence and manufacture khaddar, we cannot render effective help to the Khilafat, we cannot get redress of the Punjab wrong, nor can we attain swaraj. My leadership is perfectly useless if I cannot convince co-workers and the public of the absolute and immediate necessity of vigorously prosecuting the constructive programme.

We must know whether we can get a crore men and women in all India Who believe in the attainment of swaraj by peaceful, i.e., non-violent and legitimate, i.e., truthful means.

We must get money for the prosecution of swadeshi and we will know how many people there are in India who are willing honestly to pay one rupee out of every hundred of their past year's income to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. This subscription the Committee expects from Congressmen and sympathizers.

We must spend money like water in introducing the spinning-wheel in every home, in the manufacture and the distribution of khaddar wherever required.

Surely we have long neglected the untouchable brother. He has slaved for us too long. We must now serve him.

Our liquor picketing has done some good but not substantial. Not till we pierce the home of the drunkard shall we make any real advance. We must know why he drinks; what we can substitute for it. We must have a census of all the drunkards of India.

Social service department has been looked at with the utmost contempt. If the non-co-operation movement is not malicious that department is a necessity. We want to render alike to friend and foe service in times of distress. We are thereby able to keep our relations sweet with all in spite of our political aloofness.

## LAUGHING AT IT

Social service and temperance reform were laughed at as part of

the struggle for swaraj. It was a painful exhibition of ignorance of the essentials of swaraj. I claim that the human mind or human society is not divided into water-tight compartments called social, political and religious. All act and react upon one another. What is more, the vast majority of Hindus and Mussulmans have joined the struggle believing it to be religious. The masses have come in because they want to save the Khilafat and the cow. Deprive the Mussulman of the hope of helping the Khilafat and he will shun the Congress tell the Hindu he cannot save the cow if he joins the Congress, he will to a man leave it. To laugh at moral reform and social service is to laugh at swaraj, the Khilafat and the Punjab.

Even the organization of schools was laughed at. Let us see what it means. We have demolished the prestige of Government schools. It was perhaps necessary in 1920 to do the picketing and certainly not to mind the boys being neglected, but it would be criminal any longer to picket Government schools or to neglect national institutions. We can now only draw more boys and girls by putting existing national schools on a better footing. They have the advantage of being in institutions where they breathe free air and where they are not shadowed. But the advantage of scientific training in carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving and of having intellectual training in keeping with the requirements of the country must be added. We shall show by successful experiment the superiority of training in national schools and colleges.

Even the panchayats came in for ridicule. Little did the critics realize that the masses in many parts of India had ceased to resort to law courts. If we do not organize honest panchayats, they will certainly go back to the existing law-courts.

#### POLITICAL RESULTS

Nor is a single step devoid of vast political results. Adequate manufacture and universal use of khaddar means a permanent boycott of foreign cloth and automatic distribution of sixty crores of rupees annually among the poor people. Permanent disappearance of the drink and the opium evils mean an annual saving of seventeen crores to the people and a diminution of that revenue for the Government. Constructive effort for the untouchables means the addition to the Congress ranks of six crores of men and women who will for ever be bound to the Congress. Social service department, if it becomes a live thing, will restore the strained relations that exist today among co-operators (whether Indian or English) and non-co-operators. To work the full constructive programme therefore is to achieve all we want. To fail in fulfilling the programme is to postpone all possibility

of effective civil disobedience.

#### WHAT OF THE KHILAFAT

Several Mussulman friends have said, "Your programme is good for swaraj but it is too slow to be good enough for saving the Khilafat. The Khilafat question will be solved in a few months and whatever can be done must be done now." Let us examine the question. The cause of the Khilafat, thank God, is safe in the hands of Gazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha. He has retrieved the prestige of the Khilafat as no Mussulman of modern times has done. India has in my opinion helped not much by her money, though that has meant something, but by Hindu-Muslim unity and by telling the Government in the plainest terms possible that India will have nothing to do with the Government and will declare complete independence if England persists in her anti-Turk policy and exploits India's resources against the Turks. The greater the strength in that declaration the greater becomes the prestige of Islam and the greater the power of Mustafa Kamal Pasha. Some people think that mere temporary embarrassment of the Government by a few thousand men, irrespective of qualification, going to jail will make the Government yield to our wishes. Let us not underrate the power of the Government. I am sure that the Government does possess as yet the power to crush the spirit of violence. And it is nothing but violence to go to jail anyhow. It is the suffering of the pure and God-fearing which will tell, not the bluster of the rabble. The purer India becomes the stronger she becomes. Purity is the only weapon of the weak in body. The strong in body in their insolence often mobilize their "hard fibre" and seek to usurp the very function of the Almighty. But when that "hard fibre," comes in contact not with its like but with the exact opposite, it has nothing to work against. A solid body can only move on and against another solid body. You cannot build castles in the air. Therefore, the impatient Mussulmans must see the obvious truth that the little disorganized bluster of the rabble, whether it expresses itself by going to jail or by burning buildings or by making noisy demonstrations, will be no match for the organized insolence of the "hard fibre" of the "most determined people in the world". This terrific insolence can only be met by the utter humility of the pure and the meek. God helps the helpless, not those who believe they can do something. Every page of the Koran teaches me, a non-Muslim, this supreme lesson. Every *sura* of the Koran begins in the name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful. Let us therefore be strong in soul though weak in body.

If the Mussulmans believe in the policy of non-violence, they

must give it a fair trial and they will not have given it any trial at all if they harbour anger i.e., violence in their breasts.

As it is, by our bluster, by intimidation, by show of force, by violent picketing we shall estrange more men than intimidate into co-operation with us. And how can we dare seek co-operation by compulsion when we have refused to be coerced into co-operation with the Government? Must we not observe the same law that we expect others to observe towards us?

If the Treaty of Sevres<sup>1</sup> is not revised to our satisfaction, it is not finished. The virtue lies in India's determination not to be satisfied with anything less than her demands. After all, Mustafa Kamal may not insist upon the settlement of the Jazirat-ul-Arab<sup>2</sup>. We must continue the fight so long as it is not returned intact to the Mussulmans. If the Mussulmans consider that they can gain their end by force of arms, let them secede from the non-violent alliance by all means. But if they know that they cannot, let them carry it out in thought, word and deed and they will find that there is no surer or quicker remedy for assuaging their grief and redressing the Khilafat wrong.

#### NEED OF EXCITEMENT !

Some friends argue that in order to continue the struggle the people need some stimulant. No person or nation can be kept alive merely upon stimulants. We have had much too much of it latterly. And the antidote now is a depressant. If therefore depression follows the cessation of all aggressive activities and people forsake us, it would not only not hinder our cause but help it. Then we shall not have to shoulder the responsibility for a Chauri Chaura. Then we could go forward with a steady step without any danger of having to look back. If however we can survive the depression and keep the people with us, we shall have positive proof that the people have caught the message of non-violence and that the people are as capable of doing constructive work as they have shown themselves capable of doing destructive work. Whatever the result, the present excitement must be abated at any cost.

#### “SOMERSAULTS”

I have carefully read Mr. Kelkar's article in *The Mahratta* criticising the Bardoli resolutions. I acknowledge the gentle and

<sup>1</sup> Which provided for the partitioning of the Turkish Empire

<sup>2</sup> Literally, “the island of Arabia”, which, as defined by Muslim religious authorities, included Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia as well as the peninsula of Arabia

considerate manner with which he has handled me. I wish I could persuade him and many who think like Mr. Kelkar that what he calls a somersault was an inevitable operation. Consistency is a desirable quality, but it becomes a “hobgoblin” when it refuses to see facts. I have known dispositions of armies changed from hour to hour. Once during the Zulu revolt we were all asleep. We had definite orders for the morrow. But suddenly at about midnight we were awakened and ordered to retire behind bags of grain which served as protecting walls because the enemy was reported to be creeping up the hill on which we had encamped. In another hour it was understood that it was a false alarm and we were permitted to retire to our tents. All the “somersaults” were necessary changes. Remedies vary with the variation in diagnosis. The same physician one day detects malaria and gives a large dose of quinine, detects typhoid the next and stops all medicine and orders careful nursing and fasting, later detects consumption and orders change and solid food. Is the physician capricious or cautious and honest?

Without being untruthful and indifferent if not stupid, I could not do what Mr. Kelkar suggests I should have done at the time of the Bombay Conference<sup>1</sup>. It would have been untruthful to have yielded to the Moderate friends beyond what was conceded as the Indian sky appeared to me to be clear blue and promised to remain so. My diagnosis may be blamed but not my decision based on the then diagnosis, nor could I possibly conceal the demands especially in the teeth of the Viceregal declaration at Calcutta that nothing was to be expected in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab and that as the reforms<sup>2</sup> had only just been granted, no advance was to be expected. I would have been unfair to the Viceroy as also to the Moderate friends if I had not said that our demands were emphatic and clear-cut. To have then suspended mass civil disobedience would have been a weakness. But Chauri Chaura darkened the horizon and I discovered a new diagnosis. It would have been idiotic on my part not to have declared in the clearest possible language that the patient required a drastic change of treatment. Not to have suspended after Chauri Chaura would have been unpardonable weakness. I assure the reader that Bardoli's unpreparedness had nothing to do with the decision. For Bardoli in my opinion was quite able to give battle. I have stated several times in the columns of *Young India* and *Navajivan* that I considered Bardoli to be quite ready for the fray.

<sup>1</sup> The Leaders' Conference of January 14 and 15, 1922

<sup>2</sup> The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

The fact is that the critics do not realize the implications of civil disobedience. They seem unconsciously to ignore the potent adjective “civil”,.

The more I think of the Bardoli decision and the more I rehearse the debates and the talks at Delhi, the more convinced I am of the correctness of the decision and of the necessity of provinces stopping all offensive activities for the time being even at the risk of being considered weak and forfeiting popular applause and support.

#### SINFUL IDOLATRY

I am myself an idolater though I am also an iconoclast as so many of my friends know to their cost. Idolatry is implanted in the human breast, and we worship perhaps nothing so much as our own bodies, but I am not in this note dealing with idolatry that is permissible; I am merely writing this note to draw attention to the sinful practice that seems to have commenced somewhere in the South of putting my portraits in chariots for religious processions. Mr. Andrews draws my attention by telegram to the fact that if such a practice is continued it might even lead to rioting because not everybody will tolerate the idea of putting portraits of historical persons or living persons in chariots drawn in connection with religious festivals, and I hold it to be criminal when ordinary idols are replaced by portraits of me. It can do no good to these blind worshippers and must do violence to devotees who cannot possibly tolerate the idea of their idols being insulted. There is ample excuse for people worshipping heroes of the remote past in the form of idols, but it offends one's sense of propriety to be called upon to offer incense to living persons in the manner said to have been done somewhere in the Madras Presidency. If we are making for real manifestation of the democratic spirit, there is no room for such blind or excessive hero-worship. I would urge every Congress worker, therefore, whenever he sees such blind worship to discountenance it and by every legitimate means to wean people from it.

#### AN IDLE THREAT

It seems to be the special good fortune of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu<sup>1</sup> to be threatened with prosecution or at least to have her statements contradicted. It will be remembered that her charges about the official misdeeds during the Martial Law period were repudiated by Mr. Montagu. She took up the challenge and quoted chapter and verse from the Congress inquiry report. If she was wrong it was the

<sup>1</sup>1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji



Congress Commissioners who misled her. She was able to prove that the India Office did not even know the full contents of the report.

This time the Madras Government has actually threatened prosecution. I wish they would make good their threat. India will then have the rare chance of listening to the statement of an undefended poetess of India. Only there will be such a rush for hearing the poetic non-co-operator in the courts that the trial will have to be either in an open *maidan* (not a bad thing) or inside prison walls. There is no hall large enough in all India that would hold the eager crowd that would want to have a glimpse of the bulbul<sup>1</sup> in a British cage.

Well, she has lost no time in repeating her charges. Chivalrous Keshava Menon and many others have come forward to support her statement. Mr. Prakasam has published the portrait of [the] boy whose arms were cruelly cut off. She has invited the Government to prosecute her or to tender an unqualified apology or before so doing to appoint an impartial commission of non-officials to investigate her charges. India awaits the reply of the gallant Madras Government. It surprises me that Lord Willingdon should have omitted the courtesy of privately writing to Mrs. Naidu asking her whether she had made the charges in an unguarded moment and if not, whether she could assist the Government in proving them. Have English noblemen in their rage forgotten their traditional chivalry? Must they insult one of the most distinguished daughters of India because she has the temerity to take up the popular cause? I do expect Lord Willingdon to make the *amende honorable* and that in a handsome manner. I assure him that he will regain for the Government a little of the lost prestige by such an honourable act. It cannot affect the struggle one way or the other. But an honourable act on the part of the Government will come like a drop of rain on a parched land.

#### THE "BHILS" OF RAJPUTANA

The *Bhils* of Rajputana are a simple and a brave people. They have certain grievances. They have found in one Motilal Tejavat a friend and helper. He has been, it is said, weaning them from drink, gambling and meat-eating and asking them to live an orderly industrious life. He has been also advising them about their grievances. The only fault I can find is that he has been moving about with a large retinue of his followers. This has undoubtedly caused uneasiness among the States. Hearing all sorts of complaints against Mr. Motilal I asked Mr. Manilal Kothari to inquire. He did so with the permission and the help of the respective States and the *Bhils* have

<sup>1</sup> Sarojini Naidu was popularly known as "the Nightingale of India"

assured him that they do not mean any mischief at all. He has met Mr. Motilal also. The latter has assured Mr. Kothari of his peaceful intentions. But unfortunately in the meanwhile the Idar State is reported to have taken action against the *Bhils* and killed four of them. I do not know the full details nor do I know the reason for the action. I can only hope that they will settle the *Bhil* complaints by appointing an arbitration court and promise free pardon to Mr. Motilal if he comes out of the hills and surrenders himself. The *Bhils* have been long neglected by the States and reformers. If they are given a helping hand, they can become the pride of India. All they need is the spinning-wheel in their homes and schools in which their children can receive simple education. In the vast awakening that has taken place no race can be left out of the calculation of the States and reformers.

#### THE TOLL OF ANDHRA

Here is a letter<sup>1</sup> from a correspondent:

I am not surprised at the reported treatment. The authorities have got the chance of a lifetime. They would fain break the proud Andhra spirit and brutally crush it for ever. I have no Bardoli just now to present them with. But I urge them to be patient, not to be angry nor to be cowed down. Let them bear all the brutalities without harbouring ill will against the wrong doer. He can take our possessions and our bodies. He cannot take away our wills.

#### AFFLICTED ASSAM

The pages of *Young India* have contained much information about repression in Assam. In my opinion Assam has undergone perhaps the greatest suffering. It has no leader left worthy of the name. Those who are left are working under extraordinary difficulties. The following graphic description<sup>2</sup> needs no embellishment.

The reader should reread with the above p. 105 *Young India* 16th February. My advice to the workers that are left is, stop for the time being all aggressive activities. Do the constructive work with all your energy. If the spirit of violence has crept into our ranks at all, drive it out. Hold your Congress office under the beautiful trees of Assam. The storm will blow over in a moment, if we shall be true to

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here; it described the arrest and beating of volunteers in Guntur district despite the stoppage of the "no-tax" campaign

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here; it gave an account of the burning and looting of Congress offices and of arbitrary sentences passed on volunteers.

ourselves.

#### AJMER HIGH-HANDEDNESS

Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav sends the following wire<sup>1</sup> from Delhi which speaks for itself:

Ajmer news completely suppressed by local authorities, who have censored all telegrams going and coming in names of local leaders. . . . Ordinary telegrams of Provincial Congress going to districts in usual course of business are censored by the Commissioner. . . . The spirit in the beginning was naturally violent, but thanks to the non-violence movement of Mahatmaji and the good efforts of the local leaders . . . the entire masses of town have shown great forbearance and complete self-control even under greatest provocation. The other day a garden party was given by some *johukams*<sup>2</sup> to the retiring Commissioner Patterson in the name of citizens of Ajmer. The volunteers who went to impress the guests that the party was not on behalf of the citizens were mercilessly caned by the Police Superintendent, but all remained calm and quiet. If there were some stray examples of Chauri Chaura, there are more examples of non-violence throughout the country. The authorities have bent so low that complete absence of peace and justice is shown at every step. The distribution of *fatwa* has brought many brilliant youths of Ajmer in jail; but the distribution of the same *fatwa* to the *sowars* and the police in the Court by twenty organized volunteers kept them unarrested. Some five hundred volunteers were organized for this collective civil disobedience, but the very first unit, who went round the city in procession and distributed the *fatwa* to the very police and mounted *sowars* who were kept in readiness for their arrest, were left untouched though again and again they challenged the Police Superintendent and even the Commissioner in his Court that they were distributing the *fatwa*. Such is the law and justice of the Government. On the trial of Kunwar Chand Karan Sarda, the pleaders wanted the case to be tried in the open court instead of in jail, but the Commissioner wanted the pleaders to take assurance from Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav that complete peace and order would prevail before he could transfer the case to open court. On approach of the pleaders to Panditji, he refused to give any undertaking to the Commissioner or the co-operating pleaders, but told them that their very creed was non-violence and therefore there cannot be the least doubt of any breach of peace. It was then that the case of Kunwar Chand Karan Sarda was transferred to the open court.

Kindly give space to all these news as these are the brief summary of many important news suppressed by the local authorities. These are therefore sent through Delhi Telegraph Office. The last news is that of the big *urs* fair coming on 1st March, when the All-India Ulemas conference is going to meet in Ajmer. The Political Conference would also meet, where all the members of the All-India Congress Committee and Moderate friends are cordially invited.

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced here

<sup>2</sup> Servile people

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is elected President of the Conference, while Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav is elected Chairman of the reception committee. P. Shersingh and Maulvi Mohuddin are the General Secretaries of the Committee.  
*Young India*, 2-3-1922

### *108. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE*

The session<sup>1</sup> just past of the All-India Congress Committee was in some respects more memorable than the Congress. There is so much undercurrent of violence, both conscious and unconscious, that I was actually and literally praying for a disastrous defeat. I have always been in a minority. The reader does not know that in South Africa I started with practical unanimity, reached a minority of sixty-four and even sixteen and went up again to a huge majority. The best and the most solid work was done in the wilderness of minority.

I know that the only thing that the Government dread is this huge majority I seem to command. They little know that I dread it even more than they. I have become literally sick of the adoration of the unthinking multitude. I would feel certain of my ground, if I was spat upon by them. Then there would be no need for confession of Himalayan and other miscalculations, no retracing, no rearranging.

But it was not to be.

A friend warned me against exploiting my "dictatorship". He little knew that I had never once used it, if only because the legal occasion had not yet arisen for its use. The "dictatorship" accrues to me only when the ordinary Congress machinery is rendered unworkable by the Government.

Far from my consciously or unconsciously exploiting my "dictatorship" I have begun to wonder if I am not unconsciously allowing myself to be "exploited". I confess that I have a dread of it such as I never had before. The only safety lies in my shamelessness. I have warned my friends of the Committee that I am incorrigible. I shall continue to confess blunders each time the people commit them. The only tyrant I accept in this world is the "still small voice" within. And even though I have to face the prospect of a minority of one, I humbly believe I have the courage to be in such a hopeless minority. That to me is the only truthful position.

But I am a sadder and I hope a wiser man today. I see that our non-violence is skin-deep. We are burning with indignation. The Government is feeding it by its insensate acts. It seems almost

<sup>1</sup> Of February 24 and 25, 1922

as if the Government wants to see this land covered with murder, arson and rapine, in order to be able once more to claim exclusive ability to put them down.

This non-violence therefore seems to be due merely to our helplessness. It almost appears as if we are nursing in our bosoms the desire to take revenge the first time we get the opportunity.

Can true voluntary non-violence come out of this seeming forced non-violence of the weak? Is it not a futile experiment I am conducting? What if, when the fury bursts, not a man, woman or child is safe and every man's hand is raised against his fellow being? Of what avail is it then if I fast myself to death in the event of such a catastrophe coming to pass?

What is the alternative? To lie and say that what I know to be evil, is good? To say that true and voluntary co-operation will come out of false and forced co-operation is to say that light will result from darkness.

Co-operation with the Government is as much a weakness and a sin as alliance with suspended violence.

The difficulty is almost insurmountable. Hence with the growing knowledge of the fact that this non-violence is merely superficial, I must continually make mistakes and retrace, even as a man wading his way through a tractless forest must continually stop, retrace, stumble, be hurt and even bleed.

I was prepared for a certain amount of depression, disappointment and resentment, but I confess I was totally unprepared for the hurricane of opposition. It became clear to me that the workers were in no mood to do any serious work of construction. The constructive programme lent no enchantment. They were not a social reform association. They could not wrest power from the Government by such humdrum reform work. They wanted to deliver "non-violent" blows! All this appeared so thoroughly unreal. They would not stop to think that even if they could defeat the Government by a childish display of rage, they could not conduct the Government of the country for a single day without serious and laborious organization and construction.

We must not go to jail, as Mahomed Ali would say, "in a false issue". It is not *any* imprisonment that will lead to swaraj. It is not *every* disobedience that will fire us with the spirit of obedience and discipline. Jails are no gateway to liberty for the confirmed criminal. They are temples of liberty only for those who are innocence personified. The execution of Socrates made immortality a living reality for us — not so the execution of countless murderers.

There is no warrant for supposing that we can steal swaraj by the imprisonment of thousands of nominally non-violent men with hatred, ill will and violence raging in their breasts.

It would be otherwise if we were fighting with arms, giving and receiving blow for blow. The imprisonment of those who may be caught intimidating, assaulting and murdering will certainly embarrass the Government and when they are tired, they would as elsewhere yield. But such is not our fight today. Let us be truthful. If it is through “show of force” that we wish to gain swaraj, let us drop non-violence and offer such violence as we may. It would be a manly, honest and sober attitude—an attitude the world has been used to for ages past. No one can then accuse us of the terrible charge of hypocrisy.

But the majority will not listen to me. In spite of all my warnings and passionate plea for rejecting my resolution, if they did not believe in non-violence as indispensable for the attainment of our goals they accepted it without a single material change. I would ask them therefore to realize their responsibility. They are now bound not to rush to civil disobedience but to settle down to the quiet work of construction. I would urge them to be indifferent to the clamour for immediate action. The immediate action is not courting imprisonment, nor even free speech and free association or free pen, but self-purification, introspection, quiet organization. We have lost our foothold. If we do not take care, we are likely to be drowned in the waters whose depth we do not know.

It is no use thinking of the prisoners. When I heard of Chauri Chaura I sacrificed them as the first penitential act. They have gone to jail to be released only by the strength of the people; indeed the hope was the swaraj parliament’s first act would be to open the prison gates. God had decreed otherwise. We who are outside have tried and failed. The prisoners can now only gain by serving the full term of their imprisonment. Those who went under false pretences, or under any misapprehension or under a mistaken understanding of the movement, can come out by apologizing and by petitioning. The movement will be all the stronger for the purging. The stoutest hearts will rejoice in the opportunity of unexpectedly greater suffering. Though thousands of Russians have “rotted” in the Russian prisons for years and years, that unhappy people are not yet free. Liberty is a jilt most difficult to woo and please. We have shown the power of

suffering. But we have not suffered enough. If the people in general keep passively non-violent and if only a few are actively, honestly and knowingly non-violent in intent, word and deed, we can reach the goal in the quickest time with the least suffering. But we shall indefinitely postpone the attainment if we send to prison men who harbour violence in their breasts.

Therefore the duty of the majority in their respective provinces is to face taunts, insults and if need be depletion in their ranks but determinedly to pursue their goal without swerving an inch. The authorities mistaking our suspension for weakness may resort to still greater oppression. We should submit to it. We should even abandon defensive civil disobedience and concentrate all our energy on the tasteless but health-giving economic and social reform. We should bend down on our knees and assure the Moderates that they need fear no harm from us. We should assure the zemindars that we have no ill will against them.

The average Englishman is haughty, he does not understand us, he considers himself to be a superior being. He thinks that he is born to rule us. He relies upon his forts or his gun to protect himself. He despises us. He wants to compel co-operation, i.e., slavery. Even him we have to conquer, not by bending the knee, but remaining aloof from him, but at the same time not hating him nor hurting him. It is cowardly to molest him. If we simply refuse to regard ourselves as his slaves and pay homage to him, we have done our duty. A mouse can only shun the cat. He cannot treat with her till she has filed the points of her claws and teeth. At the same time we must show every attention to those few Englishmen who are trying to cure themselves and fellow Englishmen of the disease of race superiority.

The minority has different ideals. It does not believe in the programme. Is it not right and patriotic for them to form a new party and a new organization? They will then truly educate the country. Those who do not believe in the creed should surely retire from the Congress. Even a national organization must have a creed. One, for instance, who does not believe in swaraj has no place in the Congress. I submit that even so has one who does not believe in "peaceful and legitimate means" no place in the Congress. A Congressman may not believe in non-co-operation and still remain in it but he cannot believe in violence and untruth and still be a Congressman. I was therefore deeply hurt when I found opposition to the note in the resolution

about the creed and still more when I found opposition to my paraphrase of the two adjectives “peaceful” and “legitimate” into “non-violent” and “truthful” respectively.<sup>1</sup> I had reasons for the paraphrase. I was seriously told that the creed did not insist upon non-violence and truth as the indispensable means for the attainment of swaraj. I agreed to remove the paraphrase in order to avoid a painful discussion but I felt that truth was stabbed.

I am sure that those who raised this opposition are as patriotic as I claim to be, they are as eager for swaraj as every other Congressman. But I do say that the patriotic spirit demands their loyal and strict adherence to non-violence and truth and that if they do not believe in them they should retire from the Congress organization.

Is it not national economy to let all the ideals be sharply defined and to work independently of one another? That then which is most popular will win the day. If we are going to evolve the real spirit of democracy, we shall not do so by obstruction but by abstention.

The session of the All-India Congress Committee was a forcible demonstration of the fact that *we* are retarding the country’s progress towards swaraj and not the Government. Every mistake of the Government helps. Every neglect of duty on our part hinders.

*Young India*, 2-3-1922

## 109. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

### I. “FLOGGING IN PRISONS”

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my letter No. 402/C dated the 17th February, 1922, I invite your attention to an article in the form of a letter from Mr. Mahadev Desai, which you headed “Flogging in Prisons”, and which you published in your issue of the 19th January last. In the course of that letter no less than six cases of flogging are mentioned and the implication is that political prisoners were involved. In two instances the names of certain persons are mentioned. They are Kailash Nath and Lachhmi Narayan Sharma. Enquiries have been made from the Superintendent of the Central Prison, Naini . . . I am able to affirm categorically that neither Kailash Nath nor Lachhmi

<sup>1</sup>*Vide* footnote 3 to “Working Committee’s Resolutions at Bardoli”, 12-2-1922.



Narayan, whose names were mentioned by the writer of the letter which you published, have ever been flogged in the Naini Jail, nor were they given any punishment whatsoever, with the exception of No. 1488, Kailash Nath, who was “warned” for refusing to work when undergoing a sentence for rigorous imprisonment. . . . I beg that you will give a prominent place to this denial in an early issue.

*Yours faithfully,*

LUCKNOW

J. E. GONDGE

18-2- 1922

PUBLICITY COMMISSIONER

The categorical denial<sup>1</sup> is wholly unacceptable. Not till a full impartial investigation is made, can any contradiction of statements made by a public man of unimpeachable character be accepted, especially when the contradiction comes from interested quarters. I draw attention to the fact that the *Independent* of Allahabad publishes the statement that a prison official admitted to a Congressman the fact of the flogging of Mr. Lachhmi Narayan. There is just a chance that the prison authorities are quibbling when they deny “flogging”. The letter published in *Young India* is a translation. The Gujarati word is the same for whipping, flogging and caning. I have known the habit of officials denying unofficial corporal punishments. I hope the Government do not wish the public to infer that if there is no record of corporal punishments in the jail register, it has not been administered. The contradiction I am publishing certainly makes me more uneasy than before, for it betrays an intention to persist in the inhumanity and to hush it by denials. The Publicity Commissioner ill-performs his duty by sending unsupported contradictions by accused parties.

## II. DEHRA DUN INCIDENT

TO

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

. . . I beg to draw your further attention to the fact that you quoted as the 7th item of “lawless repression” in your rejoinder to the Government of India *communiqué*, “the shooting of a boy at Dehra Dun and the forcible dispersal of a public meeting at that place”. . . . the obvious innuendo is that Government officials shot the boy. It is presumed that you are referring to the shooting incident on the 24th December 1921, when a certain young European named Madden shot a Mohammedan youth. Madden is not a

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts reproduced above

Government servant.... The incident arose out of a personal quarrel and the promptest measures were taken to arrest Madden . . . The Civil Surgeon at the Magistrate's request came down in the night to see the injured boy. Madden was tried after the Xmas holidays and committed to sessions on charges under sections 307, 326 I.P.C. . . . Secondly, you have been undoubtedly misinformed as to the alleged cruel forcible dispersal of a public meeting. The facts are as follows:

1. Volunteer processions had become an extreme nuisance in Dehra Dun and their behaviour on several occasions had been highly provocative.

2. They were prohibited within certain areas by the Superintendent of Police with the Magistrate's assent, in the interests of non-co-operators themselves as the temper of interests members of the public was being sorely tried.

3. The local extremist organ *The Garhwali* had commented upon the unwisdom and folly of these demonstrators.

4. The volunteers decided to defy the orders of the Superintendent of police . . .

5. The meeting was dispersed with very little force. No one was hurt . . .

LUCKNOW,

*Yours faithfully,*

15th February

J. E. GONDGE

The Publicity Commissioner has certainly "caught" me regarding the shooting incident.<sup>1</sup> I should have been more precise and stated that the shooting was not by a Government servant. I now see that the mention itself was irrelevant and unjust to the Government. The shooting in question cannot in any way be as part of lawless repression. I tender my apology for the error which I assure the authorities was wholly unintentional.

The other contradiction however does not appeal to me at all. I deny the necessity in the first instance of the use of force. In the second instance the force used was out of all proportion to the requirements if my correspondent's description is to be relied upon. The public will not trust the interested official denial. I hope that the mistake about the shooting will [not] be used to discredit or underrate the account of the forcible dispersal. The mistake about the shooting was a thoughtless confusion of facts and their consequent misapplication.

### III. A PEEP OF A BOMBAY JAIL

*With the compliments of the Director of Information, Bombay.*

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts from his letter reproduced above

In the issue of *Young India* for January 19 an extract was printed from *The Hindu* dealing with the alleged ill treatment of a certain “Rahmat Rasool, a Punjabi Martial Law prisoner”, in the Hyderabad Central Prison.<sup>1</sup> Enquiries show that the allegations made are unfounded. The article appears to refer to a Gujarati prisoner named Himat Rasool, who was sentenced by the Ahmedabad Special Tribunal to transportation for life for cutting telegraph wires, setting fire to the telegraph office and rioting at Ahmedabad on 11th April 1919. The charges made and the actual facts relating thereto are as follows:

“On their arrival in this jail from the Andamans in November last no meals were given them for three days until the medical officer saw them and got them meals.”

The prisoners (who arrived on December 6th) were seen daily both by the medical officer and the Superintendent but they refused to take *jowari* diet as they wanted wheat diet. This was given them on December 8th.

“Whenever the Superintendent approached them they were required to raise their hands as a Muslim does in prayer with the greeting ‘Sarkar is one’. This immoral rule, interfering with the fundamental principles of Islam, Rahmat Rasool refused to obey, telling the Superintendent that for him God alone is one and that he can raise his hand in prayer before God alone, when the Superintendent proudly replied that he, as representative of Government, was his god in jail.”

This is a pure invention. When the Superintendent or any official visits the prisoners, the latter stand with their hands open, the arms being at right angles to the elbows and the elbows in at the sides. The object of this is to show that there is nothing concealed in the hands with which an assault can be attempted. This attitude is obviously not that of a Muslim raising his hands in prayer and the procedure to which no objection has ever been raised is common to all jails. It is absolutely untrue that the Superintendent used the words attributed to him.

“The prisoner refused to be led away from the path of religion with the result that his religiousness was rewarded with the five-fold punishment of 30 stripes, 6 months’ solitary confinement, six months’ gunny clothing, 6 months’ cross fetters and 6 months’ bar fetters.”

The facts are that on December 13th the prisoner refused to stand up when ordered, became very excited and was grossly impertinent to the Superintendent. He was awarded, not the punishment alleged but gunny clothing for one month and bar fetters for three months. Since the arrival of this prisoner in jail he has been eleven times awarded punishments, including 30 stripes and cross bar fetters for ten days for gross insubordination and persistently refusing to work. He is at present undergoing a punishment of three months’ separate confinement awarded him in the Andamans for refusing to work and refusing to obey orders. His history sheet describes him as “a man of violent temper”.

20th February, 1922

I venture to call this a brazen defence of a brutal punishment. It

<sup>1</sup> Vide “Worse than Martial Law”, 19-1-1922.

tells the public in so many words, "We have done it and we propose to continue." As I did not publish the incident for the edification of the Government, I remain unperturbed by the shameless admission. The reader will please note that in all this *communique* there is no denial of a single material in particular. It makes no difference whether the name or description of the prisoner is correctly given. The facts that the prisoner had to starve for three days, that he had to stretch forth his hands in a humiliating fashion, that he had gunny clothing for one month, bar fetters for three, and thirty stripes and that he is now undergoing *separate* confinement for three months is sufficient corroboration of the allegations of *The Hindu*. I am prepared to assume that every prisoner who receives punishment is, in official parlance "a man of violent temper".

*Young India*, 2-3-1922

### 110. A LYING PLACARD

The following was handed to me in Delhi:

MAHATMA GANDHI'S MESSAGE TO NON-CO-OPERATORS

Stop Hartals

Suspend All N.C.O. Activities

O ye people of Delhi!

Come in your hundreds!!

Come in your thousands!!!

Welcome H.R.H. the Prince of Wales

I can only conclude that it was issued by or on behalf of the Government. I wish indeed I could have sent such a message. As it was, my misfortune was to send quite the opposite. Hartals were specifically retained in the Bardoli resolutions. Non-co-operation activities were not suspended. Aggressive civil disobedience and aggressive activities preparatory thereto were suspended. Apart from the untruthfulness of the placard the organizers did not even see that such lies could only strengthen the movement. But as a non-co-operator I do not want even co-operators to resort to lies. I need not be told that non-co-operators too have been found lying. It is known by this time that I spare neither friend nor foe when it is a question of departing from the code of honour.

*Young India*, 2-3-1922

### III. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[March 2, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

I was so sorry you became suddenly ill and had to get down at Palghar.

I would like you carefully to read every line of *Young India*. I write to you to tell you that the meeting of the All-India Congress has simply confirmed the views with which I left Bardoli. So far as my influence counts I am going to dissuade people in the different provinces from embarking upon even defensive civil disobedience. For the time being, I have persuaded them to concentrate their attention upon the constructive programme, but all this does not mean any change in my attitude towards the Government. Its fraud, its hypocrisy, its unblushing worship of violence repel me more than ever and the time may come when I would want to shun the multitude as much as I shun the Government, though for a different reason. I am anxious to enlist your full co-operation.

Will you not give your whole-hearted co-operation in the prosecution of this constructive programme? I would like you not to be engrossed in the effort to bring about a round table conference, which is a futile effort at the present time ; nor to be thinking of the prisoners. They will be quite all right taking their rest-cure in the prisons. I would so much like you to give your undivided attention to some part or other of the constructive programme. If you are well, as I hope you are, I would even trouble you to come over here and pass a quiet day with me. We could then discuss the possibilities of working along the lines indicated by me. I am in Ahmedabad till Wednesday. Next Monday, as you know, is my silent day. This will be in your hands on Friday. You can come on Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday, the earlier is better.

*The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, pp. 581-2

<sup>1</sup> From the source

## 112. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA<sup>1</sup>

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
March 4, 1922

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have kept your letter of the 19th February in order to be able to write to you at length.

Your first question is whether the requisite non-violent atmosphere can at all be attained and if so when. This is really a question as old as non-co-operation. It puzzles me to find some of the closest and most esteemed of co-workers putting the question as if the requirement was a new thing. I have not the shadow of a doubt that, if we can secure workers with an abiding faith in non-violence and in themselves, we can ensure the non-violent atmosphere required for the working of civil disobedience. The discovery I have made during these few days is that very few understand the nature of non-violence. The meaning of the adjective “civil” before “disobedience” is of course “non-violent”. Why should the people not be trained to refrain from participating in activities which are likely to throw them off their balance? I agree that it will be difficult to get 30 crores of people to be non-violent, but I refuse to believe that it is difficult, if we can get intelligent and honest workers, to make people who are not actively participating in the movement remain indoors. Now, at Chauri Chaura<sup>2</sup> the procession was deliberately formed by volunteers. It was wickedly taken in the direction of the Thana. In my opinion, the forming of the procession itself was easily avoidable. Having been formed, it was the easiest thing to avoid passing the Thana. Two or three hundred volunteers are reported to have been in the procession. I hold that it was equally easy for this large number of volunteers to have effectively prevented the atrocious murder of the constables or at least for every one of them to have perished in the flames lit by the mob which they were leading. I must not also omit to tell you that these men knew that trouble was brewing, knew that the Sub-Inspector was there, knew that there was collision between him and the people on two former occasions. Was not the Chauri Chaura tragedy

<sup>1</sup> President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

<sup>2</sup> A village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh where on February 5, 1922, the mob set fire to the police station and 22 constables were burnt alive. Gandhiji was profoundly shocked by this and imposed on himself a five days' fast on February 12; *Vide* “The Crime of Chauri Chaura”, 16-2-1922.

absolutely capable of being avoided? I admit that nobody plotted the murder, but the volunteers should have foreseen the consequence of what they were doing. Of the Bombay tragedy I was myself a witness. The workers neglected the duty of telling the people, whilst they were preparing them about boycott, to remain tolerant, as also of posting volunteers in areas visited by the labouring population. I myself neglected the duty of putting down every insolent laying of hands upon other people's turbans and caps. Finally take Madras. Not one single incident which happened in Madras was unavoidable. I hold the Congress Committee responsible for all that happened in Madras. With the experience of Bombay fresh in their minds they could, even if they were not fully confident, have avoided hartal. The fact is in every case all the workers did not understand the full purpose of non-violence nor its implications. They liked and loved excitement, and underneath these vast demonstrations was an idea unconsciously lurking in the breast that it was a kind of demonstration of force, the very negation of non-violence. To follow out non-violence as a policy surely does not require saints for its working, but it does require honest workers who understand what is expected of them.

You say that the people work under the spell of one year's limit. There is much truth in what you say, but there again, if the people worked slowly under that spell, they were certainly not working for swaraj. I can understand some temporary excitement, but excitement must not be the whole thing, nor the main part of a great national activity. Swaraj after all is not a mango trick; it is a steady evolution, steady growing into strength such that a period must arrive when our strength has assumed such proportions as to tell upon the usurpers, but every moment of our activity we are gaining swaraj.

Certainly a peaceful Tehsil at the foot of the Himalayas will be affected by a violent hamlet situated near the Cape Comorin if there is a vital connection between the two, as there must be if they are both integral parts of India and your swaraj flag is to dominate both. At the same time, for mass civil disobedience in Bardoli, I would certainly have thought nothing of anything happening in an out-of-the-way Tehsil which had not come under the influence of the Congress and which had not resorted to violence in connection with any Congress activity. You cannot predicate any such want of connection about Gorakhpur, Bombay or Madras. Violence broke out in connection with a national activity. You have the forcible illustration of Malabar.<sup>1</sup> There it was organized and sustained violence offered by the Moplahs, and yet I did not allow Malabar to affect any of our plans, nor have I

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Moplah Outbreak", 4-9-1921.

altered my views during all these months. I can still distinguish between Malabar and Gorakhpur. The Moplahs themselves had not been touched by the non-co-operation spirit. They are not like the other Indians nor even like the other Mussulmans. I am prepared to admit that the movement had an indirect effect upon them. The Moplah revolt was so different in kind that it did not affect the other parts of India, whereas Gorakhpur was typical, and therefore, if we had not taken energetic steps, the infection might easily have spread to the other parts of India.

You say that, individual civil disobedience being withdrawn, there will be no opportunity to test the temper of the people. We do not want to test the temper. On the contrary we want the people to become immersed in industries and constructive activities so that their temper is not exposed to the constant danger of being ruffled. A man wishing to gain self-control instead of exposing himself to temptations avoids them, though, at the same time, he is ready for them if they come to him unsought and in spite of his wanting to avoid them.

We certainly have not suspended any item of non-co-operation. This you will see clearly brought out in *Young India*. I am satisfied that our success depends upon our cultivating exemplary self-restraint and not disobeying even unseen orders of prohibition of meetings. We must learn to conduct our campaign in spite of prohibitions and without civil disobedience. If the people want excitement, we must refuse to give it to them even though we have to risk unpopularity and find ourselves in a hopeless minority. Even a few hundred chosen workers, scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country, stolidly following the programme will create a far more lasting impression than a haphazard mass movement undertaken in order to truckle to the multitude. I would like you therefore to become introspective and to find out for yourself the truth. If you still consider that there is a flaw in the reasoning I have put before you, I would like you to combat the position I have taken. I want us all to think originally and to arrive at independent conclusions. A drastic overhauling of ourselves and of the movement is absolutely necessary.

I do not mind having finally to find out that non-violence is an impracticable dream. If such is our belief, it will be at least an honest belief. For me there is but one thing. I would love to contemplate the dreamland of non-violence in preference to the practicable reality of violence. I have burnt my boats, but that has nothing to do with any of my co-workers. The majority of them have come into the movement as a purely political movement. They do not share my religious



beliefs, and I do not seek to thrust them upon them.

You must get better soon and, if necessary, you should come here to further discuss the matter.

*Yours sincerely,*

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

GUNTUR

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7977

### *113. MY DISAPPOINTMENT*

I am not a quick despairer. I see rays of hope even in clouds of despair and I live on that food. But I must say the meeting<sup>1</sup> of the All-India Congress Committee this time disappointed me. If, as an optimist, I see light even where there is pitch darkness, it is because I force myself to do so.

If my view had not received a majority, I would certainly have seen signs of success. However, I feel crushed under the weight of majority opinion. I do not like shouts of victory; many times I have actually to plug my ears. With such shouts in their mouths, frenzied mobs killed people and burned down houses in Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Amritsar<sup>2</sup>, Chauri Chaura and other places.

The All-India Congress Committee gave me a majority, but I could see that very few really like the Bardoli resolutions.<sup>3</sup> I got the votes because I was Gandhi and not because people were convinced. How can we put any value on them? When we are struggling to establish the rule of the people, of what avail is the victory of one individual? Truth and principle alone should triumph in such a case. A duel was going on between the heart and the head of the majority. The heart would incline towards me, while the head would run miles away from me. I felt, and still feel, unhappy at this.

How far will the wagon go, having thus to be pushed all the time? My soul testifies that, even if we do not accept non-violence in thought, word and deed, that is, even if we regard non-violence only as

<sup>1</sup> Held at Delhi on February 24-25, 1922; at this meeting the resolution suspending mass civil disobedience but allowing individual satyagraha was adopted.

<sup>2</sup> In April 1919, during demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act, mobs had resorted to violence at Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Amritsar.

<sup>3</sup> The Working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on February 11 and 12. At Gandhiji's instance, it decided to cancel the programme of mass civil disobedience and to substitute a constructive programme of spinning, temperance, social reform and educational activities.

a matter of expediency, we should see, as clearly as we do the full moon, that after Chauri Chaura there can be nothing but the Bardoli resolutions.<sup>1</sup> And yet, if the Bardoli resolution has been confirmed [by the A.I.C.C.], it was not on its merits but for my sake. The sailors, who without knowing the directions continue to pilot their ship relying solely on their pilot, will see their ship sink if the latter happens to die or they lose faith in him. It would be dangerous to sail in a ship piloted by such men. Similarly, those who pass Congress resolutions without understanding them will see the ship of the Congress go down.

To me at any rate it is clear that, if we believe that we can win only through non-violence but combine the methods of non-violence and violence, the mixture will go sour and do us harm instead of good. Just as Bardoli's performance would have had an effect on the whole of India, Chauri Chaura, too will have a similar effect. If we are in our right mind, we must see this. We can not see both the sun and moon in the sky at the same time. It cannot be so very cold while the sun shines. How long will a deliberate representing of sunlight as shade succeed? How long can we succeed in the game of making a traveller proceeding to the north believe that he is going southwards? How long can one hide the fact that, in the name of non-violence, violence is going on?

Even a policy adopted for practical reasons should be faithfully adhered to as long at least as the need for it remains. A policy adopted out of expediency, while it is being followed, should be followed whole-heartedly. Any person who promises to devote himself to work for five days should do so completely on those five days. He may love idleness, but he cannot say, after promising to work, that he has no faith in work and, therefore, will not work even on those five days. We would all say that, if he does not believe in working even for five days, he should certainly stay out of a team of people who are ready to work.

Indians have decided that, without non-violence, their country's salvation is impossible as, without it, India cannot unite and the spinning-wheel programme will not succeed. Without Hindu-Muslim unity and without the spinning-wheel, India cannot advance even one step. The former is India's life-breath, the latter its body. Both grow in the soil of non-violence.

Though the matter is so plain, and though we keep uttering the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "The All India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921. and "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-1 - Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-II, 28-12-1921 & "Bardoli's Decision", 30-1-1922.

word “non-violence”, we harbour violence in our minds and are full of anger. Can a pseudo-saint who has “the name of Rama on his lips and a dagger under his arm” ascend to heaven?

Despite many warnings by me, the Bardoli resolutions were passed by a large majority. This has put me in a predicament. If all those votes have been cast with proper thought, the outcome can be good. If all the delegates who cast those votes believe that we should remain peaceful henceforth, that it is necessary for us to work on silently, then we shall acquire more strength than we have at present.

It is as necessary now to postpone going to jail as it once was to go to jail. Under tyrannical rule, the jail will always remain a gateway to freedom. But one needs to be an artist even for going to jail. Thieves and impostors go to jail, no doubt, but they do not secure freedom by doing so. They merely suffer their punishment there. Nor can those who go to jail with an agitated mind and full of anger be happy there. To them, the jail will not seem a home for service, whereas one who goes to jail with a calm mind will certainly believe that, even while in jail, he does the highest service, or better service [than he did outside]. While there, he should think with a quiet mind, increase his self-control and follow rules more strictly. Socrates made his best speech holding a cup of poison in his hand and, by his death, won immortality for himself and his words. Tilak Maharaj wrote his two greatest books in jail. No one can say that he wasted a single moment in jail or that the years he spent in jail were wasted. Even now, those<sup>1</sup> who have been doing their work in jails are in fact doing service.

At the present time, to court imprisonment will mean encouraging violence. Hence, staying out has become our duty for the time being.

We may fear that, if we do not go to jail, the enemy will look on us as cowards and we shall be dishonoured. When the enemy believes that we are cowards but actually we are not, the hour of our victory draws near because what seems to be our cowardliness is our strength and the enemy's illusion misleads him. How can he who prays only for God's help be ever dishonoured? One can be dishonoured only if one does anything even slightly unworthy. We do not wish to avoid imprisonment through fear of jail. But we should avoid it through fear of acting thoughtlessly or out of pride or through fear of encouraging violence. We may desist from courting imprisonment, not in order to please the enemy, but to please ourselves. Having abandoned the idea of going to jail, should we not get ready for hanging?

<sup>1</sup> Imprisoned during the Non-co-operation campaign of 1920-21

We should not do what the enemy wishes us to do. Just now, he wants us to get more angry still. He is trying to provoke us. He is shaking his fist defiantly at us, he looks angrily at us, growling and shaking his mane. If we allow ourselves to be provoked, we shall fall. His weapons are pride, hypocrisy, disregard for all restraint, and intimidation. Ours are peace and humility. We shall not mind if the enemy regards or describes us as frightened, but we cannot afford to see it proved that we have broken our pledge.

This is why I have decided that our first atonement is to leave the prisoners out of account for the time being. Having committed mistakes, we have lost our power to secure the release of the prisoners through our own efforts, and they do not want to be released through the Government's favour. If they are released by the Government on its own, they will be unhappy and we shall feel humiliated.

It is not as if we can get them released only by going to jail. We can secure their release through the power of truth and by remaining faithful to the pledge. Just as we can show our strength by going to jail, so can we also by doing constructive work. Our strength consists not in actually doing a particular thing but in the spirit in which it is done. One who goes to jail out of shame is not a man of strength but, when the occasion for going to jail arises, one who declines to do so even at the risk of being regarded as a coward may be a strong man. Strength lies in being true to ourselves in action.

If India or Gujarat carries out the constructive work in a month's time, it can secure the release of prisoners within that period. It is not at all difficult to do this if we have the services of many honest, thoughtful and well-known men as workers.

1. Every man and woman should take the Congress pledge and get his or her name enrolled at a Congress office, paying four annas.
2. Contributions should be collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund<sup>1</sup>.
3. National schools should be started and run.
4. The homes of liquor-addicts should be visited.
5. People who wear foreign cloth should be persuaded to wear khadi and the spinning-wheel should be introduced into every home.
6. *Antyajas* should be helped.
7. Panchayats should be set up.
8. Any person who suffers from a disease or injury should be nursed, irrespective of whether he be white or black.

There is not a single item among these which will require ages

<sup>1</sup> Instituted as a memorial to Bal Gangadhar Tilak who died in 1920

for implementation, unless public opinion is against our activities. But at present we claim that public opinion is with us. If it is so, and if we have honest workers with us, is there any item among those listed above in which we may not get immediate success?

To my mind, this programme is a test for the people. If they really desire victory through non-violence, they will carry it out enthusiastically. If they want only violence, they will most certainly oppose our constructive programme and, when we start civil disobedience, they will get ready to resort to their uncivil disobedience disguised as civil disobedience. This is the greatest danger facing us. Hence, those who wish to engage themselves in peaceful activities should resolutely go ahead along their chosen path. It will matter little if they are reduced to a mere handful in number, are humiliated or lose respect among the people. When this happens, they will be able to carry on their work fearlessly and take every step with firmness. At present, whenever they wish to resort to a strong measure like civil disobedience, they find themselves beset with difficulties.

My path is clear. I see that people exploit my name. Murders were committed in my name in Chauri Chaura. When I talk of civil disobedience, my listeners ignore “civil” and accept only “disobedience”. The term “civil disobedience” should be taken as an indissoluble compound. There are two kinds of mixtures in chemistry. One is a simple mixture in which the elements which form the mixture retain their properties. The other is a compound in which the result is a third substance whose properties differ from those of either of the constituent elements. Civil disobedience is such a chemical compound. It entails not a single evil result of disobedience and we never find in it the effects produced by mere civility. We often see weakness with civility and arrogance, untruth, etc. with disobedience. In civil disobedience, everything should be above reproach and there should be complete fearlessness. As long as there are persons who break up the inseparable elements of this expression and accept only “disobedience” from it, it is well-nigh impossible to conduct civil disobedience. If, however, the people would boycott those who offer civil disobedience, the latter could demonstrate their strength. If they do not adopt that course, I shall have to non-co-operate with the party advocating violence, as I do with the Government.

I do not believe that the country is prepared for violence or that the weak “rice-eaters” can in any way profit from swaraj won through violence. They will remain victims of the votaries of violence, much as they are today. What the devotees of violence desire is not swaraj for the millions of India but power for themselves. Of course, they will not admit this charge. They do not even know that their

activities are bound to have this result. I have not written this article in order to blame them. I am merely pointing at the consequences of their activities.

It is only by following the path of non-violence that India can win freedom in a few months. I believe that it cannot do so even in a hundred years by following the path of violence; if, moreover, the swaraj for which we are struggling is the swaraj of the poor and of the weak “rice-eaters”, then the latter will not be able to shake off their weakness for a century [along the path of violence]. By our experiment in non-violence, we show even to the poor that, if they choose, they can display the same strength of their soul as an emperor can through his.

If this is not so, if this belief is unfounded, then this non-violent non-co-operation is also wrong and we can speak simply of non-co-operation. We should stop using terms like civility, peace, truth, etc., and calling the Government Satanic. One who fights with Satanic means has no right to regard or describe the opponent as Satanic.

I have, thus, more than enough reasons to be filled with despair, but I will certainly not give up hope. I shall hope that India will understand the full propriety of the Bardoli resolutions, that at least some provinces, if not all, in any event Gujarat, will thoroughly understand the absolute necessity of peace or that, if I cannot make even Gujarat understand it, there will be at least some individuals in the country who will understand this great step. My last hope is that, if I have always shown to India the path of truth, God will grant me the good sense and strength to stick steadfastly to my pledge through every trial and ordeal. Hence, though enveloped in despair, I shall not abandon optimism. For, God means Truth and Truth means peace. God is, without doubt, the supporter of Truth. Truth always triumphs. Though knowing this, if through fear I doubt it, who would be a greater coward than I?

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan* 5-3-1922

#### 114. SWADESHI v. KHADI

“Swadeshi” is a very widely known word. It is a comprehensive word. Such a word can have both a good and a bad effect. The sea is vast. But for it, we would not get oxygen. However, the sea, like fire, is all-devouring. Immeasurable dross is washed into it and yet in itself it is pure. The moment one leaves the shore behind, one finds that its water is as transparent as glass. Under the sun’s rays, its spray

shines like pearls and diamonds; the radiance of these is nothing compared to that of the sea. The sea lets ships sail across its waters, and yet, if anyone were to drink the water, he would feel sick. We get sweet potable water from wells, rivulets and small streams. Swadeshi, then, is a sea, an ocean. Nations can prosper by following it even to a small extent. When its meaning is explained, the word impresses. But, at present, if we take a headlong plunge into the sea of swadeshi, we are likely to be drowned. Just now, swadeshi is no more than an aspiration which it is beyond our capacity to realize.

Some say in the name of swadeshi that they will make or buy swadeshi padlocks and not buy Chubb padlocks. In preference to the Rogers brand of knives, some buy a knife with an edge none too fine, and even one which would not so much as cut a nose, and some others try to manufacture such knives. Some ask for swadeshi paper, while others want ink, penholders and pins. Thus, everyone demands a swadeshi product of his choice to gratify his sentiment for swadeshi. But this can be of no benefit to our country. It only brings the word "swadeshi" into disrepute and harms the cause.

A house-builder does not, at the very start, put up balconies, porticos, doors and windows and arrange furniture. First, he lays the foundation, then he builds the walls and when they are ready, he begins plastering and painting them. The same is true about the edifice of swadeshi.

By now we have understood the significance of swadeshi and have known its practical uses well enough to grasp its true meaning and import. Till now we have cheated ourselves in the name of swadeshi and effected a few changes. We took swadeshi to mean cloth produced in our country. That was the first stage. Then we realized that foreign yarn woven into cloth in India was not swadeshi and would benefit the country in but an insignificant measure. Thus came the second stage when we persuaded ourselves that cloth woven in the mills in our country from yarn produced by them would do. But we learnt through further experience that even this did not serve our purpose. One of its evil effects was that the price of mill-cloth went up considerably and scarcity of cloth seemed imminent.

The third stage was reached when we preferred cloth woven by hand though the yarn was spun in mills. Even in this, we did not show that we had grasped the real significance of swadeshi.

Now, arriving at the fourth stage we seem to have learnt that swadeshi means khadi woven by hand from hand-spun yarn. Everything else is false and useless.

Khadi means the spinning-wheel. How can we ever have khadi

without it? Like swaraj, khadi is our birth-right, and it is our life-long duty to use that only. Anyone who does not fulfil that duty is totally ignorant of what swaraj is.

The aim of swadeshi or swaraj can be and is simply this, that the starving people of India may be fed, famine may be banished from the country, the chastity of Indian women may be safeguarded and Indian children in the country may get a little milk.

As long as the spinning-wheel does not become universal, like the oven, I believe it is impossible that India will be prosperous again .

Suppose India were free to act as she desired and imported the cheapest cloth, that, regardless of the difference in the conditions obtaining in England and here, she introduced “free trade”, that is, trade without protective tariff, her plight would then become worse than it is today.

Just as our people cannot afford to do away with the ovens in their homes even if someone offered to cook their food for them free of charge, so also they cannot afford to do away with the spinning-wheel. “What a bother is the oven! In every home an oven, and fire to be lighted in every home. What a nuisance this is! As the day dawns, every housewife must swallow smoke. How oppressive this is!” What would happen if, misled by such deceptive arguments, we should choose to take our meals at a common dining-club in every village, having thrown away our ovens? Can anyone doubt that the children in the country will then go uncared for? The destruction of the oven is not economics, it is the science of doom. It does not deserve the honour of being called economics.

By abolishing the spinning-wheel, we have invited upon ourselves starvation and immorality. If we banish the oven, we would invite death. By reinstating the spinning-wheel, we would brighten our homes which have become desolate.

Hence, in the present circumstances, our special and highest duty is khadi. Khadi should be in demand like ghee. Hand-spun yarn should be regarded as valuable as milk. The spinning-wheel is also as venerable as the cow. Just as a home without a cow is no home, so too a home without a spinning-wheel is no home. Just as neither the rich nor the poor consider milking a cow a degrading thing, so too the rich and the poor—everyone—should regard spinning not as a degrading thing but as something becoming a householder. A cow sometimes kicks and she demands fodder. The spinning-wheel is so benevolent that it does not kick and needs no food at all. You can draw from it yarn, white as milk, at your will. A cow yields milk according to her capacity. The spinning-wheel gives yarn according to our capacity.



Preserving the spinning-wheel means protecting the cow. Anyone who would preserve the spinning-wheel ought to use only such khadi in which both the warp and the woof are hand-spun.

I feel and everyone should feel ashamed that the Provincial Congress Committee has to advertise khadi. That foreign cloth or mill cloth is sold and khadi remains unsold is certainly no sign of India's prosperity. It is like eating the bran in preference to the grain.

Protection of the cow has become almost impossible except through the revival of the spinning-wheel. Because Indian farmers do not have money, they sell off their cattle or starve them. As Indians are weak, so are all their cattle, for the country's state is that of a bankrupt. India uses up its capital resources in order to live. The capital is getting exhausted day by day. India does not get enough of oxygen and feels suffocated. The people of India are forced to remain idle at least for four months in a year. People who are thus forced to remain idle cannot but be ruined. For crores of people, the spinning-wheel is the only occupation which can supplement their income from the fields; most emphatically, they have no other one.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 5-3-1922

## 115. MY NOTES

### CONGRESS LEVY

Those who command people's obedience have their taxes willingly paid. There are big temples in India and they are maintained by their devotees without any effort having to be made for the purpose. Surely, no volunteers had gone round collecting funds for the golden dome that crowns the Vishwanath temple at Kashi. The pious made donations on their own. The Sikh temple at Amritsar has plastering of marble, doors of silver and gold-plate on the dome, for which reason it is known as the Golden Temple. Its wealth was willingly contributed by the pious Sikhs. The money for the huge mosques that we see at so many places was received without a collection drive. It should be so about the Congress too. If the people regard the Congress as means which enables them to follow their dharma and their worldly pursuits, if the Muslims believe that Congress rule means the protection of the Khilafat and freedom for themselves, if the Hindus see in it protection of the cow, and their own freedom, the Parsis the protection of their fire-temples and their own freedom and if the Christians and Jews also feel likewise, all of them should support the Congress in their own interests or as a matter of

duty. Supporting the Congress means, among other things, paying its levy. If it is a body enjoying popular support, it should never be in want of funds. We shall know before long whether or not it is a popular organization.

This time, the Congress has really levied a tax. There already was one levy—the sum of four annas required to be paid by those enrolling themselves as members and wishing to be voters. The new levy should be paid by all whether they are members or not—even the salaried class who like the Congress.

Those who revere Tilak Maharaj, who believe that the greatest memorial to him is the attainment of swaraj, should pay the levy.

The new levy is equivalent to one per cent of one's income during the last year. That is to say, the Congress wants one rupee from a person whose income for the year was Rs. 100. This levy is the lightest. The Government scrutinizes books of account, the Congress will examine the heart. Everyone should send to the Congress office his contribution in proportion to his income.

But my aim in writing this article is rather personal. Nearly 35,000 copies of *Navajivan* sell every week. Taking it that a copy is read by at least three persons, there are 1,05,000 readers. I wish to test them. If they approve of the work being done by the Congress, they should pay their levy through *Navajivan*. Every reader of *Navajivan* may send his own levy or readers in every town should collect the levy from their friends—never from strangers—and remit the collection to the *Navajivan* office. Its receipt will be acknowledged in *Navajivan* every week and the amount will be sent to the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee.

I hope everyone will honestly pay one per cent of his income. People may pay more if they like, but none should pay less. Those paying less may send any amount they like as a gift but, as levy to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, they should pay no less than one per cent. They may pay more according to their inclinations. Those who can pay more should certainly do so, so as to make good to the Congress the loss on account of those who do not pay. Those paying more may be regarded as paying on behalf of others.

At present, this money can be used mainly for three purposes. The donor may earmark his contribution for any one of them as he may desire. They are: popularizing khadi or the spinning-wheel, education and work among the *Antyajas*. We must put education on a sound basis during this year. I would regard it as a matter of shame for us if there was even one pupil in a Government school. We can attract every child to our schools by improving them. It will also be a

shame for us if there is even one child who does not attend a school.

Both these activities are such that, if they are organized honestly, those who pay the levy and the people as a whole will get a tenfold return. The fifteen lakhs which Gujarat gave last year have been mainly used for these two activities. This year we shall need for them even more funds, not less. Moreover, we shall undoubtedly have to spend this year more money on work among the *Antyajias*. Hence, if the work of the Congress has satisfied the Gujaratis, they will pay more but not less [than they did last year] and make the collection less troublesome. This will be the first test of the measure of willing obedience which the Congress commands. I hope that people will start paying this levy, each one of his own accord without waiting to see what others do.

Let everyone note that the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committee are perfectly in order. They have even been examined by two auditors, one appointed by the local Congress Committee and the other by the All-India Congress Committee, and have been published from time to time.

#### AHMEDABAD MUNICIPALITY

A municipality is under the general control of the people, while a Committee [appointed by the Government] has administrative authority in its own hands. When the Government set up such a committee, the Municipality became national, because the relations of the people's representatives with the Government came to an end.

This event can be viewed from two angles. If we regard the suspension of the Municipality by the Government as an unexpected and unwelcome development, we cannot say that the Municipality has become national; we should say, rather, that people have been deprived of the power they enjoyed. If we hold—and that of course is the right thing to do—that it was our aim that the Government should either surrender to the Municipality or suspend it, then we can say that the Municipality has become independent or national.

It is for the citizens to show whether or not it has really become national. If they trust their representative and get the city's work done through them, then the Municipality has become national. If on the contrary they submit to the Committee even in matters in which they can easily exercise their freedom, it will be plain that the Municipality has been taken over by the Government.

The honour of the citizens and of their representatives rests in the hands of the citizens themselves. No one can command the obedience of another against his wishes. This is an immutable law. It is true that, in thousands of instances, we feel that people are made to do

things under force. If someone makes me do anything under threat of death, we call it coercion. However, if I have no fear of death, who can force me to do anything? I cannot, therefore, say that I have done anything against my wish. When a person does something, submitting to physical force, it is certainly customary to say that he did what he did against his will. Actually, it is not so. The soul binds as well as releases itself.

The dispute was only about education. As regards lighting, sanitation, water supply, etc., the Municipality certainly wanted to co-operate with the Government. We had nothing much to lose if the Government lighted the street lamps. What we could not tolerate was that the Government should kindle the flame of knowledge in the temples of our children's hearts or that it should whitewash their brains. That flame and that whitewashing were not natural. Therefore, we made our education national. On this subject, our views and those of the Government could not be reconciled. The citizens can assert their supremacy in this matter. Let the Government clean the roads if it so chooses. We do not have to pass them on to the Government to get them swept, but children can be taught in schools only if we send them there willingly. Hence, if the citizens would only give some thought to the subject of education, they would be able to maintain complete freedom in this field.

I was pleased to hear, while returning from Delhi,<sup>1</sup> that about 35 national schools had already been started for nearly 7,000 children and that arrangements were afoot to start more. I hope there will not be a single boy or girl left in the schools managed by the Committee, that is, by the Government.

If the citizens so desire, not a single boy or girl will ever attend a Government school. Sometimes our affairs suffer because of our own lassitude or indifference. Let us hope that the citizens will not remain indifferent in regard to their children at any rate. We have merely to find money and provide good education. It is possible to impart the best education to children at minimum cost if we retain control of education in our hands.

I congratulate those parents who have withdrawn their children from Government schools and those who have made over their buildings, as also the teachers who have given up Government service. I hope that they will complete what they have started and go even further.

“The Committee will have the citizens' money—people will pay

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji returned to Ahmedabad from Delhi on March 1.

taxes.” I would advise that we do not discuss this matter at this stage. I shall consider it a complete victory of the citizens if they carry out the programme in regard to education. It will be proper to raise other issues only after completing this job. If we start another struggle now, this most important task is likely to suffer. Besides, starting another struggle is likely to add to the prevailing bitterness. There will be grace in it if we can carry out even the programme of education with mutual understanding and without fuss. If the citizens succeed in organizing the work of education independently and if there is no use or show of force, direct or indirect, that will set no ordinary example for others to follow.

#### MERCHANTS' ANXIETY

We see that the merchant class feels apprehensive at present. The merchants fear that the present struggle will ruin business. This is not a correct view. The struggle is not directed against trade or traders; it is for the benefit of trade. Today, out of every hundred rupees, the traders themselves earn only five and send the rest out of the country. If the present struggle succeeds, they will retain all the hundred or keep five for themselves and let ninety five reach the homes of the poor.

Businessmen need only to be fearless, to have confidence and take a little risk. It is not that the Government encourages trade; it encourages slavery and, at most, brokerage. For every Indian whom it allows to be a millionaire, it helps a hundred others in Europe to be so. I hope businessmen who understand this plain reasoning will plunge headlong into the struggle; if the trading class plays its part well, there will be an early end to this struggle and the traders themselves, as also the rest of the country, will be able to carry on their normal work in peace.

The cloth merchants will have to show more courage than others. They should give up trade in foreign and mill cloth and should sell pure khadi only. Honest trade in khadi also can flourish; it will provide livelihood to hundreds and thus promote the welfare of the people. One need not assume that businessmen can never remain honest. They will see from experience that, if they set a limit to their profits, they will never have to resort to untruth.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan* 5-3-1922

## 116. FOREWORD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
March 5, 1922

Typed copies of Mr. Badrul Hassan's chapters on the Drink and Drug Evil have lain on my desk for over three months. I had hoped to be able to go through them and write a fairly long foreword, and in that hope I have been postponing writing the foreword. I must no longer do so.

Mr. Badrul Hassan was for many months assisting me in bringing out *Young India* from week to week. The readers of *Young India* will recall his chapters on the Alcohol and Opium habits. They discover a close study of blue-books and statistical abstracts. The chapters now presented to the reader are a reprint of Mr. Badrul Hassan's writings in *Young India* with enlargements and additions. They will repay perusal, and they cannot but help the reformer who is bent upon ridding India of the double evil. Mr. Badrul Hassan's study shows also how the policy of the Government has tended to increase the habit. The facts and figures presented in these chapters to the reader demonstrate in the clearest possible manner that the Government has trafficked in these two vices of the people of India. It will be no defense to urge that the vice has existed in India from time immemorial. No one organized the vice as the present Government has for purposes of revenue. But I must not anticipate. Let the young writer prove his own case.

M. K. GANDHI

*The Drink and Drug Evil in India*, pp. V-VI

## 117. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Sunday [March 5, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. DEVDAS,<sup>2</sup>

What you write about Vasumatiben is correct. I regard Krishnadas to be a yogi. His calmness, patience, intelligence, and

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru's release, to which this letter refers, took place on Friday, March 3, 1922.

<sup>2</sup> Devdas Gandhi (1900-1957); youngest son of Gandhiji; worked in Champaran villages in 1917 and went to jail during the Salt Satyagraha, 1930; managing editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1940-57

single-mindedness are all worthy of emulation.

You did well in asking me the questions you did in your letter. I am an *anekantavadi*<sup>1</sup>. I can see many sides of a question. The guard cannot demand from a passenger, whom he might find without a ticket, fare from a place beyond the last checking station. This is the general practice. That is why I told him that the fare from Abu Road could not be paid. Besides, it was none of your duty to pay it. Those boys had boarded the train quite innocently. I had accepted as reasonable the argument that they must pay the fare from Palanpur. I had thought that they were unwilling to pay it.

This is the position about the Modern School. Because boys were forced to join in honouring the Prince, picketing was no answer. You could have publicly protested against it. Moreover, I thought that your case was that you resorted to picketing because the boys were punished. That was still worse.

If you wish to ask any more question, you may.

Now that Jawaharlal has come out, you will get plenty of help.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[PS.]

Keep to the rule as regards time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original; S.N. 7979

### 118. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

*Silence Day [March 6, 1922]*<sup>2</sup>

CHI. DEVDAS,

These are the wire and letter received here.<sup>3</sup> The letter is from Satish Babu. Reply to him immediately.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[PS.]

I replied to you yesterday. Do go and see Mr. Joseph, the Headmaster, when you get time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7980

<sup>1</sup> One who believes in looking at things from more than one point of view

<sup>2</sup> The postscript evidently refers to the Modern School incident mentioned in the preceding item.

<sup>3</sup> These are not available.

119. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI'

*Silence Day, March 6, 1922*

You must have calmed down by now. There is, therefore, not much to write. I have not yet written to Mahadev. I intend to do so today. If I write, I shall send the letter to you and you may forward it to him, so that your curiosity may be satisfied.

You do not have to apologize for anything you write to me. I may learn something from it.

I am an *anekantavadi*. This is the most important thing that I have learnt from Jain philosophy. It is implicit in Vedanta philosophy, while in Jain philosophy it is explicitly stated. I do not see any contradiction between what I did in Delhi<sup>2</sup> and what I am doing in suspending the movement. Had I been rigid in Delhi, it would have been violence on my part. When friends put their difficulties before me with an open mind, how could I brush them aside? When, however I decided to give freedom to the Provinces, I made up my own plans and thus accommodated both the parties. So far as the Government was concerned, I had nothing to consider. It was for this reason that Gokhale<sup>3</sup> bestowed two adjectives upon me.

He told the members of the Society<sup>4</sup> that I was as yielding as I was rigid and advised them to admit me. But they could see only my rigidity. I shall spend Sunday and Monday in Surat and go to Bardoli on Tuesday.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, pp.46-7

<sup>1</sup> Son of Gandhiji's sister

<sup>2</sup> At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Delhi on February 24-25, Gandhiji tried to bring about a compromise between conflicting views on the suspension of civil disobedience; *Vide* "Interview to the Press", 26-2-1922.

<sup>3</sup> Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); patriot and statesman; presided over the Banaras session of the Indian National Congress in 1905; founder of the Servants of India Society; visited South Africa in 1912 at Gandhiji's suggestion.

<sup>4</sup> The Servants of India Society, Poona



## 120. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
March 7, 1922

MY DEAR PRAKASAM <sup>1</sup>,

You ask me for my future programme. I have just sent you a telegram as follows:

“In Ahmedabad till Saturday Surat Sunday Monday Bardoli Tuesday.”

But that is Government willing, for I have persistent rumours being thrust upon me that my leave is now more than over-due, and I am also told that I shall be relieved of my burdens inside of 7 days. Subject, therefore, to that happy contingency you have the foregoing programme. If I am arrested, I look to you and all who are out to keep absolute peace. It will be the best honour that the country can do me. Nothing would pain me more, in whatever jail I may find myself, than to be informed by my custodians that a single head has been broken by or on behalf of non-co-operators, a single man had been insulted or a single building damaged. If the people or the workers have at all understood my message, they will keep exemplary peace. I would certainly be delighted if on the night following my arrest there was throughout the length and breadth of India a bonfire of all foreign cloth voluntarily surrendered by the people without the slightest compulsion having been exercised and a fixed determination to use nothing but khaddar and, till then, in the glorious weather of India, to wear nothing but a piece of loin-cloth, and in the case of Mussalmans the minimum required by religious obligation. I would certainly love to be told that there was a phenomenal demand for spinning-wheels and that all workers who did not know hand-spinning had commenced it in right earnest. The more I think over our future programme and the more news I get about the spirit of violence that has silently but surely crept into our ranks, the more convinced I am that even individual civil disobedience would be wrong. It would be much better to be forsaken by everybody and to be doing the right thing than to be doing the wrong thing for the sake of boasting a

<sup>1</sup> 1876-1957; editor, *Swarajya*; was known as “Andhra Kesari” the lion of Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras and later, of Andhra Pradesh.

large following. Whether we are few or whether we are many, so long as we believe in the programme of non-violence, there is no absolutism from the full constructive programme. Enforce it today, and the whole country is ready for mass civil disobedience tomorrow. Fail in the effort, and you are not ready even for individual civil disobedience. Nor is the matter difficult. If all the members of the All-India Congress Committee and Provincial Congress Committees are convinced of the correctness of the premises I have laid down, the same can be done. The pity of it is that they are not so convinced. A policy is a temporary creed liable to be changed, but while it holds good, it has got to be pursued with apostolic zeal.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S. N. 7973

### *121. TELEGRAM TO T. PRAKASAM*

[ *March 8, 1922*]

GLAD TO LEARN VENKATAPPAYYA'S ARREST.<sup>1</sup> HOPE  
THERE WILL BE NO HARTAL, NO DEMONSTRATION,  
NO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, NOT EVEN MENTAL  
ANGUISH, BUT A GRIM DETERMINATION TO PURSUE  
THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME. MOST EFFECTIVE  
DEMONSTRATION WOULD BE FOR EVERY ANDHRA  
WHO LOVES VENKATAPPAYYA TO DISCARD ALL FOREIGN  
CLOTH, TAKE TO SPINNING AND REMOVE UNTOUCH-  
ABILITY. ATTENDING YOUR REQUIREMENTS.

GANDHI

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 257

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Deshbhakta's Arrest", 9-3-1922.

## 122. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday [March 8, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MAGANLAL<sup>2</sup>,

Dr Mehta<sup>3</sup> has asked for a man for Ratu. I can think of no one except Surendra<sup>4</sup>. The work requires patience, love and forbearance. Speak to Surendra. See that he does not give his consent merely out of regard for us. Let him move about with Ratu. If he can win him over, he may bring Ratu here. But if he is unwilling, he should be free to decline. If you can think of any other alternative, let me know. If Surendra is agreeable to go, he should see me at Bardoli and then start. If he decides to go, wire Dr. [Mehta] and ask him whether we could send Surendra. I am writing this on way to Ajmer. I shall return from there on Friday.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5987. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

## 123. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON<sup>5</sup>

AJMER,  
March 8, 1922

MY DEAR CHILD,

It is only here where I have come for a day, that I get the time to write to you. The loss of your Bohemian independence is more than made up by your sharing your life with another. If marriage has any meaning at all, it must point to the greater selfsurrender which is in store for everyone of us. The surrender by two dissimilar (in form)

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji reached Ajmer on this date.

<sup>2</sup> Maganlal Khushalchand Gandhi (1883-1928); Gandhiji's nephew; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement, Natal; manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, 1915-28

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta, Gandhiji's friend since his student days in London

<sup>4</sup> Presumably Surendra Medh of Ahmedabad who had participated in Gandhiji's satyagraha movement in South Africa

<sup>5</sup> Esther Faering, who was like a daughter to Gandhiji, had married E. K. Menon. She had come to India as a Danish missionary and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; *Vide* "Letter to Esther Faering", 12-12-1917.

persons one to the other is greater independence because it is a realization of greater responsibility. The discharge of the greatest responsibility is the greatest independence. This is secured only by the fullest surrender to God.

I know you will come whenever you can. I am not moving from Gujarat for some time, if I am still left free. There are all sorts of rumours about my arrest.

Miss Petersen<sup>1</sup> owes me a letter.

With my love to you all,

BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N. A. I.; also *My Dear Child* p.75

## 124. NON-VIOLENCE

When a person claims to be non-violent, he is expected not to be angry with one who has injured him. He will not wish him harm ; he will wish him well ; he will not swear at him ; he will not cause him any physical hurt. He will put up with all the injury to which he is subjected by the wrongdoer. Thus non-violence is complete innocence. Complete non-violence is complete absence of ill will against all that lives. It therefore embraces even sub-human life not excluding noxious insects or beasts. They have not been created to feed our destructive propensities. If we only knew the mind of the Creator, we should find their proper place in His creation. Non-violence is therefore, in its active form, goodwill towards all life. It is pure Love. I read it in the Hindu scriptures, in the Bible, in the Koran.

Non-violence is a perfect state. It is a goal towards which all mankind moves naturally though unconsciously. Man does not become divine when he personifies innocence in himself. Only then does he become truly man. In our present state, we are partly men and partly beasts and, in our ignorance and even arrogance, say that we truly fulfil the purpose of our species when we deliver blow for blow and develop the measure of anger required for the purpose. We pretend to believe that retaliation is the law of our being, whereas in every scripture we find that retaliation is nowhere obligatory but only permissible. It is restraint that is obligatory. Retaliation is indulgence requiring elaborate regulating. Restraint is the law of our being. For, highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint. Suffering is thus the badge of the human tribe.

<sup>1</sup> Anne Marie Petersen, a Danish missionary

The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress, the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.

Therefore, though I realize more than ever how far I am from that goal, for me the Law of complete Love is the law of my being. Each time I fail, my effort shall be all the more determined for my failure.

But I am *not* preaching this final law through the Congress or the Khilafat organization. I know my own limitations only too well. I know that any such attempt is foredoomed to failure. To expect a whole mass of men and women to obey that law all at once is not to know its working. But I do preach from the Congress platform the deductions of the law. What the Congress and the Khilafat organizations have accepted is but a fragment of the implications of that law. Given true workers, the limited measure of its application can be realized in respect of vast masses of people within a short time. But the little measure of it to be true must satisfy the same test as the whole. A drop of water must yield to the analyst the same results as a lakeful. The nature of my non-violence towards my brother cannot be different from that of my non-violence to the universe. When I extend the love for my brother to the whole universe, it must still satisfy the same test.

A particular practice is a policy when its application is limited to time or space. Highest policy is therefore fullest practice. But honesty as policy while it lasts is not anything different from honesty as a creed. A merchant believing in honesty as a policy will sell the same measure and quality of cloth to the yard as a merchant with honesty as a creed. The difference between the two is that the political merchant will leave his honesty when it does not pay, the believing one will continue it even though he should lose his all.

The political non-violence of the non-co-operator does not stand this test in the vast majority of cases. Hence the prolongation of the struggle. Let no one blame the unbending English nature. The hardest "fibre" must melt in the fire of love. I cannot be dislodged from the position because I know it. When British or other nature does not respond, the fire is not strong enough, if it is there at all.

Our non-violence need not be of the strong, but it *has* to be of the truthful. We must not intend harm to the English or to our co-operating countrymen if and whilst we claim to be non-violent. But the majority of us *have* intended harm and we have refrained from doing it because of our weakness or under the ignorant belief that mere refraining from physical hurt amounted to due fulfilment of our

pledge. Our pledge of non-violence excludes the possibility of future retaliation. Some of us seem, unfortunately, to have merely postponed the date of revenge.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that the policy of non-violence excludes the possibility of revenge when the policy is abandoned. But it does most emphatically exclude the possibility of future revenge after a successful termination of the struggle. Therefore, whilst we are pursuing the policy of non-violence, we are bound to be actively friendly to English administrators and their co-operators. I felt ashamed when I was told that in some parts of India it was not safe for Englishmen or wellknown co-operators to move about safely. The disgraceful scenes that took place at a recent Madras meeting were a complete denial of non-violence. Those who howled down the Chairman, because he was supposed to have insulted me, disgraced themselves and their policy. They wounded the heart of their friend and helper, Mr Andrews<sup>1</sup>. They injured their own cause. If the Chairman believed that I was a scoundrel, he had a perfect right to say so. Ignorance is no provocation. But a non-co-operator is pledged to put up with the gravest provocation. Provocation there would be, when I act scoundrel-like. I grant that it will be enough to absolve every non-co-operator from the pledge of non-violence and that any non-co-operator will be fully justified in taking my life for misleading him.

It may be that even cultivation of such limited non-violence is impossible in the majority of cases. It may be that we must not expect people even out of self-interest not to *intend* harm to the opponent whilst they are *doing* none. We must then, to be honest, clearly give up the use of the word “non-violence” in connection with our struggle. The alternative need not be immediate resort to violence. But the people will not then be called upon to subject themselves to any discipline in non-violence. A person like me will not then feel called upon to shoulder the responsibility for Chauri Chaura. The school of limited non-violence will then still flourish in its obscurity, but without the terrible burden of responsibility it carries today.

But if non-violence is to remain the policy of the nation, for its fair name and that of humanity, we are bound to carry it out to the letter and in the spirit.

And if we intend to follow out the policy, if we believe in it, We must then quickly make up with the Englishmen and the co-operators. We must get their certificate that they feel absolutely safe in our midst

<sup>1</sup> Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist and a close associate of Gandhiji

and that they may regard us as friends although we belong to a radically different school of thought and politics. We must welcome them to our political platforms as honoured guests. We must meet them on neutral platforms as comrades. We must devise methods of such meeting. Our non-violence must not breed violence, hatred and ill will. We stand like the rest of fellow-mortals to be judged by our works. A programme of non-violence for the attainment of swaraj necessarily means ability to conduct our affairs on non-violent lines. That means inculcation of a spirit of obedience. Mr Churchill<sup>1</sup>, who understands only the gospel of force, is quite right in saying that the Irish problem is different in character from the Indian. He means in effect that the Irish, having fought their way to their swaraj through violence, will be well able to maintain it by violence, if need be. India on the other hand, if she wins swaraj in reality by non-violence, must be able to maintain it chiefly by non-violent means. This Mr. Churchill can hardly believe to be possible unless India proves her ability by an ocular demonstration of the principle. Such a demonstration is impossible unless non-violence has permeated society so that people in their *corporate*, i.e., political, life respond to non-violence, in other words, civil instead of military authority, as at present, gains predominance.

Swaraj by non-violent means can therefore never mean an interval of chaos and anarchy. Swaraj by non-violence must be a progressively peaceful revolution such that the transference of power from a close corporation to the people's representatives will be as natural as the dropping of a fully ripe fruit from a well-nurtured tree. I say again that such a thing may be quite impossible of attainment. But I know that nothing less is the implication of non-violence. And if the present workers do not believe in the probability of achieving such comparatively non-violent atmosphere, they should drop the non-violent programme and frame another which is wholly different in character. If we approach our programme with the mental reservation that, after all, we shall wrest the power from the British by force of arms, then we are untrue to our profession of non-violence. If we believe in our programme, we are bound to believe that the British people are not unamenable to the force of affection as they are undoubtedly amenable to force of arms. For the unbelievers, the Councils are undoubtedly the school of learning with their heavy programme of humiliations spread over a few generations or a rapid but bloody

<sup>1</sup> Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965); British statesman and writer, Secretary of State for War, 1918-21; Prime Minister, 1940-45, 1951-55; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1953.

revolution probably never witnessed before in the world. I have no desire to take part in such a revolution. I will not be a willing instrument for promoting it. The choice, in my opinion, lies between honest non-violence with non-co-operation as its necessary corollary or reversion to responsive co-operation, i.e., co-operation *cum* obstruction.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

## 125. AFTER CHAURI CHAURA

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

I was one of the six deputed at Hata Tehsil by the District Congress Committee, Gorakhpur, to help the villages in resuming their normal aspect. Hata Tehsil is in the vicinity of Chauri Chaura. During my short stay there, I was flooded with the reports of the unbridled tyranny of the police from various quarters. News came from Dhanavti (and I had no reasons to dismiss them as untrue) that the police had exacted bribes from the people on pain of implicating them in the Chauri Chaura affair. While I was touring through the villages, I was authentically informed at Usri that three persons of Deogaon, Chattar Dhari, Ram Khagid and Amlu were made to pay Rs. 10, 2 and 1 respectively by the *sowars* at the point of the spear. Reports of brutal assaults were not lacking. I myself saw with my own naked eyes the cuts inflicted by the merciless shower of lashes (or cane) to which one Bhagelua Koeri of Ubhaon village was subjected. One rupee was subsequently snatched away from him which belonged to the Congress Fund. I have known the people who have been actually looted. If the Government cares to contradict the reports, I will take it upon myself to prove the substance of the allegations I have made.

I assure you many a crime of the police would not see the light of the day. If you come to know of the splendid patience with which the Khalabadis (the people of Basti Teshsil) are bearing the untold miseries that have fallen to their lot, you will bless them abundantly.

Sudarshan Bhawan

ALLAHABAD,

28-2-'22

*Yours, etc.,*

JANG BAHADUR SINGH

Whatever the guilt of the crowd at Chauri Chaura, the police outrages reported by numerous correspondents are wholly unjustified. The remedy with the people is to love the police in spite of their atrocities and to wean them from their error.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922



## 126. NOTES

### PERPLEXED

A correspondent from Lahore writes under date 3rd March:

So far as the facts about "Bardoli decision" have come to light, it appears the decision was arrived at either under the influence of Pundit Malaviya<sup>1</sup> or under some far-fetched notions of non-violence. In the former case the act is most unworthy, and in the latter it is most unwise. Is not the ideal of the Congress swaraj and not non-violence? People have imbibed non-violence generally, which surely must do for the Congress purpose. How the breaches like those at Bombay and Gorakhpur can make the engine come to a standstill, I cannot understand. And if M. Paul Richard is true as to your aspirations of World Leader through non-violence even at the cost of Indian interest, it is surely unbecoming and, excuse me to say, dishonest.

And have you realized the effects of this sudden standstill? Mr. Montagu's<sup>2</sup> threat comes for that. Lord Reading<sup>3</sup> and his Government are harder to us than ever before. It had almost yielded. As to the public, there is a general distrust prevailing among the classes and the masses. Surely it is difficult to make men play things of the hour and their disgust and disappointment show how the fight was carried on in right earnest. Don't you perceive that it is a shock and that two such shocks must enervate the combatants altogether?

Besides, I have heard the responsible Mussalmans talk of withdrawing co-operation even from the Hindus. The fight is religious with them. It is the Jihad, I should say. God's Command and the Prophet's is no joke to start and to stop the Jihad at will. If the Hindus should retire, they say they must devise their own course. Will you take care to ease one heart that feels uneasy on this account?

It is impossible to withhold sympathy from the writer. His letter is typical of the attitude I saw reflected in Delhi. I have already given the assurance that Pundit Malaviyaji had nothing to do with Bardoli decision. Nor have any "far-fetched notions of non-violence" anything to do with it. The correspondent's letter is the best justification for it. To me the Bardoli decision is the logical outcome of

<sup>1</sup> Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Banaras Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice President of the Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1919

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of State for India, 1917-22

<sup>3</sup> Lord Reading (1860-1935); Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1921-26; Foreign Secretary in the first National Government of England, 1931

the national pledge of limited non-violence. I entirely endorse the opinion that swaraj is the nation's goal, not non-violence. It is true that my goal is as much swaraj as non-violence, because I hold swaraj for the masses to be unattainable save through non-violence. But have I not repeatedly said in these columns that I would have India become free even by violence rather than that she should remain in bondage? In slavery she is a helpless partner in the violence of the slave-holder. It is however true that I could not take part in a violent attempt at deliverance if only because I do not believe in the possibility of success by violence. I cannot pull the trigger against my worst enemy. If I succeed in convincing the world of the supremacy of the law of non-violence and the futility of violence for the progress of mankind, the correspondent will find that India will have automatically gained her end. But I freely confess my utter inability to do so without first convincing India that she can be free only by non-violent and truthful means and no other.

I must further confess that what Mr. Montagu or Lord Reading would think of the decision did not concern me and therefore their threats do not perturb or affect me. Nor should they affect any non-co-operator. He burnt his boats when he embarked upon his mission. But this I know that, if India becomes non-violent in intent, word and deed, even the hearts of Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading will be changed. As it is, marvellous though our progress has been in non-violent action, our hearts and our speech have not become non-violent. Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading do not believe in the sincerity of our profession nor in the possibility of sincere workers succeeding in creating a truly non-violent atmosphere. What is therefore required is more and yet more non-violence "in intent, word and deed".

As for the people, I have little doubt that they will survive the purifying shock. I regard the present depression as a prelude to steady progress. But should it prove otherwise, the truth of the Bardoli decision cannot be denied. It stands independent of public approval. *God is*, even though the whole world deny Him. Truth *stands*, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained.

I should be sorry, indeed, if responsible Mussalmans will not see the obvious corollaries of non-violence. In my opinion the fight is as religious with Hindus as with Mussalmans. I agree that ours is a spiritual jihad. But a jihad has, like all other wars, its strict restrictions and limitations. The Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. The dissatisfaction is common to both and it is open to both to dissolve partnership with each other. Either or both may also depose me from generalship. It is purely a partnership at will. Finally I assure

the correspondent that, when I find that I cannot carry conviction home to the people, I shall withdraw from the command myself.

#### OTHER IMPLICATIONS

I invite the reader to study the leading article of the week on non-violence.<sup>1</sup> The article became fairly long even with a discussion of the main principles. I did not therefore discuss the important side issues in it but reserved them for the Notes.

Such for instance are the questions:

- (1) When can even individual civil disobedience be resumed?
- (2) What kind of violence will stop civil disobedience?
- (3) Is there room for self-defense in the limited conception of non-violence?

(4) Supposing the Mussalmans or the Hindus secede, can a non-violent campaign be carried on by one community alone?

(5) Supposing Hindus and Mussalmans both reject me, what would become of my preaching?

I shall take the question seriatim. Civil disobedience, even individual civil disobedience, requires a tranquil atmosphere. It must not be commenced till the workers have assimilated the spirit of non-violence and have procured a certificate of merit from the co-operators whether English or Indian, i.e., till they have really ceased to think ill of them. The surest test will be when our meetings are purged of intolerance and our writings of bitterness. Another necessary test will be our serious handling of the constructive programme. If we cannot settle down to it, to me it will be proof positive of our disbelief in the capacity of non-violence to achieve the purpose.

#### NON-VIOLENT ATMOSPHERE

It is not every kind of violence that will stop civil disobedience. I should not be dismayed by family feuds even though they may be sanguinary. Nor will the violence of robbers baffle me though they would be to me an indication of the absence of general purification. It is political violence which *must* stop civil disobedience. Chauri Chaura was an instance of political violence. It arose from a political demonstration which we should have avoided if we were not capable of conducting it absolutely peacefully. I did not allow Malabar and Malegaon<sup>2</sup> to interrupt our course, because the Moplahs were a special people and they had not come under the influence of non-violence to any appreciable extent. Malegaon is more difficult, but there is clear

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Non-violence", 9-3-1922.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Malegaon's Crime", 8-5-1921.

evidence that the chief non-co-operators had tried their best to prevent the murders. Nor was mass civil disobedience imminent at the time. It could not interrupt individual civil disobedience elsewhere.

#### SELF-DEFENSE

The non-co-operator's pledge does not exclude the right of private self-defence. Non-co-operators are under prohibition as to political violence. Those, therefore, with whom non-co-operation is not their final creed, are certainly free to defend themselves or their dependents and wards against their assailants. But they may not defend themselves against the police acting in discharge of their duties, whether assumed or authorized. Thus, there was no right of self-defence under the pledge against Collectors who have, I hold, illegally belaboured volunteers.

#### IF MUSSALMANS OR HINDUS SECEDE

If one of the big communities secede from the compact of non-violence, I admit that it is most difficult, though certainly not impossible, for one party only to carry on the struggle. That party will need to have an invulnerable faith in the policy of non-violence. But if one community does realize that India cannot gain swaraj for generations through violent means, it can by its consistently non-violent, i.e., loving conduct, bring round all the opposing parties to its side.

#### IF BOTH REJECT ME

If both the parties reject me, I should keep my peace just as ever and most decidedly carry on my propaganda of non-violence. I should then not be restricted as I am now. Then I should be enforcing my creed, as today I seem to be enforcing only the policy.

#### MANUFACTURE OF CRIME

A correspondent sends the translation of the following notice issued by the Cantonment Magistrate at Pindi<sup>1</sup> on certain volunteers:

It is brought to my notice that you took part (or were present) in the anti-Government propaganda being carried out in the R. Pindi Cantt. and because only such persons can reside in the Cantts. who are loyal to (*Khairkhah* of) the Government, you are hereby warned that if you are found being present in any such meeting in future, you will be recommended for being turned out of the Cantt. limits.

Thus, this Magistrate has made even attendance at meetings where anti-Government propaganda may be carried on a crime. Even co-operators sometimes carry on an anti-Government campaign.

<sup>1</sup> Rawalpindi

Multiplication of such orders will bring down the Government with the weight of its own enormity, even as a person suffering from obesity becomes at last incapable of walking.

#### RIGHT OF RESIDENCE FORBIDDEN

A friend has sent the following notice issued by the District Magistrate of Noakhali on the 16th February:

Whereas I am credibly informed that a certain building in the town of Noakhali called the “Swaraj Ashram” is being used for the harbouring of so-called volunteers who belong to an organization which has been declared unlawful by Government under the Criminal Law Amendment Act,

And whereas I am credibly informed that the owner of the land on which this building stands is Babu Nalini Kanta Mukherjee and that the building was by his permission first of all occupied by Babu Promotha Nath Sen Gupta and thereafter turned into a home for the so-called volunteers,

Now, therefore, I, O. M. Narain, District Magistrate of Noakhali, do call upon Babu Nalini Kanta Mukherjee, Babu Promotha Nath [Sen] Gupta, and the volunteers and other people, who are at present using or occupying this building or the land on which it stands, to show cause on the 18th February 1922 at 12 noon in the Court of the District Magistrate of Noakhali why an order should not issue under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure forbidding the use of the said building or land for any purpose by the said volunteers on the following grounds:

Firstly, that the said volunteers belong to an unlawful association and that the building is therefore being used for an unlawful purpose and

Secondly, that the conduct of the volunteers using the building is a source of annoyance to the neighbourhood and a danger to the public tranquillity.

I do not know what happened on the day of the hearing of the notice, but it is worthy of note that the building in question could not be used by the volunteers “for any purpose”, presumably, therefore, even for mere residence apart from the volunteers’ activities as such. The grounds upon which the notice was issued are also as strange as the notice itself. The Magistrate argues that as the volunteers belong to an unlawful association, the building occupied by them is used for an unlawful purpose. It follows from this that no landlord is safe in letting his property to any person whatsoever. How should he know if he is a potential thief or an actual sedition-monger?

The second reason is even more ludicrous than the first. How can the conduct of volunteers, whose only crime is open defiance of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, be a source of annoyance to the neighbourhood in which they reside and why should such volunteers not be imprisoned if they are a source of annoyance? The action of the Magistrate is almost like letting a thief alone and then charging the

public with the task of punishing him by depriving him of shelter. It really amounts to teaching people Lynch Law.

#### INCITING TO ASSAULT

The retiring President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce<sup>1</sup> has come out with the boldest declaration in favour of Lynch Law. He has found it necessary to throw off the mask of hypocrisy, laid down the law of racial superiority, dictated to the Moderates what they are expected to do and asked the Englishmen “to hit back hard when attacked”. We cannot afford to answer this impudence in our chosen manner. That can only be done when we have become proof against provocation. For the time being, I must ask the Bengali friends voluntarily, deliberately and out of their strength to remain calm, unperturbed and non-resistant. To resort to civil disobedience out of anger will not only be contradictory conduct, but will be playing into the hands of the opponent. Let the District Magistrate of Noakhali and the Englishman who allows himself to be influenced by the incitements of the retiring President of the Bengal Chamber do their worst. The programme before us is to exhaust alike the District Magistrate and the Chamber President by receiving the blows in a dignified manner and without retaliation. The fury is bound then to return to itself for want of response.

#### GWALIOR’S CAMPAIGN AGAINST GANDHI CAP

A correspondent has sent me a copy of a notification by the Gwalior State signed by the Peshi Officer. It occupies nearly five printed columns of a newspaper. It is a dissertation on khaddar. It goes on to say that there is no harm about the inhabitants of the Gwalior State using khaddar, that they always used to wear it and that, in view of the high prices of cloth, there was nothing strange in the people taking to khaddar wear, but the notification warns the people against attending lectures on khaddar, and finally prohibits in the following terms the use of the “Gandhi cap” The original is in Hindi.

But it is necessary here to state that nowadays a particular type of khaddar cap has come into vogue which is in the form of a boat and whose two sides are capable of being folded. The fact is that such caps are not being used for economizing cloth, but it has become an emblem of a particular party and it has become so intimately connected with one class of views that it is believed that those who use it entertain those views. For these reasons, the use of such caps is improper. In this (prohibition) are not included caps of any other pattern whether they are

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Watson-Smythe

made of khaddar or any other cloth.

I am sorry for this unnecessary prejudice against a harmless and cheap cap. I venture to inform the Gwalior authorities that, whilst it is true that many non-co-operators wear what are known as “Gandhi caps”, there are thousands who wear them simply for convenience and cheapness, but who are no more non-co-operators than the Peshi Officer himself.

#### MORE WRITTEN NEWSPAPERS

Assam bids fair to beat every other province in the number of its written newspapers. Golaghat has now come out with a written weekly in Assamese. It gives the general news and smart editorial columns. I have been favoured with a translation of the third number of the issue which is called *Bande Mataram*. In the editorial notes, commenting upon an Anglo-Indian twitting us for desiring liberty by saying that even tigers and burglars desire liberty, the editor says:

We do not want the meaning of liberty taught us by others. India insists upon becoming mistress in her own house. She does not want to become a mere student receiving lessons in liberty. She has under the bureaucratic system long enough remained under deception. She has now regained her consciousness and her eyes are opened.

I can only repeat to the editor and manager of this weekly the hope expressed in respect of other written newspapers, that there will be the strictest adherence to truth and there will be no violent or provocative language used in connection with the new venture.

#### “OBJECTIONABLE” WIRES

It has evidently become the fashion nowadays to reject wires containing news of repression as objectionable. Here is one despatched by the Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee, on the 22nd February, from Hyderabad:

Repression in Sind is going on apace. In Sahiti District, where Section 108 has been freely applied, Mr. Gobindram has been sentenced to one year's rigorous and Mr. Khemchand, President, District Congress Committee and Editor, *Shakti*, is awaiting his trial. Mr. Dhloomal, Sind provincial propagandist, has been arrested under same section. Latter's work in Nagarparker side of Tharparker District where evil system of Rasai, Begar and Lape prevailed, resulted in stoppage of evil, which proved too much for the local officials. Notices under Section 144 prohibiting addressing meetings within five miles of Mughulbin have been served on seven workers on the eve of a fair to prevent propaganda. Messrs Sobharaj and Wadhmal, Joint Secretaries, Shikarpur District Congress Committee, with seven others have been sentenced to rupees hundred fine or in default 3 months, simple for obstruction of road. The nine workers organized *Nagar-Keertan* with no

intention of procession and as usual expecting no police interference, but sudden attention was paid to them by Shikarpur police. One paid fine, remaining preferred jail. City Magistrate, Karachi, has been invested with additional powers to require security for good conduct in case of Sedition Section 108, which means that the officials want to clear the ground by sweeping off workers before Prince comes to Karachi.

The following is a wire addressed to Hakimji<sup>1</sup> and sent from Raghunathpur by the President of the Sub-Divisional Congress Committee, Buxar:

Inform Mahatmaji Congress camps pitched in Brahmapur fair for last two days forcibly pulled down yesterday night by Collector, Superintendent, Arrah, Armed Gurkhas and Rameshwarsingh Deputy Collector, Resident Brahmapur. Volunteers brutally assaulted, forcibly removed with elephant help. Tents, flags, other articles taken away. Liquor, ganja volunteers cruelly beaten with *lathis*. Complete peace prevails.

The third has been received from Belsand. The Secretary, Thana Congress Committee, says:

The local Sub-Inspector of Police, Mr. Nath Sahay Roy, is nowadays bent upon provoking people to violence. On the 23rd February '22 he went to Pachra and Ath Koni villages, where the constables by his orders forcibly entered the Zenana houses of Babu Musafir Sinha, Bhubneshwar Sinha and Ram Briksh Mahto, volunteers, and took away utensils and water pots worth Rs. 15 from the houses of the former two, and one cage with a *pahari* parrot worth Rs. 10, one quilt worth Rs 6, one dhoti worth Rs. 2-8, 4½ mds. of paddy seeds worth Rs. 18, 7 mds. of maize seeds worth Rs. 20 one *batook* (cooking pot) worth Rs.11 and one she-goat with three kids worth Rs. 10, total amounting to Rs. 67-8-0, from the house of the latter. On the 25th February 1922, he went to Bhataulia to realize the fine from Mohammad Jan already in jail and forcibly entered the house of Shaikh Shabu Jan, his brother, whose household affairs are quite separate from Mohammad's for more than a year, and kicked the earthen granary (*kothi*) and took away 10 mds. of paddy seed worth Rs. 40, 1 md. and 5½ *paseris* of rice worth Rs. 9 and 1 *bedhua* (water pot) worth Rs. 5, total amounting to Rs.54.

The three telegrams are important and contain details of repression. When Congress offices are burnt and looted, workers are sent to jail on one pretext or another, the temptation to civil resistance is irresistible, but I must warn workers against it. If they want a completely non-violent atmosphere, they must stop all aggressive activity for the time being. Let every person be his own Congress office and Khilafat office and let him confine himself to spreading the

<sup>1</sup> Hakim Ajmal Khan (1865-1927); physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921



gospel of spinning and khaddar and, if nobody listens to him, I assure him that he will have done a good day's work if he will devote all his time to any of the cotton processes—carding, hand-spinning, hand-weaving. It is the one most useful and enduring thing about which there is no retracing and there is no possibility of mistake.

#### MISLEADING

Readers have besieged me with leaflets which the Propaganda Committee of W.I.N. Liberal Association has been distributing broadcast. I like its enthusiasm and activity. It does good and keeps non-co-operators up to the mark and shows them their bad side. I would only suggest to the Propaganda Committee that exaggeration would do it no good. I am sure it will not indulge in conscious exaggeration. I would therefore venture to correct some of the mis-statements.

Leaflets No. 6 contains the following:

What would India be like when Gandhi-Raj comes? . . .

No Railways. No Hospitals. No Machinery. No army and navy will be wanted, because Gandhi will assure other nations that India would not interfere with them, and so they will not interfere with India!

No laws necessary, no courts necessary, because everyone will be law unto himself. Everybody will be free to do what he likes. It will be a very easy life, because everybody will have to go about in a khaddar *langoti*<sup>1</sup> and sleep in the open.

I cannot say that this is an exaggeration. It is a clever caricature permissible in Western warfare. It is only suggestively false. Let me say what I mean. In the first instance, India is not striving to establish "Gandhi-Raj". It is in dead earnest to establish swaraj and would gladly and legitimately sacrifice Gandhi for the sake of winning swaraj. "Gandhi-Raj" is an ideal condition, and in that condition all the five negatives will represent a true picture, but under swaraj nobody ever dreams, certainly I do not dream, of no railways, no hospitals, no machinery, no army and navy, no laws and no law-courts. On the contrary, there will be railways: only they will not be intended for military or the economic exploitation of India, but they will be used for promoting internal trade and will make the lives of third-class passengers fairly comfortable. There will be some return made for the fares the third-class public pay. Nobody anticipates complete absence of diseases during swaraj: there will therefore certainly be hospitals, but one hopes that the hospitals will then be intended more for those who suffer from accidents than from self-

<sup>1</sup> Lion cloth

indulgence. Machinery there certainly will be in the shape of spinning-wheel, which is after all a delicate piece of machinery, but I have no doubt that several factories will grow up in India under swaraj intended for the benefit of the people, not as now for draining the masses dry. I do not know of the navy, but I do know that the army of India of the future will not consist of hirelings to be utilized for keeping India under subjection and for depriving other nations of their liberty, but it would be largely cut down, will consist largely of volunteers and will be utilized for policing India. There will be law and law-courts also under swaraj, but they will be custodians of the people's liberty, not as they now are instruments in the hands of a bureaucracy which has emasculated and is intent upon further emasculating a whole nation. Lastly, whilst it will be optional for everybody who chooses to go about in *langoti* and sleep in the open, let me hope that it will not be necessary, as it is today, for millions to go about with a dirty rag which serves for a *langoti* for want of the means to buy sufficient clothing and to rest their weary and starved bodies in the open for want of a roof. It is not right therefore to tear some ideas expressed in *Indian Home Rule*<sup>1</sup> from their proper setting, caricature them and put them before the people as if I was preaching these ideas for anybody's acceptance.

In another pamphlet isolated acts of hooliganism, no doubt done by non-co-operators or their sympathizers, have been repeated as if they were the ordinary vocation of non-co-operators, and then follows the amazing summing-up:

Non-co-operation is destruction, a falling back to the bad old days of bloody civil strife and confusion.

Non-co-operation is certainly partly destruction in so far as it is necessary, but not of the type of Bombay as suggested in the leaflet, but destruction of a vicious system by peaceful means, and I should very much like to know the bad old days of bloody civil strife and confusion. Is there any warrant in history for such a belief? I have known people sing of good old days. I have seen some verses in the vernacular text-books singing the praises of British rule at the expense of pre-British rule, but I do not know that there ever was a time when there was "bloody civil strife and confusion" throughout the length and breadth of India.

#### PROGRESS OF KHADDAR IN BIHAR

The *Bihar Herald* is responsible for the following news:

In the Land Revenue Administration Report of the Bihar and Orissa

<sup>1</sup> For the text of this book, *Vide* "Hind Swaraj", 22-11-1909.

Government, it is recorded that in Patna, Bhagalpur and Tirhut, the levying of *abwabs*<sup>1</sup> has materially decreased with the growing knowledge among the tenantry of their rights, and that at Bhagalpur, the opposition to such extractions has been stiffened by the non-co-operation movement.

The contribution of non-co-operation to the revival of the charkha and the weaving industry is noteworthy. In Bihar, according to official figures, three-eighths of the cloth worn is woven on the handloom. The charkha gave a further impetus to the weaving trade. In Patna, Tirhut, Orissa and Chota-Nagpur divisions, "Motia" cloth is being spun and woven with success . . . . An extended use of coarse cloth manufactured in country looms is evident . . . the weaving industry of Tasar in Navadah and "Daris", etc., in Aurangabad, continued to thrive.

The extract shows the steady progress made by constructive work in Bihar, a place where 3 years ago it would have been difficult to see a spinning-wheel anywhere or a yard of homespun khaddar. Only the poor people of Bihar know what a blessing the charkha has been to them.

#### AN M.L.C. RESIGNS

Sjt. Sita Ram, a pleader of Kheri, sends me a copy of his resignation as a member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces. The following is the text:

It is with feelings of great regret that I beg to announce the resignation of my seat in the U.P. Legislative Council. It was after the announcement of the Reforms that I sought my election to the Council for the first time, and I had faith that the Reformed Government would be different from what it was in pre-Reform days and that the reign of terror and Dyerism would be a thing of the past and that there would be no more undue and undeserved repression in the country and that only guilty persons would be punished and that people would be able to do real service to the country by being returned to the Councils. The experience of one year has, however, belied all my hopes. I have seen that arrogance and haughtiness are much more in evidence in Council than respect and goodwill for others. Class and communal interests are still there. The experience of my own district has convinced me that there is still a place for Dyerism in the machinery of the Government. Mr, Young, special Manager of the . . . Estate, committed acts tending to lead to breach of peace and tyrannized the entire population of . . . and the Government has not seen its way of doing any justice in the matter. Pundit Harkaran Nath Misra who preached non-violence to the people and directed the tenants to pay up their rents to their landlords and asked them not to resort to civil disobedience under the present circumstances, has been sentenced to three years' impri-

<sup>1</sup> Irrigation tax

sonment. The recent arrests throughout the whole of India and particularly in these Provinces have led me to believe that the Government is determined on the policy of shutting up every person who believes in the real self-government of India. Unfortunately, my temperament is not such that I can remain a part and parcel of such a Government and hence I beg to tender the resignation of my seat.

He informs me that there are five candidates for the post. I do not envy the five candidates. Both Sjt. Sita Ram and they are right. Sjt. Sita Ram needed personal experience to show him the true nature of the reforms. The elected candidate, let me hope, will also learn by experience; but, even at the end of the chapter, there certainly will be some men who will honestly hold the opinion that, whether good or bad, it is only through the Councils that the British administrators give us that we shall make any progress. For non-co-operators, the proceedings of the Councils and the Assembly ought to be a standing proof of the wisdom of their abstention.

#### PLEA FOR COOL-HEADEDNESS

Angry correspondence regarding Sir Robert Watson-Smythe's speech is streaming in. One correspondent advises me to give a full reply to that unfortunate speech. Another sends me a cutting with a covering letter in which he asks:

Does it not represent the mentality of the average Englishman towards India, and if it does, should we not boldly ask them to clear out of India and leave the country exclusively to the children of the soil? Shall we be very much in the wrong to proclaim that our immediate object is to drive Englishmen out of India?

The correspondent says that he is an humble camp-follower in the movement. I must respectfully point out to him and those who may think like him that the mood represented in the foregoing paragraph ill-becomes a non-co-operator. Non-co-operation is a process of conversion and we have to convert by our model conduct even Britishers like Sir Robert Watson-Smythe. Whilst I am prepared to admit that the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce represents the mentality of the majority of Englishmen, there is a very respectable minority, that certainly does not share the Smythian mentality. And so long as we have an Andrews, a Stokes<sup>1</sup>, a Pearson<sup>2</sup> in our midst, so long will it be ungentlemanly on our part to wish every Englishmen out of India. Nor is it otherwise necessary for us to take up the exclusive attitude suggested by the correspondent. I do not

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Stokes, social worker and associate of C. F. Andrews

<sup>2</sup> William Winstanley Pearson, a missionary who collaborated with C. F. Andrews in Y.M.C.A. work; taught at Santiniketan for some time in 1914.

despair of Englishmen taking a sane view of things. After all, they are a practical people. They know how to make a virtue of necessity. What they will not yield to reason, they have been known to yield to force of circumstances, but I suggest to the correspondent that we should have some faith also in ourselves. Can we escape our share of blame for being treated like "dirt"? If we have hitherto been too weak to assert ourselves, too disunited to command attention to our wishes, and too selfish to sacrifice and too ignorant to understand the true interest of the country, is it any wonder if English traders, taking advantage of our weaknesses, have lorded it over us and have begun to think that they have a prescriptive right not merely to remain in India but to command our labour as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" [?] The attitude taken up by the correspondent not only betrays anger, but it also betrays want of faith in ourselves. I venture, therefore, to think that the position that the Congress has taken up is the only dignified and feasible position. There is room enough for Englishmen and others in our country if they will live as friends and servants of the nation. There is no room for anyone, be he English or any other, if he wants to remain in India as lord and master. We must fight the demon of race superiority even though we might have to give a million lives. Let us also be humble enough to know that we are reaping the fruit of our own sinfulness. Have we not acted towards the untouchables of India as Englishmen of the Smythian type are behaving towards us?

#### RELEASED

Pandit Jawaharlal, Moulvi Gulamatulla, Shaikh Shaukat Ali, Sjt. Mohanlal Saxena, Pandit Balmukund Bajpeyi, Dr Sivraj Narain and Dr. L. Sahai have been prematurely released from the Lucknow Jail<sup>1</sup>. It is evident that the revising judge appointed by the U.P. Government has come to the conclusion that the connections were wrong. God only knows how many of these convictions are totally wrong. But the plain fact today is that prisoners rather than feeling glad over their discharges are really grieved. Pandit Jawaharlal and his companions have my sympathy. The unregistered *Independent*<sup>2</sup> publishes the following message from him:

What message can I give? I have been released, I don't know why. My father, a victim of asthma, and hundreds of my co-workers lie still in jail. I

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, along with other leaders, had been arrested on November 22, 1921.

<sup>2</sup> This was started in February 1919; *Vide* "Letter to Syed Hussain", 30-1-1919. The Government forfeited its security during the Non-co-operation Movement.

feel I have no right to be out of it. All I can say is: Fight on, work on for a free India. Let there be no respite, no forsaking of principles, for a false compromise. Follow our great leader Mahatma Gandhi and be true to the Congress. Be efficient, organized and, above all, remember the charkha and non-violence.

#### NOT EXTREMIST

The publicity Commissioner, U.P., writes from Lucknow saying that in his letter of the 15th February, the *Garhwali* of Dehra Dun was mentioned as an extremist journal by an oversight, and now writes to say that it is a moderate journal.

#### PETTY PERSECUTION

Babu Bimalanand Das Gupta, Dacca, who was arrested in connection with a public meeting held in Dacca on the 23rd January last and which was dispersed by force, was tried and discharged for want of evidence against him. That, however, was not enough for the authorities. He has now therefore received the following notice under Section 40 of the Legal Practitioners' Act:

Whereas it has been reported to me by the Dist. Magistrate, Dacca, that Babu Bimalanand Das Gupta, M.A., B.L., a pleader of this Court, suspended his practice in July 1921 and engaged himself as a professor of Economics in the Dacca National College so-called; and whereas it appears further that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta took such service without the permission of the High Court; and whereas further it appears from the report of the Dist. Magistrate that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta was present and took part in a meeting held at Dacca on the 29th January 1922, in contravention of orders made by the Dist. Magistrate, Dacca, under Sec. 144 Cr. P. C.;

And whereas it appears further that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta, when he was tried for an offence under Section 188 I.P.C., stated to the Court that he owed no allegiance to the British and had no regard for the post held by the trying Magistrate; and whereas it appears that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta has thereby been guilty of gross professional misconduct;

It is hereby ordered that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta do show cause on or before the 7th March, why he should not be reported to the High Court for dismissal or suspension from practice.

Thus the farce that was begun with Mr. Sherwani<sup>1</sup> is being repeated at Dacca. The Judge who has issued the notice does not seem to have appreciated the humour of the situation. Those who have

<sup>1</sup> T. A. K. Sherwani, who was in charge of the National Muslim University, had given up legal practice. He was arrested soon after the disturbances in Aligarh and lodged in Naini Jail near Allahabad; *Vide* also "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Notice to a Barrister" & "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title "Sherwani Disabled".

suspended practice are not likely to go back to the courts till swaraj is attained. That after the attainment of swaraj all the legal practitioners who have suspended will revert to their practice if they choose follows as matter of course. What then can be the effect of the notice save that it exposes the Court to further ridicule and furnishes the public with an additional reason for boycotting courts which are used for punishing (I use the word “punishing” as the issuing Judge flatters himself with the belief that he awarded a punishment by disbarring a lawyer who has suspended practice) lawyers not for any unprofessional conduct but for holding certain political opinions no matter how strong or extreme. I should not be surprised if this notice served upon Babu Bimalanand results in stiffening his brother-practitioners of Dacca and making some of them at least leave the law-courts, even if it is by way of protest against courts being turned into engines of political oppression.

#### A BLESSING

Borodada (Dwijendranath Tagore)<sup>1</sup> sends me a beautiful little letter covering the following lines:

My views concerning the speeding and slackening motion of the Great Vessel which is just now bearing in its bosom the earnest prayers of the sons and daughters of India for the advent of a new era of peace and good-will to mankind in this travailing earth of ours.

A wise captain slackens the speed of his vessel whilst moving in the right direction, whenever it arrives at a spot abounding in dangerous rocks, and speeds his vessel as soon as he enters into the open sea which is free from all sorts of such impediments. But a foolish captain steers his vessel in a wrong direction for fear of rocks, where there is no such thing whatever under the sea, and proceeds towards an unknown region where hidden rocks are lying in wait to shatter his vessel into fragments the moment it approaches their dwelling place.

Mahatma Gandhi is guiding his vessel in the former way, while his advisers want him to take the latter course.

I hope that at the end of the chapter it will be possible to say that I was “a wise captain”. I can truthfully say that I have never in my life been so storm-tossed as I am at the present moment. I have hitherto flattered myself with the belief that I have a fair measure of my capacity as also my limitations, but just now I seem to be in deeper waters than I should care to find myself in. The prayers, therefore, and blessings of one so pure and so good as Borodada are most welcome to me at this juncture.

<sup>1</sup> Elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

## TERRIBLE IF TRUE

A correspondent, who sends in his name for my information but signs himself as “Punjab Nationalist”, writes as follows:

In your issue of the 16th instant you write as follows:<sup>1</sup>

“The Sikh awakening seems to be truly wonderful. Not only has the Akali party become a party of effective non-violence, but it is evolving a fine code of honour. The Gurudwara Committee is now insisting on the release of Pandit Dina Nath, a non-Sikh, who was arrested in connection with the keys affair.”

It seems you are not aware of the facts, or you will probably pause before labelling the warlike Akali party as one of “effective non-violence”. The overbearing and disorderly conduct of Akali bands in Hoshiarpur District has necessitated sending military posse down there. At a meeting held at Bilaspur the other day within two miles of Hoshiarpur, about 2,000 Akalis were present. Rows of men with drawn swords formed themselves round a centre where the speakers were. The orators declared valiantly there was no government and that an Akali according to a prophecy would come from Kabul and, overpowering all opposition, establish himself on the throne of Delhi, and at a given signal expressed readiness to start revolutionary operations. The Akalis in Hoshiarpur have a commissariat and an intelligence service of their own; they employ camel *sawars* to watch what is going on. A large crowd gathered together outside the Court of a Magistrate engaged in political cases at Gaurishanker and demanded the surrender of prisoners at their own terms.

The pledge of non-violence has now been omitted from the vow of the Akalis; and the service they undertook was not exclusively confined to the Gurudwara Reform. The meetings are the order of the day, and the substitution of the Sikh rule for the present Government is frankly put forward. Advises from Ludhiana declare that bands of Sikh enthusiasts march to the Diwans with much pomp and parade, carrying swords and axes and hammers. They march through the bazars in regular formation, and, when travelling in large numbers by railway, they refuse to pay for their tickets, sometimes even claiming the privilege of free travel, as they foolishly imagine that the country is theirs. At Samnala the Akali speakers declared: “King George V is not our king. Sardar Kharak Singh is our uncrowned king.” Some men of the 23rd Pioneers returning from leave in the Kusur Tehsil have complained that they were threatened by the Akalis with the molestation of their women if they did not forthwith desert the Army and join the ranks of the Khalsa. These are, in short, some of the terrible facts which should persuade you to revise your opinion regarding the non-violent character of the awakening of the Sikhs in the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Notes”, 16-2-1922, under the sub-title “Sikh Honour”.



central parts of the Punjab.

The letter has startled me. The report seems to me to be unbelievable, but as my correspondent claims accuracy for his report and as I have paid a glowing tribute to Sikh non-violence, I have not hesitated to publish the report, but I refrain from making any comments till I have heard from the Sikh friends to whom I have already written about the matter.

#### CASE FOR SEARCHING INQUIRY

After having dealt with the “Punjab Nationalist’s” charges against the Akalis, I came upon a letter from a well-known resident of Feni in Noakhali district. He has given his full name and address. He has not asked me to keep his name back from publication, but I purposely refrain from giving the name as, if the facts set forth in his letter are true, he is likely to be subjected to ill treatment for having dared to tell the truth. The letter which is dated the 16th February reads as follows:

I beg to bring to your notice the present condition of the Feni Subdivision in the district of Noakhali. Although I am not a non-co-operator, I have regard for you. Your movement was proclaimed as non-violent. But the violence of the followers has far exceeded the bearable limit. There is no peace and order and no respect for the elders. Bad characters of the villages have a golden opportunity to carry on their professions and have joined the Volunteer Corps. There is none to check them. The country is now in the hands of these men. Money is squeezed from the poor sellers and stall-keepers on every *hut*<sup>1</sup> day. The poor who can ill-afford to have two meals a day have to give one handful of rice every morning and evening; otherwise they are molested. The unfortunate men who are not non-co-operators are subjected to social boycott, attacked with night-soil, house burning, criminal intimidation, assault, pelting of stones, and the like. There is no freedom of speech for them. I give below instances of violence for your information:

1. Moulvi Nural Huq, Vakil, High Court, Mr. Ali Haider Chaudhry, and Babu Jasnada Kumar Ghosh were attacked with night-soil, because they stood as candidates for the Council.

2. Munshi Mahommed Wasil, and Munshi Reazuddin Ahmed, clerk, civil Court, were brutally assaulted and insulted in bazar because they refused to hand over their caps to the volunteers.

3. Reazuddin Munshi’s Bazar, Peer Buksh Munshi’s Bazar, Daroga Mahommed Ama’s Bazar, and many other bazars were forcibly closed and buyers and sellers were not allowed to meet on the bazar because the proprietors of these bazars are not non-co-operators.

<sup>1</sup> *Hat*, Weekly market in rural areas

4. Local Sub-Divisional Officer and other leading gentlemen were molested and their motor cars were forcibly stopped in several places; stones and dust were thrown at them on many occasions.

5. House of a village gentleman was set on fire and he was intimidated in other ways because he helped the S.D.O. and his companion when his motor car was forcibly stopped.

6. Repeated attempts were made to burn Khan Saheb's house and at last his house was burnt down to ashes and then the labourers were prevented by intimidation from working in his *busha* and constructing the house.

7. Intimidation to the co-operators by means of anonymous letters, posters and publicly exciting people against them.

8. Khan Saheb was not allowed to cross a *khal* (stream) even over bamboo bridge and he was publicly insulted. There are numerous other instances. These are plain truths and I challenge anybody to disprove these facts. Local Congress and Khilafat workers do not take any action, but rather seem to take pride because they have authority to do anything they wish. I appeal to you in the name of humanity to kindly hold an enquiry, sincerely believing that you will not allow this state of things to go unchecked and will allow those who do not follow your creed, a place under the sun to live peacefully.

I have removed from the letter only one or two passages which seemed to me to be unnecessary. Hitherto, I have at times received complaints against non-co-operators and have not hesitated to publish them or otherwise deal with them, to ascertain the truth of the charges contained therein. In many cases they have proved to be exaggerated. In some they have proved to be unjustified, but strangely enough, I am receiving specific charges which the author offers to prove. Under the heading "In Cold Blood"<sup>1</sup>, I have had the misfortune to publish from week to week tales of terrible repression in Bengal, Assam, U P., Punjab, Andhra and elsewhere. Reports continue to arrive, from one or other of these places, of studied repression, but I have flattered myself with the belief that, *on the whole*, non-co-operators could show a clean slate. The Noakhali news therefore is a rude shock. I am prepared for receiving contradictions, but there is so much wealth of detail in the correspondent's letter that the substance of the charges is likely to be well-founded. The writer asks me to hold an inquiry. I wish I had the time and the authority to do so, but I invite all the non-co-operation workers, both in the Congress and in the Khilafat Committees, to meet these charges. I would like them to send me a letter for publication, brief and to the point, not hesitating to make a clean, emphatic confession where the charges can be sustained. I invite also the Provincial Congress Committee to take up

<sup>1</sup> This featured in *Young India*, in January-February 1920.

the matter immediately, to depute one or two Commissioners and to make a full and exhaustive inquiry. They do not need the name of the correspondent who has frankly given the names of those who, he holds, have been persecuted. An inquiry therefore is a simple matter. Meanwhile, as I know that publication is also half the remedy, I gladly place the columns of *Young India* at the disposal of those who can send authentic instances of intimidation, coercion, assaults, social boycott by or on behalf of non-co-operators whether Congressmen or Khilafatists. Indeed, every Congressman is a Khilafatist, and every Khilafatist is a Congressman, but since we have two organizations in the country, I appeal to both to be merciless in exposing our own wrongdoing. I could find a thousand excuses for the wrongdoing of the administrators if only because we impute to them nothing better, whereas we claim to be immaculate so far as non-violence and honesty are concerned. We shall bring the struggle to a successful issue far more quickly by being strict with ourselves. There is no excuse whatsoever for intimidation, coercion, assault or social boycott on our part. I would urge the correspondents, who may send me letters of complaints, to be brief, strictly accurate and to write in a clear hand on one side of the paper only. It is not an easy matter to go through the heavy correspondence pouring in from day to day. Compliance with this simple request will ensure quicker attention. Correspondents will take care to avoid vague generalizations. Specific details as in the Noakhali letter are absolutely necessary to inspire belief and to assist inquiry.

#### THE VALUE OF WORD OF HONOUR

Mr. Subramanya Siva has sent the following explanation in response to my invitation<sup>1</sup> published in *Young India* about his reported apology:

The Government *communique* relating to my release is likely to make many of my countrymen misunderstand me and my present position. Mahatmaji himself writing in *Young India* wants me to clear myself by making a full statement. I have already explained myself in *The Hindu* of the 20th January last. The following is my explanation:

The *communique* is so worded as to mean that the Government released me because of my undertaking. But the order to the Superintendent of the Central Jail at Trichinopoly ran thus:

“Under Section (some Section) of the Criminal Procedure Code, the Governor-in-Council is pleased to remit the unexpired portion of the sentence of convict Subramanya Siva unconditionally.”

<sup>1</sup> Vide “Notes”, 9-2-1922, under the sub-title “A Well-Deserved Snub”.

It is plain from the word “unconditionally” in the order that nothing about the undertaking or any condition is mentioned and that the recommendations of the Surgeon-General and the District Medical officer ought to have been the chief cause of my release. No condition has been imposed upon me; and I am as free as before to work in any way I like, I wish to inform my countrymen.

A word as to my undertaking. Soon after my conviction I fell so seriously ill in the jail that I, in addition to suffering from high fever, was passing endless diarrhoea motions every day, so much so that at times I fell into delirium and my life was despaired of. It was at that time I wrote an undertaking to the Government that if I were to be released, I shall refrain from politics in future. This may be considered a weak act on my part by certain people. But if the circumstances and the time in which I wrote were taken into consideration, I believe I am surely entitled to be excused. “Even Homer nods”, man is liable to err; and I am no God. I have every right to expect my countrymen who have been watching my life ever since 1905 to slight this small past weakness of mine.

Though one would wish that people even suffering tortures would not tender apologies, it is not open to outsiders to criticize the conduct of those who weaken under physical suffering. Mr. Siva therefore rightly appeals to the public not to judge him harshly for having tendered the apology. But the point is that the apology having once been tendered and a promise given, it should have been faithfully carried out. Mr. Subramanya Siva is not entitled to take advantage of the word “unconditionally” occurring in the order of remission. It is a mark of confidence in the probity of a non-co-operator. Surely the Government were quite justified in believing that Mr. Siva would abide by his written word. I wish non-co-operators to earn the credit for being above reproach so far as truth and non-violence are concerned. This struggle depends for its success solely upon the acquisition of a moral prestige which can only be built up by scrupulous regard for honesty under all circumstances. Instead of taking the advantage that Mr. Siva wishes to take of the unconditional pardon, he should really recognize in this act at least the generosity of the Government in not having humiliated him by referring to the apology. I cannot close this painful subject without appealing to Mr. Subramanya Siva even now to make a public declaration that he will strictly refrain from taking part in politics and apologizing that he ever departed from the undertaking he gave. I am sure that neither he nor the public will lose by his strict adherence to his promise. There is a vast scope for him to do social and economic work. He can do a great deal of khaddar work in its purely economic and moral aspects.

### A WIFE'S CONGRATULATIONS

Mr. Abdur Rahman Ghazi of Lyallpur wrote as follows whilst his case was being heard:

Before I select a cosy corner in the Swaraj Mandir, I leave these few lines with a friend of mine to send them on to you. The case as usual is a huge farce. I have been run in under Section 108. The witnesses are all interested parties. The utter demoralization of the present Government is made clear to me by this case. The Press telegrams pertaining to it have been held up. You will be glad to know what my wife writes about the case:

“Congratulations on your arrest. Thank God, the much-longed-for day is come, and God has accepted your sacrifice. We are all very happy. May you cheerfully suffer for your country and your religion, and may the Almighty arm us with sufficient strength to bear hardships for our cause”.

Now I gladly await the orders of the National Parliament for my release.

The foregoing was written on the 26th January. It makes somewhat sad reading on the 4th of March when the National Parliament seems to be not quite so near as it certainly appeared to be on the 26th of January. To a soldier, however, it matters not when the battle is won. To him it only matters that he should stand to his post. In my opinion, the only dignified release must be by the first Act of the Swaraj Parliament or by efflux of time and I certainly do not lose hope of the prisoners being released by national strength if the revised Bardoli programme of construction can be successfully carried out.

### CALCUTTA'S UNREADINESS

A correspondent in the course of letter from Calcutta writes:

My mind compels me to say that Bengal is doing nothing about swadeshi in comparison to the neighbouring province of Bihar. It is lagging far behind. Even those who boast themselves of being volunteers are not clad in khaddar. I have travelled through almost all the important quarters of this great town, but have not found a single person clad in khaddar. In Bihar, on the other hand, you will rarely find a man wearing foreign cloth. In the villages they have not yet begun to wear khaddar dhoties, but the attempt is being made to replace mill-made dhoties with khaddar ones.

I have merely given a few extracts from the correspondent's letter. He goes on to say that, if Calcutta's unpreparedness is reflected in the villages of Bengal also, the battle of satyagraha cannot be won. This letter is supported by several others, but I am not prepared to admit that, even in Calcutta, no progress has been done in khaddar movement. At the same time, I fear that the charge against Calcutta is mainly true. Khaddar wear in Calcutta is rather an exception than the rule, and there is no denying the fact that full

satyagraha is impossible without full compliance with the conditions precedent. If we are to usher in peaceful swaraj—and swaraj attained by peaceful means must be peaceful swaraj—we must be as ready for construction as we seem to be for destruction. Boycott and manufacture, evacuation and occupation, disobedience and obedience must go hand in hand, if we are to avoid an interval of confusion, anarchy and civil strife. The khaddar movement is the largest part of construction. We dare not neglect it if the struggle is to remain non-violent to the end.

#### INTERESTING INFORMATION

Though now stale, the report issued by Messrs Prakasam, Nageshwara Row and Narayan Rao about the preparedness for mass civil disobedience of the areas selected by the Guntur District Congress Committee makes interesting reading. The Commissioners divide the area into two parts: Peddanandipadu Firka and all the neighbouring villages forming one contiguous whole, and the second the rest of the Firkas consisting of Palnad, Vinukonda, Settanapalle and portions of Ongole, Narasaraopet, Tennali and Repalle. The Commissioners found that the second part of the selected area fully satisfied the conditions about khaddar but not so about untouchability, although there was a great advance in the mentality of people. As to non-violence, whilst the Commissioners admit that the people are non-violent by temperament, they say: “Still we doubt whether they could withstand a provocation or insult if it is of an extreme nature.” They found that the condition about Hindu-Muslim unity was largely fulfilled.

Of the first part of the area, the Commissioners are much more enthusiastic. They estimate the total number of volunteers at about 4,000.

They are clad in khaddar uniform with badges. Men of all ages have enlisted themselves. We found even men of 60 to 65 years doing active work. In some villages there were *Panchama* volunteers doing active work and freely mixing with others. The excellence of the organization among these ryots consists in their devotion to duty and observance of non-violence as part of their religion.

As to khaddar, the Commissioners remark:

Most of the villages are self-contained. In some almost every house has one or more charkhas actually working. The yarn made in each village is woven generally by the village *Panchamas*. Even orthodox Brahmins have been getting their clothes made by their *Panchama* brethren. In most of the villages more than 50 per cent wear khaddar made by themselves. In some the percentage is as high as 95.

Remarking upon untouchability, they say:

We were surprised at the extraordinary progress made by some of the villages in this area in their attempt to remove untouchability within so short a time. We could not believe that it was humanly possible to effect such a revolution in the minds of these countrymen of ours. We found the so-called untouchables admitted into the Panchayat Board. In some places orthodox Brahmins took the *Panchamas* by hand and seated them in their midst, and in some places they are admitted into the premises of Brahmins to do the same services which other castes have been doing. One rich Brahmin gentleman told us that he and some of his friends in the neighbouring villages would spend all their income to make provision for their needy *Panchama* brethren.

Their final opinion, however, is:

In some villages untouchability has ceased to exist and in several it is likely to disappear soon. We consider the progress not uniform and not sufficient.

Their final summing-up is:

No doubt all this is a good record, but it is difficult to see how far the masses can remain absolutely peaceful if more drastic and inhuman measures are employed. The time at their disposal for discipline has been too short. They have been just at the beginning of the fight. We consider it more advisable to postpone the campaign until the people have sufficient time to steel their hearts against all engines of oppression.

I have given relevant extracts from this valuable report to show: (1) the utter impartiality with which the Commissioners approach their mission, (2) the marvellous progress made in the selected area in fulfilling the conditions laid down by the Congress, (3) the necessity for much greater work before the idea of civil disobedience could be approached with any confidence. I am aware that extraordinary efforts were being put forth in many parts of India for due fulfilment of the Congress conditions in order that the people might be able to exercise the privilege of civil disobedience. That in itself is certainly a matter for congratulation, but work of construction ought not to have to depend upon stimulation. It must go on irrespective of the excitement of civil disobedience. Removal of untouchability, manufacture of khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity, cultivation of non-violence are not measures of a temporary character. They are the four pillars on which the structure of swaraj must for ever rest. Take away any one of them and it must topple down. The greater, therefore, the progress in these four matters, the nearer we are to swaraj, and the nearer also to capacity for civil disobedience. Indeed, even disobedience, if it is truly civil, excludes the idea of excitement. When Daniel threw open his doors in defiance of the laws of Medes and Persians, when John Bunyan became a non-conformist, when Latimer thrust his hand into

the fire, when Prahlad embraced the red-hot iron pillar, not one of these civil resisters of old resisted under excitement. On the contrary they were, if possible, more collected and deliberate than on ordinary occasions. Absence of excitement is an infallible test of civil disobedience. I therefore hope that the good people of the selected area will not go to sleep now that mass civil disobedience has been suspended, but that they will go on with the programme of construction with greater zeal and devotion.

#### A WIFE'S FAITH

Mrs. Stokes in writing to Mr. Andrews says:

I know it well that when my husband is in jail with many other sons of India, suffering for the sake of righteousness, he is sure to be happy. I am quite confident that the Almighty God will hear the cry of the oppressed and deliver His judgement.

The reader will be glad to hear that Mr. Stokes is happy and well in his prison. He is occasionally seen by friends in Lahore.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

### 127. ILLUSTRATION OF LAXITY

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

If I can be allowed to say a word or two in connection with your article "Our Laxity"<sup>1</sup> in the last issue, I beg to state as follows:

I believe, at least from my personal experience in the C. P., that the vast majority of the volunteers do not conform to the Congress conditions because the recruiting officers themselves are careless in observing the principles laid down by the Ahmedabad Congress. It is highly regrettable, while revered persons like Deshbandhu Das Lalaji, Panditji Nehru and others (now in gaols) are shouting out at the top of their voice that it is sinful for Indians to wear anything but khaddar, the Congress workers at several places are yet ashamed of wearing short khaddar dhotis instead of their mill or *videshi* dhotis. Even many of the leaders who appear on platforms to deliver speeches, I am pained to say, are seen in their old *videshi* or mill clothes.

So under the circumstances, I think the public is entitled to have your advice over this vital question of dealing with the elected representatives and office-bearers who do not abide (as stated above) by the Congress mandate.

HANSAPURI

NAGPUR

28-2-'22

*Yours, etc.,*

MANCHERSHAW RUSTOMJI AVARI

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Our Laxity", 23-2-1922.



The Delhi resolution is quite clear on the subject and expects all office-bearers to wear nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

### 128. THE DEATH DANCE

Why is there this chorus of condemnation of the doubling of the salt tax and other taxes on the necessities of life? Wonder is expressed that now there is no apology even offered for the terrific military charges of sixty-two crores. The fact is, it is impossible to offer apology for the inevitable. The military charges must grow with the growing consciousness of the nation. The military is *not* required for the defence of India. But it *is* required for the forcible imposition of the English exploiters upon India. That is naked truth. Mr Mon-tagu has bluntly but honestly stated it. The retiring President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has said it and so has the Governor of Bombay. They want to trade with us not upon our terms, but upon their terms.

It is the same thing whether it is done with the kid glove on or without it. The Councils are the kid glove. We must pay for the glove. The reforms hang upon us like an incubus. They cover a multitude of defects including the blood-sucking salt tax.

They say to us: "We propose to hold India whether you wish it or not." We believe that all this is for our good. We think we cannot keep from fighting one another without the protecting power of the British arms. And so, being afraid to die at the hands of our brothers, we are content to live as bondmen.

It would be a thousand times better for us to be ruled by a military dictator than to have the dictatorship concealed under sham councils and assemblies. They prolong the agony and increase the expenditure. If we are so anxious to live, it would be more honourable to face the truth and submit to unabashed dictation than to pretend that we are slowly becoming free. There is no such thing as slow freedom. Freedom is like a birth. Till we are fully free, we are slaves. All birth takes place in moment.

What is this dread of the Congress but the dread of the coming freedom? The Congress has become a grim reality. And therefore it has to be destroyed, law or no law. If only sufficient terror can be struck into the hearts of the people, the exploitation can last another century. It is another question whether India itself can last that time under the growing strain or whether the people must during that time

die like flies. When a man begins to eat a coconut, he is not called upon to be tender to the kernel. When he has carved out the last bit, he throws away the shell. We do not consider it a heartless performance. No more does the trader consider what he takes from the helpless buyer. A heartless performance—there never is any heart about it. The trader takes all he can and goes his way. It is all a matter of bargain.

The councillors want their fares and extras, the ministers their salaries, the lawyers their fees, the suitors their decrees, the parents such education for their boys as would give them status in the present life, the millionaires want facilities for multiplying their millions and the rest their unmanly peace. The whole revolves beautifully round the central corporation. It is a giddy dance from which no one cares to free himself and so, as the speed increases, the exhilaration is the greater. But it is a death dance and the exhilaration is induced by the rapid heartbeat of a patient who is about to expire.

The expenditure is bound to grow so long as the dance continues. I should not be surprised if the increase is also laid upon the broad shoulders of non-co-operators. For them there is only one lesson. They may look upon the increase with philosophic calmness if they will be but true to their creed. The only way they can prevent it, the only way it will ever be prevented is the way of non-violence. For the greatest part of non-co-operation is withdrawal from the organized violence on which the Government is based. If we want to organize violence to match that of the Government, we must be prepared to incur greater expenditure even than the latter. We may not convince all the dancers of the fatal doom awaiting them, but we must be able to convince the masses who take part in it and sell their freedom to buy so-called peace. This we can only do by showing them that non-violence is the way to freedom—not the forced non-violence of the slave, but the willing non-violence of the brave and the free.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

### 129. IF I AM ARRESTED

The rumour has been revived that my arrest is imminent.<sup>1</sup> It is said to be regarded as a mistake by some officials that I was not arrested when I was to be, i.e., on the 11th or 12th of February and that the Bardoli decision ought not to have been allowed to affect the Government's programme. It is said, too, that it is now no longer

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was arrested at Ahmedabad after 10 p.m. on March 10, under Section 124, Indian Penal Code.

possible for the Government to withstand the ever-rising agitation in London for my arrest and deportation. I myself cannot see how the Government can avoid arresting me if they want a permanent abandonment of civil disobedience, whether individual or mass.

I advised the Working Committee to suspend mass civil disobedience at Bardoli because that disobedience would not have been civil, and if I am now advising all provincial workers to suspend even individual civil disobedience, it is because I know that any disobedience at the present stage will be not civil but criminal. A tranquil atmosphere is an indispensable condition of civil disobedience. It is humiliating for me to discover that there is a spirit of violence abroad and that the Government of the United Provinces has been obliged to enlist additional police for avoiding a repetition of Chauri Chaura. I do not say that all that is claimed to have happened has happened, but it is impossible to ignore all the testimony that is given in proof of the growing spirit of violence in some parts of those provinces. In spite of my political differences with Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru<sup>1</sup>, I regard him to be above wilful perversion of truth. I consider him to be one of the most capable among public workers. He is not a man to be easily carried away. When, therefore, he gives an opinion upon anything, it immediately arrests my attention. Making due allowance for the colouring of his judgement by reason of his pro-Government attitude, I am unable to dismiss his report of the Chauri Chaura tragedy as unworthy of consideration. Nor is it possible to ignore letters received from zemindars and others informing me of the violent temperament and ignorant lawlessness in the United Provinces. I have before me the Bareilly report signed by the Congress Secretary. Whilst the authorities behaved like madmen and forgot themselves in their fit of anger, we are not, if that report is to be believed, without fault. The volunteer procession was not a civil demonstration. It was insisted upon in spite of sharp division of opinion in our own ranks. Though the crowds that gathered were not violent, the spirit of the demonstration was undoubtedly violent. It was an impotent show of force wholly unnecessary for our purpose and hardly a prelude to civil disobedience. That the authorities could have handled the procession in a better spirit, that they ought not to have interfered with swaraj flag, that they ought not to have objected to the use of the Town Hall, which was town property, as Congress offices in view of the fact that it had been so used for some months with the permission of the Town Council, is all very true. But we have ceased to

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hriday Nath Kunzru (b.1887); President of the Servants of India Society since 1936 and of the Indian Council of World Affairs since 1948.

give credit to the authorities for common or reasonable sense. On the contrary, we have set ourselves against them because we expect nothing but unreason and violence from them, and knowing that the authorities would act on better than they did, we should have refrained from all the previous irritating demonstrations. That the U.P. Government are making a mountain out of mole-hill, that they are discounting their own provocation and the provocation given by the murdered men at Chauri Chaura is nothing new. All that I am concerned with is that it is not possible for us to claim that we have given them no handle whatsoever. It is therefore as a penance that civil disobedience has been suspended. But if the atmosphere clears up, the people realize the full value of the adjective "civil" and become in reality non-violent both in spirit and in deed, and if I find that the Government still do not yield to the people's will, I shall certainly be the first person to advocate individual or mass civil disobedience as the case may be. There is no escape from that duty without the people wishing to surrender their birthright.

I doubt the sincerity of Englishmen who are born fighters when they declaim against civil disobedience as if it was a diabolical crime to be punished with exemplary severity. If they have glorified armed rebellions and resorted to them on due occasions, why are many of them up in arms against the very idea of civil resistance? I can understand their saying that the attainment of a non-violent atmosphere is a virtual impossibility in India. I do not believe it, but I can appreciate such an objection. What, however is beyond my comprehension is the deadset made against the very theory of civil disobedience as if it was something immoral. To expect me to give up the preaching of civil disobedience is to ask me to give up preaching peace, which would be tantamount to asking me to commit suicide.

I have now been told that Government are compassing the destruction of the three weeklies which I am conducting, viz., *Young India*, *Gujarati Navajivan* and *Hindi Navajivan*. I hope that the rumour has no foundation. I claim that these three journals are insistently preaching nothing but peace and goodwill. Extraordinary care is taken to give nothing but truth, as I find it, to the readers. Every inadvertent inaccuracy is admitted and corrected. The circulation of all the weeklies is daily growing. The conductors are voluntary workers, in some cases, taking no salary whatsoever and in the others receiving mere maintenance money. Profits are all returned to the subscribers in some shape or other, or are utilized for some constructive public activity or other. I cannot say that I shall not feel a pang if these journals cease to exist. But it is the easiest thing for the Government to put them out. The publishers and printers are all

friends and co-workers. My compact with them is that the moment Government ask for security, that moment the newspapers must stop. I am conducting them upon the assumption that, whatever view the Government may take of my activities, they at least give me credit for preaching through these newspapers nothing but the purest non-violence and truth according to my lights.

I hope, however, that whether the Government arrest me or whether they stop by direct or indirect means the publication of the three journals, the public will remain unmoved. It is a matter of no pride or pleasure to me but one of humiliation that the Government refrain from arresting me for fear of an outbreak of universal violence and awful slaughter that any such outbreak must involve. It would be a sad commentary upon my preaching of, and upon the Congress and Khilafat pledge of, non-violence, if my incarceration was to be a signal for a storm all over the country. Surely, it would be a demonstration of India's unreadiness for a peaceful rebellion. It would be a triumph for the bureaucracy, and it would be almost a final proof of the correctness of the position taken up by the Moderate friends, viz., that India can never be prepared for non-violent disobedience. I hope, therefore, that the Congress and Khilafat workers will strain every nerve and show that all the fears entertained by the Government and their supporters were totally wrong. I promise that such act of self-restraint will take us many a mile towards our triple goal.

There should therefore be no hartals, no noisy demonstrations, no processions. I would regard the observance of perfect peace on my arrest as a mark of high honour paid to me by my countrymen. What I would love to see, however, is the constructive work of the Congress going on with clockwork regularity and the speed of the Punjab Express. I would love to see people who have hitherto kept back, voluntarily discarding all their foreign cloth and making a bonfire of it. Let them fulfil the whole of the constructive programme framed at Bardoli, and they will not only release me and other prisoners, but they will also inaugurate swaraj and secure redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Let them remember the four pillars of swaraj: non-violence, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian-Jew unity, total removal of untouchability and manufacture of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar completely displacing foreign cloth.

I do not know that my removal from their midst will not be a benefit to the people. In the first instance, the superstition about the possession of supernatural powers by me will be demolished. Secondly, the belief that people have accepted the non-co-operation programme only under my influence and that they have no independent

faith in it will be disproved. Thirdly, our capacity for swaraj will be proved by our ability to conduct our activities in spite of the withdrawal even of the originator of the current programme. Fourthly and selfishly, it will give me a quiet and physical rest, which perhaps I deserve.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

### *130. DESHBHAKTA'S ARREST*

Just at the time of going to the press, I received the telegraphic news that Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappayya has been arrested. He is the greatest and the best among the Andhras. His fault was that he loved India better than his ease. I congratulate the Deshbhakta and the Andhra friends. This great servant of the nation will have well-earned rest and the cause will prosper in spite of his withdrawal from our midst. For though his body can be imprisoned by the Government, they cannot take away his spirit from our midst.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

### *131. FOREIGN PROPAGANDA*

I see that there is great deal of misunderstanding about the scope of foreign propaganda undertaken by the Working Committee. I see that it was a mistake not to have published the report that was adopted by the Working Committee. Here it is:

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE OF  
THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE, DELHI

SIR,

At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Surat on 31st January last, the following Resolution was passed:

“The Working Committee records its firm conviction that dissemination of correct news about Indian political situation in foreign countries is absolutely essential and refers to Mahatma Gandhi all the correspondence on the subject of foreign propaganda now with the Working Secretary with a request that he should prepare a definite scheme in that behalf at an early date so as to enable the next meeting of the Working Committee to consider it.”

Having considered the resolution and papers forwarded to me by the Secretary, I beg to report as Follows:

In my opinion it is not only undesirable but it may prove even harmful to establish at the present stage any Agency in any foreign country for the dissemination of correct news in such country about the political situation in India, for the following reasons:

First, because it would distract public attention and instead of making the people feel that they have to rely purely on their own strength, it will make them think of the effect of their actions on foreign countries and the support the latter can render to the national cause. This does not mean that we do not care for the world's support, but the way to gain that support is to insist upon the correctness of every one of our actions and rely upon the automatic capacity of Truth to spread itself.

Secondly, it is my experience that when an Agency is established for any special purpose, independent interest ceases to a certain extent and what is distributed by the Agency is previously discounted as coming from interested quarters.

Thirdly, the Congress will not be able to exercise effective check over such Agencies, and there is great danger of authoritative distribution of wrong information and wrong ideas about the struggle.

Fourthly, it is not possible at the present moment to send out of India any person of importance for the sole purpose of disseminating news in foreign countries, for such men are too few for the internal work.

I am therefore of opinion that the work of publishing the *Congress Bulletin* should be better organized, if necessary, by engaging a special editor for the purpose and by sending the *Congress Bulletin* regularly to the chief news agencies of the world. The editor should be instructed to enter into correspondence with these newspapers or news agencies which may be found to interest themselves in Indian questions.

It is my firm opinion based upon experience gained through the conduct of the journals I have edited in South Africa and here that the more solid the Congress work and the sufferings of the Congress men and women, the greater the publicity the cause will attain without special effort. From the exchanges of letters and correspondence that I receive day by day from all parts of the world in connection with the conduct of *Young India*, I observe that never was so much interest taken in Indian affairs throughout the world as it is today. It follows that the interest will increase in the same proportion as the volume of our sufferings. The very best method of disseminating correct information about the political situation, therefore, is to make the Congress work purer, better organized and to evoke a greater spirit of suffering. Not only is curiosity thereby intensified, but people become more eager to

understand the inwardness and the exact truth about the situation.

BARDOLI,

22nd Feb. 1922

*I remain,*

*yours faithfully,*

M. K. GANDHI

After having gone through all the papers that were given to me and after having heard all the arguments for and against, I remain convinced that, at least for the present, we want no news agency outside India. We want the whole world with us, but we shall not get it by carrying on foreign agency. We can only send correct information to those who care for it. If a foreign country does not keep its own agency for gathering information from a particular country or about a particular movement, it is proof to me that that country is not interested in it. We have been without our agency in London now for nearly 15 months. I venture to think that we are no worse off today than we were 15 months ago. We are certainly better off because and to the extent that we have done substantial work in India itself. There are more people in the world interested today in India than there ever were. We, therefore, owe it to them that we place at their disposal correct information, but our duty must end there. I have before me a letter from Italy from an Italian editor telling me how deeply interested people in Italy are in the Indian movement, and the Italian newspapers are therefore busy instructing the Italian public in Indian affairs. This is what I call a natural and organic movement, but if, on the strength of this information, we were to establish an Indian agency in Italy to awaken further interest, we would not mend matters but would spoil them by overdoing. We shall therefore better consult our own interest by relying upon our own strength to speak for itself.

Moreover, the non-co-operation movement is one of self-help. Its formula is: "We shall succeed only to the extent of our strength and no further." No certificate of merit from the world will give us success, if we have not earned it by the sweat of the brow. No condemnation of the movement will kill it, unless we are ourselves so fickle-hearted as to give it up by reason of the condemnation. Let us not therefore turn our attention from our own work. Let us simply mind our work and let us be sure that the world will mind us without any further effort. I am really jealous of even talking away from their work some of the young men who necessarily have to be engaged in the preparation and distribution of the *Congress Bulletin*. But we have really no authentic record of the progress of our work from week to



week. The *Congress Bulletin* will therefore be useful as well for workers in India as it undoubtedly will be for our friends in foreign countries.

Being almost impatient to see the work inaugurated, the Working Committee has given me a free hand in organizing the *Bulletin*. I hope to issue the first *Bulletin* next week and thenceforth it would be issued from week to week. The *Bulletin* will be sent to all the readers of *Young India* at a nominal charge to cover a part or the whole of the cost of paper and printing. *Young India* has a registered circulation of over 25,000 and it goes to almost all parts of the world. It has a comprehensive exchange list. The price for the subscribers to the *Bulletin* only will be announced later. The method I have sketched is intended to save the Congress as much expense as possible and to give the widest publicity to the *Bulletin*. Whereas *Young India* represents my own views and those of my associates in the conduct of the journal, the *Bulletin* will contain nothing in the shape of individual views. It will be mainly a record of Congress activities all over India in all its multifarious departments, and an epitome of newspaper opinions both pro-Congress and anti-Congress. It will contain a Khilafat section registering all Khilafat activities during the preceding week. Such a *Bulletin* cannot become a success unless there is co-operation from all Congress and Khilafat workers. I invite therefore all who are interested in the *Bulletin* to send their suggestions and news addressed to the Editor, *Congress Bulletin*, C/o *Young India*. Correspondents will please take care to mark all such correspondence for the *Congress Bulletin* in order to save the *Young India* staff from having to handle correspondence intended for the *Bulletin*. To start with, I would ask every Provincial Congress Committee to send the number of members on its provincial register, the number of village and district organizations, the names and addresses of nationalist newspapers, the number of national educational institutions with the average attendance during the past 6 months, the number of Panchayats and all other information regarding non-co-operation activities.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

## 132. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

### I

#### ALIGARH INCIDENT

TO THE EDITOR,

*Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In the course of a communication addressed to the Government of India, you have stated as one of the seven instances of “lawless repression” the treatment of volunteers who “had given no offence or cause whatever” by the police in Aligarh. I have enquired into this on behalf of the Government from the Collector of Aligarh. He replies that the charge is absolutely untrue and I beg that you will give publicity to what he writes:

That knocks have been given and bruises endured is true enough but they have been inflicted solely in the course of dispersing unlawful assemblies and they have been extraordinarily few in number. No injured person has approached me, and even the non-co-operators of Aligarh are quite ready to do so if they have had any real grievance.

“The unruly spirit of a riotous crowd cannot be conjured away by the polite infinitive. As a matter of fact the kid gloves have never yet been taken off in Aligarh and the trouble here has been handled with the greatest moderation. Since the early attempt of the volunteers to behave in disorderly and intimidating manner when a certain amount of force had to be used, I am not aware that there has been any kind of physical collision in the town. So far as good feeling can be said to exist anywhere, I should say that it exists here, and both the police and Europeans can now go freely about the city without interference. To describe Aligarh as suffering, or as having suffered, from repression is a travesty of language and of fact.”

LUCKNOW,

*Yours faithfully,*

16TH FEBRUARY 1922

J. E. GONDGE

This is no denial. It is an attempt to justify the use of force which is admitted. Every tyrant justifies the use he makes of his lawlessness. Naturally the non-co-operators did not report their bruises to the Collector. If the kid-gloves demonstration consisted of “knocks given and bruises endured”, I am curious to know what it will be like when the kid gloves are off in Aligarh. If the arrest of Mr. Sherwani was great moderation and that of Mr. Khwaja was greater, then the “Knocks and bruises” were, indeed, the greatest moderation.

## II

### IN BENARES JAIL

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my d.o. letter No. 404/C, dated the 18th February 1922, I beg to draw your attention to a telegram from a certain Vishnudatiya of Benares to Mahatma Gandhi dated the 5th of February, which was duly published in your paper on the 9th *idem*. Inquiry has been made into the statements made therein and I must apologize for the length of the report which I must ask you to publish in explanation and contradiction of the telegram aforesaid. The telegram was somewhat incoherent, but it has caused much concern in the mind of the public and its allegations can only be answered at considerable length. I therefore reproduce the report which has been sent to me by Major N. S. Harvey, the Superintendent of the Benares Central Prison:

The facts about this case are as follows. Eight youths were sentenced by the Joint Magistrate on the 21st January 1922, to rigorous imprisonment under section 143 I. P. C. and classed as non-politicals. As there was such an unruly and unwieldy mob of political prisoners in the jail at the time, the jailor was not able to keep these eight prisoners separate, and they got mixed up with their friends, the other political prisoners, and we were not able to get hold of them and put them to hard labour.

On the 3rd February the Joint Magistrate and myself decided that we would separate these 'non-political' prisoners from the others, and after some trouble we were able to get hold of four of them—Ram Nath, Kamla Pati, Bhagwan Das and Satya Narayan, who were taken away to the regular juvenile prisoners' enclosure. This District Jail has had a juvenile jail in it for many years, so that the removal of these youths to this place was nothing out of the way. I have had 50 juveniles confined in this place for seven years to my knowledge. The juvenile barrack is a cellular one for obvious reasons, and youths are always locked up separately at night. So that the locking up of these four youths in separate cells was not a punishment, but was just the ordinary jail practice. They evidently did not like the idea of being separated from their political friends, so Bhagwan Das on the evening of the 4th February worked himself into a so-called state of 'unconsciousness'. This was about 7.30 p.m. I happened to be in the jail at the time and went at once and saw this youth. I most carefully examined him and came to the conclusion that there was nothing the matter with him and that he had worked himself into a 'hysterical state' purposely. Of course, his self-imposed hunger strike of two

days' duration may have had something to do with his condition. He probably thought that, if he got into a state of feigned unconsciousness, he would be taken away to hospital and given nourishment. This actually happened, some milk was given him and he was quite well by the morning.

The hunger strike of the other political prisoners from the 3rd to the 5th had nothing to do with this business. This was started because they were not allowed to get sweets and food from outside, and also as a sort of advertisement.

On the night of the 2nd February, Kripalani<sup>1</sup> and his youths gave a lot of trouble in being locked up. They behaved like a lot of hooligans in their barracks and the jail people were not able to count or lock them up till 11.30 p.m. The next morning they went on 'hunger strike' and refused to speak to or answer any jail officials. It is all nonsense to say that the cells in which these youths were locked up are insanitary; they are undoubtedly the cleanest and most sanitary living rooms in the jail. To prove this, the special treatment prisoners, who have recently been transferred from the Central Jail, have elected to live in these cells. As for being waterless, this is absolutely untrue. These youths were kept together in the enclosure during the day where there is a perpetual tap of good municipal water and if they had required water at night, there was a regular warder and two convict overseers to give it to them.

On the 5th February (Sunday) the political prisoners refused to have an interview with their friends as they said they were on hunger strike. The mob of two or three hundred city people were told that their friends refused to see them and were asked to go away. They refused to do so and collected a few yards in front of the main gate and started yelling, shouting and singing, and as there was a possibility of the gate being rushed into, the jailor telephoned to me. I telephoned and asked the Superintendent of Police to remove this noisy and unruly mob from the jail precincts.

LUCKNOW

20th February

*Yours faithfully,*

J.E.GONDGE

I have re-read the telegram referred to and appearing in *Young India*, of 9-2-22.<sup>2</sup> The most damaging facts seem to be admitted. The difference consists in the different gloss the Superintendent put upon the admitted facts. Without an impartial inquiry, who can judge bet-

<sup>1</sup> Acharya J. B. Kripalani (b.1888); principal of Gujarat Mahavidyalaya; President of the Indian National Congress, 1946 left Congress in 1951; Member of Parliament

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title "In Holy Banaras".

ween the rival interpretations? Those who know Prof. Kripalani will reject the charge of hooliganism brought against him and his pupils. As for insanitation and want of water, I am glad the Superintendent is able to deny the charge.

#### A REGRETTABLE MISREPRESENTATION

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

The attention of the Central Province Government has been drawn to the editorial note on "Interference with religious liberty" which appeared in your paper of the 2nd February 1922. Enquiries have been made from the Superintendent, Saugor Jail, with the result that the information on which your comments are based proves to contain a series of glaring mis-statements. As these mis-statements are causing considerable uneasiness in the public mind, I beg that you will give a prominent place to the following denial in an early issue:

1. Pandit Arjun Lal Shetti was admitted into the Saugor Jail on the 19th May 1921. He was put on twine making from the 13th June till he came to be admitted into the Jail Hospital for malaria (not for pneumonia) on the 24th September 1921. He remained in the Hospital for about a month and in consequence of the illness lost 11 lbs. in weight, of which he has regained 7 lbs. Ever since his discharge from the Hospital, he has been third-class work in twine making. I am thus able to affirm that he was never made to grind or prepare cords during his illness. The allegation that "it was when he was thus pressed that he had tendered an apology which he withdrew immediately he came to his senses" is a wicked lie and has absolutely no foundation in fact. The truth is that, in view of the assurance given by the Government in the Provincial Legislative Council on the 2nd August 1921, to consider sympathetically any apology tendered by persons undergoing prosecution or imprisonment for seditious speeches or offences of similar nature, Superintendents of Jails were addressed to communicate the Government attitude to the political prisoners in their charge. This was accordingly communicated by the Superintendent, Saugor Jail to Pundit Arjun Lal Shetti on or about the middle of September 1921. On the 2nd November 1921 he verbally expressed to the Superintendent his desire to apologize. A week after, he said the same thing to the Deputy Commissioner of the District when he paid a visit to the prisoner in Jail. The Deputy Commissioner asked him to apply in writing if he really wished to do so. The prisoner gave a written apology the next day, i.e., on the 10th November 1921, which was forwarded to the Local Government in the usual official manner. The fact of his having tendered an apology was well known and the interest taken by the public in this prisoner's health

became very great. On the 21st November 1921 his son interviewed him and pressed him to withdraw his apology. The prisoner showed his willingness to do so in presence of his son and was told by the Superintendent to apply in writing, if he was really serious to withdraw it. The prisoner gave the petition to withdraw his apology two days after, i.e., on the 23rd November 1921, and [it] was forwarded by the Superintendent to the Local Government. I would pointedly draw your attention to the fact that the prisoner was discharged from the Hospital on the 17th October 1921, and he submitted his apology on the 10 November 1921, that is, nearly a month after the date of the discharge from the Hospital. It will thus appear that the prisoner was neither drugged nor tricked into making an apology. On the contrary it required the moral influence of his friends to make him withdraw it.

2. The allegation that “he is being forced to take eggs and wine” is a perversion of the truth. The fact is that neither of these articles is given to the prisoner. The prisoner petitioned the Superintendent to give him eggs and also wrote to his relatives about it, asking them to keep the matter secret and not to out-caste him. He even mentioned this to his friends Laxmi Narayan and Panna Lal of Saugor who interviewed him on the 16th January 1922. The Superintendent could not grant the prisoner’s petition for eggs, as it is an article prohibited to good caste Hindus.

*Yours faithfully,*

N. R. CHANDORKAR

PUBLICITY OFFICER TO GOVERNMENT,  
CENTRAL PROVINCES

This misrepresentation was discovered by me before the receipt of the letter from the Publicity Officer and duly noted in last week’s *Young India*.<sup>1</sup> The misrepresentations about Pundit Sethi’s treatment are about the worst I have yet noticed. I hope they are the last. I am sorry for being instrumental in giving currency to the sensational news about the treatment of Pundit Arjunlal.

*Young India*, 9-3-1922

<sup>1</sup> This was published in the issue dated February 23, *vide* “Notes”, 23-2-1922, under the sub-title “A Correction”.

### 133 MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC<sup>1</sup>

[AJMER,  
March 9, 1922]

- (1) That there should be no demonstration or hartal on his arrest.
- (2) That mass civil disobedience should not be taken up and non-violence should strictly be adhered to.
- (3) That full attention should be paid to the removal of untouchability and drunkenness and the use of khaddar should be encouraged.
- (4) That, after his arrest, people should centre their hopes in Hakim Ajmal Khan.

*The Searchlight*, 19-3-1922

### 134. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

AJMER,  
Thursday [March 9, 1922]

CHI. MAHADEV,<sup>2</sup>

I have come here for a day on Chhotani Mian's<sup>3</sup> invitation. I shall return tonight. Shuaib and Parasram are with me.

I got your letter. I do not know how Durga<sup>4</sup> came to think that I was offended. You did well in writing the letters. I would certainly be hurt if you do not express your thoughts. If you do not let me know them, I cannot correct them, nor can I, even if I wish to, correct my own thoughts in the light of what you think. Durga or Mathuradas or whoever else told you has made a mistake. Remember, however, that a prisoner<sup>5</sup> has no right to indulge in such speculation. In any case, he should not feel hurt. I wish to see you all as you actually are and not as you would be, for I, too, wish to appear to you all as I am. I may

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji saw Abdul Bari at Ajmer on March 9 and gave him this message to be released to the public. It was issued to the Press from Lucknow on March 15. Gandhiji was arrested on March 10.

<sup>2</sup> Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years.

<sup>3</sup> Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani; nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay. He had invited Gandhiji to attend the Muslim Ulemas' Conference.

<sup>4</sup> Wife of the addressee

<sup>5</sup> Mahadev Desai was then serving a term of imprisonment in Naini Jail, near Allahabad, for his articles in the *Independent*.

very much wish to be better than what I am; but if I did not appear as I am, I cannot be what I wish to be.

There was, therefore, no need for you to apologize.

After getting and considering all the papers, I have become confirmed in my views. By making a change in my language, I have proved my spirit of compromise. By expressing my personal views in *Young India*, I am proclaiming my firmness and independence. Take it from me that Chauri Chaura has saved us from a conflagration and has brought swaraj miles nearer. That other swaraj [we were trying to attain] was like a mirage. There is such a close connection between the means and the end that it is difficult to say which of the two is more important. Or we may say that the means is the body and the end is the soul. The end is invisible, the means is visible. Now we shall have the pleasure of demonstrating this great truth.

Just as Sudhanva<sup>1</sup> kept dancing with joy in the cauldron of boiling oil, so do I feel intense joy in the blazing fire around me. Now is the time when the real nature of non-violence will be revealed.

You should always write whatever you wish to without any hesitation. Keep on purifying the atmosphere around you. I wish you become a powerful writer in Urdu. Your presence outside is no doubt useful. I, however, wish that you finish your term of imprisonment.

You should not at all be worried about what is happening outside. Many people in America are unhappy. What can we do about them? Similarly, what can you do about what happens outside?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 7981

<sup>1</sup> Son of King Hansdhvaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharata*, who defied his parents and, adhering to truth and God, smilingly threw himself into a cauldron of boiling oil.



### 135. IN HAZARIBAG JAIL

[On or before *March 10, 1922*]<sup>1</sup>

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

On 7-2-22, the Jail Superintendent, Major Cook and Mr. Meck, the Jailor of the local Central Jail, went to see Shah Abutorab Wazi Ahmed B. A., B. L., Vakil of the High Court, who is a political (non-co-operator) prisoner and who has been transferred here from the Buxar Central Jail. At that time the said Maulvi Saheb who was engaged in reading his Quran was asked by the Superintendent to stand up; but as he was busy in reading his Quran he could not do so and hinted by raising his hand to wait, whereon the Jailor shouted out something in English and kicked the Quran and forcibly lifted up the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb and shook him physically and took away the Quran. This created a great deal of sensation and unrest among the other political prisoners in the jail who made some sort of protest. The public of this town has been greatly alarmed and shocked to hear all these incidents. So much so that, on Friday last the Mussalmans of this place held a meeting in the mosque protesting against this sacrilegious act of the Jailor in kicking the Quran and brutally treating the Maulvi Saheb during his religious devotion.

On 18-2-22 Mr. A. W. Jones, Deputy Magistrate of Hazaribag, went to the jail hospital along with the Superintendent and the Jailor and there examined the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb, Babu Ram Narain Singh, B.L., a non-co-operator political prisoner, Babu Chitaranjan Guha Thakurta and Maulvi Md. Fasiuddin, prisoners, and they all corroborated the fact of kicking the Quran by the Jailor. After that, Doctor, Babu and Headwarder were examined and they denied all knowledge of the fact. After this the Superintendent ordered that the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb Abutorab B. L., Babu Chitaranjan Guha Thakurta and Md. Fasiuddin be given 15 stripes each and they were taken to the place for being flogged and the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb Abutorab B. L. was fastened to the triangular post whereon Mr. Wardi Jones, D. M., asked to wait as he had not examined the orderly. Then orderly warder, Ramsagar Ram, was examined who fully corroborated the fact that the Jailor kicked the Quran whereon the Deputy Magistrate stopped the flogging.

On 23-2-22 the Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribag went to the Central Jail and dismissed the aforesaid warder.

*I am etc.,*

RAMESHWAR PRASAD

SECRETARY,

DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

HAZARIBAG

27-2-22

<sup>1</sup> This and the following item must have been sent to the Press by Gandhiji before his arrest on March 10.

If the statement made by the correspondent is correct, it betrays a lamentable lack of regard even for the most precious religious sentiments of the people.

*Young India*, 16-3-1922

### 136. MY NOTES

[On or before *March 10, 1922*]

#### DISAPPOINTMENT

There is keen disappointment in the air following the suspension of civil disobedience. There may be two explanations for this: one, that the people's hope of immediate swaraj has been shattered and, two, that people did not realize the paramount importance of preserving peace.

If the first explanation is correct, then the meaning of swaraj has not been understood at all. Swaraj is a state of mind to be experienced by us. We have to win it by our own strength. If this is true, there is no reason at all for disappointment. Swaraj consists in our efforts to win it. If it is not won at the first attempt, we may make a second, a third, as many more as necessary. With every attempt, we shall advance. Has our labour of the last fifteen months been wasted?

He who does not know which direction to take may feel disappointed. If we know that swaraj can be won only by following the path of non-violence and we discover that, in place of the spirit of non-violence which we thought prevailed, people harboured violence, we should clearly see that our progress lies in suspending civil disobedience. If an army which has been advancing in the belief that the road ahead is clear comes upon a moat, does its progress lie in jumping into it? Does it not lie rather in abandoning the wrong path and seeking the right one or in stopping to build a bridge over the moat? What would history say of an army which, standing in despair beside the moat, fills it with its tears?

#### NON-CO-OPERATION NOT UNDERSTOOD

Such disappointment only shows that one has not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. The foundation stone of swaraj was laid when non-co-operation was started. The slave who stops saluting his master, is he not freed from that very day? Let the master kick him, abuse him, hang him. The slave has stopped saluting. He has realized that he was a slave. What does he care if the master does not

acknowledge him a free man? His strength increases with the latter's resistance, because it is a challenge to him.

So long as we are firm in our determination to secure justice about the Punjab, to heal the Khilafat wound, to win swaraj and also to stick to non-co-operation till we have succeeded in these aims, what reason do we have to feel disappointed?

When the War with Germany started, the British had expected that it would end in two months. Lord Curzon thought that he would have his Christmas dinner in Berlin. December 1914 passed and the War continued till December 1920; did this mean that the British were defeated? Liege was lost, so was Namur. France was run over by Germans right up to Paris. Did France admit defeat? So long as a warrior continues to fight, how can he be regarded as having been defeated? While the fight continues, strategy after strategy is planned, schemes of encirclement are tried out, tunnels are made through hills and bridges built over moats. It is thus that men and even nations are moulded. To Arjuna's question, "Does not that soul perish which, though struggling, fails in its efforts?"<sup>1</sup> Shri Krishna replied, with the utmost affection: "No one who keeps striving ever meets with an unhappy end."<sup>2</sup> "It is only the soul which doubts that perishes."<sup>3</sup> If we do not have faith in our non-co-operation, we lose the struggle the very hour we embark on it.

#### NOT PLAY-ACTING

The struggle on which we embarked in Calcutta in 1920 was no mere play-acting<sup>4</sup>. The decision was an expression of the nation's firm resolve. It was a pledge, like the one taken by the mill-hands in Ahmedabad<sup>5</sup>. Whether the struggle takes thirteen days or twenty-three, do those who stake their honour make any terms with God?

#### TIME-LIMIT OF ONE YEAR MISUNDERSTOOD

Some say: "Why should we send our children to national schools now? We had withdrawn them [from government schools] in the hope that everything would be over in a year" If there are many people who think in this way, it is indeed good that our goal was not

<sup>1</sup> *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 38

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> At the special session of the congress held in Calcutta in September 1920, the Non-co-operation resolution was passed.

<sup>5</sup> In February 1918.

won in one year. Otherwise, what would have been the condition of such people and the country?

If we have been unable to win power in one year, by what logic have schools which earlier appeared sinful to us become now fit for our children to attend? Or, were the parents merely led away by my arguments when they withdrew their children from schools? If so, I ask their forgiveness and would certainly advise such parents to send their children to Government schools. I and those who have understood the meaning of non-co-operation will ever look upon these schools, even if guineas were to be distributed there, as fit to be boycotted so long as the Government does not repent and bow to public opinion, whether this takes one year or many many years.

#### WRONG COURSE

Some say that the Vidyapith should pay the expenses of schools. If the Vidyapith is to pay, where will it get the money from? Surely, it will not bring money from outside to educate children in Gujarat? Instead of contributing money to the Vidyapith and then getting it back from it, why should we not raise enough in each town or village to run good private schools.?

#### SAHARA DESERT

I am convinced that it is all to the good that our way has been blocked by this Sahara Desert. We shall profit by the experience of being scorched by the heat and get hardened. We shall now be able to distinguish right from wrong, make out the brave from the coward, differentiate between those who joined us with proper understanding and those who did so without such understanding. We shall now know who are the actors and who the spectators. It was indeed necessary that we should learn this.

Schools are an acid test for us, Wherever national schools are functioning, it is proper that the local people should regard it as a point of honour to run them on their own. If no buildings are available, classes should be held under trees; if teachers cannot be paid, they may go round begging for provisions, live a life of privation and teach children. Only in this way can the nation rise.

#### ROWDYISM WILL NOT SUCCEED

Defiance of law for its own sake is uncivil behaviour and rowdyism. If swaraj is won through rowdyism will the rowdies then run the Government? We are planning to win it with our own efforts

and hope to run it ourselves. The worth of the swaraj-builder will not be tested by his ability to destroy, but by his ability to construct. One who can construct certainly knows how to destroy. But all those who can destroy cannot construct. We call the person who is engaged for breaking stones and gravel a mere wage-earner, while the one who builds is called mason. Without having learnt how to construct, we wanted to start destroying in Bardoli<sup>1</sup> and so God, in His kindness, held us back and saved us from danger.

#### SWARAJ-BUILDERS

We should heed the warning. We should now make an effort to become masons. If we cannot give a good account of ourselves in the building department, we have no right to offer civil disobedience.

#### INDIFFERENCE ABOUT PRESERVING PEACE

I have said that the second reason for disappointment may be that people failed to realize the importance of preserving peace. This is more dangerous than even the failure to understand the meaning of swaraj, for in that failure we are merely guilty of faulty diagnosis. If the *vaid*<sup>2</sup> is not sure of the correctness of his diagnosis, he can prescribe mild remedies. In the second instance, however, the *vaid* is guilty of carelessness in prescribing a remedy. A *vaid* gave a friend of mine zinc oxide in place of magnesium sulphate. Instead of having motions, the latter started vomiting and it was with the greatest effort, with proper treatment and after he had suffered much, that the patient was saved. Arsenic powder and powdered sugar look very much alike; what would be the condition of a person who takes arsenic instead of sugar? A friend mistook salt for sugar and put three teaspoonfuls in a cup of tea. When he took a sip, the expression on his face was worth reproducing in some comic journal.

The examples I have given are of ignorant, inexperienced *vaid*s. But what shall we say about one who, though knowing the difference between arsenic and powdered sugar, does not care whether he gives the one or the other? We may understand the point of view of those who believe that swaraj cannot be won by peaceful means, but it is impossible to tolerate one who is so thoughtless as to incite violence

<sup>1</sup> The Bardoli Taluka Conference held on January 29, 1922 accepted Gandhiji's proposal to launch civil disobedience and he informed the Viceroy about it in his letter of February 1. But the Chauri Chaura tragedy led Gandhiji to decide that the movement should be suspended.

<sup>2</sup> A physician practising Ayurveda

when an experiment in a peaceful method is in progress. Anyone who is so thoughtless knows neither the meaning of swaraj nor the best means of securing it. To such a person, concern for means seems to be fetters on his freedom. My view is that, by suspending civil disobedience in Bardoli, we have saved ourselves from a great calamity. If we are certain that we shall not on the whole succeed in influencing people to adopt peaceful methods and that the professional trouble-makers, too, in the country will not yield to our persuasion, it would be wise to give up all talk of winning swaraj by peaceful means. If we cannot gain control over them by such means, we should conclude that we shall never be able to bring round this Government also by peaceful means. If they cannot be won over by our love, they will assuredly be over-awed by the Government's guns and help it, or they themselves will become the rulers. Both these situations are undesirable.

I believe that, though it may be difficult, it is not impossible to win over the lawless elements. We need to have faith in ourselves, as also patience. Our lives should be governed by dharma.

If we earnestly start working on the various items in the non-cooperation programme and make progress in them all, we shall automatically learn the lesson of peace, for they include three important constructive activities—khadi, removal of untouchability and the unity of all communities. Can anyone even dream that Hindus and Muslims can be truly united until they have fully realized the importance of peace? If the two can maintain peaceful relations so that they may help each other, they together can, with love, win over the unsocial elements and other mischief-makers. Those who believe that this cannot be done cannot possibly believe in true friendship between Hindus and Muslims. If these two major communities are not bound to each other by ties of mutual regard, I venture a prophecy and say that one day they will fight it out to their heart's content. If the pride of both is humbled after this, the two together will be able to overcome the third party; if, on the other hand, one of the two is defeated in fighting, it will be doomed to slavery. This way of looking at the matter will furnish us the key to an understanding of all our problems.

That Hindus and Muslims should find themselves together in such large numbers in India, that they should have been enslaved by third power and that subsequently both should be awakened the

significance of these facts is plain for all to see. For myself. I see every moment the providence of God in it. Through peace lies victory, and through violence the destruction of both.

#### PROPAGATION OF KHADI

Shri Ramji Hansraj writes from Amreli to say that there was a time when hand-spun khadi was not available. Now that there is a large stock of khadi, he says, there are no people to wear it, and the saddest part of the story is that the women who spin, the carders who make the slivers and those who weave cloth from hand-spun yarn do not themselves wear khadi.

How can we hope to win swaraj under such circumstances? What is one to make of the fact that, even in a part of the country like Kathiawar, people do not wear khadi? Can anything be more perverse than that, instead of eating the bread I have made, I sell it in the market and then buy other bread for myself? Should I not value my own handiwork?

What are the workers of Kathiawar doing about this? Is not this one task enough to engage their energies to produce khadi and see that people wear it? If they give up busying themselves with other activities, things will soon get right. If population of twenty-six lakhs spins, cards and weaves to the value of no more than Rs. 10 per head every year, even then its work would produce goods worth two crore and sixty lakh rupees. This would come to less than two pice per head daily. But drop by drop the lake is filled, as they say; in like manner, the result which can be brought about by an increase of two pice in everyone's earnings should be seen to be believed. A postcard costing a pice, a tax of two pies on a rupee-worth of salt, railway fares at the rate of three or four pies a mile this is how Government's Postal Department makes a profit and the Post Master General gets an annual salary of thousands, the salt tax yields crores and the railway company earns lakhs from railway fares calculated at the rate of a few pies a mile.

The same kind of calculation applies to khadi. The only difference is that, while taxes at rates of a few pies make it possible for the Government to rule over us and the Viceroy to be paid a salary of Rs. 20,000 a month, while the earnings of railways yield large dividends to foreigners, the income from khadi will remain in the homes of the poor and brighten their lives. Practising this simple dharma even in a little measure can end much suffering.

I request everyone to help in clearing khadi stocks immediately wherever they have accumulated and in producing it wherever it is not being produced. I believe that all the khadi in Amreli will be disposed off if every person there buys from the store khadi just enough for one shirt.

Are there not enough uses for khadi? It can be used for making towels, loose covers, coverlets, double-sheets, satchels, bags, hammocks and carpets. When I hear of khadi stocks not being sold, I am reminded of persons who buy animal fat in place of ghee. In our country people may refuse to buy khadi when they refuse to buy ghee. We cannot claim to have understood the meaning of swaraj till khadi becomes as universal as currency.

#### COTTON SEASON

This is the cotton season. A reader, therefore reminds us that everyone, especially the cultivator, should store enough cotton for his own use. Others may buy for their needs. We should count no less than four seers of cotton per head. The best way to store it is for each one of us either to spin the quantity into yarn or to get it spun by someone else. The rich can employ skilled women and have fine, well-twisted yarn spun according to their liking. In this way, we can revive the old custom of employing one's own spinner and weaver.

#### ARBITRATION BOARDS

In Gujarat, the practice of appointing arbitration boards has not yet been introduced. We have completely forgotten the advantages of having our disputes settled by a *panch* or an arbitrator, as if we thought that justice could only be got through unknown persons and by spending money. Justice is not to be bought for money in this way; what can be sold is injustice. Fraud or false witnesses will be of no avail before a *panch* or an arbitrator. A *panch* settles the dispute and so brings the two parties together. Courts increase enmity, *panchas* lessen it. It is true that in these days people are tempted to go to courts because of absence of honest *panchas*. Moreover, are those who are fond of litigation likely to go to a *panch* at all? Nevertheless, if in every town or village, people make an effort, the practice of settling disputes through *panchas* or arbitrators can be revived.

#### POLLUTION OF SAFFRON

Till this day I was not aware that the saffron which is used for ritual worship and making sweets is imported from abroad and that it



is smeared with animal fat. Shri Mulchand Uttamchand Parekh writes:<sup>1</sup>

In view of these painful facts, the use of saffron in ritual worship or for making sweetmeats is courting sin while seeking to do good.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 12-3-1922

### 137. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SABARMAT,

[On or before *March 10, 1922*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

You are making separation from you more and more unbearable to me every day. I feel it, however much I wish that I did not. However, at a time like this, separation is the proper thing. I have already given you whatever advice I wanted to. The best thing for you now is to go to jail in an innocent manner, that is, without thinking of your safety, you may plunge yourself in any danger that comes your way. And if riots break out anywhere, I wish you will have the courage to sacrifice your life without a moment's thought in order to extinguish them. My blessings are with you.

Ramdas<sup>2</sup> has not yet come. Today Prabhudas<sup>3</sup> has arrived unexpectedly in response to Vinoba's<sup>4</sup> letter. Chhaganlal<sup>5</sup> too has come.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S. N. 7848

<sup>1</sup> The table does not tally with the figures given above and the totals also are not all correct.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji's third son

<sup>3</sup> Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>4</sup> Vinoba Bhave, Bhoodan leader; *vide* "Letter to Vinoba Bhave", After 10-2-1918.

<sup>5</sup> Chhaganlal Gandhi Gandhiji's nephew and co-worker; Editor of the Gujarati section of *Indian opinion* after 1908

138. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS OFFICE, BOMBAY

AHMEDABAD,  
March 10, 1922

WEATHER PERMITTING<sup>1</sup> GOING BARDOLI SUNDAY.

GANDHI

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 259

139. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

AHMEDABAD,  
March 10, 1922

THICK RUMOUR ARREST. YOU RAMDAS SHOULD COME  
IF NOT REQUIRED THERE.

GANDHI

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi* , p.258

140. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Friday [March 10, 1922]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Have just arrived from Ajmer. I am likely to be arrested this very day. Jagannath has now become free. I am thinking of sending him to Jalgaon. Dastane has come here for the same purpose. The work there can be carried on if we send one man. Please send me a wire if you see no difficulty in this [arrangement]. I shall reach there on Sunday morning if I am free. I have a letter from Surendra, but I am not writing to him separately.

SHRI MAGANLAL GANDHI

SWARAJ ASHRAM

BARDOLI Via SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5988. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was probably referring to the 'political weather'.

<sup>2</sup> On this date Gandhiji arrived at Ahmedabad from Ajmer.

*141. LETTER TO PAUL RICHARD*<sup>1</sup>

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*March 10, 1922*

DEAR FRIEND

I have your letter.

If I am free I expect to be in Surat on my way to Bardoli on Sunday morning. Do please come to Bardoli that day. I would like to have a long chat with you.

I am publishing your statement<sup>2</sup>.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. PAUL RICHARD  
BHARATIYA BUNGALOW  
ATHVA LINES  
SURAT

From a photostat: S. N. 7982; also G.N. 869

*142. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*March 10, 1922*

DEAR MR. KELKAR

I have your letter.

As you know, the rumours are thick about my arrest, but if I am free, I shall certainly come over to Bombay as soon as you are ready. If I get my well-deserved rest, I know that you will do all you can to further the movement. I have really very little to say in addition to what I have said in my article "If I am arrested" in *Young India*. I

<sup>1</sup> This letter also, like the preceding one, did not bear Gandhiji's signature and was dictated by him to Krishnadas before his arrest on the night of March 10. It was forwarded to the addressee on March 12.

<sup>2</sup> This was published in *Young India*, 16-3-1922, under the title "His Sorrow Is My Sorrow". It was a rejoinder to an article by Gandhiji on Paul Richard's interview with Lokamanya Tilak published in *Young India*, 23-2-1922.

was in Ajmer yesterday, and I have given some advice about the Khilafat which I may note down, otherwise you will hear it from Mr. Chhotani and others.

*Yours sincerely,*

SJT. N. C. KELKAR  
POONA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7984

*143. LETTER TO GOPALA MENON*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
*March 10, 1922*

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I certainly do remember your conviction.

I wish your venture all success. The only message<sup>1</sup> that I can send in the midst of overwhelming work is for both Hindus and Moplahs to realize their future responsibility not to brood over the past. How to reach the Moplahs as also the class of Hindus whom you would want to reach through your newspaper is more than I can say, but I know that Hindus should cease to be cowardly. The Moplahs should cease to be cruel. In other words, each party should become truly religious. According to the Shastras, Hinduism is certainly not the creed of cowards. Equally certainly, Islam is not the creed of the cruel. The only way the terrible problem before you can be solved is by a few picked Hindus and Mussalmans working away in perfect unison and with faith in their mission. They ought not to be baffled by absence of results in the initial stages, and if you can get together from among your readers a number of such men and women, your paper will have served a noble purpose.

*Yours sincerely,*

SJT. N. GOPALA MENON  
EDITOR, "NAVEENA KERALAM"  
6, VELLALA STREET, VEPERY  
MADRAS

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 260

<sup>1</sup> This was a message to Menon's newly started Calicut paper *Naveena Keralam*, and was published in the Press.

144. LETTER TO DR. BHAGWANDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 10, 1922

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS<sup>1</sup>,

I was delighted to receive your letter from Vizagapatnam.

I was sorry to hear about your brother.

It is said that my arrest is imminent. It is at night that I am dictating this letter, but if I am not arrested, I promise you I propose to deal with your pamphlet<sup>2</sup>. Not a week has passed but I have thought of it, only you will see that, in spite of my having doubled the size of *Young India*, I have not put in a line that need not have gone in that particular issue. So many things are happening which require immediate attention that I have been obliged to defer consideration of your scheme. That does not mean an indefinite postponement. You have generously given me a fairly long time, but I shall not abuse your generosity. If I get my well-deserved rest, I would like you then to open the discussion yourself in the columns of *Young India* if it is allowed to survive my arrest.

*Yours sincerely,*

BABU BHAGWANDAS

SEVASHRAM

SIGRA

[BANARAS]

From a microfilm: S. N. 7986

<sup>1</sup> 1869-1959; author, theosophist and colleague of Annie Besant; principal of the Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras.

<sup>2</sup> This was on the definition and content of swaraj, a subject on which Dr. Bhagwandas appears to have been frequently in correspondence with Gandhiji. He took up the matter again after the latter's release in 1924; "Note on Bhagwandas's Letter", 8-5-1924, and the appendix thereto.

145. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR<sup>1</sup>

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
March 10, 1922

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR<sup>2</sup>,

I do wish you [will soon]<sup>3</sup> get well and strong.

I thank you for your long letter<sup>4</sup>, but I won't weary you with my counter-argument. As you know, my arrest is reported to be imminent, but if I am not arrested, I shall look forward to our meeting. Just one thing I would like to say in order to correct what seems to me to be a misapprehension. I should be sorry if anything I have written has led you to infer that I have in any shape or form altered my view about the efficacy of imprisonment for our salvation.

I have not lost faith in the responsiveness to sacrifice by those who compose the Government. Only those who have courted imprisonment have not all been of the right sort. I certainly expect no response whatsoever to the imprisonment of those who are full of violence in their hearts, and my reason for suspending even civil disobedience for the time being is to see if it is at all possible to produce an atmosphere of real non-violence. Thus my present view is not due to my discovery of greater hardness in the administrators, but to the painful discovery of much less non-violence now in our midst

<sup>1</sup> Though dictated on the night of March 10, this letter was typed and dispatched the next day with the following covering note by Krishnadas, Gandhiji's personal secretary: "The accompanying letter was dictated to me by Mahatma Gandhi last night about an hour and a half prior to his arrest. The letter was actually typed by me early this morning and is being posted to you without Mahatmaji's signature but in accordance with his instructions."

<sup>2</sup> 1873-1959; lawyer and Liberal leader from Maharashtra

<sup>3</sup> These two words occur in the version given in M. R. Jayakar's *The story of My Life*,

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.* Dated March 7, this was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of March 2; It dealt with, in some detail, the Congress programme of non-co-operation and the question of Council-entry. Jayakar had wanted to meet Gandhiji.

than I had expected.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

SJT. M. R. JAYAKAR  
399, THAKURDWAR  
BOMBAY

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 259

#### 146. MESSAGE TO ASHRAM PEOPLE

AHMEDABAD,  
*March 10, 1922*

His parting words to the Ashram people were that all who bore patriotism and love for India should strain every nerve to propagate peace and goodwill all over India, among all communities.

*The Hindu*, 13-3-1922

#### 147. AN EXHORTATION <sup>2</sup>

AHMEDABAD,  
*March 10, 1922*

I have also<sup>3</sup> full hope in you and wish you to pursue in the work as energetically and courageously as I am hitherto doing.

*The Hindu*, 17-3-1922

#### 148. TRIAL AND STATEMENT IN COURT

[AHMEDABAD,  
*March 11, 1922*]

At Saturday noon Messrs Gandhi and Banker<sup>4</sup> were placed before Mr. Brown, Additional District Magistrate, the Court being held in the Divisional Commissioner's Office at Shahibag. The prosecution was conducted by Rao Bahadur Gir-dharilal, Public Prosecutor.

<sup>1</sup> Jayakar replied to this on March 17; indisposition prevented him from seeing Gandhiji, as he had expected, the next day, the day of the trial; *vide The story of My Life*.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji addressed these words, just before being escorted to the Sabarmati Jail, to "an eye witness" to the arrest whose report was published in *The Hindu*.

<sup>3</sup> Earlier, Gandhiji had expressed full trust in Hasrat Mohani.

<sup>4</sup> Shankerlal Banker, printer and publisher of *Young India*. He was arrested and convicted along with Gandhiji.

The Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad, first witness, produced the Bombay Government's authority to lodge a complaint for four articles published in *Young India* dated 15th June 1921 entitled "Disaffection a Virtue", dated 29th September, "Tampering with Loyalty", dated 15th December, "The Puzzle and its Solution" and dated 23rd February 1922, "Shaking the Manes".<sup>1</sup> He stated that the warrant was issued on the 6th instant by the District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, and the case was transferred to the file of Mr. Brown. Meanwhile warrants were also issued to the Superintendents of Police of Surat and Ajmer as Mr. Gandhi was expected to be at those places. The original signed articles and issues of the paper in which these appeared were also produced as evidence.

Mr. Gharda, Registrar, Appellate side, Bombay High Court, second witness, produced correspondence between Mr. Gandhi, the Editor of *Young India* and Mr. Kennedy, District Judge, Bombay High Court. Mr. Chatfield, Collector and Magistrate of Ahmedabad, was the next witness. He testified that security had been dispensed with on the understanding that he should be informed if Mr. Gandhi started his Satyagraha Campaign.

Two formal police witnesses were then produced.

Accused declined to cross-examine the witnesses.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, 53, farmer and weaver by profession, residing at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, said:

I only want to state that, when the proper time comes, I shall plead "guilty" so far as disaffection towards Government is concerned. It is true that I am the Editor of *Young India*, that the articles read in my presence were written by me and that the proprietors and publishers permitted me to control the whole of policy of the paper. That is all.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Shankerlal Banker, landed proprietor, Bombay second accused, stated that at the proper time he would plead guilty to the charge of having published the articles complained of.

Charges were framed on three counts under Section 124-A; accused were committed to the Sessions and trial comes off on the 18th instant.

Mr. Gandhi asked his associates present in the Court to carry on the publication of his papers.

*The Hindu*, 13-3-1922

<sup>1</sup> For the text of the first article, *vide* "Notes", 15-6-1921, under the sub-title "Disaffection A Virtue"; for those of the second and the third, Vol. XXI and for that of the fourth Vol. XXII.

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph is extracted from the "Statement of the Accused" as recorded in the Court and reproduced in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 136-7. *The Hindu* report had verbal variations.



## 149. INTERVIEW TO INDULAL YAGNIK <sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI JAIL,

March 11, 1922

A big job has been accomplished in Ajmer<sup>2</sup>. Maulana Abdul Bari<sup>3</sup> made a scathing speech which deeply agitated the thousands of Muslims who had gathered there. He had bragged a little. Many believe when I went there that there would be fireworks between us two and Hindu-Muslim unity would be wrecked. But the Maulana is an extremely pure man. I said to him: "Whatever you do today will be done in anger only. That may, perhaps, incense a few other Muslims also, but that will not benefit us at all. I, too, wish that both of us should go to the gallows, but only while we remain utterly pure." "The Maulana understood my point fully and now I do not worry on his account at all. Maulana Hasrat Mohani<sup>4</sup> also was there and he has come here with me. He has promised me that he would not place obstacles in the straightforward work of the Congress by upholding violence even in the least. Therefore, I am free from anxiety."<sup>5</sup>

I have only one message to give and that concerns khadi, Place khadi in my hands and I shall place swaraj in yours. The uplift of the *Antyajas* is also covered by khadi and even Hindu-Muslim unity will live through it. It is also a great instrument of peace. This does not mean that I do not favour boycott of Councils and law-courts, but in order that people may not have a grievance against those who go to them, I desire that the people should carry on work concerning khadi even with the help of lawyers and members of legislatures. Keep the Moderates highly pleased, cultivate love and friendship for them. Once they become fearless, that very moment they will become one with us. The same holds good also for Englishmen.

<sup>1</sup> Political leader of Gujarat; associate of Gandhiji for a number of years; editor of *Navajivan* during the period of Gandhiji's imprisonment, 1922-24; was elected to Lok Sabha in 1957.

<sup>2</sup> Gandhiji attended the Muslim Ulemas' Conference at Ajmer on March 9, 1922.

<sup>3</sup> 1838-1926; nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged the Muslim to refrain from cow-slaughter.

<sup>4</sup> 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader who was active in the Khilafat movement.

<sup>5</sup> What follows is the message asked for by Yagnik.

He<sup>1</sup> will now do great things. He has asked me to observe what he would do when I am in jail.<sup>2</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 19-3-1922

### 150. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY<sup>3</sup>

SABARMATI JAIL,

*March 11, 1922*

I do not want Bombay to mourn over the arrest of one of its mute Secretaries and myself, but to rejoice over our rest. Whilst I would like an automatic response to all the items of non-co-operation, I would like Bombay to concentrate upon the charkha and khaddar. The moneyed men of Bombay can buy all the hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar that could be manufactured throughout India. The women of Bombay, if they really mean to do their share of work, should religiously spin for a certain time every day for the sake of the country. I wish that no one will think of following us to jail. It would be criminal to court imprisonment till a complete non-violent atmosphere is attained. One test of such atmosphere will be for us to put the Englishmen and Moderates at ease. This can be done only if we have goodwill towards them in spite of our differences.

M. K. GANDHI

*The Hindu*, 14-3-1922; also from a photostat: S. N. 8059

### 151. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

SABARMATI JAIL,

*March 12, 1922*

MY DEAR HAKIMJI,

Since my arrest, this is the first letter I have commenced to write after having ascertained that under the jail rules I am entitled to write

<sup>1</sup> Referring to Madan Mohan Malaviya

<sup>2</sup> When Yagnik remarked, while taking leave of Gandhiji, that the latter had found in the jail a good nursing home, Gandhiji burst out into a great laugh and said, "Of course, of course, that is so".

<sup>3</sup> The message was sent through Sarojini Naidu who met Gandhiji in Sabarmati Jail.

as many letters as I like as an under-trial prisoner. Of course, you know that Mr. Shankerlal Banker is with me. I am happy that he is with me. Everyone knows how near he has come to me naturally, therefore, both of us are glad that we have been arrested together.

I write this to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Working Committee and, therefore, leader of both Hindus and Mussalmans or, better still, of all India.

I write to you also as one of the foremost leaders of Mussalmans, but, above all, I write this to you as an esteemed friend. I have had the privilege of knowing you since 1915. Our daily growing association has enabled me to prize your friendship as a treasure. A staunch Mussalman, you have shown in your own life what Hindu-Muslim unity means.

We all now realize as we have never before realized that without that unity, we cannot attain our freedom and I make bold to say that, without that unity, the Mussalmans of India cannot render the Khilafat all the aid they wish. Divided, we must ever remain slaves. This unity, therefore, cannot be a mere policy to be discarded when it does not suit us. We can discard it only when we are tired of swaraj. Hindu-Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances. Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities, the Parsis, the Christians, the Jews or the powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall some day want to fight each other.

I have been drawn so close to you chiefly because I know that you believe in Hindu-Muslim unity in the full sense of the term.

This unity, in my opinion, is unattainable without our adopting non-violence as a firm policy. I call it a policy because it is limited to the preservation of that unity. But it follows that thirty crores of Hindus and Mussalmans united not for a time but for all time can defy all the powers of the world and should consider it a cowardly act to resort to violence in their dealings with the English administrators. We have hitherto feared them and their guns in our simplicity. The moment we realize our combined strength, we shall consider it unmanly to fear them and therefore, ever to think of striking them. Hence, am I anxious and impatient to persuade my countrymen to feel non-violent not out of our weakness but out of our strength. But you and I know that we have not yet evolved the non-violence of the strong and we have not done so because the Hindu-Muslim union has not gone much beyond the stage of policy. There is still too much mutual distrust and consequent fear. I am not disappointed. The

progress we have made in that direction is indeed phenomenal. We seem to have covered in eighteen months' time the work of a generation. But infinitely more is necessary. Neither the classes nor the masses feel instinctively that our union is necessary as the breath of our nostrils.

For this consummation, we must, it seems to me, rely more upon quality than quantity. Given a sufficient number of Hindus and Mussalmans with almost a fanatical faith in everlasting friendship between the Hindus and the Mussalmans of India, we shall not be long before the unity permeates the masses. A few of us must first clearly understand that we can make no headway without accepting non-violence in thought, word and deed for the full realization of our political ambition. I would, therefore, beseech you and the members of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. to see that our ranks contain no workers who do not fully realize the essential truth I have endeavoured to place before you. A living faith cannot be manufactured by the rule of majority.

To me the visible symbol of all-India unity and, therefore, of the acceptance of non-violence as an indispensable means for the realization of our political ambition is undoubtedly the charkha, i.e., khaddar. Only those who believe in cultivating a non-violent spirit and eternal friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans will daily and religiously spin. Universal hand-spinning and the universal manufacture and use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar will be a substantial, if not absolute, proof of the real unity and non-violence, and it will be a recognition of a living kinship with the dumb masses. Nothing can possibly unify and revivify India as the acceptance by all India of the spinning-wheel as a daily sacrament and the khaddar wear as a privilege and a duty.

Whilst, therefore, I am anxious that more title-holders should give up their titles; lawyers, law-courts; scholars, the Government schools or colleges; the Councillors, the Councils and the soldiers and the civilians, their posts, I would urge the nation to restrict its activity in this direction only to the consolidation of the results already achieved and to trust its strength to command further abstentions from association with a system we are seeking to mend or end.

Moreover, the workers are too few. I would not waste a single worker today on destructive work when we have such an enormous amount of constructive work. But perhaps the most conclusive argument against devoting further time to destructive propaganda is the fact that the spirit of intolerance, which is a form of violence, has never been so rampant as now. Co-operators are estranged from us.

They fear us. They say that we are establishing a worse bureaucracy than the existing one. We must remove every cause for such anxiety. We must go out of our way to win them to our side. We must make Englishmen safe from all harm from our side. I should not have to labour the point if it was clear to everyone, as it is to you and to me, that our pledge of non-violence implies utter humility and goodwill even towards our bitterest opponent. This necessary spirit will be automatically realized if only India will devote her sole attention to the work of construction suggested by me.

I flatter myself with the belief that my imprisonment is quite enough for a long time to come. I believe in all humility that I have no ill will against anyone. Some of my friends would not have to be as non-violent as I am. But we contemplated the imprisonment of the most innocent. If I may be allowed that claim, it is clear that I should not be followed to prison by anybody at all. We do want to paralyse the Government considered as a system not however by intimidation, but by the irresistible pressure of our innocence. In my opinion, it would be intimidation to fill the gaols anyhow, and why should more innocent men seek imprisonment till one considered to be the most innocent has been found inadequate for the purpose?

My caution against further courting of imprisonment does not mean that we are now to shirk imprisonment. If the Government will take away every non-violent non-co-operator, I should welcome it. Only, it should not be because of our civil disobedience, defensive or aggressive. Nor, I hope, will the country fret over those who are in jail. It will do them and the country good to serve the full term of their imprisonment. They can be fitly discharged before their time only by an act of the Swaraj Parliament. And I entertain an absolute conviction that universal adoption of khaddar is swaraj.

I have refrained from mentioning untouchability. I am sure every good Hindu believes that it has got to go. Its removal is as necessary as the realization of Hindu-Muslim unity.

I have placed before you a programme which is, in my opinion, the quickest and the best. No impatient Khilafatist can devise a better. May God give you health and wisdom to guide the country to her destined goal.<sup>1</sup>

*I am*  
*Yours sincerely*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 7991

<sup>1</sup> To this Hakim Ajmal Khan replied on March 17; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Hakim Ajmal Khan", 17-3-1922.

## 152. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[SABARMATI JAIL,]

Sunday, March 12, 1922

MY DEAR KRISTODAS<sup>1</sup>,

The correspondence, reports, etc. should come to you for disposal.

Unless it is too much for you, all articles must finally pass through your hands.

I have several names as Editor (Satis Babu<sup>2</sup>, Rajagopalachari<sup>3</sup> you, Shuaib<sup>4</sup>, Kaka<sup>5</sup>, Devdas<sup>6</sup>).

It would be better now if Satis Babu gave you the permission to sign articles.

The room should be entirely at your disposal. You should lock the verandah door from inside. Fix up the whole office there. Hardikar<sup>7</sup> and the *Bulletin* staff should be there for work but under your permission.

Of course you have my blessings. God will give you all the strength and wisdom you need.

BAPU

*Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 260

<sup>1</sup> As Gandhiji used to call Krishnadas, his secretary

<sup>2</sup> Satishchandra Mukerji, formerly Principal, Bengal National College, and editor Dawn Magazine, Calcutta.

<sup>3</sup> Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

<sup>4</sup> Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

<sup>5</sup> Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885); popularly known as Kaka Saheb; a colleague of Gandhiji since 1915.

<sup>6</sup> Devdas Gandhi, Gandhiji's youngest son

<sup>7</sup> Dr. N.S. Hardikar, Congress leader from Karnatak, head of the Hindustani seva Dal.

### 153. LETTER TO ABDUL BARI

SABARMATI JAIL,

[After March 12, 1922]

DEAR MAULANA SAHIB,

Just now I am enjoying myself in my house of freedom. Hakimji and other friends are here. I feel your absence, but that does not much worry me since we had ample discussion at Ajmer. I know that you will certainly steadily stick to those principles that formed the subject of our talk. I will earnestly request you to avoid making any speeches in public. Personally, after deep thought, I have come to the conclusion that, if there is anything that can serve an effective and visible symbol of the Hindu-Muslim unity, it is the adoption of charkha and pure khaddar dress prepared from hand-spun yarn by the rank and file of both the communities. Only universal acceptance of this cult can supply us with a common idea and afford a common basis of action.

The use of khaddar cannot become universal until both the communities take to it. The universal adoption of charkha and khaddar, therefore, would awaken India. It will also be a proof of our capacity to satisfy all our needs. Ever since the commencement of our present struggle, we have been feeling the necessity of boycotting foreign cloth. I venture to suggest that, when khaddar comes universally in use, the boycott of foreign cloth will automatically follow. Speaking for myself, charkha and khaddar have a special religious significance to me because they are a symbol of kinship between the members of both the communities and the hunger and disease-stricken poor. It is by virtue of the fact that our movement can today be described as moral and economic as well as political. So long as we cannot achieve this little thing, I feel certain success is impossible. Again, the khaddar movement can succeed only when we recognize non-violence as an essential condition for the attainment of swaraj and Khilafat both. Therefore, the khaddar programme is the only effective and successful programme that I can place before the country at present. I was so glad when you told me that you would begin to spin regularly when I be arrested. I can only say that every man, woman and child ought to spin as a religious duty till a complete and permanent boycott of foreign cloth is effected, the Khilafat and

Punjab wrongs satisfactorily redressed and swaraj attained. May I entreat you to use all your influence for popularizing charkha among your Muslim brethren?

*Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, pp. 745-6*

#### 154. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SABARMATI JAIL,  
March 13 [1922]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

At last I am having a quiet time. It was bound to come. The calm that prevails in India today is surely a mighty triumph of non-violence.

I would like you to keep *Young India* up to the mark. At first I thought of wiring to you to take editorial charge. But I recalled our conversation and thought the nominal head should be an Indian. But will you regularly write and, when time permits, go over to Sabarmati occasionally? You must know Kristodas and Shuaib. You will fall in love with both at once.

I hope the case you have lost did not contain much that could not be recalled.

With love,

Yours,  
MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS  
SANTINIKETAN  
BOLPUR

From a photostat: G. N. 2610

#### 155. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI <sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI JAIL,  
March 13 1922

MY DEAR SISTER,

You have neglected me entirely. But I know that you have done so to save my time.

I want you to devote the whole of your time to nothing but

<sup>1</sup> Sister of C. R. Das



charkha and khaddar. It is the only visible symbol of peace, all-India unity and our oneness with the masses including the so-called untouchables.

Please show this to Basanti Devi<sup>1</sup> and Deshbandhu. I hope he is well and strong. Prisoners cannot afford to be ill.

You know, of course, that Shankerlal Banker is with me.

With love to you all.

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI

NARI KARMA MANDIR

CALCUTTA

*Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*, p. 742

### 156. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[SABARMATI JAIL, ]

*Silence Day, March 13, 1922*

You have now to take on the burden of Shankerlal's work. You are capable of carrying it. But on one condition: you must take exercise and spend two days in a week at Matheran. You ought not to remain ill or weak.

I enjoy boundless peace. Here it is as good as home. Till this moment I have not felt that I am in jail. But, believe me, I shall enjoy even greater peace than at present when visitors stop coming and there are some jail restrictions also. There should, therefore, be no grief on my account.

Those who are outside [the prison] will find that their peace lies in their work. And that work is nothing but popularizing and producing khadi. The production in Bombay proper may not be much, but it is desirable that plenty of it is collected there from all sides.

If we have our headquarters in Ahmedabad instead of in Bombay and collected all the khadi there, it may possibly be less expensive.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, pp. 47-8

<sup>1</sup> Wife of C. R. Das

### 157. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI <sup>1</sup>

JAIL,

*Silence day, March 13, 1922*

I enjoy perfect peace. I was arrested only after I had eradicated my anger, had undergone atonement and purified myself. What better lot can there be for India or for me? Please do not worry about me at all. . . <sup>2</sup>

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuni Prasadi*, p. 48

### 158. INTERVIEW IN JAIL<sup>3</sup>

SABARMATI JAIL,

*March 14, 1922*

A long discussion took place regarding the contribution of funds by some Ahmedabad mills towards the Tilak Swaraj Fund of about three lacs of rupees. Mr. Gandhi insisted on the giving over the whole amount to the Gujarat Provincial Committee, in a manner so as to use any sum wholly or partly in the national education. . . . At the end of a long argumentative discussion, ultimately the parties came to a unanimous decision that the Fund Committee should pay every year such amount as may be voted by the Provincial Committee to the labour unions of Ahmedabad in the interest of labour schools. The Unions were to submit their accounts to the Fund Committee of the mill-owners and keep drawing amounts from them.

This matter being settled, Mr. Gordhandas Patel, who is the Honorary Joint Secretary of the Mill Owners' Association, asked Gandhiji:

In case you are convicted, will the non-co-operation movement be adversely affected?

A. The words "in case" are inappropriate. The more harsh the punishment, the more strong will the non-co-operation movement be. This is my firm conviction.

<sup>1</sup> Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri, a friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta.

<sup>2</sup> Omission in the source

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji was interviewed by leading public men of Ahmedabad along with Gordhandas I. Patel, member of the Ahmedabad Mills Tilak Swaraj Fund who, in his private capacity, put a few questions to Gandhiji. This extract was released by the Associated Press.

Q. After your conviction, if Government resort to rigorous repressive measures can any district or tahsil embark upon mass civil disobedience?

A. Certainly not. It is my emphatic advice that, whatever repressive measures Government may adopt, the people should in no circumstances indulge in any movement of mass civil disobedience.

Q. What should be the next move of the nation now?

A. The first and foremost duty of the nation is to keep perfect non-violence. Mutual ill will and feelings of hatred among the different sections of people have taken such a strong root that constant effort to eradicate them is absolutely essential and the non-co-operators should take the lead, because their number is considerable. There is a considerable lack of toleration, courtesy and forbearance amongst non-co-operators and it is my firm belief that that is the sole reason why our victory is delayed, and I regard the charkha as the most potent weapon to secure the required peace, courtesy, etc. Hence I would only advise that the people should become immediately occupied with the charkha and khaddar prepared therefrom. No sooner could we effect a complete boycott of foreign cloth and the use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar than swaraj is in hand and in consequence whereof the doors of the jail would be automatically laid open and my companions and myself would be able to be out. I anxiously await such an auspicious occasion.

Q. What is your opinion in regard to the remarks made by Sir William Vincent<sup>1</sup> against the Ali Brothers?

A. There is nothing new in it. The Brothers have given out in the clearest terms what they believed to be true. This is considered to be their greatest fault and I too am committing similar faults. For the same reason I regard them both as my real brothers.

Q. Will India suffer any harm in consequence of Mr. Montagu's resignation?

A. I certainly do not believe that there will be any harm. But Mr. Montagu certainly deserves credit for what he has done.

Q. Is there any logical connection between the political conditions of England and India at present?

A. There certainly is such a connection. If the programme which I have laid down for India is carried through, it will produce a very salutary effect not only on the political situation of England but on

<sup>1</sup> Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

that of the whole world.

Q. What do you think of the coming Paris Conference?

A. At present, I have no high expectations from that, as it is my firm belief that, as long as India does not show completely the miracle of the charkha, the problem of Khilafat will not be properly solved.

Q. What are your instructions regarding the harmonious relations between the mill-hands and the capitalists of the place, in your absence?

A. Repose full confidence in Anasuyabehn<sup>1</sup>.

Q. What message do you send to the people of Ahmedabad?

A. The people of Ahmedabad should take to khaddar, preserve perfect unity and support the current movement.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1922*

### 159. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[SABARMATI JAIL,]

*Thursday Night [March 16, 1922]<sup>2</sup>*

CHI. JAMNALAL<sup>3</sup>,

As I proceed in my quest for Truth, it grows upon me that Truth comprehends everything. I often feel that ahimsa is in Truth, not *vice versa*. What is perceived by a pure heart at a particular moment is Truth to it for that moment. By clinging to it, one can attain pure Truth. And I do not imagine that this will lead us into any moral dilemma. But often enough, it is difficult to decide what is ahimsa. Even the use of disinfectants is *himsa*. Still we have to live a life of ahimsa in the midst of a world full of *himsa*, and we can do so only if we cling to Truth. That is why I can derive ahimsa from truth. Out of Truth emerge love and tenderness. A votary of Truth, one who would scrupulously cling to Truth, must be utterly humble. His humility should increase with his observance of Truth. I see the truth of this every moment of my life. I have now a more vivid sense of Truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago.

<sup>1</sup> Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, a social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad

<sup>2</sup> The letter, bears the signature of the jail officer indicating that it was seen and passed by him on March 17, 1922. It was written by Gandhiji the previous night while he was an under-trial prisoner.

<sup>3</sup> 1889-1942: merchant and banker of Wardha; close associate of Gandhiji; social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years.

The wonderful implication of the great truth *Brahma satyam jaganmithya*<sup>1</sup> grows on me from day to day. We should therefore be always patient. This will purge us of harshness and make us more tolerant. Our lapses will then appear as mountains and those of others as small as mole-hills. The body exists because of our ego. The utter extinction of the body is *moksha*. He who has achieved such extinction of the ego becomes the very image of Truth; he may well be called the *Brahman*. Hence it is that a loving name of God is *Dasanudasa*<sup>2</sup>.

Wife, children, friends, possessions—all should be held subject to that Truth. We can be satyagrahis only if we are ready to sacrifice each one of these in our search for Truth. It is with a view to making the observance of this Truth comparatively easy that I have thrown myself into this movement and so not hesitate to sacrifice men like you in it. Its outward form is Indian swaraj. Its real [inner] form is the swaraj of particular individuals. This swaraj is being delayed because we have not found even one satyagrahi of that pure type. This, however, need not dismay us. It should spur us on to greater effort.

You have indeed, made yourself my fifth son. But I am striving to be a worthy father to you. it is no ordinary responsibility which a man who adopts a son undertakes. May God help me, and may I be worthy of the responsibility in this very life.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G. N. 2843

<sup>1</sup> “Brahma is real, this world is unreal.”

<sup>2</sup> Servant of servants

160. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS* <sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI JAIL,  
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just got your letter. You were quite right in not leaving your work. You should certainly go to Gurudev<sup>2</sup>, and be with him as long [as] he needs you. I would certainly like your going to the Ashram (Sabarmati) and staying there a while, when you are free. But I would not expect you to see me in jail; I am as happy as a bird! My ideal of a jail life, especially that of a civil resister, is to be cut off entirely from all connection with the outside world. To be allowed a visitor is a privilege. The religious value of jail discipline is enhanced by renouncing privileges. The forthcoming imprisonment will be to me more a religious than a political advantage. If it is a sacrifice, I want it to be the purest.

With love,

*Yours,*  
MOHAN

From a photostat: G. N. 1307

161. *LETTER TO A YOUNG FRIEND* <sup>3</sup>

SABARMATI JAIL,  
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR CHILD,

Well, I hope you were all happy over the news of my arrest. It has given me great joy, because it came just when I had purified myself by the Bardoli penance and was merely concentrating upon no experiment but the proud work of khaddar manufacture, i.e., hand-spinning. I would like you to see the truth of the spinning-wheel. It and it alone is the visible outward expression of the inner feeling for

<sup>1</sup> This was in reply to C. F. Andrews's letter expressing deep regret that, on account of the railway strike, he was not able to leave his work and come to Gandhiji before the trial was over.

<sup>2</sup> Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); poet and author; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1913; founder of Visva Bharti, now a university, at Santiniketan

<sup>3</sup> The source does not carry the name of the addressee. It is, however, likely that it was written to Esther Menon whom Gandhiji used to address as "My dear child".

humanity. If we feel for the starving masses of India, we must introduce the spinning-wheel into their homes. We must, therefore, become experts and, in order to make them realize the necessity of it, we must spin daily as a sacrament. If you have understood the secret of the spinning-wheel, if you realize that it is a symbol of love of mankind, you will engage in no other outward activity. If many people do not follow you, you have more leisure for spinning, carding or weaving.

With love to you all,

BAPU

*Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 747*

### 162. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SABARMATI JAIL,

*Silence Day [March 17, 1922]*<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MAHADEV,

Maybe this will be my last letter to you for a long time to come. Rest assured that you are rendering service by being there. My real service begins here. I shall exert myself to the utmost to observe the jail rules with my whole being, to shake off likes and dislikes, and if I really become purer every day in jail, that will have its effect outside also. Today there is no limit to my peace of mind, but when I am sentenced and visits from people stop, I shall have still greater peace of mind.

It may be asked, if we can render greater service in this manner, why not go and live in a jungle. The answer is simple. To go and live in a jungle suggests *moha*<sup>2</sup> for it implies desire on our part. To a Kshatriya whatever comes unsought is dharma. The peace of jail life which one gets without seeking may do one good. How wonderful is God! I purified myself thoroughly in Bardoli, did not allow any impurity to enter into me in Delhi, but on the contrary, purified myself still further by putting before the people the same thing in a language which would appeal to them, for I showed thereby my tenderness together with my firmness. Even afterwards, through *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I carried on self-purification. I wrote an article on ahimsa and another entitled "Death Dance" Thus when the process of self-purification had reached the highest point, I offered

<sup>1</sup> The date is given in the addressee's hand.

<sup>2</sup> Attachment to false values

myself for arrest, singing the song of *Vaishnavajana*<sup>1</sup>. If this does not constitute the good, what else can?

It is my desire that no one should now deliberately seek imprisonment.

Translate this letter to your teacher Khwaja Saheb<sup>2</sup>, to your comrade Joseph<sup>3</sup> and others.

Could it be even dreamt of that Shankarlal should be arrested with me? But God may do anything.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7997

### 163. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SABARMATI JAIL,

March 17, 1922

CHI. MANILAL,<sup>4</sup>

Tomorrow I shall be sentenced. I shall hardly wish to write letters thereafter.

I shall be content if you take care of your health, and occupy yourself in some good work anywhere. While I am in jail, it is not necessary that you must come here. Now that you have made *I.O.*<sup>5</sup> your own, I think you can come here only after you have placed it on a sound footing. I see no one whom I can send to you from here. Every good worker is needed here.

It seems you have not yet sent the account from there. If you have not, please do so.

Imam Sahib's wife, Haji Sahiba, died suddenly of heart failure on reaching the port of Porbandar. Imam Saheb is filled with grief. He had been to see me yesterday.

<sup>1</sup> A devotional song attributed to Narasinh Mehta, a poet-saint of Gujarat. *Vide* "To Vaishnavas", 5-12-1920.

<sup>2</sup> Khwaja Abdul Majid who taught the addressee Urdu in the Naini Jail

<sup>3</sup> George Joseph, a barrister of Madura, was on the staff of the *Independent*, and in jail with Mahadev Desai as a result of Government's action against that paper. He also edited *Young India* for some time.

<sup>4</sup> Gandhiji's second son, who was in South Africa

<sup>5</sup> *Indian opinion*, Gandhiji's weekly



Now about your personal problem. Both Naidu and Ramdas tell me that I should write to you about your marriage. They believe that deep down in your heart there is the desire to marry, but that you would marry only if I absolve you from your promise. I do not consider you to be under any promise to me. It would be proper for every man to be under binding to himself. One is one's own enemy or friend.

You have bound yourself and you alone can free yourself from it.

It is my opinion that whatever peace you get is because of your self-imposed binding. You can be sure about this. As long as you do not think of marriage, you stand absolved from your past sins. This atonement of yours keeps you pure. You can stand up as a man before the world. The day you marry you will lose your lustre. Take it from me that there is no happiness in marriage. To the extent Ba is my friend, I derive happiness from her, no doubt. But I derive the same happiness from all of you and from the many men and women who love and serve me. I derive more [happiness] from the man or woman who understands me. If, at this moment, I get enamored of Ba and indulge in sexual gratification, I would fall the very instant. My work would go to the dogs and I would lose in a twinkling all that power which would enable one to achieve swaraj. My relation with Ba today is that of brother and sister, and the fame I have is due to it.

Please do not think that I got this wisdom after I had my fill of pleasure. I am simply painting before you the world as I find it from experience. I cannot imagine a thing as ugly as the intercourse of man and woman. That it leads to the birth of children is due to God's inscrutable way. But I do not at all believe that procreation is a duty or that the world will come to grief without it. Suppose for a moment that all procreation stops, it will only mean that all destruction will cease. *Moksha* is nothing but release from the cycle of births and deaths. This alone is believed to be the highest bliss, and rightly.

I see every day that all our physical enjoyments, without exception, are unclean. We take this very uncleanliness to be happiness. Such is the mysterious way of God. However, our *purushartha*<sup>1</sup> lies in getting out of this delusion.

Having said all this, I regard you as quite free [to act as you please]. I have written this merely as a friend. I have not given any command as a father. "Be you good" this is my only injunction. However, do what you wish, but not what I wish. If you simply cannot

<sup>1</sup> Goal of human life

do without marrying, do think of marriage by all means.

Please write to me in detail what your innermost thoughts are.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[PS.]

Please send here all my manuscript papers, correspondence files, books of newspaper-clippings, etc., which are lying there. Also, all the books which you think are not needed there.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1116. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

#### *164. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA*

SABARMATI JAIL,  
*Friday [March 17, 1922]*<sup>1</sup>

BHAI SHREE KISHORELAL,

I have always longed to see you. It would have been enough to have met you. Well, now your letter will do. You did the right thing in giving up the idea of coming over to see me. Your coming would not have served any special purpose; besides, the interruption in your practice<sup>2</sup> on account of it would have been an obvious loss.

Since your effort is sincere, it will certainly bear fruit. No honest endeavour ever goes in vain.

Sentence has not yet been passed on me. Possibly it will be known only tomorrow. At present I am an under-trial prisoner, and perfectly at peace. Shankarlal Banker, too is with me.

My blessings are ever with you. Do not be in a hurry to leave the place. But you may certainly leave it when your inner voice tells you to do so

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Shreyarthini Sadhana*, pp. 139-40

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was sentenced on Saturday, March 18, 1922. This letter was written the previous day

<sup>2</sup> The addressee had retired to a hut for contemplation under the guidance of Kedarnath *alias* Nathji.

## 165. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA

[SABARMATI JAIL,  
Before March 18, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

How can I forget to write to you? Please tell my Parsi sisters and brothers never to lose faith in this movement. It is impossible for me to give up my confidence in them. There is no other programme before me than that of khadi and charkha, charkha and khadi. Hand spun yarn must be as current among us as are small coins. To attain this object we can put on no other cloth than hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. So long as India is not able to do this much, civil disobedience will be futile, swaraj cannot be attained, and Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are impossible to be righted. If this conviction is driven home to you, keep on turning out yarn and using khaddar. Be expert spinners.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

*Young India*, 30-3-1922

## 166. INTERVIEW TO "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

SABARMATI JAIL,  
[Before March 18, 1922]<sup>2</sup>

... We came to the subject of non-co-operation. I asked him if in view of the answer Christ gave in the incident of the tribute money he did not think the policy of non-co-operation was contrary to Christ's teaching. He replied:

Not being a Christian, I am not bound to justify my action by Christian principles. But, as a matter of fact, in this case I do not think there is any indication that Christ was against the principle of non-co-operation. I think His words show that He was for it.

"I do not understand," I protested. "Surely the meaning is quite clear. 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's' means that it is our duty to pay to the civil authorities what is their due. If it doesn't mean that, what does it mean?"

Christ never answered a question in a simple and literal manner. He always gave in His replies more than was expected, something deeper some general principle. It was so in this case. Here He does not mean at all whether you must or must not pay taxes. He means

<sup>1</sup> This letter appears to have been written before Gandhiji's trial on March 18.

<sup>2</sup> The interview must have taken place before Gandhiji was tried and sentenced on March 18; *vide* "The Great Trial" 18-3-1922.

something far more than this. When He says “Give back to Caesar the things which are Caesar’s”, He is stating a law. It means<sup>1</sup> ‘give back to Caesar what is his, i.e., I will have nothing to do with it.’ In this incident Christ enunciated the great law which He exemplified all his life of refusing to cooperate with evil. When Satan said to Him, “Bow and worship me” i.e., co-operate with me, then He said, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” When the crowds round Him wanted to take Him by force and make Him a military king, He refused to co-operate with them as their method was evil; they wanted Him to rely on force. Christ’s attitude against the authorities was defiant. When Pilate asked Him if He were king, He answered, “Thou sayest it.” Is not that treating authority with defiance? He called Herod “that fox”. Was that like co-operation with authorities? And before Herod He would not answer a word. In short, He refused to co-operate with him; and so I refuse to co-operate with the British Government.

“But” I said, “Surely it is our duty in this imperfect world to co-operate with what is good in individuals and institutions.” The Mahatma said:

As a man. I would gladly co-operate and be friends with Lord Reading; but I could not co-operate with him as the Viceroy, being a part of corrupt Government.

Protesting further, I said “Granted the Government has made mistakes, yet you cannot surely say it is wholly bad; if there is miscarriage of justice here and there, the broad fact remains that the 300 millions of India are kept in a condition of law and order. Are you against governments in general? Can you point out to me any government on earth that is faultless and would satisfy you?” He replied at once:

Yes, look at the Government of Denmark. I should be satisfied with such a Government. It represents the people; it does not exploit a conquered nation; it is efficient; the people under it are cultured, intellectual, manly, contented and happy; it supports no large army and navy to keep others in imperial subjection.

“But,” I asked, “do you think empires are inherently bad? Surely the Roman Empire was a benefit to civilization. Christ never said a word against it as far as we know”

Quite so, but it was not His business to inveigh against imperialism. Every great reformer has to struggle against the special evil of his age. Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and, in a lesser way, Luther had their own evils and difficulties to contend with, peculiar to their age. So have we. Now it is imperialism that is the great Satan of our times.

“So you are out to destroy the Empire?” I asked.

I would not put it that way. I only wish to destroy the Empire

<sup>1</sup> Here Gandhiji waved his hand as though putting something away from him.

by creating a commonwealth. I do not wish for complete separation from England; we have no right to wish for it.

“What is your definition of this commonwealth to which India shall belong, what is to be its structure?”

It is to be a fellowship of free nations joined together by the “silver cords of love”. (I think it is Lord Salisbury’s phrase.) Such a fellowship already exists for many parts of the Empire. Look at South Africa, what fine fellows they are there! Australia fine fellows! And New Zealand splendid land and a fine people! I would have India enter freely into such a fellowship and with the same rights of equality for Indians as for other members of the commonwealth.

“But surely that is just the very aim that the Government has for India: to become a self-governing unit in the Empire as soon as she is ready for the responsibility. Is not this the whole meaning of the Montagu reforms?”

The Mahatma shook his head.

Ah, I am afraid I do not believe in those reforms. When they were first introduced, I rejoiced and said to myself, “Here at last is a small ray of light in the darkness, just a small chink but I will go forward to meet it.” I welcomed it; I fought against my own people to give it a fair chance. I said this was a sign of true repentance on the part of the Government. When the War broke out, I went about speaking at recruiting meetings because I thought the Government did really mean to give us what it promised. It is only a small beginning, I thought, but I will wait and see. I will humble myself, make myself small to go through this narrow opening. But events have changed me. Then came the Punjab atrocities, then the Khilafat question, and finally, all the repressive actions of the Government, and now I can believe in the reforms no longer. They were a mere blind, a camouflage to prolong the agony. That is why I call the Government Satanic and why I refuse to co-operate with it in any way.

From the subject of non-co-operation, the conversation passed naturally enough to the question of the boycott of foreign goods and the great khadi (homespun) campaign. Here the Mahatma’s face lit up, his eyes shone with enthusiasm.

Of all my plans and foibles, of all my weaknesses and fanaticisms, or whatever you like to call them, khadi is my pet one.

Touching the rough homespun shawl over his shoulder, he said:

This is sacred cloth. Think what it means. Imagine the thousands and hundreds of thousands of homes in the famine areas. When the famine comes they are stricken down; they are helpless. They do nothing in their homes can do nothing they wait and die. If I can introduce the spinning-wheel into these homes, their lives are assured;

they can earn enough money with the sale of their homespun to tide them over the famine.

This coarse stuff is dearer and finer to me than the softest silks of Japan. Through it I am bound nearer to millions of my humble and starving countrymen. Look at the cloth you are wearing. When you buy that, you put one or two annas into the hands of the workman and six or seven into the pocket of the capitalist. Now look at mine. All the money I spend on this goes straight into the hands of the poor to the weaver, the spinner, and the carder, and not a pice into the hands of the rich man. To know this fills me with a heavenly joy. If I can act thus, if I can introduce the spinning-wheel into every cottage in India, then I shall be satisfied for this life; I could go on with my other schemes in my next if it pleased God.

“What do you mean?” I asked, not quite sure of the drift of his last remarks. “You think we come back again to this earth?” He replied:

Yes. I think we all come back here again if we are not pure enough to go to heaven. You see, it is the same principle we were talking about before. “Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s the body must give back to the earth the things that are of the earth before the soul can give itself absolutely to God; or, rather, the soul must refuse to co-operate with the things of this earth; it must become quite free from any earthly desires and entanglements.

“And do you believe animals have soul too?”

Of course. It is the same with them; they, too, must learn to give back to Caesar the things which are Caesar’s. That is why as Hindus we do not kill animals; we leave them free to work out their own destinies.

“Then you think it is wrong to kill even such things as snakes, scorpions, and centipedes?”

Yes, we never kill them at our Ashram. It is a high stage in the development of the soul to feel a love for all humanity, but it is a higher stage still to have a heart of love for every living thing. I confess that I have not reached this stage. I still feel afraid when I actually see these creatures come near me. If we have no fear at all, I do not think they will harm us.

(I might mention here an incident related to me by one of Gandhiji’s followers. At evening prayer one day at his Ashram, a cobra came through the dusk and crawled right on to Mr. Gandhi, raising its head in front of him. His followers were going to catch it, but he signed to them to be still. He remained motionless himself and the reptile slid over his knees and went back into the garden.) The Mahatma, still on the subject of our relation to the animal world, continued:

I met an Englishman once. He was a veterinary surgeon and had

a wonderful way with animals. We were visiting a house together, and suddenly a gigantic brute of a dog rushed towards us, fierce as a lion, and raised himself up almost to the height of a man as he flung himself at us. I was petrified with fear, but this Englishman went forward to meet it as it charged, and embraced it without a trace of fear. Its anger evaporated at once and it began wagging its tail. It impressed me very much. That is the true way of meeting animals by non-resistance.

"But do you not think a man's life is worth more than an animal's? Take yourself now. You are the leader of a great movement which you believe to be for the good of your country. Supposing you were confronted by a crocodile and you could only escape by injuring it, would you not think your duty and responsibility as a leader were more important than the life of that reptile?"

No, I should say or at least I ought to say to this crocodile, "Your need is greater than mine", and let it devour me. You see, our life does not finish with the death of the body. God knows all about it. We none of us know what will happen next. If I escaped the crocodile, I could not escape the flash of lightning that might come next minute.

"But surely," I urged, "a man's soul is different from that of a crocodile if it has one at all. You remember what Chesterton says about it, 'when a man is taking his sixth whiskey and soda, and is beginning to lose control over himself, you come up to him and give him a friendly tap on the shoulder and say, 'Be a man'. But when the crocodile is finishing his sixth missionary, you do not step up to it and tap it on the back and say. 'Be a crocodile'. Doesn't this show a man has an ideal in him to strive after in a way no animal has?"

The Mahatma laughed and said:

True, there is a difference between the souls of men and of animals. Animals live in a sort of perpetual trance; but man can wake up and become conscious of God. God says, as it were, to man, "Look up and worship Me; you are made in My image."

"And the souls of animals, where do they come from?" I queried. "Do you think the soul of a man can become the soul of an animal?"

Yes, I think all these horrible and evil creatures are inhabited by the souls of men who have gone wrong snakish men, greedy, unmerciful crocodile men, and so on.

"But look at the infinite number of animals, the countless millions upon millions of insects, to mention only one group of the animal kingdom; are they all souls the mosquitos, the sandflies, the microbe?"

Who are we, to set a limit to God's sphere of action? Are there not countless other suns and planets in this universe?

It was time for me to go, for I had another appointment, so at this point I rose to take my leave. I went to the edge of the little carpet on the verandah where we had

been sitting and began to put on my shoes (for I had removed them, eastern fashion, being in a manner his guest).

As I lifted one shoe, I saw a spider in it. "See," I said to him, laughing, as I shook out the loathsome thing, and resisting the impulse to crush it, let it run away. "Look; it has been sent to me as a temptation, to try if I have profited by your sermon."

He laughed—he has an infectious and hearty laugh—and said:

Yes, a spider may be a great matter. Don't you remember the story of Mohammed and the spider?

I confessed my ignorance, wondering vaguely if he had got the story muddled up with Robert Bruce.

Yes, one day Mohammed was fleeing from his enemies in great danger. In desperation he turned into a sort of cave in the rock. A few hours afterwards the pursuers came along. "Ah," said one, "let's look in here; this is a likely place." "No" replied the other, "he couldn't be in here, for, see, there is a spider's web across the entrance." Not realizing how recently it had been spun, they passed on, and so Mohammed escaped by the help of the spider and the will of Allah.<sup>1</sup>

*The Hindu*, 15-8-1922

### 167. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

*Sabarmati Jail,  
March 18, 1922*

DEAR JAMNALAL,

From the purely economic point of view, I can say that unless merchants dealing in foreign yarn and foreign cloth give up their trade and unless the public give up their fondness for foreign cloth, starvation—the chief malady of our country—will not be ended. I

<sup>1</sup> The following are the concluding remarks of the reporter:

While he had been telling this, his friend and fellow-prisoner, Mr. Banker, had brought him his charkha or spinning-wheel. As I bade good-bye to the Mahatma, he was just settling down to the daily duty, shared by all his followers (in theory if not in practice), of spinning or weaving a certain amount each day.

As I reached the end of the verandah, I turned for a last look. There was this unassuming-looking little man, dressed with less ceremony than the meanest coolie, squatting cross-legged in front of his charkha, spinning away as contentedly as Mohammed's spider. Was he, I wondered, spinning a web that was to save the Indian peasant from the menace of an industrial system, untinged with even a veneer of Christian ethics; or was he himself caught in the centre of a vast web of illusions, spun from his own extraordinary brain, into which he had drawn hundreds and thousands of his ignorant and emotional countrymen?



hope all businessmen will participate fully in the propagation of khaddar and the spinning-wheel.

Yours,

MOHAN GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original: G N 2198; also 2844

## 168. THE GREAT TRIAL<sup>1</sup>

AHMEDABAD,  
March 18, 1922

At the Circuit House at Shahi Bag, the trial of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Banker commenced on Saturday noon.

Sir J. T. Strangman<sup>2</sup> with Rao Bahadur Girdharlal conducted the prosecution while the accused were undefended. The Judge<sup>3</sup> took his seat at 12 noon and said there was a slight mistake in the charges framed, which he corrected. The charges were then read out by the Registrar, the offence being in three articles published in the *Young India* of September 29, December 15, of 1921 and February 23, 1922. The offending articles were then read out; first of them was, "Tampering with Loyalty"; the second, "The Puzzle and its Solution" and the last was "Shaking the Manes".

The Judge said the law required that the charge should not only be read out, but explained. In this case, it would not be necessary for him to say much by way of explanation. The charge in each case was that of bringing or attempting to bring in to hatred or contempt or exciting or attempting to excite disaffection towards His Majesty's Government established by law in British India. Both the accused were charged with the three offenses under Section 124 A, contained in the articles read out, written by Mr. Gandhi and printed by Mr. Banker. The words "hatred and contempt" were words the meaning of which was sufficiently obvious. The word "disaffection" was defined under the Section where they were told that disaffection included disloyalty and feelings of enmity and the word used in the Section had also been interpreted by the High Court of Bombay in a reported case as meaning political

<sup>1</sup> A verbatim report consisting of a shorthand transcript of the entire Sessions Court proceedings is available in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 197-212. This report from *Young India* has minor verbal modifications or additions made in it wherever necessary to bring it in line with the Court records.

A contemporary report of the trial was published by the Sadaqat Ashram Press, Patna, in 1922, with an 'introduction,' by Mazharul Haque, and reprinted in 1965 by Navajivan Publishing house, Ahmedabad. Also relevant is the book *Two Memorable Trials of Mahatma Gandhi*, edited by R. K. Prabhu, published by Navajivan in 1962. Sarojini Naidu has given a classic description of the memorable trial; *vide Mahatma*, Vol. II, "The Great Trial"

<sup>2</sup> Advocate-General, and Special Public Prosecutor

<sup>3</sup> Justice R. S. Broomfield

alienation or discontent, a spirit of disloyalty to Government of existing authority<sup>1</sup>. The charges having been read out, the Judge called upon the accused to plead to the charges. He asked Mr. Gandhi whether he pleaded guilty or claimed to be tried.

MR. GANDHI: I plead guilty on each count of the charge. I merely observe that the King's name is omitted from the charge-sheet and, in my opinion, very properly

THE JUDGE: Mr. Banker, do you plead guilty, or do you claim to be tried?

MR. BANKER: I plead guilty.

Sir J. Strangman then wanted the Judge to proceed with the trial fully;<sup>2</sup> but the Judge said he did not agree with what had been said by the Counsel. The Judge said that from the time he knew he was going to try the case, he had thought over the question of sentence and he was prepared to hear anything that the Counsel might have to say, or Mr. Gandhi wished to say, on the sentence. He honestly did not believe that the mere recording of evidence in the trial which Counsel had called for would make any difference to them, one way or the other. He, therefore, proposed to accept the pleas.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Gandhi smiled at this decision.

The Judge said nothing further remained but to pass sentence and before doing so, he liked to hear Sir J. T. Strangman. He was entitled to base his general remarks on the charges against the accused and on their pleas.

SIR J. T. STRANGMAN: It will be difficult to do so. I ask the Court that the whole matter may be properly considered. If I stated what has happened before the Committing Magistrate, then I can show that there are many things which are material to the question of the sentence.

The first point, he said, he wanted to make out, was that the matter which formed the subject of the present charges formed a part of the campaign to spread disaffection openly and systematically to render Government impossible and to overthrow it. The earliest article that was put in from *Young India* was dated 25th May 1921, which said that it was the duty of a non-co-operator to create disaffection towards the Government<sup>4</sup>. The counsel then read out portions of articles written by

<sup>1</sup> The interpretation of the Judge was: "An attempt to excite disaffection towards Government is equivalent to excite political hatred of Government as established by Law, to excite political discontent and alienate the people from their allegiance."

<sup>2</sup> He urged that "the charges should be investigated as fully as possible and also that the Court will be in a better position to pass sentence if it has the whole of the facts"

<sup>3</sup> For a fuller version of the judge's observations, *vide Trial of Gandhiji*.

<sup>4</sup> Commenting that the Government's charge on Sunderlal, student leader of Central Provinces, was not for violence but purely spreading disaffection, Gandhiji had written in *Young India* that "it may be stated to be the creed of the non-co-operator to give voice to the popular disaffection towards the Government and to spread it. Disaffection is the very essence of non-co-operation." *Vide* "Repression in the G.P", 25-5-1921.

Mr. Gandhi in the *Young India*.

Court said nevertheless it seemed to it that the Court could accept plea on the materials of which the sentence had to be based.

Sir J. Strangman said the question of sentence was entirely for the Court to decide. The Court was always entitled to deal in a more general manner in regard to the question of the sentence than the particular matter resulting in the conviction. He asked leave to refer to articles before the Court and what result might have been produced if the trial had proceeded in order to ascertain what the facts were. He was not going into any matter which involved dispute.

The Judge said there was not the least objection. Sir J Strangman said he wanted to show that these articles were not isolated. They formed part of an organized campaign, but so far as *Young India* was concerned, they would show that from the year 1921. The Counsel then read out extracts from the paper, dated June 8, on the duty of a non-co-operator, which was to preach disaffection towards the existing government and preparing the country for civil disobedience. Then in the same number there was an article on disobedience. Then in the same number there was an article on Disaffection—a virtue or something to that effect.<sup>1</sup> Then there was an article on the 28th of July 1921,<sup>2</sup> in which it stated that “we have to destroy the system”. Again on September 30<sup>3</sup>, 1921, there was an article headed, “Punjab Prosecutions”, where it was stated that a non-co-operator worth his name should preach disaffection. That was all so far as *Young India* was concerned. They were earlier in date than the article, “Tampering with Loyalty” and it was referred to the Governor of Bombay. Continuing, he said, the accused was a man of high educational qualifications and evidently, from his writings, a recognized leader. The harm that was likely to be caused was considerable. They were the writings of an educated man, and not the writings of an obscure man and the Court must consider to what the results of a campaign of the nature disclosed in the writings must inevitably lead. They had examples before them in the last few months. He referred to the occurrences in Bombay last November and Chauri Chaura, leading to murder and destruction of property, involving many people in misery and misfortune. It was true that, in the course of those articles, they would find non-violence was insisted upon as an item of the campaign and as an item of the creed. But what was the use of preaching non-violence when he preached disaffection towards Government or openly instigated others to overthrow it? The answer to that question appeared to him to come from Chauri Chaura, Madras and Bombay. These were circumstances which he asked the Court to make into account in sentencing the accused and it would be for the Court to consider those circumstances which involve sentences of severity.

As regards the second accused, his offence was lesser. He did the publication

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Notes”, 15-6-1921, under the sub-title “Disaffection A Virtue”.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>3</sup> This appears to be a slip for September 1; *vide* “Notes”, 1-9-1921, under the sub-title “Punjab Prosecutions”

and he did not write. His offence nevertheless was a serious one. His instructions were that he was a man of means and he asked the Court to impose a substantial fine in addition to such term of imprisonment as might be inflicted upon. He quoted Section 10 of the Press Act as bearing on the question of fine. When making a fresh declaration, he said a deposit of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 10,000 was asked in many cases.

COURT: Mr. Gandhi, do you wish to make a statement to the Court on question of sentence?

MR. GANDHI: I would like, with the Court's permission, to read a written statement.

COURT: Could you give me the writing to put it on record?

MR. GANDHI: I shall give it as soon as I finish reading it.

Before reading his written statement, Mr. Gandhi spoke a few words as introductory remarks to the whole statement. He said:

Before I read this statement I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned Advocate-General's remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this Court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me, and the learned Advocate-General is also entirely in the right when he says that my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with *Young India*, but that it commenced much earlier and in the statement that I am about to read, it will be my painful duty to admit before this Court that it commenced much earlier than the period stated by the Advocate-General. It is the most painful duty with me, but I have discharge that duty knowing the responsibility that rests upon me, and I wish to endorse all the blame that the learned Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay, the Madras and the Chauri Chaura occurrences. Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night, it is impossible to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay and Madras. He is quite right when he says that, as a man of responsibility, a man having received a fair share of education, having had a fair share of experience of this world, I should know the consequences of every one of my acts. I knew that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and, if I was set free, I would still do the same<sup>1</sup>. I know that I was feeling it so every day and I have felt it also this morning that I would have failed in my duty if I did not say what I said here just now.

<sup>1</sup> These sentences do not occur in the official transcript.

I wanted to avoid violence. I want to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad; I am deeply sorry for it. I am, therefore, here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not ask for any extenuating act of clemency. I am here to invite and cheerfully<sup>1</sup> submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is as I am just going to say in my statement, either to resign your post, or inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal. I do not expect that kind of conversion, but<sup>2</sup> by the time I have finished with my statement, you will, perhaps, have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk<sup>3</sup> that a sane man can run.

The statement was then read out.

#### STATEMENT

I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England, to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up, that I should explain why, from a staunch loyalist and co-operator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator, To the Court, too, I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.

My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and an Indian I had no rights. More correctly, I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian.

But I was not baffled. I thought that this treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticizing it freely where I felt it was faulty, but never wishing its

<sup>1</sup> *Young India* has this word here.

<sup>2</sup> This Part of the sentence does not occur in the official report.

<sup>3</sup> The official report has "the maddest risks"

destruction. Consequently, when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it<sup>1</sup>, raised a volunteer ambulance corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith.<sup>2</sup> Similarly in 1906, at the time of the Zulu revolt, I raised a stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the rebellion.<sup>3</sup> On both these occasions I received medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.<sup>4</sup> When the war broke out in 1914 between England and Germany, I raised a volunteer ambulance corps in London consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students.<sup>5</sup> Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly, in India, when a special appeal was made at the War conference in Delhi in 1918 by Lord Chelmsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a corps in Kheda<sup>6</sup> and the response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all these efforts at service, I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen.

The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and culminating in crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations. I discovered, too, that the plighted word of the Prime Minister to the Mussalmans of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likely to be fulfilled. But, in spite of the forebodings and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919,<sup>7</sup> I fought for co-operation and working the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed and that the reforms, inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India.

But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was white-washed and most culprits went not only unpunished, but remained in service and some

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "The Great Trial".

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", 19-7-1906

<sup>4</sup> *Vide* "Natal Indians", 4-4-1908 & "Story of a Soldier of Truth", 4-4-1908.

<sup>5</sup> *Vide* "Speech at Mass Meeting", 25-1-1914.

<sup>6</sup> *Vide* "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

<sup>7</sup> *Vide* "Speech on Reforms Resolution at Amritsar Congress", 1-1-1920.

continued to draw pensions from the Indian revenue, and in some cases were even rewarded. I saw, too, that not only did the reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him. So much is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations before she can achieve the Dominion status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages just the supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources. This cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless and inhuman processes as described by English witnesses. Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realize that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiassed examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases has led me to believe that at least ninety-five per cent of convictions were wholly bad<sup>1</sup>. My experience of political cases in India leads one to the conclusion that in nine out of every ten cases the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in the love of their country. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do with such cases. In my opinion, the administration of the law is thus prostituted consciously or unconsciously for the benefit of the exploiter.

The greatest misfortune is that Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they

<sup>1</sup> The original draft has "thing"

are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many English and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in the world and that India is making steady though slow progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organized display of force on the one hand, and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This awful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124 A under which I am happily charged is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system<sup>1</sup>, one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence. But the section under which Mr. Banker and I are charged is one under which mere promotion of disaffection is a crime. I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India's patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under it. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system. And it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing in non-co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But, in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that, as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a

<sup>1</sup> The original draft has "thing"



deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal.<sup>1</sup>

COURT: Mr. Banker, do you wish to say anything to the Court as regards the sentences?

MR. BANKER: I only want to say that I had the privilege of printing these articles and I plead guilty to the charge. I have got nothing to say as regards the sentence.

The following is the full text of the judgment:

Mr. Gandhi, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless what remains, namely, the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that, in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only. It is not my duty and I do not presume to judge or criticize you in any other character. It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be grave offences against the State. I do not forget that you have constantly preached against violence and that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence, but having regard to the nature of your political teaching and the nature of many of those to whom it is addressed, how you could have continued to believe that violence would not be the inevitable consequence it passes my capacity to understand.

There are probably few people in India who do not sincerely regret that you should have made it impossible for any Government to leave you at liberty. But it is so. I am trying to balance what is due to you against what appears to me to be necessary in the interests of the public, and I propose, in passing sentence, to follow the precedent of a case, in many respects similar to this case, that was decided some 12 years ago, I mean the case against Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak under this same section. The sentence that was passed upon him as it finally stood was a sentence of simple imprisonment for six years. You will not consider it unreasonable, I think, that you should be classed with Mr. Tilak, and that is the sentence, two years' simple

<sup>1</sup> The signed, handwritten statement is available in photostat in *Trial of Gandhiji*.

imprisonment on each count of the charge, i.e., six years in all, which I feel it my duty to pass upon you and I should like to say in doing so that, if the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.

THE JUDGE ( to Mr. Banker): I assume that you have been to a large extent under the influence of your chief. The sentence that I propose to pass upon you is simple imprisonment for six months on each of the first two counts, that is, simple imprisonment for one year and a fine of a thousand rupees on the third count, with six months' simple imprisonment in default.

Mr. Gandhi said:

I would say one word. Since you have done me the honour of recalling the trial of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, I just want to say that I consider it to be the proudest privilege and honour to be associated with his name. So far as the sentence itself is concerned, I certainly consider that it is as light as any judge would inflict on me, and so far as the whole proceedings are concerned, I must say that I could not have expected greater courtesy.

Then the friends of Mr. Gandhi crowded round him as the Judge left the court, and fell at his feet. There was much sobbing on the part of both men and women. But all the while Mr. Gandhi was smiling and cool and giving encouragement to everybody who came to him. Mr. Banker also was smiling and taking this in a light-hearted way. After all his friends had taken leave of him, Mr. Gandhi was taken out of the Court to the Sabarmati jail. And thus the great trial finished.

*Young India*, 23-3-1922

### 169. MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY <sup>1</sup>

[AHMEDABAD,  
March 18, 1922]

I am delighted that heavenly peace reigned supreme throughout the country during the last six days. If it continues to the end of the chapter, it is bound to be brief and illuminating.

*Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi*, p. 758

<sup>1</sup> After the sentence and before he left the Court, Gandhiji asked the General Secretary of the Congress who was near him to convey this message to the country.

## 170. REMARK ON REMOVAL FROM SABARMATI JAIL

SABARMATI JAIL,  
[March 20, 1922]<sup>1</sup>

M. K. Gandhi remarked that the one thing which had kept his spirits up since his arrest was the fact that the country had paid heed to his message and no outbreak of violence had occurred.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, p. 454

## 171. INTERVIEW TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI <sup>2</sup>

YERAVDA JAIL,  
POONA,  
April 1, 1922

In answer to questions about his food Mahatmaji said he was given goat's milk and bread, milk being given all at a time. He had cut down his three meals to two. Asked what he did for fruits, he said he was given two oranges a day. Raisins which he had mentioned as a part of his usual diet had not yet been ordered to be given. . . .

. . . Mahatmaji told me that he did not want any complaints to be made about his life in jail.

*The Hindu*, 3-4-1922

## 172. A PRIMER <sup>3</sup>

*Friday, Chaitra Vad 3* [April 14, 1922]

TO THE TEACHERS

This primer should be regarded as an experiment.

Shri Narahari<sup>4</sup>, Kaka and other teachers should go through it

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji and Shankerlal G. Banker were removed by Special train from Sabarmati Jail to Yeravda Jail on the Midnight of March 20

<sup>2</sup> The interview, during which Devdas Gandhi was present, took place in Yeravda Jail, Poona. For the full report, *Vide* Appendix II

<sup>3</sup> The letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan, April 14, 1922, mentions the completion of the primer of the Gujarati language. The Note to the Teachers and Foreword carry the date *Chaitra Vad 3*, which corresponds to April 14, 1922. The primer was published in 1951 under the title *Balpothi* by the Navajivan Publishing House.

<sup>4</sup> Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh, a member of Gandhiji's team of constructive workers in Sabarmati Ashram since 1917

and show it to Professor Gidwani<sup>1</sup>, Ballubhai<sup>2</sup> and Shri Diwan<sup>3</sup>, but only if they approve of it. If it is passed by these gentlemen, it should finally be sent to Anandshankarbhai<sup>4</sup> and should be published if he, too, approves of it.

Anandanand,<sup>5</sup> Valji Desai<sup>6</sup>, Chhaganlal, Maganlal, Devdas, Jamnadas,<sup>7</sup> and others may also go through it. If possible, a copy should be sent to Mahadev too. Let no one think even in his dream that it should be published because I have prepared it. The labour I have put in should also be no consideration, for I have enjoyed writing it.

I have followed, in writing this, exactly the same method by which I used to teach children at Tolstoy Farm and other places. I used to act as “mother” there.

My original idea was to write thirty lessons. But, on second thoughts, I felt that it would be better to limit the size of the primer. Let children read two or three primers in a year.

There should be no objection to Narahari and Kaka making such changes as they may wish to.

Any letter informing [me] whether it is proposed to publish this primer or any correspondence about it should be in English. I believe that the [Jail] Superintendent will let it come through in that case.

If it is decided to publish the primer, it would be better to add pictures of the spinning-wheel, etc. Good paper should be used and the type must be large.

<sup>1</sup> A. T. Gidwani, Professor, Muir Central College, Allahabad; later, Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

<sup>2</sup> Ballubhai Thakore and Jivanlal Diwan, educationists and Congress workers of Ahmedabad

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Anandshankar B. Dhruva (1869-1942); Sanskrit scholar and man of letters; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, 1920-37

<sup>5</sup> Swami Anandanand, Manager of Navajivan Press during the decade following *Navajivan*'s first publication in 1919; edited *Navajivan* for some time during 1922-24 when Gandhiji was in jail.

<sup>6</sup> Valji Govindji Desai, sometime lecturer in English, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; resigned from service and joined Gandhiji; translated *Satyagraha in South Africa* and other works of Gandhiji; worked on the editorial staff of *Young India*.

<sup>7</sup> Jamnadas Gandhi, son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin, and younger brother of Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi

I certainly intend to write about Hinduism.<sup>1</sup>

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

I think it would be better not to give my name as the author of this primer.<sup>2</sup>

#### FOREWORD

This primer presupposes that the pupil has already spent a year or less in spinning, learning the letters of the alphabet, both Devanagari and Prakrit, and simple tables.

I have used in the primer the words *laghushanka*<sup>3</sup> and *apaman*<sup>4</sup> because I could not avoid them. I have used the word *laghushanka* in place of *peshab*, thinking that it would be good if children learnt this fine word. *Apaman* has been kept, as milder word could not be found.

The difficult words in Lesson 12 have been deliberately introduced.

The aim which has been kept in view in preparing this primer is that the pupil should be able to put into practice whatever he learns. Nothing has been included which is not within the range of his daily experience.

The presentation of the lessons in this primer in the form of dialogue between a mother and her child has a touch of artificiality about it, as most Indian mothers today do not perform their duty of instructing children, nor are they equipped for the task.

This artificiality has been introduced to set forth an ideal, in the hope that now some mothers at any rate will do their duty towards their children. I believe that the primer can be completed in three to six months.

Teachers should make the child write out every lesson in an attractive hand.

The lessons have been planned to serve as a basis for the teacher, who may elaborate them further as his zeal and enthusiasm may inspire him to do.

AUTHOR

#### LESSON 1: MORNING

“Get up, my child, it is morning.”

<sup>1</sup> When Gandhiji was sentenced, Kaka Kalekar had requested him to write in jail a primer on Hinduism..

<sup>2</sup> Vide “ Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda”, 12-8-1922.

<sup>3</sup> Passing urine

<sup>4</sup> Insult

“I still feel sleepy.”

“Look, your sister is up; you, too, should get up and brush your teeth; and then say your prayers. It is past four. Don’t you hear the birds singing? Your sister Shanta has started singing a *bhajan*<sup>1</sup>.”

#### LESSON 2: BRUSHING THE TEETH

“Have you cleaned your teeth? Let me see your teeth. They look yellow. You have not brushed them properly. The tongue, too, is not clean. You have not taken enough care to remove the coating. What stick did you use?”

“It was from the *babul* tree.”

“Why did you not use one from the *neem* tree?”

“It is rather bitter.”

“What if it is? The mouth feels fresh afterwards. You will come to like the bitterness when you get used to it.”

#### LESSON 3: PREPARING FOR THE “BHAJAN”

We should not go to the *bhajan* without cleaning ourselves first. Rheum in the eyes marks one as dirty. Our bodies and minds should be clean when singing *bhajans* to God. During prayers, one should sit erect with crossed legs and folded hands. We should not talk with anyone, nor look at anyone. We do not see God, but He sees us.

I see you even when you are asleep, being awake myself, but you do not see me. Likewise, may it not be that God sees us, even if we do not see Him?

#### LESSON 4: THE “BHAJAN”

Dear, very dear to me is the name of *Dada*<sup>2</sup> Rama,

Little use have I for all learning else;

Dear, very dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.

Father dear, show your love for me,

Have sweet songs about Govind written on my slate;

For dear, dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.

All I wish to hear is stories and songs about Shri Rama,

Of Him do I constantly think, and on Him meditate;

For dear, dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.

KALIDAS VASAVADA

#### LESSON 5: EXERCISE

“What exercise did you take after the *bhajan* today?”

<sup>1</sup> Devotional song

<sup>2</sup> Grandfather

“I did some *dand*<sup>1</sup> exercise, and we also ran, all of us together.”

“Do you keep your mouth closed while running? We should always breathe through the nostrils. Do you take any other exercise?”

“Sometimes we practice *oothbes*<sup>2</sup> and occasionally we do wrestling. We look upon exercise also as part of games. Among the games we play are *aatapaata*, *saat-tali*, *hututu*, *mag-matali*, *moidandia* and so on, as we feel inclined from day to day. As we take some exercise in the morning after the *bhajan*, so there is always something in the evening too.”

#### LESSON 6: THE SPINNING-WHEEL

“Madhu, how much did you spin today?”

“Mother, I spun only six coils today.”

“Why so little? Generally you spin not less than eight.”

“Yes, mother, I felt a little lazy today and the sliver, too, must have been rather bad; so the thread kept snapping.”

“For how many hours were you at the spinning-wheel?”

“I worked at it for three hours. You will of course say that it is too little. I admit it is. I told you I felt lazy today. If possible, I shall work an hour extra tomorrow. I do want to spin at least for four hours daily.”

“You will discover that in the extra hour put in, you will not be able to do as much as you could have in the hour that you lost. Time lost is never recovered. Laziness is our enemy.”

#### LESSON 7: THE FUN OF SPINNING

“Do you enjoy spinning?”

“Spinning is as much fun as playing when the spindle is not bent and the strap fits properly, when the wheel turns noiselessly and the thread does not snap. When I turn the spinning-wheel fast enough, it produces a sweet sound, like that of a *bhambhutia*<sup>3</sup> and it gives pleasure. Moreover, I feel happy thinking that the yarn spun by me will be used to make clothes for me.”

#### LESSON 8: CLEANLINESS

“I find dirt in your nails today. There is dirt in your ears too. Did you have a bath today?”

“I never omit to have a bath.”

“Do you think that all you have to do to take a bath is to pour

<sup>1</sup> Kinds of physical exercise

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> May mean ‘spinning top’ or ‘beetle’ or both

water on your body or take a dip in the river? Having a bath means cleaning all parts of the body carefully. The body should be rubbed as water is poured over it. Dirt should be removed from the ears, armpits and other parts. The nails should be examined. When the nails are dirty, how can anyone eat with the hand? Like the body, our clothes, bedding, etc., should also be clean. Cleanliness is a sign of one's diligence. Dirt is a sign of idleness."

#### LESSON 9: BAD HABITS

"There is a very strong smell in our village. What can be the reason mother?"

"Well, son, some of our old bad habits are responsible for it. People, instead of taking the children far out of the village, let them sit for stools in the lanes, and themselves do not go farther than the outskirts of the village. How is it possible, then, to pass by a village in the morning? People do not hesitate to pass urine at any spot. We insult mother earth by acting in this way. Stools should be immediately covered over with earth. A cat digs up earth and, after relieving itself, covers the stools with it. Human beings should do the same."

#### LESSON 10: THE FIELD AND THE "VADI"

"Do you know what crops grow in our village?"

"Yes, mother; wheat, gram, *bajra*, *tuvar*, *jowar*, etc., according to the season. The absence of a *vadi* near the village is felt very badly. There are plenty of trees round the neighbouring village; one enjoys roaming around them. There are *neem* trees, and tamarind trees as well. There are a few mango trees too. Some jujube plants also grow here and there. Quite a few vegetables are also grown in that *vadi*, beans, brinjals, fenugreek, java radish, lady's fingers, radishes and so on. Would it not be nice if the people of our village too grew such trees?"

"Ours is a poor village. There is no unity among the residents, so the people rest content with the crops that grow in our fields."

"I shall certainly plant some fruit trees, at any rate, when I grow up."

"May God fulfil your wish."

#### LESSON 11: HOUSEWORK

"Look here, son you should help with the housework, just as your sister Shanta does."

<sup>1</sup> Farm growing fruits and vegetables



“But Shanta is a girl; a boy plays and studies.”

Shanta cried out: “Do we not also wish to play and study?”

“Do I prevent you? Perhaps you like working in the home, too.”

Mother said: “Shouldn’t boys work, then?”

Madhu replied: “A boy must pay more attention to his studies, as he will have to earn a living when he grows up.”

Mother said: “That is a wrong idea altogether. There is much to learn in housework. You do not know what you can learn if you sweep the house, help with the cooking, wash clothes and clean utensils. You do not know how much you have to use your eyes, hands and brain in housework, But, then, we use them without effort and so do not know. True education consists in gradually acquiring experience in this way. Then again, by doing housework, you will acquire greater skill, become stronger in body and, when you have grown up, will not be dependent on anyone. I would say, you need to learn and do housework as much as your sister Shanta does.”

#### LESSON 12: THE GLORY OF GOD

“Shanta and Madhu, do you, sister and brother, ever look up at the sky?”

Shanta said: “You yourself taught us to have *darshan*<sup>1</sup> of the sun. How can one do this without looking up at the sky?”

Madhu said: “And have you forgotten that you show us the moon waxing and waning? The small crescent moon two days old and the large moon on full-moon day how can one fail to observe this change?”

Mother said: “Well, then, what else do you see in the sky?”

Shanta: “What a great many stars! What fun it would be, I feel, if I could have some of them!”

Madhu: “Then again, both during day and night clouds often cover up the sun, the moon and the stars for a while and then go away. We often enjoy seeing this.”

Mother: “Who created all this and the earth on which we walk?”

Madhu: “You yourself told us that God created all this.”

Shanta: “And it is you who time and again make us sing that Hindi song. Come, let us sing it:

“Thou hast created this whole universe, my God !

<sup>1</sup> Sight of person, object or place considered holy

Dearer to me than my very soul, Thou art without compare, we know,  
Thou art brother and Thou friend, Thou art father and Thou mother,  
All this universe is filled with Thee.”

[From Gujarati]

*Balpothi*; also S.N. 8081

### 173. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN <sup>1</sup>

YERAVDA JAIL,  
*April 14, 1922*

DEAR HAKIMJI,

Prisoners are allowed one visit every three months and to write and receive one letter during the same period. I have had a visit from Devdas and Rajagopalachari. And I am now writing the permitted letter.

You will remember that Mr. Banker and I were convicted on the 18th March on a Saturday. On Monday night about 10 p.m. we received notice that we were to be removed to an unknown destination. At 11.30 p.m. the Superintendent of Police took us to the special that was awaiting us at Sabarmati. We were given a basket of fruit for the journey and we were well looked after during the whole journey. The doctor of the Sabarmati Jail had allowed me, for health and religious reasons, the food to which I am used, and to Mr. Banker bread and milk and fruit for medical reasons. Cow's milk for Mr. Banker and goat's for me were, therefore, ordered on the way by Deputy Superintendent who was escorting us.

We were taken off at Khirki where a prison van was waiting to take us to the jail from where I am writing this.

I had heard bad accounts of this Jail from ex-prisoners and was therefore prepared to face difficulties in my path. I had told Mr. Banker that if my hand-spinning was stopped, I would have to refuse food as I had taken a vow on the Hindu New Year's Day to spin every day at least for half an hour except when I was ill or traveling. He should not, therefore, I told him, be shocked if I had to refuse food and that he should on no account join me out of false sympathy. He had seen my view-point.

We were not, therefore, surprised when, on reaching the Jail about 5.30 p.m., I was told by the Superintendent that he could not allow the spinning-wheel which was with us nor could we be allowed to take the fruit that was with us. I pointed out that hand-spinning was

<sup>1</sup> This was withheld by the Jail authorities; *vide* the following item.

a matter of vow with me and that, as a matter of fact, both of us were permitted to do it everyday at the Sabarmati jail. Thereupon we were told, Yeroda was not Sabarmati.

I told the Superintendent too that both of us were permitted at the Sabarmati jail for health reasons to sleep outside, but that was not to be expected at this Jail.

Thus the first impression was rather unhappy. I felt however totally undisturbed. The semi-fast of Tuesday following that of Monday did me no harm. I know that Mr. Banker felt it. He has night terrors and requires someone near him. And this was his first rough experience in life perhaps. I am a seasoned jail-bird.

The superintendent came the next morning to question us. I saw that the first impression did not do justice to the Superintendent. The previous evening he was evidently in a hurry. We were received after the regular time and he was totally unprepared for what was undoubtedly to him a strange request. He discovered, however, that my request for the spinning-wheel was not a matter of cussedness, but rightly or wrongly a real religious necessity. He saw too that it was no question of hunger-striking. He gave orders that the spinning-wheels should be restored to both of us. He realized too that both of us would need the diet we had mentioned.

And so far as I have been able to observe, the animal comforts are well looked after in this Jail. Both the Superintendent and the Jailor appear to me to be tactful and have pleasant manners. The first day's experience I count as of no consequence. The relations between the Superintendent and the Jailor and myself are as cordial as they can be between a prisoner and his keepers.

But it is evident to me that the human element is largely, if not entirely, absent in the jail system. The Superintendent informs me that all prisoners are treated as I am treated. If that is so, as animals prisoners could hardly be better cared for. But, for the human sentiment, there is no accommodation in the Jail Regulations.

This is what the Jail Committee consisting of the Collector, a clergyman and some others did the next morning. This Committee met quite by coincidence the very next day after our admission. The members came to find our needs. I mentioned that Mr. Banker suffered from nervousness and that he should be kept with me and that his cell should be kept open. I cannot describe to you the contemptuous and callous indifference with which the request was treated. As the members turned their backs upon us, one of them remarked, 'nonsensical'. They knew nothing of Mr. Banker's past or his position in life or of his upbringing. It was none of their business

to find all this out and to discover the cause for what appeared to me to be the most natural request. It was certainly of greater importance for him than his food that he should be able to have undisturbed rest at night.

Within one hour after the interview, a warder came ordering Mr. Banker to be removed to another quarter. I felt like a mother suddenly deprived of her only child. It was by a stroke of good fortune that Mr. Banker was arrested with me and that we were tried together. At Sabarmati I had written to the District Magistrate that I would deem it a courtesy if the authorities did not separate Mr. Banker from me and had told him that we could be mutually helpful if he was kept with me. I was reading the *Gita* with him and he was nursing my weak body. Mr. Banker lost his mother only a few months ago. When I met her a few days before her death, she said she would die in peace as her son should be quite safe under my care. Little did the noble lady know how utterly powerless I would prove to protect her son in the hour of his need. As Mr. Banker left me, I entrusted him to God's care and assured him that God would take care of him and protect him.

He has been since permitted to come to me for about half an hour to teach me carding, which he knows. This he does in the presence of a warder in order to see that we do not talk about anything else than the purpose for which he is brought to me.

I am trying to coax the Inspector-General and the Superintendent to let me read the *Gita* with Mr. Banker during the few minutes he is allowed to come. This request is under consideration.

In fairness to the authorities, I must mention that Mr. Banker's animal comforts are well looked after and that he is looking not bad at all. He is gradually losing his nervousness.

It has required the use of all my tact to retain possession of seven books, five of which are purely religious and the other two are an old dictionary I prize and an Urdu manual presented to me by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad<sup>1</sup>. Strict orders given to the Superintendent were that prisoners were not to be allowed any books save the Jail library books. I was given the option of presenting the said seven books to the Jail library and then using them. Whilst I was prepared to do so with my other books, I gently told the Superintendent that to ask me to present religious books which I was using or gifts with a history was like asking me to give up my right arm. I do not know

<sup>1</sup> 1888-1958; Congress leader and scholar of Koranic theology; President of the Indian National Congress, 1923, 1940-45; Education Minister, Government of India, 1947-58

how much tact the Superintendent had to use in persuading his superiors to let me retain those books.

I am now told that I could import at my own expense periodicals. I had said a newspaper was a periodical. He seemed to agree, but he had his doubts about a newspaper being allowed. I had not the courage to mention the *Chronicle* weekly. But I mentioned *The Times of India* weekly. That seemed to the Superintendent to be too political. I could name the *Police News*, *Tit-bits* or *Blackwoods*. This matter is, however, quite beyond the Superintendent's province. What is to be considered a periodical will probably be finally decided by His Excellency the Governor-in-Council.

Then, there was the question of the use of a knife. If I was to toast my bread (I could not digest it without). I must cut it up in slices and, if I was to squeeze my lemons, I must cut them also. But a knife was a 'lethal weapon' and most dangerous in the hands of a prisoner. I gave the Superintendent the option of withdrawing bread and lemons or giving me the use of a knife. At last the use of my own pen-knife has been restored to me. It has to remain in the custody of my convict warder to be given to me whenever I may require it. It goes back to the Jailor every evening and comes back every morning to the convict warder.

You may not know the species. Convict warders are those long-term prisoners who by their good behaviour may be given a warder's dress and may be, under supervision, entrusted with light responsibilities. One such warder who has been convicted for a murder is in charge of me during the day and another reminding me of Shaukat Ali's size is added for night duty. This addition was made when the Inspector-General at last decided to leave my cell open. Both the warders are quite inoffensive. They never interfere with me. And I never engage in any conversation with them. I have to speak to the day warder for some of my wants. But beyond that I have no intercourse with them.

I am in a triangular block. One side (the longest) of the triangle which falls west has eleven cells. I have as my companion in the yard an Arabian State prisoner (I suppose). He does not speak Hindustani. I unfortunately do not know Arabic; therefore, our intercourse is restricted to morning greetings. The base of this triangle is a solid wall and the shortest side is a barbed-wire fence with a gate opening on to a spacious open ground. The triangle is divided by a lime line beyond which I was not to go. This I had about seventy feet length for exercise. As an illustration of the want of human touch, I mentioned the white line to Mr. Khambata, the Cantonment Magistrate, who is

one of the visiting Magistrates. He did not like the restriction and reported likewise. The whole length of the triangle is now open for exercise to me giving me probably 140 feet length. My eyes are set upon the open space just mentioned. But that is perhaps too human to be permissible. Anyway, seeing that the white line is gone, the barbed-wire fence may, I have suggested, be disregarded so far as my exercise is concerned. It is rather a ticklish problem for the Superintendent and he is taking to consider it.

The fact is I am an isolation prisoner. I must not talk with anybody. Some of the Dharwar prisoners are in this jail, so is the great Gangadharrao of Belgaum. Verumal Begraj, the reformer of Sukker, is also in this jail and so is Lalit, one of the Bombay editors. I cannot see any of them. What harm I can do to them if I live in their midst, I do not know. They can certainly do me no harm. We cannot plot our escape. It will be just the thing the authorities would relish if we did plot. If it is a question of infecting with my views, they are all inoculated. Here in the Jail I could only make them more enthusiastic about the spinning-wheel.

But if I have mentioned my isolation to you, it is not by way of complaint. I am happy in it. By nature I like solitude. Silence pleases me. And I am able to indulge in studies which I prize, but which I was bound to neglect outside.

But not all prisoners can enjoy isolation. It is unnecessary and unhuman. The fault lies in the false classification. All prisoners are practically grouped together and no Superintendent, however humane he may be, can possibly do justice to the variety of men and women that come under his custody and care, unless he has a fee hand. Therefore, the only thing he does is to study their bodies to the entire neglect of the man within.

Add to this the fact that the jails are being prostituted for political ends so that political persecution follows a political prisoner even inside the prison wall.

I must finish the picture of my jail life by giving you the routine. The cell itself is nice quite clean and airy. The permission to sleep outside is a blessing to me, being used to sleeping in the open, I rise at 4 a.m. for prayers. The Ashram people will be interested to know that I recite the morning verses unfailingly and sing some of those hymns I have by heart. At 6.30 a.m., I commence my studies. No light is allowed. As soon therefore as one can read, I commence work. It stops at 7 p.m., after which it is impossible to read or write without artificial light. I retire at 8 p.m. after the usual Ashram prayer. My studies include reading the Koran, *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, books

on Christianity given by Mr. Standing, study of Urdu. These literary studies receive six hours. Four hours are given to hand-spinning and carding. At first, I gave only 30 minutes to spinning when I had only a limited supply of slivers. The authorities have kindly given me some cotton. It is exceptionally dirty. It is perhaps good training for a beginner in carding. I give one hour to carding and three to spinning. Anasuyabai and now, Maganlal Gandhi, have sent slivers. I would like them to stop sending slivers, but one of them may send good clean cotton, not more than two pounds at a time. I am anxious to make my own slivers. I think that every spinner should learn carding. I was able to card after one lesson. It is harder to practice but much easier to learn than spinning.

This spinning is growing on me. I seem daily to be coming nearer to the poorest of the poor and to that extent to God. I regard the four hours to be the most profitable part of the day. The fruit of my labour is visible before me. Not an impure thought enters my mind during the four hours. The mind wanders whilst I read the *Gita*, the Koran, the *Ramayana*. But the mind is fixed whilst I am turning the wheel, or working the bow. I know that it may not and cannot mean all this to everyone. I have so identified the spinning-wheel with the economic salvation of pauper India that it has for me a fascination all its own. There is a serious competition going on in my mind between spinning and carding on the one hand and literary pursuits on the other. And I should not be surprised if, in my next letter, I report to you an increase in the hours of spinning and carding.

Please tell Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb that I expect him to compete with me in spinning which, he informed me, he had just taken up. His example will lead many to take up this great occupation as a duty.

The Ashram people may be informed that I have finished the primer I promised to, which I presume that I shall be permitted to send to them<sup>1</sup>. I hope to be able to overtake the religious primer I promised to write, as also the history of the struggle in South Africa.

Instead of three, for the sake of convenience, I am taking two meals only here. But I am taking quite enough. The Superintendent is offering every convenience in the shape of food. For the last three days he has procured for me goat's milk, butter, and I expect in a day or two to be baking my own chapatis.

I am allowed two perfectly new warm, heavy blankets, a coir mat

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was not allowed by the authorities to forward the manuscript of the Gujarati Primer to the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922.

and two sheets. A pillow has been added since. It was hardly necessary. I used books or my extra clothing as a pillow. The latter has been added as a result of the conversation with Rajagopalachari. There is privacy for bathing which is allowed daily. A separate cell is allowed as a work-room whilst it is not otherwise required. Sanitary arrangements have been made perfect.

Friends, therefore, need not worry about me in any way whatsoever. I am as happy as a bird. Nor do I think I am doing less useful service here than outside. To be here is good discipline for me, and separation from co-workers was just the thing required to know whether we were an organic whole or whether our activity was one man's show-a nine days' wonder. I have no misgivings. I have, therefore, no curiosity to know what is happening outside. And if my prayers are true and from a humble heart, they, I know, are infinitely more efficacious than any amount of meddlesome activity.

I am anxious about Das's health. I shall always have cause for complaint against his good partner that she did not keep me informed of his health. Motilalji's asthma, I hope, has left him.

Do please persuade Mrs. Gandhi not to think of visiting me. Devdas created a scene when he visited me. He could not brook the idea of my standing in the Superintendent's office when he was brought in. The proud and sensitive boy burst out weeping aloud and it was with difficulty I could restrain him. He should have realized that I was a prisoner and as such I had no right to sit in the presence of the Superintendent. Seats might and should have been offered to Rajagopalachari and Devdas. But I am sure there was no discourtesy intended. I do not suppose it is usual for the Superintendent to supervise such interviews. But in my case evidently he wanted to run no risks. I would not like the scene to be repeated by Mrs. Gandhi, nor do I want a special favour to be done in my case by a seat being offered. Dignity, I am sure, consists in my standing. And we must yet wait for a while before the British people naturally and heartily extend the delicate courtesies to us in every walk of life. I am not at all anxious to have visitors and I would like friends and relations to restrain themselves<sup>1</sup>. Business visits may always be paid under circumstances adverse or otherwise.

I hope Chhotani Mian has distributed the spinning-wheels donated by him among poor Mussalman women in Panchmahals, East Khandesh and Agra. I forget the name of the Missionary lady who

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji, however, had occasional visits from them; for an account of Maganlal Gandhi's interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Maganlal Gandhi", 20-7-1922.



wrote to me from Agra. Kristodas may remember.

I shall soon finish the Urdu manual. I would prize a good Urdu dictionary (and) any book you or Dr. Ansari may choose.

Please tell Shuaib I am at ease about him.

I do hope you are keeping well. To hope that you are not overworking yourself is to hope for the impossible. I can, therefore, only pray that God will keep you in health in spite of the strain.

With love to every one of the workers,

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

HAKIMJI AJMAL KHAN  
DELHI

From a handwritten copy: S. N. 8011; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

### *174. LETTER TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY*

YERAVDA JAIL,  
*May 12, 1922*

FROM PRISONER NO. 8677

TO

THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

With reference to the Government orders passed on Prisoner's letter to Hakimji Ajmal Khan, a friend of Prisoner's, and returning said letter to Prisoner with certain remarks in the said orders read out to Prisoner by the Superintendent of Yeroda Jail, Prisoner No. 8677 begs to say that on application to the Superintendent for a copy of the said orders, he says he has no authority to give Prisoner a copy thereof.

Prisoner would like to possess a copy of the said orders and send one to friends so that they may know under what circumstances Prisoner has been unable to send to friends a letter of welfare. Prisoner hereby applies for instructions to the Superintendent to give him a copy of the said orders.

Regarding the orders, so far as Prisoner recollects and understands them, the Government base their refusal to send Prisoner's letter to its destination on the ground that (i) the letter contains reference to prisoners other than Prisoner himself, and (ii) the letter is likely to give rise to political controversy.

With regard to the first ground, Prisoner submits that the letter contains no references that are not strictly relevant to Prisoner's own

personal condition and welfare.

With regard to the second ground, Prisoner respectfully contends that the possibility of a public controversy cannot be a valid ground to deprive a prisoner of the right of sending a quarterly letter of welfare to friends and relatives. The implication of the ground is, in Prisoner's opinion, dangerous in the extreme, it being that an Indian prison is a secret department. Prisoner contends that Indian prisons are an open public department subject to criticism by the public in the same manner as any other department.

Prisoner contends that his said letter is strictly one containing information regarding his personal welfare. References to other prisoners were necessary to complete the information. Prisoner would gladly correct mis-statements or exaggeration if any be discovered to him. But to send the letter in the mutilated manner suggested by the Government would be to give an erroneous idea of his condition to his friends.

Unless, therefore, the Government will forward Prisoner's letter subject to such correction that may be found necessary, Prisoner has no desire to exercise the right of sending to friends a letter of welfare, which right becomes of doubtful value under the restrictions imposed by the Government under the said orders.

M. K. GANDHI

PRISONER NO. 8677

From a handwritten copy: S. N. 8013; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

### *175. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN <sup>1</sup>*

YERAVDA JAIL,  
May 12, 1922

DEAR HAKIMJI,

I wrote to you on 14th April a long letter giving you full information about myself. It contained messages among others to Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas. The Government have just passed orders refusing to send the letter unless I would remove material parts of it. They have given grounds for their decision, but as a copy of the order has been refused to me, I cannot send them to you nor can I give you the grounds so far as I recollect.

I have written to the Government questioning the validity of their grounds and offering to correct mis-statement of exaggeration in my letter if any is discovered to me. I have told them too that, if I

<sup>1</sup> This letter also was withheld by the Jail authorities.

cannot send my letter without mutilation, I have no desire to write even regulation letters to friends, which then become of doubtful value. Unless, therefore, the Government revise their decision, this intimation must be my first and last from the jail to you or other friends.

Hoping you are keeping well,

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI  
PRISONER NO. 8677

HAKIM AJMAL KHAN  
DELHI

From a handwritten copy S. N. 8012; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

*176. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA JAIL,  
*August 12, 1922*

TO  
THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

There are regarding myself three matters pending for some time.

(1) In May last, I wrote to my friend Hakimji Ajmal Khan of Delhi the usual quarterly letter. The Government declined to forward it unless I cut out portions objected to by them. As I considered the portions strictly relevant to my condition in the Jail, I could not see my way to remove them and I respectfully notified to the Government that I did not propose to avail myself of the privilege or the right of sending to my friend the usual letter unless I could give him a full description of my condition. At the same time, I wrote a brief letter to my friend saying that the letter I had written to him was disallowed and that I did not propose to write any letter regarding my welfare unless the Government removed the restrictions imposed by them. This second letter, too, the Government have declined to send. It is this second letter which I have asked should be returned to me as the first has been.

(2) After having received permission from Col. Dalziel to write a

vernacular primer<sup>1</sup> and the assurance that there would be no objection to my sending it to my friends for publication, I wrote the primer and gave it to Col. Dalziel for dispatch to the address mentioned in the covering letter. The Government have declined to send the primer to the address given, on the ground that prisoners cannot be permitted to publish books whilst they are serving their term. I have no wish to see my name on the primer as publisher or author. If the primer may not be published even without my name being connected with it in any way, I would like it returned to me.

(3) The Government were pleased to notify that I could be allowed periodicals. I therefore asked for permission to send for *The Times of India* weekly, the *Modern Review* a high-class Calcutta monthly, and the *Saraswati* a Hindi magazine. The last named has been kindly allowed. No decision has yet been received regarding the other two. I am anxiously awaiting the Government decision about them.

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,  
M. K. GANDHI*

From a handwritten copy: S.N. 8014

### 177. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[YERAVDA JAIL,]  
October 5, 1922

I have obtained Superintendent's permission to send this to you.

In expressing my opinion about Ramdas's intended marriage, I was hasty and yielded to blind affection. I repented after we parted and saw how one who considered himself to be a careful man could become thoughtless and blinded by affection.

I failed yesterday in my duty as father.

I feel that Ramdas would sin if he married before he knew his ideal and had not found an occupation to his liking. He wishes, and we all respect his wish, that he should marry not on the strength of my position but on that of his own merits. Hence he must now choose his own calling. That would help the parents of the intended bride to come to a decision and girl would know where she has to go. Therefore, our first business and now the first business of all of you

<sup>1</sup> Vide "A Primer, 14-4-1922.

who are outside is to help Ramdas to come to a decision about his future.

If Ramdas wishes to continue his studies, he may do so. If his father who is now old can study like a boy, Ramdas who is only just entering upon his youth easily can. Or he may take up the commercial life or find himself a place in the Ashram or the Ashram Seminary or he may wish to join his brother Harilal. My strong advice is that he should not think of marrying until he has tried himself for one year in the calling of his choice.

For Ramdas to marry a girl belonging to rich parents, even though she may have an excellent character, is to court unhappiness for himself and his wife and her parents. The safest course appears to me to find a virtuous girl in one of the poorest families. He should not mind the time that may have to be devoted to the search.

I was blindly affectionate to Mrs. Gandhi too. I feel that I should do my duty by her if I continue to be 'butcher' to her. Parents ought not for their own selves impede the progress or thwart the wishes of their children. For the moment yesterday I encouraged Mrs. G[andhi] in her contrary intention. My advice to her now is that she should swallow the bitter pill of separation from Ramdas and that she should do with contentment. She should bless Ramdas if he places himself under the care of so good a soul as Rajagopalachari. I know that she will consult her own good too by adopting my advice. She must feel happy in the thought of having children who have a character to lose. It is not proper to crave for their company for ever.

You have taken upon yourself the role of Devdas. You will now realize what it means. You have to take the place of all the children. May God help you. For me, I am trying to deserve your wonderful affection.

Now for your religious difficulty. He who is altogether free from impure thoughts has attained salvation. Their total destruction can be achieved only after severe austerity. There is only one remedy for attaining the end: To match pure against impure thoughts. This is possible only through God's grace. That is attainable only by contemplating God the whole of our time and by realizing that He is in us. I should not be baffled even if the mind wanders and God's name is only on our lips. By unwearied insistence what is on the lips will soon be enthroned in the heart. Again, we must not allow any of our organs to be acted upon by a vicious thought. He who allows

them to be so acted upon perishes. We must force our organs out of the control of a wicked thought. I know that even at my age, if I were to allow all my thoughts to rule my actions, I should be undone. At the same time, we must not fret about these evil thoughts. Ours is but to persevere. The result is in the hands of God and He will worry about it. Moreover, when an impure thought haunts you, you will know that it is disloyalty to your wife. You are an ideal husband. The thought of her must help you. Ordinary remedies you know. Moderate eating and a single eye. When the eye is inclined to go astray, you must be angry to the point of plucking it out. Good books are the best company.

May God protect you from all harm.

SHETH JAMNALALJI BAJAJ

GHELABHAI MANSION

CHOWPATI

BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8010

### 178. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA<sup>1</sup>

YERAVDA JAIL,  
October 14, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT

YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

With reference to Government refusal to let me have the *Modern Review*, I beg to state that the friends who accompanied my wife last week at the quarterly interview told me that the Government had announced that magazines were allowed to the prisoners. If the information is correct, I renew my request and ask for the *Indian Review*, a monthly magazine edited by Mr. Natesan of Madras.

*I remain,*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI

(The *Indian Review* was refused, M.K.G)

From a photostat: S. N. 8015; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

<sup>1</sup> This was published in the second instalment of Gandhiji's jail correspondence, with notes added.

179. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,  
December 20, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You were good enough to tell me that of those who had recently applied for permission to see me, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were refused permission to see me.

Mr. Maganlal Gandhi is a very near relative of mine, holds my power of attorney and is in charge of my agricultural and hand-weaving and hand-spinning experiments and is in close touch with my work among the depressed classes.

Panditji and Hakimji are, besides being political co-workers, personal friends interested in my well-being.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly ascertain from the Government the reasons for the refusal to Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakimji Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi.

I observe that under the prison regulations governing interviews with prisoners, all the three gentlemen named above appear to be eligible as visitors to their prisoner friends.

I would like, too to know, if I may, what the Government's wishes are regarding interviews with me; whom I may and may not see and whether I may receive information from the permitted visitors on non-political topics or activities with which I am connected.

*I remain,*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8016; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

180. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,  
December 20, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have been good enough to tell me that the Inspector-General has without reasons refused to sanction the use by me of two Gujarati monthlies, namely, *Vasant* and *Samalochak*.

In view of the orders of the Government about the use of periodicals by prisoners, the foregoing decision is a surprise to me. The Government orders, as I have understood them, are that prisoners may have periodicals which do not contain current political news. I am not very conversant with the *Samalochak*, but I am with the *Vasant*. It is the standard Gujarati literary monthly edited by Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai, well known as a social reformer, and contributed to mainly by those who are in some way or other connected with the Government. I have not known it to treat political questions as such, nor have I ever known it to contain political news. But it may be that the Inspector-General has other reasons for disallowing the periodicals or that both the *Vasant* and the *Samalochak* have now become political magazines. Will you kindly, therefore, ascertain from the Inspector-General the reasons for his decision? I may add that if the decision is not altered, it will deprive me of the opportunity of keeping myself in touch with Gujarati literature.

*I remain,*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8017; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924



## 181. JAIL DIARY, 1922<sup>1</sup>

APRIL 21<sup>2</sup>, FRIDAY

Upto today, I have read the following books:<sup>3</sup>

1. *Master and His Teaching*
2. *Arm of God*
3. *Christianity in Practice*
4. *By an Unknown Disciple*
5. *Satyagraha aur Asahayoga*
6. The Koran
7. *The way to Begin Life*
8. *Trips to the Moon*
9. *Indian Administration* (Thakore)
10. *The Ramayana-Tulsidas*

I have started baking chapatis since yesterday.

APRIL 22, SATURDAY

I finished reading *Natural History of Birds*.

Today the Superintendent<sup>4</sup> called all political prisoners to meet him.

<sup>1</sup> In Gandhiji's own hand, in Gujarati, the Diary is for the most part a factual record of his life as an inmate of the Yeravda Central Jail during the period March 1922- January 1924. The original is a note-book, half-foolscap in size, with the dates, days, etc, written by Gandhiji in pencil or ink. It does not give all the days in a consecutive order, there being frequent omissions. The titles of books read by Gandhiji, given by him in Gujarati script, have been generally checked with information available in *Young India* and elsewhere. The original carried a list, in Gandhiji's hand, of titles of books in English and in Indian languages evidently read by him in jail, and this is furnished as an appendix to the "Jail Diary, 1923," which is given in this volume, as the last item for that year.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the entries in the Diary contain, besides the dates to the Gregorian calendar, the corresponding dates of the Vikram era. Only the former are reproduced here.

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji was taken to the Yeravda Central Jail on March 21, 1922. During the period of his imprisonment there he read, in all, about 150 books on religion, literature, social and natural sciences. In the series, *My Jail Experiences*, which appeared in *Young India* from April 1924, Gandhiji offered detailed comments on some of these books.

<sup>4</sup> Col. Dalziel

I had a talk with Deshpande<sup>1</sup>.

APRIL 23, SUNDAY

Finished reading *The Young Crusader*.

Gave up lemons and sugar from today.

APRIL 26, WEDNESDAY

Yesterday I finished reading *A History of Scotland-Book I*.

The Rev. Lawrence has sent me *Bible View of the World*.

APRIL 29, SATURDAY

Finished reading the book sent by the Rev. Lawrence.

Glanced through a book on martyrs.<sup>2</sup>

MAY 1, MONDAY

Finished reading *A History of Scotland* Book II. Today they passed on to me ten lbs. of flour in one lot.

MAY 5, FRIDAY

Finished reading Farrar's *Seekers after God*. Stopped taking oranges since yesterday.

MAY 6, SATURDAY

Finished reading *A History of Scotland*. Today received a letter from the Government saying that my letter<sup>3</sup> to Hakimji could not be forwarded to him.

Finished reading *Misar Kumari*.

MAY 12, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Stories from the History of Rome*. Today the Superintendent declined to give me a copy of the Government's order requiring him to keep back my letter to Hakimji. Consequently, I wrote one letter<sup>4</sup> to the Government and one<sup>5</sup> to Hakimji. I wrote to Hakimji only to inform him that, since the Government have refused to forward to him my letter uncensored, I have give up the intention of writing a quarterly letter.

MAY 15, MONDAY

Banker was today transferred to this ward. Wrote to the Superintendent, not officially but in a personal way, that I did not like his increasing again the supply of oranges to me. He should stop the

<sup>1</sup> Gangadharrao Balkrishna Deshpande, journalist and Congress leader of Karnatak.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably, *Lives of Fathers and Martyrs*, mentioned in the list reproduced in the appendix to "Jail Diary, 1923".

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

<sup>4</sup> Vide "Letter to the Government of Bombay", 12-5-1922.

<sup>5</sup> Vide "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 12-5-1922

supply of oranges and chapatis and the additional supply of milk to me.

MAY 16, TUESDAY

Mr. Jacob, head clerk to Mr. Griffiths<sup>1</sup>, came to see me and talked to me on his behalf. The Superintendent declined to reduce the supply of oranges and told me, on the contrary, that he had orders to supply nine oranges to me.

They are slaves who will not choose  
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,  
Rather than in silence shrink  
From the Truth they needs must think:  
They are slaves who dare not be  
In the right with two or three.

LOWELL

(From *Tom Brown's school Days*)

MAY 17, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Some portions of it are beautiful.

The Holy Supper is kept indeed  
In whatso we share with another's need  
Not that which we give, but what we share,  
For the gift without the giver is bare:  
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,  
Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me.

LOWELL

from the same book as above.

MAY 20, SATURDAY

Finished reading Bacon's *The Wisdom of the Ancients*. Have given up chapatis since Wednesday. I am living, as an experiment, on four seers of milk, two ounces of raisins, four oranges and two lemons. Haji was taken to a dark cell yesterday.

MAY 28, SUNDAY

Read the history of India up to the Moghul dynasty. Went through Morris's grammar.

MAY 29, MONDAY

Finished reading *Chandrakant*, Part II, as also Patanjali's *Yogadarshan*.

<sup>1</sup> Superintendent of police

Nearly four weeks have passed.

Started reading the Gujarati translation of Valmiki's *Ramayana*.

MAY 31, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *The Five Nations*

JUNE 4, SUNDAY

Finished reading Edward Bellamy's *Equality*.

JUNE 6, TUESDAY

The superintendent called and informed me that the Government has refused permission<sup>1</sup> for the printing of the *Balpothi*<sup>2</sup>. It has permitted me to send for books mentioned in the list.

JUNE 7, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *St. Paul in Greece* (by Davis).

JUNE 9, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

JUNE 14, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Pitt* by Lord Rosebery.

Truth is	Untruth is
gold	brass
silver	tin
light	darkness
heaven	hell
sky	the nether world
day	night
diamond	a pebble
a virtuous wife	a prostitute
celibacy	adultery
God	Satan
Ormuzd	Ahriman
Brahman	A soul in delusion
living	lifeless
virility	impotence
valour	cowardice
Rama	Ravana
deliverance	bondage
ambrosia	poison

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922

<sup>2</sup> The Gujarati Primer; for its English translation, vide "A Primer", 14-4-1922.

life	death
goodness	evil
existence	non-existence
Truth is one	Untruth has many forms
Truth is a straight line	Untruth is a curved line
a right angle	... <sup>1</sup>
an ocean	the Sahara Desert
restraint self-indulgence	
love	hatred

JUNE 17, SATURDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *Second Jungle Book*.

JUNE 21, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Faust*.

JUNE 24, SATURDAY

Finished reading John Howard's life.

Received yesterday a parcel of five lbs of raisins.

JUNE 25, SUNDAY

Finished reading Valmiki's *Ramayana*. Started reading *Shant-  
iparva*<sup>2</sup>, Part I.

JUNE 28, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Jules Verne's *Dropped from the Clouds*.

JULY 1, SATURDAY

Finished reading the life of Columbus by Irving. Anasuyabehn, Kanji and Dhirajlal came to see Shankerlal. Ba, Harilal<sup>3</sup>, Ramdas Maganlal, Mathuradas, and Manu came to see me.

JULY 5, WEDNESDAY

Warner came yesterday and gave me a box and some books. Commenced reading Girdhar's *Ramayana* and *The Crusades*. Finished reading Wilberforce's *Five Empires*.

JULY 10, MONDAY

Finished reading *Lays of Ancient Rome*.

JULY 12, WEDNESDAY

Received another parcel of five and a half seers of raisins.

JULY 13, THURSDAY

Finished reading *The Crusades*. Started reading Gibbon's *Rome*.

<sup>1</sup> The original is blank here.

<sup>2</sup> A *Parva* is one of the eighteen books into which the *Mahabharata* is divided.

<sup>3</sup> Harilal Gandhi

JULY 16, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Shantiparva*, Part I. Started reading Part II.

JULY 18, TUESDAY

Finished reading First Urdu Book.

JULY 22, SATURDAY

Finished reading Girdhar's *Ramayana*. Started reading *Shrimad Bhagavat*.

JULY 23, SUNDAY

Started reading *Krishnacharitra* (by Jhaveri).

JULY 29, SATURDAY

Finished reading Krishnalal Jhaveri's *Krishnacharitra*.

AUGUST 4, FRIDAY

Finished reading Vaidya's *Krishnacharitra*.

AUGUST 7, MONDAY

Finished reading Gibbon, Vol. I. Started reading Vol II.

AUGUST 10, THURSDAY

Finished reading the *Gita* by Tilak, *Shantiparva*-Part II, and *Bhagavat*-Part I. Started reading *Bhagavat*-Part II.

AUGUST 22, TUESDAY

Political prisoners were removed yesterday to the European ward. Today they were brought back to their original ward.

AUGUST 24, THURSDAY

Finished reading *Adiparva*.

AUGUST 27, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Bhagavat*-Part II. Started reading *Sabhaparva* on Friday. Started reading *Sarasvatichandra*.

AUGUST 28, MONDAY

Finished reading *Manusmriti*. Started reading *Ishopanishad*.

AUGUST 30, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Sabhaparva*. Started reading *Vanaparva*.

SEPTEMBER 1, FRIDAY

Finished reading Gibbon, Vol. II. Finished reading *Ishopanishad*.

SEPTEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Started reading Gibbon, Vol. III.

SEPTEMBER 3, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*-Part I. Started reading Part II.

SEPTEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*-Part II. Started reading Part-III

SEPTEMBER 9, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra* Part III. Started reading Part IV.

SEPTEMBER 13, WEDNESDAY

I have decided to observe silence from 3 p.m. today up to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, with Major Jones's<sup>1</sup> consent. The following exceptions will be made:

1. When others or I suffer.
  2. When friends from outside come to see me.
  3. If, in the meanwhile, I am removed to the ward of my Dharwar friends.
  4. If an official like Mr. Hayward<sup>2</sup> happens to visit us.
  5. If Major Jones wishes to have a talk with me.
- Bedsteads were received today for. . .

SEPTEMBER 20, WEDNESDAY

Observance of silence ended yesterday. Experienced supreme joy during the period of silence. Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra* Part IV today. Finished reading Kabir's poems. Started reading Jacob Boehmen. Wrote a letter of apology to Shankerlal. Have again started observing silence. It will end at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

SEPTEMBER 23, SATURDAY

Finished reading Boehmen's *Supersensual Life*.

'It is naught indeed but thine own hearing and willing that do hinder thee so that thou dost not see and hear God.' p. 14

'If thou rulest over the creatures externally only and not from the right internal ground of thy inward nature, then by will and ruling is in a bestial kind or matter.' p. 18

'Thou art like all things and nothing is unlike thee.' p. 19

'If thou wilt be like all things, thou must forsake all things.' p. 20

'Let the hands or the head be at labour, thy heart ought nevertheless to rest in God.' p.65

'Heaven is the turning in of the will to the love of God.' p. 83

'Hell is the turning in of the will into the wrath of God.' p. 83

<sup>1</sup> Who worked as Superintendent of Yeravda Central Jail in the place of Col. Dalziel during the period the latter acted as Inspector-General of Prisons.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Maurice Hayward, the then Home Member of the Government of 'Bombay

BOEHMEN, *Supersensual Life*.

Started reading *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*

SEPTEMBER 24, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Kathavalli Upanishad*

SEPTEMBER 25, MONDAY

Finished reading *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*. Started reading Satyarth Prakash. Finished reading *Vanaparva*..

SEPTEMBER 26, TUESDAY

Started reading *Viratparva* and *Galilean*.

SEPTEMBER 27, WEDNESDAY

Started reading *Jnaneshwari*

SEPTEMBER 30, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Virataparva* and Gibbon Vol. III.

OCTOBER 1, SUNDAY

Started Gibbon, Vol. IV, and *Udyogaparva*.

OCTOBER 3, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Galilean*.

OCTOBER 6, FRIDAY

Ba, Jamnalalji, Ramdas, Punjabhai and Kishorelal came to see me on Wednesday. Wrote a letter<sup>1</sup> to Jamnalalji yesterday about Ramdas. Wrote a letter<sup>2</sup> to the Superintendent today about Gani<sup>3</sup> and newspapers<sup>4</sup>. Started reading *Philo Christus* and Fourth<sup>5</sup> Urdu Book.

OCTOBER 15, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Udyogaparva*.

OCTOBER 16, MONDAY

Started reading *Bhishmaparva*.

OCTOBER 18, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Satyarth Prakash*.

OCTOBER 22, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Bhishmaparva* and *Philo Christus*.

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 5-10-1922.

<sup>2</sup> Not available

<sup>3</sup> Abdul Gani, a fellow-prisoner

<sup>4</sup> Political prisoners were denied newspapers and magazines Gandhiji's request was for any of these: *The Times of India Weekly*, *The Indian Social Reformer*, *The Servant of India*, *Modern Review*, *Indian Review*.

<sup>5</sup> This should be "Second", vide entry for November 27.



OCTOBER 23, MONDAY

Finished reading Gibbon. Started reading *Dronaparva* and *Prem Mitra*. Finished reading *Jnaneshwari*.

OCTOBER 24, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Prem Mitra*.

OCTOBER 25, WEDNESDAY

Started reading *Shad-darshan-samuchchaya* and *The Gospel and the Plough*. Started reading Nathuram Sharma's commentary on the *Gita*.

OCTOBER 28, SATURDAY

Finished reading *The Gospel and the Plough*.

NOVEMBER 6, MONDAY

Finished reading *Dronaparva*.

NOVEMBER 7, TUESDAY

Started reading *Karnaparva*. Shankerlal was taken ill yesterday: he vomited, etc.

NOVEMBER 11, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Karnaparva*.

NOVEMBER 12, SUNDAY

Started reading *Shalyaparva*.

NOVEMBER 17, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Shalyaparva*. Left off oranges from today as an experiment. Started reading *Anushasanparva*.

NOVEMBER 22, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Shad-darshan-samuchchaya*.

NOVEMBER 27, MONDAY

Finished reading *Urdu Reader* No 3. Started reading *Urdu Reader* No 4.

NOVEMBER 28, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Anushasanparva*. Started reading *Ashvamedhikaparva*.

DECEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Ashvamedhikaparva*. Started reading *Ashram-vasik*.

DECEMBER 4, MONDAY

Finished reading the *Mahabharata*. Started reading the writings of poet Rajchandra. Had started reading the *Mahabharata* on June 25.

DECEMBER 5, TUESDAY

Had severe stomach-ache yesterday, so took castor oil today and started taking oranges. Also started taking raisins after an interval of nearly one month.

DECEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Commenced J. Brierly's *Ourselves and the Universe*.

DECEMBER 9, SATURDAY

To wish ill, to do ill, to speak ill or to think ill of anyone, we are equally forbidden without exception.

TERTULLIAN.

J. BRIERLY in *Ourselves and the Universe*

Gave up raisins and oranges from Friday.

DECEMBER 15, FRIDAY

Completed J. Brierly's *Ourselves and the Universe*.

DECEMBER 16, SATURDAY

Started reading *What Christianity Means to Me* by Lyman Abbott. Ba was to come today, but did not.

DECEMBER 21

Wrote a letter<sup>1</sup> yesterday to the Major about refusal of permission to Maganlal and others. Handed it today to Warner.

DECEMBER 25

Finished reading *What Christianity Means to Me*. Took raisins and figs sent by Anasuyabehn.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 8039M

## 182. INTERVIEW IN JAIL

[January 27, 1923]<sup>2</sup>

. . . Mahatma Gandhi is keeping very good health. While in prison we heard that there were stories abroad of his ill-health and melancholia. He was hurt to hear about this.

He said he would feel ashamed if he suffered from melancholia<sup>3</sup>. He further said that a civil resister, who would feel moody if he has to go to prison, has no business to court imprisonment or do anything that would bring it on to him. He must be prepared to treat prison as his home, if he values his country's liberty above everything else. He added that if he ever fell ill, it would not be because of any lack of

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 20-12-1922.

<sup>2</sup> Kasturba Gandhi visited Gandhiji in jail on January 27, 1923.

<sup>3</sup> A brief report in *Young India*, 1-2-1923, has this here: ". . . he replied that no one who knew him could imagine that he would ever suffer from melancholia, and expressed surprise that such rumours could find any credence".

attention on the part of the prison authorities, but because of his own carelessness or some inherent weakness in his constitution, or because of climatic conditions. He is taking all reasonable care of his health.

*Young India*, 19-4-1923

### 183. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*February 4, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

SIR,

You were good enough to tell me yesterday that the Inspector-General had replied to my letter of the 20th December last to the effect that you had full discretion regarding interviews by relatives and friends with me in terms of the prison regulations governing such interviews.

This reply has come upon me as a surprise and is at variance with the information given me by my wife, who, together with Mrs. Vasumati Dhimatram, was permitted to see me on the 27th ultimo.

My wife told me that she had to wait for over twenty days before receiving reply to her application for interview. On hearing rumours of my illness she came to Poona in the hope of being admitted to see me. Consequently, early last week, accompanied by Mrs. Vasumati Dhimatram, Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, Radha his daughter about fourteen years old, and Prabhudas, a lad about eighteen years, old, Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi's son, who had come in the place of his father who was ailing and who was one of the applicants, my wife applied at the prison gate for admission. You told the party that you could not admit them as you had no authority to grant permission and that you were awaiting reply from the Government to whom the original application was sent by you. On Mr. Maganlal Gandhi's pressing, you undertook to telephone to the Inspector-General who, too, it seems could not grant the proposed interview and my wife and party had to go away disappointed.

On the 27th ultimo, my wife told me you telephoned to her saying that you had heard from the Government that she and three others who were named in her original application could see me. This therefore excluded youngsters Radha and Prabhudas.

If you had the discretion retained to you, the whole of the circumstances narrated above need revision. I feel sure that I have not misunderstood my wife.

Moreover, if your discretion had been retained, Radha and Prabhudas could not have been excluded.

I shall therefore be obliged if you will enlighten me on the discrepancy between the Government reply and my wife's version, and inform me further:

(1) On what grounds Pandit Motilal Nehru, and Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were excluded last year.

(2) Who will and who will not be allowed to see me in future.

(3) Whether, at these interviews, I may receive information on non-political matters and activities initiated and now being conducted by my various representatives.

Though I will not permit myself to believe that any humiliation was intended, I venture to think that the treatment received by them was in fact humiliating. I should not like a repetition of the unfortunate occurrence

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,*

From a photostat: S. N. 8018; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

#### 184. LETTER TO MAJOR W. JONES

*February 10 [1923]*

DEAR MAJOR JONES,

This is a personal letter because it embraces sentiment and travels beyond my province as a prisoner. At the same time, if your official position demands that you cannot help taking official notice of it, of course you are at liberty to do so.

Yesterday morning I heard screaming and some of the men about shouted out: "There goes flogging."<sup>1</sup> I wondered. A short while after, I saw four or five young men in gunny clothing being marched. One had a bare back. They were all walking very slowly and with bent backs. I observed that they were in pain. They bowed to me. I returned the bow. I concluded that they must have been flogged. During the day I saw a respectable man in irons and gunny clothing pass by. He too bowed. Contrary to my custom, I asked him who he was. He told me he was a Mulshi Peta man. I asked him whether he knew the flogged men. He said he knew them all, as they were also Mulshi Peta men.

<sup>1</sup> Shankerlal Banker's detailed statement on prison treatment, which was published in *Young India*, 19-4-1923, refers to this incident.

The object in writing this is to know whether I could be permitted to see these men who are refusing to work<sup>1</sup>. If I find them to be acting foolishly or thoughtlessly, I might be able to persuade them to reconsider their position. Satyagraha requires a prisoner to obey all reasonable prison regulations, and certainly to do the work given. In fact, his resistance ceases once a satyagrahi is in prison. It can be revived for extraordinary reasons, e.g., studied humiliation. If these men claim to be satyagrahis, I should like to explain all this to them.

I know that a prisoner cannot ordinarily be permitted to assist or intervene in prison administration. My only ground for expecting response to my suggestion is that of common humanity. You, I am sure, will want to leave no stone unturned to avoid flogging, if it is at all possible. I have suggested a possibility in all humility. I wish you would and could be permitted to avail yourself of my offer.<sup>2</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. N. 8019; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

### 185. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA JAIL,  
*February 12, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT

YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR

I have just learnt that Mr. Jeramdas<sup>3</sup> has been awarded some punishment for having talked to some Mulshi Peta men.<sup>4</sup> I do not write this to complain of the punishment, but to ask for the same or greater for myself. I make this request not in a querulous but, if I may so put it, in a religious spirit. For the breach is more mine than Mr. Jeramdas's. I asked him to tell any Mulshi Peta man he could see that,

<sup>1</sup> They had been assigned grinding of corn, but had considered the work unfit for political prisoners.

<sup>2</sup> Major Jones thanked Gandhiji, but regretted the offer could not be accepted.

<sup>3</sup> Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892); General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 1931-34; Governor of Bihar, 1947-48 of Assam, 1950-56; Union Minister for food and Agriculture, 1948-50; member of Parliament since 1959.

<sup>4</sup> He had crossed over from his barrack to that of the Mulshi Peta prisoners and tried to persuade them to carry out the work assigned to them as a measure of jail discipline. On the warder reporting this to higher authorities, he was confined in his own cell for a few days, being let out for a few minutes only for his bath.

if he claimed to be a satyagrahi, he should not refuse to work. Mr. Jeramdas would not reject such a request from me. I told him too to tell you all that happened if you visited him today, and I was to have told you tomorrow what happened between us tomorrow, because you do not visit me on Mondays, as it is my day of silence. I assure you that I would not misunderstand the infliction of punishment on me. I should feel sorry if I escape when the one who is less guilty if there be guilt in the act is punished<sup>1</sup>.

*I remain  
Yours obediently,  
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat: S. N. 8020, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

*186. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA:*

YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL,  
*February 12, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

I observe that some Mulshi Peta prisoners have been flogged, as they are said to have refused to work and to have wilfully done short task.

If these prisoners claim to be satyagrahis, they are bound to obey all prison regulations so long as they are not humiliating or unreasonable, and certainly to the best of their capacity do the tasks allotted to them. If, therefore, they have refused to work or do not work according to their physical capacity, they are committing a

<sup>1</sup> While reproducing the letter in *Young India*, 6-3-1924, Gandhiji added the following note: "The Superintendent, in reply to the foregoing, came to my cell and said that he harboured no anger against Mr. Jeramdas. Whatever he (Mr. Jeramdas) did was done openly, but he was bound to take some notice of the breach of regulations. He could not punish me for instigation. I had not left the boundary of my yard to talk to the satyagrahis and therefore he could not punish me. Owing to Mr. Jeramdas's talk to the satyagrahis, an ugly situation was prevented." About this episode, Jairamdas Doulatram says: "As a result of Gandhiji's intervention through me, the Mulshi Peta prisoners responded and carried out the task imposed on them. The authorities had intended to give them the punishment of whipping in case they persisted in their refusal. . . . This would have led to other developments and, I believe, might have led to Gandhiji's intervention in a much more active manner, leading to other consequences."

breach of their own canon of good conduct in addition to that of prison regulations.

I am sure that the authorities do not desire to flog them, if they can be otherwise persuaded to work, and that they would wish prisoners to yield to reason rather than to fear of punishment. I fancy that the men will listen to me. I therefore, request that I may be permitted to meet in your presence all the Mulshi Peta men who wilfully break prison regulations, so that I may explain to them their duty as satyagrahis if they claim to be such.

I am aware that it is not usual to permit prisoners to assist or intervene in matters of prison administration. But I imagine that considerations of humanity such as in the case mentioned will be allowed to supersede those of administrative custom.<sup>1</sup>

*I remain,*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8021; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

### *187. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*February 23, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT,  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

[SIR, ]

You were kind enough to tell me today that you had heard from the Government in reply to my letter of the 4th instant,<sup>2</sup> and that the Government was sorry for the inconvenience that was caused to my wife and that, with reference to the other parts of my letter, the Government could not discuss with a prisoner the prison regulations in general. I appreciate the expression of sorrow about the inconvenience caused to my wife.

Regarding the other part of the Government reply, I beg to state that I am well aware of the fact that, as a prisoner, I may not discuss the prison regulations in general. If the government will reread my letter of the 4th instant, they will discover that I have not invited a general discussion of the regulations. On the contrary, I have merely

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji appended the following note later, while publishing the letter in *Young India*: "In reply, the Superintendent told me that whilst the Government thanked me for the offer, they could not avail themselves of it."

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 4-2-1923.

ventured to seek information on the particular application of certain regulations in so far only as they bear on my future conduct and welfare. I presume that a prisoner is entitled to seek and receive such information. If I am to see my friends and wife in future, I ought to know whom I may or may not see, so as to avoid disappointment or even possible humiliation.

I venture to make my position clear. I have the good fortune to have numerous friends who are as dear to me as relatives. I have children being brought up under me who are like my own children. I have associates living under the same roof with me, and helping me in my various non-political activities and experiments. I could not, without doing violence to my most cherished sentiments, see my wife, if I may not from time to time also see these friends, associates and children. I see my wife not merely because she is my wife, but chiefly because she is my associate in my activities.

Nor should I have any interest in seeing those I wish to, if I may not talk to them about my non-political activities.

Again, I am naturally interested in knowing why Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakimji Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were excluded. I should understand their exclusion if they were guilty of ungentlemanly conduct, or if they wanted to see me for any political discussion. But if they have been excluded for any unnamable political reasons, the least I could do is to waive the pleasure of seeing my wife. I entertain ideas of honour and self-respect which I would like the Government, if they can, to understand and appreciate.

I have no desire to hold political discussion with anybody, much less to send out political messages. The Government may post anyone they wish to be present at these interviews and their representative may take shorthand notes thereon if the Government deem it necessary. But I may be excused if I wish to guard against friends and relatives being refused permission for reasons outside the prison regulations. I have now stated my position frankly and fully. This correspondence commenced on the 20th December last. I would urge the Government to let me have an early, straight and undiplomatic reply.

*I remain*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI  
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8022, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924



188. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*February 23, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have kindly informed me that in reply to my letter of the 4th ultimo, the Inspector-General says that the use of the two periodicals *Vasant* and *Samalochak* cannot be granted. I beg to state that I knew that decision before writing the letter in question. If the Inspector-General will please have the letter read to him again, he will notice that I knew the decision and he will notice further that what I have sought in my letter is the reason for the refusal. I have ventured to ask in my letter whether the use of the periodicals was refused on the ground that they contained currently political news, or whether the decision was based on any other ground. I venture to repeat my request and hope to be favoured with an early reply.

*I remain*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8023, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

189. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*March 25, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have kindly informed me that the Inspector-General has replied to my letter of the 23rd ultimo saying that the decision about the *Vasant* and *Samalochak* was given by competent authority and that I was to be referred to the last paragraph of the Government's letter regarding my inquiry about certain applications for interviews with me.

I beg to tender my congratulations to the I.G. for the promptness of his reply, but greatly deplore the position adopted by

him. I.G.'s<sup>1</sup> competency to decide as to the periodicals was never questioned by me. And the paragraph of the Government's letter referred to by him does not help me in the least. It says that you may not discuss with prisoners the prison regulations in general. I have asked the I.G. to do no such thing with me. I have merely asked for the reasons of his decision. I may remind him that when he was Superintendent, and applied on my behalf for the *Modern Review*, the Government did give reasons for their refusal. I venture to suggest that the present case in no way differs from the previous one.

Moreover, the Inspector-General knows from his conversations with me that I regard these refusals to let me have the use of periodicals a punishment in addition to that awarded by the convicting judge. I feel sure that, in every case, a person is entitled to reasons for punishments inflicted on him by competent authorities.

With due respect to the Inspector-General, I venture to submit that he cannot take up the lofty attitude of indifference towards prisoners that the Government may permit itself to take. Whilst he was Superintendent, he taught me to think that as Superintendent of a prison, although he undoubtedly carried out the discipline of a prison, his appointment required him equally to protect the rights, such as they were, of prisoners. He led me to think that a Superintendent of a prison was, in fact, guardian of the prisoners under his charge. If this is true, the Inspector-General is, I take it, the super-guardian of prisoners who, therefore, expect him to press their just claims even before the Government, when it happens to overlook or disregard them. A prisoner also expects him not to evade his just inquiries, but to satisfy him in every possible and reasonable way.

I am sorry for carrying on this correspondence. But, rightly or wrongly, I believe that even as a prisoner I have certain rights, for example, the right to have pure air, water, food and clothing. Similarly, I have the right to have such mental nourishment given to me as I am used to. I ask for no favours, and if the Inspector-General thinks that any single thing or convenience has been given to me as a favours, let it be withdrawn. But this matter of receiving periodicals I consider as important a right as that of receiving suitable food. I do, therefore, respectfully ask him not to treat my application for reasons

<sup>1</sup> *Young India* has "Government's".

for his decision with the indifference that his letters have unfortunately hitherto betrayed.<sup>1</sup>

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,  
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat: S.N. 8024; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

*190. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*April 16, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA C.P.  
SIR,

As my youngest son<sup>2</sup> has come to see me today, I should like if possible to see the Government reply to my letter of the 23rd February last regarding the regulation of interviews with me. The reply will enable me to find out whether consistently with my said letter I should see my son or not, as you know today is my silent day. The silence breaks at 2 p.m. today.<sup>3</sup>

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,  
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat: S.N. 8025, also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

*191. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

*April 16, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL  
SIR,

Over six months ago there was received for me a book called *Life and Teachings of Buddha*. About the end of last January, my wife brought for me a religious magazine which was handed at your office. For the past four months, a Hindi fortnightly containing Hindi and Tamil and Telugu lessons has been received and four numbers have

<sup>1</sup> The letter was published with the following note by Gandhiji: "The Inspector-General, Col. Dalzeil, at last condescended and replied that the decision was arrived at by higher authority."

<sup>2</sup> Devdas Gandhiji

<sup>3</sup> For Gandhiji's comments, in connection with this letter, on Government's policy regarding interviews, *vide* "Note on Correspondence", 6-3-1924.

been handed to me.

A Hindi monthly known as *Saraswati* has been sanctioned by the Government, but beyond the first three numbers, after my admission here, that magazine has not been given to me. I asked my wife during her last visit to let me have some books. This parcel is now overdue.

Will you please let me now:

- (a) What has happened to the *Life and Teachings of Buddha*.
- (b) What has become of the religious magazine brought by my wife.
- (c) Whether the remaining issues of the Hindi, Tamil, Telugu fortnightly have been received and, if so, whether I may have them.
- (d) Whether the *Saraswati* has been received and, if not, whether a letter may be written to the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, telling him the remaining issues of the magazine, since last June, have not been received and asking him to send them.
- (e) Whether the expected parcel from my wife has been received.
- (f) Whether any other books or periodicals have been received and not given to me.

I am anxious not to lose any of the books or magazines that may be received for me. Therefore, even when any are not given to me, I should like to have the names of such prohibited books or magazines and be assured that they are preserved at your office on my behalf.

*I remain,*

From a photostat: S.N. 8026

## 192. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

*April 26, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

Last Monday week, my youngest son Devdas Gandhi who was permitted to see me told me that he had applied for permission on behalf of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Mahadeo Desai and himself, but he alone received the permission to see me. You have kindly informed me of the reply of the Government to my letter to you of

23rd February last. Putting the two together, I am in a position to understand somewhat the Government attitude regarding those who may wish to see me. In order to avoid disappointment, as much as possible, I told my son that, for a while at any rate, I shall try to apply for the necessary permission instead of friends having to apply from outside. Consistently, therefore, with the said reply of the Government, I beg to apply for permission to any five of the following who may be free to see me together with Lakshmi Dudabhai Gandhi, a young suppressed-classes girl, seven years old, who has been brought up and adopted by me. The other names are:

- (1) Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi, a cousin of mine who was to have seen me last January but could not owing to illness.
- (2) Mr. Jamnadas Gandhi No. (1)'s brother.
- (3) Mr. Narandas Gandhi, No. (1)'s brother.
- (3A) Ramdas Gandhi, my son.
- (4) Radha Maganlal Gandhi, No (1)'s brother's daughter, a girl 14 years old.
- (4A) Rukhi M. Gandhi, No (4)'s younger sister.
- (5) Moti Lakshmidas, a girl about 15 years old.
- (6) Laxmi Lakshmidas, No. [5's sister]- a girl 13 years old.
- (7) Amina Bawazeer, a girl 15 years old.
- (8) Krishnadas Chhaganlal Gandhi, No. (1)'s son, about 12 years old.
- (9) Mrs. Gandhi.

All these are living with me at the Satyagraha Ashram. Those who are relatives and those, Nos. 5, 6 and 7, who are not. I am giving more than five names in order to insure the coming of five along with Laxmi. I respectfully ask for an early reply as I am anxious to meet Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi, his wife and the girl Moti who are ailing for some time.

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,*

From a photostat: S.N. 8027

193. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
May 1, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
SIR,

You have kindly shown me the regulation classifying certain simple-imprisonment prisoners in a special division and told me that I am so classified. In my opinion there are hard-labour prisoners like Messrs Kaujalgi, Jeramdas and Bhansali<sup>1</sup>, who are no more criminals than I am, and who have enjoyed outside a status probably superior to mine, and who certainly have been used to a softer life than I have for years. Whilst, therefore, such prisoners remain outside the special classification, much as I should like to avail myself of some of the regulations above-named, I am unable so to avail myself, and I should be glad if my name is removed from the special division.

*I remain,*  
*Yours,*  
M. K. GANDHI  
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8028; also *Young India* 6-3-1924

194. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
June 28, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
SIR,

I heard this morning that six Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged today for short task. A few days ago, I heard that one such prisoner was also flogged for the same 'offence'. Today's news has considerably agitated me and seems almost to compel some action on my part. But I want to take no hasty step. And I owe it to you that I should, before doing anything whatsoever, seek accurate information from you regarding the punishment, which I do hereby.

<sup>1</sup> Jaikrishna Bhansali; was printer of *Young India* after Gandhiji's arrest in March 1922. He was also arrested soon after and lodged in Yeravda jail.

I am aware that as a prisoner I have no right to ask you for such information, but I venture to do so as a man and in my capacity as a public worker.

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,  
M. K. GANDHI  
NO 827*

From a photostat: S.N. 8029; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

*195. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*June 29, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
SIR,

With reference to my letter of yesterday regarding the flogging of certain Mulshi Peta prisoners, I beg to thank you and the Inspector-General for giving me full information about the cause of the punishment.

You will recall that, when some months ago similar punishment was awarded to some other Mulshi Peta prisoners, I requested the Government to let me interview all such prisoners with a view to inducing them to conform to jail discipline. The Government were good enough to thank me for the offer, but declined to accept it. I did not press my request further, if only for the reason that I had hoped that occasion would not again arise for flogging such prisoners. But the hope has not been fulfilled and flogging has been resorted to more than once since the one referred to by me.

I believe that, if I could see the prisoners, I could induce them to look at their imprisonment in the proper light and not to shirk work or resort to insubordination, as they are said to have done. To enable me to do so from time to time, I request that I may be accommodated with them. If this cannot be done, I request permission to see the prisoners as often as the occasion may require.

I am aware that as a prisoner I may not ask or receive such permission, but I respectfully ask it as a human being to serve a humane purpose. The Government, I am sure, cannot wish to see the punishment of flogging inflicted if it can be at all avoided on any prisoner, much less on one who rightly or wrongly regards himself as imprisoned for conscience' sake. They will appreciate my position when I state that these floggings are most distressing to me, specially

as I believe that they can be avoided if I am permitted to live with the prisoners.

I venture to trust that the Government will reciprocate the spirit of my letter and not put me, by rejecting my offer of service, in the most awkward position of being compelled to take action, which may, without any such wish on my part, prove embarrassing to them.<sup>1</sup> It is not my purpose whilst undergoing imprisonment to embarrass the Government by any conduct that I can possibly avoid.

In view of the fact that some of the prisoners are hunger-striking in connection with the matter, I request as early a reply as possible.

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,  
M. K. GANDHI  
No. 827*

From a photostat: S.N. 8030; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

#### *196. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
*July 9, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL  
SIR,

You will recall the fact that I wrote to you on the 29th ultimo on the recent flogging of certain Mulshi Peta prisoners. By way of protest against this punishment some of the Mulshi Peta prisoners have been fasting ever since. Of these a few have weakened and given up the fast.

In view of the fast, if not for my request, I had expected that the Government would send an early reply to the proposal contained in my letter. It is now ten days and there is no reply as yet received from the Government.

As time passes, the agitation of my soul increases. I have attempted again and again to regard myself as a mere prisoner and therefore not to think about what happens to the other prisoners. But I must confess that I have failed. I cannot forget that I am a human being, or public worker and reformer. Rightly or wrongly I feel that, if I could but meet the hunger-strikers, their fast, if it is unreasonable,

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was contemplating a fast; *vide* the following item.



as you say and I believe it is, will end. If it was my brother who was fasting in this prison instead of a stranger, I wonder if I would be expected to look upon his fast with the indifference which prisoners are supposed to adopt regarding their fellows. I feel about these fasting prisoners exactly as I would about a blood brother. Though the fact is irrelevant, I may mention that two of these prisoners are well known to me and have considerable status in society in their respective provinces.

The situation has become well-nigh intolerable for me. Unless, therefore, in the meantime some satisfactory reply to my offer is received by the end of the day, purely as a solace for my own soul, and for no other reason, I propose to fast from tomorrow (not denying myself water or salt) till a satisfactory solution is reached, i.e., till the hunger-strike ends and the situation sought to be covered by my proposal contained in my letter of the 29th ultimo is fully met.

I know that my decision will cause you pain. You have been so extraordinarily kind and went to the Government. But I hope both you and the Government will appreciate my moral difficulty.

The Government can at any moment end the unfortunate situation by accepting my offer.

I shall fast not because these Mulshi Peta prisoners are fasting, but because I am debarred from helping, though I feel confident that I can help, to end the prevailing hunger-strike and prevent a recurrence of the events that have ended in the hunger-strike.

I have no desire to interfere with the prison administration. But where a question of humanity arises, that of administrative prestige, in my humble opinion, recedes into the back-ground. And any civilized Government will, I imagine, gladly accept the willing co-operation of even a prisoner if thereby the<sup>1</sup> interests of humanity are served.

*I remain,  
Yours obediently,*

From a photostat: S.N. 8031

197. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITHS

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

July 17, 1923

DEAR MR. GRIFFITHS,

The Superintendent told me yesterday your reply to my message. Here then is my letter.

You told me at the last interview last week that whilst His Excellency was willing to permit me to see the Mulshi Peta Satyagrahi hunger-strikers and to issue suitable instructions for preventing the flogging of satyagrahi prisoners except in the case of assaults upon officials, and then, too, after previous sanction by the Government, he did not wish even to seem to consider my proposals under threat of my fasting which my letter of the 9th instant appeared to His Excellency to convey. I repeat here what I told you in the course of our conversation on Thursday last. Nothing was farther from my wish than to issue any threat to the Government. The contemplated fast, as already stated in my said letter, was for me a purely ethical step. As a prisoner, I was bound to inform the Superintendent of my wish to fast in the event of my failing to obtain an interview with the hunger-strikers. My fast, I knew, was likely to embarrass the Government which had custody of my body, but I felt that I could not, without doing violence to my inner being, refrain from a clear duty because it might, without any such desire on my part, embarrass the Government if it would not take the course that humanity plainly dictated. To emphasize the meaning I put upon my said letter and the whole of my action since and before in connection with the hunger-strike, I told you I was prepared to regard my letter as withdrawn, without in any way admitting that I had intended to issue any threat to the Government, and to believe His Excellency's assurance that he would have granted my request on merits even if he had not known that I contemplated fasting. And I was thankful that you were authorized to accept my explanation of my letter and to let me see the two of the hunger-strikers whose names I mentioned to you.

I hope that the instructions regarding flogging have already been issued.

If there is any omission or error, you will please not hesitate to tell me.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: S.N. 8032

198. LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITHS

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

July 24, 1923

DEAR MR. G[RIFFITHS],

I was astonished to learn from you, when you saw me on the 12th inst., that H.E. the Governor had read a threat into my letter of the 9th inst. I would now repeat what I told you then, namely, that no threat of any kind whatsoever was intended to be conveyed to the Government in that letter and that, if in spite of that assurance, H.E. still read a threat into that letter, it might be regarded as entirely cancelled or withdrawn.

It is, indeed, all the more pleasing to me to be able to feel that H.E. could accede to my requests on their merits. Will you please, therefore, convey my thanks to H.E. for the orders which, as you now tell me, were issued almost immediately after our conversation regarding further floggings, which orders, I am glad to see, really cover a wider ground than I had intended.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. G.

F. C. GRIFFITHS, C.S.K.,O.B.E

From a photostat of a draft: S.N. 8033

199. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

August 14, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to the conversation yesterday between His Excellency<sup>2</sup> and myself, I would like to submit the following:

I must confess that behind the special division regulations I have always read not a sincere recognition of the necessity of some such

<sup>1</sup> A note at the end of the above draft says that, on July 25, this paragraph was replaced by the following sentence: "I need hardly add that I am sorry that H.E. should have read any threat in my letters."

<sup>2</sup> The Governor, Sir George Lloyd visited Yeravda Prison on August 13.

provision, but a reluctant and, therefore, a mere paper concession to some public pressure. But for H.E.'s kind invitation to say anything I might have in my mind, I would not have taken advantage of yesterday's visit of kindly inquiry to raise or discuss any contentious matter. But when I mentioned the question of the special division, I was totally unprepared for what H.E. said. I want, if possible, to disabuse my mind of the suspicion I have of the Government's motive, the more so after knowing the H.E. is himself responsible for drawing up the regulations.

Notwithstanding the confidence with which H.E. spoke yesterday, I feel that there is no legal bar to the inclusion of selected rigorous-imprisonment prisoners in the special division. If there is a statutory bar, I should like to see the provision.

I would also like respectfully to point out that H.E. was sorely labouring under some mistake that sentences could be altered only by courts of law. Even during my short experience of this jail, I have noticed so many prisoners having been prematurely discharged under administrative orders. The point I raised was merely that of reducing rigorous imprisonment to simple, if there was any technical and legal difficulty about specially classifying rigorous-imprisonment prisoners as such.

In referring to these points, I do not want to be understood to complain of the rigorous imprisonment of any of the prisoners or to desire the inclusion of any rigorous-imprisonment prisoners for their own sakes in the special division.

What, however, I do respectfully desire is (1) to be enlightened on the points I have raised so as to rid myself of the suspicion I have referred to and (2) either, logically, the inclusion in the special division of also the rigorous-imprisonment prisoners who are brought up to habits of life, for meeting which the special division regulations have been framed, or to have my name and the names of my two colleagues removed from the special division.

I trust that H.E. will appreciate our anxiety not to be favoured to the exclusion of those whom we consider to be just as much entitled to extra conveniences as ourselves. In this connection, I would request H.E. to send for and read my letter<sup>1</sup> of 1st May last on the same subject.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 1-5-1923

I need hardly say that this letter is in no way written in my capacity as a prisoner, but is in continuation of the friendly, kindly conversation in which His Excellency was pleased to engage me yesterday.

*I am,*  
*Yours faithfully,*  
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8034

## 200. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
August 15, 1923<sup>1</sup>

TO  
H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY  
SIR,

Your Excellency will, I trust, forgive me for referring to our conversation of Monday last. The more I think of what you said about the powers of the Government about framing regulations, and reducing sentences, the more I feel that you are mistaken. I must confess that behind the special division regulations, I have always read not a sincere recognition of the necessity of some such provision, but a reluctant and, therefore, a mere paper concession to some public pressure. But if you are right in thinking that the law gives you no authority to specially classify rigorous-imprisonment prisoners or to reduce sentences, I must revise my view of the Government action and rid myself of the suspicion about its motives. I should like to be able to do so all the more as its you tell me you have personally framed the regulations in question. I have always considered you to be the last person to do things weakly or to appear to conciliate public sentiment when you did not wish to. I would be glad, therefore to find that you excluded rigorous-imprisonment prisoners from the benefit of the regulations only because the law rendered you helpless.

But if your law officers advise you that the law does not prevent you, as you imagine it does, I hope you will do one of the two things:

(1) Either remove me and my colleagues mentioned to you by me from the special division or (2) logically include in the special division those rigorous-imprisonment prisoners who are accustomed to the same mode of life as we are.

<sup>1</sup> *Young India* has "15th July 1923", which is a slip.

I would ask your Excellency to send for and read my letter of 1st May last addressed to the Superintendent together with this.<sup>1</sup>

*I remain,  
Your faithful servant,  
M. K. GANDHI*

From a photostat: S.N. 8035; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

**201. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA**

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
*September 6, 1923*

THE SUPERINTENDENT

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to the names sent to the Government of certain visitors intending to see me,<sup>2</sup> you have today informed me that the Government have now decided to restrict the number of visitors to be permitted to see me to two, and that of the names sent, only Messrs. Narandas and Devdas Gandhi may be permitted to see me for this quarter's interview.

As the Government have hitherto permitted me to receive five visitors, I must confess that the present decision has come upon me as a surprise. But I welcome the decision inasmuch as they have refused to grant similar permission to my colleague Mr. Yagnik who is kept in the same block with me. Had it not appeared graceless, I would myself have waived the facility which I then saw was exclusively allowed to me.

The case, however, of restricting the permission only to Messrs. Narandas and Devdas Gandhi stands on a different footing. If it means that henceforth I am not to see any but such blood relations only as may be allowed, I must deny myself the usual privilege of receiving visitors twice every quarter. I had thought the question of the qualifications of persons who were to be permitted to see me was decided once for all. I have no desire to weary the Government by reiterating the argument contained in the previous correspondence on this subject. I can only state that the three friends whose name have been sent to the Government fall under the category of those who

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji's observations made later, while releasing the correspondence in *Young India*, vide "Comment on Prison Regulations", 6-3-1924.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 26-4-1923.

have been permitted to see me since the correspondence referred to by me. And if I may not see these friends, whom I regard in the same light as my blood relations, I must simply not receive any visitors at all.

I observe that the Government have taken over a fortnight to give the decision you have conveyed to me. May I ask now for an early decision on this letter, so as to avoid unnecessary suspense both to those who are eager to see me and to myself.

*I remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
M. K. GANDHI  
No. 827*

From photostat: S.N. 8036; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

## 202. MESSAGE TO MAHOMED ALI <sup>1</sup>

[YERAVDA PRISON,  
*September 10, 1923*]

I can send you no message because I am in prison. I have always disapproved of people sending messages from prison. But I may say that I am deeply touched by your loyalty to me. I would, however, ask you not to allow your loyalty to me to weigh with you so much as your loyalty to the country. My views are very well known. I expressed them before I went to jail, and there has been no change in

<sup>1</sup> This message seems to have been given to Devdas Gandhi personally when he interviewed Gandhiji in Yeravda Prison, and was conveyed by him to Mahadev Desai, who later quoted it in his article, "Delhi Congress", in *Young India*, 4-10-1923. On September 13, according to Mahadev Desai, Mahomed Ali "asked Devdas if Bapu had anything to say to him, and the 'wireless' message he jocularly referred to in his speech was then given to him." This is however worded differently from the message which Mahomed Ali quoted in his speech, in support of the resolution advocating Council-entry, at the special Congress session in Bombay on September 12, over which he presided. According to a report in *The Hindu*, 17-9-1923, the gist of the message from Gandhiji, which Mahomed Ali interpreted to mean as permitting a change in the non-co-operation programme of the Congress, was as follows: "I do not want you to stick to my programme. I am for the entire programme. But, if looking at the state of the country, you think that one or two items of the boycott programme should be discarded or modified or added to, then in the name of love of country, I command you to give up those parts of my programme or alter them accordingly." There is, however, no evidence that this message was actually sent by Gandhiji. *Vide* Mahadev Desai's, article "Delhi Congress" *Young India*, 4-10-1923, C. Rajagopalachari's "Notes", *Young India*, 20-9-1923, Pandit Sunderlal's "Our Immediate Duty", *Young India*, 1-11-1923 and finally, V.S. Srinivasa Sastri's statement to the Press reproduced in *Young India*, 17-1-1924.

them since. I may assure you that if you choose to differ from me, it will not affect by one jot the sweetness of relations between you and me.

*Young India*, 4-10-1923

203. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
*November 12, 1923*

TO  
THE SUPERINTENDENT  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
SIR,

At the time you told my companion, Mr. Abdul Gani, that the prison rules did not permit you to let him have diet that cost more than the authorized scale, I informed you that your predecessor had allowed all my companions and me to regulate our diet. I further submitted to you that it was awkward for me to enjoy a facility Mr. Abdul Gani could not enjoy and that, therefore, my diet too should be so reduced as to be brought in harmony with the regulations, and the scale allowed to Mr. Abdul Gani. You were good enough to suggest that, for the time being, I should continue the present rations and that I might discuss the matter with the Inspector-General, who would shortly visit the prison. I have waited now for over ten days. I feel that if I am to keep the peace of mind, I should wait no longer and, in any case, I have nothing to discuss with the Inspector-General. I have no complaint whatsoever to make against your decision regarding Mr. Abdul Gani. I recognize that you are powerless even if you were minded to help my companion. Nor is it my intention to seek any revision of the prison regulations regarding diet. All I am desirous of doing is to avoid my favoured treatment. You have kindly suggested that my diet scale might have been considered by your predecessor a medical necessity. I know, however, as a matter of fact, that such should not be the case, for my diet has been the same more or less from the time of my admission to this jail; and what is more to the point, my companions and I have, as has been already mentioned, been hitherto permitted to regulate our diet without regard to cost. I propose, therefore, to discontinue oranges and raisins as from Wednesday next. My diet will still exceed the authorized rate. I am not sure that I need 4 lbs. of goat's milk, but unless you will kindly assist me to further change my diet so as to reduce the cost to the



authorized rate, I shall reluctantly continue to take the 4 lbs. of milk and sour limes not exceeding two.

I need hardly assure you that I contemplate the reduction in no querulous spirit. I fully sympathize with your decision regarding Mr. Abdul Gani. I propose to make the change purely for my inner peace, and in this I ask for your sympathy and approval.

*I remain*  
*Yours obediently,*  
M. K. GANDHI  
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8038; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

## 204. LETTER TO INDULAL YAGNIK

*November 12, 1923*

BHAISHRI INDULAL,

Read this<sup>1</sup> carefully and show it to Abdul Gani. Make any suggestions you would like regarding language, etc. I see no alternative but to give up oranges and raisins. I am not at all convinced that it is necessary to take them. Even if I were to lose a few pounds in weight, that would be nothing compared to the satisfaction I would derive. I see that if I am to be true to my nature, I can do nothing else. I have waited long for J.

MOHANDAS

From a handwritten draft of the Gujarati: S.N. 8038

## 205. JAIL DIARY, 1923

JANUARY 3, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Steps to Christianity* yesterday. Started reading Trine's *My philosophy and Religion*. Today the Major<sup>2</sup> gave me a copy of the notification that the Inner Temple had removed my name from its Roll.

JANUARY 7, SUNDAY

Finished reading *My Philosophy and Religion* yesterday. Star-

<sup>1</sup> Presumably, this was the draft of the preceding item.

<sup>2</sup> Major Whitworth Jones; for the notification, *vide* Appendix "Inner Temple Order", 21-12-1922.

ted reading Rabindranath's *Sadhana* and *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*].

JANUARY 14, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Sadhana* yesterday.

FEBRUARY 4, SUNDAY

Finished reading Rajchandra's writings and *Ishopanishad* with a commentary. Reading *Kena*<sup>1</sup>. Completed the second reading of Urdu Book III. Finished reading *Auto-suggestion*. Ba came and saw me on January 27. Released Shankerlal from his vow on the 28th.

FEBRUARY 5, MONDAY

Finished reading *Helps to Bible study*. Started reading Max Muller's translation of the *Upanishads* as also Well's History.

FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY

Finished reading Max-Muller's translation to the *Upanishads* as also *Upanishad-Prakash*, Part III. Reading Part IV and Well's History.

FEBRUARY 25, SUNDAY

Finished reading the *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*,] Part IV. Started reading Part V, *Kathavalli Upanishad*.

MARCH 2, FRIDAY

Finished reading Wells's History, Part II, on February 28. Started reading the Bible yesterday. Finished reading the leaflet on the worship of Vishnu. Started reading Wells's History, Part I.

MARCH 11, SUNDAY

Applied, on Wednesday, caustic soda to the eye for conjunctivitis.

Finished reading the *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*], Part V, on Thursday. Started reading Part VI. I could not spin on that day. Completed Urdu Book IV. Started reading Book V.

MARCH 16, FRIDAY

Finished reading Wells's History, Part I, yesterday. Today glanced through *Science of Peace* by Bhagwandas.

MARCH 19, MONDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *Barrack-room Ballads*. Reading

<sup>1</sup> *Kena Upanishad*

*Geddes's Evolution of cities*. Finished reading the pamphlet on Vedic religion.

MARCH 21, WEDNESDAY

Yesterday finished reading Geddes' *Evolution of Cities*. Today started reading a biography of Ramanuja. Received ten seers of raisins.

MARCH 22, THURSDAY

Finished reading the biography of Ramanujacharya. Started reading Sikh history.

MARCH 26, MONDAY

Started reading Mirza's *Ethics of Islam* yesterday.

MARCH 31, SATURDAY

Finished reading Sikh history and Mirza's *Ethics of Islam* yesterday and started reading Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*. Started reading Buhler's translation of *Manusmriti* today.

APRIL 4, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Kidd's *Social Evolution* yesterday. Finished reading Buhler's preface to *Manusmriti* today. Started reading *Rise of the Sikh Power* by Gokulchand.

APRIL 9, MONDAY

Yesterday finished reading Gokulchand's *Rise of the Sikh Power* as also *Kabir's Songs* by the Poet<sup>1</sup>. Started reading *Our Hellenic Heritage* by James today. Started reading Dadachandji's *Avesta* and Purani's translation of Aurobindo's<sup>2</sup> *Gitanishkarsha*.

APRIL 17, TUESDAY

Finished reading James's *Our Hellenic Heritage*. Devdas came and saw me yesterday. Shankerlal was released today.

APRIL 19, THURSDAY

Sufishah Mullah Shah, when he was advised to flee from the wrath of Shah Jehan, is reported to have said:

I am not an impostor that I should seek safety in flight. I am an utterer of truth. Death and life are to me alike. Let my blood in another life also redden the impaling

<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore

<sup>2</sup> Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950); mystic, poet and philosopher; since 1910 lived at Pondicherry where he established an Ashram.

stake. I am living and eternal; death recoils from me, for my knowledge has vanquished death. The sphere where all colours are effaced has become my abode.

Mansuri Hallaj said:

To cut off the hands of a fettered man is easy, but to sever the links that bind me to the Divinity would be a task indeed.

CLAUDE FIELD in *Mystics and Saints of Islam*.

Received today five seers of raisins.

APRIL 26, THURSDAY

Finished reading *Upanishad-Prakash*, Parts VII-X (*Kathopanishad*). Today started reading Part XI commencing with *Prashnopanishad*. Completed on Saturday the second reading of Urdu Reader No. I. Severe pain in stomach on Saturday. Subsided on Monday. The Major looked after me very well. I suffered very much. On Saturday, could continue work and studies according to schedule, despite the pain. They remained suspended from Sunday to Tuesday. Did not observe silence on account of pain. I believe the pain was due to my taking milk and bread as usual at 7 a.m. before the castor oil taken by me early on Saturday morning could act. Once before I had done precisely this. It had done no harm then, but this time it did. I draw two conclusions from this. First, the disease must be digging itself in slowly. Second, this body of mine will not stand the experiment of taking food before the purgative has had its effect. This result is both welcome and painful. God has been testing me on all sides. He does not permit me to see what He has been recording in His book. His wisdom is boundless.

APRIL 28, SATURDAY

Yesterday I finished reading Dadachandji's *Avesta* and started reading Spencer's *Elements of Sociology*. Today I started reading *History of Sikhism* by Macauliff.

MAY 9, WEDNESDAY

Col. Maddock<sup>1</sup> examined me last Saturday and informed me that most probably I was suffering from incipient dysentery. The Major started giving me injection of emetine since Sunday. It is about a week since Manzar Ali arrived. News was received today that Indulal also would be coming here. The Major delivered Andrews's letter to

<sup>1</sup> Surgeon-General at Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who was to operate upon Gandhiji for appendicitis on January 12, 1924.

me today. Finished reading *Gitanishkarsha* yesterday.

MAY 16, WEDNESDAY

Indulal came yesterday. Col. Maddock examined me once again. Finished reading Herbert Spencer's *Elements of Sociology* today. Also glanced through Shivram Pherwani's *Social Efficiency*.

MAY 19, SATURDAY

I was taken to the European ward yesterday. Ba, Radha, Mani, Laxmi (Junior) and Jamnadas saw me yesterday. Yesterday I finished reading Wadia's *Message of Mahomed* and started reading *Message of Christ*. Finished reading *Prashnopanishad*.

MAY 20, SUNDAY

Started reading *Mandukopanishad*.

MAY 21, MONDAY

Finished reading Hasan's *Saints of Islam*. Started reading Moulton's *Early Zoroastrianism*.

MAY 27, SUNDAY

Finished reading Kaka's *Himalayno Pravas* and *History of Sikhism*. Part III. commenced reading Part IV and also Chandra-shankar's *Sitaharan*. Read Rolf Evelyn's *Bars and Shadows*.

MAY 31, THURSDAY

On Tuesday, took up again the spinning-wheel which had been abandoned for thirteen days. Finished reading Chandrashanker's *Sitaharan* yesterday. Today finished reading Moulton's *Early Zoroastrianism*.

JUNE 1, FRIDAY

Finished reading Kishorelal's book, *Buddha and Mahavira*, as also *History of Sikhism*, Part V.

JUNE 3, SUNDAY

Finished reading Kishorelal's *Rama and Krishna*, and also *History of Sikhism*, Part VI.

JUNE 6, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading the story of Aurobindo's imprisonment and *Mandukopanishad*.

JUNE 16, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Man and Superman* yesterday. Finished reading *Bhagyan Varas* today. Started reading English translation of *Markandeya Purana*.

JUNE 30, SATURDAY

At the beginning of this week, finished reading *Poorva Rang* by Kaka and Narahari and started reading the lectures given in the Puratatvamandir. Yesterday finished reading a book on an episode in the life of the Prophet in Urdu and started reading the account of the companions of the Prophet [*Usva-e-Sahaba*].

There was a discussion yesterday with Dalziel and the Major about the flogging of the Mulshi Peta prisoners.

JULY 2, MONDAY

Yesterday finished reading *Markandeya Purana* and started reading Chapters XV and XVI of *Mandukyopanishad* and Chapter XVII of Gaudapadacharya's *Karika*.

Started reading today Buckle's *History of Civilization*, Part I

JULY 7, SATURDAY

Finished reading the lecture series<sup>1</sup> given at the Puratatvamandir. Started reading *Jaya-jayant*. Suffered great pain on Monday night. The fault was entirely mine. I ate more than I should have of the figs sent by Anasuyabehn. Boundless indeed is God's kindness. What else can be more conducive to welfare than immediate punishment for a sin?

JULY 10, TUESDAY

Yesterday finished reading the lecture series given at the Puratatvamandir and started reading Rabindranath's book on ancient literature.

Wrote a letter yesterday<sup>2</sup> to the Superintendent about my commencing a fast from today. He, therefore, came and appealed to me to postpone the fast. He again called on me this morning and asked me to postpone it for 48 hours for his sake. I have agreed to do so. Mr. Griffiths came today at 2 p.m. and left after talking to me for two hours.

<sup>1</sup> The following entry says that this was done on July 9.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 9-7-1923.

JULY 12, THURSDAY

Yesterday again Griffiths came with a message from the Governor. Finished reading the book on ancient literature yesterday. Started reading *Yugadharma*. I met Dastane and Dev<sup>1</sup> in the presence of the Superintendent and Mr. Griffiths. After discussing the moral issues involved, they announced their decision to give up their fast.

JULY 13, FRIDAY

Chhaganlal, Kashi<sup>2</sup> and others were to come to see me but did not.

JULY 22, SUNDAY

Ba, Chhaganlal, Amina, Ramdas and Manu saw me last Monday. Finished reading, during the week, the autobiography of Countess Tolstoy and Buckle's *History*, Part I. Reading Part II and *Kalapani-ni-katha*. Wrote a letter<sup>3</sup> to Mr. Griffiths about Dastane and others on Tuesday.

JULY 30, MONDAY

Finished reading *Kalapani-ni-katha* last week. Finished reading *Sampattishastra*, Part I. Reading Part II. Finished reading *Juno Karar*<sup>4</sup> yesterday. Started reading *Navo Karar*<sup>5</sup> today.

AUGUST 8, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Buckle's *History*, Part II, and *Gitagovind*.

AUGUST 12, SUNDAY

Finished reading the last part of the *Upanishad* [-*Prakash*], covering *Aitareya Brahmana* and *Taittiriya Brahmana*. Started reading *Chhandogya Upanishad*. On Thursday, started reading Prof. James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Finished reading *Sampattishastra*.

AUGUST 15, WEDNESDAY

The Governor paid a visit on Monday. Wrote a letter<sup>6</sup> today about the special division. Finished reading [*Usva-e*]-*Sahaba* today. Reading *Stories from the History of Rome*.

<sup>1</sup> Two leaders of Mulshi Peta satyagrahi-prisoners who had been on fast since June 30, in protest against the flogging of the satyagrahis.

<sup>2</sup> Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Letter to F. C. Griffiths" 17-7-1923

<sup>4</sup> Gujarati translations of the Old Testament and the New Testament

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>6</sup> Vide "Letter to Governor of Bombay". 15-8-1923.

AUGUST 19, SUNDAY

Finished reading Buckle's *History*, Part III. Started reading Hopkins' *Origin and Evolution of Religion*.

AUGUST 23, THURSDAY

Finished reading Hopkins' book. Started reading Lecky's *European Morals*

AUGUST 26, SUNDAY

Finished reading James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Four days ago finished reading Vinoba's *Maharashtra-Dharma*, Part I. Part II. is about to be finished.

The Superintendent said yesterday that those who took raw milk did not need fruits and hence he refused to give fruits to Manzar Ali. Even for me, he said, they were not really necessary; so I stopped asking for oranges, lemons, etc. Today ate bananas from Manzar Ali's ration. Took milk raw.

AUGUST 28, TUESDAY

Today finished writing *Gitakosh*<sup>1</sup>. Started reading Holmes' *Freedom and Growth* yesterday.

Started living exclusively on raw milk from today. May God help me !

AUGUST 31, FRIDAY

Finished reading Holmes' *Freedom and Growth*. Started reading Haeckel's *Evolution of Man*.

Today the Major applied caustic soda to the eye for conjunctivitis.

SEPTEMBER 2, SUNDAY

Finished reading the Bible yesterday. Started reading an illustrated account of Jesus today.

Lost in weight by three lbs. during the last week.

SEPTEMBER 9, SUNDAY

Finished reading the illustrated account of Jesus and also Kavi's *Muktadhara* and *Dubtoon Vahan*.<sup>2</sup> Weight went up by one lb.; it is

<sup>1</sup> Glossary to the *Gita*; it was later revised to incorporate meanings given to words and phrases in Gandhiji's *Anasaktiyoga* (1929), a Gujarati translation of the *Gita*, and was published under the title *Gitapadarthakosh*, in 1936, by Navajivan Publishing House.

<sup>2</sup> Plays by Rabindranath Tagore



now 101 lbs.

SEPTEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Devdas, Narandas, Keshu<sup>1</sup> and Kacho<sup>2</sup> saw me on Monday<sup>3</sup>. Finished reading the first part of Maulana Shibli's life of the Prophet, and also the preface to the Koran by Dr. Mahomed Ali.

SEPTEMBER 28, FRIDAY

This week finished reading Vivekanand's *Rajayoga* and Champakrai Jain's *Dharmani Ekata*. Finished reading life of the Prophet (by Maulana Shibli) today.

SEPTEMBER 30, SUNDAY

Started reading Nicholson's *Mystics of Islam* yesterday and finished it today. Started making the fair copy of *Gitakosh* today. Yesterday started reading *Sahaba Ekram*, Part II, and the unread portion of Urdu Reader No. V. Started reading Paul Carus's *Gospel of Buddha*. Today Major Jones came to bid me farewell.

OCTOBER 7, SUNDAY

Finished reading Paul Carus's *Gospel of Buddha* during the week. Reading Rhys Davids' Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism. Started reading Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam* today. Work on the fair copy of *Gitakosh* continues. Received a basket of fruits from Jamnalalji today.

Finished reading *Chhandogyopanishad* today and started reading *Brihadaranyak*.

OCTOBER 14, SUNDAY

Ba, Avantikabai, Jamnalalji and Savatibai came and saw me on Wednesday.

Finished reading Davids' *Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism*. Reading Sir Oliver Lodge's *Modern Problems*.

OCTOBER 21, SUNDAY

Finished reading Sir Oliver Lodge's *Modern Problems* and started the current issue of *Puratatva*.

OCTOBER 25, THURSDAY

Manzar Ali was taken to Prayag today.

<sup>1</sup> Keshavlal, son of Maganlal Gandhi

<sup>2</sup> Krishnadas

<sup>3</sup> *Young India* published a brief report; vide Appendix "Interview in jail", 13-9-1923.

Finished reading Ameer Ali's book on Tuesday.  
Started reading Washington Irving's *Mahomed* Yesterday.  
Started reading *Syadvada Manjari* today.

OCTOBER 26, FRIDAY

Abdul Gani was brought to this ward today.

NOVEMBER 4, SUNDAY

Abdul Gani started spinning on Wednesday.  
Finished reading Irving's *Mahomed*.

STARTED READING *HISTORY OF THE SARACENS* BY AMEER ALI.

NOVEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Brihadaranyak Upanishad* on Tuesday.  
Started reading *History of Civilization in Europe* by Guizot on Thursday. Finished reading *Sahaba*, Part II, today. Will commence tomorrow Maulana Shibli's biography of Hasrat Omar.

NOVEMBER 12, MONDAY

Wrote a letter<sup>1</sup> today to the Superintendent saying that I would have to give up oranges and raisins from Wednesday because he could not provide Abdul Gani the diet of the latter's choice.

NOVEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Have given up oranges and raisins since Wednesday last. Found today that I have lost three pounds in weight, but my physical strength remains unaffected.

NOVEMBER 24, SATURDAY

Today finished reading Ameer Ali's *History of the Saracens* and also making the fair copy of the *Gitakosh*. Yesterday finished reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in Europe*. Today started reading *Guizot's History of Civilization in France*, Part II.

NOVEMBER 26, MONDAY

Yesterday started reading Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*. Today commenced writing the history of Satyagraha in South Africa<sup>2</sup>. Finished reading Reese's autobiography and started reading Rajam

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda" 12-11-1923.

<sup>2</sup> Originally in Gujarati, this book was published in two parts in 1924 and 1925 by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, and the English translation in 1928, by S. Ganesan, Madras.

Iyer's *Vedantabhraman*.

DECEMBER 9, SUNDAY

Today finished reading the first part of Motley's book and started the second part. Finished reading Rajam Iyer's *Vedanta-bhraman*.

On Wednesday finished reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in France*, Part II, and started Part III.

Finished reading *Syadvada Manjari* today. Started reading *Uttaradhyayan Sutra*. The experiment of doing without fruits is going on. Have been taking some bread with milk since Tuesday. Found that my weight had increased by two pounds; now it is 99.

DECEMBER 15, SATURDAY

Finished reading Guizot and started *Rosicrucian Mysteries*.

DECEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Finished reading the second part of Motley's book and started the third.

DECEMBER 23, SUNDAY

Ba, Mathuradas and Ramdas came to see me on Tuesday.

Ramabai Ranade<sup>1</sup> came on Wednesday. At the instance of the Superintendent, wrote a letter<sup>2</sup> to Harilal asking him to come and see me.

Have started taking fruits again since Tuesday evening. Last Sunday my weight stood as low as 96 and even the Superintendent got alarmed. Since Thursday started taking honey and increased the intake of bread to eight ounces.

I weighed 99 lbs. today. On Wednesday, finished reading *Rosicrucian Mysteries* and started Plato's *Dialogues*. Today finished reading the biography of Hasrat Omar and started reading Maulana Shibli's *Al Kalam* and also Woodroffe's *Shakta and Shakti*. Finished reading Motley's book.

DECEMBER 30, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Uttaradhyayan Sutra* and started *Bhagavati Sutra*. Finished reading Woodroffe's *Shakta and Shakti*. On

<sup>1</sup> Ramabai Ranade; widow of Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade; was associated with the Seva Sadan of Bombay and Poona in social welfare work for women and children.

<sup>2</sup> This is not available

Thursday, finished reading the first part of Plato's *Dialogues* and started the second.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 8039

APPENDIX: LIST OF BOOKS

- \* 157<sup>1</sup> *Natural History*
- \* 158 *The Wisdom of the Ancients*
- \* 159 *Natural Features of India*
- \* 178 *Stories from the History of Rome*
- See Diary of 23-4-1922
- \* 205 *The Young Crusader*
- \* 212 *Lives of Fathers and Martyrs*
- \* 215 *Dropped from the Clouds*
- 264 *Ivanhoe*
- 282 *The Old Curiosity Shop*
- \* 295 *The Five Empires*
- 305 *Westward Ho*
- \* 356 *Seekers after God*
- Equality Bellamy*
- \* 41 *The Five Nations: Kipling*
- \* 49 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- \* 10 *The Second Jungle Book*
- \* 107 *J. Howard*
- 109 *Satires and Epistles of Horace*
- \* 111 *Goethe's Faust*
- 116 *Tropical Agriculture*
- \* 125 *Lays of Ancient Rome*
- 129 *Primer of Marathi Language*
- \* 132 *Natural History of Birds*
- 144 *Enoch Arden*
- 148 *Historical English Grammar*
- 149-50 *Scott's Poetical Works*
- \* 152 *Life and Voyages of Columbus*
- Muktivivek*<sup>2</sup> Translation of Vidyaranyaswami's book
- Kanta Do*

<sup>1</sup> The significance of the asterisks is not known, but the numerals apparently stand for catalogue numbers.

<sup>2</sup> The originals of this and the following book were in Sanskrit.

*Malati Madhava*<sup>1</sup>  
*Siddhantasara*  
*Panchasati*  
*Gulabsinh*  
*Shrivritiprabhakar*  
*Chatuh Sutri*  
*Bhojprabandh*  
*Vikramcharitra*  
*Anubhavapradipika*  
*Vastupalcharitra*  
*Yogabindu*  
*Kumarpalcharitra*  
*Vivadtandav*

From a copy: S.N. 8039

<sup>1</sup> This and the following are titles of books in Gujarati

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX-I

#### GOVERNMENT OF INDIA "COMMUNIQUE" ON GANDHIJI'S LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,  
*February 6, 1922*

The Manifesto issued by Mr. Gandhi on the 4th February justifying his determination to resort to mass civil disobedience contains a series of misstatements. Some of these are so important that the Government of India cannot allow them to pass unchallenged. In the first place, they emphatically repudiate the statement that they have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and of free Press.

*In limine*, the Government of India desire to draw attention to the fact that the decision to adopt a programme of civil disobedience was finally accepted on the 4th November before the recent notifications relating either to the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act to which Mr. Gandhi unmistakably refers, were issued. It was in consequence of the serious acts of lawlessness committed by persons who professed to be followers of Mr. Gandhi and the non-co-operation movement that the Government were forced to take measures which are in strict accordance with the law for protection of peaceful citizens in the pursuit of their lawful avocations. Since the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement the Government of India, actuated by a desire to avoid anything in the nature of recrudescence of political activity even though it was of an extreme character, have restricted their actions in relation thereto to such measures as were necessary for the maintenance of law and order and the preservation of public tranquillity.

Upto November no steps, save in Delhi last year, were taken against the Volunteer Associations. In November, however, the Government were confronted with a new and dangerous situation. In the course of the past year there had been systematic attempts to tamper with the loyalty of the soldiers and the police and there had occurred numerous outbreaks of serious disorder directly attributable to the propaganda of the non-co-operation party amongst the ignorant and excitable masses. These outbreaks had resulted in grave loss of life, the growth of a dangerous spirit of lawlessness and an increasing disregard for lawful authority. In November they culminated in the grave riots in Bombay in which 53 persons lost their lives and approximately 400 were wounded. On the same date, dangerous manifestations of

lawlessness occurred in many other places and at this period it became clear that many of the Volunteer Associations had embarked on a systematic campaign of violence, intimidation and obstruction to combat which proceedings under the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure had proved ineffective.

In these circumstances the Government were reluctantly compelled to resort to measures of a more comprehensive and drastic character.

Nevertheless the operation of the Seditious Meetings Act was strictly limited to a few districts in which the risk of grave disturbances of the peace was specially great and the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 was confined to associations, the majority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation. It is impossible here to set out in details the evidence which justified the adoption of these measures in the different provinces. Abundant proof is, however, to be found in the published proceedings of the various legislative bodies, in the *communiqués* of different local Governments, and in the pronouncements of the heads of provinces. While resolute in their determination to enforce respect for law and order and to protect loyal and peaceful subjects of the Crown, the Government have at the same time taken every precaution possible to mitigate where desirable the conditions of imprisonment and to avoid any action which might have the appearance of vindictive severity. Ample proof of this will be found in the orders issued by local Governments. Numerous offenders have been released, sentences have been reduced and special consideration has been shown in the case of persons convicted of offences under the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act. There is then no shadow of justification for the charge that their policy has been one of indiscriminate and lawless repression.

A further charge which has been brought by Mr. Gandhi is that the recent measures of Government have involved a departure from the civilized policy laid down by His Excellency at the time of the apology of the Ali Brothers, namely, that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. The following citation from the *communiqué* of the Government of India issued on the 30th May conclusively disproves the statement. After explaining that in view of the solemn undertaking contained in the statement over their signatures, it had been decided to refrain from instituting criminal proceeding against Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, the Government of India observed: "It must not be inferred from the original determination of the Government to prosecute for speeches inciting to violence that promoting disaffection of a less violent character is not an offence against the law. The Government of India desire to make it plain that they will enforce the law relating to offences against the State as and when they may think fit against any persons who have committed breaches of it."

It remains with the Government of India to deal with the allegation that His Excellency summarily rejected the proposal for a conference although the terms put forward by the Conference at Bombay and accepted by the Working Committee of the Congress were "quite in keeping with His Excellency's own requirement as indicated in his speech at Calcutta". How far this is far from being the case will be manifested from a comparison of His Excellency's speech with the terms proposed by the Conference. His Excellency in that speech insisted on the imperative necessity as a fundamental condition precedent to the discussion of any question by a conference, of the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party. No assurance on this point was, however, contained in the proposals advanced by the Conference. On the contrary whilst the Government were asked to make concessions which not only included the withdrawal of the notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment, and Seditious Meetings Acts and the release of persons convicted thereunder, but also the release of the persons convicted of offences designed to affect the loyalty of the army and the submission to an arbitration committee of the cases of other persons convicted under the ordinary law of the land, there was no suggestion that any of the illegal activities of the non-co-operators other than hartals, picketing and civil disobedience should cease. Moreover, it was evident from the statements made by Mr. Gandhi at the Conference that he intended to continue the enrolment of volunteers in prohibited associations and the preparations for civil disobedience. Further Mr. Gandhi also made it apparent that the proposed Round Table Conference would be called merely to register his decrees. It is idle to suggest that terms of this character fulfilled in any way the essentials laid down by His Excellency or can reasonably be described as having been made in response to the sentiments expressed by him.

Finally, the Government of India desire to draw attention to the demands put forward in the concluding paragraph of Mr. Gandhi's present manifesto which exceeded even the demands made by the Working Committee of the Congress. Mr. Gandhi's demands now include, (1) the release of all prisoners convicted or under trial for non-violent activities (2) a guarantee that the Government will refrain from interference with all non-violent activities of the non-co-operation party, even though they fall within the purview of the Indian Penal Code or in other words an undertaking that Government will indefinitely hold in abeyance in regard to the non-co-operators the ordinary and the long established laws of the land. In return for these concessions he indicates that he intends to continue the illegal and seditious propaganda and operations of the non-co-operation party and merely offers to postpone civil disobedience of an aggressive character until the offenders now in jail have had an opportunity of reviewing the whole situation. In the same paragraph he reaffirms the unalterable character of the demands of his party.

The Government of India are confident that all right thinking citizens will



recognize that this manifesto constitutes no response whatever to the speech of His Excellency at Calcutta and the demands made are such as no Government could discuss much less accept. The alternatives that now confront the people of India are such as sophistry can no longer obscure or disguise. The issue is no longer between this or that programme of political advance but between lawlessness with all its dangerous consequences on the one hand, and on the other, the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized governments. Mass civil disobedience is fraught with such dangers to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity. The Government entertain no doubt that in any measures which they have to take for its suppression they can count on the support and assistance of all law-abiding and loyal citizens of His Majesty.

*India in 1921-22, pp. 329-31*

## APPENDIX - II

### *LETTER FROM HAKIM AJMAL KHAN*

AHMEDABAD,  
*March 17, 1922*

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have received the letter which you wrote to me from Sabarmati Jail and thank you very sincerely for the kind sentiments that you have expressed towards me. Whether I really deserve them is another question into which I do not propose to enter.

I am glad that Mr. Shankerlal Banker is with you in the jail. He has great affection for you and possesses qualities which have endeared him to you. I feel sure that his company in jail will be source of extra pleasure and satisfaction to you.

I can, however, feel happy at your arrest only when I find that, as a mark of the profound respect that it has for you, the country takes still greater interest in the national movement than it did when you, were free. But it gives me infinite pleasure to see that the country observed perfect peace on your arrest. This is a clear sign of the spread of the spirit of non-violence in the country, which is as essential for our success as pure air is for life.

I have no doubt that the secret of the progress of our country lies in the unity of the Hindus, the Mussulmans and other races of India. Such a unity should not be based on policy, for that, in my opinion, will only be a kind of armistice which might with difficulty be sufficient for the present requirements. But I clearly see that the two great communities are coming closer to each other every day. And although the number of men whose hearts are absolutely free from any sectarian prejudices may

not be very great in the two communities, I feel convinced that the country has found the road to real unity and will advance on it with steady steps towards its goal. So highly do I prize the unity of races inhabiting our country that, if the country gave up all other activities and achieved that alone, I would consider the Khilafat and the swaraj questions automatically solved to our satisfaction. For the achievement of our objects is so intimately connected with this unity that to me the two appear identical.

The question naturally arises, how are we to achieve this living and lasting unity? I can find only one answer to that. We can only achieve it by the sincerity and purity of our hearts. Not until every one of us has driven selfishness out of his mind will our country succeed in achieving its object. I know that the differences which have been created by a century of this system of Government cannot very soon be eradicated and, therefore, we cannot expect our efforts to bear fruit immediately. But there can be no doubt that we have accomplished the work of generations in months and have actually achieved what the pessimists among us considered impossible of achievement.

I do not consider the question of the Khilafat, in other words, the question of the evolution of Islamic policy, a passing phase. Just as in centuries past, it presented itself in one form or another, so will it in centuries to come. God alone knows how and when it will finally be solved. Therefore, even those who do not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity in the true sense of the term must understand that even as a policy it carries centuries under its arms. It is an admitted fact that looking to the present condition of India, next to Hindu-Muslim unity in importance is the question of non-violence. How far have our efforts, or rather your efforts, been successful in that direction is shown by the progress of events. But the most striking proof of all of our success in that direction is afforded by our North-West Frontier Province where non-violence had the least chance of success. When we find our brethren in that corner of India generally opposing the shield of non-violence to the violent attacks of their opponents, we feel convinced that the spirit of non-violence has spread and is spreading satisfactorily in the country.

Doubts are entertained with regard to the United Provinces in this matter; but my own opinion is that in consequence of the dearth of national workers, the Congress creed has not been sufficiently explained to the people. I feel sure, however, the United Provinces will very soon come up to the level of other Provinces.

If some extraordinary or special causes have occasionally led to violence in some parts of the country, they should afford no ground for despair. We should not be unprepared for such stray cases, when we remember that we have been working with a limited number of workers in the midst of a population of 33 crores and working for eighteen months only. At the same time we should not minimize the significance of such occurrences and concentrate all our efforts on preventing their recurrence. Unity

of the races inhabiting India and non-violence are the two essential conditions for the success of the present movement.

Khaddar, too, no doubt is of invaluable help to us in the achievement of our objects. It will demonstrate our unity and show us how far we have advanced towards swaraj. I do not think that picketing is so necessary for popularizing khaddar as the country considers it to be. The country considers it a short cut and spends its limited time over it, although as you yourself have observed, the real work lies in creating in the minds of our people love for home-made things. But so far as I think our Congress Committees have not sufficiently devoted their time and attention to it. This is the reason why they want to make up for this neglect by adopting the comparatively easier method of picketing. I, however, hope that in future the various Congress Committees would adopt it as their ideal to persuade people to use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar and prefer it to picketing.

You have also touched upon the question of untouchability in your letter. On the face of it, it might appear to be a communal question. It is really a national question, for, the country as a whole cannot progress until and unless its component parts progress too. It is the duty of every person who has the interest of the country at heart to interest himself in all such questions as affect our national growth. Consequently, everything which comes in the way of the material or moral progress of the country must engage our attention. It is, therefore, as much a Muslim question as Hindu. Similarly, if the Mussulmans are backward in education, every good Hindu should think of their educational advancement, for every step in that direction is a step towards the educational advancement of the country as a whole, even though it may superficially appear to be to the advantage of one community only. I hope, therefore, the country will pay to the question of untouchability the attention that it deserves.

Bardoli and Delhi resolutions invite the country to concentrate its efforts on the constructive programme laid down by you. I hold that if we were to start civil disobedience, we would not have the necessary atmosphere required for the success of the constructive programme. It is very difficult to find a *via media*. I trust the Working Committee will fully consider the question and adopt a proper and suitable course.

Now that we are starting constructive work, we should reorganize the Congress office to suit to our requirements. We should divide the work and create separate departments for different works, each under a member of the Working Committee selected for the purpose.

In the end, I join you in your prayers and wish to assure you that though my failing health will not enable me to be of very great service to my country, it will be my earnest endeavour to discharge my duties until Mr. C. R. Das is once more

amongst us. May God help us in the sacred work which you and the country have undertaken for truth and justice, and may your going to jail lead to the achievement of our triple goal.

*Young India*, 23-3-1922

### APPENDIX- III

#### *INTERVIEW TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI<sup>1</sup>*

Mr. Devdas Gandhi and myself went to Poona on Friday last to see Mahatmaji who, we learnt, was in Yeravda Jail. We were informed by Mr. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society that the Jail Superintendent had orders to allow only one interview in three months. Mahatmaji's son Devdas accompanied by Mr. Thakkar and myself went to the Jail and requested the Superintendent to allow us to see Mahatmaji. We were told that only one of us two, Mr. Thakkar or myself, could accompany Devdas.

The prisoner then was brought down by a warder to the Superintendent's room and we were called in. The Superintendent was in his chair and Mahatmaji standing in front of his table. He had to continue standing throughout the interview.

In answer to questions about his food, Mahatmaji said he was given goat's milk and bread, milk being given all at a time. He had cut down his three meals to two. Asked what he did for fruits, he said he was given 2 oranges a day. Raisins which he had mentioned as a part of his usual diet had not yet been ordered to be given. The Superintendent, however, promised to allow this. Mahatmaji's milk is heated for him on a stove in the yard which some Arab prisoners are using.

Mahatmaji is not allowed to see Mr. Shankerlal who is in the same prison or any other persons or prisoners. Mahatmaji is kept in one of the cells intended for solitary confinement and locked in during nights. The cell has two ventilators, one near the roof and another at the floor. It has a verandah besides which, in day-time an area marked out for him in the yard is allowed for walking. The nightpot has to be in the same little cell during nights. At our interview the Superintendent promised to replace the crude pot by a commode.

No articles are allowed from outside. Mahatmaji is not allowed even his own bed. He is given as usual 2 jail blankets. I was curious to ask if he had any pillow. He said he had none. When I expressed surprise, the superintendent interposed that a pillow was luxury. For utensils the Mahatmaji has the usual jail mug and dish. He is, however, allowed his own spoon, having strongly remonstrated on this subject. The Superintendent said during our interview that, if Mahatmaji applied, he would forward his petition to the Government. He has not been deprived of his writing paper and

<sup>1</sup> This took place on Saturday, April 1, 1922

pen which he is just now using only to learn Urdu by himself. Mahatmaji was in his usual single loin-cloth. He did not seem to us to be in good health though the Jailor told us that he had gained in weight.

It is clear that, except in the matter of food to the limited extent mentioned by me, Mahatmaji is treated strictly as a common prisoner under the Bombay Jail Code which in many respects is a worse code than others. Mahatmaji told me that he did not want any complaints to be made about his life in Jail. The fine words uttered by the Judge at the famous trial at Ahmedabad had led us all to hope that the Government of Bombay would treat the great prisoner, if not exactly as he deserved, or as we would want, at least as civilized Government would treat their more important prisoners of war. Our interview, however, rudely awakened us to the realities of the British Indian administration.

*The Hindu*, 3-4-1922

#### APPENDIX -IV

##### *INTERVIEW WITH MAGANLAL GANDHI<sup>1</sup>*

I was one of the party that visited Mahatmaji in jail, on the first of this month. . . .

We asked Mahatmaji what his daily routine was. He replied with evident satisfaction that he always got up 4 a.m. and devoted the morning hours to prayer and meditation. . . . Mahatmaji has no work to do till it is broad daylight, probably because he is given no lamp. Finishing his morning ablutions, he commences his favourite work-spinning and carding. . . .

While relating to us his daily routine, he looked at his feet for fine cotton fibers sticking to his legs. "I am just coming from my carding work", he said.

He took delight in standing all the time we were talking, in spite of our repeated appeals to take one of the chairs that were placed this time for all present, visitors as well as the prisoner. At every appeal, he said he was all right. One could see that the discipline to which he had voluntarily surrendered himself was a luxury for him. . . .

When Mahatmaji heard the warning that was given at the close of the interview that nothing that had transpired should be published, he inquired of the Superintendent with his vanquishing smile, "Not even the fact that letters were stopped by the Governor for reasons best known to him?"

"No."

"Or even that I am well?"

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from Maganlal Gandhi's article: "Mahatmaji's Luxuries in Jail". The interview took place on July 1, 1922.

“No, nothing whatsoever,” was the reply.

The prisoner, retracing his steps towards the door, said that he left it to the visitors to decide whether he should lose the privilege of future interviews. . . .

*Young India*, 20-7-1922

## APPENDIX V

### INNER TEMPLE ORDER

The official order of the Inner Temple Bench disbarring Mr. Gandhi runs as follows:

“Inner Temple: At a Parliament holden on Friday, the 10th day of November, 1922.

“Whereas at a Bench Table holden on the 9th day of November 1922 the treasurer having reported that he had received a certified copy of the conviction and sentence to six years’ imprisonment of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a barrister of this Inn, at the court of the Sessions Judge, Ahmedabad, India, on the 18th March, 1922, for sedition.”

“It was ordered that the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, having been convicted by a competent tribunal of an offence which, in the opinion of the Bench, disqualifies him from continuing a member of the Inn, should have his name removed from the books.”

“And at the same Bench Table it was further ordered that at the Parliament to be holden on Friday 10th November, 1922, the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi should be disbarred and his name removed from the books of the Society and that this order be communicated to the judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature, to the other Inns of Court, to the General Council of the Bar and by registered letter to the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and be screened in the Hall.”

This was confirmed at the Parliament of the Inner Temple held on November 10.

*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 21-12-1922

## APPENDIX VI

### INTERVIEW IN JAIL

[September 10, 1923]

Gandhiji was interviewed in Yeravda Jail on Monday. He has been keeping fairly good health since his last illness three months ago. He is still given milk, bread and fruit, and the diet has been quite agreeable to him so far. Though he looks perfectly bright and healthy, time and deep religious study have not failed to tell upon his general appearance. His weight now is 101 lbs., i.e., 13 lbs. less than his original weight when he was arrested. He spends his time, besides spinning, mainly in a study of the Vedas and Upanishads and Urdu in which he gets the assistance of Mr. Manzarali Sokhta.

Mahatmaji was perfectly amused when told of the speculation in the country about the rumours of his release, and said laughing he would deplore his early release, for it would interrupt his studies.

*Young India*, 13-9-1923

## APPENDIX VII

### *DREW PEARSON'S INTERVIEW WITH SIR GEORGE LLOYD*

On Gandhi Day just a year and a half after the Mahatma's imprisonment I visited the gaol near this city where he is confined, and talked with the man who more than anyone else in India was responsible for his arrest. The latter official, whose name I cannot divulge, is one of the highest in India. In words so graphic that I could almost picture the slender figure of Gandhi sitting before him, he described his talks with the Mahatma and the events leading up to the arrest. It was a story which probably few people had heard.

At the height of his campaign of Non-co-operation, my informant had called Gandhi to his office. Gandhi had been staging great bonfires, burning English cloth, had begun a most successful boycott of the schools and courts, and had organized such an effective campaign against the Prince of Wales that the streets down which his procession passed were almost empty.

Then, to use the words of my informant, "Gandhi pattered in here on his little bare feet and sat where you're sitting. And I warned him. You don't know what you're doing,' I said, 'but you insist on going ahead with this devilish programme, I'll hold you responsible for every man, woman and child that is killed.'

'There won't be any, Your Excellency,' he said.

'Yes, there will,' I replied. 'You're preaching non-violence, but that's all theory. In practice it won't work out. There's no such thing as non-violence in such a campaign as you are waging. You can't control men's passions. Remember, I hold you responsible.'"

His Excellency shook his finger at me as if I were Gandhi sitting opposite him.

"Gandhi came in again after it was all over after the riots and murders at Chauri Chaura. And I said:

'I told you what would happen. You are responsible.' He covered his face with his hands and said, 'I know it.'

'You Know it! Well, can your knowing it bring back to life the men and women whose heads were ground into dust by the heels of your Indian mob ?'

'Put me in gaol, Your Excellency,' he moaned.

‘Yes. I will put you in gaol, but not until I get good and ready. Do you think I want to put a crown of thorns on your head?’ He said he was going to fast for a week.”

### A COLOSSAL EXPERIMENT

His Excellency paused and leaned back. In a less animated tone, he added:

“Just a thin, spindly shrimp of a fellow he was, but he swayed 319,000,000 people and held them at his beck and call. He didn’t care for material things, and preached nothing but the ideals and morals of India. You can’t govern a country with ideals. Still that was where he got his grip upon the people. He was their god. India must always have its god. First it was Tilak, then Gandhi now, someone else tomorrow. He gave us a scare. His programme filled our gaols. You can’t go on arresting people for ever, you know not when there are 319,000,000 of them. And if they had taken his next step and refused to pay taxes, God knows where we should have been! Gandhi’s was the most colossal experiment in world’s history, and it came within an inch of succeeding. But he couldn’t control men’s passions. They became violent, and he called off his programme. You know the rest. We gaolled him. I saw him three days ago in prison. Life seemed a little dull. I think he would like to get out. He complained that I wouldn’t let him have any newspapers. ‘Why, I don’t even know who is Prime minister,’ he said. ‘The best way to keep posted in politics is to keep out of gaol,’ I told him. ‘You’ll be glad to know that I’m leaving in a few months. You and I were never the best friends, but at least we were candid with each other.’”

Here I interrupted to put the question I had come to ask permission to visit Gandhi in prison.

“Absolutely impossible,” His Excellency cut me short. “The only way to gaol Gandhi is to bury him alive. If we allowed people to come here and make a fuss over him, he would become a martyr, and the gaol would be a Mecca for the world. We didn’t gaol Gandhi to put a crown of thorns on his head.”

When I asked if there was any likelihood of Gandhi being released before his six years’ term expires, he replied, emphatically:

“Not while I’m here. Of course, my term expires in December. They can do whatever they like with him after I go back to England.”

After describing Mr. Gandhi’s life in gaol, Mr. Pearson proceeds:

Mr. Gandhi’s religious creed, as explained to me by his son, is based upon two things: truth and non-violence. He is willing to dispense with all forms and ceremonies which the world calls religion, and retain these two basic principles.

According to his son, Mr. Gandhi does not wish to be released from prison by the pressure of a popular demand but only by the Government itself, when it has suffered a change of heart towards the Indian people. He will win his release by no promise to abstain from politics, but promises to devote the rest of his life to the liberation of his country.

*Young India*, 22-11-1923