THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XLV

(1930-1931)

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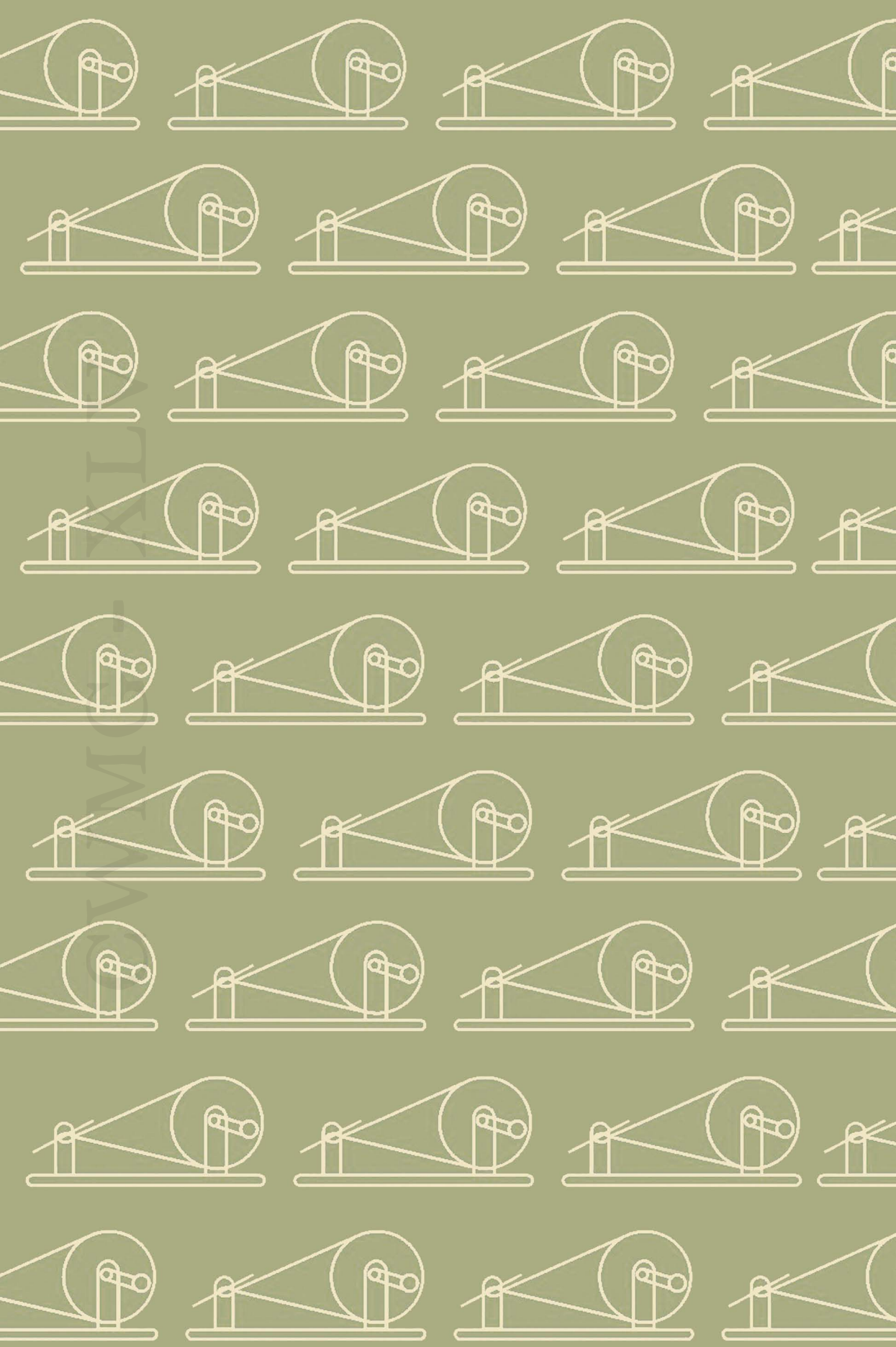
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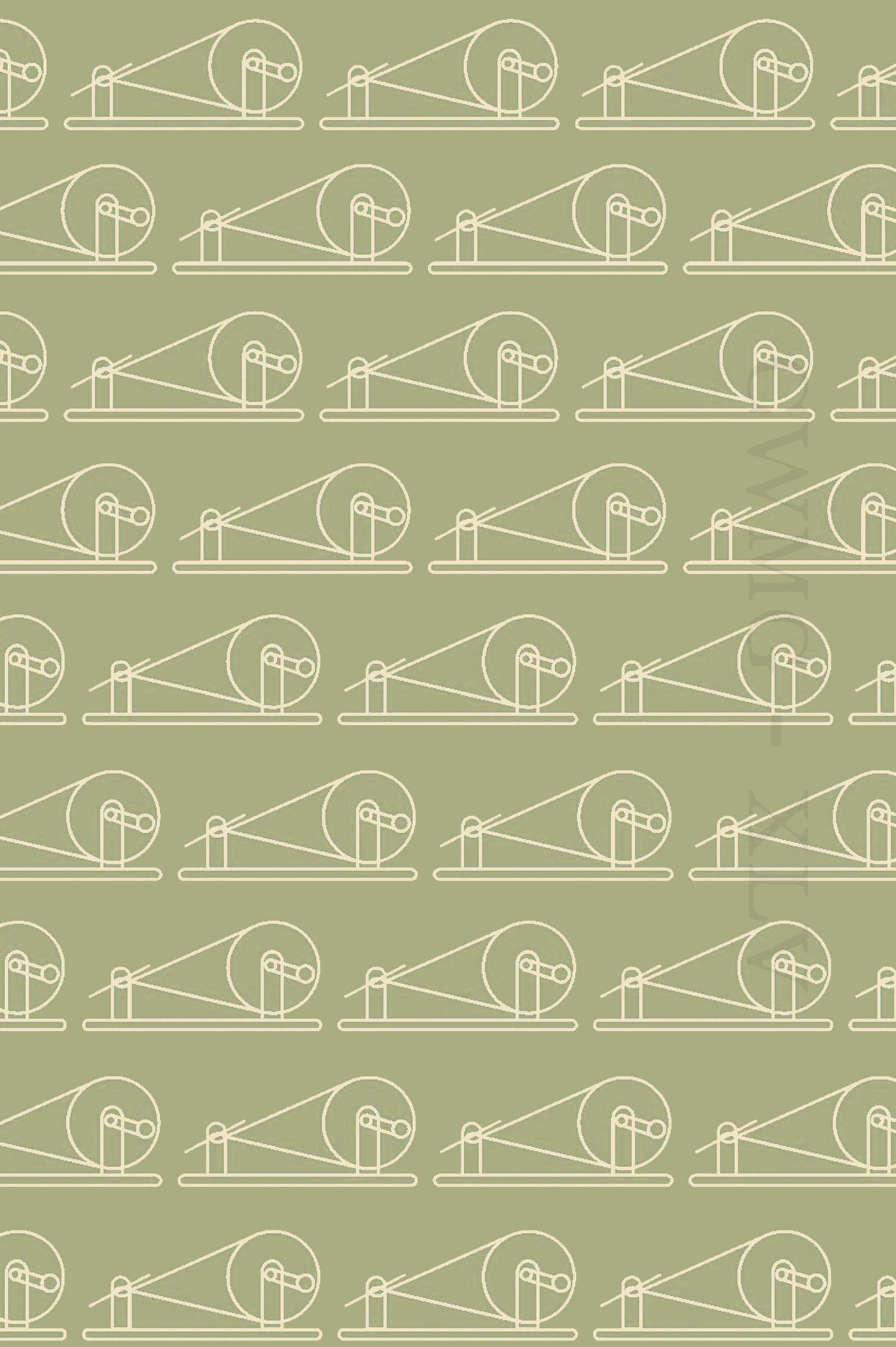
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Gandhi at Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad, January 1931

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PREFACE

This volume, covering the four months from December 15, 1930 to April 15, 1931, is chiefly concerned with the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations which resulted in a truce between the Congress and the Government paving the way for Congress participation in the Round Table Conference. The agreement was approved at the plenary session of the Congress held in Karachi towards the end of March under the Presidentship of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Gandhiji was appointed by the Working Committee, a few days later, to be the sole Congress representative at the Conference. The plenary session also passed a resolution on fundamental rights to be incorporated in any future constitution of the country, thus setting the seal of formal approval on the new, radical trends in national politics which were emerging under the influence of Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru. At the very beginning of this new phase in the freedom struggle, the country suffered a grievous calamity and Gandhiji an irreparable personal loss in the passing away of Motilal Nehru.

The ground for the Gandhi-Irwin parleys was prepared by the mediatory efforts of the Liberal leaders, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar. Gandhiji and other members of the Working Committee were released on January 26 as a conciliatory gesture in keeping with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's statement on January 19 at the concluding session of the first Round Table Conference. The three Liberal leaders, on their way back to India from the Conference, had cabled to Gandhiji appealing to him to suspend judgment on the statement till they had met him and apprised him of the situation. Gandhiji responded to their appeal unreservedly. "I have come out of jail", he declared in the very first public statement after release, "with an absolutely open mind, unfettered by enmity, unbiased in argument and prepared to study the whole situation from every point of view . . ." (p. 125).

But soon misgivings arose in his mind. The continuing repression, he said in reply to a cable from the *Daily Herald*, robbed the release of the leaders of all grace and made it valueless for the intended purpose of creating an atmosphere suitable for calm discussion of the political problem (pp. 130-1). Writing to the Viceroy, Gandhiji said : "But I assure you that I am simply waiting for a sign in order to enable me to respond to your appeal.

I confess, however, that some of the signs are highly ominous'' (p. 136). The civil disobedience campaign could not be called off, he said, ''without a reasonable hope of a final settlement'' and also ''unless the hope of a settlement is shared by the vast mass of the people'', and he saw no possibility of this ''so long as repression in its virulent form continues'' (p. 138). Gandhiji expressed his doubt to Srinivasa Sastri, too: ''The atmosphere in India does not seem to me to support your and other friends' jubilation.'' But he added: ''I would like however to feel that there was no foundation for my fears'' (p. 160). He was, he said in an interview to *The Pioneer*, a man of peace, and it was ''no joy to me to submit thousands who have a childlike faith in me to suffering''. Gandhiji, therefore, hoped that Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar, ''who love their country as intensely as I claim to do'' (p. 151), might be able to convince him that their optimism was justified.

Gandhiji seems to have been particularly agitated by what he described to the Viceroy as ''a cruel, uncalled for and unchivalrous lathi-charge . . . upon wholly innocent women and girls''. ''I cannot recall'', he commented, ''anything in modern history to parallel this official inhumanity against wholly defenceless and innocent women'' (pp. 136-7). He expressed his pain and indignation in equally strong words in a letter to T. Rangachari: ''The man in the street and now the woman also must, if the authorities can help it, for ever lie under the police heels, a situation that I for one cannot tolerate for a moment longer than I can help'' (p. 163).

But while Gandhiji condemned the Government's heartlessness in attacking women, he felt proud of the latter's role in the movement. ''They have brought swaraj nearer'', he said in a Press interview. ''They have added several inches to their own height and that of the nation'' (p. 129). To the Ashram women who had taken part in the procession at Borsad and sustained injuries, he expressed admiration for their courage and their freedom from anger. Writing to Gangabehn Vaidya, he said: ''I got excited when I knew about this atrocity, but was not pained in the least.'' On the contrary, he felt happy. ''How I would have smiled with pleasure'', he said, ''to see your sari made beautiful with stains of blood'' (p. 145).

The Gandhi-Irwin talks form a landmark in the history of British rule in India. For the first time since its establishment the British Government dealt with a representative of the country, one who had defied its authority, on a footing of equality and with respectful courtesy. The negotiations yielded no tangible gains

to the nationalist cause; the Viceroy drove a hard bargain and secured all the immediate advantage and the truce terms were bitterly criticized by the radical nationalists. But the dialogue had the effect of legitimizing satyagraha as a weapon of political warfare and demonstrating the power of *jana shakti*, the moral strength of the people.

From the personal point of view, the meetings provided high drama of great psychological interest. The Viceroy and Gandhiji were drawn to each other by a common faith in a higher Power and in the moral governance of the universe. And yet they were genuine opponents struggling to safeguard the interests, the one of the Empire and the other of the people, they represented. If Gandhiji believed that revolutions are caused by people themselves (not by great men) and obey rigid laws of their own (p. 95) and that public opinion (not artificially created) is the pure basis of *Ramarajya* (p. 328), Lord Irwin for his part disclaimed personal credit for halting the war and declared, "the broad forces that were at work were working very hard in the direction of peace" (Birkenhead: *Halifax*, p. 303). The general line taken by His Majesty's Government had, in his words, "immensely strengthened our moral position both here and all over the world" and he "felt it a great privilege to have some part in this great play" (*ibid*., p. 307). Both protagonists joined in the prayer that "history may say you and I were permitted to be instruments in doing something big for India and for humanity" (p. 268).

"It was a most strenuous fight today, but it left no unpleasantness in the mouth at the end", reported Gandhiji to Mahadev Desai after the second meeting (p. 197). This could well be said of the entire series. Gandhiji wanted to meet "not so much the Viceroy of India as the man" in Lord Irwin (p. 176). He did meet both and, in keeping with the spirit of satyagraha, he yielded much to the Viceroy because of his regard for the man. Lord Irwin was extremely considerate to Gandhiji in personal matters, and once or twice paid him compliments which Gandhiji duly reported to Mahadev Desai. Irwin also admitted, "You planned a fine strategy round the issue of salt" (p. 200). But the Viceroy stood firm on the prestige of the British Government. He turned down, at the very first meeting, Gandhiji's demand for an inquiry into charges of police excesses on the ground that such an inquiry would place the police in a position of defendants, and to this he could not agree (p. 187). On the issues of salt, picketing and restoration of confiscated lands in Kaira District he made minor concessions. In regard to picketing, for instance, he noted: "I

have very little doubt that, if you can get rid of the political-weapon drive of it and have it purely as an economic and social thing, it will be dead in three weeks. This is the very strong view of all the Indians who come and talk to me about it'' (p. 241). Referring to the difficulties which, towards the end, developed on the issue of the restoration of confiscated lands in Kaira District, the Viceroy noted that ''it is essential to give no more time for moral scruples to develop'' (p. 247). Once or twice the Viceroy had mental reservations about Gandhiji's motives, too, and was determined not to ''allow the break which I anticipated to come, as I felt certain Mr. Gandhi would try to engineer it, on Police alone'' (p. 239). And he thought that Gandhiji's firmness on the issue of salt was ''mainly vanity'' (p. 240).

Gandhiji seems to have approached the talks in an entirely different spirit. He had spelt out his attitude in a letter to Reginald Reynolds in reply to the latter's strong criticism of Gandhiji's conciliatory statements after his release. Satyagraha ''can be gentle'', he said, ''and should be gentle, where gentleness is a duty'' (p. 221). ''Remember too'', he added, ''that satyagraha is a method of carrying conviction and of converting by an appeal to reason and to the sympathetic chord in human beings. It relies upon the ultimate good in every human being'' (p. 222). The Viceroy himself has borne testimony to this essentially personal approach of Gandhiji. Describing how Gandhiji yielded on the issue of inquiry against police excesses, he noted: ''In the course of a short discussion we had about this, he revealed what I have by now discovered as the right method of dealing with him. He said: 'When you or Mr. Emerson use your best arguments it does not always have much effect on me, but, when you tell me that Government is in a difficulty and cannot do what I want, then I am inclined to capitulate to you!' This was exactly the history of the Police discussion'' (p. 244). Gandhiji was well aware of the difference between the Viceroy's official approach and his own personal approach, for he reported: ''I cannot yet say that he is sincere, but he was friendly and frank. . . . To a certain extent I may say I have found him sincere, but that was because he had to reciprocate my sincerity'' (p. 208).

In keeping with the spirit which had informed the talks, Gandhiji, as soon as they had concluded, took up the task of building an atmosphere of peace and co-operation in the country. In a Press statement issued on the day on which the truce terms were finally agreed upon, he paid a handsome tribute to the Viceroy for his ''inexhaustible patience and equally inexhaustible

industry and unfailing courtesy'' during the talks (p. 250). He also disclaimed victory for the Congress. ''For a settlement of this character, it is not possible nor wise to say which is the victorious party. If there is any victory, I should say it belongs to both'' (p. 251). He appealed for the co-operation of the Princes and the goodwill of the English. Appreciating the former's gesture in accepting the idea of federation, he invited them also to concede the principle of democracy in their States. Appealing to the English he said their active help was absolutely necessary and urged them ''to let India feel the same glow of freedom which they themselves would die in order to possess'' (p. 253). Reassuring British commercial interests, he declared in a Press interview that he would not ''repudiate one single farthing that can be legitimately debited to us . . . what the Congress has asked for, and will insist upon, is proof of the justness of the obligation . . . '' (p. 266).

And as for the people, Gandhiji urged them to eschew whatever violence had crept into the movement. ''Having suspended civil disobedience'', he told a public meeting in Delhi a few days after the conclusion of the talks, ''we now enter a period of disciplined obedience. We are now pledged to eschew all passive and active violence, direct and indirect violence in picketing foreign-cloth and liqour shops . . . '' (p. 273). Writing in *Young India* on the subject, he said: '' . . . the cent per cent observance of the conditions of the settlement to be fulfilled by the nation will make the Congress an irresistible power for vindicating the national position'' (p. 282).

Gandhiji, however, was under no illusion that a change of heart had occurred (p. 355). He had changed the method, he explained to the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, because the situation had changed (p. 331). Earlier, the nation did not have a complete measure of its strength, but after the ''magnificent spectacle'' (p. 331) of the civil disobedience campaign of the preceding ten months, they could negotiate with a consciousness of strength (p. 296). ''The satyagrahi'', he explained at a public meeting in Bombay, ''whilst he is ever ready for fight must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace'' (p. 305).

Jawaharlal Nehru and other younger nationalists were not easily reconciled to the settlement, and Gandhiji strove patiently to win them over to his point of view. In a note presumably addressed to Jawaharlal, he said: ''You seem to be feeling lonely and almost uninterested. . . . I want your active support in what I am doing. And that I cannot get unless you criticize, alter,

amend, reject and do many other things'' (p. 242). Gandhiji's position in relation to them was made extremely difficult by the execution of Bhagat Singh on the eve of the annual session of the Congress at Karachi in the last week of March. He had pleaded for clemency at his very first meeting with the Viceroy, not as condition for a settlement, but on humanitarian grounds. In the last-minute appeal to him on the day of the execution, Gandhiji wrote: ''Since you seem to value my influence such as it is in favour of peace, do not please unnecessarily make my position, difficult as it is, almost too difficult for future work'' (p. 333). ''Charity never faileth'', he reminded the Viceroy (p. 334). The appeal went unheeded, and Gandhiji declared that the Government had ''missed a golden opportunity, to win over the rebels to its side. . . . The reliance on violence is perhaps ominous and it suggests that in spite of high-sounding and pious proclamations, it does not want to part with power'' (p. 336). Gandhiji fully sympathized with the young men who had greeted him with black flags and the slogans, ''Down with Gandhism'', ''Go back Gandhi'', which he considered were ''a legitimate expression of their anger'' (p. 344). But his own position remained unchanged. The staying of the executions was no part of the truce agreement, and he would not therefore be deflected from the path he had chosen. While paying a glowing tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of Bhagat Singh and his comrades, he added: ''But I want the greater bravery . . . of the meek, the gentle and the non-violent, the bravery that will mount the gallows without injuring, or harbouring any thought of injury to a single soul'' (p. 344). Violence against the foreigner could not be separated from violence against one another. The Kanpur riots, he said, were ''the handwriting on the wall . . . we have harboured violence in our hearts, we have been guilty of using coercion''. Making a passionate appeal to the country for sanity, Gandhiji said: ''I have felt deeply ashamed of these deeds of blood, and to whoever my voice may reach I wish to declare that such things may any day prove more than I can bear. . . . as soon as I feel that life is unbearable, I should hope to have the courage to fast myself to death rather than witness these blood feuds'' (pp. 350-1).

Though Gandhiji insisted on adherence to non-violence for the sound practical reason that in the special conditions of India it had a better chance of success than violent resistance, his faith in it as a political weapon rested on another, deeper intuition, namely, that it alone gave promise of successfully rebuilding Indian society on juster foundations. For Gandhiji's ambition was not only

to win political freedom for India but also to establish a just society, "dharmaraj, *Ramarajya* or the people's raj (democracy)" in which princes and paupers would live in enjoyment of equal rights (p. 328). In reply to a question by the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* he said: "I should like to take an active part in the reconstruction of my country . . . That, indeed, would be a labour of love" (p. 332). In fact, Gandhiji was rebuilding the country even through the satyagraha campaigns themselves. "Satyagraha is the most important tool for the people's education and awakening", he said, and added: "Self-purification is another name for satyagraha" (p. 329). Swaraj thus won through non-violent struggle and self-purification would solve the problem of the minorities in India, for, under this method, swaraj "can never be achieved by usurping the rights of any community big or small but by ensuring even-handed justice and fair treatment to all — even the poorest and the weakest in the land" (pp. 231-2).

At the end of an article "The Giant and the Dwarf" deprecating the demand for equality between British and Indian interests, Gandhiji envisaged India's role as a member of the world community : "My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, is not devised to harm any nation or individual" (p. 343). On the contrary, his conception of swaraj implied scrupulous regard for the interests of all. He preferred the positive term, "Swaraj" to the negative term "Independence". Swaraj meant "disciplined rule from within", whereas independence might mean licence to do as one liked (p. 263). "Swaraj" was a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint. *Purna* swaraj would pave the way for voluntary association with other nations for mutual benefit (p. 264).

For Gandhiji, patriotism was not an ultimate value. While denying the charge that he was "sacrificing the country for Truth", he asserted parenthetically but categorically that he "should, if there could be such a choice, most decidedly sacrifice the country for Truth" (p. 340).

As he had explained at length in *Hind Swaraj* (Vol. X), India must have the courage to be herself, to remain rooted in the soil of her own spiritual and moral tradition. He did not want India to "be swamped by the onrush of Western civilization" (p. 397). His ideas about its evils, which he had expressed in *Hind Swaraj*, had changed little (p. 333). He had said then, and he still held, that if Britain remained in India on a footing of equality they would "benefit each other and the world". But this could happen, he had foreseen, "only when the root of our

relationship is sunk in a religious soil'' (Vol. X, p. 62). Gandhiji wanted the dealings between nations to be governed by equality and justice and he welcomed the provisional settlement as a stage in building an Indo-British relationship based on dharma or morality.

To rebuild one's country and the world on moral foundations one must begin with oneself. ''The remedy for every evil'', Gandhiji wrote from jail to a friend, ''is self-purification. If there is but one self in all, you should have faith that self-purification contributes to the welfare of the entire world'' (p. 113). Indeed swaraj was self-purification and purity of life led to self-rule. (p. 249). The country was to acquire strength through self-purification and the past twelve months had made it clear that ''swaraj will come when it does, from within, by internal effort . . .'' (p. 311). This process of self-examination, self-reform, consists in noticing our defects, trying to get rid of them and not resting till we have got rid of them. ''If there is a snake in the house, we shall not feel easy in mind till we have caught and removed it. . . . This is also true about snakes and other such poisonous creatures in our hearts'' (p. 56).

In his anxiety not to embarrass the Government or the jail authorities, Gandhiji warned Mirabehn not to publish news of his illness (pp. 81-2) as he warned Narandas Gandhi not to give publicity to his efforts for securing for Appasaheb Patwardhan and other political prisoners the permission they had sought to do sacrificial spinning (p. 124). The letters from prison also throw some precious light on his inner life. His horror of *himsa* is well brought out in the account of the '' holy experience'' of seeing God in a worm and a weevil which he might have killed but luckily did not (p. 20). Equally revealing is the half-serious mention of his lectures to the birds and secret talks with the stars (p. 79). The ideas and values symbolized by the Hindu gods were more real, he felt, ''than the so-called real things we perceive with our five senses'' and hence recitation of a hymn to Saraswati was for him ''a mystical act'' (p. 98).

Amidst the many public cares and burdens that he had to carry on the morrow of his release he found time to arrange for the supply of a denture to a fellow-prisoner named Wheeler (p. 126). In disposing of the yarn spun by him in jail, he would give their due share to the A.I.S.A. and to the Cow-protection Society, but he would like Narandas Gandhi ''to use the rest to get a sari woven for Ba'' (p. 181).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a dateline or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the January 1969 edition.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to documents and M.M.U. to the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

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1. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Saturday Morning, December 13/16, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet at 12 noon on Wednesday. I got a copy of the booklet *Gitabodh*[1]. I take it that those who make notes about the work they do as *yajna* do so in their diary. If you remind people often enough about this, they will be careful. See that everyone is soon able to use the instruments for weighing yarn and testing its strength. I have replied to Mahadev's questions in my letter to Durga, and to questions about my health in my letter to Kakasaheb. Therefore read both the letters.

Afternoon

There was a letter from Jayaprakash saying that Prabhavati would go over there. She may have even arrived there before you get this letter. If she comes, look after her very carefully. She gets fainting fits and these should stop immediately in the Ashram. You may buy any fruits which may be necessary for her. Consult a doctor if necessary. You may write to me about her whenever you wish to.

Night, December 15, 1930

I got Manilal's letter. I felt relieved. Let him observe as many restrictions as he chooses, but not at the cost of his health. 110-115 lb. is certainly low weight. Manilal should maintain his weight between 120 and 125; if, however, he has kept up his strength, he will regain that level after he is released. He should guard against any disease insidiously attacking him. The reading which he has done is quite good, but in order to derive the fullest benefit from his work he should carry out my suggestions as far as possible. Really speaking, however, when he has the benefit of the company of a person like Nanabhai[2], and will now have the benefit of Mahadev's company, there should hardly be any need

[1] Gandhiji's discourses on the *Bhagavad Gita*, given in letters to Narandas Gandhi; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 277, footnote 1 and p. 340, paragraph 2. For the text of these discourses, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

[2] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

for me to guide him. The reading he is doing at present is good indeed. There is little in it, however, to be remembered and digested. The reading which I have suggested will, while developing his memory and power of thinking, also be interesting to him. *Jivanshodhan*[1] can be understood only if it is read carefully twice or thrice. He is doing right in reading it once again. One reason why my writings are easy to follow is that these days I write with the sole aim of making myself easily understood by all the inmates of the Ashram. Formerly too I wrote with the general public in view, and not for men of learning. It is natural, therefore, that my writings should be easy to understand. Let him write to me again. He should write as often as he gets time and is permitted to do so.

I have had no reply to my inquiry about Devdas's letter. I have even suggested that he should write again. If the Bombay air suits Jamna, do not insist on her returning to the Ashram. Do you still make bread there? If you do, of what quality are you able to make it, and who actually makes it? If it is of good quality and if anyone is coming on a visit here, send a sample. You had described the process of making it, but it did not succeed here. I have not been able to discover where the error lay.

I can say that, up to this evening, the *bhakhari* of *jowar* and *bajra* seems to have done me no harm. I eat very little in bulk but can keep up my strength all right. No one should worry on my account. I will not be obstinate and cling to the experiment.

I did not find Hariyomalji's and Gijubhai's letters. I wonder if Gijubhai was written in place of Haribhai. I did not find the latter's name in Radha's note.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

Tuesday Morning, December 16, 1930

Pranayama (control of breath) and *asanas* (yogic postures) are referred to appreciatively in this chapter, but we should remember that at the same time the Lord has stressed the need for *brahmacharya*, i.e., keeping the observances calculated to take us nearer and nearer to God. It should be clearly understood that the mere practice of *asanas* and the like can never take us to the goal of even-mindedness. *Asanas* and *pranayama* may be of some slight help in steadying the mind and making it single-purposed, provided

[1] By Kishorelal Mashruwala, a Navajivan publication

[2] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VI) which followed, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

that they are practised to that end. Otherwise they are no better than other methods of physical training. They are very useful indeed as physical exercise and I believe that this type of exercise is good for the soul, and may be performed from a bodily standpoint. But I have observed that these practices do only harm when indulged in for the acquisition of supernormal powers (*siddhi*) and the performance of miracles. This chapter should be studied as a summary of the teaching in the preceding three chapters. It cheers us up in our spiritual struggle. We should never be down-hearted and give up the endeavour to reach evenness of temper.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 71 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

2. *LETTER TO SANKERJI*[1]

YERAVDA,
December 16, 1930

MY DEAR SANKERJI,

I was glad to hear from you of your progress. Can you give me the figures of khadi production in Malabar, or at least in Cochin? Do you know where Ramachandran is? Do please write to me from time to time.

Yours,
BAPU

The Hindu, 29-12-1930

3. *LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 16, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Please send me four pounds of cotton. Kakasaheb's place is now taken by Pyarelal. He spins faster and, therefore, a greater quantity of cotton will be consumed than formerly. Kindly inform the people you buy the cotton from, that it is full of particles and

[1] Of "Swaraj Bhawan", Ernakulam (Cochin State), Kerala

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seeds. As a result, we have to spend much time in cleaning it and some of the cotton is wasted.

I hope I do not give you too much trouble. I do believe that, if you store cotton for my sake, you will also be able to use it for other purposes.

I hope all your sisters are quite well.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4817. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

4. *LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI*

December 16, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter. Though you are so near the Ashram, I do not send this letter along with the other post for the Ashram, and delay its reaching you by some days. Instead, I am taking the risk and writing it directly to you. I believe you will get it. Why do you give way to despair? One who believes in God can never feel despair. Since you are very eager to work, you earn merit as if you had been actually working. Why, then, do you feel impatient? Who knows for what service God has destined you? Or how can we say that your aspirations in themselves are not sufficient for His work? You do perform the daily *yajna* of spinning; what else is it, if not service ? Start repeating Ramanama and rouse yourself. Shake off despair. Banish the very thoughts of weakness and disease. If you take interest in the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*, go on repeating to yourself verses from them. Write to me direct. And write often.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANU
C/O PROF. TRIVEDI
TILAK ROAD, POONA CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7773

5. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. Even if I agree to see you I am afraid the permission will not be granted. Therefore for the time being, we must be content with letters alone. By speculation I did not mean that no forward transactions should be entered into. Speculation means gambling. With the expectation that market prices will go up I buy 1,000 bales of cotton. I do not need any cotton, I do not even store it in any warehouse. Only a book transaction is made. Now I await a rise in price. I sell the cotton when it rises; this I consider gambling. The nation or, rather, the world has lost a great deal through such transactions. This was what I meant in my letter[1]. Yes, I expect much more than this, but, at present, you will not be up to that. Without at all depending upon future market prices, to sell the commodities at a little more than the cost price is what I consider unsullied trade. Today it might be difficult to conduct such business, but ultimately, it might bear fruit. You might remember this is what I visualize for khadi. But I know this is a tall order. I shall be very happy and content if you brothers can give up speculation. However, do only what is intelligently acceptable and within your power. I would not at all wish that you should act upon the suggestion simply because it happens to be mine and that, too, sent from jail. Faith should not have a place where reasoning is applicable.

Jayaprakash informs me that, although you are not recruiting any new people just now, he will be absorbed somewhere because of my recommendation[2]. I certainly hold that Jayaprakash is a worthy young man but I do not wish that a post be created where none exists today.

I was a little worried to read of Malaviyaji's fever in the newspapers. I am relieved now. I hope he will emerge from the jail in good health. I am glad about your health too. I am again experimenting with a milkless diet. This time constipation was res-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 356.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 266

ponsible for it. Now I am taking chapatis prepared from millet for the prisoners, vegetables, three *tolas* of almonds and dates. I am trying to give up dates. Constipation has disappeared. I shall revert to milk if I lose strength. It is nearly a month since I gave up milk.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6191. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

6. *LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 17, 1930

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

Your letter. I have in general given the literal translation of *Bhajanavali*[1]. Now it is up to Mirabehn. I do not consider the translation worth publishing. It cannot even be published while I am in jail. How can I choose from the *bhajans*? Different *bhajans* appeal on different occasions. We might say that all are well liked. But I do wish to drop a few in the new edition. In "Who is not devoted to Rama and Vaidehi"[2] I take Rama to mean *Daridranarayana* and it is our duty to forsake the company of one who does not serve *Daridranarayana*. Non-co-operation emanates from that.

Thanks for making a start in Gujarati. Considering all this connection with Gujarat, it is good to learn the language too. As a matter of fact, the more Indian languages one knows the better.

I do not use the enema regularly. I regard it efficacious to use only when the need arises. To use it daily is not good. It can also prove harmful.

My blessings to the children. I hope the ear-trinkets taken off have not been replaced. My hope is that now the children would have become simpler than ever before.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4218

[1] *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* Vol. XLIV.
[2] A verse from *Vinaya Patrika* by Tulsidas

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7. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

A person without art is like a beast. But how will you define art? Art is "skill in work". The yoga of the third chapter of the *Gita* is perfect art. And this is also true about the activities generally known as art. Any activity in which the masses cannot participate is not art, but a kind of self-indulgence, whether it concerns the voice or clothes or stone. Large numbers singing *Ramdhun* in unison is art, which ought to be cultivated. Many temples have art, and their art is something which can be appreciated by the masses. The daily worship and readings from holy books which take place in temples, if kept within measure and done with genuine faith, are the best form of art. Thus, there is art wherever harmony prevails as regards the time, the place and the occasion. I do not like films. I have never gone to a cinema.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5267

8. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

December 18, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. I understand what you say about the children. They ought to gain strength. If their present diet is kept up and they get regular exercise, they certainly will. You may write and make whatever suggestions you think necessary regarding them to the people at Calcutta and then stop worrying about the matter. For you cannot do more than that at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6807

9. LETTER TO BHAWANIDUTT JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1930

BHAI BHAWANIDUTT,

I was glad to have your letter. God grants an opportunity to those devoted to service. Much work can be accomplished through Prabhudas's charkha when you have gained mastery over it.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 104

10. LETTER TO RADHABAI OAK

December 19, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

You must have got my message. I was happy to learn that you are working hard in the field of public service. But it seems you fight shy of khadi saris. How can you serve the poor if you feel averse to the sacred products of their labour? Think over this.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SMT. RADHABAI OAK
C/O SUSHILA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6726

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11. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

December 19, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

The letter to Radhabai is enclosed. Why do you write *vancha vish*[1]? Why did you split the word? And why *vish*? It should be *veesh*. The dictionary[2] published by the Gujarat Vidyapith contains rules for spelling; acquaint yourself with them. Tara is bound to know about this. Is not language also included in our love for things Indian? We ought not to murder a language.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4780

12. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 19, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. You seem to be rendering good service. And simultaneously you have been improving your weight. That is indeed creditable. Explain what you mean when you say that you eat everything. Do not overstep the limits of propriety. Do not beg from anyone. Be content with what you get.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9215

[1] Meaning 'I shall give to read'
[2] *Jodanikosh*; *vide* Vol. XL, pp. 213-4.

13. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 19, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Since you have been doing your duty with sincere devotion, you should feel no other desires. What path should I suggest to you? We daily recite the verse *Prajahati yada kaman*[1]. You should burn up every personal desire. You will then yourself discover the path. Reflect over the verses describing the qualities of the *sthita-prajna*[2] and know that they are for persons of your character. Think which of those verses you are not able to follow in conduct, and why. If you do this, all your mental problems will disappear. Write to me from time to time. My respectful greetings to the elders, and blessings to Jamnadas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 901. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

14. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 19, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. Is Kripalani all right? Kanti and others will meet me in a few days. Pyarelal tells me that his books about the rules governing *sandhi* and *samas* in Sanskrit are with you, or that you know where they are. Send them here. He requires them for a systematic study of the *Gita*. Both of us keep good health. So far, *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra* seem to have agreed with me.

I give detailed news about my health in the letter meant for all, and so I do not write about it separately in each letter.

You can send letters to Pyarelal through Trivedi[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1814

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 55
[2] *Ibid.*, II. 55-72
[3] Jayashankar Trivedi of Poona

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15. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
4.30 p.m., December 20, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter betrays about my health an anxiety which is wholly unnecessary. The weight which was taken on Thursday showed an increase of 1½ lb., a very good increase in seven days. Nor do I feel any weakness. I do my two hours' spinning on the *takli* standing as a rule without feeling any appreciable fatigue. I have just now sat down to write this after finishing the *takli*. All the mistakes made last time are being avoided. Stools are well formed. Pyarelal tells me there is no smell worth noticing. The food is all well cooked, i.e., vegetables and chapati. The latter is rebaked when I receive it. Last time, you should remember, it was all raw food including cereals and pulses.[1] As a matter of fact, I am now taking practically what I was taking before starting the raw cereals. The only difference is taking *bajri* or *jwari* in the place of wheat. Perhaps it is a change for the better. I am taking once boiling water, lemon and salt. In spite of all this apparent improve[ment] if I find any irregularity about the stools or weakness (persistent) or a continuing decrease in weight, in any one of the three things happening, I shall go back to milk. But just now with the good feel about the health I must not deprive myself of the joy of avoiding milk and taking the *bajri* or *jwari* chapati. And what is more, I like the taste of these chapatis. This detailed explanation and description ought to give you and other friends full satisfaction and free you from all worry as to the future.

In my opinion, while it is necessary, so far as you are concerned, to keep a watch on your menu, your chief trouble is mental. Any pressure on the mind reacts immediately on your body. This anxiety complex, you should try to throw off. "Be careful for nothing." "Look at the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." I do not know whether I have quoted correctly. Anyhow the

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "I had reminded Bapu in a letter of the severe attack of dysentery he had had at the end of a previous food experiment he had carried out in Sabarmati Ashram." *Vide* Vol. XLI.

lilies only seem neither to toil nor to spin. They do both but so naturally that we do not notice their toilsome spin. If they did not toil, they would wither. Only they have not the egotism and hence attachments, likes and dislikes that we have. But when we toil like them detachedly, our toil will not be noticed and therefore will not adversely affect the body.

7.30 p.m.

You and I and all of us have to make a conscious and deliberate effort to realize this blessed state. Or else, our reading of the *Gita* is vain.

You will take care not to burn yourself with the primus. You know how Gujarati women have burnt themselves over the use of the primus. The loose saris lend themselves to the wick especially at the time of lighting it. As it is kept on the floor, they have to bend and the rising flame easily catches a fold or a loose end of the sari. It may be wise for you, therefore, to keep it on a metal-mounted stool. Then too there is precious little room in your little dormitory. Anyway, you have my warning. You will now take what precautions you may think right.

In my seclusion, the idea of your bringing out a paper does not at all commend itself to me. That ties you down and I should like you to remain free for what comes to your lot. And then the paper will absorb the labour of several others. I dread the idea. But my opinion has no value. You and the other workers are the best judges.

Yes, I have just finished the first part of the introduction to my translation of the *Gita*[1]. I hope to do at least a paragraph every day. If I succeed, the introduction cannot take long.

The new Gandiv[2] has almost all the improvements I had contemplated. It has two springs for the two *mals*. It is working like a musical instrument and requires very little attention. For the execution of these improvements I am thankful to the Superintendent and an English co-prisoner, who is a clever mechanic and who takes a serious interest in the work. He has applied the spring to the holder in an original way. The idea is incredibly simple and equally effective. But I must not keep you over this any longer.

I am glad you have taken Surendra in hand. It is criminal how he neglects his body. Even St. Francis, though he called his

[1] *Anasaktiyoga*; *vide* Vol. XLI.
[2] A new type of spinning-wheel

body an ass, took some care of it. And after all the ass is a most useful and patient animal. The brother ass can be equally useful if properly treated and neither pampered nor neglected.

And now here is the first verse of the morning prayer:

"Early in the morning, I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge), *sukham* (bliss), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculate Brahman which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements (earth, water, space, light and air)." You will be interested to know that the first verse was commenced on 6th May last.[1]

I am sorry that the very first verse needed correcting. The more I think, the more clearly I see the meaning. And then I don't mind how often I cut about the translation. Formerly I used to shudder to utter this verse thinking that the claim made therein was arrogant. But when I saw the meaning more clearly, I perceived at once that it was the very best thought with which to commence the day. It is a solemn declaration that we are not the changeful bodies which require sleep, etc., but deep down, we are the Being, the witness pervading the countless bodies. The first part is the recalling to mind the presence of the vital principle and the second part is the affirmation that we are that vital principle. The description of the Being, the Brahman, is also quite apposite. It *is*, nothing else *is* (*sat*), it is all knowledge or light (*chit*), and naturally, therefore, it is all bliss (*sukham*) or the word generally used is *anand*. The rest is simple. You will compare this translation with what you have already, translated by Valjibhai. If there is a material difference, let me have his translation. In scholarship I should yield the palm to him. So now God willing, you may expect a present of this character every week. And here goes the bugle telling me it will presently be 9 p.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9284. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *Vide* "*Ashram Bhajanavali*", Vol. XLIV, p. 386.

16. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

December 20, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your detailed letter, which was fully worthy of your name. Its enthusiasm pleased me. But, according to our principle, I cannot give any decision about the work being done there. Nor should you rely upon the opinion of a prisoner. I have already explained the proper relations between a leader and the volunteers working under him or her. You should discuss with Mithubehn herself your differences with her. This is the attitude I have adopted from the beginning and I do not wish to go further than this. You are free to follow what seems to you your dharma. We observe the rules and regulations in order that we may know this dharma. The inner voice does not speak in every person. It speaks only in one in whom it is awake.

May God bless you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6808

17. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

December 21, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

You may ask me any question that may arise in your mind. I have plenty of time here to reply to people's questions. If we cannot overcome all our shortcomings at a time, we may first overcome those which we can easily remove. If we proceed thus, we shall gradually be able to overcome all of them. Your handwriting cannot be described as bad, but you can improve it and make it better still.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6222

18. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 21, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

Is it possible that I should go on writing to you even if you never drop me so much as a line? Have you forgotten your promise that you would be writing to me? But better late than never. Realize the importance of keeping promises. Give me an account of your jail experiences. Did you keep good health? What food did you take?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 75

19. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

[*December 22, 1930*][1]

CHI. SHANTI,

You did well in writing to me. I hope you are quite well. I will do nothing on my own responsibility. Manilal himself will do what seems best to him. I am afraid he will not be able to leave India just now. At a time like this . . .[2]

19 FIRST AVENUE, DURBAN

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

[1] From the Gandhi Sangrahalaya Records
[2] The rest of the letter is not available.

CWMG XLV

20. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

December 22, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

It no doubt puts a very heavy responsibility on us when parents of grown-up girls entrust them to us. God will help us to bear it. When, however, you feel in a particular case that the responsibility will be beyond your strength, plainly refuse to accept it. Send away any girl who refuses to submit to your discipline. Explain the position clearly to the parents and the girl before you accept her. If we do not take such steps of practical wisdom, God will not help us. He never helps the timid, the lethargic and those who are not vigilant.

Have any facilities you require, but safeguard your health. If you think that tea and coffee are essential for it, take either without the slightest hesitation or without feeling ashamed about doing so. Giving up tea or coffee is not at present the purpose of your *sadhana*; that purpose is the service of those among the inmates of the Ashram who suffer.

I cannot think of one single remedy which will help Madhu and all others in the Ashram who suffer from constipation. I will tell you how I overcame it in my case. For three or four days, I ate only cooked greens like *tanka*. That completely restored my bowel movement. Then I added almonds to the diet. You do not need them for the people there. Perhaps you will not get even greens. But you can certainly get onions. If those who suffer from constipation eat boiled onions, that, too, will probably help them. If you can get tomatoes, you may mix them with onions. If simple boiled onions do not taste well, even with the addition of salt, and if tomatoes are not available, they may use *kokum*.

The persons may try *shirshasan*. It has helped people to overcome constipation from which they had suffered for many years. The *asana* should be done only on an empty stomach. It is quite easy to do. The skirt should be tucked up behind and one should stand on one's head, supporting the body against a wall. After some practice the support of the wall will not be necessary. The head should be supported by the palms joined together.

I suppose you know that these days I eat the *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra*, and vegetables, served to prisoners in jail. The vege-

tables for me have to be cooked separately, because those cooked for other prisoners contain spices. I continue to eat dates. In place of milk I take four *tolas* of almonds. I keep fairly good health. If I do not keep it up, I will resume milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8768. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

21. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter full of information. Both the meanings of *nija-namagrahi*[1] are good. The meaning suggested by Narandas may suit Gujarati better, but the one suggested by you is not altogether inappropriate. I imagine that you yourself are a little girl and reply to your question about prayer. Just as we have parents who gave birth to us, so they had their parents who brought them into the world. If we go further and further back like this, He whom we can conceive as the Father of all is God. It is because He is that that we also call Him the Creator. As our parents often come to know what we want without our telling them, so does God know our wishes. If our human parents have this power to know what we want, the Creator of all must have infinitely greater power to know our heart. That is why we also think of God as *Antaryami*, the Dweller within. It is not necessary that we should be able to see Him. We have never seen a good many of our relations. Somebody's parents may have gone away to a foreign country or died while he or she was a child, but such a man or woman trusts other people and believes that the parents live or lived. Similarly, we should trust the testimony of saints about the existence of God and believe that the *Antaryami* does exist. If that is so, it is easy to understand why we should sing *bhajans* to Him and pray to Him. If we are good children, we bow to our parents, prostrating ourselves before them, the first thing in the morning after leaving bed and the last thing at night when going to bed. We should do the same to God. And as we tell our parents what we desire, so we

[1] One who clings to the Name, which is his very self

should tell God. This should be enough for today. If you do not understand anything in this, do not hesitate to question me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10247

22. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

December 22, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I got the two boxes of dates and the cotton sent by you. Need I thank you for them? Write to Vithaldas and tell him that the dates were excellent. This does not mean, of course, that he should send me such dates more often. My request was that he should communicate the price to the Superintendent here and supply the dates as and when required, provided his brother orders enough quantity to spare some and sell it. I got your letter too. I will write to you when I require more cotton.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4818. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

23. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

You are being really tested. See that you do not fail in the test. One preserves one's self-respect better by giving up the very desire for being respected. You will not get another Gangabehn who will look after you like a mother as she does. She has an overbearing temper. Endure it. Understand and appreciate her zeal for service and her sympathy for all. Anyone who wishes to serve must learn to act as a member of an organization. To do this means to obey somebody's authority. One's superior has his or her superior too. Think over the verses of Chapter XII of the *Gita*. One of them says that a devotee and lover of God is equally indifferent to respect and disrespect, to praise and censure, and

holds friend and foe in equal regard. Let this be true about you. Do not feel it a burden to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9318

24. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letters. From your postcard received yesterday, I thought I would receive a letter today, but I did not get one. From Jayaprakash's letter it would seem you have now gone to the Ashram. But it is not clear from your letters whether you have. I should like you to go to the Ashram as soon as possible. I do not like your continuing to get the fainting fits. I must now get a report of your talks with Father. Incidentally, that will give me news about his health too. I am quite well. So far, I have been able to digest *jowar* and *bajra.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3385

25. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday Morning, December 18/23, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet yesterday evening. The letters to the Ashram which I handed in this time, that is, on Tuesday last, should reach you on Thursday, that is, today. I suggested to the official here to post them immediately, if possible, and he told me afterwards that this week's letters were posted on Tuesday itself.

I welcome your long letters, but I shall not be happy if you take special trouble to make them long. I can understand what a burden you are carrying. I did not want an explanation in regard to Keshu. But I can understand your having given it so that you could pour out your heart and satisfy yourself.

I had a postcard from Surajbhan, in which he says that he would be happy if Yashodadevi was called to the Ashram. She

lives with the family of Lala Dunichand, a lawyer, in Ambala. Write to him.

The Ratilal episode is both happy and painful. His foolishness is painful, but the display of humanity by the merchant, who returned the diamond, and by Gopi, who returned the money, makes one happy. In my eyes, their subsequent conduct wipes out their initial guilt. Champa, of course, has always been foolish. She listens to no persuasion and remains fond of diamonds and other jewels, and loses money in consequence. Ratilal must have returned. Even if he has not returned, that will not worry me. God always saves him. But this is what life is. We pass our time in undoing the consequences of one another's errors. For those who can remain unattached while doing this, their labour is not wasted. To them it is a spiritual striving and they realize God through it. I had an experience of this yesterday when I saw God in a worm and a weevil. You are wrong if you think that you know Pyarelal fully. Being a poet, he is bound to be dreaming always. I asked him to remove a worm from the dates. He should have put it in a safe corner, but, instead of thinking about his duty, he was thinking of something else, God knows what, and he put the worm in the wash-basin. The weevil, too, was dropped into the same. If now I washed my hands or face in the basin, I would be the cause of the death of both. I, therefore, decided not to wash in it. But when, after I had finished my work, I got ready to wash my hands, I did not see the worm and the weevil in the basin. They had slowly moved away. I look upon this experience as seeing God in the two worms. An atheist or a rationalist would describe the incident as mere accident. It was an accident, no doubt, but seeing God is also an accident. If we but understand the truth, we would see Him every day; otherwise our whole life would pass without our seeing Him. But I will not dwell further on this. I wanted to note this incident in the diary yesterday, but, in my preoccupation with other work I wrote in it only about the daily sacrificial work and forgot to note this. While writing about the merchant and Gopi, I remembered this holy experience and have shared it with you. I learnt much else, too, from it yesterday. God alone knows whether I shall be able to digest all that. I will now answer your question here. As we reflect deeper and remain peaceful, the meaning of ahimsa and truth becomes clearer. I even realize the supreme utility of these two. I believe we realize God in the degree to which we practise them. I am getting more convinced than ever in my view that seeing God except through truth and ahimsa is an impossibility. How can members of a group

practise ahimsa towards one another? They can do so by displaying generosity towards co-workers and their faults and everyone regarding his own faults with strictness. Anyone who observes the faults of others believes, whether he is conscious of the fact or not, that he does not have the same faults. This gives rise to pride. The true rule is that one should oneself observe all rules strictly and tolerate others who seem slack in observing them. This is not kindness but strict justice. Do we really know what effort is made by a person in observing a rule even as slackly as he does? If our seeming strictness in observing rules comes naturally to us, what is the value of that strictness? Is it any cause for wonder if a man like Bhima can lift a weight of four pounds with the utmost ease? A girl, however, might slip down while trying to lift one pound; what would we think of that Bhima if he laughed at her then? Really speaking, the effort of that girl to lift one pound is of much greater value than Bhima's lifting the weight of four pounds. If Bhima had not lifted that weight, somebody else as strong would have lifted it; but by her effort to lift one pound that girl taught the world a lesson in doing one's duty and earned God's grace. Our dharma therefore does not lie in criticizing others and thereby committing violence; it lies in becoming more vigilant ourselves. If a strong bullock is yoked with one seemingly or really weak, the former's duty is to do more work and make up for the deficiency of the latter. The driver goads it to labour harder. If the strong bullock does not do the work expected of it, it is looked upon as a shirker; it is selfish and has no pity on the other one. Let us never be shirkers. Let us always do our duty. God will judge us and our co-workers. He can see into the hearts of all. We scarcely can see into our own. We easily learn this if we strive sincerely to cultivate ahimsa.

Through the pursuit of truth, we know the measure of purity in our motives. It increases our vigilance in regard to the smallest social duties and to our daily work. If we strive for truth, we would not be content merely to attend prayers but would try to concentrate our attention on them. We would try to follow the songs and the discourses, be punctual in attending the prayers and respond to them as to a fresh experience every day. The freshness does not consist in the variety of *bhajans* or other recitations, but should result from the increasing purity of our heart. We should grow daily more contented and feel greater peace of mind. If we do not have this experience, the fault will lie not with the quality of the prayers but with the element of untruthfulness in us. If we attend the prayers with sincere devotion to truth,

we would experience nothing but peace. The faithful who visit temples do not observe the lack of cleanliness in them, or pay attention to the hypocrisy of the priest. They do not see the image as a stone. They experience peace in the midst of noise and return from the temples purified in heart. A person like me who feels suffocated by the noise there and sees the image only as a piece of stone should never visit a temple. God appears to us in the form in which we worship Him. For He is not outside of us. He is in the hearts of us all. If we understand this truth, our simplest and smallest actions would shed lustre on us and help us to see God. In order that we may learn this, prayers, spinning, and other daily duties are like a spiritual lighthouse to us or a right angle which is the standard of measurement.

Saturday Morning

If Giriraj remains quiet, that problem will then be over. I see that it will not be possible now to get the children to the Ashram. He has entrusted them [to somebody else]. Trust them to their fate now. I am going on quite well at present. I have gained a pound or a pound and a half in weight this week. I cannot say that I have at last succeeded in giving up dates and raisins. Only a few days ago, Jamnabehn and Vithaldas sent some dates and I ate them for two or three days. And now again I have stopped eating them. I am thus observing the effect of eating them and not eating them. I do want to give them up if I can. At present, therefore, my diet includes a little quantity of greens or cabbage or beetroot or turnip or pumpkin, *bhakhari* of *bajra* or *jowar*, four *tolas* of almonds, and lemon. If God keeps me fit with these, so far so good; otherwise I will humbly resume milk or curds. I cannot say yet that I am able to live on this diet. I will not say, either, that I shall not be able to do so. I had never expected that I would be able to digest *jowar* and *bajra*. At present, however, I seem to have no difficulty in doing so.

I have noted what you say about yourself. Your selection of the items and their quantities is correct. I see that you have given up groundnuts; there is nothing wrong in that. The fact that you are losing weight will do you no harm at all. You should not lose strength, however. If you find it necessary, increase the quantity of milk or curds. It will perhaps help you if you add just one *tola* of almonds to your diet. Solve the problem of Parnerkar firmly. It seems to have turned out a painful chapter. I got the chapters of *Gitabodh*. So far I have not received the piece of leather.

You may extract from any of my letters what I say about the *yajna* of spinning and publish it. There is no harm in publishing

similar other material of public interest. The more the people do *yajna* for self-purification, the better. A mass *yajna* has an altogether miraculous effect. If you can, keep up with what you have started. The spinning-wheels and all other things must be in perfect condition. These things produce an effect on our minds and make a difference to the speed. Your speed has increased well enough. I have not been able to go beyond 200 on the spinning-wheel and 60 on the *takli*. But I do hope to do so. I do not know if there is something wrong with my fingers. If the nerves running through them are weak, it is possible that they may not be active enough. Just as you go to bed early, it will also be good if you make it a rule not to rise earlier than a fixed hour. You should do what you can between 4 and 9 and then stop. If you have more things to do than you can finish during that time, you may omit those which you safely can. You should entrust to others the things which they can attend to. It is really not necessary to give you advice in this matter, but I have said something all the same in order that you may be more careful. One test of non-attachment is that a person who is non-attached always feels as if he had no work, though he is never inactive even for a single moment. At present, however, that state of mind "is a wish beyond our reach". All the same, we should grasp with our intellect the meaning of that verse and, having done so, strive to reach that state. The condition of a non-attached person should never seem pitiable. He should never have an expression on his face which might make anybody feel sorry for him and think that he was carrying an excessive burden of work. Think what "burden" of work God has to carry. Nevertheless He is the king of those who do not work. He is an object of pity to no one. On the contrary, we hunger for His mercy. We should never be satisfied with a state a whit inferior to His, though He may carry the burden of the entire universe and we that of something smaller than even a particle of dust. Just as He ever feels light, though carrying the burden of the universe, so should we do though carrying the burden of a mere fraction of a particle of dust. We can easily attain such a state of mind if we reduce ourselves to a cipher. Mirabehn finds it impossible to become non-attached, but she is a good woman and, therefore, will one day approach that state. From here I think she would do well not to undertake the responsibility of a new paper. I had understood about Sitla Sahay even without a letter from him, and that is why I wished to get one from him.

I do not like to give to anyone the impression of my palm.

Apart from that, it would be against jail rules to do so. I have, therefore, no choice in the matter. Kakasaheb could not even give his signature on his photograph. And I think that it is a good rule too. I have written a letter[1] to Purushottam; read it. Kanu, too, seems to have been upset a bit.

Sunday Morning

I was not at all satisfied by . . . 's[2] letter. I take it that you will see him personally, or probably you have already seen him. Discuss the matter with him and convey to me the impression you form. This case, too, seems like . . . 's[3]. The latter would not admit anything more than what had come out and produced an impression on Surendra, Chhaganlal and others that nothing wrong had happened. He did not succeed in producing that impression on me, and ultimately confessed having been guilty of a serious lapse. I would not be surprised if a similar thing should happen in . . . 's[4] case. His language gives the impression of a guilty person attacking an innocent. Look into this.

Kusum has referred in her letter to the problem that has arisen about the offer of a job to her in Porbandar. Read my reply to her and guide her as you think best. My compliments to Jaya for having gone to the rest-house[5]. Has she any relation there to whom I can write? If Kakasaheb has not been able to win over the others, I think it would be best to let the *Gita* recitation go on as at present. The suggestion to complete the whole recitation in seven days by reciting some verses in the morning and some in the evening has not appealed to me. I will congratulate ourselves if we can improve upon the present practice. I have noted that you took two and three-quarter hours to write your letter to me. The time taken in dispatching the letters must have been in addition to this. It is fine indeed if you can get all this time. If you can reduce it a little, however, you should certainly do so.

I see that I made an amusing mistake about Vidyabehn[6]. I will be more careful in future when several persons claim the same name.

I think you did right in detaining Bhagwanjibhai's[7] Manibehn. She will be welcome to the Ashram when the two reach a level

[1] *Vide* p. 10.

[2], [3] & [4] The names have been omitted.

[5] Prison

[6] There were two women of this name: one, the wife of Anand Hingorani, and another, the daughter of Raojibhai Manibhai.

[7] Bhagwanji P. Pandya

so that they feel as brother and sister to each other. At present it is best that they remain away from each other.

Bhansali has been testing you a good deal. I got two Godrej boxes. I have written to the dealers to inquire for more. You may use the donation by Soniramji for any cause that you think good. Inform him to what account you credit the sum. Take Nayan to a doctor, if necessary. She must be helped to get rid of her fever. Your solution concerning Kashinath seems all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The responsibility for Amina's Urdu education rests on us. Giriraj used to teach her. He should start doing so again, or some other arrangement should be made.

December 21, 1930

If you have kept a copy of my letter to Hari-ichchha, show it to Radha. Read my letters to Kaka and to Mirabehn. Did you show Shanti's letter to Manilal? If you did not and if you remember its contents, acquaint Manilal with them. Read my letter to Shanti. I have gone through *Gitabodh* again. I have not been able to read your letter, though. If you do not follow any point or if my explanation is incomplete, write to me about it.

BAPU[1]

[PS.]

There are 72 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VII) dated December 23 which followed, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

CWMG - XLV

26. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
December 23, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to hear from you. If the R.T.C. results in doing something worthy of the great sacrifice of the nation and therefore of acceptance, I should be delighted. But as I have told you, having been filled with distrust nothing but an accomplished result will reassure me.

The question of debts is incredibly simple. The Lahore resolution has an explicit condition about reference to an impartial tribunal.[1] But you have my assurance that no Congressman has ever enunciated the doctrine of total repudiation. What Congressmen, including myself, demand is that the nation's representatives should have the right of having any portion of the so-called national debt, concessions and the like, being referred to an independent tribunal whose decision should be final and binding on both the parties. I feel I am quite safe in saying this even for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Not to adopt the course above indicated would be disloyal to the nation as total repudiation without just cause would undoubtedly be dishonourable.

Whatever Maulana Mahomed Ali may think of me, I have nothing but kindly feelings about him. And I feel sure that time will remove misunderstandings. Having no feeling either against Islam or Mussalmans, I feel absolutely at ease.

My love to Reginald. I know Charlie Andrews is not now with you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HORACE ALEXANDER
144 OAKTREE LANE
SEELY OAK
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: G.N. 1409

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLII, p. 358.

27. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 24, 1930

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I have your letter. I have not however received the proofs of the book. I am making inquiries. I will go through them when I get them.

Your being my namesake has at least this advantage for me, that I am saved from a good deal of correspondence.[1]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7

28. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 27, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have heard from you after a long time. I did not get your detailed letter which you mention. It will be better, therefore, if you write again. I have not been able to read the book sent by you. The better part of the day is spent in spinning and carding, and the remaining time is taken up by correspondence. I can, therefore, do very little reading.

I am very glad indeed that you have gone to live at Juhu. Grandmother will enjoy peace of mind there.

Does Sumati keep well?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4720. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

[1] Part of Gandhiji's mail used to be misdelivered to the addressee.

CWMG XLV

29. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 27, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

At last I have a letter from you. You have somewhat made up for previous neglect. Do build up your health at any rate. You had a great deal of work[1] on your hands, so there was no need to read any books. You did well to put up a fight[2].

I am now all right. Due to constipation I had stomachache one day; therefore I had my bowels flushed and took only vegetable soup the next day; this cured my constipation. Since that day I have not taken milk. I take one *roti* made of local *jowar* or *bajra* and vegetable with a few almonds. There is no reason for anxiety on my score.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 75-6

30. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

December 27, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

You have written your letter in a beautiful handwriting. It is not enough that your speed on the *takli* is the same as mine. Can an old man and a child have equal capacity? Have you heard with what speed they spin in Wardha? Even a girl of your age spins 80-85 rounds in half an hour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5757

[1] That of looking after numerous fellow-prisoners
[2] On the question of women prisoners' right to wear bangles

CWMG - XLV

31. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA KHARE

December 27, 1930

CHI. RAMBHAU,

A resolution is as good as a vow if we regard it as such. You are in the sacred land of the Himalayas. Shake off your laziness, etc., to which you confess. Remember that you have gone there to serve Prabhubhai[1] and to become a good boy. Therefore, spin regularly on the Magan spinning-wheel. Follow Prabhubhai's advice and get rid of the last trace of laziness.

Your handwriting is not too bad nor the mistakes too many.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 287. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

32. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

December 27, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

Is not this coloured paper lovely? It is a very good thing that you no more doze off during prayers. With effort handwriting can become as beautiful as pearls.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 258-a. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

33. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 28, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. I invariably write to you. But if I fail to do so, you too do not write to me. I agree to this condition, though children should not insist on this. You have each to write one letter to me and I have to write one letter to each; but I

[1] Presumably Prabhudas Gandhi who was in Almora

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have thousands or lakhs of children. So I write as many as I can. But everyone who writes to me expects me to write to them myself. What is to happen then?

You should get rid of your cough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9896. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

34. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

December 28, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter. The handwriting is better than before. It shall certainly improve through effort. You must regularly write something in a clear hand, be it only for ten minutes. Keep a model before you. Be engrossed in service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5269

35. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

December 28, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

Does the doctor say that your ear-drum has been damaged, and that, if it cannot be cured, it would be advisable to remove it? If that is so, you should get it removed even at the risk of certain deafness which might result from its removal, and save yourself from the present pain. Is there a continual discharge from the ear? You should not ignore this disease. I am still able to carry on without milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9297

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36. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

December 28, 1930

CHI. MADHAVJI,

It is not unlikely that you will get this letter. It is the same to us whether we are in jail or outside. Even self-purification is a form of service, and we must strive for it wherever we are whether in jail or outside. Even if we devote ourselves to service, we must make our hearts pure.

Surendra himself is responsible for his bad health.

I am acting with proper caution. If, none the less, I do make mistakes, how can that be helped? I would rather that I made mistakes in dealing with the body than in matters concerning the soul.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6809

37. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 28, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I do not want you to bind yourself with a promise. I am satisfied with your assurance. Do not shout so loudly as to harm your throat. Did the fast have any beneficial effect on it? I should like somebody to go through the letters which the children write to me from the point of view of both language and handwriting.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10248

38. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 28, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have not wasted your time in shortening your long letter. This practice will ultimately make your thinking clear. And as our thinking becomes clearer we are able to express in a few words whatever we have to say. Quest for exploring the soul is nothing but our detecting, in the process, attachment, hatred, etc., lurking in our heart. This is similar to the exploring of the Himalayas which involves facing a number of difficulties and cliffs.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 332. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

39. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 29, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

It would be very good if Shanta spends some time with you. If I know what you wish in regard to punishment, I can consider and suggest something. A fast may contain an element of violence in it. If it is likely to take the form of blackmail, it should be avoided. I do not remember if you had asked this question before.

Has not Shankarbhai's passing away increased your responsibility? Has the widow any children? Is she educated? Apart from that, was there any other responsibility on Shankarbhai? If the widow desires to remarry, I assume that you will help her to do so. Give me all the facts.

My weight has again reached 101.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1815

40. LETTER TO N. M. KHARE

December 29, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

Cannot we lead children playing in streets in "singing processions"? They will acquire, in the process, some education in letters too. But I need not write about this, since you are already discussing the matter with Kaka. It is very necessary to keep the people and children occupied in useful activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 214. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

41. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 29, 1930

MADAM TEACHER,

You say that everything is all right. Excellent! To say that all is well after finishing me![1] I hope you will be satisfied with this lesson for today. I will not follow the frog in the story simply because you praise me much. I am quite aware how fine my Urdu is, but I am not ashamed of it. Words of love need no more ornament than love itself does, no matter how foolish they are or how like the mere prattle of a child. You are quite right in comparing with music an operation by skilled doctors. Let us be thankful that the gentlemen spared your nose although they made away with all the bones. We must now think of some punishment for Father. All of you should help me in that. How could youths with white beard go to a hospital? What sort of a make-believe is that? I hope he is now as strong as an Arab horse.

To Mother, *vandemataram;* to Father, *bhur-r-r-r*; to you,

Blessings and many good wishes from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9625

[1] These sentences are in Urdu.

42. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 29, 1930

BHAI JUGATRAM,

I have been expecting a letter from you every day. You have piled up a fairly big heap of facts before me. It requires a special art to deal with Mithubehn[1]. Use all the art you have. I have received complaints against her from the women too. In any case, Time is the friend of all. He sets everything right. Probably that is why in English they call Him Father Time. We believe Him to be God Himself. If He destroys the worlds, He does that too for their good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2690

43. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

December 29, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

Your letters contain useful information. If we do not forsake truth and non-violence, even our misfortunes will help us. Hence follow them scrupulously and persuade others also to do the same. Write to Pragji and tell him that he should not become impatient.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am still able to carry on without milk.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2691

[1] Mithubehn Petit

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44. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 29, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

I got your full letter. I cannot guide you from here in detail. Is it not our principle that a prisoner should not take interest in problems outside nor guide anyone? I have merely drawn your attention to the principle which we have accepted. Think over it and then unhesitatingly follow what seems to you your dharma. If you cannot decide where your dharma lies, you may consult Pannalal or Narandas. Now Kakasaheb also is there. Discuss the matter with him and then do what your conscience tells you. Write to me from time to time. Both of you, take care of your health. Has Pannalal completely recovered now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3109

45. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

December 29, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. I fully approve of what you did about Shanta's husband. It is enough if Shanta keeps up her courage. Whatever happens, Shanta should refuse to go to him. Let him, if he wishes, come again to attack her. She should resist if he comes to carry her away by force. She should not be alone at any time. You need not take the trouble to find out where the man has gone. It is enough that you have written about it to his people at home. Be vigilant lest he come stealthily and attack her again. If Mother is of the same mind as you in this matter, you will meet with no difficulty in following the course which you have adopted.

I have already replied to the question regarding marriage. I see that it is not enough, and also that it is. I have only

pointed out the Vedic ideal modified to suit modern times. If one is unable to follow it, one may modify it further as much as necessary. It is not for me to take measure of anyone's inability in this regard.

I don't mind your having written about Gangabehn. She is not intentionally partial to anyone. She may act in that manner through haste and lack of understanding. However, she is the fittest to be the women's leader. For Kalavati and others, therefore, service lies in doing as she says, and they ought to be satisfied with that. They should not lose heart if people give no co-operation in the work regarding cleanliness, khadi, etc. In the long run people are bound to yield to love and their daily experience of other people's conduct. Their presence by itself is enough in such places, provided they spend the whole day in work. And they must carry the *takli* and the spinning-wheel with them. They should also clean people's latrines, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5289

46. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 29, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. If you regarded the world as unreal, i.e., transitory, does it in any way go contrary to reason? Whatever is transitory is unreal because it does not endure for ever. And there is no question of being attached to what is transient. After all you will seldom find reason being exercised in matters of faith. If it could be grasped by reason it ceases to be a matter of faith. Faith might indeed one day lead to experience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 333. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

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47. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Saturday Morning, December 27/30, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet only yesterday (Friday) after 2 o'clock. Because of Christmas there seems to have been some confusion in the post office. Here the officials seem quite careful about my post. That is why you got my packet on Thursday.

I got the piece of leather for sandals. I see Mahadev's name in your list, but I did not find his letter. Perhaps there was a letter by Durga, but I do not find even that. I did feel that Ratilal would return. Where had he gone on his pleasure trip? Send with a visitor some time a sample of the bread which you make there. We do not know when Giriraj will see reason. Go on doing your best. His heart is pure and he is filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice. One day, therefore, he is bound to see reason. "No one seeking to do good ever comes to harm."[1]

I understand everyone being nervous about my experiment in diet, for I have not fully succeeded in it. But perhaps you may tell people that you know that I wake up in time and make necessary changes, and that my body responds to them. How can I give up a dharma which has come to me unsought? I was weighed yesterday and again seemed to have gained a pound and a half. I advisedly say "seemed" because on the previous occasion I was weighed after I had passed stool and this time before I had done so. The weight of the stool is not real gain in weight, but an unnecessary load. We may therefore count half a pound less; even then there has been a gain of one pound. But more important than the weight is the energy which I feel in my body. I feel no sign of weakness yet. I eat without difficulty one *bhakhari* of the size which they make here, half a piece at one meal. The quantity of almonds which I eat comes to nearly two ounces. At present at any rate I feel that, if I can continue to digest this amount of food, I shall be able to keep up my strength. There is, therefore, no reason at all for worry. I am taking the utmost care, and, after all, even in this matter one needs to practise non-attachment. Who can say when that

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

thing, more fragile than glass, will slip from one's hand and break ?

I suppose you remember that you sent to Kantu[1] a diary made of handmade paper. He has now sent it for my autograph. The binding is very bad. Not only that there is no neatness about it, but he has so bound it that one cannot turn the pages at all. The art of binding books is easy to learn. It can be learnt in a very short time. Someone from among us should learn it. Or we should get our binding done outside. I intend to get the diary re-bound in the press here. This is just by the way. I have mentioned the matter for future guidance. "Yoga is skill in work."[2] This should be illustrated even in our least important activities. "Skill in work" lies also in not attempting what we cannot do. That is a case of action in inaction. Even refraining from something is a form of action. There is a saying in English borrowed from Persian. "He who knows that he knows not is wise." I am prompted to say all this from my own unhappy experience. I observe that my spinning displays too much evidence of lack of skill and slackness despite all the care that I take. There may be a knot in the thread which I observe, but I let it go. At times the yarn is much too loose, but I let it remain. I have acquired no proficiency at all in joining broken thread. But I go on, all the same. What kind of *yajna* is this? Whether you call it carelessness, laxity or indifference, I observe every day this weakness in me in regard to this great *yajna* of spinning. I try every day to improve myself, and fail. But I keep hoping that one day I shall do well in my *yajna*. Even if I do not, I derive consolation from the verse: "After many lives, the enlightened one attains Me"[3]. It is a dangerous verse. One may use it to remain content with one's lethargy. If a person pays attention to the meaning of every word in it, he will not fall, otherwise the verse can be the cause of much harm to one. I hear the bugle sounded every day at 5.30. It is now time for me to pace up and down.

7.30, Tuesday

If you send your packet by unregistered parcel, it may perhaps be delayed. Make inquiries, however, and do what you think best. This time I have been hard pressed for time to cope

[1] Kantilal Gajiwala; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 136.
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 50
[3] *Ibid.*, VII. 19

with the work. Ordinarily, I should be spinning at this hour. I get letters from Prabhavati from time to time. She should arrive in the Ashram any day now. Drop me a postcard as soon as she arrives. Most probably I shall get it. Read my letters to Kaka and Mirabehn. Today I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Did you read the account about Amidas? If you have not read it, get a copy from Harivallabhdas. He seems to have preserved one.[1]

[PPS.]

There are 82 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

48. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 29/30, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. This time I must be very brief as the post came two days late. I start therefore with the translation of the 2nd verse[2]: "In the early morning I worship Him who is beyond the reach of thought and speech and yet by whose grace all speech is possible. I worship Him whom the Vedas describe as *neti, neti* (not this). Him they (the sages) have called God of gods, the unborn, the unfallen, the source of all."

I do not think that this calls for any explanation. The translation of the preface[3] is proceeding apace. And as there was no Ashram post till Friday, I devoted the spare time to translating more paras. The result is that now there are only 10 more left. It will be time then to consider whether I can translate the *Gita* notes I am writing for the Ashram inmates. Just now the 100 rounds on the *takli* take up much time. But I am now showing an increase in speed. The speed on the Gandiv today was for me quite a record, i.e., 169 rounds in 40 minutes. This means 255 in 60 minutes. The improvements are primarily

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VIII) which followed, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

[2] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali; vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 387.

[3] To *Anasaktiyoga; vide* Vol. XLI, pp. 90-101.

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responsible for this speed. If I continue to show improvement, I may have some more time for writing work. For I do not want to be greedy just now in the way of increase in the output. I shall stick to 300 on the wheel and 100 on the *takli* till I show a permanently marked increase in speed.

I was quite sure you would get your foreign mail.

Of my health which is excellent more in the general letter.

Of your journalistic venture my opinion remains unaltered and is reinforced by the recent ordinance. But, as I have said, my opinion ought not to count one way or the other.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5425. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9659

49. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 30, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

I have your letter. Let me give my blessings just now for the new year. If you take a vow, do so after full deliberation and, having taken one be firm in keeping it. There is no need at all to undertake a seven days' fast. It is likely to prove too much for you. It is enough if you fast on the birthday. Write to Shankarbhai and to me and tell us what vow you take. Take the vow in the presence of the girl friends living there. If possible, spend that day with Kusumbehn. It would be good before taking your vow to consult her. The difficulty which you point out about eating food without spices is only an excuse. One who is determined to eat unspiced food will certainly find out what to eat. Surely, there are no chillies in *rotla*, rice and buttermilk. [Is it not so?] One should be satisfied with a *rotla*, buttermilk and salt. Just as we eat and drink every day, we should also write the diary every day. Everything can be done if one has the will. Kamu has not acknowledged my letter. Ask her whether she got it. What will her husband do at Ahmedabad?

How can anyone say that there is no sin in killing bugs and fleas? Even in cutting up vegetables there is sin. However, we do commit some sins which we regard as unavoidable. When we smoke a place to protect ourselves against fleas, countless fleas are killed, but we feel helpless and do that all the same. However,

we realize through such necessities that it is everyone's duty to seek deliverance from bodily life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4057

50. LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI

December 30, 1930

CHI. HARILAL (DESAI),

I am hard pressed for time just now and will not, therefore, write a long letter. You did well in giving me all the details. I do not wish Valji to know my opinion for the present. He may be told about it after he is released. I am confirmed in my opinion after reading Hari-ichchha's letter. But what happened has happened. I have written to Hari-ichchha and explained to her how she can now make the best of an unfortunate event.[1] She will probably show you that letter if you have not seen it already. Ask her to show it to you.

Your duty now is to cling to the job which you have accepted. You may think of something else to do only when circumstances arise in which you on your own leave it—for I have already observed your unsettled state of mind. I have faith in you despite that, for you belong to Valji's family and are sincere at heart. Such persons often become steady all at once. What has Dudhibehn[2] decided to do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6626

51. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got four letters from you together. You should not forget that after all I am a prisoner. I get the letters when the Superintendent visits [me]. However, I continue my efforts to see that I get my letters immediately. When will you now go to the Ashram?

[1] She was married to a widower.
[2] Valji Govindji Desai's wife

I should like you to do so without delay. Your weakness must disappear. Don't be eager to start working as soon as you reach the Ashram. Take milk, curds and fruits in sufficient quantities. And you of course know the benefits of open air. May God protect you in every way. Don't worry about me. I had given up eating fresh fruits during the [Dandi] march itself. Nor do I feel any need for them. I seem to be able to digest four or five *tolas* of almonds and that keeps up my strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3386

52. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 31, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. But I put off writing to you thinking that you will soon be in the Ashram. The more you stay on there, the more I feel worried. Why don't you go away immediately and leave matters to take care of themselves? If Jayaprakash cannot go immediately, cannot he ask Harasubabu? I see that the longer you delay in going to the Ashram, the weaker you are becoming. What further can I now write even to Jayaprakash?

What is your diet in your present condition of health ? Who watches over you when you are in a swoon? What did Father tell you when you met him? I feel afraid even to ask you questions, for it may be a burden on your mind to think and reply to them. I dismiss my worries in the faith that God has been protecting you and will continue to do so. I am quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3387

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53. *A LETTER*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 31, 1930

CHI.,

It is possible that, from an academic standpoint, my interpretation of the phrase 'ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च' is of no value. But I think it is possible to interpret it to refer both to the self and the body. The self unclouded by ignorance knows neither birth nor death. However, one who believes that it dies must believe also that it is born again. For, nothing in this world suffers total destruction, not even physical body. It ceases to exist in one form and takes another. It goes on ever changing its form. After the body has been reduced to ashes it will not remain unchanged for ever in the form of atoms, for the atoms will change too. "When turned into ornaments, gold acquires different names and forms but it ever remains gold." Does this appeal to your reason in any way? As Vinoba's style is very lively, he wins our interest. However, I have come to the conclusion that it is possible to put more than one interpretation on the words of the *Gita* and that all of them may be right. The central meaning would remain the same, and consistent with it there may be as many interpretations as one may wish, which together, like the numerous instruments in an orchestra, produce a beautiful symphony. As regards "is seated," "sits" and "walks," it is possible to draw out three distinct meanings. But the *Gita* is not a technical or scientific work composed with such precision. It abounds in repetitions, and there is looseness of expression too. This is not a defect, but it is there.

These days I have been spinning on the *takli* at least 100 rounds a day. I have given up the iron *takli*, after having tried very hard to spin well on it, and now I am back to the bamboo *takli*. I feel a little better with it. The speed has risen to 75 per hour. It will go up still. After I have mastered the bamboo *takli* fully, I will return to the iron one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9317. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

54. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

[*December 1930*][1]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have construed the answers to your questions all right. Even then I will add a little here.

There is no end to conflicts of loyalties and to miseries. True desire for knowledge arises from this.

The body can be said to be an abode of *punya*[2] in spite of its origin in *papa*[3] in so far as it is a means to realization of the *atman*.

Knowledge means the realization of the self. One who has fully realized truth and non-violence is a perfect *jnani* in spite of being unlettered. This includes the answer to the question why we should obtain, etc.

Non-attachment means absence of attachment. Attachment means the desire for a certain fruit. Attachment is implicit in wanting to climb the Himalayas. Climbing the Himalayas when it falls to one's lot is doing it free of attachment.

Yoga: Action performed without attachment. You write books but you do not crave for honour on that account, nor money nor praise from anyone. And since it has been your lot to render service through writing what you do is yoga.

Generally I do not forbid asking questions. But the better and correct way is to solve such problems by oneself and to consult others in case of doubt. Unless we did it our discrimination will not develop.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 331. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

[1] As supplied by the addressee
[2] Merit
[3] Sin

55. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI[1]

[*1930*]

CHI. DURGA[2],

I have your beautiful letter. Go ahead. Work well. Never forget to get up early. Be fully awake during the morning prayers.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 30

56. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*1930*]

CHI. SATYADEVI[3],

There will be no end to my troubles if you girls or other people start thinking that I have forgotten those to whom do not write. Can anyone write to each member of such a large family? But you all can certainly write.

Your handwriting is good, and the sketch of a flower-pot with flowers standing upright is so good that the flowers seem to emit fragrance. Are you doing everything carefully? Is Dharma[4] still naughty?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 33

[1] According to the source, this was written from Yeravda Central Prison; also, this and the two following items were originally written in Gujarati.
[2] & [3] Dalbahadur Giri's daughters
[4] Addressee's brother

57. LETTER TO DHARMAKUMAR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [*1930*]

CHI. DHARMAKUMAR,

Your letter. You must form the habit of writing in ink and produce print-like alphabet. You indulge in mischief, don't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 35

58. LETTER TO SHANTA

January 1[1], *1931*

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Be brave and remain firm. You are facing an intricate problem.[2] Ponder well over the verses recited during the prayers in the women's section. Understand their meaning.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5274

[1] In the source '1' appears to have been corrected to '7', presumably the date on which the letter was posted.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Kashinath Trivedi", pp. 35-6.

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59. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

January 1, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got the pages of your booklet. I have gone through them. You have collected some useful statistics. But the title of the booklet is certainly not appropriate. It gives more and more reliable information about mill-cloth than about handloom cloth. After reading it, I felt that its title "How to Compete with Foreign Cloth" was too ambitious for the contents. You have not attempted a careful and detailed examination of hand-spinning. If you have realized that the master-key for the solution of the problem is hand-spinning, you should put the truth in your own manner. If you are not convinced that it is so, you should not give it a place in your scheme yielding to the present atmosphere. I am becoming more and more convinced that, without hand-spinning, permanent boycott of foreign cloth will be impossible and that even hand-weaving cannot survive without it. If you share this view, you should explain it convincingly.

Despite my partiality for hand-spinning, I don't think that Talchekar's contention is supported by facts. I have even had correspondence with him on the matter. His claim that hand-spun yarn is superior is not borne out by experience. By carefully co-ordinating a variety of factors, it may be possible to produce hand-spun yarn which would be stronger than mill-yarn, but the ordinary hand-spun yarn will always be weaker than mill-yarn. But what does it matter? As compared to hand-made *bhakhari*, the biscuit produced in a factory with the help of dies will always be perfectly round in shape, smooth and attractive in appearance, and still the former will continue to be preferred to it. You have tried to convince the readers that mill-cloth and handloom cloth can supplement each other. It may be possible for some time to regulate things in that manner, but not permanently. The division of the booklet into sections is not accurate. Go through it again. I have nothing more to add.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8

60. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 1, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

This week's post, too, seems to have been delayed. Meanwhile I have started writing my letters.

When the mind is occupied with nothing else, it starts thinking about the boys and girls. Probably the children don't know why the 23rd of December is the shortest day. In trying to explain this, you will automatically explain to them some facts of geography and astronomy. Will you not try this? While explaining the reason for the 23rd being the shortest day, speak about the longest day and about the dates on which the day and the night are equal. Simultaneously, you may explain the change of seasons. While doing so tell them what Christmas means. In such discussions, both the parties should feel interested. This is also true about the indigenous tables and methods of oral calculation. These things, too, can be taught to children in an entertaining way. From this, I am generally led to think about botany. I am a complete ignoramus in this field. You, perhaps, know something of the subject. If you do not, you can pick up some general knowledge without much trouble and impart it to children, and to me through letters. You can teach as you learn. But you should not feel this as a burden on your mind. It will be a boon to the children and to me if you make some such effort.

I constantly feel that we don't give to children all that we ought to. We should, therefore, give that at any rate which we can without much trouble to ourselves. Discuss this matter with Narandas.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10249

61. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[Before *January 2, 1931*]

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your letter of 16th instant does not acknowledge my letter in reply to your previous letter. Did you not receive it? In it I expressed my joy at hearing from you and asked you to tell me about Guruji, etc.

I have now received the pieces of khadi which, of course, I shall use with great pleasure and share with Pyarelal if and when he needs any clothing. Please thank all the co-workers for these beautiful pieces.[1] There need be no apology for coarseness or unevenness. Beauty lies in the gentleness and evenness of the heart behind the work. I am using only coarse and uneven khadi, and by reason of this habit, thin and glossy stuff will feel probably unpleasant.

Do write to me all about you. How are your parents? Where is Guruji now? Do you ever go to see Hemprabha Devi? If not, do go now. How are you keeping? Tell me also all about Panditji. We are both keeping fit and well.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 2-1-1931

62. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 2, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I had also got your letter describing your difficulties at Pij, and replied to it. I hope you received my reply.

You have done well in confessing everything. In my opinion, you should certainly not have physical relations with your wife.

[1] Six pieces of khadi, woven from yarn spun by political prisoners in Dum Dum jail on October 2, were sent to Gandhiji.

You should make some arrangement for her education so that her intellect may develop. If you are firm in your decision to have no physical relations with her, you should plainly tell her about that so that she may not remain discontented and may not go on hoping. You should also let her marry again if she wishes to do so. You should not do that if deep in your heart you crave for physical gratification. In any case, you should make it clear to her that you cannot satisfy her as long as the present movement lasts. Since she is poor, you should bear the burden of maintaining her. You should ask her to go and live in the Ashram. The remedy against attacks of lustful thoughts is to devote oneself to work. How can a person who is always absorbed in work ever get time for such thoughts?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9503

63. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 2, 1931

CHI. MAITRI,

You certainly are careless in writing to me. I should be happy if you change. Why do not all of you who are there immediately give water to Dheds and Bhangis? And you can also plead with the people who give their left-overs to the latter to eat. Do you tell Gangabehn about all this? I don't mind your growing fat, but you should take care to make your body firm and as strong as steel. The only way to do this is hard physical work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6223

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64. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 2, 1931

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I understand your enthusiasm. But the *Gita* tells us that, even if *paradharma* looks more attractive, *swadharma* is better for us.[1] We may die while doing *swadharma*. Somebody else's work is fraught with danger. *Swadharma* means one's own work. Your work is what Mithubehn may assign to you. You and others who support you should reason with Mithubehn. Till she is won over, you should keep patience. You yourself say that you get something to learn every day. Why then should you be impatient? In any case, a prisoner has no right to say what work she will do and what work she will not do. My blessings to all who have returned from jails. I should know why Joshi has returned with ten pounds less.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5329

65. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 3, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

I have read the two renderings you have sent me of the first verse of the morning prayer. For use and perhaps conveying the meaning, I prefer my rendering. If you find any obscurity anywhere, please tell me. The second I sent you by the last mail.[2] Here is the third.

"In the early morning I bow to Him who is beyond darkness, who is like the sun, who is perfect, ancient, called Purushottam (the best among men) and in whom (through the veil of darkness) we fancy the whole universe as appearing even as (in darkness) we imagine a rope to be a snake."[3]

[1] III. 35
[2] *Vide* p. 39.
[3] *Vide Ashram Bhajanavali*, Vol. XLIV, p. 387.

The idea is that the universe is not real in the sense of being permanent, it is neither a thing to be hankered after nor feared because it is supposed to be God's creation. As a matter of fact, it is a creation of our imagination even as the snake in the rope is. The real universe like the real rope is there. We perceive either when the veil is lifted and darkness is gone—compare "And with the morn, those angel faces smile which I have loved long since and lost awhile." The three verses go together and I think are Shankar's composition. You do know of Shankar, do you not? Five more days and I shall have finished the translation of the preface. My suggestion is that I continue to send you the verses and the *bhajans* with such comments as then occur to me. You should for your own satisfaction, with the help of whoever comes your way, translate the weekly notes on the *Gita*. The plan I am now following is well thought out, i.e., that of looking through the translation of the whole *Gita* in the light of my rendering and translating the notes. The attempt may lead to something good of which we have no knowledge today. If I begin the translation of the weekly notes, the above plan may fall through altogether. It would not be right. Of my food experiment, you will learn everything from Narandas. The assurance, that the moment I find it necessary I shall revert to milk, should remove all cause for anxiety.

By the travelling wheel I suppose, you mean the box wheel of the Pratishthan type. Whatever it is, your speed is certainly quite good. Let the Gandiv disappear from your mind unless Kaka has something to show. . . .[1]

I was sorry to learn about Romain Rolland's health. Do please send him my love and tell him I often think of him and pray that he may be long spared in the service of humanity. . . .[2]

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 146-7

[1] & [2] Omissions as in the source

66. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

January 3, 1931

BHAI TYAGIJI,

I have your letter. Why does not Balbir write to me? He should let me know his wishes. He could certainly go to the Ashram if he really wants to. Who is now the Principal of Prem Mahavidyalaya? Why has Devasharmaji[1] been transferred to Kanpur [jail]? Write out your ideas on fasting and other subjects. We shall see about their publication later on.

Give in detail your daily routine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3267

67. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN MATHURADAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. MOTI,

If you wish to continue to be Moti[2] of Vijayanagar and not Motibehn in Vijayanagar, you must learn to make your handwriting as beautiful as pearls. The handwriting in your letter was quite good, but you should improve it a little every day. It is one of the virtues of a person devoted to dharma that he or she is exact in every matter, small or big. Will no one in Cochin agree to keep Shantu exclusively on fruit? Write to them and see. One should not be lazy in such matters. If pus continues to issue from a child's gums, we ought not to remain indifferent. If we do, the child will not live long. It is easy to cure such diseases in childhood. The alternative is for you to keep Shantu with you and bring him up yourself. I am glad that you have taken up the task of keeping children clean.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3750

[1] Also known as Acharya Abhaydev
[2] Literally, 'pearl'

68. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I just read the news of your having been released. Is it true that you lost ten pounds of weight in jail? How did that happen? Describe to me your experiences in jail.

I will certainly expect your weekly letter now. What a pleasant surprise it was to learn that Dhiru had stuck to the Ashram, though left alone! But there have been no end of such pleasant surprises. You are bound to hear everything about me and Pyarelal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5497

69. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter.

If you meet Father, tell him that I envy his lot, for he is both in and out of the house of rest and is able to visit the doctor every day.[1] He never received such delicate attention so long as he was a free man. And I hope that in this way he will get rid for good of the trouble in the teeth and in the nose.

Will he be my neighbour this time too?

If you meet Rajendrababu, ask him to write to me. Did he get my reply to his letter?

Keep on giving me all the news as long as you are not arrested.

[1] The source explains: "The Sardar was then in Arthur Road Prison and was taken every day for a month under police escort to Dr. D. M. Desai's dental clinic in Whiteaway Laidlaw Building, Fort, Bombay."

CWMG - XIV

Dahyabhai seems to have taken a vow never to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 47-8

70. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 4, 1931

I was very happy that all of you got an opportunity to visit the Ashram. I would have been happier still if you could have spent a few days there. I get news about Mathuradas from time to time. I am sure his days will pass peacefully. This is a good experience he is getting. Pyarelal is quite well. My love to children.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 103

71. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

January 4, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. It seems you are getting daily new experiences. Wherever you go, live with the utmost self-restraint. If the experiment of starching yarn succeeds, that will undoubtedly help us very much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6224

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72. *LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Sunday Morning, January 4, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am writing this immediately after the morning prayers. Taste ultimately is a matter of the palate and the mind. Our vow is that we will not gratify the craving of the palate. The latter will always feel and recognize the taste of every food. But to gratify the craving of the palate means to eat food which it likes and avoid food which it dislikes. We may certainly eat whatever food the body requires, but only at the time when and in the quantity which the body requires, and it does not matter then if it gives us pleasure. When Mahavir has conquered the palate, he will gladly accept what is for his good. Ordinarily, a man does not care for his spiritual good and does what will give him pleasure for the time being even if that is likely to harm him spiritually. Hence the attitude, that one should accept whatever is offered to one at any time, is not the right one for a spiritual seeker. We do not know from experience how a person who has attained perfection acts, and need not concern ourselves with the question. Let us wait till we have attained perfection. The question then will not arise at all. If this does not answer all your questions, ask me again.

It is a good sign that we notice even our small defects. We ought to know whether we are striving to overcome them. If I see that I have pride in me and if I am a spiritual seeker, I am bound to make an effort to get rid of it. I shall not feel easy in mind till I have got rid of it. If there is a snake in the house, we shall not feel easy in mind till we have caught and removed it. If asked, we can certainly say whether we are trying to remove it. This is also true about snakes and other such poisonous creatures in our hearts. I am glad that your ear is now all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9316

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73. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 4, 1931

MAD RAIHANA,

A girl whose brother is mad is hardly likely to be wise! I have written a letter to Dahyabhai.[1]

I am glad that you are improving, but do you think you will improve so much that you can shoulder the burden of leadership of the Kadi division? If you do indeed, we shall have to present an address to the doctor sister. A person with a grey beard, I am afraid, cannot escape suffering. A white beard is bound to have some effect at any rate. But all's well that ends well. I am not surprised to hear about Father's exploits. Isn't he also a branch of the same tree ?

Khuda Hafiz.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9626

74. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

January 4, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

Your long letters are no trouble to me to read. Narandas has also written to me about you. He says that you refused to show him your diary. If this is true, your action was not right. Narandas is an extremely straightforward man and always does what he thinks right. You can tell him everything. Have a quiet talk with him and, if there has been any misunderstanding, remove it. If you wish to live in the Ashram and are not opposed to any of its rules, Narandas on his part will certainly take you back. He has even written to me to say so.

Whether or not you live in the Ashram, you can keep up connection with it for other purposes. You can ask for papers

[1] These two sentences are in Urdu.
[2] A farewell greeting, meaning: 'May God protect you.'

relating to your work. Difference of opinion should not mean personal enmity.

If you think it necessary to engage a lawyer to defend your brother-in-law, you may do so. If you have sufficient courage, however, do without a lawyer. Your actions seem all right. I did not understand your reason for refusing to sign the summons. But that is a minor matter. I have written to Shanta, Kalavati, Raghavdas and Banarasidas. Read those letters. You had asked the same, or a similar, question about art in your previous letter. I have already replied to it.[1] Did you get that letter? I got the booklet on vows. I did not see any letter from Ramnarayan. There was one from Haribhau[2], and I have replied to him. Convey my blessings to all.

Mother should take only so much of milk as leaves her hungry. If, however, she cannot remain hungry and begs repeatedly for something to eat, you may give her a *khakhara*[3]. If she can continue milk and light diet for some time longer still, she will become all right. You should do everything with the utmost patience. Don't feel unhappy about anything. "What God, World Teacher and Master has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over. Without His will we cannot move a blade of grass. If we do fuss about things, what is left over is a legacy of sorrows."[4]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5270

75. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. DURGA,

It is 7 o'clock on Sunday morning just now. It is extremely cold. The hands shake, but I cannot give myself a holiday from writing. After I have finished this letter, I will start the spinning *yajna*. You have done well in starting the experiment of eating oranges. While it continues, write to me regularly.

[1] *Vide* p. 7.
[2] Haribhau Upadhyaya
[3] Crisp chapati
[4] From a poem by Narasinh Mehta

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Tell me in detail the effect which it has. Weigh yourself from time to time. Enemas will also have to be continued. I suppose you take sun-baths too. If you have enough strength, you should slowly walk about a little.

Now for Mahadev:

I don't hope at all to leave this place with any new discovery about the spinning-wheel. Along with enthusiasm, one must have knowledge of the craft, too, which I don't possess. I shall be satisfied if I can make sufficient changes which will enable me to increase my speed. I do feel that one can acquire good speed despite one's age. If, however, the nerves of my hands have become weak, the speed will not increase. But I do make changes from time to time to see if they help me to increase my speed. I see that I displayed great wisdom in not going to England despite Sastri's view that I should go. Really speaking, it required no wisdom to come to that decision. My heart simply did not consent, however much I tried to persuade myself. The reins are held by that Master of the Play. Why, then, need we worry at all? On the contrary, we should daily leave the reins more and more in His hands and strengthen His hands.

If any trace of fissure is noticed, [he] should immediately take steps to cure it. And [he] should not give up milk or ghee. It is our duty to obtain whatever facilities we can get and which are essential for our health. If we clearly see that we hold the body as a trust, that it is not our own, we shall think no more about the problem. It is good that Devdas has been working at Sanskrit to increase his proficiency in it. Mahadev will be able to help him in that. My blessings to all prisoners. Pyarelal spins daily 375 rounds on the spinning-wheel and 100 on the *takli*, and the work takes up the whole of the morning and an hour and a half in the afternoon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16900

76. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is surprising that there is no letter from you for the last two weeks. This must not happen. Even if there is nothing worth writing it will do if you send a few words about your welfare. How are Charu and Arun? When are Satisbabu and Kshitishbabu to be released?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1680

77. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4 [*1931*][1]

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

There is no reason to be so despondent. One who recognizes his weakness and desires to remove it is already half-way to success. The resolve to devote the rest of your life to service is all to the good. Derive greater strength from the calamity that has befallen you.[2] So much in the line of service lies before you. It is gratifying to learn that the baby is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2523

[1] Gandhiji had written '1930', which is obviously a slip. The letter (G. N. 2524) under reply was dated December 24, 1930.

[2] The addressee's wife had died in September 1930 leaving behind a new-born child.

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78. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Keep on sending me letters. They contain the news I look forward to. When Janakibehn arrives, tell her to write to me. They may certainly arrest Vinoba if they wish. Is there any news of Chhotelal? How is his health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3036

79. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 5, 1931

BHAI SATAVALEKARJI,

I am grateful for your promptitude in sending me *Gita-shlokardhasoochi* and other books. Are handmade slivers strong enough to yield 19,000 yards of yarn in eight hours? What is the count? Will this charkha be entered in the prize-winning charkha competition? If possible, send me the pocket-size charkha.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4761. Courtesy: S. D. Satavalekar

CWMG - XLV

80. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 5, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. Generally they are quite regular now. But I have not been very regular in writing to you thinking that you will now be leaving for the Ashram any day. Of course I think of you every day. I don't at all like your remaining there. If Jayaprakash cannot leave just now, and if he wishes, someone from the Ashram will come to fetch you. Since Kamala[1] has gone to the rest-house, will you have to go to Prayag now? I have not received the letter which Jayaprakash was to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3402

81. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

January 5, 1931

CHI. VANAMALA,

I get your letters. Your speed on the spinning-wheel can be described as good, but you should increase it still further. Can a mistake committed through carelessness be forgiven? After writing a letter, you should go through it once.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
I saw your slip after writing this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5758

[1] Kamala Nehru

CWMG - XIV

82. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

January 5, 1931

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I will now find some time and read about the carding-bow. This time I got the post two days late. You have got a good band of workers with you. You should only think about the work and not feel worried about it. Never doubt that you are doing God's work, provided, of course, you do it in the spirit of *yajna*. I have read what you have written about carding. It is good. When you gain further experience, you will be able to make more definite statements.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3751

83. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 5, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. In my opinion, the view of Vivekananda and Dhurandhar is one-sided. One should feel in the heart what one says. Surdas, Tulsidas and other *bhaktas* have described themselves as cunning, lustful, etc. In doing so, they were not merely using the language of modesty, but speaking from the heart. The truth is that we feel both ways. In an enlightened state, we know ourselves to be Brahman, but in the ignorant state we feel meek and humble before that Merciful One. He who does not feel so but knows himself as the perfect Brahman may not sing *bhajans* praying for God's mercy. You will not come across one such person in millions. To realize one's greatness is the beginning of being great. The drop of sea-water which has become separated from the sea would dry up if it thought that it was still the sea. If it admitted to itself that it was no more than a drop, it would flow towards the sea, merge in it and become one with it.

"Culture" means refinement of feelings and "education" means knowledge of literature. Education is a means and culture is the

end. The latter is possible even without education. For instance, if a child is brought up in a truly cultured family, it will unconsciously imbibe culture from its environment. In our country at any rate, present-day education and culture have no connection with each other. If the educated still retain some culture, that is in spite of their education. This fact shows that the roots of our culture are deep.

My blessings and compliments to Prasannabehn. I should like her to draw her husband also to the Ashram.

You seem to be running a competition in the opposite direction with Narandas with regard to weight. It is good. You can afford to put on some more weight, and Narandas to lose some.

I like the translation of *Gitabodh* which Dhurandhar is making.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10250

84. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

8 p.m., January 1/6, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This week, too, I have not received your packet so far. It must have been posted as unregistered parcel and, if so, I shall probably get it tomorrow. But I started writing the Ashram letters today, or rather yesterday.

I had a letter last time from Danibehn from Bombay. My reply to her is enclosed. She is from Marwar, it seems. If you know, inform me whether that is so. I have given her address in the letter itself, thinking that you may not have it with you. Last week there were a few remarks in pencil by way of criticism of *Anasaktiyoga* by a Maratha friend; the remarks were unsigned. If you remember the name, let me know it.

We were both weighed today. My weight came to 100 and Pyarelal's to 122. I have lost a pound; it is not worth taking note of. The weight may increase or decrease by a pound or two even if the time of weighing changes or according as one is weighed before or after passing stool. If a person gets himself weighed immediately after drinking water, his weight will be found to have increased. If he gets himself weighed after passing urine, there will be corresponding decrease in his weight. So long as I myself feel quite fit, pass stool without difficulty, have an appetite

and eat well, there is no reason at all for concern. If I can carry on like this for six months, the experiment will have succeeded. I have made an important change, which I describe here for those of you who may be interested to know about it.

Almonds are soaked in hot water and the peel is removed. They are then crushed into a paste. This is mixed with four ounces of water and the mixture is boiled till the water evaporates and a butter-like jelly is left behind. I eat it with vegetables. It not only tastes good but seems to be more easily digested than almond paste not boiled in water. It is possible that, even if the almonds are crushed into very fine paste but the latter is not boiled in water, the stuff remains undigested and passes out with stool. But I have no doubt that the jelly which I eat is digested. Even a person with a very delicate stomach may be able to digest almonds cooked in this manner. The jelly may again be mixed with water and turned into milk. It will, of course, have no taste. One can add a little jaggery or sugar, or even lime juice and salt, to the liquid. I don't advise anyone just now to make this experiment. But the information which I have given may perhaps be useful to anyone who is interested in making such experiments or cannot digest milk. Apart from this change, my diet remains what it was. The quantity, too, remains unchanged.

I hope to reach very high speed on the Gandiv spinning-wheel. I had never been able to reach 200, let alone 255, per hour before now. On the *takli* I have not been able to go beyond 75-80 rounds. I cannot spin even 75 comfortably. I spin about 60 comfortably. But I can say that my hand has now set well on a bamboo *takli*. It still seems a hard task for me to spin 100 rounds.

2 o'clock, Saturday

I got your packet yesterday. Since it was a parcel and they do not carry packets during holidays, two days were wasted. But I see that it cost you only three annas to send the packet as a parcel, whereas, if it had been sent as a letter, the postage would possibly come to as much as a rupee. You may, therefore, follow whichever method you think right. I have mentally reconciled myself to getting the packet on Fridays and adjusted my programme accordingly. Here they are very careful in handing over the packet immediately to me after examining its contents. They are equally careful in dispatching the packets from here.

Who is Palibehn? Her question is the same as Premabehn's. I need not, therefore, write separately to her. Send her a copy of my letter to Premabehn, or show it to her if she is in the Ashram.

As regards printing extracts from my letter, what I have written about *yajna* can certainly be given below Chapter II. Any other portions which seem useful can also be printed. But where and in what manner is for you to decide. You can include such material in the *Gitabodh* in footnotes at relevant places or as independent extracts.

Keep the Doctor informed about Ratilal and deal with the latter tactfully so that he may keep to the right path. Look upon him as an animal, uncultured and enslaved by passion. When he is overcome by passion, he goes mad. There are many kinds of passion; Ratilal is enslaved by three: for sex, for eating and for spending money extravagantly. He becomes mad when these passions are not satisfied. Running away from the Ashram has a beneficial effect on him in some measure. He calms down after a few days. God alone knows how he will end up. Sometimes such persons even attain *jnana*. He is certainly not wholly wicked.

The quantity of spinning which you are able to do seems much indeed to me. One can do with the left hand any work which the right hand does. Bhau can spin on the *takli* equally well with either hand.

It will not be bad if Kanu goes to Wardha and learns Bhau's skill, and also gets some experience of the place. If there is any other boy, besides Kanu, who can and wishes to go, I see no harm in sending him.

Your body seems to have changed altogether. Personally, I am confident that ultimately it will become purer in its functioning.

Will not Parnerkar leave the Ashram for a while and go somewhere else to improve his health?

The fact that the bull was brought back and the manner of its being found were a miracle indeed.

Do you follow our method or some other method in preparing *mava* from milk? Do you experience any difficulty in selling it? If that is so, you may write to Ghanshyamdas, Mahavirprasad, Jivanlal and others and they will probably buy it up. If you can supply it regularly, even an advertisement in a newspaper will help.

Do not give up walking. It is a practice worth clinging to at any cost. If you follow fixed rules in your work, you can include many things in the day's programme.

Devdas had written a letter to me; what has been done in regard to it? I have requested that he should recall the contents of the letter and write again to me. I have received no reply to this.

6.45 p.m., Monday, January 5, 1931

I have acknowledged having received the leather for sandals. The address of the lady to whom letter No. 82 is addressed is known to Ramnarayan[1] (of Ajmer). If you send the letter to Martand or somebody else, he will post it.

Read my letter to Kashinath. I need not add to what I have written in it.

Jivandas is in Sabarmati Jail. Does anyone visit him? If not, somebody should go and visit him. Tell him that I often remember him.

Blessings from
BAPU

January 6, 1931

[PS.]

I started this letter on the first and I described the position with regard to my experiment in diet as it was on that day. I had a feeling of indigestion on Saturday night and on Sunday diarrhoea started. But this time I suffered no pain at all. There was no griping even. There were frequent motions. They continued even yesterday, but the number was less. I am writing this at 5 a.m., after prayer. I think the motions will be much fewer today. My work was not interrupted in any way. Yesterday I sat up for exactly ten and a half hours and finished all the work. This time there were a good number of other letters too. Of course eating has been stopped. The cause of diarrhoea seems to be *jowar* and *bajra*. I shall know it by and by. I have not decided how to resume eating. There is no cause at all for worry. I have informed you because I thought I must. At present I take lime juice with jaggery and soda bicarb. I will write again tomorrow.

BAPU[2]

[PPS.]

There are 83 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

[1] Ramnarayan Chaudhary

[2] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. IX) which followed, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

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85. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

12 Noon, Wednesday, January [7][1] *1931*

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the packet dispatched yesterday. Today I feel better. I started with diluted curds yesterday. Today I ate raisins and a little quantity, twice, of crushed, cooked almonds. There is no complaint about stools. That is, after 4 in the morning, I have felt no call. Don't worry at all. Ba and Mirabehn must not worry. I will drop a postcard again tomorrow. I am able to do all my work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

86. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 7, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. What you say about Shanta is correct. Kuhne baths cannot but benefit her.

I have written about Mother in my previous letters. Has she really given up the traditional notions of pollution? I have had no letter from Mama.

I have read Babu Bhagwandas's article. He has suggested the first two remedies ironically to show their impossibility. He believes in the third one. I have thought much about the problem and written about it and suggested every remedy I could. I don't think unity will be brought about through artificial means. If either we or they display pure love, the problem would be solved immediately. It is difficult to say definitely in what form such love will express itself. What you say about the Maulana Saheb is correct. There is no doubt about his patriotism. He said what he believed. Even if we think someone's views to be

[1] The source has "6", but Wednesday was 7th.

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erroneous, how can we blame him for holding those views? It is on such occasions that tolerance is required. Leva Patidars in Gujarat do observe the *purdah*. It is observed among other communities, too, in Kathiawar.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5271

87. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 7, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

Yes, *purdah* is observed here and there in Gu[jarat] too. After all Gu[jarat] is a part of India! Hirabehn is in a pitiable plight. Teach the people of Ras to spin on the *takli* and make bamboo *taklis* locally. I don't understand about Samalbhai. Do write again. I shall enquire into the dispute. Keep yourself fit. Learn *shirshasana* or *sarvangasana* for your feet. Learn the method. Kashinath can read from the book available at the Ashram and write to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5272

88. LETTER TO SHANTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 7, 1931

CHI. SHANTA,

I have already sent you a letter.[1] What more can I say? You are being tested. Be brave.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5273

[1] *Vide* p. 46.

89. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday, January 8, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

The news about my having had diarrhoea must not be published. I passed a little stool yesterday at four in the morning. After that, I passed stool again today at 10 o'clock. I have, therefore, taken half a spoon of castor oil, and, after I have had a motion, I will take milk or curds, whichever I think will suit me. Or I may take something else which may be equally harmless. The body is quite fit. The tongue is perfectly clean. There is no cause at all for anyone to worry. As I thought I ought to inform you about the attack, I wrote about it on Monday and will continue to write every day till I am completely all right so that you may all feel relieved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

90. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 8, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. It is a good sign that there are some days in between when you don't suffer from your usual complaint. You must have received my previous letter. I am very eager indeed that you should go over to the Ashram without delay. Why doesn't Jayaprakash write to me? And what is the position about him now? Is it now fixed that he is joining that college? Is he waiting for any letter from Ghanshyamdasji?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3393

91. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 9, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I think I am very well today. I am writing this after the midday meal. I had a normal motion. In the morning I took almond paste mixed with water and dates. Just now, I had fenugreek leaves, liquid curds and dates. The diet tomorrow, God will decide. There is no cause for worry. The weight is bound to go down after four days of fasting. It came to 96. If things go well tomorrow, I shall recover some of the lost weight during the next week. Tell Mirabehn that I got yesterday the card she posted on Tuesday. I got your packet only today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

92. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 10, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

If you get my letters late, is that my fault alone? Are you so busy that you have to write in the night and spoil your handwriting? Why should you not stay there if it suits you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9897. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

93. LETTER TO ROHINI K. DESAI

January 10, 1931

CHI. ROHINI,

I got your letter. The handwriting was beautiful, but the letter was written in pencil. As far as possible, you should not write a letter in pencil. I have also understood that Kanajibhai

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will be released. When he is released, ask him whether the people outside have done him any harm that, having given up chewing pan during his stay in the rest-house, he should resume the practice outside and deprive the poor of the money spent on it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2656

94. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 10, 1931

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

It pains me every time you fail to keep your resolution. The books you have sent are not the ones which I meant. Pyarelal thought that you knew his books and that probably they were with you. Now don't worry about the matter. The grammar which you have sent will be useful to him. The *Gita* is not required. We have a good many editions here. You will know about my health from the general letter. Pyarelal's is good. You must have noted that I have had to give up eating *jowar* and *bajra* for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1816

95. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

January 10, 1931

CHI. GOVIND,

I got your beautiful letter. The word is not *dandvrat* but *dandavat* and the phrase means respectful greetings offered by prostrating oneself straight like a stick on the ground. In the original phrase, *dandavat* is an adjective and the noun, *pranam*[1], is understood. But we have been using the word *dandavat* as a noun too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3946

[1] Salutation

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96. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 10, 1931

CHI. VANAMALA,

If you do not know how to do oral sums in arithmetic, you should learn it. Can you tell me orally how much $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of ghee would cost if one maund costs Rs. 30?

Your handwriting is good, but you can make it better still.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5759

97. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 10, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This is the last postcard about health. Today I feel very good. I am writing this after the midday meal. The diet today has been the same as it was yesterday. For the evening meal yesterday I had almonds and dates, stirred in water. Today, too, I had curds for the midday meal. I had a normal motion.

Durga should add potassium permanganate to enema water, enough to turn it into pink. Two or three crystals make the water pink. She should also swallow every day 30 grains of soda bicarb with water. If gas continues even after this, she should give up oranges for a day or two. If it becomes necessary to write to me about her health, you may write whenever you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

98. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 10, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

You should have no objection to drinking tea as a medicine. Bear the harmful effect which it may have. After all, one must learn to live with a delicate body. There would be pride or obstinacy in not taking tea even if it is necessary for one's health. One must be humble and take it, as I take dates.

Shirshasana can certainly be done in the presence of others. Why should a woman mind doing so, since she will have tucked up her skirt!

Do not worry about me at all. It had become a religious duty to give up papaya. Giving it up has done me no harm. Friends can help each other best by practising self-denial in their own person.

Are there any quarrels among the women inmates of the Ashram? There was a hint about them in Kalavati's letter. I would not be surprised if that is so. We have not become perfect. As we strive to become so, we shall stumble and fall and rise again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8769. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

99. LETTER TO ISHWARLAL JOSHI

January 10, 1931

CHI. ISHWARLAL,

I was eagerly awaiting a letter from you. I have met Jagannath. I was glad to learn that Premshankar is all right now. I hope you exercise the utmost care in all that you do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9288. Courtesy: Ishwarlal Joshi

100. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 10, 1931

CHI. MANI (SARDARIJI),

I had guessed what you wrote about Harilal.[1] I think there was no harm if the facts had been published. For then perhaps Harilal would have come to his senses. Whether he does, or does not, the path we have to tread is straight. Everyone in the world is our kith and kin, or else everyone is a stranger.

There is a good improvement in your handwriting. Where will you stay now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 48

101. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 10, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your two letters together. So far I have received no letter from Birla about khadi. What is the harm in his taking over charge of all the khadi stock at the Pratishthan? Let him sell at any price. I want to understand all this. Do everything with patience. It is for us to perform our duty, the result lies in God's hands. I have no anxiety as you are already blessed with patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1681

[1] The source explains: "Harilal asked for an interview with the Sardar in Arthur Road Prison, but the Sardar refused to see him, as he was drunk and as the interview asked for appeared to have been arranged by the British Government of India for propaganda purposes. All the same, an account of the interview—that never took place—appeared in the *Evening News of India* and words were placed in the Sardar's mouth which he had never uttered. The Sardar strongly resented this and his contradiction appeared in the papers the next day."

102. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

Your handwriting has improved considerably. See that you keep up the improvement. Regarding your work, follow your conscience. But first you should examine yourself and decide whether it is your conscience or your ego that speaks. Do not neglect your health and let it suffer again. You should feel no hesitation in eating what your health demands. No one will grudge your eating what is necessary for your health, and if anyone does you should not mind. Why should we care if we get no reward for doing our duty?

No one at present can fully appreciate the value of the work which the women all over the country are doing. But the whole world is watching it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3110

103. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 11, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

Whether a person should be particular about spinning even if he has not taken a vow to do so, should be left to his own inclination. No one rule applicable to all persons can be laid down.

You must have heard that the dream castle of *jowar-bajra* which I had built lies shattered. I do not, therefore, write more about it here. If an opportunity occurs, I will try the experiment once again. But perhaps my stomach is no longer strong enough for such experiments. There is, however, no cause at all for worry. I have lost a little in weight, too. It is now 96. But I have resumed milk and curds and, therefore, I shall probably regain the weight lost.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9317

104. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

January 11, 1931

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You did well in going round and meeting everyone. Surendra was not keeping good health; has it improved now? Since you don't write anything about Sita, I believe that she is improving satisfactorily. Don't be parsimonious in supplying her fruit. She must not become ill.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4782

105. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I could once say which verse in the *Gita* I liked most. It was the one beginning, "The impressions of senses, O son of Kunti."[1] Today I cannot be positive about it. Different verses appeal at different times according to the state of mind at the moment. I feel no interest now in deciding which I like most. The entire *Gita* is dear to me. She is the mother. If anyone asks a child which limb of its mother is dear to it, the question would be meaningless. That is how I feel in regard to the *Gita*.

It was quite cold here for two or three days. It is no longer so now. Probably that is because of the wall on the four sides. Of course both of us sleep in the open.

Cannot Kashinath teach Hindi because he has left the Ashram?

Dharmakumar should be treated for his cough without delay. And Nayan too. I remember Kamalabehn. Send my blessings to her. I understand what you say about Dhiru.

[1] II. 14

I was glad that prayers were offered for Rolland. Even apart from his relation with me, his sincerity draws one towards him.

Try and cure the defect in your throat which persists. How are things with Sarojinidevi? Has Sheela got over her illness?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10251

106. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 11, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. Patience and single-minded devotion to the service one has undertaken cannot but yield good results. If you cultivate close contacts with drink addicts and share their joys and sorrows, their lives will be transformed. They themselves will then start working, each in his own circle.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6810

107. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I hope your asthma has completely left you now. Whenever it is possible, you should take a sun-bath. We should not feel concerned at the arrests of Dahibehn and Sharinabehn. I do feel a little worried about Dahibehn's health, but I ask myself why we should worry when there is God to worry for us all and then I straight get back my peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8990

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108. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 11, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

Your inference, from your experience of carding on a carding-bow without the usual leather-strip at the end of the string, about the capacity of the string to bear the blows of the rod is correct. If we have overcome the fear of death, we shall have progressed very far. Write to me and tell me what facilities of boarding and lodging you have in Palanpur, who your companions are, and so on.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6225

109. LETTER TO TEHMINA P. JOSHI

January 11, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

You seem to be very greedy. Where is the need to write long letters from here? You can write long ones. I can write long ones if I write about my speeches to the birds and the talks in silence with the stars. But how can I expose to the human race my lectures delivered to the birds? And my talks with the stars are after all secret. Hence I can write only short letters but must receive long ones from you. Perhaps they may not pass on to me the cutting carrying your speech. But don't I know what you would say? I am glad you went to see the Ashram.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 116

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110. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 7/12, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

Though the Ashram post has not yet been received as it generally is, in order to avoid pressure on my time I commence the letters now. Here is the fourth verse[1]:

"O Goddess Earth, with the ocean for thy garment, mountains for thy breasts, thou consort of Vishnu (Preserver), I bow to thee; forgive the touch of my feet."

Bowing to the earth we learn or ought to learn to be humble even as the earth is humble. She supports the beings that tread upon her. She is therefore rightly the consort of Vishnu. This conception in my opinion does no violence to truth. On the contrary it is beautiful and is wholly consistent with the idea that God is everywhere. There is nothing inanimate for Him. We are of the earth earthy. If earth is not, we are not. I feel nearer God by feeling Him through the earth. In bowing to the earth, I at once realize my indebtedness to Him and if I am a worthy child of that Mother, I shall at once reduce myself to dust and rejoice in establishing kinship with not only the lowliest of human beings, but also with lowest forms of creation whose fate—reduction to dust—I have to share with them. And if considered as mere life without the earthy tabernacle, I regard myself as imperishable, the lowest form of creation is just as imperishable as my soul is.

This attack of diarrhoea is a positive blessing for me. It has caused no pain, meant no interruption of my work. And it has taught me lessons. I feel a greedy eater. The *bajari* and *juwari* are new foods for me. I should have taken them sparingly and omitted them occasionally. Even one *bhakhari* per day was evidently too much for me. But I did not do it. I thought I would make up for lost weight quickly. I know no such thing as full satisfaction of hunger no matter how much I eat, i.e., within my limitations. I always rise with an empty stomach. I therefore learn my mistake after the event. And then everything practically is tasty for me. I went to *bajari* and *juwari* for feeling tangibly akin to the fellow-prisoners. But for me these *bhakharis* had a definitely pleasant taste.

[1] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 387.

In these mixed circumstances to practise not only moderation but spare eating is a difficult performance. An occasional fast and at least once per month is a good thing it seems even for light weight people. But I seem to have full control over this crisis, if it can be so called. I am not interrupting the experiment altogether but shall modify it from time to time as may be found necessary. I took curds, as you know, yesterday. Feeling quite well at 11 o'clock I took finely powdered twice cooked almonds and soaked raisins. This is how matters stand today (Wednesday). This will be posted six days after. You will have further developments either through this letter or through the general letter. I give you these details to put you and others at ease. The knowledge that the slightest derangement in my health upsets you all causes me more anxiety than the derangement itself. Complete abandonment of dietetic experiment will be for me the worst evil. It is part of my search. But the evil is not in the experiment, the evil is in me. I have not learnt the art of taking food as medicine pure and simple. That means complete mastery over the palate. I am far from it still. I believe that if I acquire it, the giving up of milk will be an easy job. That it is not a healthy human being's food I have not a shadow of a doubt. In health, I have lived without it for six years. Through my folly that health was undermined. To undo the effect of that folly, instead of paying with my life for it, I went to milk always hoping to struggle out of it again. The struggle must continue. Every defeat humbles me, chastens me and opens up newer outlooks. The urge for struggle becomes intenser with defeat. The continuance gives one peace. Col. Steele the Civil Surgeon who comes to see me every fortnight and Major Martin came today. Their first remark was that I was looking exceptionally well. And this after practically three days' fast! And they were right. I am not feeling any the worse for the 'crisis'. Then and in any case be careful for nothing.

January 12, 1931

I take up the letter where I left it on 7th. I seem to feel quite all right. The bowels are again quite regular. My food is almond paste dissolved in water and dates in the morning, curds and dates at noon, dissolved almond paste and dates in the evening. Hot water lemon and salt 7.30 a.m. Cold water lemon and soda 1.30 p.m. If all goes well and the bowels become constipated, I may take vegetables. So again there is nothing further to report. I would warn you against publishing anything about these interruptions in health, as they will be magnified by the public and there

will be unnecessary alarm and unwarranted reflections against the Government. In this case, at any rate, no blame of any kind can be cast on them.

I have your letter and the postcard. Let us thank God that Rolland is quite out of the wood. The world needs him for many years yet. His work, so far as we can see, is not finished. Please send him my loving regards and say he must hold on for a while. Premabehn has described to me the prayer you had for his recovery. I do not know that these prayers add a single second to the life prayed for. But they elevate those who pray and comfort those for whom the prayers are offered. The comfort has the appearance of prolongation of life.

I finished the translation of the preface two days ago and have taken up nothing further. But I feel like taking up the original plan. I am likely to come to a decision tomorrow, after the Ashram post is finished.

Having taken up the news-sheet, you will give up the formal editorship if it can be without any disturbance. Not to take up a service is wisdom, but it is folly to give it up afterwards unless it is found to be demonstrably immoral. Such is the general principle of ethics. Of the particular application you and those who are outside are the only judges. As to secrecy, there seems to be some confusion of thought as expressed by you. If a butcher asks me in which direction a cow is gone, I am in no way bound to disclose the information to him. I may not mislead him but nor may I lead him to where the cow is. Not only that, I may even hide away the cow. Indeed, it would be my duty to do so. From this instance one may shape one's conduct in given circumstances.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your description of Totaramji's love of gardening is enchanting. I wish some youngsters will learn the art from him. You should discuss this with Narandas.

From a copy: C.W. 5428. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9662

111. LETTER TO JAMNA N. GANDHI

January 12, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

You are welcome to the Ashram, but see that you do not lose there what you have gained in Bombay. If you think that your health suffers in the Ashram, you should see no harm in staying in Bombay for education. Really speaking, we should know the art of adjusting our mode of living to any climate. If we do not know it, however, and if we can easily go and live where we can keep good health, it is best that we do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 846. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

112. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 12, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your last letter, but not the one which you wrote before that. I am making inquiries. If you think it necessary to live in the U.P., by all means do so. How was Brijkishorebabu's health? What arrangements have been made about his meals? Give me a detailed report. Tell Swarupraniji that she should keep up courage. My blessings to Swarup and Krishna. Where is Jayaprakash at present?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3394

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113. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 12, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I am writing this letter though I have nothing special to write about. Probably you will get this letter at the Ashram. You must have received my previous postcards. I keep very good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3410

114. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
[*January*][1] *12, 1931*

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your postcard. I did not get your earlier letter. When were you released? Who else were released with you? How is your health? How is Dr. Ansari? What are you doing at present?

We are both well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2387

[1] The source has "12-12-1931" which appears to be a slip, for on that date Gandhiji was in Rome. From the reference to the addressee's release from Gujarat Jail which, according to the addressee, took place some time during the last week of December 1930, it is clear that the letter was written in January.

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115. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Monday Morning, January 12, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I take up your letter last for replying. I have started writing after the evening prayer. You must have received the postcards I wrote including Saturday's. After that, my health has remained all right. You will find details in my letter[1] to Mirabehn. It contains something else, too, which will interest you. It is desirable that the news about my health should not spread outside.

Though Mahadev's name was in your list, I believe that you carry the impression that there was a letter by Mahadev because Chandrashankar's handwriting is very much like Mahadev's. Was there really a letter by Mahadev in his own handwriting? If there was, what were its contents? Durga would certainly know. There has been no special letter about her health, so I believe that she is all right. You must have got the letter in which I made a suggestion about her. Champa recovered even the lost ring! All this seems a miracle. Perhaps this is how God protects the fools. Champa had said in her letter that they might all go to Rajkot for some time. She said that that was the advice she was given by Nanalal's wife. If she wishes to go, I certainly like the idea. You must have thought about the matter independently and done what you thought proper, or you will do what you think proper. I don't remember to have encouraged Parasram to hope that we might give him some help. If, however, his work is efficient and clean, I would certainly be tempted to help him. Before you do anything, consult Shankerlal and follow his advice. You can send to me the small box received from Polak. If it is of a kind which you think should be preserved carefully, keep it there or put it in the Gujarat Vidyapith museum. If you don't think that necessary, you can send it to me through Trivedi. A lady from as far away as Canada had sent to me a bag containing about two pounds of salt. The authorities passed it on to me.

Take careful measures and help Kusum to get rid of her fever. Consult a doctor, if necessary. Chandrashankar has discovered

[1] *Vide* pp. 80-2.

a Punjabi vaid. He will probably give you some ordinary medicine. If you think it worth while, inquire about him.

Have a quiet talk with Bhagwanji and draw his attention to his shortcomings.

I let you off with this today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Two conclusions can be drawn from my experiment. Perhaps three. One of them is as good as proved. Two require to be tested further. Those who suffer from constipation should live for some days only on fenugreek leaves, *tandalja*, *tanko* and spinach. That is how I overcame my constipation. Pyarelal, too, seems to have overcome his. For the past four days he has been eating only fenugreek leaves. The jelly of almonds which I have described, besides being nourishing, is free from the defects of milk and so does not cause constipation. The *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra* seem to have a laxative effect on those who are not used to them. Ghee should not be taken during this experiment. All the vegetables should be merely boiled. But I cannot say that the experiment of *jowar* and *bajra* has proved successful. I do not think, either, that it has failed. If I have had to suspend it just now, it is in order that people there may not feel worried.[1]

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 83 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

116. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

January 13, 1931

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letters and the books. I did devote five to ten minutes. How shall I find more time? I remember our meeting.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1079

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. X) which followed, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

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117. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 14, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your long letter. Since you have stayed on there of your own free will, what can I say? Personally, I don't like your decision at all. There will always be something or the other in a home requiring one's presence to attend to. I fear the longer you stay on there the greater will be the delay in your recovery. From what source did you arrange to get the money to pay your rent? Whenever you happen to be in such difficulties about money, you may write to the Ashram. My daughter is a daughter of the Ashram. You have, therefore, every right to request and get money from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3395

118. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 14, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

I got the loving gift of dates sent by you. I have now a larger stock of them than I require. The quantity sent by Shri Jerajani is still not exhausted. May I request you to maintain an account of the dates which you send to me, as you do of the cotton? You may send them whenever I request you to do so. I shall require some more cotton in four days' time. Kindly, therefore, send four pounds at your convenience.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4819. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

119. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

After Morning Prayers, January 15, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

It is good that you sent me . . . 's[1] letter. He also may write to me direct. I agree with you that he should discuss the whole matter with Kakasaheb.

As far as I have been able to understand the situation, it seems to me that he should make . . .[2] free. It is unlikely that she will marry again, but in her heart of hearts she will welcome her freedom. If even now she is leading an immoral life, . . . will not be able to reform her, just as he cannot reform any other woman like her. He should not mind what effect his action, right in itself, produces on society. He should get rid of the idea that she belongs to him. And if he sincerely repents having married a second time, he should regard . . .[3] purely as a friend and live with her accordingly. But one cannot force oneself to act in such a manner. If he cannot live thus, he should humbly live with . . . as her husband, exercising as much self-control as he can. There are many other issues which arise from this, but I do not wish to discuss them here.

The criticism about camps in your letter is a painful story. Truth and non-violence have not yet found a place in the hearts of people. They are accepted only as policy. Hence, even public workers have not realized that truth and non-violence in social life depend upon their practice by individuals, that is, upon self-purification by them. The Ashram was established to demonstrate the truth of this idea through actual practice. Our duty is to go on serving, unaffected by the atmosphere round us no matter how polluted it is. This is true about women workers too. All of them should be as strong as Khurshedbehn, who will never fall in any atmosphere however evil it may be. It is true that we have not yet reached this level. We have got this golden opportunity of testing our strength. Maybe some of us, both men and women, will receive burns in this ordeal. Let that be so, if it cannot be helped. If on the whole our effort in the Ashram is sincere, God will pro-

[1], [2] & [3] The names have been omitted.

tect us. The prayer-song of the turtle and his wife is worth meditating over in this connection.

The second part of your letter also is interesting. What can I say in reply? Work as hard as you can but not at the cost of your health. We ought to preserve good health, and not merely refrain from sacrificing the body unnecessarily.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5498

120. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI N. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1931

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

I have your letter. You should try to check a disease as soon as it makes its appearance. I hope you have consulted a nose specialist and taken proper treatment. I had read Father Elwin's articles. I was glad to learn that Dahibehn and Sharinabehn had been arrested. I used to complain, too, against the . . .[1] khadi in the Kheda district. I would be happy if the cause is removed now. I am sure the people of Kheda at any rate will continue their sacrifices.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8991

121. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter containing news about the Sardar. We know about Harilal. How long is Father likely to stay on for dental treatment? Even if it[2] is infested with mosquitoes, it is desirable that this course of treatment should be completed. I believe

[1] A word here is not legible in the source.
[2] Arthur Road Prison

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that you too will stay on there[1] during that period. We are both all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

How is Sumitra[2]? Can Yashoda move about? Is Vithalbhai staying on there?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 78

122. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 15, 1931

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Tell Chhotelalji to write to me if he is permitted to write letters. Has he also been released under [Section] 160? Essential silk means that which is required for the borders in khadi or without which khadi itself cannot be sold. If the question of principle is settled, the rest can be done as suits the occasion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3037

123. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
January 16, 1931

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN[3],

With reference to your talk about interviews, I regret that I am unable to depart from the position I took up at the outset. It is the only position that I can take up. For years I have erased the distinction between blood relations and others. There are friends and inmates of the Ashram who are, if possible, more to me than blood relations. But I have endeavoured to appreciate the

[1] Bombay
[2] Dr. Kanuga's daughter
[3] Jail Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison, Poona

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Government's position and therefore submitted a list[1] of possible friends who should be permitted to visit me on the same terms as relations by blood and marriage. I have excluded from the list all noted political leaders. I offered too that if there was any specific name to which the Government had objection I should be informed. Further than that I could not go then and cannot now.

Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19985

124. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
January 16, 1931

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

Babu Ramananda Chatterjee of *The Modern Review* has, as you know, written to me asking me to sign an appeal for a *Golden Book*[2] of appreciations to be presented to the Poet Rabindranath Tagore on his forthcoming 71st birthday. The appeal is signed by Sir J. C. Bose, R. Rolland, and Einstein among others. I would like, if I may, to respond to the invitation. If you feel that you have no authority to give me the permission, will you please ascertain the Government's wishes in the matter? I should like an early reply.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19986

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLIV, pp. 11-3.

[2] *The Golden Book of Tagore, 1931*

[3] The permission was given on January 26, the day Gandhiji was released. The following notings, reproduced from Bombay Secret Abstracts, were recorded on this letter:

"I see no reason why he should not be allowed to sign this appeal. There is nothing political about it. He and Tagore have been friends for many years. HOTSON/22.1.

"May go U.O. to I.G. of Prison to issue the necessary orders. G.C./22.

"The prisoner may be permitted to sign the appeal. E.E. DOYLE. 25-1-31.

"The appeal has been handed over to the prisoner. R. V. MARTIN. 26-1-31."

For Gandhiji's tribute, *vide* p. 126.

125. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 16, 1931

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have already written to you about the books. Don't worry about my health on any account. It is certainly good. How old is Tara? I hope you write the diary regularly. It is my experience and of many others that doing so helps us to keep a watch over our truthfulness.

What is the position about Chandubhai's hospital now? For what purpose is the rest of the building being used? Pyarelal is in fine health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1817

126. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

January 16, 1931

CHI. MATHURI,

I got your letter. So you did not like staying in a hut in Bochasan? Before the Ashram was built, we also lived in such huts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 259. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

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127. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 17, 1931

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI (CARE KASHIRAMJI),

I have an impression that I have answered your letter. Your question is not such as to warrant a reply from me. Rising early can become effortless by practice. In order to rise early one must go to bed early. Even the habit of evacuating the bowels immediately upon rising can be acquired by and by. During winter you can begin studies after taking some exercises. The primary thing is to acquire the habit of rising early. If we cannot be firm even in such a small matter, the capacity to carry an important job to its conclusion will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 835

128. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 17, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter. Pay no heed to anyone's criticism. Pay attention to what the chief says. Shamalbhai and Gangabehn do not wish to save you. Resolve this problem by talking it over with them. No father has the right to forcibly send away his daughter to her husband's house.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5275

129. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 17, 1931

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

You are making great effort to write a good hand I like it. Similarly continue your effort to be good too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5276

130. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 17, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

It would be cowardice to run away to the Himalayas. Every page of the *Gita* teaches us to regard equally respect and disrespect. We should not feel hurt by anything that somebody may say about us. We should pay attention only to what our conscience tells us. But I know that you have merely poured out your heart. Since you continue to do your best, everything will be all right. Surendra's help was certainly very valuable.

The work of educating children is of very great value. While giving them a knowledge of letters, we should also try to mould their ideas and behaviour. We should pay proper attention to their general habits too. We should examine their nails, ears, eyes, teeth, etc., and, if they are not clean, make the children wash them in the school itself. They should be quick in oral sums. We should also pay attention to children's habit of using foul words among themselves.

I keep good health. Pyarelal is fine, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9318

131. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 17, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

What courage I must have! Or love for Indian languages! Howsoever incorrect, was it not Marathi? But the time for writing to you in Marathi is not yet.

You have taken upon yourself a fairly difficult responsibility. Do not lose hope about Durga. If you continue to coax her, that very Durga will begin to take interest in reading.

You can get some general knowledge about plants from Totaramji. Shouldn't the children be able to recognize the trees and plants growing in the Ashram, and should they not know how they grow and when they bear fruit and be able to tell their age ? I of course cannot do this.

I would not have remembered the *Sankranti* Day, were it not a half-holiday here. I got the *tilgul*[1] sent by you. They again reminded me of it. For us, one may say, every day is a *Sankranti* Day.

With Narandas's permission, you can send to people any extracts from my letters which you wish to.

"Hero" means one worthy of reverence, a god, so to say. In the political field, Gokhale holds that place for me. The persons who have influenced my life as a whole in a general way are Tolstoy, Ruskin, Thoreau and Raychandbhai. Perhaps I should drop Thoreau from this list.

Great men *seem* to be the cause of revolutions in the world. In truth the people themselves are the cause. Revolutions do not take place by accident but obey laws as rigid as the law governing the motions of the planets. Only we do not know those laws and causes and, therefore, regard revolutions as accidents.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10252; also *Bapuna Patro–5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne*, pp. 40-1

[1] An offering prepared from sesame and jaggery

132. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

January 17, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

I think the more important reasons for your decision to live outside the Ashram were your own wish to do so and the facilities which you would enjoy thereby. I too do not believe Narandas to be a perfect man. But I believe that his mistakes are unintentional, and that he makes fewer mistakes than others would. I, therefore, think that we should put up with his method of running the Ashram. You may take your own time to return to the Ashram, but if you really had no objection to showing your diary, you should show it even now, and ask to be admitted to the Ashram when you wish and are ready to go there. I have not been able to understand why the teaching of Hindi at the Ashram was discontinued. Did Narandas forbid it, or did you yourself stop teaching?

I am glad that your father has joined you. But you should continue to maintain a firm attitude. I have no doubt that, no matter how much he insists, you should prevent her from going. I, however, hope that in the present circumstances she will not wish to go. If that man decides to marry again, we need not object.

It seems that Mother's health is improving. It will get even better if she observes the restrictions on diet, remains in the open air and takes other precautions.

I was satisfied with Kalavati's answer. Just now at any rate she seems to be progressing.

I know Gadreji. I have carefully gone through the extract quoted by you. I felt that it showed more emotion than calm reflection. It attributes to me something that I have never held or said. I have never asserted that the Pandavas, Krishna and other characters are not historical persons. My view is that, though all of them might be historical persons, the *Mahabharata* is not a work of history in the modern sense of the term. Caesar, John, Henry, etc., were historical kings, but we know that Shakespeare's plays named after them are not works of history. He used historical events and characters for his dramatic purpose in the plays. Further, I never thought or said that the *Gita* was composed for expounding non-violence. On the contrary, I have believed and have said, that at

the time of the *Gita*, war was accepted as normal, though they believed in the dharma of non-violence. Nevertheless, I believe that the teaching of the *Gita* does not justify war, even if the author of the *Gita* had intended otherwise. I hold that physical warfare, armed warfare can never be non-violent. Those who perform animal sacrifice may, and do, say that belief in non-violence does not forbid such sacrifice. But whatever they say, animal sacrifice is a violence. And this also is true about armed warfare. To regard it as a necessity and not subject to the general rule, and then to regard it as sanctioned by religion is one thing, but it is quite another to say that it is non-violent. I feel that Gadreji's article suffers from looseness and confusion of thought. Being a prisoner, I cannot make a public reply, but it is open to you to send my reply to Gadreji for his information.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5283

133. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Saturday [*January 17, 1931*][1]

CHI. VANAMALA,

What an intelligent girl you are! A sum which would seem difficult to other children, you found quite easy. Here is another, a little more difficult, sum. If a girl spins 252 rounds in an hour, how many would she spin in twenty minutes?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5760

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, p. 73. This letter was presumably written on Saturday week.

134. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 14/18, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

Again I commence the Ashram letters with yours and that just after the morning prayer.

The 5th verse[1] is: "May the Goddess Saraswati (of learning) the Destroyer completely of black ignorance, protect me, she who is white as the *mogra* flower, the moon and a garland of snow, who has worn white robes, whose hands are adorned with the beautiful bamboo of her *veena* (a kind of violin), who is seated on a white lotus and who is always adored by Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and the other gods."

January 18, 1931

To me the thought here is very beautiful. Learning of course means wisdom. The emphasis on threefold whiteness—that of snow, moon, flower—and the white dress and white seat is intended to show that uttermost purity is an indispensable part of wisdom or learning. As you explore the deeper meaning of these and kindred verses, you will find every virtue personified and made a living reality instead of a dead dictionary word. These imaginary gods are more real than the so-called real things we perceive with our five senses. When I recite this verse, for instance, I never think that I am addressing an imaginary picture. The recitation is a mystical act. That when I analyse the act intellectually, I know that the goddess is an imaginary being, does not in any way affect the value of the recitation at prayer time. If all this is not clear to you, you must unhesitatingly tax me.

So you are to be travelling again. I can only say 'do not overdo it, do not strain yourself beyond endurance.'

I telegraphed about Surendra[2]. He must have given up his fast. For me, I am quite right. I have not yet gone back to vegetables or bread. Almonds, dates and a little milk or curds and lemons seem to keep me perfectly fit. To be able to keep standing at the *takli* for nearly two hours is not a bad feat for me and I sit at the wheel for nearly two hours without any support to the

[1] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali*; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 387.
[2] Who taught Hindi to Mirabehn

back. Add to that nearly 45 minutes for carding and sliver making.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5429. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9663

135. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

5 a.m., January 18, 1931

CHI. DURGA,

I hope that your experiment of eating oranges is going on. I also suppose that you are taking enemas regularly. The belching must stop. If you suffer from headaches, you may apply mud packs to the head.

Tell Mahadev that I have not seen Hill's translation of the *Gita*. I have written to Kaka and asked him to suggest any changes that he may wish to in *Anasaktiyoga* and ask me any question he may want in regard to it. I shall be glad if he does. I send to Mirabehn the translation of one *bhajan* every week. If it is decided in future to publish them, Mahadev will certainly see them. Even otherwise, you may get the translations from Mirabehn. I have got with me translations of all *bhajans* except the Bengali ones. It would be a fine thing if Devdas turns out a Sanskrit scholar. It would be good if he improves his Urdu too. If Mahadev has not read what Mathuradas has written on the carding-bow, he should do so. It is necessary to make this science as exact, and introduce as much art in it, as possible. My love for the spinning-wheel increases as I take more and more interest in it. The spinning-wheel means all the processes through which cotton passes. God is no doubt the sole help of the poor, but the spinning-wheel is His hands and feet, and, the poor man or woman who holds it holds God. We may not be able to live on simple fare as the poor do, but we ought to ply the spinning-wheel for their sake. And to ply the spinning-wheel means to examine its infinite capacity and reveal it to the world. This is a study of no ordinary value. And to pursue it means to live the teaching of the *Gita*. I need not say all this to Mahadev, but, at this hour of prayer, these deeper sentiments of my heart come out spontaneously as I think of him. Perhaps I would not be able to express them before others in the same manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16901

136. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

January 18, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I understand the situation in which you are placed. If you only remain firm in your vow about the struggle, many of your problems will be solved. I don't remember having written anything special to you in reply to your letter about jail life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9504

137. LETTER TO JAMNA N. GANDHI

January 18, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

I don't at all remember having received a letter from you about Dharmadas and Kalyandas. If I had received any, I would have replied to it.

If you don't keep good health in the Ashram, I should certainly like you to go to Bombay and adopt the diet I have suggested.

Tell Kusum that she should not be impatient to start eating solid food. One can live on fruits and milk for the whole of one's life. She must fully regain her health. There is nothing wrong with my health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 847. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

138. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 18, 1931

BHAI FULCHAND,

I was eagerly waiting for a letter from you. I know your enthusiasm. I need not say anything from here whether or not picketing would be proper. It will be enough, so far as I am concerned,

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if people do not swerve from the path of truth and non-violence even for the sovereignty of the three worlds.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2865. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

139. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

January 18, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

When children grow up, they become our friends. One can only advise a friend. He may then do what he thinks best, and one should not mind if he does so. Moreover, we hold all human beings in equal regard; how, then, can we be pleased with some and offended with some others? You should not, therefore, feel hurt about Kaku in any way.

Take care of your feet. You should keep them in warm water for a long time and then apply *kokum* oil. That will be enough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8770. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

140. LETTER TO JANAKIBEHN BAJAJ

January 18, 1931

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Shouldn't I say that you have done me a favour by writing to me after many days? The task in Calcutta is a difficult one, but not so for you. Ghanshyamdasji is making a good contribution through his work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchve Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 73

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141. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 18, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

If your health remains good in Ras, I would like you to stay there for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9898. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

142. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

8 p.m., January 14/19, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the post today at 8 in the morning. I found on the cover stamps worth eleven annas. On the packet, the stamps used to be three annas worth. I don't feel, however, that paying the extra eight annas every time will be an extravagance. This time at any rate I didn't feel that it was so, for your letter contained news of Surendra's fast and I could send a wire to you to persuade him to give it up. These days the officials here are careful about the post received from and addressed to the Ashram. At both ends, therefore, we are likely to receive it regularly.

Inform Surendra. Show this to Nathji or write to him. I see ignorance and impatience in Surendra's step. The ignorance is on two counts. There is ignorance in the belief that, when imprisoned, one is prevented from doing work of service and, secondly, in the belief that one does service by giving up one's life in this manner. The duty of everyone in Surendra's circumstances is to preserve his body carefully and use it for service. In jail one can spin and weave and do many other kinds of productive work. Upright conduct will have its effect on the masses. That is also part of service. I see cowardice and lack of understanding in ending one's life by fasting. Surendra's motive is noble, but the goodness of the motive does not by itself condone the intrinsic badness of an action. Considered from every point of view, therefore, Surendra's action

in embarking on a fast was blameworthy. Obtain Nathji's opinion and let me know what he thinks. If Surendra has anything to say in defence of his action, let him. I don't wish to suggest that one may not give up one's life in any circumstances. All that I mean is that Surendra's circumstances are not such as will justify his doing so.

Madhavji has decided to follow my example in experimenting with *jowar* and *bajra*. Dissuade him from doing so. For one thing, my experiment cannot be considered to have succeeded. Even if it is so considered, an experiment of this kind should not be imitated too hastily. Milk and dates have agreed with him, and let him cling to them. I may say that I have earned the right to make experiments and play with my body after many years' practice till it has become accustomed to such experiments. This can be said about few others. Moreover, this is not the time for such experiments.

Let us not shed tears over your not having received my post-cards regularly. After all, am I not a prisoner? What facilities are given should be accepted as a kindness. I have no complaint to make about my health now. At present my diet consists of dates, almonds, curds and lime juice. I am watching the effects of these. I do not take more than ten *tolas* of curds, whether in liquid or semi-liquid form. I take them only once. I don't think I can digest more just now. The total number of almonds at two meals comes to forty, and that of dates, at three meals, to seventy. I will not increase the number for some time. Perhaps I may reduce it. I am proceeding cautiously. This quantity of food contains plenty of energy. It is yet six days before this letter will be posted. If I make any changes during this period, I will write about them. There is not the slightest cause for worry. The almonds are first soaked in water and peeled, they are then roasted and crushed into a jelly. I follow this method in order to save time. The other method of crushing the almonds without roasting them and then boiling the paste in water is of course an excellent one.

We should realize that we can never do our *yajna* work too methodically. The vigilance which we exercise in such work will keep us vigilant in all other matters, provided of course we are sincere at heart.

If even now Keshu calms down and devotes himself to work, I will not believe that he has wasted his time so far. You took a very good step indeed.

Tell Devdas that I agree with what he says. I would be ashamed to be released on the ground of illness. I would rather prefer to take milk and curds and preserve my health. That is actually what I am doing. The primary aim of my experiment is to keep

up my health here by exercising self-restraint. The experiment was started entirely for the sake of health, but, since it also satisfied my conscience, a spiritual motive has entered it.

Do what is necessary to settle the affair of Nanibehn and Budhabhai. When you think it necessary that I should write to anyone in the matter, let me know.

Tell Sarja that I regard her as very fortunate. She should now pick up great courage and go forth and make good use of every moment of her time.

Mathew should not be permitted to use the name of the Ashram for working outside. In any case he cannot be paid money for doing so. If he can, he may do some teaching work in the Ashram or the Vidyapith. But shouldn't he first acquire sufficient proficiency in spinning, carding, etc., and obtain a certificate? And in Hindi, too? Till he has done this, he cannot be entrusted with responsibility for outside work. I will write to him also to this effect.

I suppose Mirabehn's paper has closed down completely. Did she issue any statement or let the public merely guess as much? What about the money received from people? Who was, or is, in charge of the financial affairs?

Be firm in dealing with Sarojinidevi. If Padma herself wants to leave, I think it would be best to let her go. You should tell her plainly that if, after leaving once, she wants to return, you will have to consider then whether to re-admit her. If the mother or the daughter or both leave, they should understand just now that they will be leaving for ever.

Ask Devdas to send my compliments to Lala Hansraj and tell him that every thread which he spins brings swaraj nearer. I hope that he will excel me in speed.

Night, January 18, 1931

Read my letter to Sarojinidevi. If she has calmed down and if you fear that she will be upset again by my letter, do not give it to her. There was a complaint in one of the letters (I forget whose) that the children have again started playing mischief among themselves and making noise at prayer meetings. Please look into the matter if there is any substance in this complaint.

Night, January 19, 1931

Prabhavati's husband has gone to Delhi and may, therefore, send for some inmate of the Ashram. If he does so, send someone

immediately to bring her to the Ashram. If she recovers, we shall have earned the merit of saving a cow from the slaughter-house. My health has remained very good. I continue the same diet and in the same quantity.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

[PS.]
There are 78 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

143. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

January 19, 1931

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

Sjt. A. Patwardhan is an old associate of mine in political, educational, social and religious work. He is at present in R. prison. I read in the papers that he is fasting because he is not permitted to spin during leisure hours. I hope the report is not true. The prohibition is unthinkable when A and B class prisoners are permitted. I may say that with many of us the duty of spinning comes before the pleasure of eating. Will you be so good as to let me know whether there is any truth in the report? I am sure you will appreciate my anxiety.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19987

[1] For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. XI) which followed, *vide* Vol. XLIX, "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

[2] The Inspector-General of Prisons replied the same day:

"The report is perfectly true. The privilege of spinning has not been extended to C class prisoners — as it would be impossible, for administrative reasons, to have charkhas, *taklis* and cotton all over the prison.

"If any C class prisoner can show special reasons why this privilege should be extended in his case, I am sure his request will receive sympathetic consideration.

"The case of the prisoner in point is now before Government for orders."

S. P. Patwardhan, popularly known as Appasaheb Patwardhan, was later allowed to spin; *vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", pp. 107-8.

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144. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 19, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have all your letters. I get them fairly regularly. I understand that I should wait for a wire from you. But I don't understand now the reasons about home affairs which you give. What help can a person who is almost bed-ridden give? And even if she can give any help, others should not let her give it. But I understand your argument. Since I have not lived in a home of mine for many years, I have lost the faculty of understanding the problems of a home. I very much hope there will be no unexpected difficulty on the 24th. My health is very good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3404

145. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Tuesday [On or before *January 20, 1931*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I do not know where you are. I am sure your agitation must have subsided now. The central teaching of the *Gita* is that we should preserve peace of mind and be happy in all conditions of life. The first verse of the morning prayer, too, speaks of *sat-chit-sukh*.[2] Till we have attained that state, all else in us is imperfect. We should be indifferent to honour and insult. We should, therefore, do, to the best of our ability, the task that has fallen to our lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8772. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Gandhiji was released from Yeravda Prison on January 26, 1931.
[2] *Vide* p. 13.

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146. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

January 20, 1931

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply. *The Times of India's* latest report says that Sjt. Appasaheb Patwardhan commenced his fast on 10th instant. I know that he has not superfluous flesh on him and it is a matter of great anxiety to me to feel that he may be still fasting. Could you please ascertain how he is doing and let me know also whether permission has been granted him to spin.

Your reply raises what is to me a very big question. You call the labour of spinning a privilege. But to all who spin for sacrifice it is a sacred duty. And why is it impossible for administrative reasons to have instruments of this labour all over the prison if it is not impossible to have other instruments of labour? In 1922 all the prisoners who wished were allowed to spin in this prison and their work was used for the prison as may be done again. The wheels too were made in the prison. I am not idly raising this question of spinning. It is, as you as well as the Government are aware, a matter of vital importance for me and some of my associates. It goes beyond politics and economics. With some of us life would not be worth living if we could not serve God through this little labour. Evidently C class prisoners who have been spinning in Sabarmati, Nasik and perhaps other prisons have been doing so without authority and with the unwarranted connivance of the local officials. But such a sacred duty cannot be performed in a precarious manner under connivance. Either the Government should recognize the right of prisoners to spin even as they recognize their right to pray and eat and perform the other necessary functions although their performance may, as it does, cause inconvenience or they should say they are not prepared to recognize this right in which case in justice it should be withdrawn from all classes of prisoners. In reality the discrimination in such a matter between A class and B class prisoners on the one hand and C class on the other shows clearly the absurdity and the injustice of the classification of prisoners. And I feel myself with all the conveniences given to me regarding spinning to be a much pampered and privileged prisoner. I have no desire to enjoy a single privilege that any other prisoner may not for similar reasons enjoy. I would ask you

please therefore to treat this matter of sacrificial spinning as one of urgency. I am sorry again to put you and the Government to trouble but you and they will appreciate my position.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19988

147. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 20, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I foresee a difficulty in returning your letter.

1. Since you agree with me about the importance of hand-spinning, please make it as clear as you can what more you expect from me.

2. The interests of the mill and handloom industries are mutually opposed. There is certainly a place for the mill industry. It will have a place for many more years to come, perhaps for ever. My position is that those who understand the problem should not argue that the two industries are complementary to each other. The mills require no support. The swadeshi movement itself helps them, cannot but help them. If we plead, however, that both require help, the handloom industry will receive less help. Perhaps I am not able to explain my meaning clearly. Even if we do not plead for the mill industry, it does receive help. If we plead for it, we may possibly harm it and will certainly harm the other.

3. The manufacture of artificial silk should always be opposed.

4. Personally, I believe that we can import the required cotton. But I would not bother to explain this just now.

5. The measures which you suggest for protecting the handloom industry seem quite all right.

The title which you have suggested does not appeal to me. I prefer the title which I have suggested. You may, however, give whichever you like.

[1] To this Doyle replied the next day: "Provisional sanction has already been accorded to S. P. Patwardhan to spin, pending receipt of Government orders. To enable me to understand your point of view on the subject of spinning — I shall be glad if you will explain what exactly you mean by the term 'sacrificial spinning'. *Vide* also "Letter to E. E. Doyle", p. 109.

I keep good health. I don't eat fresh fruits these days.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9

148. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

January 20, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

You must have received my last postcard in which I had acknowledged receipt of the dates and requested you to send cotton. I got the tin box of cotton on Sunday. It contained $1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. That will last ten days. At present I require exactly four pounds every month. Please, therefore, send the balance before the end of this week. You need not put the cotton in a tin box. It will be enough if you pack it in paper which has not been used. Here I store the cotton in a bag.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4820. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

149. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
January 22, 1931

DEAR MAJOR DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply.[1] Will you please tell me how my friend is doing?

With reference to your inquiry, sacrificial spinning means spinning in the name of God for the sake of the poor without any expectation of personal gain. I suggest that all those who wish to do sacrificial spinning should have permission to do so. Two more cases of fasting have occurred for prohibition to spin. Both the men are connected with the Ashram. They have observed the rule of spinning for some years. I would therefore ask you, if you can, to issue provisional instructions in such cases.

Yours,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 19989

[1] *Vide* p. 108, footnote 1.

150. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 22, 1931

CHI. SHARDA,

Since you like to stay there rather than at your home, do stay there and get rid of your ailment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9899. Courtesy: Shardabehn Chokhawala

151. LETTER TO NIRMALA DESAI

January 22, 1931

CHI. NIRMALA,

The correct word is *anasakti* and not *anashakti*. *Shakti* means strength. *Asakti* means desire, ignorant attachment. *Anasakti* means . . .[1] absence of such attachment. . . .[2] Do you understand the *Anasaktiyoga ?*

You should keep a diary and write your thoughts in it. If we do so, we are able to keep a watch over our minds. That makes us good. Today . . .[3] after many years . . .[4] can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9458

152. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

January 22, 1931

BHAI KUNVARJI,

It seems doctors have let you off quite soon. Before you get this letter, you will probably be on your feet. But see that you are not overhasty and, in consequence, become bed-ridden again. My blessings to Shivlal.

[1], [2], [3] & [4] The original appears to have been damaged at these places.

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Tell Abbas Saheb that the hospital seems to have done him much good, and that, having come out of it a young man again, he is bound to do something striking. I keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2692

153. LETTER TO JAMNA N. GANDHI

January 22, 1931

CHI. JAMNA,

I advise you to put yourself under the treatment of the Punjabi vaid who had treated Chandrashankar. Chandrashankar says that he practises in a spirit of service. You and Kusum ought to get strong.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 843. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

154. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 22, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your beautiful long letter. Do I have to send back an equally long reply? My travels are from one end to the other of the compound. There is no guard or anybody else here to quarrel with. The sky is the ceiling of my train. If I were to attempt a description of its innumerable stars, I would fail. And the stars I see, you too see them. So I have nothing to write about. I too understand that you will remain outside prison for only a few days. For at present jail is our real home.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 78-9

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155. LETTER TO KRISHNAMAIYA GIRI[1]

January 22, 1931

CHI. KRISHNAMAIYADEVI,

What has happened to you? How did you fall from the terrace? Give me full details. Get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6232

156. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

January 23, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

Be patient with people. The lethargic will become industrious by observing your scrupulous diligence. We become forgetful by thinking about too many things. Therefore we must concentrate only on the task on hand and nothing else. The memory is thus sharpened.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You are now entering the seventeenth year. Keep growing in character as well as in age.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5278

157. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 23, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. You should lovingly bear Father's anger. If Shanta herself cannot show firmness, I don't think it will be possible to protect her. The self is its own friend or enemy. About that matter of child-marriage, you may try to do what you can and should then stop worrying about it. We cannot fight

[1] Widow of Dal Bahadur Giri

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every wrong. Solving the problems of family and social life is not unconnected with the struggle for swaraj. A reform effected in any field takes us a step nearer to swaraj.

As regards the oppression in the Badva State, you may make due representation to the Kathiawar Political Agent and try to rouse public opinion against it, and then leave the matter. You may carry on such public agitation about it as you can. The remedy for every evil is self-purification. If there is but one self in all, you should have faith that self-purification contributes to the welfare of the entire world. And through it we, too, immediately know our duty in particular circumstances. Self-purification is *tapas*. Think over what Tulsidasji says in "Bal Kand" in praise of *tapas* and its power.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5277

158. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

5 a.m., January 24, 1931

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I heard about your request for permission to leave the Ashram. If you have made the request so that you may cultivate greater purity outside, what you have done is all right. But if you have asked for permission to leave the Ashram in despair, thinking that, since you have committed an error once, you are certain to commit more errors in future, then your action is wrong. No one in the world is totally free from shortcomings. We have come together in the Ashram not because we are perfect, but in order that we may know our shortcomings and overcome them. We should not feel unhappy if on some occasion we commit an error. We should feel unhappy only if in committing it we had willingly yielded to a weakness in us or had not been vigilant enough, if we had not struggled, or not sincerely enough, to overcome it. You should never lose heart.

Think over this letter and do what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3752

159. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 21/25, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

It is again Wednesday morning after prayer. If I am fortunate like last week, I may get the post about 8 a.m. today. But it gives me pleasure to copy out the verses (this time they will be two) for you before I commence the weekly batch of letters. Here then are 6th and 7th verses[1] with the notes made at the time:

6. "O God with a curved mouth and big body, refulgent like ten million suns, keep me ever free from harm whilst doing beneficent acts."

NOTE. This is addressed to God represented by the mystic letter ॐ pronounced 'Om'; mark its curved mouth and big body. Its mystic splendour has been sung by the Upanishads.

7. "Guru (teacher) is Brahma, he is Vishnu, he is Mahadev, he is the great Brahman itself. I bow to that guru."

NOTE. This refers of course to the spiritual teacher. This is not a mechanical or artificial relationship. The teacher is not all this in reality, but he is all that to the disciple who finds his full satisfaction in him and imputes perfection to him who gave him a living faith in a living God. Such a guru is a rarity at least nowadays. The best thing therefore is to think of God Himself as one's Guru or await the Light in faith.

No further comment beyond the notes seems necessary.

The decision as to further translation is made. For my own satisfaction, I must embark upon the translation. Any short cut will be longer in the end. There will be no stopping after making the commencement. I seem, therefore, to be dreading the commencement whilst the present pressure continues. The dread is more mental than real. But mind supersedes reality.

I see you are already in Sind. I hope the Sind cold has not worried you. It can be as cold as the Punjab in Sind. You must have met Jamshed Mehta—a noble type of man. He is by himself an institution. And I expect to hear from you about Kikibehn, Gangabehn and Mrs. Malkani and Mrs. Jeramdas, and of course Anand and Vidya.

[1] Of *Ashram Bhajanavali*, Vol. XLIV, p. 388.

January 25, 1931

I have your letter from Sind. The rendering of the 2nd chapter is excellent. There are two corrections I would suggest. Instead of 'notion', I should have 'weakness' at page 1 and at page 7 instead of 'followers of Vedas' I should have 'the Vedic literalists'. The second correction is vital, not so the first. The followers of the *Gita* are also followers of the Vedas. But these follow the spirit. The literalists, as the very name implies, follow the letter. I do not know whether I was to return the notes you have sent. I shall not re-read your letter, but am preserving the notes till I hear further from you. They are no longer required for immediate publication, though this one is good enough any day for publication subject to the vital correction.

What you say about rebirth is sound. It is nature's kindness that we do not remember past births. Where is the good, either, of knowing in detail the numberless births we have gone through? Life would be a burden if we carried such a tremendous load of memories. A wise man deliberately forgets many things even as a lawyer forgets the cases and their details as soon as they are disposed of. Yes, 'Death is but a sleep and a forgetting.'

My health is quite good. Energy sometimes astonishes me. I fancy that I could not negotiate two hours' continuous standing at the *takli* whilst I was at the Ashram. I was weighed on Thursday and I was 98 lb., a gain of $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in one week. It is an achievement. I am, have been for the past five days on vegetables, brown bread, almonds (paste), dates and sour limes. Dates I take principally in the morning. Brown bread is well toasted. I have not felt the need of milk or curds; if I did, I should take either. You will thus see that there is no cause whatsoever for anxiety. It may be that I may need a dose of milk or curds periodically. If I do, I shall take it as I may take medicine.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5430. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9664

160. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

January 25, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

What has happened is for the best. It is only thus that we shall be really tested. Even if somebody assaults us, we should wish well of him and serve him. I am perfectly all right. I have hardly taken two pounds of milk and curds after I had resumed them. For the last four days, I have not taken them at all. I eat some toast of brown bread, vegetables and almonds crushed into paste. For breakfast I eat dates and almonds, soaked in water.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9319

161. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

January 25, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

What may I write to you from here? May God bless you and give you the courage of a lioness. Take care of your health. Give up all idle thoughts and live happily.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9568

162. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

January 25, 1931

CHI. BALBHADRA,

Your letter was very good. If you can get ink and a pen, write in ink. If you otherwise keep good health, you need not weigh yourself. How many children attend?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9216

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163. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Sunday Night, January 25, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got the wire you sent from Mugalsarai and it has relieved me. You should now wind up your affairs there as soon as possible. Let there be no weight on your mind. After reading about Harasbabu's illness in your letter received yesterday, I had given up all hope and had thought that you would not be able to come in the immediate future now. But God wills your welfare. I shall know by and by how it became possible for you to leave. After reading your letter yesterday, I sent a wire to Jayaprakash to inquire about Harasbabu's health. I expect a reply tomorrow (Monday). Since it has become possible for you to leave, Jayaprakash, too, must have gone to Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3405

164. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 25, 1931

RAIHANA THE CRAZY,

What a strange girl you are! You fall ill, return home, go out again to work and again fall ill. What wonderful enthusiasm for the cause![1]

Is that enough for an Urdu lesson? Why do you say Father may have to be operated upon again? How much longer will he be in hospital? He seems to have fallen in love with it. I did not know that you had to undertake a three-day fast. What is the cause of your illness? Did you get the co-operation of women in Patan? How many had joined in the fast? Have you become stronger after the operation?

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9627

[1] These sentences are in Urdu.

165. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

January 25, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letter which you finished in Vaso. It is full of information. What shall I write in reply? Strange and yet charming are His ways —thus has He been described.

In this running about from place to place, see that you do not neglect your health. The secret of preserving good health is in our own hands:

1. We should not worry.
2. Even in the midst of ceaseless running about, one should inwardly cherish the feeling of rest.
3. We should drop a meal when we get food which may not agree with our system, rather than load the stomach with such food.
4. We should lie down for rest and snatch a nap at any time and at any place.

All these are beads which would form a good rosary, with the string of Ramanama to join them; without it, they would remain loose and not hold together.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5499

166. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

January 25, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Conditions are the same in every home. Since all of us try, consciously or unconsciously, to seem better than others, it is necessary for us to be vigilant. You of course are. I have started eating cereals because I had always wanted to give up milk. If I could have lived, like the other prisoners here, on *jowar* and *bajra*, that would have made me happy, and served other purposes too. But *jowar-bajra* did not agree with me. Now I eat only wheat. Nobody else should copy me. As for you, the diet which you have adopted is the right one. If I succeed in my

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experiment, I shall advise others. Till then, milk and fruits remain the best diet. I keep well. At present, I eat dates once, bread and boiled vegetables twice, and twice or thrice almonds crushed into paste.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6813

167. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 25, 1931

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter only now. Do not allow your good health to be impaired. I have not so far received the *Conversations*[1] by Aurobindo. Even the copy sent by you has not reached me yet. Where is Krishnan Nair? We are both well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2386

168. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 25, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

What you heard in Palanpur is true. A Muslim weaver from a village named Kanodar, near Palanpur, had come to the Ashram to teach weaving. He was sent by the late Nawab Saheb. A good carder always cards in such a manner that his strokes fall rhythmically. Mirabehn cards in that manner. I also keep time in my strokes, but imperfectly. If we card in this way, we feel less tired and are able to card more cotton during the same period of time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6226

[1] The reference is to *Conversations* (Special Edition 500) by Mother. Copies of the book with the Mother's autograph were distributed in the Ashram.

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169. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

January 25, 1931

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. "This time, too, I cannot think of anything to write about" —this is how you begin practically every one of your letters. Should I laugh at this or weep over it? Answer the question for yourself.

What reason is there now for you to worry about my health? Every time there was a set-back, however slight, I informed people about it, took immediate measures and recovered. My strength has remained unchanged. Why, then, should you worry?

Shanta must have arrived there by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1818

170. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

January 25, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

If one wishes to write, one will certainly get the time to do so. If not every week, remember me once in a while. It seems you are being really tested. That is the experience of the whole world. You do not say anything about your own health. How is Benarsi employed there? There are many other relations and friends in that place, but it seems your household duties leave you no free time at all. Can you go out for a walk occasionally? Do you get time to read?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I read Benarsi's letter after I had written the letter above. It gives me news about your being ill—that you get fainting fits? How is that?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9056

CWMG - XIV

171. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

January 25, 1931

CHI. BENARSI,

I was eagerly waiting for a letter from you. I was sorry to learn that Rukmini gets fainting fits. If she wishes to go to the Ashram and if her circumstances permit her to do so, you may send her there. She may possibly improve in the Ashram. She had a fit only once or twice in all the years that she lived here. What you say about her is quite correct. She is of a brooding temperament. Medicine is not very likely to help. How are you employed at present? It seems outsiders fall ill in your home.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9055

172. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 25, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I see that Satisbabu is utilizing his time very well. How nice it would be if he improves his health too? Do send the Hindi translation of the primer. I wish I could read it in Bengali itself but it seems difficult to attain proficiency in Bengali to that extent.

Your desires, being pure, will gradually be transformed into tranquillity. There is no harm in a desire provided it is accompanied by detachment. For example we may desire an increase in the sale of khadi but no harm will come from so desiring if there is no dejection in case the sales do not increase.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1682

CWMG - XIX

173. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Night, January 20/26, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I handed over the post this morning and am writing again at night. I am doing this in order to write about something which I have been forgetting to mention in the letters for the past several weeks.

Ba had glasses. There were three pairs. Please inquire who has them now. Perhaps Premabehn may have them. If you find them send all the three pairs. I cannot explain from here which pair I require. The one which I have with me gives me a little trouble when I spin on the *takli*. It is intended to serve two purposes, and, therefore, I have to strain the eyes when spinning on the *takli*. Send them with any intending visitor or by parcel.

Thursday, January 22[1], *1931*

I got your packet yesterday evening at seven. I had done my best to see that you got my postcards regularly. But after all a prisoner is a prisoner. That you got them is *ganimat*. Do you know this word? It is a very good one. It is much in use in Urdu. It means "enough", "thank God".

Surendra's problem seems to have been solved for the present. His power of thinking has become weak. That has happened with many others who, instead of working, get caught in idle thinking. But Surendra's heart is pure and so I believe that he will ultimately come out safe from this. His faith in Nathji will also help to save him. Meet Khurshedbehn. If she requires anything, send it to her.

Inquire about Madhavji's diet and inform me about it. I think he should stick to milk and dates.

When you find a serial number omitted in my letters, you should certainly inform me. I leave it to Pyarelal to check the numbers and trust that he does so. Last time, however, I myself had checked the letters and put them into the envelope. I had corrected two errors. The numbers on Kaka's and Maganlal's letters were repeated. As I did the checking in a hurry, I may have overlooked some other error. I will be more careful in future.

[1] The source has "21".

Do what you think best about Keshu. Ask yourself what your duty is, rather than what I would wish, and take the reply to that question as my own wish and act accordingly. If I permit myself at this distance to have my own wish in the matter, I would be guilty on two counts. In the first place, having handed over the reins to you, I should have no wish of my own. Secondly, at this distance I would not have sufficient data to decide what would be desirable. Hence, from either point of view, it would be attachment or ignorance or blind desire on my part to have any inclination in such matters. Yes, I can come to certain tentative conclusions from this distance. These should be intended merely to guide you. You may act on them only if they find an echo in your heart.

This rule should be applied to the business of the land in Vijapur. I have written to the same effect to Chhaganlal too. If you deal firmly with Sarojinidevi, everything will be all right. I had to act in this manner once. I have already written to you what I felt in regard to Padma.

In a general way I approve of your reading my letters to all and the letters addressed by others to me. It will be good if you now tell everyone this: 'I read, with Bapu's consent and at my leisure, all letters received from and addressed to him, except those which Bapu himself or the individual concerned may ask me not to read. Everyone, therefore, may rest assured that, if he does not wish me to read letters by or to him, I will not read them. If anyone feels embarrassed to tell me this personally, he may write to me and that will suffice.' I see again and again that such secrecy does much harm. But we cannot get rid of the evil through compulsion. Hence we have no choice but to endure it.

Mathuradas's affair is a painful one. You must have read the letter which I wrote to him last week. If his having got himself released is the result of greater self-knowledge and self-examination, it is all right. I am doing something from here about Appa.[1]

I was happy that Lilavati had to suffer. That is, it is always better that, instead of some other woman, a woman of the Ashram should have to suffer. An inmate of the Ashram should have more endurance and the spirit of ahimsa in her.

Did Shankarbhai finally get a *takli?*

I have written to Hariyomal. He must have got the letter with the last mail.

[1] *Vide* letters to E. E. Doyle, pp. 105, 107-8 & 109.

Evening, January 22, 1931

I had raised here the issue of Appa and others. I am informed today that they will be permitted to spin. The general problem, too, will be solved. This news, that is, the information about my intervention, should not be published.

I told Kashinath in my last letter to him about my opinion regarding him to which you refer. You may now do what you think best.

Write to Swami and inform him that I have not received *The Prophets of New India.*

By the time you get this, Prabhavati will have been there for quite some days.

I suppose I wrote to you, didn't I, suggesting that you should try the treatment of one Punjabi vaid for Prabhavati.

What you say about Mathew is correct.

Night, January 25, 1931

As I have given the information about my health in the letter to Mirabehn, I do not repeat it here. There is no cause for alarm; on the contrary, I think my health is excellent. I don't require enemas at all. I had a wire from Prabhavati today saying that she had started. The wire was dispatched from Mugalsarai and was dated yesterday. Hence, by the time you get this letter, she will have settled down there. If necessary, get her examined by Dr. Haribhai. If you prefer Dr. Talwalkar, consult him. My own hope is that it will not now be necessary to consult any doctor and that she will recover by herself.

Afternoon, Monday [*January 26, 1931*]

We were informed this morning that Pyarelal and I are to be released. When, therefore, you get this letter, we shall have been released, but I don't know where I shall be. My present feeling is that I shall be leaving peace and quiet and going into the midst of turmoil.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 80 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I; also C.W. 8149. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

CWMG-XLV

174. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[*January 26, 1931*][1]

In common with thousands of his countrymen I owe much to one who by his poetic genius and singular purity of life has raised India in the estimation of the world. But I owe also more. Did he not harbour in Santiniketan the inmates of my Ashram who had preceded me from South Africa? The other ties and memories are too sacred to bear mention in a public tribute.

The Golden Book of Tagore, 1931

175. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

January 26, 1931

While waiting on the platform of the Chinchwad station to board the train for Bombay, Mr. Gandhi gave the following message to the Indian people:

I have come out of jail[2] with an absolutely open mind, unfettered by enmity, unbiased in argument and prepared to study the whole situation from every point of view and discuss the Premier's statement[3] with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and other delegates on their return. I make this statement in deference to the urgent wish expressed in a cable sent to me from London by some of the delegates.

When asked whether he had any statement to make regarding Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speech, he said he had studied it carefully, but was not yet prepared at that stage to make any comment whatsoever especially owing to the appeal of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Questioned as regards his movements in the near future, he said:

I have no plan and no policy mapped out. I am proceeding to Bombay to talk over things with some friends but I do not know just where I shall go from there or how long I shall stay in Bombay.

Q. What is your opinion regarding the immediate release of all political prisoners?

[1] *Vide*, p. 91.
[2] Gandhiji was detained in Yeravda Central Prison, Poona, from May 5, 1930.
[3] Of January 19, 1931; *vide* Appendix I.

A. I most sincerely believe that every political prisoner now in jail for being connected with my civil disobedience movement should be liberated immediately, and none of us as leaders should be happy as long as any of our brethren or sisters are in jail.

Q. What will you do if the Government do not see eye to eye with you in this matter?

A. I cannot say at this juncture as I have made no plans.

Asked if he was happy at being free once again, he replied:

I really do not know.

Mr. Gandhi expressed great appreciation of the treatment he received in jail, and when . . . asked . . . if he expected to go back again in the near future, Mr. Gandhi . . . replied:

Possibly, you never know.

The Hindu, 28-1-1931

176. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

January 27, 1931

BHAI TRIVEDI,

I was not happy that I had to come away without meeting you or seeing Manu, but I was not free to decide my own plans. I did receive your gift. I gave the vegetables to co-workers and I am taking with me the tomatoes, dates and almonds. I write this letter in the train. I am writing it for the sake of an English prisoner named Wheeler. He served me in many ways while I was in jail. He is an intelligent man and has great love for animals. I liked him. He has no teeth, though he is only middle-aged. I wish to help him to get a denture. I have obtained Major Martin's permission for this. If you know any person in Poona who makes good dentures, persuade him to do this act of service. Or you yourself may bear the expense and get a denture made for him. Perhaps Major Martin will not send him there. In that case, take the doctor in your car to Yeravda. Meet Quinn or the Major and do what is needed. Let me know afterwards what you did. Ask Manu to write to me.

I got the books which you gave to Pyarelal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1002

CWMG - XIV

177. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
January 27, 1931

I personally feel that the mere release of the Working Committee members makes a difficult situation infinitely more difficult and makes any action on the part of the members, if not altogether impossible, almost impossible.

The authorities evidently have not yet perceived that the movement has so much affected the mass mind that the leaders, however eminent they may be, will be utterly unable to dictate to the masses a particular course of action.

This, in my opinion, is a very healthy condition, because independent thinking is the very essence of the spirit of democracy. The thousands therefore who are in different prisons of India are better able to deliver the goods than all the released leaders combined.

In my opinion, therefore, if the release of leaders is to be effective, the release of all the satyagrahi prisoners is a necessary condition and this release will, in its turn, be ineffective if repression is not stopped altogether.

I would like to draw the distinction which is very vital between civil disobedience and the action of those thousands who are now in prison. Civil disobedience is deliberate disobedience of non-moral laws by way of protest not necessarily against the laws covered by disobedience but any general grievance. In the present case, however, the men and women have not in the vast majority of cases resorted to civil disobedience, but a wholly artificial condition has been produced by the Viceregal ordinances. The satyagrahis have not resisted any natural or moral laws, nor have they resisted the common law of the country, nor yet the statute law of the country; but they have been forced to resist autocratic ordinances which were designed to interfere with common law rights such as the right of persuading addicts to the drink or drug habit to give it up, of persuading the drink and drug dealers to give up that calling or the dealers in, or purchasers of, foreign cloth to give up the sale and purchase of such cloth.

It may be said that a breach of the salt law is undoubtedly civil disobedience. I hold, however, that even in connection with the salt law the people have merely exercised a natural right that

millions possess of manufacturing salt out of the waters in their neighbourhood. The only instance, therefore, of civil resistance that I can just now recall is in connection with the salt raids and possibly the forest laws. The raids have a history into which I do not wish to go at the present moment.

What I am anxious to clear is that, even if, after conference with the friends who are coming from the Round Table Conference, it is found that the Premier's statement affords sufficient ground for the Congress to tender co-operation, the right of picketing cannot be given up, nor the right of the starving millions to manufacture salt; and, if these elementary rights are recognized, most of the ordinances will naturally have to be withdrawn.

It is, therefore, highly necessary for the public, as also the Government, to understand the fundamental Congress position.

Manufacture of salt and boycott of foreign cloth and of liquor are not intended to register the resistance of the nation to the existing misrule, but they are intended to achieve these three things for all time. No amount of goodwill established between Great Britain and India, so far as I can see, will reconcile the public to the drink evil, the foreign cloth evil or the prohibition to manufacture salt. Speaking for myself, I am hankering for peace, if it can be had with honour; but, even if I stood alone, I could be no party to any peace which does not satisfactorily solve the three questions that I have mentioned.

I should, therefore, judge the Round Table Conference tree by its fruit. I have given the three tests that are in operation, but, as the public knows, there are eight more.[1] I want the substance of independence — no shadow — and, even as a doctor names the disease of his patient after a proper diagnosis so will I name the tree of the Round Table Conference after I have examined the fruit in the light of the eleven points which are conceived in terms of the man in the street.

Replying to a further question as regards his treatment in the Yeravda Jail, Mr. Gandhi said:

I was a pampered prisoner, in one sense. So far as physical comforts were concerned, the prison authorities left no stone unturned to supply them. I have, therefore, so far as I am concerned, nothing but good to say of the authorities regarding my food. Of course, I was strictly isolated from the fellow-satyagrahis and conditions were imposed which made it impossible for me to see those who were near and dear to me.

[1] For the eleven points, *vide* Vol. XLII, p. 434.

But the general treatment of the C class prisoners leaves much to be desired. The Superintendent of the Yeravda Prison, Major Martin, I think, is a good man. He is anxious to make the prisoners in his charge happy; but he is hidebound by rules and regulations which make it impossible for him to make the prisoners comfortable even so far as their daily meals are concerned.

To give one instance, there is a rigid rule to the effect that the ordinary prisoner can have only *jowar* or *bajra roti*, and of these he must have that grain which is the cheapest at the time.

Here there is no consideration whatsoever of the bodily wants of the prisoner.

To quote another instance, these prisoners cannot have even a grain of salt extra. They must be content with what is put in their dal or vegetable. I can multiply such instances. In a sentence, I can sum up my impression by saying that there is no human touch generally between the officials and the prisoners.

I have appreciated *The Times of India's* efforts to better the lot of the numerous C class prisoners. If there was any human touch, the very simple suggestion made by Mr. David would have been acted upon long ago. Up to the time of leaving the jail, I saw no such sign. I am convinced that C class prisoners have to undergo much avoidable suffering. The classification into A, B and C, I regard to be highly irritating and wholly unjustified. What is wanted is real relief for the vast majority of prisoners and that cannot come through classification but through humane considerations.

Answering a question as to what he meant by the statement that he was a "pampered prisoner", Mr. Gandhi explained that, while all his physical wants, by way of food, etc., were provided, he was mentally and spiritually tortured by being kept in splendid isolation and by way of compensating him for such isolation he was provided with all the food that he wanted.

Mr. Gandhi was reminded of the passage in the Viceroy's recent statement that there was little difference between the goal which the Government had before them and that of the Congress and that the difference was only with reference to the method of reaching that goal. Speaking on this point Mr. Gandhi said:

In the first instance, I am not at all satisfied that a common term has been used to mean the same thing. Secondly, the Congress has pursued nothing that the situation did not render absolutely necessary. In my opinion when the history of the last decade comes to be written the palm will be given to the women of India. They have brought swaraj nearer. They have added several inches to their own height and that of the nation.

Mr. Gandhi was next referred to the report from Yeravda to the effect that he had handed some mysterious document in a sealed envelope to the Superintendent of the jail before his departure. He denied having given any such document to the Superintendent. . . .[1]

In the course of further conversation, Mr. Gandhi said he was unable to say anything about his future plans at present. He was proceeding to Allahabad to see Pandit Motilal and his programme would depend upon Pandit's state of health. He had suspended his judgment on the Premier's speech in response to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Sastri's cable pending consultation with Mr. Sastri and his fellow-delegates.

The Times of India, 28-1-1931

178. A TELEGRAM

January 27, 1931

OWING TO THE PANDIT'S SERIOUS ILLNESS PROCEEDING ALLAHABAD. AWAIT FURTHER WIRE.

The Times of India, 28-1-1931

179. CABLE TO "DAILY HERALD", LONDON[2]

January 30, 1931

EXAMINING PREMIER'S STATEMENT IN TERMS CONGRESS DECLARATION AND ASPIRATION. STATEMENT ON FACE OF IT WOULD APPEAR WHOLLY INADEQUATE BUT IN COMMON WITH MAJORITY CONGRESSMEN HAVE ABSOLUTELY OPEN MIND AND HAVE SUSPENDED JUDGMENT IN VIEW URGENT REQUEST OF RIGHT HONOURABLE SASTRI DOCTOR SAPRU AND MR. JAYAKAR. PERSONALLY AM EAGERLY SEARCHING FOR AVENUES LEADING HONOURABLE PEACE THAT WOULD GIVE INDIA FREEDOM SHE DESIRES AND IS ENTITLED TO. BUT MERE RELEASE OF MEMBERS CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE AND THEIR WIVES WILL BE

[1] Here the interview was interrupted when Gandhiji was given a message to which he dictated a reply; *vide* the following item.

[2] In reply to a cable dated January 25 which read: "Following your release would welcome two hundred words statement your views Premier MacDonald Indian declaration. Cable. Company will accept message gratis."

CWMG - XLV

OF LITTLE HELP. EVEN FOR CREATING ATMOSPHERE SUITABLE FOR CALM DISCUSSION RELEASE OF ALL SATYAGRAHI PRISONERS WITHDRAWAL OF REPRESSIVE ORDINANCES AND RESTORATION CONFISCATED PROPERTY ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. ON TWENTYFIRST INSTANT WELLKNOWN LADIES OCCUPIED IN NO UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES BUT FORMING PROCESSION LEADING TO MEETING OF PROTEST AGAINST RECENT ILLTREATMENT OF FELLOW WORKER WERE INDECENTLY ABUSED AND MERCILESSLY BEATEN RESULTING IN INJURIES TO OVER HUNDRED AND FIFTY. ON INDEPENDENCE DAY THE TWENTYSIXTH INSTANT MEETINGS IN CALCUTTA WERE PROHIBITED CONTRARY EXPECTATION AND FORCIBLY DISPERSED. MAYOR CALCUTTA SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE BELABOURED THEN ARRESTED AND SENTENCED SIX MONTHS RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT. SAME DAY IN BIHAR FIVE MEN KILLED AND DOZEN WOUNDED IN DISPERSING SIMILAR MEETING. CONGRESS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING WOMEN'S ARE STILL BEING DECLARED UNLAWFUL. THIS CONTINUING REPRESSION ROBS SAID RELEASE OF ALL GRACE AND MAKES IT VALUELESS FOR PURPOSE INTENDED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 16904

180. TELEGRAM TO M. S. ANEY[1]

ALLAHABAD,
January 31, 1931

I TREASURE YOUR WIRE. I KNOW THAT YOU MEAN BERAR AND MUCH MORE. YOU KNOW MY REGARD FOR YOU. IT GIVES ME ADDITIONAL STRENGTH TO KNOW THAT I HAVE YOUR HEARTY CO-OPERATION IN ANYTHING. WILL YOU, WHEN YOU HAVE THE TIME, GIVE ME YOUR VIEW OF THE GENERAL SITUATION AND OF THE STATE OF THINGS LOCALLY?

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] In reply to his telegram which read: "Assure you that Berar will stand like one man to uphold any decision on future policy and programme you may arrive at as result of deliberations with leading Congressmen and other friends."

181. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

January 31, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

I have just heard about your illness. I read your letter to Jamnalalji. What should I write to you? Get all right quickly. I had hoped to be able to see you both. But this time that could not be.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9057

182. SPEECH TO CONGRESS LEADERS, ALLAHABAD

January 31, 1931

I would never give up my demand even if I stood alone and the whole of India were against me. Still, I seek your advice also in the matter. After receiving the telegram from Sapru and Sastri, I decided that we should not consider MacDonald's statement. Even so, I have explained on what terms we might consider the statement or enter into negotiations on the basis of it. They are truce terms. For myself I am bound by my declaration in Bombay that I continued to adhere to the condition which I had laid down in Yeravda. I have now added one more condition. Why should we not demand an inquiry into the incident the memory of which brought tears to the eyes of a person like Sardar Sardul Singh ? What we have suffered so far is nothing in comparison with what we shall be made to suffer in future. We are, therefore, justified in demanding that a tribunal should be set up for an independent inquiry into such incidents, that a report of the inquiry be published and the officers found guilty be removed. Though we do speak of forgetting and forgiving the misdeeds of others, it would be a sin to forget certain things. We may forgive Dyer and O'Dwyer for the Jallianwala massacre, but we cannot afford to forget it. We may also forgive the authors of the atrocities here, though some of the incidents here have been more cruel than the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. History offers no parallel to the

atrocities committed on women in the Kaira District. The papers could not even report what cruelty was inflicted on women—mere women—who were never guilty and could never be guilty of any violence. Under the present conditions, how could any such reports appear in the papers? An independent court should go into ail these incidents, and in future also there should always be an inquiry into incidents such as the arrest and beating up of advocates, of a person like Sunnab.

Mention was made of the prisoners. Those under a death sentence should not be hanged. My personal religion tells me not only that they should not be hanged but also that they should not even be kept in prison. However, that is my personal opinion, and we cannot make their release a condition. The death sentence on the Sholapur men was executed in spite of the doubt expressed by the judge and in spite of so many earnest appeals from the public. Shall we say that, if such death sentences continue to be executed, we shall not enter into negotiations with the Government? There is a risk in making any such condition. We can with justice demand only the release of those who had joined the present struggle. We should not, therefore, include in the truce terms the release of others. Hence I adhere to my statement. Yes, those who have not been regularly tried in a court should of course be released. We can decide even today to enter into talks with the British Government, but only on the condition that I have laid down. That condition holds good also for a truce. Who would describe the breaking of the salt law as civil disobedience? Breaking of a law would be civil disobedience only if we intended to obey it after peace was concluded.

We cannot give up even one of the demands put forward in the negotiations carried on from Yeravda. I do not believe that MacDonald's statement grants us anything. However, even a consideration of it can be undertaken only if the Government concedes our demands. As for myself, I felt even when I started on the Dandi march that I had done my part, and I left it to the Congress to act as it wished or to stop the movement. If you tell me that my work is over and that I should return to the Ashram, I would immediately do so. How shall I describe to you the shock that I feel on coming out of jail? You have played your part so well that I was lost in admiration and felt no need to make any suggestion. I have no shadow of doubt in my mind that I could lead the people better. They have taken up the fight. It is God who conducts it. I do not know who will lead it to success, but I do know that God will take us across.

You may say what you wish about your Province, and say it frankly. What do we have to hide from the Government? It gets all the information somehow, I do not know whether through radio messages or in some other way. But there can be no question of the people yielding. After all these sacrifices, are they likely to yield? I have no doubt that we can carry on this fight for any length of time. But the Government's capacity for brutality is so great that we must gird up our loins to face more of it. We have still to free the oppressed millions in the world, to free the entire world. It waits for a miracle from India. For my part, I should like you to go from here with the firm determination that you will give up your life, to do whatever is yet necessary for winning swaraj. I fear that yet more beastliness will be let loose on us—I say "fear" because we can never wish that man may become still more beastly; but if he does, how can we help it?

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

183. TO THE READER

In renewing your acquaintance after so many months, I feel within me a glow of pleasure that under the greatest difficulty the paper has continued publication.[1] I had told my co-workers that, in the event of suppression by the authorities, the paper were to continue publication even though it was a hand-written sheet multiplied to the extent of volunteers coming up to make copies. Where there is perfect co-ordination and willingness, copies can be thus multiplied without end and no printing press in the world can compete with such an effort. But I know that this is true in theory. In practice, one does not find that willingness. But nothing is impossible for ahimsa or active, unadulterated love. It surmounts all difficulties. My companions have chosen an effective though in my opinion a method less in keeping with the spirit of ahimsa and truth which know no secrecy. But I do not judge them. On the contrary, their organizing ability has commanded my admiration and respect. I do not yet know how over seven thousand copies are being issued with such regularity. I must content myself with thanking the invisible helpers and the numerous readers who have continued their association with

[1] The reference is to its cyclostyled publication during Gandhiji's incarceration.

Young India. In renewing contact with the readers through these sheets, let me redeclare my faith.

Over eight months' contemplation in solitude has, if possible, increased my faith in truth and ahimsa. At the risk of incurring ridicule, I repeat what I have said so often that voluntary universal adoption of khaddar with all its vast implications means *purna* swaraj and that civil disobedience becomes a necessary duty only because khaddar has not yet obtained the hold it should. But of all this hereafter.

Young India (Supplement), 5-2-1931

184. WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION[1]

ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

The Working Committee having, out of regard for the wishes of Srijuts Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar, suspended the publication of its resolution passed on January 21, 1931, an impression got abroad that the movement of civil disobedience has been suspended. It is, therefore, necessary to reiterate the decision of the Committee that the movement is to continue unabated until explicit instructions are issued to the contrary. This meeting reminds the public that picketing of foreign cloth and drink and drug shops, in itself is no part of the civil disobedience campaign, but that it is the exercise of ordinary right of a citizen, so long as it remains strictly peaceful and causes no obstruction to the public.

This meeting further reminds the sellers of foreign cloth, including foreign yarn, and Congress workers that the boycott of foreign cloth, being a vital necessity in the interest of the masses, is a permanent feature of national activity and will remain so till the nation has acquired the power to exclude foreign cloth and foreign yarn from India, whether by total prohibition or prohibitive tariff.

Whilst appreciating the response made by dealers in foreign cloth and foreign yarn to the appeal of the Congress to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth, this meeting reminds them that it is not open to any Congress organization to hold out hopes of their being able to dispose of their existing stock in India.

The History of the Indian National Congress, Vol. I, p. 430

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

185. LETTER TO VICEROY

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

H.E. THE VICEROY, DELHI

DEAR FRIEND,

You have made a public appeal[1] to me for co-operation in connection with the further work of the recently held Conference in London and ascribed to me a belief in the sincerity of British promises and declarations. I wish that I could endorse your ascription. I told you on the 23rd December 1929, that subject to honourable exceptions I had found to my great sorrow that British declarations and promises were insincere. Had I not found them so, the active voluntary co-operation that I had tendered to British officials in India and outside would never have been withdrawn.

But I assure you that I am simply waiting for a sign in order to enable me to respond to your appeal. I confess, however, that some of the signs are highly ominous. In Borsad, in the district of Kaira, on the 21st January, a cruel, uncalled for and unchivalrous lathi-charge was made upon wholly innocent women and girls who were forming a procession which was marching to a women's meeting that was to be held in order to protest against the brutal treatment of a girl[2] 17 years old by a police official. Neither the procession nor the meeting was prohibited. The injuries were severe in several cases. Some of those who were assaulted belong to the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati. One of them, an old widow[3], a member of the Managing Board of the Ashram, was drenched in blood. To give you some idea of the nature of the police barbarity, I give you a free translation of her letter[4] to me. The facts stated in that letter are capable of easy proof. The Collector himself was in Borsad on this date. At the time of writing this, I cannot recall anything in modern history to parallel this official inhumanity against wholly defenceless and innocent

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.
[2] Lilavati
[3] Gangabehn Vaidya
[4] *Vide* Appendix III.

women. I may complete the outline of this picture by stating that there were no men in this meeting or procession except a few volunteer guides.

On the 26th at Calcutta, as you may be aware, the meetings advertised to be held for the purpose of re-declaring the Independence Day Resolution were put under the ban and the procession marching to the principal meeting and headed by the Mayor of Calcutta, Syt. Subhas Chandra Bose, was dispersed by a cruel lathi-charge.

In Begusarai (Bihar) on the same date a party of men returning from a similar meeting was fired upon by the police resulting in six killed and several wounded. The police are reported to have fired even into a school. You have probably read the official defence of the police proceeding. My informants deny the main part of the official defence, and if their version is correct, the firing was wholly uncalled for.

On the top of these three events comes the news that Sjt. Bhashyam, a member of the Madras Bar Council, and Sjt. V. A. Sundaram, a well-known worker, were, whilst they were picketing foreign-cloth shops, with the concurrence of their owners, assaulted and treated in a manner unworthy of a civilized State. They were taken, after the assault, to an out of the way place and out of reach of medical or other assistance. Had it not been for the chance passing of a car, it is difficult to say what would have happened to these gentlemen.

I do not ask you to accept the versions given here, but I do ask you to feel with me that it is not possible for those like me who believe in them to tender co-operation with any confidence, much less enthusiasm. Whether, however, such co-operation, for which many other things are necessary, comes forth in the end or not, it is, I hope you will agree, highly necessary to have an unbiased judgment over happenings like those I have narrated. Such an enquiry is necessary because I assume that the Government of India do not want to countenance methods such as I have described. The four cases I have cited are but recent examples. I invite you, therefore, to appoint an impartial and representative committee of enquiry acceptable to the Congress to investigate the allegations of excesses against officials in different parts of India since the inauguration of the civil disobedience campaign. If such a committee is appointed I am sure that the Congress will lead evidence before it to show that in very many cases the conduct of officials has been contrary to the expectations raised in the preambles to your ordinances and in your repeated declarations.

Till I hear from you and know your wish in the matter[1] I am not sending this letter to the Press. I am in Allahabad till Tuesday. I expect to leave Allahabad on Tuesday evening for Bombay where I expect to be till the 6th instant.

I remain,
Your faithful friend,

Enclosure: Translation of a letter

Bombay Secret Abstracts 750(14)0 Pt-A, pp. 159-63

186. INTERVIEW TO REUTER

ALLAHABAD,
February 1, 1931

Interviewed by Reuter's special correspondent, Gandhiji said:

All speculation regarding split among the members of the Working Committee is pure myth. On the contrary the proceedings yesterday and today were perfectly unanimous, and the behaviour of the members cordial. All were of one mind that the movement cannot be withdrawn or suspended unless truce is declared. It should be obvious to everybody that a mass movement like the one now going on cannot be suddenly and without a reasonable hope of a final settlement stopped, nor can it be called off unless the hope of a settlement is shared by the vast mass of the people; and this can never happen so long as repression in its virulent form continues, as witness, the latest example in the shape of wanton assaults upon Srijuts Bhashyam and Sundaram. I have been daily receiving reports from men and women of unimpeachable character giving me details of repression not confined to any particular part of India. A friend has handed me a letter containing harrowing details of atrocities said to have been committed by the police in the district of Midnapore (Bengal).

[1] In his letter dated February 4, addressed to Gandhiji, G. Cunningham wrote: "His Excellency regrets that he is unable to accept the suggestion. He would equally decline to entertain any similar proposal to initiate any general enquiry into the responsibility for excesses committed by adherents to the civil disobedience movement . . . His Excellency therefore sees no profit in the general exploration of charges and counter-charges that would be made. Nor can he feel that it would assist the discharge of what he considers at the present time the most important task of affording opportunity to all, who are willing to do so, to join in the constructive work of bringing to fulfilment the purpose clearly stated by the Prime Minister."

CWMG-XLV

In my opinion nothing short of an absolutely impartial and thorough going enquiry into these charges can satisfy either the public mind or the requirements of justice. I do not see how it is possible to conduct negotiations for peace with repression fouling the atmosphere hour after hour.

The Hindu, 2-2-1931

187. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, ALLAHABAD

February 1, 1931

Speaking in Hindi while seated on the dais, Mahatma Gandhi said that it afforded him great pleasure in seeing an assembly of such a large crowd as had gathered at the meeting and he offered his thanks to God and congratulations to the people for the great deeds of bravery and sacrifices done by the people during the period of eight months. He said that whenever he thought of those brave deeds and sacrifices he was at once reminded of his sisters. The whole world was surprised, said Mahatma Gandhi, at the considerable sacrifices made by people in the national struggle, especially at the share taken by the women of India.

The women who were considered absolutely ignorant and always lived in *purdah* gave up their *purdah* forthwith at the nation's call, they sacrificed their children, offered for the struggle even their little girls and did not put any obstacles in the way of their husbands participating in the fight. And, he said, the women's sacrifices were not confined to that alone but they themselves discarded the *purdah* and went out to participate in the fight.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that any number of families would be found in the country, which would have given every one of its members for the national struggle. In a fight with guns, old men, women, boys and girls were exempted, but India's fight for freedom was such that everybody could participate in it.

Resuming the speech, which Mr. Shiva Prasad Gupta repeated[1], Mahatma Gandhi, while busy at his *takli*, said that the women of the country had been lifted high on account of their sacrifices, by three or four inches and consequently the height of the whole country was also raised by three or four inches which naturally provided an occasion for the Indians to feel proud.

Young children had also given proofs of their bravery, said Mahatma Gandhi. When he heard in the jail the name of *vanarasena* he could not think that that *sena* would include children aged six and eight also. And when he heard, Mahatma Gandhi added, an account of their brave deeds and sacrifices, it at once struck him that in this national struggle God was also with them. It

[1] As the loud-speakers failed

was a heavenly precept that victory was bound to come if they remained on the path of truth and non-violence, and in such a victory there would be the share of not one individual but of all people and all the communities. There could be no considerations of superiority and inferiority in the case of people participating in such a struggle and it was Mahatma Gandhi's conviction that if they really remained on the path of righteousness and peace the danger of communal quarrels with which they were faced frequently, would altogether disappear.

Mahatma Gandhi, therefore, appealed to the people that whether there be war against the Government or disputes among themselves, they should never leave the path of peace and righteousness, the result of which would be that they would never suffer defeat.

He realized that sufficient observance of the principle of non-violence had been made but at the same time he wished to warn the public that the least mistake on their part in that matter would ruin them as they had taken a pledge before God and the whole world that they would carry on the fight peacefully and with firm devotion to the motherland. So long as that pledge stood, if they deliberately made a departure from it they would be regarded, said Mahatma Gandhi, as cheats before God and the world.[1]

Resuming, Mahatma Gandhi said that he would reiterate what he had been saying all along, namely, that every man, woman, boy, and girl should start spinning at the charkha and use khaddar made of the yarn spun by him or her and throw away foreign clothes. They should also give up drinking and gambling and everything that was bad, for Indians wanted to govern the country themselves and if the government went into hands polluted with misdeeds, the country would be ruined.

As the noise continued on account of the inability of the audience to hear, in spite of Mr. Gupta's repeating the speech at the top of his voice, Mahatma Gandhi said that he did not want to take much of the time of the people on account of the noise, and with blessing to the people he concluded his speech abruptly to the utter disappointment of those who expected some pronouncement from Mahatma Gandhi with regard to the situation arising out of the declaration of the British policy, it being the first public speech delivered by him after his release from the Yeravda Jail.

The Leader, 4-2-1931

[1] At this stage the speech was interrupted by two C.I.D. inspectors forcing their way into the meeting. They were, however, asked by Jawaharlal Nehru to quit the place.

188. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF MIDNAPORE

ALLAHABAD,
February 2, 1931

I have made myself acquainted with your condition to the extent it was possible without a local visit. I tender my congratulations for your courage and patience with which you have borne your sufferings. Out of such sufferings will be born a new nation pulsating with life. Earthly possessions are no compensation for loss of liberty. It is a matter of joy that you have preferred deprivations of these to that of your liberty. I hope you will not neglect the duty of manufacturing free salt.

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

189. NOTE TO URMILA DEVI

ALLAHABAD,
Silence Day, February 2, 1931

Hunger-strike can be resorted to in matters of self-respect. It is a weapon to be most sparingly used.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

190. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 2, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letters. Do you get fewer fainting fits there than you used to do in Bihar? Do you eat well? Have you recovered strength? What do you do about baths, etc.? Give me all these details.

Jayaprakash saw me here. He has joined Ghanshyamdas. Rajendrababu is here. Mrityunjaya, too, has come here today. I shall reach Bombay on the 4th or the 5th. Write to me there. If you recover strength enough to be able to travel, we shall meet

earlier. Let there be no weight on your mind at all. Where have you been accommodated? I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3403

191. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

February 2, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

How fortunate you are. You got beaten and were also awarded a jail sentence. All of you have upheld the honour of the Ashram and brought glory to your sex. All people do not yet see the full significance of this incident[1]. Its real value will be appreciated after some time. I hope you did not even feel angry with the person who beat you. All of them are like our brothers. If we do not feel angry, they are bound to change some day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9320

192. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

February 2, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got all your letters. But I have had no rest after leaving the rest-house. Today is my silence day and so I have got some time, though the stream of visitors continues.

I simply cannot forget the Borsad incident. The people have not yet realized its significance. I am taking up the matter.

The Ashram women have immortalized themselves and the Ashram. Our prayers and the vows of self-discipline have borne fruit. Other women also have shown such courage. There were some in this procession too. But I have formed the impression that the special merit of the sacrifice made by the Ashram women lies in the religious spirit which inspired it.

[1] At Borsad; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", pp. 136-8.

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My future movements are uncertain. Probably I shall reach Bombay on the 4th. Panditji's ship is in mid-ocean, so that even for his sake I may have to stay on here. I keep good health. About other developments, you will read in the papers. I am trying for the release of the other prisoners, but only within limits proper for us. Those who are released by the Government on the expiry of their sentences should try to return to the jails immediately. Write to me wherever I am. For the ensuing official year of the Congress, Sardar has been elected President. This increases the responsibility of Gujarat. It may have been necessary for women from outside Kaira District to go there. Who took the lead in showing this discourtesy?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5500

193. LETTER TO SHAKARIBEHN

February 2, 1931

CHI. SHAKARIBEHN,

All of you behaved wonderfully well. Send me an accurate description of Mir.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24388

194. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

February 2, 1931

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. I see that it is still very necessary to be careful. You should not exert yourself too much. Naturally, therefore, your food also should be light. Let us see—I think we shall now be able to meet somewhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7412. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

CWMG XLIV

195. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 2, 1931

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Make full use of the opportunities there. But do not be impatient while doing that. Follow Khurshedbehn's advice. If the food does not agree with you, tell them so. Write to me whenever permitted to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9319

196. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

February 2, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

This is just to drop a line to you. I have before me only one sheet of your letter. The rest seem to have got mixed up with other papers. I shall get them by and by.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10253

197. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

February 2, 1931

CHI. MAITRI,

You have acted as befits the brave daughter of a brave father and brought honour to the Ashram. Do not nurse the slightest ill will against the person who beat you. I hope you don't feel any pain now. Write to me. Most probably I shall soon arrive there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6227

CWMG - XLV

198. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

February 2, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

How shall I compliment you? You have shown that you are what I had always thought you were. How I would have smiled with pleasure to see your sari made beautiful with stains of blood. I got excited when I knew about this atrocity, but was not pained in the least. On the contrary, I felt happy.

I would have certainly felt unhappy if none of you were among the victims of that assault. I know that there is ignorant attachment even in feeling thus, but I cannot conceal my attachment to the Ashram even if I tried to do so. The shortcomings of the inmates of the Ashram are intolerable to me. Likewise, I feel happier when I see their virtues than when I see the virtues of others. Is it a great thing that you did not feel angry with those who hurt you? Would you be angry with Kaku if he beat you? These others who beat you were also your sons, who had become blind through ignorance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8771. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

199. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

February 2, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

The kindness which Gangabehn and others have tasted, all of you will taste by and by. You should be patient and keep yourselves ready for it. It is not enough that we should suffer beating. When beaten, we should not get angry with the person who beat us but, on the contrary, should pray for his welfare. I think we shall now be able to meet somewhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6814

200. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

February 2, 1931

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Everything is possible with patience and effort.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 178

201. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 2, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have no idea when I shall reach Calcutta. If at all I go there, I cannot ignore Khadi Pratishthan. But it may not be possible to stay there all the time. Tell me about Arun's health. I shall leave for Bombay tomorrow or the day after.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1683

202. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

February 2, 1931

CHI. KALAVATI,

You have shown great courage. Give me a full account.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5279

[1] The addressee had taken part in the women's procession at Borsad and was one of those who received injuries when the police lathi-charged the processionists.

CWMG - XLV

203. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

February 2, 1931

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

You have taken a good vow. May God give you the strength to keep it. You have given me no news about Shankarbhai. On hearing about his fast in connection with his demand for a *takli*, I had taken steps while in jail and had heard that orders had been issued that a *takli* should be supplied to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4058

204. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 2, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am writing this at about 10 p.m. on silence day. I started observing silence at 11.30 p.m. yesterday and so a little more time must pass before I can give it up. After my release it is only today that I may say I had some time for rest, though of course even today I had to listen to many people and hear their stories. All the same, I have certainly been able to write, for the first time after my release, the letters enclosed with this and some others. See if you can pass on their letters to Surendra[1], Gangabehn[2] and Vasumati[3], or inform them of their substance. How is Durgabehn's health? I have not asked Mahadev about it. I don't know where he is at present. What is the position about Madhavji's diet? Tell him that he cannot insist on being supplied milk and dates and that he should be satisfied if they agree to provide them at his own cost. Though I have been released, I feel as if I had not been released. If others are not released and if the situation does not improve, I shall have no choice but to court imprisonment. My programme in general is as follows:

[1], [2] & [3] They were in jail.

I intend to start from here tomorrow evening so as to reach Bombay on Wednesday evening. I shall be there up to Friday at any rate. If, however, Panditji's health deteriorates, I may not be able to leave even tomorrow. Or it may also happen that, after meeting Sastriji and others, I may have to leave on Friday to return here. Address the post accordingly. That is, address it to me at Bombay till I inform you otherwise. I am yearning to visit Kaira district. I intend to go there if I am free on Friday.

God alone knows when and where we shall meet. Unless some reason connected with the struggle brings me to the Ashram, I wish to visit neither the Ashram nor Ahmedabad. For permanent headquarters, I should naturally choose Karadi, but I see no possibility at present of my wish being fulfilled. I feel unhappy at the thought that I shall no longer be able to send discourses for *Gitabodh*. If you come to know more about Kaira, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

205. CABLE TO "DAILY NEWS", LONDON

February 3, 1931

CABLE JUST RECEIVED. UNABLE PRONOUNCE FINAL OPINION ON CONFERENCE BUT WHAT WORRIES ME IS THE LOOK OF THINGS HERE. IF CONFERENCE HAS REALLY OFFERED FREEDOM TO INDIA THE REACTION SHOULD HAVE BEEN FELT HERE. ON CONTRARY WHAT I FIND IS BLACK REPRESSION CONTINUES UNABATED. UNPROVOKED ASSAULTS ON INNOCENT CITIZENS STILL CONTINUE. RESPECTABLE PEOPLE BEING SUMMARILY AND WITHOUT APPARENT REASON DEPRIVED OF THEIR IMMOVABLE AND MOVABLE PROPERTY BY MERE EXECUTIVE ACTION. PROCESSION OF WOMEN FORCIBLY DISPERSE[D] AND THEY WERE SEIZED BY THEIR HAIR AND KICKED WITH BOOTS. CONTINUANCE SUCH REPRESSION WOULD MAKE CONGRESS COOPERATION IMPOSSIBLE EVEN IF OTHER DIFFICULTIES WERE GOT OVER.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 16920-1

206. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 3, 1931

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter. Now in a few days we shall meet somewhere.[1]

I got your letter. If the climate of Kadi suits you and if the burden of work does not impose an excessive strain on you, the present arrangement will certainly do you good.

I had met Father and Mother in Bombay. The operation has given them good rest. Panditji's condition is still critical. The doctors are trying hard. But after all, the thread of our life is in God's hands. He may draw it back whenever He wills.

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9628

207. LETTER TO UMA BAJAJ

February 3, 1931

CHI. OM,

You knew enough Gujarati, have you forgotten it all? For you, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Marwari, all should be the same. Write your next letter in Gujarati or Marathi and tell me how much you spin and card and what is your speed with the *takli*. Do you take a large helping of food and waste some or do you take only as much as the poor should and clean your plate? Do you read the *Gita*?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 335

[1] These two sentences are in Urdu.

CWMG - XIV

208. SPEECH TO BOATMEN'S ASSOCIATION, ALLAHABAD

February 3, 1931

Gandhiji received an address today from the representatives of the Allahabad Boatmen's Association in the "Swaraj Bhawan".

Speaking to the boatmen's representative and some Congressmen, Gandhiji referred to the no-rent campaign, and advised the people not to use force against cultivators who were not disposed to stop payment of their rents. He also referred to Sunday's incident of the villagers travelling without tickets,[1] and deprecated their action as the Congress had not launched a campaign of travelling without tickets. He added that even when they attained swaraj, some fare would have to be charged for railway service.

A purse containing Rs. 101 was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the boatmen.

The Hindu, 4-2-1931

209. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
February 5, 1931

CHI. MANUDI,

I can now send the pictures which I collected for you. Preserve them all carefully and ask someone who can understand their meaning to explain it to you. We shall now meet some time. Write to me. Where is Ramibehn? Ask Balibehn and Kamubehn to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1509. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

[1] To attend the public meeting at Allahabad; Jawaharlal Nehru paid the money to the Railway authorities in order to get all those who were arrested released.

CWMG - XIV

210. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

February 5, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. I have come to Lucknow on account of Panditji's illness and I shall stay here for the time being. It will do no harm if Satisbabu fasts once every month. Those who join the Ashram on condition that they will observe its rules must observe them. But old inmates should not be turned out if they do not follow new rules. But the rules formulated for the sake of good management must be followed at all cost. The point is that rules should be such that no one can say that they are something new, that is, they should be in keeping with local conditions.

Write to me at Lucknow, care of Kalakankar House.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1684

211. INTERVIEW TO "THE PIONEER"

ALLAHABAD,
February 5, 1931

I am a man of peace, but circumstances have made my life one of struggle. I shall, however, leave no stone unturned to attain peace. It is no joy to me to submit thousands who have a childlike faith in me to suffering.

In answer to a question whether he found the Prime Minister's declaration[1] satisfactory, he said that he had resolutely refrained from coming to definite conclusions on the subject.

Mr. Sastri, Mr. Jayakar, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru have cabled to me to suspend judgment and I have the highest esteem for these patriots who love their country as intensely as I claim to do. They may be able to explain to me satisfactorily that

[1] *Vide* Appendix I.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's declaration conveys something beyond what I have been able to make out on a cursory reading, and, if in the light of my eleven points, I see that a settlement is possible, I shall readily advise the calling off of the civil disobedience movement.

Mr. Gandhi proceeded to discuss the allegations made against the police and said he had a large file on the subject containing evidence from men upon whose word he relied. When reminded that his version was one-sided, he added:

I do not ask you to accept my allegations against the police. Let us have an impartial investigation and I am quite prepared to lead evidence and abide by the verdict of the tribunal.

On its being pointed out that the police had generally conducted themselves with the utmost forbearance under the most difficult conditions, he replied:

I do not complain about ordinary repression. If I violate the law, I expect to be arrested. The Government may want to maintain order, but there must be some relation between offence and punishment. Departure from this rule has been much more general than you suppose.

Responding to a question whether it was not inevitable that there should, in extraordinary times, be a certain amount of severity as it must be impossible exactly to measure action, Mr. Gandhi interjected:

Why should it be inevitable? It was not so in South Africa and the reason for that was that they had a national Government there.

Explaining himself further, Mr. Gandhi made a specific grievance of confiscations said to have taken place in Gujarat and Bengal.

Many have lost their homes. The sufferers may have been guilty of non-payment of taxes or not, but if property worth, say, Rs. 50 lakhs has been appropriated for dues, say, of about a lakh, it must be restored. The Government have nothing to gain by refusing to restore the property and my suggestion is not without precedent.

He insisted that the matter should not be left to Local Governments, but should go before an entirely impartial tribunal.

The presentation of an inventory does not, however, establish a claim, and I quite see that confiscations must be satisfactorily proved by the complainants.

Mr. Gandhi referred also to the release of political prisoners. On attention being drawn to the promise of the Government to release prisoners on the termination of the civil disobedience movement, he remarked:

I know that they will be released. But I have difficulties, though not insuperable, facing me. Some of our people are already perturbed at my conciliatory statements. But when I am convinced that I should call off the movement, I hope also to convince them. When I called off the last non-co-operation movement at Bardoli[1], I had only to act on my own and not wait for any indication from the Government. The circumstances today are different.

Dealing with the proposed Constitution, Mr. Gandhi said that with 80 per cent of the budget placed beyond the purview of the legislature and only 20 per cent left which would be inadequate for "nation-building" purposes, there was not much satisfaction to be gained.

If our co-operation is wanted, it will not do to tell us simply to adhere to a consideration of the unsettled questions. We must have the freedom to reopen the discussions on the so-called safeguards.

Mr. Gandhi also said that, in regard to the Indian States, there seemed to be no protection for the people of the States.

The Congress would be untrue to itself if it did not seek it, and I cannot bring myself to believe that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald would deny in his dealings in the matter all the teachings of a lifetime.

Mr. Gandhi, however, felt hopeful that the States and communal questions could be adjusted. But he was clearly of opinion that the Congress participation depended on two things: first, satisfactory adjustment of the preliminaries of suspension of the civil disobedience movement; and secondly, satisfaction regarding the Conference. He concluded:

I am doing everything to terminate civil disobedience which will be done if I am sure that full restoration will be made, prisoners are released, an impartial inquiry is held into the alleged police excesses led to, in many cases, by action taken for offences created by the proclamation of new regulations, and generally certain other necessary adjustments are made.

The Pioneer, 6-2-1931

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII.

212. *INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS*

LUCKNOW,
February 5, 1931

Asked by the Free Press representative at Lucknow about some message for the country, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I have no message to give. I can only emphasize what I have been saying, that continuous repression about which evidences are daily accumulating makes it well nigh impossible to contemplate peace. From all over the country I am getting reports that the authorities are ruthless and sometimes even devoid of all decency. And that, on the top of this, they do not hesitate to deny the truth of the allegations made on behalf of the suffering public.

The most painful part of the whole affair is that the Political Departments at the top defend the conduct of the police and wilfully—that is the only expression I can use — shut their eyes to everything said on behalf of the public, no matter how well supported the allegations might be. I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that the allegations about the unchivalrous and cruel conduct of the police in respect of women's processions in Borsad are true, and yet the Director of Public Information has made what reads like an oracular statement incapable of being contradicted. I am sure that if a really impartial enquiry is made, it would be found that the Director of Public Information had become a tool in the hands of unscrupulous officials who have not hesitated to add falsehood to their barbarity.

I know that I am using strong language, but anything less strong will be untruthful on my part. I would like to be proved wrong in having believed the reports I have received, in which case I should tender my apology to the officials concerned.

When asked by another Press representative about his future programme, he said that it depended upon the health of Pandit Motilal Nehru.

The Hindustan Times, 7-2-1931

213. MESSAGE TO "DARIDRANARAYANA"

LUCKNOW,
February 6, 1931

As *Daridranarayana* is the name given, I trust the performance too will match the name. In the present times if a raja brings out a paper for his subjects he has to be doubly careful. If he considers himself the master, the subjects are brought to ruin, but by regarding himself as their servant he uplifts both himself and the subjects.[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8695; also C.W. 2891. Courtesy: Kumar Suresh Singh

214. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
February 6, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got your letters. I could not reply to them owing to Pandit Motilalji's illness. He passed away today and I am now disposing of the correspondence which has accumulated. It is not in the least necessary to translate my comments into English and give them in the booklet. A translation does not read well. It may also be improper to publish comments which I made from jail.[2] If your booklet is translated into Gujarati and if I can write anything on that occasion, I may say there whatever I wish to. My criticism was for your benefit only.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I had read the figures of imports of foreign cloth, etc. They were excellent.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10

[1] This appeared in the first issue of the weekly published on October 26, 1931, from Kalakankar.

[2] *Vide* pp. 47 & 108-9.

215. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

February 6, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

You know well enough what time I can spare when out of jail. I shall not, therefore, be able to write as often is I used to do from jail. Panditji passed away today. And so it has become uncertain where I shall be going from here and where I shall stay. If you wish to write, you may do so at Allahabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1819

216. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

February 6, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I got your letter. You should remain firm. You should tell the people very clearly that we are not fighting at present for redress of individual hardships. This matter must be fully clarified. We shall then know the weak from the strong. And that is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3111

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217. SPEECH AT MOTILAL NEHRU'S FUNERAL, ALLAHABAD

February 6, 1931

Though a great leader of India has passed away today, I see on your faces not grief but elation. That should be so. When leaders leave us, it does not behove us to shed tears. For, what is happening here is not consigning to the flames the lifeless flesh of a devotee, but our witnessing great sacrifice that the nation has made. This is not the first such occasion in my life. At the time of the Lokamanya's death also we had such a vast crowd. I see before me a scene similar to the one I had seen then. The people had been praying and singing songs. They were filled with a certain kind of exaltation. At first I could not realize that, but as soon as I recovered from the grief which had momentarily clouded my reason, I understood how the people had felt that the Lokamanya's death was the crowning glory of his life-long sacrifices. I witnessed similar scenes at the time of Deshbandhu's death and of Lalaji's, Hakimji's, Mahomed Ali's. What a great effect on the world and on Londoners had Mahomed Ali's death made! The reason was that he had gone to England to serve the country's cause and that he sacrificed his life in it. I am happy that today also the people have displayed the same feeling. If you have fully understood the significance of this, it is well that you have thus observed the occasion. Otherwise, the world would call us fools and say that a crowd of unfeeling people had collected at a fair. What we see before us is a national sacrifice. On this occasion, I ask of you that you disperse only after taking some definite vow to do whatever little you can for the country. You will indeed deserve praise if you do this.

Now, on this occasion, I will narrate to you an interesting story. Panditji was a huge lion and he had fought big battles in his life. And similarly he fought the god of death. You may say that he was defeated, but I do not believe that it is true. During this last illness of his, I visited him daily and occasionally he sent for me too. He did that yesterday. I joked with him. I have no words to praise the doctors. They had done their very best, and would have given their lives if that would have saved his life. It is because they had such faith that they

had taken him to Lucknow for treatment. Their faith was the result not of Panditji's physical condition, but of his courage. I told Panditji that, if he recovered, I would believe that swaraj was won. He smiled and said that it had been won already. Though he could not speak distinctly, he had enough peace of mind to be able to say this. Why did he believe that swaraj had already been won? Could anyone say that swaraj was not won when sixty thousand people had gone to jail, when people had faced numerous lathi-charges and made so many sacrifices? I did not visit him last night, but I tell you what Panditji's wife told me. During his life he had not followed the practice of praying with Ramanama, and used to make fun of religion, because he abhorred hypocrisy and false show and was angered by men practising irreligion in the name of religion. But I know his heart and knew that he believed in God. Last night he had been uttering Rama's name aloud. Panditji's tongue had never uttered a word of grief or despair—only a weak man like me would do that. But he never uttered Rama's name either. However, yesterday he remembered that name. He also used to say that he had forgotten *gayatri*—he had given up the practice of reciting it because of the irreligion he saw around him. But, as he told his wife, he had recollected the *gayatri* verse that day. This means that Panditji departed a pure man. May his pure self-sacrifice result in making us purer too. Before leaving here, resolve what you will do for the cause for which this great man sacrificed his son, daughter and son-in-law.

The pledge which has stirred you is to win swaraj with the twin means of non-violence and truth. Keeping these two means in your mind, take whatever vow you wish to before you leave. In your enthusiasm today, you forgot yourselves and used thoughtless words. We are here today to serve the cause of peace, and it behoves us to be peaceful. Even soldiers, the men who work with weapons of steel, remain disciplined and peaceful, though of course outwardly. Leave this place with that peace in your mind and that discipline in your outward behaviour. Take, with this fire as witness, whatever sincere pledge you can fulfil. May God inspire you to take that pledge.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

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218. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA[1]

February 7, 1931

Panditji's death cannot affect the Congress position at all. Whether it may stiffen Congress attitude I do not know, but that it will not weaken it I am quite sure.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

219. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

February 7, 1931

GHANSHYAMDAS
CARE "LUCKY", BOMBAY

NO INSTRUCTIONS FAST NOW CONTINUE. DO WHAT IS BEST. AM HERE TILL 14TH.

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

220. MESSAGE ON MOTILAL NEHRU'S DEATH

ALLAHABAD,
February 7, 1931

Motilal's death should be the envy of every patriot. He died after having surrendered his all for the country and up to the very last thinking only for the country. Let us deserve this hero's sacrifice by each sacrificing, if not all, at least enough to attain freedom, which he was yearning after and which is within easy grasp now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-2-1931

[1] To its special representative James Mills

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221. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
February 7, 1931

DEAR BROTHER,

Jawaharlal was much touched by your wire[1]. Thank you for it. I would love to see you and hear all you have to say to me,[2] for I am not at all sanguine of fruitful result. The atmosphere in India does not seem to me to support your and other friends' jubilation. I would like however to feel that there was no foundation for my fears. You may come whenever you are free. The Working Committee meets here on the 13th instant. If it is at all possible, we should meet on or before 11th instant.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 207; also the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

222. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

February 7, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I got your letter. Kaira is foremost in my thoughts. It is because I am helpless that I have not run down there. But I shall take the first opportunity to do so. Write to me from time to time and keep me informed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9505

[1] Of condolence on Motilal Nehru's death

[2] Regarding the first Round Table Conference which the addressee had attended

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223. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 7, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Only today I got your letter of the 3rd. Why do you go on worrying even there? If by the time I reach Bombay you have recovered sufficient strength, do come there. I hope you got the letter in which I had asked you some questions. What do you eat? And how much? Do you sleep well? Have you gained any strength there? Can you sit up or leave the bed? Let me have as many details about the state of your health as you can give. Till the 14th at any rate, I shall be in Prayag. Write to me every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3406

224. TELEGRAM TO BOWMAN[1]

[On or after *February 7, 1931*]

EFFECT OF GREAT PANDIT'S DEATH WILL DEPEND UPON HOW PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT REACT TO IT. IF PEOPLE RESPOND TO HIS NOBLE SACRIFICE AND GOVERNMENT APPRECIATE MODERATION OF ONE WHO WAS SATURATED WITH COUNTRY'S LOVE WE CAN HAVE HONOURABLE PEACE. BUT WHILST I HAVE HOPE OF PEOPLE'S RESPONSE I HAVE NOT MUCH HOPE OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE.[2] WHATEVER MAY BE TRUE OF ATMOSPHERE IN BRITAIN I SEE NO CORRESPONDING CHANGE IN INDIA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 16923; also microfilm S.N. 16924

[1] Editor, *Englishman*. This was in reply to his telegram dated February 7, which read: "Please send short telegram on effect passing Motilal political situation. Convey deepest sympathy Jawaharlal."

[2] Up to this is in Gandhiji's hand.

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225. MESSAGE TO "LIBERTY"[1]

Press Message *February 8, 1931*

My position is worse than widow's. By faithful life she can appropriate the merits of her husband. I can appropriate nothing. What I have lost through Motilalji's death is a loss for ever.

"Rock of ages cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

GANDHI

BAKSHI
"LIBERTY"
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

226. NOTE ON MOTILAL NEHRU

February 8, 1931

Pandit Motilalji adored his children, but his adoration was divine, because instead of interfering with his and their growth it promoted that of both. For the sake of them he gave himself and them to the country.

M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9331. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 10-2-1931, published this as Gandhiji's "exclusive statement to *Liberty*".

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227. LETTER TO T. RANGACHARI[1]

February 8, 1931

I thank you for your letter. I am at one with you in desiring peace. But I confess to you that I see no sign on the Indian horizon of an honourable peace coming. The deliberate screening of the police, high and low, shows that they are to rule as they have done, no matter what happens to the constitution. The man in the street and now the woman also must, if the authorities can help it, for ever lie under the police heels, a situation that I for one cannot tolerate for a moment longer than I can help.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

228. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

February 8, 1931

CHI. SUSHILA,

Now that I am out of jail, I no longer get the time which I had there for writing letters. I shall have to stay in Prayag for one week still. After that, as God wills. My own wish is first to go to Ahmedabad and thence to Kaira. I am all right. Write to me regularly. If you write in time so that the letter should reach me here, address it to: Anand Bhawan, Allahabad. Otherwise, post it to the Ashram. They will redirect the letter to me wherever I am. My blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6695

[1] In reply to his letter which read: ". . . What a supreme occasion has arisen for entering into an honourable peace and settlement with Britishers. . . . "

229. *STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*

ALLAHABAD,
February 9, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi has issued a statement to the Press today at 11 a.m., asking that the fifteenth of February, the *Shraddha* Day, should be observed all over India as "Motilal Day". The following is the full text of the statement:

Next Sunday (15th instant) is the first day of the *shraddha* ceremony for the soul of the late Panditji Motilal Nehru. I suggest that as a mark of respect for his memory and to commemorate his unexampled sacrifice for the country, all work should be suspended and the day observed by the nation as one of greater dedication to the cause he loved and for which he lived. Those who believe in purificatory fast will fast for the day breaking it in the evening.

I suggest the following programme:

1. Meetings all over the country at 3 p.m. so far as possible and so as to enable the peasantry to return to their homes in due time.
2. People should march in silent procession to the meetings with national flags.
3. Perfect silence should be observed at the meetings.
4. The following declaration may be made by the assembly speaking word for word after the chairman: "We assembled in this meeting for commemorating the great and noble sacrifice of the late revered Pandit Motilal Nehru hereby solemnly resolve to dedicate ourselves more fully than hitherto to the cause of the country so as to hasten the advent of *purna* swaraj."

Dedication may be in any of the following ways, for instance:

(a) giving up intoxicating drink or drugs and persuading others to do so,

(b) undertaking to picket peacefully and without obstruction such drink and drug shops till such time as total prohibition becomes the law of the land or for a period,

(c) treatment similar to (a) and (b) regarding foreign cloth,

(d) resolution to spin a minimum quantity of yarn per day,

N.B. Spinning includes a knowledge of carding and so far as possible preparing one's own slivers.

(e) resolution to wear nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khadi,

(f) buying or selling such khadi on the memorial day,

(g) giving to the national cause whatever is within one's capacity or at least the day's earnings,

(h) doing any service or any act of self-denial not covered by the preceding clauses.

He further says:

1. It is of the utmost importance that all suspension of work and every other act should be absolutely voluntary. There should be no compulsion of any kind whatsoever.

2. To make the demonstration impressive perfect discipline is essential.

3. Men, women and children belonging to all classes and communities are expected, in their tens of thousands, to take part in the demonstration.

4. If the people at large will it, complete boycott of foreign cloth can be accomplished on the memorial day. It would be the noblest monument that is within the power of the nation to raise in one day to a patriot who himself at one time was given to all sorts of foreign luxuries and who when he realized his duty discarded and burnt his costliest clothes as we generally discard worn out clothings.

5. So far as possible people should declare their individual act of self-denial or resolution at the meeting and in every case to the Congress sub-committee of his or her taluk or *firka*. An abstract of results should be sent to headquarters.

The Hindustan Times, 9-2-1931

230. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS[1]

February 9, 1931

PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
PADAMDHAM
NEW DELHI

YOUR LETTER. THANKS. EARLIER YOU COME BETTER.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

[1] In reply to his Gujarati letter dated February 8, 1931, in which he had sought an interview with Gandhiji before the latter took a final decision, presumably, about the Round Table Conference after his talks with T. B. Sapru. (S.N. 16925)

231. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

ALLAHABAD,
February 9, 1931

CHI. KUSUM,

You must have received the postcard which I wrote directly from here. I understand your shrinking. But the fear that it implies does not seem proper to me. We shall now meet somewhere and, if I have time then, I will explain this to you. What is there to explain though?

I will not give up the hope I have built on you.

There was a letter from Shanta. She says that she will go to you in a few days.

My health is very good indeed. It seems I shall be here up to the 15th. I don't know where I shall be after that. Your handwriting in English is good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1820

232. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

PRAYAG,
February 9, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

Your letter of the 25th reached me only today after a long, round about journey.

For showing your diary [to Narandas], do not wait till you have gone back to live in the Ashram.

When the path of dharma is clear, you should not be deterred from following it by Father's or Mother's threat to commit suicide or the former's threat to leave the home and become a mendicant. Such threats are rarely carried out but even when they are carried out we may rest assured that that is for our good. In my view, Mother's health has improved considerably.

'Non-violent violence' is certainly a meaningless phrase.

Do not enlarge the field of your work beyond your capacity.

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We should never seek work and, when new work comes to us unsought, we should think about our capacity before accepting it. It should be enough if we improve what we are doing and put it on firmer foundation. If we do that, we shall be able to produce all the results we aim at.

I am here up to the 14th or 15th at any rate. After that, I shall have to consider where I should go.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5280

233. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL

PRAYAG,
February 9, 1931

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

If you are ready to take in Annapurna for six months or more, you may as well accept her without any such definite limit. If she is found to be of pure character, she will not prove a burden. If she is found to be unworthy, she cannot stay even for one day. I see no harm in taking her in after making this clear to her. However, Narandas and you should think and decide for yourselves what to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 24370

234. LETTER TO MANAGER, "YOUNG INDIA"

February 9, 1931

BHAISHRI,

After reading in the papers about the attack on you, I stopped sending articles to you for the journal. The loss of the cyclostyling equipment is, from our point of view, certainly a sort of defeat for us. It has had no effect on me. For we have no right at all to own property. In a tyrannous state, the tyrant claims every pie as his property and, through that claim, he is able to oppress the subjects. If, in such a state, an individual or group of in-

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dividuals becomes indifferent to property, the tyrant's power of oppression ends.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 22-2-1931

235. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *February 10, 1931*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your third letter today. I am here up to the 14th at any rate. I do not know at present where I shall go after that. I will inform you when it is decided. I should certainly like you to come and see me somewhere. Others, too, may be eager to see me. But I certainly do not wish to come to the Ashram. I can go only if there is a settlement. Instead, I intend to go to Kaira District *via* Ahmedabad so that all can see me at little expense and with little trouble. But I cannot say what I may be obliged to do.

Give me detailed information about Prabhavati's health. If she continues to get fainting fits, ask the doctor to come and examine her. If he makes any suggestion, follow it.

I get no time at all to attend to correspondence, etc. I hope I shall get some now. I shall be getting letters from you regularly now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Have Gangabehn and Vasumati been tried and sentenced? If yes, to what term of imprisonment? Sitla Sahay informs me that you get fever and that Kusum has become very thin? How is this?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8152. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to the addressee getting fever; *vide* p. 170.

236. STATEMENT ON INDIA'S PUBLIC DEBTS

[*February 10, 1931*][1]

Mr. Gandhi was shown Reuter's telegram about the *Daily Mail's* comments on the demand for the repudiation of public debts. Mr. Gandhi made it quite clear that it was no question of repudiation, but what he wanted was the matter should be placed before an impartial tribunal, who would judge whether the loan was raised in the interests of India or not; and if not, the loan should be charged to the British revenues.

The Hindu, 11-2-1931

237. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

ALLAHABAD,
February 10, 1931

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

Your letter. Confusion is worse confounded. Motilalji's death has upset my apple cart. What cruel fate has in store for me I do not know. "One step enough for me." I am here till 15th perhaps. Everything uncertain then. If ever a truce is declared, restoration of property like yours is a certainty. Meanwhile it is well that we become houseless, landless and luckless. Under organized despotism lucklessness is luck, poverty a blessing, riches a curse, evil is enthroned, goodness nowhere, in one clause all values are transposed. We have only felt from afar the heat of the fire we must pass through. Let us be ready for the plunge. That is my reading just now. And it fills me with joy. A halting peace will be dangerous and I can see no sign of real peace coming.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5214

[1] Released on this date from Allahabad, by the Associated Special Service

238. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Tuesday Morning, February 10, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

It seems you have started forwarding my post. I suppose I shall know by and by how you came to have an attack of fever.

Kanta has asked me about the land revenue dues payable by the Ashram.

I am still not in a position to give a considered opinion from here. We should carefully read the notice, etc. We should ascertain the law in regard to gift-lands. I have, however, just asked Mahadev and he tells me that a decision has already been taken not to pay the land revenue. It is, therefore, not necessary for me to express any opinion. I suppose the decision is, not to pay the land revenue, let the Government do what it will. Yes, I think that is the only proper course. It will test us. Or, rather, how do we know what will test us?

Though Prabhavati does not wish to be examined by a doctor, for our satisfaction it is necessary that Haribhai should examine her.

I suppose Mahadev keeps you informed about my programme. It is, however, likely to go on changing for some time. The only certain thing in a war is that nothing is certain. I shall know only on the 15th where I shall have to proceed on or after that date. We cannot, therefore, know for certain where and when we shall meet. If you have anything to ask me, write to me about it. If we meet, we shall discuss the matter further. I say "if we meet" deliberately. I see no signs of a settlement, and, if there is none, I think they are bound to arrest me. In these circumstances, I think it would be advisable to proceed in every matter as if I were in prison. If the Lord of Janaki did not know what was to happen the next morning, how can we possibly know what the future holds in store for us?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 40 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

239. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

PRAYAG,
February 10, 1931

CHI. RAMA,

I have your letter. You should not get tired so soon. If we are imprisoned, we should welcome that. If they beat us, we should suffer the beating with Ramanama on our lips. A person who is out to serve, what choice can he or she have? How do we know that we shall escape with beating? We may even have to face bullets. We should show patience and be ready to pass through any test God may ordain for us.

If, while doing service, we go to bed late and get up late, we need not feel unhappy about that. However, there should be no self-deception in this matter.

Write to Vimu and ask her how, after hearing that in Borsad women were dragged by their hair, she still wants to have long hair. After this incident, the right course for all women engaged in service is to get their hair cut short. But how can I convince women about this?

I am here up to the 15th. Where I shall be after that, God alone knows. But it seems to me that we shall meet now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5330

240. SPEECH TO STUDENTS, ALLAHABAD

February 10, 1931

Hundreds of students and Congress volunteers, mostly from the villages, assembled at Anand Bhawan, on Tuesday afternoon to have a *darshan* of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatmaji addressed the gathering for nearly ten minutes urging that the students should learn carding and spinning and should wear nothing but pure, hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. He emphasized that by so doing, they would best perpetuate the memory of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru and at the same time strengthen the efforts of the Congress to win *purna* swaraj for India.

Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and in an extremely low tone. A Mysore student made a request that Gandhiji should address the gathering in English for the benefit of those who could not understand Hindi quite well, and added that, despite his stay for two years and a half at Allahabad, he could not follow Gandhiji's Hindi speech.

If I remain in Mysore for two and a half years and if I cannot learn Canarese quite well, I should really feel ashamed of myself,

remarked Gandhiji and smilingly asked the student:

Are you not ashamed to confess that you do not know Hindi?

The Hindu, 12-2-1931

241. MESSAGE TO BENGAL[1]

[On or after *February 10, 1931*]

I h[ave] always enter[tained] high hopes of B[engal] and have had no cause for disappointment but I know that B[engal] has the capacity to do much more if only youth of B[engal] uniformly turn to non-vio[lence] not merely as a policy but even as the creed and I h[ave] never despaired of B[engal] doing this notwithstanding warning of some B[engal] friends to contrary.

From a photostat: S.N. 16926

242. TELEGRAM TO "TEJ"

February 11, 1931

EDITOR
"TEJ"
DELHI

RATHER THAN TALK SING OR WRITE ABOUT MOTILALJI'S MANY QUALITIES IT WOULD DELIGHT HIS SOUL AND PROFIT US IF WE WOULD EMULATE HIS NOBLE SACRIFICES AND THUS HASTEN THE ADVENT OF SWARAJ.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

[1] In reply to Har Dayal Nag's letter dated February 10, 1931, in which after expressing his condolences on the death of Motilal Nehru, he had requested Gandhiji to send a message for Bengal.

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243. LETTER TO PACHA PATEL

February 11, 1931

Received your wire. Is was not necessary to send a telegram. My heart is roaming about in Bardoli and Borsad. It seems I shall be again arrested there.

But everything depends on God. Man may strive to achieve a thing. Only when God wills it, I shall be there.

My blessings to all men and women. Particularly let everyone carry out his or her pledge.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-2-1931

244. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

After Prayers, February 11, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I do not know whether you will get this letter. This time, be satisfied with a postcard. I do wish to go to Kaira District at the earliest opportunity. Whatever settlement is reached,—I have little hope that any will be reached—I will certainly try to safeguard fully the interests of the cultivators who had joined the struggle. I have not received the note sent by you.

Write to me from time to time and ask others to write too. I shall be here up to the 15th at any rate. After that, wherever God takes me. If I can carry out my plan, I wish to go to Kaira *via* Ahmedabad. I need not write anything in this letter about the events here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5501

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245. LETTER TO TARA MODI

February 13, 1931

CHI. TARA,

I got your letter. I do not understand the complaint against Mithubehn. Whatever the truth in it, our only aim is to serve. We neither desire nor ask for any reward. The reward of service is greater zeal for service. You need not get frightened by any false charge. I take it you got the clothes, etc. You should continue to write to me. Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4171

246. CABLE TO "DAILY HERALD"[1]

February 14, 1931

"NEWS CHRONICLE" INTERVIEW IS A FAIR SUMMARY [OF] MY MENTALITY. I CAN ONLY ASSURE YOU THAT I AM MAKING A DESPERATE EFFORT IN SPITE OF MYSELF TO SECURE PEACE, IF OBTAINABLE WITHOUT SURRENDER FUNDAMENTAL POSITION. POSITION TAKEN AT YERAVDA INTERVIEWS BY LATE PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU MYSELF AND OTHER COWORKERS TOUCHED VERY EXISTENCE OF NATION. IF INDIA IS TO FEEL GLOW OF FREEDOM SURELY SHE MUST HAVE CONTROL OF HER OWN DEFENCE RECEIVING SUCH ASSISTANCE AS MAY BE NECESSARY FROM BRITISH EXPERIENCE. IF IN CERTAIN MATTERS WE ARE UNABLE TO GIVE GOOD ACCOUNT OF OURSELVES

[1]In reply to a cable (S.N. 16927) dated February 13, 1931, from its Editor, which read: "*News Chronicle* interviewer today records you saying, 'I want substance of independence. Round Table Conference proposals do not give me that substance. I content with nothing less. Civil disobedience movement must go on. I am looking for every opportunity of peace. At present I see none.' Is this correct statement? Your definite final conclusion."

FAULT IS NOT OURS BUT INCAPACITY DUE TO WHAT I HOLD WAS DELIBERATE SUPPRESSION OF A WHOLE NATION IN MATTERS OF SELF-DEFENCE. NOR AM I ABLE TO RECONCILE MYSELF TO ANY EXTERNAL CONTROL IN FINANCIAL MATTERS. ENGLISHMEN CAN HAVE NO CONCEPTION OF THE GROWING PAUPERISM OF THE MASSES WHO IN LATE LORD SALISBURY'S WORDS HAVE BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY BLED TO PROVIDE A REVENUE OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO THE CAPACITY OF THE INHABITANTS OF THIS UNHAPPY LAND. I HAVE SINGLED OUT BUT TWO MATTERS OUT OF SEVERAL OTHERS I CAN MENTION BUT I AM AN OPTIMIST AND BY NATURE LOVER OF PEACE. EFFORTS ARE THEREFORE NOW BEING MADE TO FIND IF THERE IS ANY WAY WHEREBY COOPERATION CAN BE TENDERED. I PLEAD FOR AN ACCURATE STUDY OF WHAT THE CONGRESS STANDS FOR AND OF THE SITUATION AS IT IS DEVELOPING FROM DAY TO DAY.

IT IS HARDLY REALIZED BY EVEN SINCERE WELL-WISHERS IGNORANT OF THE CONDITION OF THE MASSES THAT THEY ARE NOT ONLY UNABLE TO BEAR FURTHER TAXATION BUT THAT THEY ARE UNABLE EVEN TO BEAR THE WEIGHT OF THE EXISTING DEMAND MADE UPON THEM IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. SUCH A COUNTRY CANNOT BEAR THE EXPENDITURE OF A FOREIGN ADMINISTRATION RELATIVELY TO THE AVERAGE INCOME THE MOST EXPENSIVE IN THE WORLD OVER AND ABOVE COST OF FOREIGN ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

From a photostat: S.N. 16928

247. LETTER TO VICEROY

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD,
February 14, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

As a rule I neither wait for outward prompting nor stand on ceremony, but straightway seek personal contact with officials whenever I feel such contact is needed in the interest of a cause.

But somehow or other, in the present case, I have missed the guidance of the inner voice. But I have received suggestions from friends whose advice I value that I should seek an interview with you before coming to any decision. I can no longer resist this advice. I am aware of the responsibility resting on my shoulders. It is heightened by the death of Pandit Motilal Nehru. I feel that without personal contact and heart to heart talk with you, the advice I may give my co-workers may not be right. The friends I have referred to read into the proceedings of the London Conference a meaning and a hope I would like to share. There are other difficulties to be overcome before I can advise suspension of civil disobedience and co-operation in the remaining work of the Conference. It was felt that, before the Working Committee took any final decision, it might be better for me to meet you and discuss our difficulties with you. I therefore ask you, if you are willing, to send me an appointment as early as may be possible.[1] I would like to meet not so much the Viceroy of India as the man in you.

Could I expect a reply by Monday next? In the absence of a reply I propose to leave Allahabad on Tuesday for Bombay, where I am expected to pass four days. My address in Bombay is Laburnum Road.

I am,
Your faithful friend,

From a photostat: C.W. 9332. Courtesy: India Office Library

248. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 15, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letters. I don't require any more details about your health now. If you give up all worries, your health will improve very rapidly. Let there be no weight on your mind. It is I who have to worry for you; why, then, do you worry? As you give up worrying, the body will become free from tensions and the fainting fits will gradually disappear. For your headaches, you should bandage your head with a mud pack before going to bed, as I used to do. Twice or thrice every day, you should lie down flat on a bed, and rest. Even if you don't get sleep, you should lie down. And see that you don't suffer from constipation. Your diet

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", p. 179.

is all right. I certainly cannot wish that you should eat beyond your appetite.

Father came and stayed here for four days. On the whole, I found his health good just now. Rajendrababu was of course there, and with them was Anugrahababu.

I cannot say when I shall be able to go to Bombay. Come and see me wherever I settle down for a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3407

249. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

February 15, 1931

BHAI VALJI,

I got your letter. Do stay there as long as necessary. Do [not] forget mother khadi and mother cow. The Government is acting like one who is doomed to destruction and whose reason, therefore, is perverted, for it has been issuing all sorts of arbitrary ordinances. I am hanging in mid-air. It seems likely that I shall have to go to Delhi. How long it will be necessary for me to stay there will depend on the Viceroy's attitude. From Delhi, it seems I shall have to go to Bombay. I very much wish that you would learn the art of preserving your health. As for your questions, you must wait till we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7413. Courtesy: Valji Desai

250. SPEECH ON MOTILAL DAY[1], *ALLAHABAD*

February 15, 1931

At 3 p.m. Mr. Gandhi arrived at the meeting with, among others, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and took his seat on the rostrum . . .

After the . . . flag song by a few ladies, Mr. Purushottam Das Tandon requested, at the suggestion of Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to preside at the meeting.[2]

[1] The tenth-day *shraddha* ceremony of Motilal Nehru; *vide* also pp. 164-5.

[2] Then Purushottam Das Tandon, President of the Provincial Congress Committee, moved the resolution embodying the vow prescribed by Gandhiji. The pledge was repeated word for word by the audience.

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Mr. Gandhi, who sat on the rostrum spinning on the *takli*, then addressed the audience. It was a belief, he said, entertained in all religions that a person's soul never dies and the *shraddha* ceremony was performed with a view to giving peace to the deceased soul. A person generally does not leave his body without a single desire. Some desire is always left in him unfulfilled. Pandit Motilal Nehru, said Mr. Gandhi, died with a longing for swaraj. It was his constant wish that the entire country should be free and the reins of her government should be in the hands of her own representatives, and that justice should be done to the poorest in this land, be they Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Parsis, or Sikhs. It, therefore, struck him, said Mr. Gandhi, that some such things should be done that day as would be real *shraddha* for giving peace to the soul of Pandit Motilal Nehru. He, therefore, issued an appeal for the celebration of the memorial day.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said that a bath in the Ganges was no *shraddha*. It certainly cleansed the body but purification of the inner selves could only be done by inward act. Such act was the pledge which they had just then taken. But it was useless if they did not act up to it. They had to do something that would hasten the advent of swaraj and that they knew would give peace to the soul of Pandit Motilal Nehru. He knew of thousands of people giving their lives simply because of their anxiety not to break their pledges. Mr. Gandhi hoped that the people who had taken the vow to work for the attainment of complete swaraj would abide by their pledges.

In the course of his observations Mr. Gandhi also appealed to the people to continue their efforts for bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity of which he was reminded by the recent disturbances in sacred Kashi. He added that the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity was also the mission of Pandit Motilal Nehru's life and it was Mr. Gandhi's conviction that if the people combined to bring about that unity and attained it, other work for the attainment of swaraj would become very easy. He had learned, said Mr. Gandhi, that Hindus and Muslims in Kashi were cutting each other's throats. He did not want swaraj at the expense of a single party. Neither he nor Pandit Motilal Nehru cared for swaraj exclusively for Hindus or Muslims. Swaraj under which Hindus and Muslims and others could live together was the aim of his life. It was, therefore, a matter for great shame if either community committed excesses against the other. It would be appropriate if everyone in the audience took the pledge to promote communal unity.

He added that in the course of the struggle they had lost Lokamanya Tilak, Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan, Lala Lajpat Rai and Deshbandhu Das; and now Pandit Motilal Nehru was gone. It was time, therefore, that they did their duty and attained the good for which their leaders had died.

The Pioneer, 18-2-1931

251. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY[1]

[On or after *February 15, 1931*]

THANKS WIRE HOPE WAIT ON YOU TUESDAY TWO O'CLOCK. IF HOUR INCONVENIENT PRAY APPOINT ANOTHER. IN DELHI STAYING WITH DR. ANSARI.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

252. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ALLAHABAD,
February 16, 1931

SIR PRABHASHANKAR
BHAVNAGAR

THANKS WIRE[2]. LETTER RECEIVED. DEPEND UPON MY DOING BEST. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5912

253. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF UTKAL[3]

February 16, 1931

I hope that you all will make sacrifices in the *yajna* for swarajya according to your mite.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 9756. Courtesy: Government of Orissa

[1] In reply to his telegram received on the night of February 15 which read: "Your letter. Ready see you any time Tuesday, Wednesday. Please wire."

[2] Which read: "Hope you have received my letter. When in 1919 you not without difficulty persuaded Amritsar Congress to accept and try Montagu's reforms, eyes of India were on you for guidance. On the present occasion expectant eyes of the whole world are turned to you for peace. Everything points to an honourable settlement if Congress would help." (Manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary)

[3] Exhibited at the Orissa pavilion of the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in Delhi during 1969-70

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254. LETTER TO GUNAVATI KUNWAR MAHARAJ SINGH

ALLAHABAD,
February 16, 1931

DEAR SISTER,

Under the impulse of pure affection and contrary to my wont, I ate your bread without inquiring how it was prepared. In order to be able to copy it, I asked for the recipe. Now that I know it I must tell you that it is forbidden food for me. I do not eat eggs nor cow's or buffalo's milk and at present no milk at all. Nor do I take sugar as a rule. I may not therefore take the loaf you have so kindly sent again. Let this discovery cause you no distress. That the loaf was forbidden food for me causes me none. The remembrance I have of your affection for me, I shall treasure. If I have given you the information, I have done so to tell you why I may not eat the second loaf and also to appear before you as I am with my limitations.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

255. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

ALLAHABAD,
February 16, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter and wire. I sent a wire in reply to your wire. One need not advise the teeth to take care not to hurt the tongue. I feel like that real mother in the story. Was she not ready to let go her claim to her son so that he may remain alive? Surely, women being dragged by their hair and boys being whipped for no crime cannot make me happy. I am, therefore, eager to go to any length to secure peace. If, however, that peace would be like the peace between the wolf and the lamb, rather than accept it I would let women be dishonoured, the backs of innocent boys stained with blood, people's homes looted and innocent people hanged. I always pray to God that I, who am standing at Death's door, may not put my signature to anything which might

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prove a trap for the country. I am going to Delhi today with this prayer in my heart. I do not feel presumptuous like the dog in the story who was walking under the cart. I know the limits of my strength. I am but a particle of dust. Even such particle has a place in God's creation, provided it submits to being trodden on. Everything is done by that Supreme Potter. He may use me as He wills. Whether it is victory or defeat, it will be His. There is, therefore, no question of defeat, or, say, rather, that it is ever defeat for us. I think I have written enough. I have been able to write even as much as I have done because today is my silence day. But all this is by way of preface. My intention in writing this letter was to request you to persuade the princes to acknowledge the rights of their subjects. They wish to be partners; will they not, then, agree to give an account of their actions to the other partners?

How much did Lady Pattani spin and how much khadi did she sell? What have you done for cow-protection?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Give me news of your health. Address: C/o Dr. Ansari.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5917

256. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 16, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you have not received from Swami the yarn which I spun in jail, write to him and obtain it from him; after giving to the All-India Spinners' Association and the Cow-protection Society such quantity from it as may have to be given to them, I should like you to use the rest to get a sari woven for Ba. Whether this can or should be done, you may think over.

A good many people seem to be ill there. Since you are there I don't worry on this account. It is surprising how we invite illness the moment bread and other starchy foods are included in our diet. I have been able to keep away illness from me for many years by living only on fruits and nuts. If possible, exclude bread from your diet unless you find it necessary for your health. *Ratalu*[1] and

[1] Sweet potatoes

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other vegetables are as good as bread. I wish that you should take whatever measure may be necessary so as not to fall ill. Have Krishna and Kanu returned from Wardha? We are proceeding to Delhi today. I shall be meeting the Viceroy tomorrow. I let the events take their own course, and the Chief Potter alone knows whether the outcome will be a pot or a jar. My address in Delhi will be C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

An article for *Navajivan* is enclosed with this; pass it on to Jivanji.

An old co-worker in the Champaran Campaign has a widowed sister and he wants her to be admitted in the Ashram. She may arrive there towards the end of March. Her name is Girinandini and she is aged 36. I have told her to write to you when she decides to join. She has agreed to observe the Ashram rules. As for her expenses, the brother will give what he can. He was a lawyer but gave up practice.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

257. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*February 16, 1931*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I am sending this letter along with the Ashram post to ensure that it reaches you without fail. I do not get enough time these days to write long letters to you from here. I am now going to Delhi, so I suppose I shall be able to come to some decision very soon. However, we should learn to feel certitude even in the midst of doubt.

What can be more uncertain in its time of coming than death? A person lying on his death-bed may survive and live to a ripe old age, and a robust young man may die suddenly in a moment. Still, we go on doing our work as if we shall never die. What right, then, do we have to expect certainty in any other matter.

It will be enough if we resolve about one thing:

[1] From the contents of this and the following two items, it is clear that they were written on February 16, 1931, before Gandhiji left for Delhi.

Abandon all duties and come to Me, the only Refuge.[1]

If we can do this, what more do we require?

Whatever thou dost, whatever thou eatest,
Whatever thou offerest as sacrifice or gift,
Whatever austerity thou dost perform, O Kaunteya,
Dedicate all to Me.[2]

Put all this before co-workers and tell them to be vigilant. Our work will end only with our death; or, rather, we may say that our work will remain even after our death.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My address in Delhi: C/o Dr. Ansari, Dariyaganj.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 211-2

258. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

[*February 16, 1931*]

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. I am leaving for Delhi this very evening. I cannot say when I shall come to this side again. It is also uncertain how long I shall be in Delhi. Probably I shall have to go from there to Bombay. I shall be happy if you write to me regularly in Delhi, C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj. I hope you are much better now. I suppose you know that quite a number of people in the Ashram are ill at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9292. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

259. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Silence Day [*February 16, 1931*]

CHI. MANI,

I did get your letters, but I have not the time to send you a reply. Please therefore go on writing to me, whether or not I am

[1] & [2] *Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 66 and IX. 27

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able to write to you. We start for Delhi today. Address: C/o Dr. Ansari, Daryaganj. The Sardar is going to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 49

260. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

PRAYAG,
February 16, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I am leaving for Delhi today. My headquarters there will be Dr. Ansari's place, in Daryaganj. I do not know how long I shall stay there but it will be for two or three days at least. How is Arun and what is the news about Charu ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1685

261. SPEECH AT DELHI

February 17, 1931

At about 9 a.m., as Mahatmaji came out into the park, he was received with vociferous cheers by the crowd.

Addressing the people gathered there, Mahatma Gandhi said he was sorry that he saw no *takli* in Delhi, everywhere else he had seen *taklis* being plied by men and women.

Continuing, he said, because he was going to see the Viceroy today, it did not mean that they should go to sleep. They must continue to do something for winning swaraj.

Gandhiji laid great stress on the need of using pure khaddar.

The Hindustan Times, 19-2-1931

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262. *INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (VICEROY'S VERSION)*

February 17, 1931

There was no one present except Gandhi and myself. We began with general talk, in the course of which I dwelt upon the change in British opinion, which I hoped India would not make of no avail.

1. Future procedure. I sketched the ideas as they at present stand.

2. Scope of further discussions. I said there were three main principles in the Conference structure: Federation; Indian responsibility; reservations and safeguards. These were fundamental, but the detailed application of these principles was open to further examination and discussion. It would be as unprofitable for his friends to try to pull out the linchpins of federation and safeguards as it would be, say, for my Conservative friends to go back on the principle of responsibility.

3. He said that Congress could not give an undertaking in no circumstances to resume civil disobedience. I said that I could not bind them to any such pledge; but that the whole point was whether he and his friends had in mind a temporary and grudging truce or a genuine attempt to make a permanent peace. He said: "Certainly the latter", but that he only wished to guard himself against imputations of bad faith if, as he trusted would not be, they found themselves wholly mistaken in the spirit of the later discussions.

4. He asked about the right of raising "dissolution of partnership". I said that I regarded the question as academic, but presumed he could discuss it if he so desired. But I added that it would have a very damaging effect on British opinion if he made any public statement to this effect. He agreed, and said that he desired to be able to say that he was not precluded, if he should so desire, from raising the question, and to protect himself from the charge that he had taken His Majesty's Government unawares if he did.

5. He then referred to the question of debts. I said there could be no discussion on repudiation (which he said was not intended), but that if it was a question of the examination of particular apportionment of liability between Great Britain and India, or India and Burma (in the event of separation), I did not suppose that objection would be taken on principle, however unprofitable such discussions might seem to me likely to be.

6. He raised the question of the States' subjects. I said that I presumed he could raise the matter in discussion, but he would be up against the Princes. He acknowledged this and left me with the impression that Congress felt they had to raise the question, but did not attach undue importance to it.

7. Proportion of representation in the later Conference discussions. He did not anticipate much difficulty. He attached no importance to proportions, provided they could get enough to have their various elements represented and to enable them to pull their due weight on Committees, etc. If necessary, other sections of opinion could be increased too. He said he thought it might be necessary to ask the Working Committee for a few more key men. I told him that I had contemplated a Congress representation of about 12, and 15 or 20 were larger figures than I could think necessary. He agreed to keep the numbers as low as he could; and said he would consider a suggestion I made about working on the plan of "substitute" delegates, to bring others in without swelling the official numbers.

8. We then got on to practical points, if, as he said civil disobedience was suspended. I at once took him upon the word 'suspended' and said that what I had in mind was effective abandonment. He said he did not attach importance to the word, but wished to protect the position defined in paragraph 3 above.

Practical points were:

(1) Release of satyagrahis, including some sentenced under martial law in Sholapur. I said that my distinction of principle was violence and inciters to violence on the one side, about whom I could do nothing, and non-violent satyagrahis on the other.

(2) Meerut prisoners. He argued for their discharge, but not, as I understood, as a condition. I said that they had nothing to do with civil disobedience, but I was as much disturbed as he was at the protracted proceedings, and would examine the case with a view to seeing whether anything could be done to accelerate the conclusion of the trial. More than that I could not say, as I could recognize no association between Communists and non-violent satyagrahis.

(3) He raised the question of the Bengal detenus, not, as I understood, as a condition, but in order to inform me that a great many people had been locked up who in no way deserved it. I omitted to make the obvious point that each case was submitted to two Judges, but told him that, if he wished to submit any evidence of a case in which the police had dropped on the wrong man, I would pass it on to the Governor of Bengal who would look into it personally. He did not seem to attach great importance to the question.

(4) Land and property. I said that third parties who had bought could not be disturbed. Any adjustment that was requisite for settlement would have to be through unofficial agency. He brought forward a good many technical points, on which I said little beyond adhering to the main principle that Government could be generous with

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what was still in its own possession, but not with what third parties had acquired. He promised to submit a note.

(5) Remission of fines. Those that were uncollected I said could probably be remitted. But I could not press local Governments to entertain the suggestion of restoring fines already collected. This was a matter on which local Governments would exercise their own discretion. He did not press this very hard.

(6) Restoration of presses and securities. I said the same principle must apply, i.e., what was in Government's possession could be restored, but securities that had been forfeited fell into same category as fines paid.

(7) Reinstatement of officials resigned or dismissed. I said that I could not press any local Government to reinstate any officials whose places had been filled; and that the utmost I could do would be to invite local Governments to examine all cases on their merits with the object of acting as generously as circumstances permitted towards those who had resigned, whether out of pressure or because they had been swept off their feet by the civil disobedience movement. Dismissals stood in a somewhat different category, and I anticipated Governments would feel greater difficulty about this class of case inasmuch as officials had presumably not been dismissed without cause; but I was ready to invite local Governments to examine these cases also on their merits.

(8) Repressive ordinances. I said these could go, except the Burma Terrorist Ordinance, adding that, if the Press reverted to encouragement of violence, it would be necessary for Government to take action against it.

(9) Punitive Police, he asked, should be withdrawn. I said it was a new point to me, but would if necessary invite local Governments to consider it.

9. Enquiries into police excesses. He dropped the idea of a general enquiry, but pressed very hard for special enquiries, if necessary *in camera*. I put the counter-arguments, and said that I could not go further than promise investigation by local Governments and if desired by myself of specific complaints. This he said was not much, as the truth could only be ascertained by cross-examination of evidence on both sides. I told him that there was so much on the other side that I did not think he was entitled to press for enquiries that could only have the purpose of placing the police in a position of defendants, and to this I was not able to agree. I would see any matter he chose to submit and he must trust to my assurance that local Governments would examine it fairly. I had also no objection to publicly exonerating those who had brought charges from any imputation of bad faith. He was not satisfied with this.

10. He read over to me other points on which he proposes to speak tomorrow. Salt; Peaceful picketing and there may have been something else.

11. I told him that I thought it was of great importance, if we were to succeed in our peace efforts, that the temperature should be lowered, and asked him to get Bombay to go slow in picketing, etc. He promised to do so.

12. We agreed to meet again alone tomorrow with possibly a larger meeting with others in to follow.

13. Although I made the point in Paragraphs 3 and 8 that I drew a clear distinction between action by Congress on the basis of a temporary truce with the intention of resuming the campaign, and a genuine desire to co-operate in constructive work, it is important to leave him in no doubt when we meet again (though I don't think there is any) that the various items of action by Government are dependent on effective abandonment of the movement.[1]

(Sd.) IRWIN

From a photostat: G.N. 8946

263. *INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (GANDHIJI'S REPORT)*

[*February 17, 1931*][2]

The Viceroy had impressed me very well. He had impressed me as much as Lord Reading had done, except that Lord Reading was clever and he took undue advantage of my discussions with him. Lord Irwin talked to me in a friendly way and frankly admitted that it was his mistake that we had not met so far. The second thing he admitted was that the British public had been aroused the most by my movement. This attitude of his shows that he wants to make peace. He desires peace because he has been touched by the struggle. He is wondering how long he can allow the struggle to continue and feels that now he would be obliged to rely on the gun alone.

I took out the resolution at the very outset.

MAHADEV DESAI. Was there no talk about your letter?

GANDHIJI. No, there was no specific mention of that but I felt that he liked the letter. I certainly told him that I was ready for a settlement and in the mean time Shuaib had come and asked me

[1] For Gandhiji's report of the interview, *vide* the following item.

[2] In the source the report by Gandhiji of the interview is given under February 18, 1931.

whether I would not write a letter in this manner, that I had placed that matter before the Working Committee and they approved of it, and so I had written. I went on reading the resolution. About the initial portion regarding the constitution, he said: "There is no difficulty about discussing anything, but I can't say how much you will gain out of it. But you can certainly open the discussion." I did not make any attempt to know what his views were. But he said if we wanted to discuss the clause regarding secession we should do that only in the Conference. But no one was going to listen to it and if I pressed the point too much, persons like him who wanted to help me would be put in an awkward position.

Then immediately he came to the truce terms. We discussed what all could be placed before the Conference. And the discussion on the inquiry itself took up half the time. The greatest difficulty is about the issue of the inquiry. He is not against it but he said that it made his position very delicate. "Will you be satisfied if I conduct the inquiry?" Thus by asking this question he had given up his case. I asked him: "How will you conduct the inquiry? Have you ever heard of a person having dispensed justice without hearing both the sides? You have our unsifted account and a similar account given by the police. What will you make out of it?" He agreed that nothing could be achieved. "The position today is that you have declared us liars before the whole world. How will it behove you to negotiate with liars like us? Have a look at the whole communique. Should we swallow the allegations that everything we said was fabricated?" He had no reply to give to all this (At this point Ansari came, so some things had to be repeated.) One thing was clear from his talk that those people are also tired just as some of us are. "I shall certainly send a cable that you want the clause regarding secession to be included but the position of people like me who want to help you will become very awkward." I can understand that. He apologized about the matter of the public debt. He said, "So far I thought you wanted repudiation of the debts, but you have certainly every right to demand distribution of the war expenses. We shall see how we can examine the question of fair distribution. I also desire the same thing as you do regarding the Native States, but you have to persuade the States themselves. We shall not prevent you from doing so. I wish to give you as much help as I can."

He admits that all our demands are just. He did not say that even one of them was unjust but only put forward his difficulties. At the very beginning I explained to him whatever I had

to say about our conditions. He said it would be difficult to release the Meerut prisoners and he wondered how much pressure he could bring to bear upon the Governor of Bengal regarding the release of detenus there. Moreover, all these things might be done but he asked, "How can we do them if you want to make that a condition precedent? We have collected fines from many; how can we refund them all? How can we pay compensation for property burnt down or destroyed? The proceeds of property sold, however, can be refunded." I said: "Can you say this even in those cases where the market value has not been taken into account and you have got rupees ten for a property worth rupees one thousand? Is there equity in this?" He saw the point and asked us to give him a list of the losses incurred. He saw the point regarding taxes also. "How can you exact taxes from people who have been ruined?"

About the fairness of taxation, I told him the story of Mahmood. Once a woman went to him to seek justice. Mahmood told her: "You live so far away that I cannot carry justice there." She said: "Stop ruling over us." Mahmood said, "Yes, that region should be excluded from the empire." Irwin laughed and said that justice should be done.

(While speaking of my keenness for peace, I casually told him: "I wrote to you a letter even from Yeravda but you did not reply to it. I do not complain but I want to show you how keen I am on a settlement.")

He asked me, "How can we throw the police to the wolves?" I said, "We do not want that. We want the enquiry only to establish whether the police have committed any atrocities."

The discussion about the inquiry alone took half the time. That means they consider the condition to be very difficult. Only for that reason will it be an acid test for us.

The Governor of Bombay was sitting outside. I was introduced to him. I could not talk to him because I was in a hurry for my meal and the A.D.C. came and told me that my car had arrived. The Viceroy had also asked me whether it would do if the Governor conducted an independent enquiry. I asked him "In what way is the Governor in a better position than you to do so? Why should we submit to the excesses of the police? Why shouldn't they, over whom we are going to rule one day, consider themselves our servants right from today itself ?"

The gist of the whole talk is that he very much wants a settlement and the other thing is that if we give up a single point of ours, our whole case will be ruined. I on my part told the Viceroy

that if he granted that the Congress was something to reckon with, he must accede to our reasonable demands.

The reference to Mirabehn came up in the beginning and in the end. At the end, I said, "She must have cooked my meal and must be waiting for me." In the beginning I had said, "How can I sever my connection with you? I have so many English friends. Take for instance Mirabehn. I don't know her family and her father and yet she has completely lost herself in me. Andrews keeps sending me cables from Cape Town asking me to arrive at a settlement. How can I give up this Andrews? Horace Alexander also writes to me and he advises me not to arrive at a settlement. Having written that he apologizes! Is it possible for me to sever all these relations? And yet if co-operation is not possible, I shall have to do so.

"If both of us desire not to quarrel, we shall not quarrel. I have come with a determination not to fight as far as possible." I had assured him that "I do not want to tell you anything except the truth. I do not want to conceal anything from you, I do not want to have a single mental reservation. Hence you can tell me whatever you wish to. You can say whatever you have heard about my associates and tell me whatever you want, can question me about them."

Talking about the release of the Meerut prisoners, he expressed his difficulty but he described the sentence passed on the Sholapur Martial Law prisoners as preposterous.[1]

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] For the Viceroy's version of the interview, *vide* the preceding item.

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264. TELEGRAM TO PERIN CAPTAIN

[*February 17, 1931*][1]

PERINBEHN CAPTAIN
NEAR ISLAM CLUB
CHOWPATI, BOMBAY

HEAR VIOLENCE BEING USED PICKETING FOREIGN CLOTH. PLEASE PLACE MATTER CONGRESS AUTHORITIES TELL THEM SCRUPULOUSLY AVOID ALL VIOLENCE DIRECT INDIRECT PASSIVE OR ACTIVE.[2]

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

265. MESSAGE TO VISITORS

DELHI,
February 18, 1931

Mahatmaji came out[3] at 1.40 p.m. and was cheered by hundreds of visitors, including a large number of ladies, who were anxious to have his *darshan*.

Mahatmaji put two questions to the crowd assembled. He first asked:

How many of you are dressed in khaddar?

Everybody raised his hand. Then Mahatmaji asked:

I want only those to raise hands who are dressed in hand-spun and hand-made khaddar.

Nearly thirty per cent of the assembled raised their hands. Then he asked them how many were dressed in foreign clothes. Only three hands were raised. He told them:

Use khaddar. This is my message. Now go home, all of you.

Then with a smile he hurried to his car which drove him to the Viceregal Lodge. The crowd raised shouts of "*Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai*" and melted away.

The Hindustan Times, 20-2-1931

[1] *Vide* "Interview with Viceroy (Viceroy's Version)", p. 193.

[2] Addressee's telegram (S.N. 16936) dated February 20, 1931 read: "Wire received. Instructions will be carried out."

[3] Of Dr. Ansari's house

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266. *INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (VICEROY'S VERSION)*

February 18, 1931

I had a further talk with Mr. Gandhi this afternoon. He began by telling me that he had, as requested by me yesterday, sent a telegram[1] to Bombay saying that he had been informed that picketing was taking a serious form and was in danger of leading to violence, and that that kind of thing must be stopped. He promised to let me know the result.

He then proceeded to develop the points left over from yesterday beginning with:

(1) Punitive Police. I told him that, as I had said yesterday, it was a new point to me and that I imagined the action of local Governments would be dictated by the circumstances of each case. I could imagine cases in which local Governments might be willing to withdraw them as also others in which such withdrawal would have to be postponed. We left it at the point that I said in the event of a settlement being reached I would draw local Governments' attention to the matter.

(2) He developed an argument of which this was the gist. In districts where resort has been had to coercive processes for collection of taxes due, such further collection shall be suspended pending examination of cases by an officer through an enquiry, in which the people will be afforded an opportunity of stating their case. His point was that many of the coercive processes have been extra legal, and have imposed far greater material damage on the people than the value of the tax due to be collected. He was only asking for the right of proving such a case as would lead Government to redress real injustice.

I said that without fuller knowledge of the facts and the issues involved I could express no opinion beyond telling him that it seemed the kind of thing in which serious difficulty would be likely to arise. I told him that in my view, as in the case we were discussing yesterday of enquiries into police excesses, I regarded the whole state in which we now found ourselves as that of something very like a state of war. Under such conditions no doubt great hardship was unavoidable, but it had by no means been confined to one side. His presentment of the case seemed to me to suggest that we were dealing with unjustifiable departures from a state of affairs which had in other respects been normal, and appeared to rest on the assumption that Government was in the dock and under the necessity of justifying its action to people who had themselves been wholly free from blame. He would not expect me to accept that kind of interpretation of the present position.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Perin Captain", p. 192.

He answered this by reverting to his original argument that he was pleading for no more than redress of what he believed he could show to be a manifest excess of administrative action leading to real injustice.

(3) Salt. Here he developed the romantic side of the salt campaign, dwelling much on the inhumanity of depriving families who had natural opportunities of doing so, of taking advantage of them to manufacture salt. (I am not sure whether it confined to salt for their own use or not.) What he desired was that Government should either alter the law or acquiesce in its breach, by way of not prohibiting such private action. He instanced the Sarda Act and the Age of Consent Act as examples of Government looking the other way in matters of administration.

I told him that there was a wide distinction in my view between Government administering a particular law with discretion, through instructions communicated to its own officers, and Government advertising to the world that it was prepared to condone such breaches. The latter really amounted to an invitation to all and sundry to commit them. If, as he said, such informal breaches of the Salt Law had been in the habit of taking place before, I had no reason to suppose that Government would wish to administer the Salt Law any more or any less strictly than had been the case hitherto.

He said that he was not asking for any public declaration, but for a private assurance that Government would not interfere with private breaches of the law; he had not in mind raids on salt depots or anything on that scale.

I told him that I felt considerable difficulty about his proposition having regard to the fact that the circumstances surrounding private breaches of the law had greatly altered since his salt campaign.

(4) Peaceful picketing. He asked me whether I took any objection to its continuance. I told him that peaceful picketing appeared to me a misnomer. I had a long list of cases on my table showing the violent results that had flowed from so-called peaceful picketing, and I found it impossible to believe that peaceful picketing could fail to produce similar results in future. I quoted Benares, Amritsar, etc. I further said that I could not tolerate interference with legitimate trade, as evinced by Congress intimidation in the matter by way of sealing foreign cloth, mock funerals and all the rest. Lastly, I said that picketing as a political weapon was objectionable and its continuance was quite incompatible with Congress coming into Conference discussions. He was really setting about his principal purposes of swadeshi and temperance in the wrong way by pursuing a policy at once negative and belligerent; why could he not apply himself to the positive and pacific programme of preaching swadeshi and temperance without interference with personal liberty?

To all this he said he had no wish to do more than peacefully persuade; he only attached importance to it as a social and economic business, not primarily political. He and the Congress would prohibit violence, mock funerals and all such forms of pressure; but he could not see why people might not

stand near a grog-shop in the endeavour to reform the drunkard; if violence or molestation occurred, it could be dealt with under the ordinary law.

I told him that experience was against him in this matter, and that I feared it would not be easily possible for him to get the subtle distinction present to his own mind observed in practical action by many different people in different parts of the country.

2. I then took up a few general matters. First of all I explained to him that in everything I had said I was only speaking personally for myself, and that on many matters it would be necessary to consult local Governments or the Secretary of State, and on all matters it would be necessary for me to consult my own Council. This he recognized. I then told him that I had heard of the probability of himself and Vallabhbhai Patel visiting Gujarat. I could have little doubt that, if they went there, they would stimulate the civil disobedience movement, in which the Government of Bombay could evidently not acquiesce. I asked him therefore to keep himself and Vallabhbhai away for the present at all events. He told me that he had just summoned Vallabhbhai to come here and went on to say that, if our negotiations succeeded, no difficulty would arise; if they failed, I understood him to say that he and his friends had decided, or might decide, to offer themselves for re-arrest. It would then be for Government to do what they wished, but he would certainly when his work was finished here wish to go to Gujarat and could not do otherwise.

3. I finally told him that everything I had said about possibilities of reciprocal action by Government was dependent upon the effective abandonment of the civil disobedience campaign. He asked me what this meant; it would be impossible for him to agree to a period of ten days or fifteen days before reciprocal action was taken by Government. I said I had not that in mind; what I was rather concerned with was that before Government [took] reciprocal action they should be satisfied that the Working Committee's instructions had in fact reached local organizations and that they were being loyally carried out. There was no question of impugning the trustworthiness of the Working Committee, who might reach an agreement with Government here; on the other hand, it was not unreasonable that Government should be satisfied that the agreement honourably reached by the Working Committee was in fact being honourably given effect to by the local organizations.

He appeared to accept this.

4. I then recurred to the question we had discussed yesterday as to the contingent resumption by Congress of civil disobedience. I said that it would be an impossible position for me to recommend to His Majesty's Government to take all the steps we had been discussing if they were at any moment in the course of subsequent discussions liable to be told by Congress that the provisional conclusions arrived at, at any stage, were unpalatable and they therefore broke up and went back to their campaign. Could he give me any assurance on the point?

He said that, as he had explained yesterday and as I had accepted, Congress could not pledge themselves, either for all time or in this particular matter, not again to have resort to civil disobedience; but if they went into the Conference he would be prepared to say that they went in meaning to strain every nerve to make it a success. He did not however wish to conceal from me that, if, when the discussions had concluded, the scheme was still unsatisfactory to them, they must reserve their liberty to return to civil disobedience. He could not anticipate what their decision might be; circumstances might alter, they might desire to wait and see what happened in Parliament; but in no case would he anticipate recurrence to civil disobedience while the discussions were proceeding; and he hoped that it would never be necessary at all.

5. I asked him whether he thought, in spite of the attitude I had felt necessary to adopt as regards salt, peaceful picketing, enquiries into excesses and other matters on which I had been unable to meet him, it would be desirable to have a somewhat more formal discussion? In such event I should contemplate that we might have invited Sastri, Sapru, Jayakar, Shafi, Chhatari, possibly a non-official European from the Assembly, another non-official Moslem, Malaviya, Ansari, Bikaner and Bhopal. He appeared to welcome the idea rather warmly, saying that he thought Malaviya was indispensable, but added that he might like to bring one or two of his own and instanced Jawaharlal, Vallabhbhai and Sen Gupta. He might have liked, he added, to have had Subhas Bose, but he was at present in prison. I said that in such case I should propose to reinforce myself by representatives of my Government.

I told him that I would consider this and let him know, if I could, tomorrow, adding that I thought, if such further talks were held, a formal communique should be issued after each meeting to avoid public misunderstanding. He agreed and said that he would hold himself at my disposal.

6. The general impression I gathered was that, though there are a good many snags still in the road, he is disposed to co-operate. The principal snags evidently are the question of the scope of further discussions and of contingent resumption of the campaign. On the latter however I believed it to be impracticable to get any greater measure of assurance than he was willing to give me in our final interview this evening.

In conclusion and not connected with the above, he mentioned the case of Bhagat Singh. He did not plead for commutation, although he would, being opposed to all taking of life, take that course himself. He also thought it would have an influence for peace. But he did ask for postponement in present circumstances. I contented myself with saying that, whatever might be the decision as to exact dates, I could not think there was any case for commutation which might not be made with equal force in the case of any other violent crime. The Viceroy's powers of commutation were designed for use on well-known

grounds of clemency, and I could not feel that they ought to be invoked on grounds that were admittedly political.[1]

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat: G.N. 8947

267. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

DELHI,
February 18, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi unlike yesterday had taken leave of the Viceroy inside the room and went straight to his car. He was met by the Associated Press correspondent who asked him whether the talks were over. He looked thoughtful and with his usual smile said:

All I can say is I am not coming tomorrow.

Will you consult the Working Committee before coming back?

I cannot say yet but am not coming tomorrow.

Replying to another question, he said humorously:

You can say, it is all hanging up in the clouds.

Are you issuing an official statement?

No.

The Hindustan Times, 20-2-1931

268. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (GANDHIJI'S REPORT)

February 18, 1931

Today we were with the Viceroy for slightly less time than yesterday, and so reached home at 5.30 p.m. Today's talk was more concentrated and the man was more cautious than yesterday. It was a most strenuous fight today, but it left no unpleasantness in the mouth at the end. Once or twice we felt that the hope of a settlement was dwindling but thereafter did not feel like that. Today the salt tax, suspension of collection of land revenue and picketing alone were discussed. When I explained to him the whole position about salt, the Viceroy said: "You think any Government in the world can tolerate disobedience of its laws?"

GANDHIJI. I may enunciate a counter-proposition to it: No Government in the world can enforce all its laws.

[1] For Gandhiji's report of the interview, *vide* item 268.

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I then cited the example of the Sarda Act and mentioned Act III of 1885 of South Africa and the Gold Law, and told him that the Government was supporting the demand for the protection of those who were guilty of their breach. I talked about the Age of Consent Act and asked him why the Government tolerated the breach of all those laws. "I know that you have issued a circular that no action should be taken under the Sarda Act."

VICEROY. That is a confidential circular.

G. I do not want you to issue a public circular. We shall tell our people quietly that they can make and collect salt without any fear.

V. I am seized of your position.

He used these words repeatedly. About the Salt Act, he even said that when we would have our own Government, we could repeal it.

G. How can I betray the thousands of people whom I advised to break this law?

About the land tax also, the Viceroy had administrative difficulties.

G. Our case is that the Government has taken more coercive steps than were necessary and the officers have exceeded the instructions given to them. In such cases the tax ought not to be collected.

V. Who is to decide that?

G. You may appoint an officer for the purpose, but he should have our approval. He should only inquire whether there have or have not been excesses as alleged by us.

The Viceroy opposed picketing strongly. I explained to him that it had been going on all the time "It is being done for many years now and there is nothing against it in the Common Law. You can take action under the Common Law if there is breach of peace or violence."

V. But you have made picketing a political weapon.

G. It may have a political result, but essentially, it is an economic, social and moral weapon. Even if Lancashire stops its textile business, we would still have to declare boycott of foreign cloth and also continue picketing. Even if you forgo the revenue from the sale of liquor, we would still have to take steps against those who drink.

In short, the Viceroy was convinced of the justice of all our demands, but he talked of administrative difficulties. I reminded him: "There is no just grievance in law without a remedy." After this he asked me many questions.

V. If you attend the Round Table Conference and the results are not to your satisfaction, must you resume civil disobedience?

G. I will have to unless we feel that we shall get something from the changes proposed. Otherwise I shall have no choice but to resume the movement.

V. On further thought, I find this position dangerous for the Government. How can we stultify ourselves like that? In that case, would it not be better that you do not attend the Round Table Conference?

Then there was again some discussion about safeguards. Regarding defence, the Viceroy said: Suppose a committee of military experts proves to your satisfaction that India cannot defend herself without British troops, even then would you wish that that safeguard should be removed?

G. What do you mean by "proving to my satisfaction"? I would invite German, American and other experts and confront your military experts with them. If, after their discussions, I feel that we must retain the British army for some time, I would definitely agree to do so.

The Viceroy found this whole discussion embarrassing.

V. Now I am fully seized of your position. I shall discuss the whole thing with my advisers and we shall then resume our discussions if necessary. Meanwhile those three friends[1] desire an informal committee to be set up, consisting of my advisers, the Maharaja of Bikaner, Malaviya and the Nawab of Chhatari. You also may ask some members of the Working Committee to join it.

G. All right, we are prepared to place all our cards on the table.

During the evening walk, Bapu made some more remarks about these discussions.

G. The suggestion regarding informal talks came from those three friends. They had it in their mind right from Allahabad. I believe that their intention is honourable, but the thing may also be the Viceroy's diplomacy. But that does not matter. He may invite as many persons as he likes. I did not suggest any name. It will serve as a means of propaganda for us.

BIRLA. Did today's discussions give any cause for disappointment?

G. No, he was as sweet as before. We had a few sharp exchanges, but they were of little moment. There were one or two small but rich titbits which cannot be made public, but which will give you an idea of how cordial the talks had been. Once he told

[1] Sapru, Jayakar and Srinivasa Sastri

me that it was his dream to take me to England and introduce me to members of all the parties there. He appealed to me to forget about civil disobedience and to have faith in their sincerity and proceed accordingly. Then as I was going to his bathroom, he accompanied me and said: "Now tell me whether I did not do well in not arresting you in your Ashram?" I said: "How do we know it? A crowd of thousands had assembled in the Ashram, and I heard that a special was waiting for me and that I would be arrested at 12 o'clock. So I peacefully went to sleep." At this, the Viceroy had a hearty laugh. I continued: "Many friends had thought that this salt movement would fizzle out, and said that Mahatma Gandhi would get tired in 20 days or so and that the Government would not take any notice of the movement. But who knew what was going to happen?" The Viceroy said: "You planned a fine strategy round the issue of salt."

These two titbits are not worth narrating anywhere. Now the third one. I talked about Bhagat Singh. I told him: "This has no connection with our discussion, and it may even be inappropriate on my part to mention it. But if you want to make the present atmosphere more favourable, you should suspend Bhagat Singh's execution." The Viceroy liked this very much. He said: "I am very grateful to you that you have put this thing before me in this manner. Commutation of sentence is a difficult thing, but suspension is certainly worth considering."

I said about Bhagat Singh: "He is undoubtedly a brave man but I would certainly say that he is not in his right mind. However, this is the evil of capital punishment, that it gives no opportunity to such a man to reform himself. I am putting this matter before you as a humanitarian issue and desire suspension of sentence in order that there may not be unnecessary turmoil in the country. I myself would release him, but I cannot expect any Government to do so. I would not take it ill even if you do not give any reply on this issue."

When they were talking about members of the Working Committee, Bapu mentioned Subhas Bose too.

V. Subhas is not a member of the Working Committee.

G. No, he is not. And he is my opponent and will denounce me; still, if he wants to attend, we must give him a chance to do so.

The Viceroy said that he would think about this suggestion too.

Last evening[1] we walked for about 1½ hours. During that time we dis-

[1] February 18

cussed the proposal to hold informal talks and talked about those pleasant titbits. The question was why we should join these informal talks.

G. It behoves satyagrahis to do so. The suggestion for informal talks was not the Viceroy's, but of those three friends. If we join the talks afterwards and break them, that would be deceiving them. Instead, we should discuss the matter right now and state our demands. We would then be able to decide whether we should join the talks or not. I did not demand that all of us should join the talks, but merely said that anyone who wanted to attend might do so. I even said that probably no one would like to join. For me, it would provide an excellent opportunity for propaganda.

JAWAHARLAL. The Viceroy has the virtues and weaknesses of the average Englishman.

G. Yes.

PATTABHI. He has got the weaknesses of an Englishman.

G. No. These two days' talks have not given me the impression that he is a weak man. He is a strong man and a thoroughly capable man. He is also a democrat. I know, he says, "I can do the thing but I will not do the thing myself." I have read some of his speeches wherein I have observed his firmness with admiration and despair. I remember his reply to a deputation of the Ahmediya community. They wanted him to do according to the Muslims' wishes in the matter of Palestine. He said the British Government had always adhered to certain fundamental principles of justice and they would never swerve from them. They would not do so in this instance as they have not done up to now. He did not give them any empty promises, he did not use any vague phrases, but was as firm as he could be. That is his strength.

In the titbits I mentioned yesterday, I forgot one. The Viceroy had received a telegram about picketing. He asked me: "Do you approve of such picketing?" I said that I had already sent a telegram that I did not approve of it. He also mentioned another telegram. He said that there was a telegram from Gujarat saying that Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai would now visit Gujarat and that their presence was likely to prove very dangerous. He wanted me to call away Vallabhbhai here! Gandhiji laughed and said: "I have called him here." So the Viceroy said: "That's capital."

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

269. LETTER TO SOONABAI SERWAI[1]

[Before *February 19, 1931*][2]

I do not see how strikes and hartals, brought about by force, are in any way useful to national interests.

Mr. Gandhi has desired his correspondent to draw his attention in future to cases in which violence or force was used by Congress workers. He has again implored Mrs. Serwai to take to swadeshi.

The Pioneer, 21-2-1931

270. MY NOTEBOOK

Motilalji's Death

Pandit Motilalji's death means to me more even than to the brave widow whose sorrow it is my privilege during these days to share. I take the blow as an additional test of my faith in God's greatness and goodness. Panditji has died a true warrior's death. It is therefore well with him. He lives more amply and more truly by dying. I pray to God that he may endow me with greater consecration to the service of the cause for which alone life is worth living in these days of purification through sacrifice and suffering.

Memorial

Friends have asked me to advise a memorial subscription such as was raised to the memory of the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and Lala Lajpat Rai. I have resisted the temptation because (1) I personally cannot shoulder the burden; (2) I may any day be summoned to Yeravda or some such place of recreation; and (3) the only true memorial that can just now be raised to the memory of the deceased patriot is by intenser dedication to hasten the advent of swaraj.

[1] In reply to her letter describing "a couple of incidents in which the so-called non-violent Congress volunteers had used violence to bring about a complete hartal"

[2] Published under the date-line "Allahabad, February 19"

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI

I was privileged to offer my tribute to the memory of Maulana Mahomed Ali by sending from Yeravda a cable message to Maulana Shaukat Ali. But I cannot resume the Editorship of *Young India* without publicly declaring that in him I have lost one whom I rejoiced to call brother and friend and the nation has lost a fearless patriot. We had differences of opinion between us, but love that cannot stand the strain of differences is like "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal".

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

It is not for the soldier to worry about peace. For him both struggle and peace are alike. He has to do with the utmost joy the task that comes to him without counting the costs or the consequence. The consequence he knows. The cost is never too high for him.

PICKETING

Picketing is a dharma only when it is absolutely non-violent. Those who have no faith in non-violence had better give it up altogether. I can find out ways and means of combating the inroads of foreign cloth even though there be no picketing, but I know for certain that boycott brought about by violent picketing is bound to fail in the end. It was this knowledge that induced me last March to entrust picketing of foreign-cloth shops and drink and drug shops to women who are instinctively non-violent.

Violence in picketing can be both active and passive. The passive type can be more dangerous than the active. Both must be shunned.

KHADI

Without khadi there is no boycott. Therefore we must concentrate on khadi.

Young India, 19-2-1931

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271. TELEGRAM TO BALWANTRAI MEHTA

February 19, 1931

GENERAL SECRETARY
INDIAN STATES' PEOPLES' CONFERENCE
CARE NIMBPURI
BOMBAY

CAN SEE SATURDAY MORNING EIGHT O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

272. TELEGRAM TO JADHAV[1]

February 19, 1931

JADHAV
DEOLALI CANTT.

CAN SEE YOU SATURDAY MORNING NINE O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924; also photostat: S.N. 16932

273. TELEGRAM TO JAMSHED MEHTA[2]

February 19, 1931

JAMSHED MEHTA
KARACHI

THANKS. TELL KIKIBEHN DAILY PRAYING. SHE MUST GET RID FEVER.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924; also photostat: S.N. 16931

[1] In reply to his telegram dated February 17, which read: "Nasik District depressed class leaders desirous of waiting upon your holiness this week. Request date, time, place convenient for same. Matters urgent. Wire reply."

[2] In reply to his telegram dated February 16, which read: "Kikibehn fever continues but progressing. Takes regular diet."

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274. *INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (VICEROY'S VERSION)*

February 19, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came to see me at 2.45 p.m. this afternoon.

I explained to him that, before any further conference of a more extended character was possible, I felt it would be necessary to make a reference[1] to the Secretary of State as to the scope of the discussions and also to local Governments on the specific matters raised. I said that I supposed His Majesty's Government would want a few days for consideration, and that in the mean time I was exploring with my Council the idea of a wider conference. I said I thought it was unlikely that this could take place before next Thursday or Friday.

Mr. Gandhi replied that he was in general agreement with what I had said, though he was disposed to regret the delay suggested. He said he would naturally have desired to go to Gujarat, but would defer to my representations that for himself and Vallabhbhai to go there at this juncture would create new difficulties, and would accordingly not do so. I understood this to apply to Vallabhbhai also.

I said I would do my best to expedite matters and would warn Shafi and Sapru that it might be necessary to call them earlier than Thursday next week.

I pressed him again on the question of resuming civil disobedience if they came in, and he said firmly that he would certainly not resume in any circumstances till the conference discussions were concluded. He hoped it would never be necessary to resume at all, but at the present stage could not give me an undertaking beyond the end of the conference discussions.

He said in everything he had said he had expressed his personal view only, but that I could rely upon him to do his best to get the Working Committee's concurrence in any arrangements he made.

I told him I would communicate with him as soon as I could as to whether I thought a further conference would be profitable, and in the light of what I might be able to tell him as to the scope of discussions and the particular matters on which I might be unable to meet him, he could then consider whether from his point of view a further conference as suggested yesterday would be useful. He agreed.

He concurred in the issue of a brief communique in the following terms:

"His Excellency the Viceroy granted a further interview to Mr. Gandhi today. It is understood that various matters emerging from the discussions are

[1] *Vide* Appendix IV.

now under examination, and it is possible that some days may elapse before further stage of discussions is reached."[1]

(Sd). IRWIN

From a photostat: G.N. 8948

275. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY (GANDHIJI'S REPORT)

[*February 19, 1931*]

In the afternoon an invitation was received from Cunningham to meet the Viceroy. Bapu replied that he would meet him at 2.45 p.m. The interview lasted half an hour and thereafter, to use Bapu's words, he met the sub-Viceroys, i.e., Sapru and Jayakar. The interview with the Viceroy was very satisfactory. The Viceroy recounted for him the gist of the previous interviews.

VICEROY: I shall repeat this in your presence so that you can correct me if I make a mistake anywhere: You have promised that even though the conference were to break up as a result of your being dissatisfied with the progress, you would not resume civil disobedience until after the conclusion of the conference.

GANDHIJI: Yes, I have.

V. I am very glad; now could I have a further promise from you that you would not resume civil disobedience until after the conclusion of the proceedings in the Parliament?

G. I am afraid I cannot promise that.

V. What you have promised is enough for me. I will cable all this to the Secretary of State.[2] I must request you to stay here till I receive the reply to it. Sir Tej and Jayakar have got engagements, so they cannot come until next Saturday.

G. I cannot do that. Both of us, Sardar and I, are here and the people are expecting us. I have to go to Bardoli as also to Borsad. Even today we have asked our associates to go slow and so the pace of the struggle has somewhat slowed down and if this continues it will harm the movement.

Along with Rajaji, I asked the Viceroy: "Can't you ask those friends to stay back?" He promised to me that he would try to persuade them to do so.

V. Just as you have given instructions to your co-workers, I have also asked the Governors to send orders everywhere to go slow. I have spoken to the two Governors who are here and have also intimated the other Governors.

[1] For Gandhiji's report of the interview, *vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* Appendix IV.

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Bapu talked also about the Pratapgarh firing.

G. Our position in this respect is the same as in regard to Borsad. How can we rest without an inquiry? I have already sent a telegram regarding the picketing excesses in Bombay.

The Viceroy was pleased at this and said that a cable had been sent to the Secretary of State. On receipt of his reply, an informal conference would be held by Tuesday.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

276. TELEGRAM TO ANAND

February 20, 1931

ANAND
HYDERABAD (SIND)

WISH ENTERPRISE EVERY SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

277. TELEGRAM TO JADHAV

February 20, 1931

JADHAV
DEOLALI CANTT.

ONLY OTHER TIME AVAILABLE SUNDAY MORNING DELHI.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

278. TELEGRAM TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

February 20, 1931

DESHBHAKTA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

DELIGHTED. HOPE YOUR FAMILY WELL. SEND SUCH PARTICULARS YOU THINK NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

279. TELEGRAM TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

February 20, 1931

GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

YOUR WIRE. HAVE EVERYTHING IN MIND. HAVE NOT WORRIED YOU COME BUT IF YOU THINK NECESSARY YOU MAY. ANY CASE WRITE FULLY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

280. REMARKS ABOUT VICEROY[1]

February 20, 1931

I cannot yet say that he is sincere, but he was friendly and frank, both of which go a great way to make a man sincere. But I may say that I find much less to justify my prejudice against him. To a certain extent I may say I have found him sincere, but that was because he had to reciprocate my sincerity. And you know people can be sincere with certain people and not sincere with all. My letter was received by him in the spirit in which it should have been received. He did not accept the terms, but he admitted the justice of it and urged administrative difficulties.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

281. SPEECH AT DELHI

February 20, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi began by offering Id felicitation to his Muslim brothers and sisters. He said on such an occasion and in the presence of such an unprecedented gathering, his thoughts went to Maulana Mahomed Ali whose death had pained him a great deal. Ever since he had returned to India from South Africa he had thought of Delhi as the Delhi of Maulana Mahomed Ali, Swami Shraddhanand and Hakim Ajmal Khan so much so that even

[1] In the course of a conversation with J. M. Sen Gupta, Mayor of Calcutta

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now, though their physical presence was to be missed their unseen presence could still be felt. He was equally pained to miss at such a critical juncture as the present Pandit Motilal Nehru whose death was so recent that their eyes were yet wet with tears. Mahatmaji, continuing, said:

I know you are all anxious to hear something from me of the talks I am having with His Excellency the Viceroy. I am afraid I may not take the public into confidence about what happened between His Excellency and me. For one thing I am pledged not to do so and secondly it is not going to help us. But I may say this much, that these talks have been conducted in a most friendly manner and with much sweetness. What will be the result I cannot say. The result is in the hands of God. It is His will that will prevail. Your duty is that you must continue to do what India expects of you.

Dr. Ansari belonging as he does to Delhi has naturally spoken highly of the part played by Delhi; but I am a witness to the great sacrifices that have been made throughout India and I can say how Delhi stands in comparison with any other province. For that you deserve my congratulation.[1]

Resuming his speech, Mahatmaji said:

Here as elsewhere the part played by women is indescribable. When the history of this movement comes to be written, the sacrifices made by the women of India will occupy the foremost place and just as with women so also with children. Their wonderful awakening has fortified me in my faith that God is with us in this struggle. These young folk had never been organized for such work, never been trained for it. How they came to achieve all this I have not been able to divine nor has anyone else whom I have consulted been able to enlighten [me] as to who guided them; only God could have done so. But remember that, in the sacred battle, whatever sacrifices you have made are trifling. Let them not puff you up with pride, what we want for India is *purna* swaraj. And who can calculate what further sacrifices India will have to make to achieve that goal? I assure you that I am doing as much as is humanly possible to bring about peace so that the people may not have to go through further suffering and sacrifices but everything is in God's hands and if it be not His will that any understanding be arrived at, then I will have to tell the people that they must be ready for much further suffering.

[1] At this stage the speech was interrupted on account of disorder among a section of the people who could not hear Gandhiji.

The sacrifices that we have made are as nothing before the sacrifices other nations have made for the sake of freedom. But there is a reason why we have not had to suffer as much as other nations. It is as clear to me as daylight. The reason is that when we pledged ourselves to achieve *purna* swaraj we also took the vow that whatever we do in furtherance of the goal would be in consonance with truth and non-violence. And when I think of the part played by the whole of India, especially by the rural population, I think we have substantially fulfilled the pledge of truth and non-violence. But I cannot deceive myself nor will I permit you to deceive yourselves. We have followed truth and non-violence, but we have not made them an article of faith. They have been to some a matter of policy, but even if you have accepted it as a policy, you may not act or think in terms of violence so long as you adhere to the policy. The very thought of untruth or violence is a breach of the pledge. You will remember that at the Ahmedabad Congress[1] this matter was thoroughly thrashed out in the presence of leaders like Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari and, after full deliberation, it was decided that so long as we bound ourselves to adhere to our policy of truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed, the slightest breach of that pledge meant a breach of faith.

I may tolerate the allegation that Indians are not fit for swaraj, but I cannot for a moment tolerate the allegation, if it were true, that my countrymen were untrue or dishonest. There can be no greater tragedy than this, that Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians who believe in God were ungodly and guilty of a breach of faith. Such people are not fit for freedom. They are fit for slavery and worse. For this reason, I have always laid the greatest stress on the point that it was open to you to abandon the policy and adopt a different one but so long as you pin your faith to truth and non-violence, do not deceive yourself or the world. Therefore when I heard that there has been some excesses on the part of our people in the picketing of foreign cloth, I was deeply pained. I have not been able to investigate into the allegations but you know that in 1921-22 I expiated for the excesses by suspending the movement. That sort of expiation is today out of the question but I must say that wherever these excesses are going on, they must stop.

It is better that dealers in foreign cloth continue to sell it and those addicted to drink continue to do so, than that we resort

[1] In December 1921; *vide* Vol. XXII.

to excesses in picketing. But there is another danger I wish to warn you against. If we take to these excesses, we shall be opening the door for self-destruction, when we have swaraj, for there will then be no third power with machine-guns to intervene and restore peace. We shall be fighting one another and fratricidal war will spell destruction. If, therefore, you have the slightest apprehension in your mind that picketing cannot be done without resorting to excesses, you had better give it up. I want you to remember that I am an expert in these matters. I am sure we have in the past done considerable picketing without the slightest resort to violence. Do not be afraid that the moment we eschew the excesses our work will fall through. I would ask you not to worry. Rest assured that the man who is asking you today to keep to your moorings must have some alternatives to suggest but I shall not dwell on it today.

I have received letters of complaint and I am making enquiries. It is possible that we have committed mistakes. I will ask all Congress workers to consider these carefully and correct whatever mistakes we may have been guilty of. I appeal to you to eschew all excesses. You may like to know what I mean by 'excesses'. I invite the curious to come to me for the explanation.

And now a word to the foreign-cloth dealers. Do not deceive yourselves or the country by thinking that you have done your duty by refraining from selling foreign cloth for a few months. This foreign-cloth trade must stop for ever, because it is only by this means that we can promote the well-being of millions of our countrymen. I will respectfully submit to the foreign-cloth dealers that a complete boycott of foreign cloth is their dharma. Sacrifices they will have to make but what are those sacrifices compared to the greater sacrifices that are being made by other sections of the public? I believe that through the charkha and khaddar, the boycott can be made a success and I am working according to my belief.

Cloth merchants are arriving here the day after tomorrow. I want the pressmen to convey my message to them. Thus they will be able to realize their duty.

Citizens of Delhi, I do not flatter myself that you have gathered here in your thousands to do honour to me; you have come to proclaim to the world that you are all determined to achieve *purna* swaraj. Let not my talks with the Viceroy worry you for a moment. Do not think of them. But go on with your work. Only remember that the result is not in my hands, not in the hands of Dr. Ansari or Pandit Malaviya, but in your hands. I am but

an instrument, and I am acting only as your humble ambassador. Everything will depend upon what you do and what you will fail to do. May God give you strength to keep the pledge of truth and non-violence.

Gandhiji delivered his speech in Hindi and it was not wholly audible to large sections of the vast throng and Gandhiji made a special request to newspaper correspondents to publish only authorized text or summary of the speech and announced that the Press report of the speech would be looked through by him.

The Hindustan Times, 22-2-1931

282. TELEGRAM TO POLITICAL PRISONERS[1]

DELHI,
February 21, 1931

HEARTY ID GREETINGS TO ALL OUR COMPANIONS MUSLIMS HINDUS SIKHS AND CHRISTIANS.

The Hindustan Times, 23-2-1931

283. INTERVIEW TO "NEWS CHRONICLE"

[*February 21, 1931*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi in an interview to a representative of the *News Chronicle* of London, described the prospects of a settlement negatively as less hopeful than before but declined to make any statement at the present stage.

Questioned as to whether he would still retain his first impression created by the Viceroy which Gandhiji had described in his previous interview, he replied that he must revise that opinion now. Personally, in the course of the conversations he had found Lord Irwin to be frank, cordial and friendly.

Replying to the last question as to whether he would expiate by calling off the movement if there was a recrudescence of violence by Congressmen, as in 1922, Gandhiji said:

Last time when I did expiate, the method of non-violence in politics was a new one and people were unused to what I call absolute, downright plain-speaking on the part of leaders. Therefore I said with regard to myself that people very often thought as if I spoke with mental reservations and even said what I did

[1] This appeared as message from Gandhiji and M. A. Ansari "to all the political prisoners in various jails in India".

[2] From *The Hindu*, 22-2-1931

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not mean. And that only hurt me but I at once realized that it would injure the cause itself and so I felt it necessary, in order to drive home the truth to the masses, that they must take me literally in all I spoke and that there was no conscious mental reservation. This I could only do by some definite drastic action which even millions could understand in a moment and hence I deliberately adopted the method of public expiation by open fasting and I saw that the very first experiment along this line had produced effective and startling results and I continued that till the Chauri Chaura culmination in 1922.

That having been brought home and I having declared myself only responsible for the initiative of the campaign and not for the further conduct of it or its stoppage, it would be improper on my part now to interfere through the method of fasting. It is the Working Committee which is responsible for the campaign now and it alone can interfere with or shape its conduct. This, however, should not be taken to mean that I disown my moral responsibility for the violence done by a single Congressman, and if some violence is done by Congressmen it produces such a sore on my system that I cannot bear it. I cannot say what I shall then do, for in all such things I am not guided by reason, but by instinct or in other words by the inner voice and one never knows where that voice would lead you to.

The Hindustan Times, 25-2-1931

284. TO READERS

You should not be misled or confused if I approach the Viceroy or if the Congress Working Committee holds talks regarding a settlement. Your dharma is to carry on the task which lies before you, viz., that of serving the nation.

If you do so, there will be an honourable settlement, if one is at all possible. But if as soon as you hear of negotiations for a settlement, you either fall asleep or start enjoying yourselves or become even slightly slack, the settlement will fall through. You should know that the Congress would never accept a dishonourable settlement. A satyagrahi can neither add to nor subtract from [his demands]. Just as an honest business man maintains fixed prices, similar is the case with the satyagrahi. A soldier's demands are not reduced just because he becomes slack; similarly, soldiers cannot add to their demands when they keep advancing and getting more daring. Hence, neither I nor any other Congressman

can accept anything which is even slightly less than our demand. Therefore if the nation becomes lax, there will be no settlement and the struggle will drag on. The settlement will be reached early if the people keep up their fervour.

You should realize that at present the most important task is the boycott of foreign cloth. This boycott can be made to succeed only by convincing the people through reason and not through force. This requires intelligence and organization and constitutes the test of our sacrifice.

Mill-owners

If these mill-owners so desire, they can make a success of the boycott. The following is the plan of action:

1. They should prepare a list of those who trade in foreign goods.
2. They should give their own goods in exchange for foreign cloth with traders who are prepared for this exchange. Dealers in foreign cloth should let go a certain percentage in valuing their stocks of foreign cloth. Mills should put the minimum prices of their goods.
3. The mill-owners can sell the above-mentioned foreign cloth outside the country or they may set fire to it, or they may seal it up and set it aside for being dealt with after swaraj has been won or, in other words, they can ask for some compensation from the new Government in case they have to suffer a heavy loss.

This requires the following—some intelligence, some sacrifice, some order, some self-confidence, some foresight, some faith in the people and whole-hearted determination to boycott foreign cloth. Just as this is something that can be readily suggested, it can also be readily put into practice.

No one should look for guidance to anyone else; instead, those who are convinced should begin to act and plead with other mill-owners to follow suit. A good beginning can be made even if a few mill-owners get together and act jointly.

Congress

The contribution which the Congress can make in this regard depends upon the beginning which the mill-owners make. The contribution of the former can be secured through picketing.

Dealers in Foreign Cloth

1. You must give up the temptation of trading in foreign cloth; it is poison.
2. Do not entertain the false notion that this trade can be resumed under swaraj or within a short time. There is no swaraj

for the poor, at any rate, if this trade is not stopped in India.

3. No one asks you to lay down your lives, no one asks you even to sacrifice all you have. However, everyone asks you to rid yourselves of the filth which you have gathered. You must realize that it is not as if you cannot trade in anything except foreign cloth. People cannot do without cloth; hence there is no alternative for them but to buy cloth which is made in India.

4. If only you can see it, your true interest lies in this boycott.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan (Supplement), 22-2-1931

285. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 22, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I am happy to know that you are improving. If for some time I cannot write to you, you should not worry. I get no free time. I cannot say with certainty how long I shall have to stay on here. I shall be here for at least three or four days. You should go on writing to me. I hope you also write to Father. Jayaprakash is here. He seems to be giving satisfaction to Birlaji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3411

286. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

February 22, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letter.

It seems to me that we shall be able to meet only if there is a settlement. If the negotiations break down, we shall not be allowed to remain free, and that would be the only right course for the Government to adopt. Only God knows whether or not there will be a settlement. A satyagrahi should remain unconcerned whether there will be any. He will strive for peace, but will always keep himself ready for a fight.

I do not wish to advise you just now with regard to the work there. You should go on doing it to the best of your ability

and judgment, and, as you do so, you will learn from experience. Even if I cannot write to you, you should go on writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5502

287. SPEECH AT COUNCIL OF ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE, DELHI

February 22, 1931

MR. PRESIDENT AND BROTHERS OF MY COUNTRY,

You all know, I am physically so weak that I am unable to make a speech while standing; when I try to do so, every part of my body trembles.

Maulvi Mohammad Yaqub has said that my coming here meant the coming of 21 crores of Indian brethren.

I am a Bania, and there is no limit to my greed.

It has always been my heart's desire to speak, not only for 21 crores, but for 30 crores of Indians.

Today you may not accept that position of mine but my early upbringing, my childhood and youth, has been to strive for Hindu-Muslim unity. No one may dismiss it today as merely a craze of my old age. My heart is confident that God will grant me that position to speak for the whole of India one day, and even if I die striving for it, I shall achieve peace of mind.

I do not know what the result of my talks with the Viceroy would be, nor can I say when the talks will result in something, but if God wishes that Congress should participate in the Conference and if there is a settlement between the Government and the Congress, the question of Hindu-Muslim unity will be one which will engage our first attention. And I give you all the assurance at my command that what I can do to achieve that end we will be always willing to do.

Hindu-Muslim unity is not a question of bargain—that we should continue fighting for one, two or five seats. Unity can be achieved by giving up mutual fears and mistrust. Unless our hearts are purified and we regard Hindus and Muslims as one, unity cannot be established.

Rest assured that it is not a matter of loaves and fishes, but of trust and love. If Hindus and Muslims are two eyes of the

country, as Sir Syed Ahmed said, there should be no occasion for quarrel or distrust—no one can say that one eye is better than the other. It is quite conceivable that two brothers may have different faith and yet both may live in harmony and peace. I wonder why the people fight in the name of religion and for the sake of religion.

I am ready to serve you in the matter of establishing Hindu-Muslim unity and now since you have made a way for me into your heart, I shall try to enter it. It is a question of lover and beloved. I am in search of it; I was anxiously waiting for it. If Hindu-Muslim unity is achieved, the mission of my life would be fulfilled.

Thanking the League for the invitation, Mahatmaji said:

I wish you may continue to invite me as you have invited me today and you shall have no occasion to repent. (Laughter and cheers)

The Hindustan Times, 25-2-1931

288. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

February 22/23, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

My daily programme has become most uncertain these days. I have to keep awake till late at night. All the same I get up at four, and so the body is put to considerable strain. However, I manage to take some rest during the day and keep fit.

I have suggested to Sitla Sahay that he should call Sarojini-devi to Allahabad. She should forget the attraction of the Ashram for some time. Rukmini is with me at present and keeps cheerful. Her health, too, is good on the whole. No one can say what will happen here. I spare no effort. But, at the same time, I will not give in on any matter of principle. Nothing that I say in my letters should appear in newspapers.

Blessings from
BAPU

Morning, February 23, 1931

For some days I shall have to be satisfied with what I can write in the morning every day. As the forefinger of my right hand had an accidental cut by a knife, I am writing with the left hand. The wound is not deep. I have sent two wires to Surat about Shankarbhai. The news in the *Chronicle* seems to me to

be baseless, for I had a letter about him even while I was in jail, informing me that he had been permitted.[1]

How does Purushottam keep in jail? How is Jamnadas? Who lives with the elders[2] these days? Rukmini is quite happy here. Keshu must have returned by now.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

289. TELEGRAM TO DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, SURAT

February 23, 1931

HEAR SHANKARBHAI PATEL PRISONER SUBJAIL SURAT FASTING FOR NOT BEING ALLOWED SPIN ON TAKLI. I POSSESS INSPECTOR GENERAL'S LETTER SAYING HE WAS PERMITTED USE TAKLI. KINDLY MAKE INQUIRIES AND WIRE RESULT DARYAGANJ DELHI.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

290. TELEGRAM TO KALYANJI MEHTA

February 23, 1931

INQUIRE SHANKARBHAI SURAT SUBJAIL FASTING FOR TAKLI. WIRE INFORMATION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

291. TELEGRAM TO E. E. DOYLE

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MAJOR DOYLE
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
POONA

SHANKARBHAI PATEL OF WHOM I WROTE YOU FROM YERAVDA PRISON AND WHO YOU HAD INFORMED ME BEING UNDER

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] Addressee's father and mother

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VOW WAS PERMITTED USE TAKLI SPINNING WAS I UNDERSTAND PREVENTED FROM SO DOING SURAT SUBJAIL. HEAR NOW TRANSFERRED SABARMATI JAIL. AM PAINFULLY SURPRISED WHY HE WAS PREVENTED SURAT SUBJAIL. PLEASE ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS SABARMATI SO AS SAVE INNOCENT MEN FROM FURTHER PRIVATIONS IF NOT WORSE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16946

292. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

1 DARYAGANJ,
February 23, 1931

NARANDAS
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
AHMEDABAD

SHANKARBHAI TRANSFERRED SABARMATI. FAST MUST CONTINUE IF TAKLI NOT ALLOWED.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 16947

293. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

CAMP DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MY DEAR SURESHBABU,

For the present I will not write anything about the business part of your letter[1]. Let me ask you just now to follow the

[1] Dated February 20, 1931. Among other things, writing about the financial commitments of Abhoy Ashram, S. C. Banerji had suggested: "Instead of making us responsible for the payment of all our debts both to banks as well as private creditors, the A.I.S.A. should also bear a burden of the loss. . . . The amount of loss sustained by the Ashram during the last three or four years has been too much for the Ashram to resume khaddar work any more unless substantially backed by the A.I.S.A. . . . I request you to devote some time for the matter and, if convenient, give Annada an opportunity of talking over the whole matter to find out a practical solution to save the Ashram. . . . Mr. Banker knows everything in detail and I trust he will be able to explain the whole situation." (S.N. 16934)

treatment as a doctor should [advise] and restore your body to its original healthy condition. Annada Babu may come any day he likes and take his chance. I say this because my movement is so uncertain. I have already opened discussion with Mr. Banker.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI
P-39 FERN ROAD, BALLYGUNJ
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 16935

294. LETTER TO R. R. BAKHALE

CAMP 1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI
February 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing six copies of your report[1]. Having had some minutes at my disposal, I have gone through the report as carefully as was necessary and I have no hesitation in saying that it is well written and it is free from exaggeration and declamation. It is a report such as I would expect from anyone connected with the Society.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI R. R. BAKHALE
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
BOMBAY-4

From a microfilm: S.N. 16945

295. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

CAMP DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MY DEAR HENRY,

I wish I could write to you at length but for the present I must content myself with the line that you want, namely, that I was glad to receive the little box of salt. I have not seen it

[1] On the lathi-charge on women's procession at Borsad

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yet. Please thank Mr. . . .[1] for the thoughtful gift. My love to you all. Of the happenings in Delhi, I need not write anything because you are having everything by cable.

Yours sincerely,

HENRY S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
FIFTH FLOOR, DANES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 16941

296. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS[2]

CAMP DELHI,
February 23, 1931

MY DEAR REGINALD,

I honour you for your long, frank and emphatic letter. It will help me to remain firm where firmness is required. Having said this, let me tell you that I do not at all agree with you that I was wrong in suspending judgment or action pending the arrival of the three friends. Satyagraha can afford to wait. It can be gentle, and should be gentle, where gentleness is a duty. However mistaken their judgment may be found to be, I regard these friends as equal lovers of their country with me. I have no business to judge them as I would not have them judge me and by waiting I assure you that the cause has not suffered a bit. It may be that the friends there who are whole-hoggers may feel embarrassed to find me acting contrary to their expectation. But, as time goes by, you and they may discover many such shocks. I regard myself as a seasoned soldier in satyagraha. I have acted before, as I have acted now, at similar critical junctures and I cannot recall a single occasion when the cause espoused had lost by waiting. On the contrary I can recall many an occasion when the waiting had proved fruitful. Let my assurance there-

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

[2] In his book *To Live in Mankind*, Reginald Reynolds writes: "As soon as negotiations were re-opened with the Government, I wrote. It was not, as it might appear, impertinent interference. I had a perfectly legitimate motive, which was that — as one of the few exponents of the Congress case in Britain — I ought to know just where they stood. It was of vital importance to me that I should understand the reasons for this change of front if I was to continue writing and speaking in defence of India and her leaders. Gandhiji's reply to this first letter was written from Delhi on February 23rd, 1931 . . . "

fore be sufficient for you that so far as I am concerned there will be absolutely no surrender on principle, i.e., on the substantial part of the demand and I doubt not that there will be none on the part of the Congress. Remember too that satyagraha is a method of carrying conviction and of converting by an appeal to reason and to the sympathetic chord in human beings. It relies upon the ultimate good in every human being, no matter how debased he may be for the time being. If this does not satisfy you, do by all means strive with me. You are entitled to do so and demand satisfaction from me. I need not say a word about the brave manner in which you are fighting there. May God bless you and give you strength. Of the doings in Delhi I need say nothing because the talks are still going on and I have no doubt that the cablegrams are keeping you informed of the doings from day to day. Anything, therefore, that I can say today would be out of date when this letter reaches you.

What about your marriage?

With love.

BAPU

REGINALD REYNOLDS, ESQ.
8 FAIRDENE ROAD
BOULSDON, SURREY

From a photostat: C.W. 4539. Courtesy: Swarthmore College; also S.N. 16948

297. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

CAMP 1 DARYAGANJ,
DELHI,
February 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

As I am now at least temporarily out of jail, I have an opportunity of writing to you more fully than I could from Yeravda. I have followed with gratefulness all the efforts that you have been good enough to make on behalf of India. I feel more and more convinced that if India comes to her own, it will be perhaps the largest contribution to the world peace which we are all praying for. It is too early to give you any idea of the negotiations that are now going on. All I can say is that I am leaving no stone unturned to attain peace with honour. But in the last resort peace or war is the same thing for the satyagrahi.

He strives always for peace and has to hold himself in readiness for war. In either case he follows the path that truth dictates to him.

I hope you got over all your illness in quick time and that this letter will find you fully restored to health.[1]

Yours sincerely,

J. H. Holmes, Esq.
The Community Church of New York
12 Park Avenue, New York City (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 16943

298. NOTE TO DR. THORNTON[2]

Silence Day, February 23, 1931

If the missionary friends will forget their mission, viz., of proselytizing Indians and of bringing Christ to them, they will do wonderfully good work. Your duty is done with the ulterior motive of proselytizing. I was one of the first to raise a note of warning in this matter. To realize what harm the missions are doing you have to see a man like Mr. Andrews. He could tell you how his soul rebelled against the missionaries' presumption to give the Indians new religion. He belonged to the Cambridge Mission, but he left it inasmuch as seeing God everywhere he realized that every religion taught devotion to God, however defective it may be. You may certainly point out and help to correct the defects in my religion, but insist on my finding my salvation through my own religion. I am reminded of a simile. What is the use of my going to a higher altitude when I am born on the plains and must find what nourishment and health the plains can give? The fact is there are no irreconcilable differences between different religions. If you were to probe the surface, you will find one and the same thing at the bottom, forget your missionary spirit and simply live your life in the midst of people. Help certainly you have [brought], viz., what comes through contact with you and in spite of you, i.e., the spirit of inquiry about the short-

[1] In his reply Holmes had cabled: "Hastily approved of your message. American friends of India sustain you in the struggle for the independence of your country, through peace if possible, through war if necessary." (*The Hindu*, 3-3-1931)

[2] A Christian missionary

comings of our own religion. You did not want us to pursue the inquiry because you saw immorality where we saw spirituality. When I go to your institutions I do not feel I am going to an Indian institution. That is what worries me.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

299. TELEGRAM TO TIRATH SINGH

February 24, 1931

TIRATH SINGH
SECRETARY
SWADESHI EXHIBITION COMMITTEE
KARACHI

SWADESHI IS DECEPTIVE WORD. UNABLE JUDGE WITHOUT KNOWING MORE. ANY CASE YOU MUST SECURE APPROVAL RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

300. MESSAGE TO KHADDAR PRACHARINI SABHA, DELHI[1]

February 24, 1931

I notice that people are getting disappointed for want of khaddar. But we must remember that to put on khaddar is a religion to Congressmen, and once we forget this, it would be difficult to boycott foreign cloth. Mill-made cloth is only for those who have not understood the message of khaddar.

The Hindu, 24-2-1931

[1] This was read out by Jamnalal Bajaj at a public meeting organized by the Sabha.

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301. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

DELHI,
February 24, 1931

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. It certainly does credit to a lawyer. In sending the wire which I did to Perinbehn, my own satisfaction was the chief consideration. A satyagrahi never hides his shortcomings from the world; if he does, his vow of truth would be compromised. Hence his words, written or spoken, are always unambiguous. I do not see this in your letter. If coercion is being used in Bombay, how can we say that it is used without the approval of Congressmen? Every volunteer is a Congressman. I could see even from Yeravda Jail that coercion was being used. If you believe that coercion will not help our cause, you should do your utmost to see that not even a trace of it is left in our movement.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7514. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

302. PREFACE TO "PARDESHI KAPADNI SAME HARIFAI KEM KARAVI"

DELHI,
February 25, 193[1][1]

This is Bhai Manmohandas's translation of his own English book[2]. I have not been able to go through the translation; I however read the original while in the Yeravda Mandir. This is a timely publication. It proves that boycott of foreign cloth cannot be achieved without the spinning-wheel and khadi. The writer has made a commendable effort to show how to achieve complete boycott. The book contains much useful statistical infor-

[1] The book has "1932", which is obviously an error as Gandhiji was in jail then. The preface was sent to Manmohandas Gandhi; *vide* the following item.

[2] *How to Compete with Foreign Cloth*

mation and it is obvious that those who are anxious to understand the dharma of boycott can get considerable help from it.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11; also *Pardeshi Kapadni same Harifai kem Karavi*

303. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
February 25, 1931

BHAI MANMOHAN,

You are like the man who, with one leg in the stirrup, would have instruction regarding the nature of the Brahman. But one cannot manage it always. As my eyes chanced to fall on your letter among the many lying before me, I am able to reply to it. But just as that man who wanted instruction about the nature of the Brahman while he was getting astride a horse could have only one or two sentences, so my preface will have no more. Here they are: . . .[1]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11

304. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

DELHI,
February 25, 1931

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have just enough time, or can spare it, to answer your questions. I had got your long letter. Coercion should have no room at all in the picketing of foreign cloth. It does not matter if without coercion picketing does not succeed. I certainly do not believe that fasting is always a form of coercion. I have written on this subject for the next issue of *Navajivan*.[2] Read that article and, if you have any questions to ask me, ask them. If we have resolved not to tolerate coercion in any circumstances, we shall continually discover new methods of picketing and new means of bring-

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* "What Should One Not Do?", pp. 236-8.

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ing about complete boycott. In consequence of the picketing of liquor booths, drink addicts will make illicit liquor in their homes and some of them will even sell it. This evil may be tolerated if we have taken the necessary measures to make it bearable. Most of the addicts, however, will have stopped drinking. My impression is that, in picketing liquor booths, our main, or only, aim, has been to deprive the Government of the revenue which it receives from the sale of liquor, whereas our real duty is to stop drink addicts from drinking. If we realize this clearly and if we get workers, we can visit each addict in his home and persuade him to give up his habit, and we can also teach him to enjoy harmless drinks in place of liquor. Wherever the workers act in a manner contrary to truth, persons like you should stop them from doing so and, if they fail, break off relations with them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 9506

305. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

DELHI,
February 25, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter and a portion of the translated *Gita-praveshika* have arrived. I shall read the translation when I have time. I have had some news from Shankerlal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1686

306. SPEECH AT HINDU COLLEGE, DELHI[1]

February 25, 1931

Mahatmaji next unveiled a beautiful portrait of the late Lala Lajpat Rai amid loud shouts of "*Jai*" and then proceeded to deliver his speech.

He said he felt very grateful to them for having asked him to unveil the portrait of Lala Lajpat Rai. It was in the fitness of things, that at a

[1] After welcome address by S. K. Sen, Principal, three purses were presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Hindu, St. Stephen's and Law Colleges.

time when India's fight for freedom was on, the portrait of a great patriot should be unveiled. But mere unveiling of his portrait was not sufficient, they must resolve in their minds that they shall install in their hearts the noble qualities of Lala Lajpat Rai. He was also grateful to them for the purses they had presented then. He said he always felt great pleasure in sitting among students, chatting with them, playing with them, flattering them, and snubbing them, because he had a self-interest and that was "complete independence" and that could not be achieved unless he had attracted every student's heart and won over his power of sacrifice for *balidan* (sacrifice) in the *yajna* (fight) which was going on in the country.

The whole world was looking towards the students and he would feel much pain and sorrow, if they did not come out successful in their trial. He was sorry that the students had not taken their legitimate share in the fight for freedom. No doubt they did shout "*inquilab*" loudly, but he wanted them to cultivate three things: (1) *maryada* (discipline), (2) *sanyam* (self-control) and (3) *charitrabal* (power of character). Where else could we find these three things? The fight for swaraj was a *yajna* of self-purification and he expected the students to contribute the largest share in that *yajna*.

But, he was sorry that they had not fulfilled his expectations in the matter. They had lagged in making the sacrifice that was expected of them. Mother India expected much more sacrifice from them and he was sorry that they had not offered that. The Mahatma said:

I am an optimist and will not give up. I still feel hopeful that you would fulfil the expectations of the country.

It was with these hopes that he had come to address them.

Mahatmaji said, there were three tasks before them. (1) Hindu-Muslim unity. Let the old men (Hindus and Muslims) fight, because they had in them mistrust arising out of cowardice, which was inevitable for men nearing death. But youth should not entertain mistrust and should work whole-heartedly for Hindu-Muslim unity because they were the best messengers of the cause. What, if they had different religions? Like the five fingers of one hand, they should protect and help each other. It was a pity that we people were doing un-religious things in the name of religion. He wanted students to promise to live like brothers in perfect harmony and establish goodwill and cordiality between Hindus and Muslims. The second task before them, said Mahatmaji, was doing away with the curse of untouchability which did not mean simply touching the so-called untouchables, but it meant regarding the humblest and the poorest in the land as our equal. Thirdly, they must use khaddar and promote the use of charkha, which in itself was a great science. Sir C. V. Raman and Sir J. C. Bose deserved praise for their scientific discoveries but the charkha too was a powerful science, which would bring salvation to crores of our countrymen.

Concluding, he said if crores of people were his followers today and called him a Mahatma, it was not because he had given up practice at the Bar, but because he regarded the poorest among the poor as his brother and he believed that the salvation of the country lay in charkha and Hindu-Muslim unity. He was devoting every minute for the achievement of these ideals.

Mahatmaji smilingly added:

If you follow me you can all become Mahatmas (Laughter) and then I will have many companions to help me in the attainment of our object. (Laughter)

Mahatmaji concluded with a prayer to God to inspire the students with the will and power to sacrifice.

The Hindustan Times, 27-2-1931

307. PICKETING

It is an unshakable faith with me that a cause suffers exactly to the extent that it is supported by violence. I say this in spite of appearances to the contrary. If I kill a man who obstructs me, I may experience a sense of false security. But the security will be short-lived. For I shall not have dealt with the root cause. In due course other men will surely rise to obstruct me. My business therefore is not to kill the man or men who obstruct me but to discover the cause that impels them to obstruct me and deal with it. Even so must one deal with the cause of people selling foreign cloth and not lay violent hands on those who happened to be the dealers for the time being. The cause lies on the surface. So long as there are buyers of foreign cloth, there will be sellers. I must, therefore, gain the ear of the buying public. If we would but recognize this cardinal fact we would lay the greatest stress upon work in the villages which send their millions to the foreign-cloth market. But I must not be understood to mean that we may neglect the cities and the merchants. Only under the plan suggested by me need there be neither despair, nor the slightest trace of violence. Moreover my plan if fully executed contains within itself the surest chances of success and need never degenerate into rowdyism. Let us not forget that we are wedded to non-violence and truth. The strictest and closest striving towards these two beacon-lights would certainly bring us ashore; and whilst reaching us there in the quickest possible time it would enable us in difficult circumstances to discover effective ways out. Those who have faith would not be disheartened if they found that some dealers have defied Congress instructions and demands. Such disappointments should be used for perfecting

our own internal organization and discovering our defects, never for losing faith.

Young India, 26-2-1931

308. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

1 DARYAGANJ,
DELHI,
February 26, 1931

MY DEAR REHANA,

I have your letter. I wrote only two days ago for *Navajivan* on picketing[1] and there pointed out that your fasting was ideal and appropriate picketing. The reasoning is simple. There must be a bond of affection between the parties. In your case there was that bond. They knew you as a member of the family which the people of Patan knew had served them in common with the people of the whole State. That bond had never snapped. You had therefore a perfect right to entreat them and, if your entreaty was lost upon them, to fast even as you would be entitled to fast against father and mother if, in your opinion, they were going wrong and they did not listen to your entreaty. That the Patan dealers in sealing their stock were actuated not so much by their regard for you as by the fear of an enraged populace may be quite true and is highly probable. But that need not be considered in weighing the merits of a particular action. In the language of the *Gita* ours is but to do and not to mind the result. If the motive and the action are pure, the doer is not responsible for the manifold consequences that may arise from it. I hope this is clear. Write again if necessary.

Things here are still indefinite, but for a satyagrahi is not one step enough? We must not seek "to see the distant scene".

Love.

BAPU

MISS REHANA TYABJI
C/O SHRI DAHYALAL HIRALAL DESAI
NEAR THE BANK OF BARODA
MEHSANA

From a photostat: S.N. 9629

[1] *Vide* "What Should One Not Do?", pp. 236-8.

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309. SPEECH AT SISGUNJ GURDWARA, DELHI[1]

February 26, 1931

I have followed with painful interest the details of police firing[2] into the sacred precincts of this Gurdwara that have been narrated by the previous figure[3] and I assure you that my grief and resentment at the outrage are not less than yours. But as I told my Sikh brethren at the time of Nankana Sahib tragedy when I visited Nankana Sahib in company with Abul Kalam Azad in 1921, we are today fighting not for one Gurdwara but for the bigger Gurdwara, which is the common sacred possession of all of us, viz., *purna* swaraj. *Purna* — complete — because it is as much for the prince as for the peasant, as much for the rich land-owner as for the landless tiller of the soil, as much for the Hindus as for the Mussalmans, as much for the Parsis and Christians as for the Jains, Jews and Sikhs, irrespective of any distinction of caste or creed or status in life. The very connotation of the word and the means of its attainment to which we are pledged—truth and non-violence—preclude all possibility of that swaraj being more for someone than for the other, being partial to someone and prejudicial to the other. Truth and non-violence leave no room for fraud or falsehood. The Congress has attracted the attention of the world for the simple reason that it is pledged to win freedom by means unemployed by nations heretofore. The world has so far been familiar with only one method of achieving freedom and that by the use of physical force. But luckily for itself and the world, India has launched on the method of non-violence and truth for the attainment of its independence. It is a unique thing in history and the world which began by regarding it with scepticism is to-day watching India's great non-violent experiment with bated breath. In physical warfare even chicanery and fraud have a place but non-violence precludes the use of all other weapons except that of truth and justice. Swaraj under this method, therefore, can never be achieved by usurping the rights of any community big or small but by ensuring even-handed justice and fair treatment to

[1] This appeared under the caption: "God and Our Bond" as "a condensed translation" of Gandhiji's speech.

[2] On May 6, 1930

[3] Balwant Singh

all—even the poorest and the weakest in the land. That being so how can the Congress want to keep even a child out of its own.

The beauty of non-violence is that it carries within it its own security.

I venture to suggest that the non-violence creed of the Congress is the surest guarantee of its good faith and our Sikh friends have no reason to fear betrayal at its hands. For the moment it did so, the Congress would not only thereby seal its own doom but that of the country too. Moreover the Sikhs are a brave people. They will know how to safeguard their rights by the exercise of arms if it should ever come to that.

Sardar Madhusudan Singh in his speech has asked for an assurance that the Congress would do nothing that might alienate the sympathies of the Sikhs from the Congress. Well, the Congress in its Lahore Session passed a resolution that it would not endorse any settlement with regard to the minority question that failed to satisfy any of the minorities concerned. What further assurance can the Congress give you to set you at ease I really fail to understand.

Then there is the controversy about the inclusion of the Sikh colour in the national flag. No blame can possibly attach to the Congress in this respect. The present design was suggested by me. The Congress has not even formally adopted it. I had offered to the Sikh friends to place before the A.I.C.C. their viewpoint if they could apprise me of it. But as it turned out, the A.I.C.C. could not meet after that and no one knows as to when it would be able to meet at all. Even the Working Committee is out today on sufferance. To raise this controversy at this time—a time when the Congress is fighting for its very existence — would be, to say the least, unseemly act. You may not obstruct if you cannot help.

The Sikhs have given their loyal and unstinted co-operation to the Congress in many parts in India like Bombay and Delhi, etc. But these brave people have never bothered themselves about the flag question. The flag controversy is being conducted mostly by those who have held aloof from the present movement. A brave man always gives credit to the other party for its *bona fides*. Why can you have not faith? If the Congress should play false afterwards you can well settle surely with it, for you hold the sword. I would ask you therefore to cast out suspicion and distrust from you and to plunge into this sacred *yajna* of freedom whole-heartedly. You will find that when you are ready to make the extreme sacrifice you will disdain to ask for guarantees. It will be for others who will look up to you as the champions of their rights as it will be

for you to fulfil their expectations. I hold Granth Sahib in high reverence. Several parts of it have passed into our daily speech. So far as my reading of it goes it inculcates faith, valour and an invincible belief in the ultimate triumph of right and justice. I would like you to derive your inspiration and guidance from it.

I ask you to accept my word and the resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. If it ever thinks of doing so, it will only hasten its own doom. No nation determined to immolate itself at the altar of freedom can be guilty of breach of faith. My life has been an open book. I have no secrets and I encourage no secrets. I pray you therefore to unbosom yourselves of all your doubts and apprehensions and I shall try to meet you as best I can. What more shall I say? What more can I say than this that let God be witness of the bond that binds me and the Congress with you.

Young India, 5-3-1931

310. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

February 27, 1931

I saw Mr. Gandhi again today. I began by reference to the scope of the further constitutional discussions — in regard to which I said — "The object of future discussions is to consider further the scheme for the constitutional government of India discussed at the Round Table Conference. Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility, and safeguards, explained by the Prime Minister, as being needed to secure such matters as Crown control of defence and external affairs; the position of minorities; the financial credit of India, and the discharge of obligations. The character and form of the arrangements, by which effect should be given to these fundamental principles of Federation, responsibility and safeguards, are matters for discussion."

To this he assented.

I then referred to the question he had raised as to an examination into debt charges. I told him that the position of His Majesty's Government was that, for reasons of Indian credit, it was impossible for them to assent to an investigation into the Indian debt, and as to any particular charges it was impossible for His Majesty's Government to express an opinion without knowing more precisely to what these might relate.

In reply to this he said that he would wish to raise particular subjects, though these he was not willing or able precisely to define. He instanced however the £ 100 million gift in the war. I told him that I could only make His Majesty's Government acquainted with what he had said, and

that in any event I had no doubt that His Majesty's Government must reserve to themselves complete liberty of decision as to how they dealt with particular subjects if raised. To this he replied that, while appreciating the position of His Majesty's Government, he must make it clear that, in the event of the attitude of His Majesty's Government on questions raised being such as Congress could not accept, he must reserve to Congress the right to withdraw from participation in the Conference proceedings.

He said that he did not contemplate or desire any public pronouncement on this subject.

The next matter to which I referred was secession, on which I told him that, as I had made plain at our first interview, I regarded the question in present circumstances as academic, and that, though I presumed he could raise it if he so desired, public expression of any intention to do so would have the worst possible effect and could hardly fail to damage his own cause. To this he assented.

We then turned to the practical questions arising in the event of peace restored. I made it plain to him that any reciprocal action by Government depended on the effective discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement, of which I detailed the various activities set out in the memorandum I had before me, and of which I promised to send him a copy.

He raised a variety of points on particular issues, which were not of great importance, and, after much discussion, the position emerged that apart from these, three matters appeared to present great — and in his phrase, insurmountable—difficulty. These were picketing; enquiries into police excesses; and salt.

On each of these I developed the attitude of Government as defined in the memorandum, and said that I could not hold out any hope of Government going further.

He argued all three points on lines which after several hours' discussion have now become familiar, and promised to send me a note[1] tomorrow, showing precisely what he had in mind as regards picketing. I told him that I would consider this when I received it, but that I scarcely thought it could affect my view. This was that whatever might be the logical arguments in favour of peaceful persuasion, by way of picketing, the whole experience of the last month showed that it was a conception that had no relation to practical facts, and that it inevitably led to abuses and violence, of which we had had examples in plenty. As regards the points of police enquiry and salt, he was frankly dissatisfied.

I promised to send him a note on all the points discussed, in which I would state clearly the position of Government. He could then consider whether any further meeting would be useful. He said he would leave this to me. I concluded by again urging him to exert his influence on the side of

[1] *Vide* pp. 235-6.

peace—to which he replied by saying that he desired peace, but that when in doubt he fell back on "Lead Kindly Light" and "One step enough for me". . . .[1]

SD. IRWIN

From a photostat: G.N. 8949

311. *INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA*

February 27, 1931

The Gandhi-Irwin talks[2] concluded at six in the evening. Mr. Gandhi, interviewed by the Associated Press, said:

I have no statement to make. The Viceroy's House may issue one.

Are you satisfied with the conversations?

It all depends.—

Will the discussions be resumed?

These may be resumed.

The Hindu, 28-2-1931

312. *NOTE ON PICKETING*

February 28, 1931

In the event of peace being established picketing of foreign cloth and drink and drug shops will be unaggressive and though, to the extent that it is successful, it must produce political consequences, it will be predominantly for social and moral ends as it was before the political consequence was thought of, or intended. It will, therefore, be largely confined to villages, and even in cities attention will be directed not so much to the sellers as to the buyers. It will thus be predominantly educative. There will be no cordons, and no crowds, such as now are the special feature of picketing. There will be no hostile demonstrations against those who in-

[1] The note concluded with the remark: "He was in very obstinate mood throughout the conversation and left a pretty clear impression on my mind that, beneath the guise of reasonableness, he was either bluffing or had made up his mind that he did not mean to settle except on his full terms."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

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sist on selling foreign cloth in defiance of public opinion. Naturally it will be absolutely peaceful and conducted so as to cause no public obstruction, and will not be in defiance of the common law.

From a photostat: C.W. 9334. Courtesy: India Office Library; also G.N. 8950

313. LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,
February 28, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I understood that you would send your note on the points you expounded yesterday and that, thereafter, I was to send you my note on picketing. But, as it is getting late in the day, without further waiting I enclose my note[1] on picketing.

I would like to know early, if I may, whether I shall be wanted tomorrow. I am anxious to know early, as I have an important public engagement tomorrow which I must postpone, if I am to be at the Viceregal House tomorrow.

I am, etc.,

From a photostat: C.W. 9333. Courtesy: India Office Library; also G.N. 8950

314. WHAT SHOULD ONE NOT DO?

Let me note down what, in my opinion, are the things one ought not to do while picketing liquor shops and foreign-cloth shops.

1. We should not abuse either the seller or the buyer and should never be discourteous in our behaviour.
2. We should not lie down before a shop or a vehicle.
3. We should not cry out "shame! shame!"
4. We should not take out effigies for burning or burying.
5. Even while ostracizing people, we should not obstruct their obtaining food or any other service. But we should not take meals in their homes or accept any service from them. How far service should be rendered, however, requires careful consideration.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

6. We should not fast in protest against them in any-circumstances. The commonly accepted rule regarding fasting is as follows: Where there is a bond between two parties, one of them may fast if the other violates a condition or a moral law, just as Raihana fasted in Patan.

Some may say that the boycott of liquor shops or foreign-cloth shops cannot succeed through such limited picketing; I would then say that the boycott had better fail in that case. Those who raise such doubts, it may be said, do not have full faith in the unfailing success of non-violence. Observance of non-violence was the object behind entrusting both these tasks to women. I am convinced that we can achieve both these boycotts within a short period of time if a non-violent atmosphere is maintained. On the contrary, if we transgress our limits, however welcome the immediate results may appear to be, bitterness will spread among us in the end and the atmosphere of internecine strife will prevail. And if we become victims of family feuds, the boycott will end and, swaraj itself will remain a mere dream. Hence my advice and hope is that everyone will accept this prescription as that of an experienced vaid and put it into practice.

If despite people following my advice—regarding what should be done and what should not be done—the boycott does not succeed, I am aware that the burden of the failure will rest on me. I am prepared to shoulder it.

KHADI AND BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN CLOTH

As I continue to examine the activities of the past six months, I find that, to some extent, we have deviated from our path. Of late, I have been hearing from many quarters voices of swadeshi which are opposed to khadi. Some regard themselves as having fulfilled their objective by claiming that they wear swadeshi, i.e., mill-made cloth. But, from the long-range point of view, it will be seen that those who wear Indian mill-made cloth and disdain khadi are in the long run harming both khadi and the Indian mills. The reason is that without khadi boycott is impossible. Here is the proof. About 50 per cent of India's requirements of cloth are imported from abroad. Our Indian mills cannot meet this requirement within a short period. This task can be accomplished by khadi alone, since our capacity to produce it depends solely on our keenness. Just as we insist on making *bhakharis* (or cooking rice) ourselves and do not get them made or cooked in Indian or foreign factories, likewise, if we desire it, we can produce as much khadi as we need. If this much is understood, it is easy to show why a disregard for

khadi harms the cause of Indian (textile) mills. The latter by themselves cannot make a success of the boycott. Hence foreign cloth would enter into such fierce competition with Indian mills, that the latter could not but suffer a set-back. We have had this experience on many occasions before now. Hence those who rest satisfied with thoughtlessly wearing Indian mill-made cloth deceive themselves and harm the boycott movement. I hope, therefore, that those who respond to the message of the Congress will use nothing but khadi. Swadeshi for them means pure khadi.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-3-1931

315. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

DELHI,
February 28/March 1, 1931

CHI. GANGABEHN,

By the time you get this letter you will have been out of jail for many days. If it again becomes necessary to let your clothes be stained with blood, let them be. This colour is more pleasant than that of *kumkum* or *sindoor*. I expect a letter from you describing your experience in jail.

I cannot say yet whether we shall be able to meet.

Sunday Morning

I dictated the lines above yesterday. I saw today the wire expressing your wish. In fact I am impatient to see you all. I do hope to be able to start before Wednesday. But who can say what will happen? It will be the same to me whether I am able to leave this place or whether I am arrested. If I am arrested and we cannot meet, do not worry at all. It is not very necessary that you should consult me on any matter. If God has willed it so, we are bound to meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8773. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

CWMG-XLV

316. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 1, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came to see me this afternoon, and before he came I had, after very careful examination of the various points raised, come to the conclusion that, apart from minor and technical points, there were three main matters of principle on which, so far as I could judge, accommodation was impossible. These were: Picketing and boycott; enquiries into police excesses; and salt. I accordingly began the interview with a firm determination on one point, which was that on no account must I allow the break which I anticipated to come, as I felt certain Mr. Gandhi would try to engineer it, on Police alone. I accordingly began by taking Mr. Gandhi through the memorandum I had sent him the previous day inviting him to let me know on what points he was unable to agree with the Government attitude. We soon came to a stoppage over the question of boycott, and on this matter I, with his concurrence, brought in the Home Secretary, Emerson, to deal more fully than I could with some technical points. After rather a wandering discussion the position emerged that Mr. Gandhi was apparently willing to concentrate his claim and his energy upon the business of substitution of Indian cloth and goods for foreign, giving up boycott of British goods, and giving up boycott as a political weapon. Merchants would be at liberty to abrogate restrictive agreements, and no element of coercion would be applied to them.

On picketing we had also a long talk in which we respectively re-stated our position, he saying that all he meant to do was perfectly peaceful picketing, which was entirely permissible under the common law, I maintaining the view that, whatever his common-law rights and the persuasiveness of his logic, peaceful picketing was a thing that in present circumstances just would not happen. People were in too excitable a temper for so simple and speedy a transition as he contemplated from one sort of picketing to another to be possible. He was very frank and said that he had been discussing with the Congress Committee, and they were going to stop picketing where it was not working smoothly, and was very emphatic that they could get their orders obeyed in these matters. We left the point at this stage for further discussion in order to see how we got on on other things.

We then came to Police, in regard to which he said the formula in the memorandum was quite unsatisfactory, and he could not possibly accept it. I said that I appreciated that because, as I presumed, he would feel that however good the evidence he might have to bring about particular cases, my formula left it open for local Governments to refuse to enquire any further on the

ground that they already had the facts. On the other hand, were I to admit his very justifiable point, it would mean that I must either open the floodgates to enquiry, or something like it, in innumerable cases all over India, wherever anybody wished to get back on the Police, or must adopt the line of saying that he could select, say, three cases, which would inevitably have the effect of suggesting to the world that these were three selected instances typical of a generally prevailing state of police savagery. I therefore told him that, inasmuch as I could do neither of these things and inasmuch as we really wanted peace, would not it be better to drop it altogether? No formula that the wit of man could devise would really be much good, or was indeed possible. I should in fact be pretending to give him something that I knew local Governments did not intend. He seemed a good deal impressed with this kind of line and, after some talk, said that he had himself been thinking of dropping it. We accordingly, after some further talk, drafted a formula to the effect that he had had brought certain allegations to the notice of Government, but that Government were unwilling to institute specific enquiries because they didn't think that this would help peace, and that, having regard to those considerations, Mr. Gandhi did not press his demand. He took the formula away, but I am not without hope that we shall eventually get settled in that fashion.

We then passed to Salt, on which we covered ground over which we had been before. He attached far greater importance to it than I had expected, and I imagine it is mainly vanity. I told him that we could not condone publicly the breaches of law; that would be to give too great encouragement to evil influences; nor could we in present financial circumstances sacrifice revenue by repealing it. I was quite willing to consider the question of making some alteration in the executive administration of the law, if this could be done by regular order, with the object of extending privileges already enjoyed by the inhabitants of some areas to others, but the matter demanded fuller knowledge than I possessed and I suggested he should see Schuster. This he said he would be very glad to do, and is to see him on Tuesday. One of the possible ways of dealing with it that I put to him was that the terms of reference of the existing Salt Committee should be enlarged so as to bring in the points in which he is particularly interested and on which he might give evidence to the Committee. If this were done, I assured him that the Government would be willing to give sympathetic consideration to recommendations that the Committee might make. I think it may be necessary to do something to meet him on Salt. I fully recognize the psychological objection to doing anything on a matter so publicly identified with his inauguration of the civil disobedience campaign. A good deal will turn on how it can be done, but I do not believe that we ought to allow settlement to wreck on the abstract principle that Salt is the inviolable ark on which no hand must be laid.

The discussion up to this point therefore left us with:

Police — very promising; picketing and salt — unsettled, but with a good deal of manoeuvre-room if desired.

I accordingly suggested that he should come again after dinner and discuss the actual details of any proposals he might wish to make about picketing with Emerson. I would join them if I could.

Second Interview: 9.30 p.m., March 1, 1931

I joined Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Emerson at 9.30 p.m. and found that by that time Emerson had got Mr. Gandhi hitched to the point of abandonment of the boycott as a political weapon and an assurance of complete freedom for cloth merchants to do what they liked. These seem pretty substantial gains. We discussed Picketing for a long time, and I eventually said to him, in pursuance of what we had said earlier in the day, that I would press him to accept this sort of solution, i.e., that the statement should record the common-law right as it stood of peaceful picketing; that Government did not challenge this common-law right, but that Mr. Gandhi and Congress, realizing the circumstances of the country, did not intend to make any use of their common-law rights for a period of two months, or six weeks, in order definitely to dissociate the peaceful picketing they want liberty to employ, from peaceful picketing as it has been employed during the last 12 months. Mr. Gandhi made it plain that, if Congress did not succeed in maintaining the peaceful character of the picketing he desired, he could have no objection to Government taking any steps they wished to deal with it, and that we should be entitled to tell him he must call it off. This he would almost certainly himself desire to do. He promised to think over my suggestion and said that he did not think it would be difficult to find a formula on which we could both meet. I am inclined to agree with him and, although I should like to get rid of picketing for ever, I have very little doubt that, if you can get rid of the political-weapon drive of it and have it purely as an economic and social thing, it will be dead in three weeks. This is the very strong view of all the Indians who come and talk to me about it.

After saying that I would put him in touch with Schuster about Salt tomorrow, he ran over various points of smaller importance that some of his people had put to him on the other matters in the note. He produced difficulties on the subject of Additional Police, which I think may be obstinate, but we shall not break on this.

Vallabhbhai Patel had produced a few particular difficulties from Gujarat, but these too I think can be surmounted. The position therefore left is that:

(1) we have got to find the right settlement of picketing, which I believe can be done;

(2) we have got to persuade him to be satisfied with including his salt points in the reference to the existing Committee, or see whether we can satisfy him about this in some other way;

(3) he has got to make up his mind to accept our wash-out on police in some form that fits with our position. I think it is permissible to hope that we shall succeed in resolving these points and, if we do so, we will be pretty clear except for the question of his attitude about debts on which I must telegraph to the Secretary of State. I believe this question will prove, when it comes to the point, not to be at all impracticable. Sapru is very emphatic that, when they actually get round the table discussing it, they will be able to knock it out, or at least knock out any objectionable developments of it. There remain "the scope of the discussion", on which he has accepted His Majesty's Government's formula, and the question of secession, on which he also accepted the formula that I read to him and which has already been reported to the Secretary of State. On both these points of debts and secession he does not want any public statement to be made.

(Sd.) Irwin

From a photostat: G.N. 8952

317. A NOTE

[*March 2, 1931*][1]

I want you to take me literally in what I said yesterday. You seem to be feeling lonely and almost uninterested. That must not be, my strength depends upon you. I want your active support in what I am doing. And that I cannot get unless you criticise, alter, amend, reject and do many other things. You have a whole day at your disposal. Make the fullest use of it for considering these notes. I have not hitherto minded the language. But after prayer I carefully examined the language. Consider the notes with the linguistic changes and make suggestions as to wording even where you approve of the substance. Consider also the Viceroy's draft regarding the inquiry question. I have made some alterations[2]. Personally, I am reconciled to the substance of the suggestion which was, in the first instance, mine, given as a possible solution of the difficulty.

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This appears to be a Silence Day note addressed to Jawaharlal Nehru after the Working Committee meeting held on March 1, 1931 had discussed the provisional settlement which was finally approved at the meeting held on March 4, 1931. For Jawaharlal Nehru's note on the provisional settlement, *vide* Appendix V. For the text of the provisional settlement, *vide* Appendix VI.

[2] In Clause 8 of the provisional settlement

CWMG - XIV

318. NOTE TO V. S. S. SASTRI, T. B. SAPRU AND M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 3, 1931

You must not leave. Your presence here is indispensable. There are many difficulties yet to be smoothed over.

The Tribune, 5-3-1931

319. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

[*March 3, 1931*][2]

I saw Mr. Gandhi again yesterday. Emerson was present at our discussions at Mr. Gandhi's request.

We began with a few of the less important points, working up to the question of return of the land that had been sold to third parties. He accepted the position of Government that if this was to be recovered for the original owners it must be a question of third parties doing it. At the same time he said that it would be difficult in fact for this to get done unless Government officials were sympathetic. I adhered to the position that the Government of India was debarred from putting pressure of any kind on the Government of Bombay, that the Government of Bombay would be very sticky about doing anything, but that they would be neutral in the matter, leaving third parties to do what they could. He wasn't at all happy about this, and said that Vallabhbhai Patel was frankly doubtful whether he could carry the settlement in Gujarat unless they got some accommodation of this question. I told him however that it was not in my power to vary my position.

After clearing up the question of Additional Police in which we eventually agreed to treat the money question on the same logical basis as remission of fines (i.e., that moneys collected should not be refunded unless they were in excess of the amount required, but that moneys not collected should be washed out), we came on to boycott and picketing. I pressed him very hard either (a) to give up picketing altogether on his own on the ground of disturbance and communal feeling; or (b) to accept an agreement with Government that there would be no picketing for a specified period. He would

[1] In reply to a note expressing their desire to leave Delhi
[2] The report was prepared on March 4.

not hear of either, assuring me with the utmost conviction that, if I would only trust his honour in this matter and the honour of Congress, there would be no picketing to which anybody could take objection. All he desired to do was to return to the *status quo* before the civil disobedience movement was started. There might be a little more picketing than was done before that movement began, because people had begun to think more constructively about swadeshi, but he could guarantee that there would be no interference or intimidation or the rest. After much wrangling we came down to the boycott and picketing formula of the agreement. I think it is not too bad. It ties it up pretty tight, and pledges Congress at once to suspend it if there is any abuse.

We had no trouble about the Police formula. He had made one or two verbal alterations that on the whole improved it from my point of view. In the course of a short discussion we had about this, he revealed what I have by now discovered as the right method of dealing with him. He said: "When you or Mr. Emerson use your best arguments it does not always have much effect on me, but, when you tell me that Government is in a difficulty and cannot do what I want, then I am inclined to capitulate to you"! This was exactly the history of the Police discussion.

The last subject we tackled was Salt, on which he had had a discussion with Schuster in the morning and on which they had arrived at a working formula. While our talks were proceeding the afternoon had been getting on, and it looked as if he was again going to have a race for his evening meal, which he cannot take after the sun has set. I accordingly asked him what he would wish done about it. It was eventually decided that Mirabai (Miss Slade) should bring it up here, which was done. I was greatly interested in meeting her, of whom I had heard much. She evidently venerates him very profoundly, and one felt one had suddenly been switched into a rather different world.

We could not finish all the matters for discussion, and I accordingly asked Gandhi to come back at 9 o'clock to get on with them as far as he could with Emerson, and I promised to look in and see how matters were progressing after finishing a dinner-party.

Later Interview: 9 p.m.

I joined them again at 10.30 and found they had pretty well agreed to the statement in the form in which it now stands. A good deal of verbal redrafting had to be done which took time, but the back of it was broken when we got the Police enquiry off and got agreement about withdrawal of the boycott of British goods.

We have given more than I like about Salt, but I don't think we could have got away with much less. We concluded, with the old man telling me that he was going to throw his whole heart and soul into trying to co-operate

in constitution-building, and that, while he felt greatly oppressed with the responsibility of decision, he prayed with all his heart that it might be successful. I was impressed, as I have been throughout, with his sincerity. He told me, in reply to a question, that he was quite firm about not re-starting civil disobedience till the end of the conference discussions anyhow, and hoped never.[1]

(SD.) IRWIN, 4-3-31

From a photostat: G.N. 8953

320. LETTER TO VICEROY

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 4, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this letter in connection with the lands of civil resisters sold in Gujarat in respect of revenue dues. Overworked as you are, it is distressful to me to have to write to you on a matter which may appear to be trivial. But I fear that on it hangs the successful working of the settlement just made. With all the desire to give the fullest effect to the settlement, Sardar Vallabhbhai tells me that he will find it utterly impossible to implement the Congress obligation of the settlement unless the lands can be restored to the rightful holders. I am well aware that as head of the Government of India you cannot by reason of a previous undertaking intervene in the matter, but as an Englishman interested in the successful working of a settlement built up by your patient and unwearied toil you can perhaps exercise your influence to see justice done and thereby assist its smooth working. Shrimati Gangabehn, whose name I have already introduced to you in a previous communication and who has been working in the taluk of Borsad in Kaira District, tells me that the land in Ras, where or near which her social work was being done, was sold to the Dharalas for a song, and that it was bought by them at the instigation of the previous Mamlatdar and in collusion with him. If there was proper enquiry I should undertake to prove the alleged collusion. But I know that at the present moment I must not, so far as possible, whisper a word about the past. That all the lands sold were sold for a song will, I think, be readily admitted. To say the least it will be conceded that it

[1] For Viceroy's report to the Secretary of State on the outcome of the talks, *vide* Appendix VII.

was the height of unwisdom, on the part of local authorities, thus practically to give away the lands.

I therefore ask your assistance so far as it can be given in surmounting the difficulty. It is in the confidence that you will do all that is possible to obtain the co-operation of the Bombay Government in finding a solution which will restore peace that Sardar Vallabhbhai and I can allow the settlement to go through.[1]

I am,
Yours, etc.,

From a photostat: C.W. 9335. Courtesy: India Office Library

321. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 4, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came up and had two or three hours' talk with Emerson at 12 o'clock mainly about the detailed draft of the agreement we had reached and about the methods to be employed for its implementation. I did not participate in these discussions, but saw him for a short time in the afternoon about a letter[2] he had written to me concerning the land in Gujarat.

The point of the letter was that unless I could give him an assurance that the land sold would at some time unspecified be returned to their original owners he could not go on with the settlement. It had unhappily in his mind attained the importance of a moral scruple which outweighed everything else. His trouble was that according to his information some land at Ras had been sold by a dishonest Mamlatdar improperly and unjustly to Dharalas. This had been deliberately done according to his information in order to have revenge upon the Patidars, of whom the Dharalas are the natural enemies. I told him, as I had repeatedly told him before, that I was under the most strict obligation to the Bombay Government to accept the position, as stated in our note that these transactions must, so far as the Government were concerned, be regarded as final. It was impossible for me, in justice to these undertakings, to put pressure on the Bombay Government in a matter on which I had assured them my support. He recognized the force of this, but said that his difficulty must in some way be met. I told him that I could not vary the position as stated above, nor could I agree, as he suggested, to omit any reference to land that had been sold from the statement of settlement. To do this would inevitably carry the implication that the question was left open, and that Government had no fixed attitude in regard to it. The utmost that I could do would be to write to Sir Frederick Sykes drawing

[1] For Irwin's views on this letter, *vide* the following item.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

his attention to any statement on the matter that Mr. Gandhi cared to make to me, and ask him to give his personal attention to the task of finding an equitable solution. This I was willing to do, though I was not sanguine of Sir Frederick Sykes being able to find a solution that would meet the case. In any event it was highly unlikely that anything could be done at once. What might be possible under different conditions when things had quieted down, might be another matter. Mr. Gandhi said that he did not care about the time that elapsed before the question could be settled, but he felt so strongly that, without some settlement, the thing would remain an open sore in the Kaira District that he could never reconcile himself to it.

At this point we left it and I went to a Garden Party where I met Sapru, Jayakar, Sastri, Purshotamdas and Rahimtullah. I told them of the difficulty and exhorted them to put their full pressure on Gandhi to save the settlement from being wrecked.

Sapru, Sastri and Jayakar came to see me at 10.30 p.m. with alternative suggestions:

(1) that we should omit the paragraph from the statement;

(2) that we should insert the words "justly and lawfully sold" as a conditional limitation on non-return of land sold.

I told them both these things were impossible, and finally after much discussion we came to the suggestion of the addition of a note[1] in the form it appears in the statement as published. This seemed comparatively innocuous and they went off at 12.30 a.m. to get Gandhi to accept it. This he later did.

The impressions left on my mind by this incident were

(1) that it is essential to give no more time for moral scruples to develop. Clearly, though imponderable, they are very weighty;

(2) that there may be a real grievance in the methods adopted for the sale of some land and, whether this is so or not, the position of the Dharalas owning coveted land in the midst of Patidar villages is not going to be a very happy one. I should have supposed it might after two or three months have been possible for friendly arrangements to be made by which the Dharalas might be either bought out at satisfactory profit, or possibly assisted to buy land somewhere else, where it would not give rise to these acute difficulties.[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 8954

[1] *Vide* "Note", following paragraph 17(C) in Appendix VI.

[2] For Viceroy's version of the interview of March 5 which follows, *vide* p. 258.

322. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 4, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

I have had a full discussion with the Working Committee on the moral issue raised by me at the interview with His Excellency the Viceroy this afternoon. The responsibility for the final decision rests upon my shoulders. I must apologize to His Excellency for my obvious limitations.

As to the issue, I repeat the alternative I suggested to Mr. Emerson, viz., that words "justly and lawfully" be added after "sold". I am sure the Government of India do not seek to protect unjust or unlawful transactions.

If, however, this amendment does not commend itself to His Excellency, I would be prepared to consider any alternative amendment along the same lines.

I understand that Sjts. Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar are to see His Excellency on this matter. Pending settlement of the issue raised, I am not sending the letter[1] I handed to His Excellency this morning and which has to be somewhat reshaped.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: C.W. 9336. Courtesy: India Office Library

323. NOTES

SWARAJ IS SELF-PURIFICATION

It is a matter of great joy to me as it is I hope to the readers of *Young India* that numerous men and women took on the Motilal Shraddha Day[2] vows leading to self-purification for the purpose of swaraj. My faith in self-purification tells me that these vows if carried out to the full will bring us many steps nearer our goal. From the letters and information otherwise received I know that those who have taken vows include men and women, boys and

[1] *Vide* pp. 245-6.
[2] February 15, 1931; *vide* pp. 164-5 & 177-8.

girls drawn from all classes and all religious groups. Of these Hindu, Mahomedan and Christian names have already come under my observations. The vows are varied. Some have vowed to observe *brahmacharya*, some to abstain from smoking, some to refrain from using any cloth but khadi. The reader will not ask me or himself how these vows can possibly advance swaraj. It is not a matter for demonstration through reason. The experience of the world shows that wherever people have taken to purity of life there has been self-rule, in other words swaraj. And self-rule by millions is swaraj of millions. Any other is not swaraj but mirage. The history of past twelve months is a progressive realization of the fact that purification undertaken not merely for the purpose of individual peace but for the purpose of national happiness does result in promoting such happiness. Happiness here means an enlightened realization of human dignity and a craving for human liberty which prizes itself above mere selfish satisfaction of personal comforts and material wants and would readily and joyfully sacrifice these for self-preservation.

Am I Self-deluded?

A friend writes saying that I delude myself in believing that the boycott of foreign cloth has been attained largely through nonviolence. I must deny the charge. For I am not unaware of the violent spirit that has crept into our picketing. In my opinion any contribution made by violent picketing will be found to be not only transitory but is likely to lead to reactions which we will all deplore. 'There shall be no compulsion in matters of trade and the like' is a sound maxim of conduct. Picketing is valuable, even indispensable, aid to conviction and conversion. But a man who yields to threat or physical coercion resents it and simply awaits a suitable opportunity to revert to his original ways and resorts to reprisals when he is able to exact them. I wish therefore that I could induce the reader to share my belief that every form of violence is harmful in the end and that we shall be able to assimilate only that much result of the past sufferings which was obtained without violence, i.e., through the voluntary sufferings of the people.

Kumarappa

The reader I know will feel proud of the statement made by by J. C. Kumarappa before the court. Who that has read it can say that he did not deserve the punishment he received? His was a pure and full sacrifice in more ways than one.

Young India, 5-3-1931

324. *WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT*[1]

March 5, 1931

The Working Committee having considered the terms of the provisional settlement[2] arrived at between the Government of India and Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the Congress endorses them and directs all Congress Committees to take immediate action in accordance with them. The Committee hopes that the country will carry out the terms agreed to in so far as they relate to the various Congress activities, and is of opinion that on a strict fulfilment of the obligations undertaken on behalf of the Congress will depend the advance of India towards *purna* swaraj.

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

325. *STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*[3]

DELHI,
March 5, 1931

In the first place, I would like to state that this settlement, such as it is, would have been impossible without the Viceroy's inexhaustible patience and equally inexhaustible industry and unfailing courtesy. I am aware that I must have, though quite unconsciously, given him causes for irritation. I must have also tried his patience but I cannot recall an occasion when he allowed himself to be betrayed into irritation or impatience. I must add that he was frank throughout these very delicate negotiations and I believe he was determined, if it was at all possible, to have a settlement. I must confess that I approached the negotiations in fear and trembling. I was also filled with distrust but at the very outset he disarmed my suspicions and put me at ease. For myself, I can say without fear of contradiction that when I wrote my letter inviting the invitation to see him, I was determined not to be outdone in the race for reaching a settlement, if it could be

[1] The resolution was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* Appendix VI.

[3] This appeared as "Press Statement" on "the terms of truce to a gathering of American and Indian journalists and Pressmen".

reached at all honourably. I am, therefore, thankful to the Almighty that the settlement was reached and the country has been spared, at least for the time being, and I hope for all time, the sufferings which in the event of a breakdown would have been intensified a hundredfold.

For a settlement of this character, it is not possible nor wise to say which is the victorious party. If there is any victory, I should say it belongs to both. The Congress has never made any bid for victory.

In the very nature of things the Congress has a definite goal to reach and there can be no question of victory without reaching the goal. I would, therefore, urge all my countrymen and all my sisters instead of feeling elated, if they find in the terms any cause for elation, to humble themselves before God and ask Him to give them strength and wisdom to pursue the course that their mission demands for the time being, whether it is by way of suffering or by way of patient negotiation, consultation and conference.

I hope, therefore, that the millions who have taken part in this struggle of suffering during the past twelve months will now, during the period of conference and construction, show the same willingness, the same cohesion, the same effort and the same wisdom that they have in an eminent degree shown during what I would describe as a heroic period in the modern history of India.

But I know that, if there would be men and women who will feel elated by the settlement, there are, also those who will be, and are, keenly disappointed.

Heroic suffering is like the breath of their nostrils. They rejoice in it as in nothing else. They will endure unendurable sufferings, be they ever so prolonged, but when suffering ceases they feel their occupation gone and feel also that the goal has receded from the view. To them I would only say, 'Wait, watch, pray and hope.'

Suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and when the limit is reached, to prolong it would be not unwise but the height of folly.

It would be folly to go on suffering when the opponent makes it easy for you to enter into a discussion with him upon your longings. If a real opening is made, it is one's duty to take advantage of it and, in my humble opinion, the settlement has made a real opening. Such a settlement has necessarily to be provisional as this is. The peace arrived at is conditional upon many other things happening. The largest part of the written

word is taken up with what may be called 'Terms of Truce'. This had to be naturally so. Many things had to happen before the Congress could participate in the deliberations of the Conference. A recital of these was absolutely necessary. But the goal of the Congress is not to get a redress of past wrongs important though they are: its goal is *purna* swaraj which, indifferently rendered in English, has been described as complete independence.

It is India's birthright, as it is of any other nation worthy of that name, and India cannot be satisfied with anything less and throughout the settlement one misses that enchanting word. The clause which carefully hides that word is capable, and intentionally capable, of a double meaning.

Federation may be a mirage or it may mean a vital organic state in which the two limbs might work so as to strengthen the whole. Responsibility, which is the second girder, may be a mere shadow or it may be tall, majestic, unbending and unbendable oak. Safeguards in the interests of India may be purely illusory and so many ropes tying the country hand and foot and strangling her by the neck, or they may be like so many fences protecting a tender plant requiring delicate care and attention.

One party may give one meaning and another may give the three girders the other meaning. It is open under that clause to either party to work along its own lines and the Congress if it has shown readiness to take part in the deliberation of the Conference, it is because it seeks to make Federation, Responsibility, Safeguards, reservations, or whatever other names they may be known by, such as would promote the real growth of the country along political, social, economic and moral lines.

If the Congress succeeds in making its position acceptable to the Conference, then, I claim that the fruit of that effort will be complete independence. But I know that the way to it is weary. There are many rocks, many pitfalls, to be found across the way. But if Congressmen will approach the new task to which they are called, with confidence and courage, I have no misgivings about the result. It is, therefore, in their hands either to make something noble and worth looking at out of the new opportunity that has come to them or, by lack of self-confidence and want of courage, to fritter away the opportunity.

But I know that in this task Congressmen will require the aid of the other parties, the aid of the great Princes of India, and last but by no means the least the aid of Englishmen. I need not make any appeal at the present juncture to the different

parties. I have little doubt that they are no less eager than Congressmen for the real freedom of their country.

But the Princes are a different proposition. Their acceptance of the idea of Federation was certainly for me a surprise, but if they will become equal partners in a Federated India, I venture to suggest that of their own free will they should advance towards the position that what is called British India has been all these long years seeking to occupy.

An undiluted autocracy, however benevolent it may be, and an undiluted democracy are an incompatible mixture bound to result in an explosion. It is, therefore, I think, necessary for them not to take up an uncompromising attitude and impatiently refuse to listen to an appeal from or on behalf of the would-be partner. If they refused any such appeal they would make the position of the Congress untenable and, indeed, most awkward. The Congress represents, or endeavours to represent, the whole of the people of India. It recognizes no distinction between those who reside in British India or in Indian States.

The Congress has, with great wisdom and equally great restraint, refrained from interfering with the doings and affairs of the States and it has done so in order, not to unnecessarily wound the susceptibilities of the States, but, also, by reason of the self-imposed restraint, to make its voice heard by the States on a suitable occasion. I think that, that occasion has now arrived. May I then hope that the great Princes will not shut their ears to the Congress appeal on behalf of the people of the States ?

I would like to make a similar appeal to the English. If India is to come to her own through conference and consultation, the goodwill and active help of Englishmen are absolutely necessary. I must confess, that what seems to have been yielded by them at the Conference in London is not even half enough — no approach to the goal that India has in view. If they will render real help, they must be prepared to let India feel the same glow of freedom which they themselves would die in order to possess. These[1] English statesmen would have to dare to let India wander away into the woods through errors. Freedom is not worth having if it does not connote freedom to err and even to sin. If God Almighty has given the humblest of His creatures the freedom to err, it passes my comprehension how human beings, be they ever so experienced and able, can delight in depriving other human beings of that precious right.

[1] The source has " There ".

Anyway, the implication of inviting the Congress to join the Conference is most decidedly that the Congress may not be deterred from any consideration, save that of incapacity, from pressing for the fullest freedom. And the Congress does not consider India to be a sickly child requiring nursing, outside help, and other props.

I would like also to register my appeal to the people of the great American Republic and the other nations of the earth. I know that this struggle based as it is on truth and non-violence from which, alas, we the votaries have on occasion undoubtedly strayed, has fired their imagination and excited their curiosity. From curiosity they, and specially America, has progressed to tangible help in the way of sympathy. And I can say on behalf of the Congress and myself that we are all truly grateful for all that sympathy. I hope that in the difficult mission in which the Congress is now about to embark, we shall not only retain their sympathy but that it will grow from day to day. I venture to suggest, in all humility, that if India reaches her destiny through truth and non-violence, she will have made no small contribution to the world peace for which all the nations of the earth are thirsting and she would also have, in that case, made some slight return for the help that those nations have been freely giving to her.

My last appeal is to the Police and the Civil Service departments. The settlement contains a clause which indicates that I had asked for an inquiry into some of the police excesses which are alleged to have taken place. The reason for waiving that inquiry is stated in the settlement itself. The Civil Service is an integral part of the machinery which is kept going by the police department. If they really feel that India is soon to become mistress in her own household and they are to serve her loyally and faithfully as her servants, it behoves them, even now, to make the people feel that when they have to deal with the members of the Civil Service and the police department, they are really dealing with their servants, honoured and wise undoubtedly, but nevertheless servants and not masters.

I owe a word to hundreds, if not thousands, of my erstwhile fellow-prisoners on whose behalf I have been receiving wires and who will still be languishing in jails when satyagrahi prisoners who were jailed during the past 12 months will have been discharged. Personally, I do not believe in imprisoning, by way of punishment, even those who commit violence. I know that those who have done violence through political motives are entitled to claim, if not the same wisdom, certainly the same spirit of love and self-sacrifice that I would claim for myself. And, therefore,

if I could have justly secured their liberty in preference to my own or that of fellow-satyagrahis I should truthfully have secured it.

But I trust they will realize that I could not in justice ask for their discharge. But that does not mean that I or the members of the Working Committee have not them in mind.

The Congress has embarked deliberately, though provisionally, on a career of co-operation. If Congressmen honourably and fully implement the conditions applicable to them of the settlement, the Congress will obtain an irresistible prestige and would have inspired Government with confidence in its ability to ensure peace, as I think it has proved its ability to conduct disobedience.

And if the people in general will clothe the Congress with that power and prestige, I promise that it will not be long before every one of these political prisoners is discharged including the detenus, the Meerut prisoners and all the rest.

There is, no doubt, a small but active organization in India which would secure India's liberty through violent action. I appeal to that organization, as I have done before, to desist from its activities, if not yet out of conviction, then out of expedience. They have perhaps somewhat realized what great power non-violence has. They will not deny that the almost miraculous mass awakening was possible only because of the mysterious and yet unfailing effect of non-violence. I want them to be patient, and give the Congress, or if they will, me, a chance to work out the plan of truth and non-violence. After all it is hardly yet a full year since the Dandi march. One year in the life of an experiment affecting 300 millions of human beings is but a second in the cycle of time. Let them wait yet awhile. Let them preserve their precious lives for the service of the Motherland to which all will be presently called and let them give to the Congress an opportunity of securing the release of all the other political prisoners and maybe even rescuing from the gallows those who are condemned to them as being guilty of murder.

But I want to raise no false hopes. I can only state publicly what is my own and the Congress aspiration. It is for us to make the effort. The result is always in God's hands.

One personal note and I have done. I believe that I put my whole soul into the effort to secure an honourable settlement. I have pledged my word to Lord Irwin that in making good the terms of the settlement in so far as they bind the Congress, I should devote myself heart and soul to the task. I worked for the settlement, not in order to break it to pieces at the very first oppor-

tunity, but in order to strain every nerve to make absolutely final what today is provisional and to make it a precursor of the goal to attain which the Congress exists.

Lastly, I tender my thanks to all those who have been unceasing in their efforts in making the settlement possible.

Young India, 12-3-1931

326. TELEGRAM TO PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEES[1]

1 DARYAGANJ,
March 5, 1931

IN VIEW PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT ARRIVED AT BETWEEN WORKING COMMITTEE ON BEHALF CONGRESS AND GOVERNMENT OF INDIA REQUEST YOU TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS INFORM ALL CONGRESS COMMITTEES YOUR PROVINCE TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH IT. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND NO TAX CAMPAIGNS TO BE DISCONTINUED AND NO FURTHER DEFIANCE OF LAWS OR REGULATIONS. BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS AS SUCH TO BE DISCONTINUED AND COMPLETE FREEDOM REGARDING THEM GIVEN BUT BOYCOTT OF INTOXICATING DRINK AND DRUGS AND OF ALL FOREIGN CLOTH AND LIQUOR SHOPS IS PERMITTED AND SHOULD BE CONTINUED WHEREVER NECESSARY. SUCH PICKETING SHOULD BE UNAGGRESSIVE AND SHOULD NOT INVOLVE COERCION INTIMIDATION RESTRAINT HOSTILE DEMONSTRATION OBSTRUCTION TO PUBLIC OR ANY OFFENCE UNDER ORDINARY LAW. IF THESE CONDITIONS NOT SATISFIED IN ANY AREA PICKETING TO BE SUSPENDED THERE. INSISTENCE ON SWADESHI GOODS IN PREFERENCE TO ALL FOREIGN GOODS ALSO TO BE CONTINUED. NO ORGANIZED DISOBEDIENCE OF SALT LAWS AND NO RAIDS BUT VILLAGERS RESIDING IN AREAS WHERE SALT COLLECTED OR MADE ARE PERMITTED TO CONTINUE TO COLLECT OR MAKE SALT FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION OR SALE IN NEIGHBOURHOOD BUT NO SALE OR TRADING OUTSIDE. UNAUTHORIZED NEWS SHEETS SHOULD BE STOPPED. TAXPAYERS SHOULD PREPARE PAYMENT LAND REVENUE AND RETURN VILLAGES WHERE VACATED. IN CASES ECONOMIC DISTRESS OR INABILITY PAYMENT OTHER METHODS FOR REMISSION OR SUSPENSION SHOULD BE ADOPTED. IN VIEW

[1] This was presumably drafted by Gandhiji.

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PENDING RELEASE PRISONERS SPECIAL DIRECTIONS FOR ELECTION DELEGATES KARACHI CONGRESS BEING ISSUED PRESS.

SAYED MAHMUD
GENERAL SECRETARY

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

327. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI ANAND

March 5, 1931

SWAMI ANAND
CARE SHREE
BOMBAY

DATE UNCERTAIN. WILL TRY COME BOMBAY. CAN GIVE VILEPARLE ONE DAY.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

328. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 5, 1931

NARANDAS
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

TELL PRABHAVATI VASUMATI OTHERS TRYING REACH EARLY.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

329. TELEGRAM TO MOHAMMAD SHAFFEE

March 5, 1931

SIR MOHAMMAD SHAFFEE
LAHORE

THANKS YOUR WIRE. WITH HELP FROM FRIENDS LIKE YOU DO NOT DESPAIR OF UNITY WHICH IS SO ESSENTIAL JUST NOW FOR FREEDOM MOTHERLAND.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

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330. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 5, 1931

I heard from Mr. Gandhi this morning saying that he was willing to accept the addition of the note as I had drafted it last night, and saying that, while he understood my commitments in the matter to the Bombay Government, he relied on me to use my influence to secure a solution of the difficulty.[1] I replied to him repeating the facts of my earlier undertaking on this particular subject given to the Bombay Government, but saying that, within the limits imposed on me by that undertaking I would certainly convey to the Governor what he said on the subject, and do everything that I properly might in the direction of asking him to address himself to the task of finding an equitable solution of the difficulty.

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat: G.N. 8954

331. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

I thank you for your two letters. Pray convey my thanks to His Excellency for the prompt action he has taken on my letter[2] of the 4th instant regarding the sold lands.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9337. Courtesy: India Office Library; also A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931

[1] *Vide* pp. 245-6 & 248.
[2] *Vide* pp. 245-6.

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332. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

In the course of the conversations, I had occasion to refer to the difficulties that are said to be experienced by the people in the North-West Frontier Province. His Excellency jokingly remarked that, if I went there, perhaps things might settle down. What I understood to have been said in joke has now been said in all seriousness by three friends from the Province. They tell me that accompanied by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Syed Mahmud and Mrs. Naidu, I should proceed to the Province and they promised that, with the willing help of the authorities, things can return to the normal, not only in the Province, but among the frontier tribes living on the border. As my purpose now can only be to see peace restored everywhere and to assist in the process wherever possible, I do not want to go anywhere, for the time being, without His Excellency's approval. It may not be possible for him to give me the reply without consulting local authorities, and therefore, it may not be possible for him to send me the answer today. But I would appreciate an early reply, and I shall hope that the local authorities will not reject my advance.

I am in Delhi up to Sunday next and hope to leave for Ahmedabad Sunday night. If His Excellency favours the idea of my going to the Frontier Province, it is my intention to do so immediately after the Karachi Congress.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: C.W. 9338. Courtesy: India Office Library; also A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931

333. LETTER TO WALCHAND HIRACHAND[1]

March 6, 1931

DEAR WALCHAND,

I thank you for your letter. In my opinion the meaning of the clause relating to boycott is absolutely clear. The word boycott may be omitted for its origin, when it was first coined, or for its recent memories. Let me then say that the exclusion of British in favour of Indian goods, Indian companies, shipping, insurance, etc., is not only permitted but favoured by the clause. What is however a taboo under the clause is preference to non-Indian foreign goods and foreign services over the British even irrespective of merits, a weapon the country used as a political lever with terrible effect during the civil disobedience campaign. If a permanent settlement is the aim of the provisional settlement, as it undoubtedly is, boycott or exclusion, by whatever name we call it, should cease whilst an attempt at perpetual friendship continues. But preference for swadeshi over non-swadeshi is, apart from political consequence which it may not have, a permanent obligation which no nation can ignore without hurting its interests.

M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 8-3-1931

[1] In reply to his letter which read: "In today's Government communique about the terms of settlement reference to boycott is made which requires, to my mind, to be cleared. I understand it to mean that wherever an indigenous industry, commodity or service is available we are still justified in boycotting all non-Indian items of such commodities or services even if they happened to be only British.

"To make my point clear, I will cite shipping and insurance on the coast. There is only British shipping against Indian shipping. I take it that the Indian shippers can not only boycott British shipping interests but you will expect them to boycott these in order to encourage Indian shipping. The same can be said about Indian insurance companies and Indian cloth.

"I should be grateful if you will kindly let me have your views in detail and permit me to publish them."

334. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. Do not be impatient now. We shall meet on Monday. I intend to leave Delhi on Sunday. My health is fairly good.

MAHADEV
FOR BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9321

335. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 6, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I can understand your eagerness to meet me. I hope to leave this place on Sunday and arrive there on Monday. We shall thus be meeting on Monday evening.

MAHADEV
FOR BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3408

336. INTERVIEW TO S. HASAN ALI KHAN[1]

March 6, 1931

In the course of the interview Mr. S. Hasan Ali Khan put a number of questions to which Mr. Gandhi gave prompt and satisfactory replies.

The first question naturally related to the settlement just arrived at between the Viceroy and Congress, and Mr. Gandhi expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the compact as it stands.

Q. What would be the position of zamindars in the coming Constitution?

[1] Of the U. P. Zamindars' Association

A. They will have the same privileges and the same rights as at present. Every justice will be extended both to the zamindars and the tenants, provided they go hand in hand with us.

You know the welfare of the country depends on agriculture and the agriculturists form the great bulk of the country. In the course of the recent movement some of the young Congress workers have attempted to set the tenants against the landlords. Further, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in his presidential address at Lahore, explicitly expressed his views against the landlords of the country. May I know what the significance of that statement is? May I also know how Congress views the question concerning this important class of people?

Yes, I know that the country entirely depends on agriculture, which in turn depends on zamindars and tenants, the two chief factors of the country. No such instruction was sent by the Working Committee. We do not want that the tenants should stand against the zamindars. I was present at the Lahore Congress session. The late Pandit Motilal, myself and Pandit Jawaharlal drafted the resolution concerning the zamindars and ruling chiefs, which was only meant to establish democracy. We never meant that there would be no room for the zamindars or for the so-termed relics of the past. As a matter of fact, we have every sympathy for the zamindars if they show a fair attitude towards the peasantry. We assure the zamindars that their rights will be given due consideration in a swaraj constitution. I appeal to them to be generous to the Congress.

The Pioneer, 16-3-1931

337. INTERVIEW TO "KAISER-I-HIND"[1]

DELHI,
March 6, 1931

Mahatmaji gave me special interview yesterday in the course of which he paid a glowing tribute to the great services which the *Kaiser-i-Hind* and its proprietor, Mr. Hirjibehedin, rendered to the national cause and expressed great admiration for the noble part which the Parsi community had played in effectively advancing the country's fight for freedom. Mahatmaji said:

Kaiser-i-Hind *khub seva bajavi.* [*Kaiser-i-Hind* had rendered great services.]

[1] Of Bombay; this was reported by the special representative on March 7.

Gandhiji added that he was sure the services of Parsi ladies and gentlemen will be written with gold in the history of India, and he asked me to assure the community through the medium of your paper that he will not forget these services.

I told Mahatmaji that minority communities were clamouring for special rights and protection and that although there were three Parsis on the Round Table Conference none had pleaded the rights of Parsis; and I asked Mahatmaji whether he would advocate their rights as the Congress had decided to give all consideration to the rights of minorities. Mahatmaji said that Parsis were so strong that they could take care of themselves, that if he said that he would champion their cause it would look like egotism. Their case did not require special pleading and there was no necessity to remind him of not neglecting their interests. He cannot ignore their claims and their services.

After reflecting carefully Gandhiji said:

If it was shown to me that the Parsis had suffered any loss I will repay it with compound interest.

He gave me permission to convey this message to our beloved community.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1931

338. INTERVIEW TO JOURNALISTS[1]

[*March 6, 1931*][2]

At exactly 11.30 this morning Mahatma Gandhi invited the various journalists, Indian as well as foreign, who have . . . been . . . reporting the peace negotiations, to interview him for approximately an hour . . .[3]

Q. You say that complete independence is an indifferent rendering for *purna* swaraj. What then is the real meaning of *purna* swaraj?

A. Proper translation I cannot give you. I do not know any word or phrase to answer it in the English language—I can, therefore, only give an explanation. The root meaning of swaraj is self-rule. 'Swaraj' may, therefore, be rendered as disciplined rule from within and *purna* means 'complete'. 'Independence' has no such limitation. Independence may mean licence to do as you like.

[1] This appeared under the title "The Settlement and Its Meaning" with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai given under the sub-heading, "A Catechism". It read: "Questions are asked everywhere about the meaning and implications of the settlement, and it may be useful to present to the reader a catechism which is likely to satisfy many doubts and queries. The answers are as nearly in Gandhiji's language as possible."

[2] & [3] From *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 10-3-1931

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Swaraj is positive. Independence is negative. *Purna* swaraj does not exclude association with any nation, much less with England. But it can only mean association for mutual benefit and at will. Thus, there are countries which are said to be independent but which have no *purna* swaraj, e.g., Nepal. The word swaraj is a sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which 'independence' often means.

Is the settlement consistent with the Lahore resolution?

It is, most decidedly. There is nothing to prevent the Congress at Karachi from reaffirming the Lahore resolution, and there is nothing to prevent Congressmen from taking up that position at the forthcoming Round Table Conference. In fact, I do not think I am betraying any confidence, when I say that I took good care to ascertain that point and make the Congress position clear before approaching the question of settlement. I should feel bound to press for *purna* swaraj at the Conference and we should deny our very existence if we did not press for it.

What did you mean by 'swaraj without the Empire if necessary', as you used to say?

The Empire no longer remains, it having turned into a Commonwealth, and swaraj within the Commonwealth is perfectly possible. We may be an independent state and yet form part of a Commonwealth, as the U.S.A.

Do you think the coming Federation will be like the U.S.A. ? Have you received any guarantee as regards the composition of the Federation?

No guarantees. But it can in no case be less than Dominion Status.

But how can you say that, having agreed to the safeguards?

I have agreed to no safeguards that are not in the interest of India. The word has a bad odour, I know; it is a dangerous word. But I can quite conceive of safeguards essentially in the interests of India. The principle of safeguards in the Indian interest has undoubtedly been accepted but no specific safeguard has been accepted. The safeguards of my conception are of a totally different character. You will, therefore, see no mention even of transition in the clause. They can never be burdens imposed from without. They should be protective, that is, in the real interest of the country. I cannot endorse safeguards which compromise the interests of India.

But you had the same thing presented to you in December 1929. Why should we have gone in for this terrible suffering to get no further than the position of 1929?

You are making a great mistake. It is not the same position. Lord Irwin could or would then promise nothing. He simply reiterated the goal of Dominion Status. Today Dominion Status is in words a certainty and it is within our power to make it as comprehensive as possible so as to mean complete independence. In 1929 we had no knowledge of the attitude of the Indian members. Today we know.

There seems to be a gulf of difference between the position at Lahore affirming complete independence and the present parleys leading on to a settlement.

Even when I moved the Lahore resolution, I made it quite clear that independence need not mean complete dissociation from British connection. If we had been fighting a violent war there might have been ruin for one or the other party. But ours has been a non-violent war presupposing compromise. We have all the while assumed it, desired it. My letter to Lord Irwin was conceived in that spirit. The provisional compromise now makes an opening for us to go and ask for what we want. As a satyagrahi it was my duty to seek for such an opening.

You have said that you can conceive of safeguards which may be in the interest of India. Are the present safeguards such?

They are not. They are an intolerable burden. Englishmen may say they are in India's interest. But they have yet to convince me.

Would you be prepared to admit any safeguards in the future constitution?

Yes, those that may be reasonable and wise. Take, for example, the question of minorities. I can understand that we cannot achieve our purpose as a great nation if we do not regard the right of minorities as a sacred trust. I should regard it as a legitimate safeguard. Then, as regards Finance, if we have a public debt, it may need to be safeguarded. The nature of such safeguard, I have not yet thought the thing out for myself. As regards the army and the services, I admit that we should guarantee the pay and fulfilment of any other condition that we may have undertaken, in connection with British officers and soldiers. But we must determine whose services are necessary for the welfare of India and under what conditions as to pay, etc.

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Will you repudiate India's debts?

I will not repudiate one single farthing that can be legitimately debited to us. But, unfortunately, there has been a great deal of confusion about this talk of repudiation. The Congress has never sought to repudiate a single rupee of the national obligation. But what the Congress has asked for, and will insist upon, is proof of the justness of the obligation that might be sought to be imposed on the incoming Government, even as a buyer would like to know what obligation he has to undertake when entering on a new purchase. The Congress has suggested that in case there can be no agreed adjustments, an independent tribunal should be appointed.

Do you think the League of Nations a proper tribunal?

So far as I can say off-hand, the League of Nations may be a proper tribunal, but, I do not know whether England would agree to get the question examined by the League, and I can well understand that hesitation. Besides, the League of Nations may not undertake such a responsibility. There should be no difficulty in securing an acceptable tribunal.

Will you press this question at the Round Table Conference?

It will be necessary to do so when the question of examination and acceptance of national obligations comes up. We would express our views as to the items that should be borne by us. But if England holds another view then the question of arbitration would arise and would be necessary. What, therefore, we want is a proper audit.

Does this provisional settlement represent the practical application of the Sermon on the Mount as suggested by the *Hindustan Times* this morning?

I do not think I can judge. It is for the critics to judge which principles have been applied by either party to the settlement.

What is your idea of '*purna* swaraj?' Would it be possible within the British Empire?

It would be possible but on terms of absolute equality. Complete independence may mean separation and popular imagination does understand it in that light. But, if we remain part of the Commonwealth, on terms of absolute equality, instead of Downing Street being the centre of the Empire Delhi should be the centre. India has a population of 300 millions and that is a factor that cannot be ignored. Friends suggest that England will never be able to reconcile itself to that position. But I do not despair.

The British are a practical people and as they love liberty for themselves, it is only a step further to desire the same liberty for others.

I know if the time comes to concede equality to India, they will say that that was what they had all along meant. The British people have a faculty of self-delusion as no other people have. Yes, to my mind equality means the right to secede.

Would you like to have *purna* swaraj under the British flag?

There may be a common flag or each party may have its own.

Young India, 19-3-1931

339. TELEGRAM TO HIRALAL A. SHAH

March 7, 1931

HIRALAL AMRITLAL[1]
BOMBAY

SARDAR THERE INTERPRET [TERMS OF SETTLEMENT] GIVE INSTRUCTIONS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

340. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

March 7, 1931

KRISHNADAS
KHADI BHANDAR
CALCUTTA

PICKETING TERMS SETTLEMENT PERMISSIBLE BUT SUSPEND IF ANY TROUBLE EXPECTED TRYING DEVISE MEANS WEANING DEALERS.

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

[1] Khadi worker of Bombay

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341. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

DELHI,
March 7, 1931

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
BHAVNAGAR

LEAVING FOR AHMEDABAD SUNDAY EVENING BY METRE GAUGE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5914; also microfilm: S.N. 16924

342. LETTER TO VICEROY[1]

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 7, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Your very affectionate letter has touched me very deeply. It will always be a joy to me to renew the heart-to-heart talks, only now, let us hope, under less trying circumstances. Your kindly nature made the trial itself a pleasing work to which I had learnt to look forward. I heartily join in your prayer—may God answer it.

I am,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9339. Courtesy: India Office Library

[1] In reply to his "private" letter (C.W. 9340) dated March 6 which read: "I want to write you a personal note of my own. Very great thanks to you for all you have done, while we have been working together during these last difficult days. It has been a great privilege to me to be given this opportunity of meeting and knowing you; and I hope that, either before I leave India or in England, you will give me the pleasure of seeing you again. I do pray—as I believe—that history may say you and I were permitted to be instruments in doing something big for India and for humanity. Believe me, with again much thanks, and with deep understanding, . . ."

343. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 7, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

An urgent message from Ambala draws my attention to cantonment orders issued against persons suspected of sympathy with or assisting the Congress to leave cantonment limits and residents outside to enter those limits, and asks whether such persons are not protected by the settlement. The telegram reminds me that there are such orders in many cantonments. If it is clear to you, as it is to me, that such persons are protected by the settlement, will you please issue the necessary instructions?

Yours,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

344. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DELHI[1]

March 7, 1931

Before I begin, I must tell you how much I miss Maulana Shaukat Ali here. He arrived this morning and it is a matter of inexpressible sorrow to me that he should not be here, and I have no doubt you also will share my sorrow. But I may assure you that I shall miss no opportunity, leave no stone unturned, to persuade the Maulana and other Mussalmans to work with us on the same platform. It is a matter for shame that the 'Big Brother' with whom I travelled through the country for over two years and whom I took particular pleasure in describing as capable of carrying me in his pocket should not be here with me today. But if it is a matter for shame, I do not know how far I am responsible for it. I have spared no effort to remove that shame, but I have not succeeded. In this there is nothing surprising, inasmuch as we find

[1] This appeared under the title "Delhi Speech" with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai which read: "Addressing a mass meeting attended by over 50,000 people at Delhi on the 7th of March, Gandhiji delivered a speech in Hindi of which the following is a condensed rendering."

even blood-brothers divided by sharp differences of opinion. But our differences have not in the least affected our friendship. I regard him, even today, as my friend and brother, and I have no doubt that he also has the same regard for me. But that affords me little consolation, for I want him to work shoulder to shoulder with me for the welfare of India, and I want his co-operation on my terms, as indeed he once used to give me. But that work ceased to appeal to him at a certain stage and he left the Congress platform.

That preamble will give you an inkling of what I am about to say today. The settlement that has been just arrived at will fail of effect without a real heart-unity between Hindus and Mussalmans. Without that unity our going to the Conference will be of no avail. No one will pretend that the Conference can help us to achieve that unity. A heart-unity can be achieved between pure hearts purged of distrust and that can be achieved only outside the Conference. In this I seek your co-operation and ask you to count on my doing my utmost.

In a letter I received yesterday the correspondent asks me why I should not make the same advances to the Mussalmans as I did to the Viceroy. Why, he asks, should I not wait on esteemed Mussalman friends who are desirous of unity and beg on bended knees for their co-operation? I like the suggestion and the correspondent may be sure that I shall leave nothing undone to plead with my Mussalman friends. But you must understand that there are limits to the capacity of an individual, and the moment he flatters himself that he can undertake all tasks, God is there to humble his pride. For myself, I am gifted with enough humility to look even to babes and sucklings for help. And that reminds me that in this mission of mine I can count on the hearty and active co-operation of my sisters who beat all previous records of suffering and sacrifice during the last heroic campaign. To them I say: If you are convinced that Hindu-Muslim unity is a *sine qua non* I ask you to use against your own countrymen the same weapon of satyagraha that you used so effectively against Government. Tell your men that you will non-co-operate with them, you will not cook for them, you will starve yourselves and them so long as they do not wash their hands of these dirty communal squabbles. Assure me of your co-operation, and you will add tremendously to my strength and to my power of pleading.

We Hindus are described, to a certain extent rightly, as the majority community. Well, to them I would say the same thing as I used to do in 1921, viz., that voluntary surrender on the part of either community—preferably by the majority community—of all

rights and privileges would immediately effect this unity. It would be a great thing, a brave thing, for the Hindus to achieve this act of self-denial. Let them say to the Mussalmans: 'Have as big a share of the spoils as you want; we will be content to serve you.' What after all are the things you are quarrelling for? Not indeed for air and water. It is for seats on legislatures and local bodies. What has the vast majority of you got to do with them? How many of you can go there? And what can you do there? Outside the legislatures you did wonderful things; you defied the ordinances, you defied lathi-charges and 'firing' orders, because you were conscious of your strength. If you retain the same consciousness, what would it matter to you if your Parliament had all Mussalmans in it and no Hindu? I am sick of these squabbles for seats, this scramble for the shadow of power. How I wish I could bring home to all Congressmen that they should have nothing to do with these legislatures? The very act of voluntary surrender will clothe you with a power undreamt of before.

And you my sisters, what would you do by going to the Parliament? Do you aspire after collectorships, commissionerships or even the Viceroyalty? And what would you do if one of you were to be the Viceroy of India? I know you would not care to, for the Viceroy has got to order executions and hangings—a thing you would heartily detest. Supposing we, the 'leaders', were to run a race for getting the Viceroyalty, we would simply strangle ourselves. That is not the prize we have set our hearts on. We crave to be humble servants of the country. It is this spirit of service which I want to permeate the atmosphere. I want you to join me and share this aspiration. But if it does not appeal to you, you had better give me up, for that is the condition on which I tender my service. I have no other secret but that of voluntary surrender.[1]

'Where is peace?' asks the nameless writer of this leaflet. 'The late Pandit Motilal thought of the Garhwalis on his death-bed. What have you done for them?' that is another question that has been put to me. Well, I may tell you that when on the last day of his presence on earth he referred to the Garhwalis only I was by his side, no one else, not even Jawaharlal. I consider that as his last will and testament to me, as those were the last words I heard from him. But I know, much better than you, what he was thinking of. The writer subscribes himself 'Young India', but I

[1] At this stage a 'red' leaflet full of posers addressed to Gandhiji was handed to him.

may tell him that I am still the editor of *Young India*. Let him who would oust me from the editorship come to me and I will tell him what Pandit Motilal was referring to. You must remember that there were no 'peace talks' at that time, the peace ambassadors had not even arrived then, and the question of the freedom of Garhwalis could not be in the late Panditji's mind. He was asking whether the relations and dependants of the Garhwalis were being properly looked after.

The next question is about Bhagat Singh and others who are under sentence to death. How can there be peace, I am asked, when a sentence of death is hanging over the heads of these patriots? It is unfortunate that the young men distributing these pamphlets should not understand such a simple thing. They ought to understand that we have entered into no peace treaty. It is a provisional, temporary settlement we have arrived at. I beseech the young men not to bid good-bye to common sense, to cool courage, to patience, to reason. I have claimed to be a young man of 62. But even if I were to be labelled as a dilapidated old fogey, I have a right to appeal to your good sense. I do not want you to take for granted all that old men say to you, but I want you to consider it and weigh it, and if you find that we 'old' men have bungled, that we have been guilty of weakness get us to abdicate, and assume the reins yourselves. But that presupposes cool courage and solid common sense.

But let me tell you why Bhagat Singh and the rest have not been released. Maybe, if you had been negotiating you might have secured better terms from the Viceroy, but we the Working Committee would secure no more than what we have. I may tell you that throughout the negotiations I was not acting on my own, I was backed by the whole Working Committee. We brought all the pressure we could to bear on our negotiations and satisfied ourselves with what in justice we could have under the provisional settlement. We could not as negotiators of the provisional truce forget our pledge of truth and non-violence, forget the bounds of justice.

But it is still open to us to secure the release of all you have named—and that can be done if you will implement the settlement. Let 'Young India' stand by the settlement and fulfil all its conditions, and if, God willing, Bhagat Singh and others are alive when we have arrived at the proper stage, they would not only be saved from the gallows but released.

But I will address to 'Young India' a word of warning. These things are sooner asked for than obtained. You want to secure the

freedom of those condemned of violence. There is nothing wrong about it. My creed of non-violence does not favour the punishment of thieves and dacoits and even murderers. I cannot in all conscience agree to anyone being sent to the gallows, much less a brave man like Bhagat Singh. But I tell you, even you could not save them unless you fulfil the conditions of the settlement. You cannot do so by violent means. If you pin your faith to violence, take it from me that you will not only not secure Bhagat Singh's release but will have to sacrifice thousands of Bhagat Singhs. I was not prepared to do so, and hence I preferred the way of peace, of non-violence. The way that you have adopted has been on trial for centuries and history records numerous instances of the truth that those who use the sword shall perish by the sword. You will not stop at using the violent weapon against your rulers, you will use it against your brothers and sisters too, and others of your way of thinking will use it against you.

I beseech you then, if you want the release of the prisoners, to change your methods, to accept the settlement, and then come and ask me about the Garhwalis and Bhagat Singh. Come to me six months hence, after you have implemented the settlement and gained in strength, and ask me the question you are asking today and I promise to satisfy you.

Having suspended civil disobedience we now enter a period of disciplined obedience. We are now pledged to eschew all passive and active violence, direct and indirect violence in picketing foreign-cloth and liquor shops, but we are further pledged to relax our boycott of British goods minus British cloth. The settlement is an attempt at re-establishing friendly relations and it therefore means that we must lay down all weapons of punishment. Boycott of British goods was conceived, essentially, as a weapon of punishment and has, therefore, to be suspended. But we have to go ahead, even more energetically with the constructive programme, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, the programme which means the economic and moral salvation of our poor starving millions.

I must also explain that the relaxation of the boycott of British goods does not mean that we should prefer British goods to Indian goods. Indian goods you will prefer to *all* foreign goods for all time. Under the settlement you are pledged not to direct the weapon of punishment against the Britisher and accord a favoured treatment to other foreigners. And even that condition does not bind you to prefer British goods to other foreign goods; it binds you not to pursue the policy of aggressive boycott that you did heretofore.

The boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, as I have said before, should not be relaxed, cannot be relaxed. It is our permanent programme; but it should be purged of all its aggressive forms, e.g., social boycott, and persecution of the seller and the consumer. If you say boycott without these elements will lose all its edge, I will tell you that it argues want of faith in the efficacy of non-violence. Work achieved through aggressive picketing will be of doubtful worth, work achieved through loving persuasive pressure will be lasting. I ask you therefore to plead with the foreign-cloth seller and liquor seller to give up dealing in foreign cloth and liquor and take to some more honourable and cleaner calling. As to the constructive part of foreign-cloth boycott I want you to understand that it is impossible to achieve it without khadi. Mill-cloth is for those whom the Congress has not been able to reach; for Congressmen there can be no cloth other than khadi. It is a pity that where a few months ago there were thousands of *taklis* working, they should now be conspicuous by their absence. The period that follows should be one entirely devoted to constructive efforts.

In conclusion, I would beseech you to realize the supreme importance of discipline. It is open to you to press for a different policy and different programme at Karachi. But let it not be said that we are a people incapable of maintaining discipline. Indiscipline will mean disaster, and make one like me who is pining to see swaraj in his lifetime perish in sorrow and grief.

It is my earnest prayer that God may give you the power to appreciate what I have said and to attain swaraj by pursuing the path of truth, justice and non-violence.

Young India, 12-3-1931

345. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 8, 1931

VALLABHBHAI PATEL
BOMBAY

FINLAY[1] WIRES THEIR GODOWN UNDER PICKETING. THINK GODOWN PICKETS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN WITHOUT AFFECTING BAN THEIR CLOTH.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

[1] The Finlay Mills, Bombay

346. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 8, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

Here is a telegram from Nellore (copy telegram). I suppose the lathi-charge was due to the fact of the settlement not having been received there. Anyway I feel that I should bring all such matters to your notice unless you want me to do otherwise.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

347. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 8, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your prompt reply. I quite agree with you that the instructions must take some time to reach all the different places. I thought it my duty to pass on the wire for such action as you might think necessary. And I feel grateful that you have taken action on the wire.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Replying to this on the same date, Emerson wrote: " . . . it is the desire of the Government to give the earliest and fullest effect to the settlement and we have addressed local Governments. . . . We shall request the Madras Government for a report."

348. CABLE TO "SPECTATOR"[1]

[Before *March 9, 1931*][2]

THANKS. INDIA'S STAYING WITHIN THE COMMONWEALTH DEPENDS ON PROPER BRITISH BEHAVIOUR. THIS CAN NEVER BE A CONDITION FOR SWARAJ AND WILL DEPEND ENTIRELY ON THE SINCERE WISHES OF BOTH PARTIES ALONE.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 12-3-1931

349. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1931

Q. If the Karachi Congress should reject the terms of the provisional settlement, what do you propose to do?

A. In that case I will not be asked to be present at the Round Table Conference. I did not meet the Viceroy in my individual capacity but in the capacity of a Congress member.

Will you go to your Ashram?

I cannot go to the Ashram; if I went to the Ashram, the inmates of the Ashram would drive me out, I shall stay where I shall be able to get charity. If at the Round Table Conference the form of Government acceptable to the Congress could be decided upon, then I shall be able to return to the Ashram.

Could you advise the farmers to pay the land revenue?

The farmers have promised to pay the land revenue when Shri Vallabhbhai Patel asks them to do so. They will not do what I ask them to do.

[1] In reply to a cable from the Editor which read: "Hearty congratulations for compromise. I shall do my utmost to strive for the good of India within the British Commonwealth."

[2] Published under the date-line "New Delhi, March 9, 1931"

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Will the details of the talks between yourself and the Viceroy be released to the Press?

It is possible that the Viceroy may do so; I cannot do this.

Aaj, 12-3-1931

350. TELEGRAM TO PRAFUL SEN[1]

[On or after *March 10, 1931*]

YOUR WIRE. DEEPLY GRIEVED. AM MOVING.[2] SEND FURTHER PARTICULARS. WIRE OCCASION[3] FOR PROCESSION ARAMBAGH.

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

351. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

March 11, 1931

BENGAL TELEGRAM SAYS ELEVEN LADIES ASSAULTED BY POLICE WITH[4] LATHIS AND RIFLEBUTTS IN PROCESSION AT ARAMBAGH NINTH INSTANT. IF TRUE NEWS IS MOST DISCONCERTING.[5]

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In reply to his telegram dated March 10, 1931, which read: "Eleven ladies assaulted by police with lathis and rifles and riflebutts yesterday's procession at Arambagh."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

[3] Sengupta's wire to Gandhiji read: "Ninth Arambagh truce celebrations procession dispersed."

[4] The source has "by".

[5] In his letter, dated March 13, to Gandhiji Emerson wrote: "The Government of India have asked the Government of Bengal for the facts of the incident."

352. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

March 11, 1931

KRISHNADAS
134-B MECHHUA BAZAR STREET
CALCUTTA

AM MOVING.[1] BUT SUGGEST PATIENCE. KEEP ME INFORMED.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

353. TELEGRAM TO SARDUL SINGH CAVEESHAR

March 11, 1931

SARDUL SINGH
LAHORE

NOTE DATE MEETING SIKH FRIENDS. IF LEAGUE[2] MEETING AT DELHI ATTENDANCE POSSIBLE OTHERWISE NOT.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

354. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

March 11, 1931

Interviewed on Mr. Baldwin's decision about the non-participation of the Conservative Party in the Indian sessions of the Round Table Conference, Mr. Gandhi said:

Mr. Baldwin's statement does not come upon me as a surprise. I must say that the Congress position is unequivocal and quite simple. The Congress is out to win *purna* swaraj at the earliest possible moment. It will, therefore, look with grave suspicion upon

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Sikh League, which met at Amritsar on April 8, 1931

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any dilatory tactics. The Conservative fears about the so-called safeguards are justified. The Congress would accept no safeguard which is not clearly proved to be in the interest of India, and those that were discussed in London were certainly not in India's interest.

On questions of vital importance to India equivocation would be a dangerous pastime.

If the Congress is represented at the Round Table Conference it will do so with the clearest conscience and with all cards laid on the table. I therefore welcome Mr. Baldwin's statement of Conservative policy. It will lead the Congress to understand the forces that will be arrayed against it.

The Times of India, 12-3-1931

355. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, AHMEDABAD[1]

March 11, 1931

Addressing a small gathering of men and women volunteers this morning, Gandhiji explained the principles of the new programme. At the outset, he congratulated the volunteers on their work and said that though the lady volunteers were less in number, their share was greater. Very few believed and the outside world did not at all believe that so many lady volunteers would come forward to go to jail cheerfully and undergo beating. The world was greatly impressed. It was not to be supposed that they (volunteers) made no mistakes. No man was perfect, but on the whole Gandhiji felt that their virtues outnumbered their defects.

Speaking about the future programme, Gandhiji said it involved greater responsibility and had to be prosecuted in a calmer atmosphere. Those who needed external enthusiasm would find it dry. Peaceful picketing meant that even a harsh word could not be used. Such great work could not be expected to yield fruit instantaneously like the magician's mango tree. They should not lose interest in the future work of picketing. They should decide how far that work should be done by men and women together. Mahatma Gandhi desired that women alone should do that work. The atmosphere would thereby be elevated. Women might take the help of men in the work of organization, etc., but picketing should be their special work. The rest of the men should take to production of khaddar without which the boycott of foreign cloth was impossible. Concluding, Gandhiji said that volunteers might be paid a subsistence allowance, but their dignity should be greater than that of the Indian Civil Service.

[1] At Sheth Ranchhodlal's bungalow

Searching questions were then put to Gandhiji regarding the boycott of British goods. Gandhiji said they could not whip a man for all time. They should lay aside the whip, when they were carrying on negotiations for settlement. Boycott of British goods was a form of punishing the British people, but if the British befriended them and gave them complete swaraj, they might prefer British goods. One should buy goods from a friend.

Asked what those who had taken pledges of boycott of British goods should do, Gandhiji replied that they could not take a pledge to give two stripes to an individual every day.

Questioned if they could enter Government colleges, Gandhiji replied in the negative and said they could do so after the final settlement.

In reply to a question regarding the discipline that volunteers should follow in camps, Gandhiji said they should not tell lies, abuse, smoke or eat sweets. When asked if they could drink tea Gandhiji humorously replied that they could drink tea from the river Sabarmati.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1931

356. SPEECH TO LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD[1]

March 11, 1931

As I think of you my heart goes out for you and I pray to God that the bond of affection between us may be stronger and that you may realize that there is no difference of any kind between you and me. I go about among mill-owners, I accept their hospitality, but my heart is always with you. It is my fervent prayer to God that He may never separate me from you, and that I may lay down my life in the service of the poor.

You have in your statement rightly said that the swaraj of my dream is the poor man's swaraj. The necessaries of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and moneyed men. But that does not mean that you should have palaces like theirs. They are not necessary for happiness, you or I would be lost in them. But, you ought to get all the ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys. I have not the slightest doubt that swaraj is not *purna* swaraj until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it. I do not know when we will win it but we have all to strive for it. . . .

Your work is making you known throughout the world. Students from the West marvel at the beauty of your organization and try to make a study of it. Your Union strikes them as unique.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

The members of your Union are jealous of their rights, and are prepared to lay down their lives for them, but their leaders, who guide them, have no ill will against the capitalists. In their welfare and their power you see your own welfare and power. That is the secret of your strength. Outside people cannot understand your position. They have thought of capitalists and working men as exploiters and exploited. All capitalists, according to some, are born ogres. But there need be no such inherent antipathy between the two. It is an erroneous notion. If the capitalists are apt to be proud of their wealth, the working men are apt to be proud of their numerical strength. We are liable to be swayed and intoxicated by the same passion as the capitalists, and it must be our prayer that both may be free from that passion. I feel that no class war poisons the relations between the mill-owners and the working men in Ahmedabad. I hope and pray, that the present cordial relations may be maintained between them.

But the secret of your success is that the men and women, who guide you, have no axes to grind. They have no base interest to serve.

It is the beauty of this organization, moreover, that made it possible for the Union to take an active part in the civil disobedience movement. 165 members of the Union took part as volunteers in the Dharasana Raid, and 191 went to jail as volunteers or pickets. It is a record of which any union may be proud.

Young India, 26-3-1931

357. HOW TO DO IT

The reader will find in this week's issue the text of the provisional settlement[1], my Press statement[2], the reprint of my cross-examination by the Press correspondents[3] and some of my speeches[4] which I hold to be important for the sake of understanding the settlement. I am sure, the reader will appreciate the reprint, if only, for the sake of ready reference. My statement, cross-examination and speeches have been carefully revised by Mahadev Desai.

Those who will read the reprints with attention will not fail to discover that, if the last twelve months' heroic and hurricane

[1] *Vide* Appendix VI.
[2] *Vide* pp. 250-6.
[3] *Vide* pp. 263-7.
[4] *Vide* pp. 269-74.

campaign has brought us the hope of early attainment of swaraj, the cent per cent observance of the conditions of the settlement to be fulfilled by the nation will make the Congress an irresistible power for vindicating the national position. By our future conduct shall our immediate past be judged. Even if we have understood non-violence as the best policy, we shall now realize that whilst the truce lasts, it is obligatory on us meticulously to respect the laws and orders thereunder. I dare say, we shall find it sometimes difficult to carry out orders which to us may appear capricious. We need not expect a change of heart in the official world all of a sudden. If, therefore, we are conscious of our strength and our ability to resume civil disobedience, whenever it becomes necessary, we should find no difficulty in obeying even irksome orders.

The greatest difficulty, however, consists in duly observing the limits of picketing. I would like all Congress organizations to bear in mind that it is profitable for foreign cloth or liquor and drugs to be sold, now that picketing has to be unaggressive, rather than that there should be any aggressive picketing smelling of violence in any shape or form. Picketing under the settlement has to confine itself to pure educative effort. Every conversion brought about by educative effort must lead to permanent result. I have no doubt that in the long run unaggressive picketing will be found to be far more effective and the shorter method. Such picketing should not mean any undue restraint upon the seller or the consumer. After the picketer's appeal, the seller or the consumer must be free to sell or buy, as the case may be. There should be no social boycott, such as, stopping barber's services, cutting off the water or food supply. But we are not obliged to deal with or receive services from those whose conduct we may disapprove. Thus, we may refuse to attend the social functions of one who has turned a deaf ear to public opinion or to have dealings with him even in matters other than his business of a seller of foreign cloth or drink and drugs. The golden rule is to err on the safe side, i.e., not to do the thing about which there is the slightest doubt. It should be borne in mind that whenever there is a clash between the dealer and the pickets, picketing has to be suspended. This clash can be avoided if we are gentle in our dealings with the sellers or consumers.

It will be found on experience that unaggressive picketing will have to be done more in respect of the consumer than the seller. In other words, it means Congress penetration into villages. After all real service has to be rendered there than in the cities.

The other most important thing is communal unity. It demands urgent attention. Without it, it would be vain at least for the Congress to attend the Conference and expect great results. How this unity is to be achieved I have shown in the Delhi speech printed elsewhere. The tangle can be loosened only by Hindus daring to trust and being content with the remainder left over after the minority have satisfied themselves.

Young India, 12-3-1931

358. "YOUNG INDIA"

It is possible again to resume publication of *Young India* under the law. The typed sheets were issued to show that it was possible to distribute several thousand copies among the readers even in spite of the prohibitive law called Ordinances. The moment however truce was declared these sheets were discontinued. Fortunately the discontinuance only meant a delay of a couple of days in bringing out the printed issue. The reader did not know how it was possible to distribute seven thousand copies of *Young India* sheets and ten thousand of *Navajivan* week after week. But he will be proud to know that this was possible only because of the willing, brave and self-sacrificing help of the old *Young India* and *Navajivan* staff who worked for less pay and numerous other volunteers. Both the publications cost over two thousand rupees monthly. The sheets were sent free of charge as owing to the Ordinance the subscriptions might be confiscated. This was done in the hope that when the papers resumed normal publication the generous subscribers would make it a point of honour to pay their arrears of subscriptions. This hope, I doubt not, will be realized and from now the arrears will pour in. For a few weeks the paper will continue to be sent to the subscribers after which the despatch will discontinue in respect of those who may be in arrears.

Here I take thankful note of the fact that many subscribers, whom it was impossible to serve, never, in spite of the offer made by the management, asked for a refund of the balance of their paid subscriptions. These will now receive their paper without further payment till the balance is exhausted.

Last, but not least, to be thanked is J. C. Kumarappa, who, after my imprisonment, added to his ordinary duty the onerous one of editing the paper. To him and all the staff and volunteers my thanks are due. I hope that the public will join me in the

tangible manner they can, namely, by patronizing *Young India* and what is more fulfilling the mission for which *Young India* stands. The readers know that *Young India* and *Navajivan* do not exist for a commercial purpose. They are published for the sole purpose of educating the nation to win *purna* swaraj through truthful and non-violent means.

Young India, 12-3-1931

359. SPEECH AT BORSAD

March 12, 1931

Instead of killing and getting killed, we have accepted the principle of seeking justice by laying down our lives and you, it may be said, have observed that principle to a large extent. It is not that there was no anger in you. But you Patidars of Kheda and others who are well known for their fiery tempers, who are given to drawing their swords at the slightest provocation and who are a fervent, vigorous people, deserve to be congratulated on having courageously put up with everything. The fact that you young men sat quiet while in the by-lanes of Borsad women were being beaten with sticks, kicked and subjected to indignities is something that is incredible. But you allowed the women to be beaten and did not raise your little finger even in their defence. If this had happened in other circumstances, those who had allowed women to be beaten would have been called cowards. However, who would use this word with reference to the young men of Borsad? The reason was that all of you were bound by your pledge. It was your pledge not to use violence on the Government's men who had harassed you in various ways. You were pledge-bound like Bhima and Arjuna. At the time when Draupadi's hair was being pulled, Bhima was boiling with rage, his eyes were red, but he did not raise his club; the other brothers too were passive spectators of the entire scene. Would anyone, however, refer to those five husbands as cowards? On the contrary, we congratulate them, regard them as having attained spiritual merit; history sings their praises. History will sing your praises also, my heart is doing so now and I am expressing it here. If I have been guilty of exaggeration in saying that there was a Thermopylae at various places in Kheda, you yourselves should correct that mistake. My task is not that of a professional panegyrist, I wish to make you worthy of that fame. Hence, accept praise to the extent you deserve it.

I was merely an instrument used for the settlement which has been reached. That settlement has taken place between the Congress and the Government despite the fact that it may have been called the Gandhi-Irwin Settlement. It is the dharma of the Sardar and myself to explain this settlement. Some persons have been disappointed by it and ask whether this is to be called a settlement or a disgrace? It seems that some persons have a doubt that a person like me has become tired of carrying on a struggle, has become despondent and hence has thrown away his self-respect. It is said that this taluk has suffered a loss of Rs. 13 lakhs. People must be wondering what kind of a settlement this is in which there is no mention whatsoever of making good this loss. I ask you to point out to me if I had at any time promised to make good this loss. If I had ever done so, it would be tantamount to breach of a pledge. I am also not aware of the Sardar having given any such promise. Your servants, your leaders, can be called traitors if they do not keep their promise after having given it. And, if that happens, how will you have faith in us in future? You would come to the conclusion that since these people betray you in this manner, why should you support them any longer? In this case, however, no pledge given to you has been broken.

This settlement is not the end of the struggle. That will come only after securing swaraj. And perhaps it may not come even after swaraj has been secured, because an occasion may arise when satyagraha may have to be offered against the swaraj Government. The settlement which has been made now is a step forward in our journey towards swaraj. The settlement has been made in the hope that what has now to be secured will be done through talks, discussions and negotiations. I do not recall having said anything, or the Sardar having said anything, about compensating you for your losses. If any volunteer had given you such hopes, I must admit that he had done so thoughtlessly. You must not hold the [Congress] Committee or the Sardar or me responsible for it. After the Dandi pilgrimage, I have all along been saying that this is a do-or-die struggle, you may be ruined in it and how can those who are prepared to be ruined ask for compensation for loss? You have been told by beat of drum that your homes will be robbed, you along with your family will become destitute—you were told that you should join the struggle if you were prepared to suffer this, otherwise, not. Hence you and I will have to differ if you hold that a settlement has not been reached so long as you have not been compensated for your losses amounting to Rs. 13 lakhs. If this amount is to be forthcoming, where is

it going to come from? It will be taken out of your own money—that loss will be compensated with the tax of which the greater amount comes from the pockets of the poor rather than the rich. Even if we had the power to empty out the entire treasury, I would still not agree to do so and would ask you to choose another trustee. This is not the occasion to calculate the amount which we have borrowed or lent out. Whether this settlement should have been concluded or not is another question, but did it involve any lowering of our self-respect? I say to you that it did not involve that in the least. How can you ask for any compensation? Even if we lose our life and property, the compensation indeed will be there—compensation in the form of swaraj. If you are not prepared to suffer even this loss, it will be said that the people of Kheda were misers, they were not prepared to be robbed. Even when we have won swaraj, even if we have the capacity to make good this loss, you will be undoing swaraj if you ask for compensation.

Of course, there is one thing that the Sardar and I would regard as a slap in our faces. The land which belongs to you and which has been given away to someone else is surely something which you cannot afford to lose. We cannot ask for compensation for any loss which has been incurred because we do not ask for the dead to be restored to life or ask for compensation for a period of imprisonment undergone. But this land must be recovered. If Durbar Gopaldas was a fool, he would believe that he had lost Dhasa, but he is no fool. He believes that if he is alive, he will regain many Dhasas. If we were to be satisfied with recovering Dhasa alone, we would have included it even in this settlement. But where was the need to do so? Whoever had heard of the Durbar when he lived at Dhasa? Kalyanji did not write his biography when the Durbar was staying there. By leaving Dhasa and coming over here, the latter gained fifty Dhasas. Even if he gets back that Dhasa today, what would he do with it without swaraj?

Likewise, this land is yours, and will continue to remain yours —unless water submerges the land and the latter becomes an island, that is, if God swallows it up, then that is a different matter. Although the Sardar had agreed to have your land restored to you, I had not. But there is no doubt that that land will be restored to you; it cannot be said when and how this will be done, but you will certainly get it back. Just this one thing is sufficient to test the Sardar and me, viz., the land which has been lost must be restored. And until this is done, you must believe that swaraj has not been won, that we are not your true servants. In order to do so, we shall ruin ourselves and not spare you either.

How can we say that we shall take that land back from the Baraias by fighting? How can I speak of fighting in this manner? The responsibility of getting that land back rests with me and the Sardar.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-3-1931

360. SPEECH AT RAS

[*March 12, 1931*][1]

Not only have the Dharalas not joined you, but they have taken up your land as well. In appropriating your ancestral land, they have defiled our tradition and dishonoured our country. You apprehend a quarrel with the Dharalas while entering the village. If you want to win swaraj, how can you bypass the Dharalas? You cannot put up with it if the village headmanship which was held by Patidars for ages passes to the Dharalas. But that should not be so. A Mukhi is not your leader, he is your servant. How then can you fear a servant? If you have thoroughly grasped the idea that right from the Mukhis and the Ravanias up to the Collector and the Governor all are servants of the people, there is nothing to be afraid of. You do such a lot for us because the Sardar and I are your servants. If we were to act as your masters, you would not have cared for us. At the moment let a Dharala be the Mukhi. As long as he conducts himself properly, you may carry out his orders. At the appropriate moment, he will resign of his own accord. If my words reach the Thakore of Dahevan, I request him not to take your land, because he will not be able to hold it for long. For one thing, he has not paid its full price, and for another, even if he had done so, the land could not become his own. He will have merely taken advantage of the plight of the people who are fighting the Government. I urge all those who have appropriated the land to return it to those from whom it was taken. A time is coming when even the most backward community will not remain out of the scope of swaraj. Under swaraj, there will be no such divisions as Dharalas, Patidars and others but all alike will be Indians. Despite 30 crores of names, they will all be one. Under *Ramarajya*, even a dog should receive a fair deal; why then talk of men? Since we want to establish such

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-3-1931

a rule, I have asked you not to fear the Dharalas and the Headmen. Have self-confidence and go and live in your homes from the morning of the 16th. If everyone who stole anything goes back and quietly replaces it in those houses, we shall be having *Ramarajya*. When you start for your homes, I shall inform the Government too. A satyagrahi entertains neither ill will nor fear. When the women have faced lathi-charges, what can the men fear?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

361. SPEECH AT SUNAV[1]

[*March 12, 1931*][2]

This last paragraph[3] seems to wash out all the heroic suffering that you have gone through. The proportion of losses to the revenue that you have worked out is unfair to you and to your suffering. Revenue amounting to Rs. 69,000 was in question here, but supposing it was a single rupee, even then I would have called upon you to go through the same suffering and the same losses. The amount of the revenue was not the issue. The issue was the refusal to pay and to take the consequences. You say you have suffered so much that now you will have to borrow if you are to pay the revenue dues. If you cannot pay, as I know many of you cannot, there is provision for suspension. But do not give the impression that you are unwilling to pay. Ask for suspension wherever necessary and promise to pay up as soon as you are on your legs, and let your word be your bond.

Young India, 19-3-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-3-1931

[3] Mahadev Desai had reported that a worker who read out a statement had mentioned that "the village had incurred a loss of something like Rs. 3,00,000 in order to avoid payment of revenue amounting to Rs. 69,000."

CWMG-XLV

362. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KARADI

March 14, 1931

Addressing a large public meeting, Mr. Gandhi said he was glad they continued their work, and made Gujarat known to the world after his arrest. Now they should apply themselves to the work that was to be prosecuted.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi said now they had not to practise civil disobedience of laws, but to do constructive work. He emphasized what he had said in 1922 that if they prosecuted constructive work for six months, swaraj would be won. But constructive work, which they had to prosecute now, was of a different type. Those who could pay should pay up land revenue. If there was occasion to renew the fight, they could stop payment of land revenue, which was paid every year.

Mr Gandhi added that they had also not to manufacture salt with a view to court jail. Those people living near the seashore might manufacture salt for their own consumption. They might even sell among themselves such salt but they could not sell it in distant towns and cities. Salt was being manufactured for consumption by the poor and not for trade. They could manufacture salt for trade when they had secured political power.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said they had to carry on peaceful picketing of liquor and foreign-cloth shops. They had to approach drunkards in their homes and persuade them to give up drink. They might similarly picket foreign-cloth shops if there were still any in their villages, but they must take to production of khadi. The speaker felt satisfied that they had established a *panch* in their village and urged the *panch* to manage all their affairs from settlement of disputes to sanitation and policing. If such *panches* were established in all villages it was easy to win swaraj.

The Hindu, 15-3-1931

363. SPEECH TO CLOTH MERCHANTS, NAVASARI[1]

[*March 14, 1931*][2]

This function appears to me to be to a great extent out of place and uncalled for. The association of merchants, dealers as they are in foreign cloth, ought not to have thought of presenting the address to me or the Sardar. The presentation, if it must be made, ought to be accompanied by a pledge that they would never in future have anything to do with foreign cloth and also the intimation that they have either burnt their present stock or sealed it. How can we, whose daily prayer is for the entire extinction of this trade, accept an address and a purse from dealers in it? I would, therefore, plead with the friends to take back their purse and their address. The address affords no information about the association and reads as though it was a citizens' address. That smacks somewhat of a bogus translation, as I said to the Sardar. Satyagraha eschews all make-believe. I have no relish for the title of the Mahatma given me by the people, if only because I am unworthy of it, but I have given myself a title of which I am proud. I call myself a satyagrahi, and as I must live up to it, I cannot but utter the bitter truth, whenever there is an occasion for it. The acceptance of the purse and the address would be a bitter dose for me, as its presentation should be for you too. But, if I cannot convince you, I must ask you to take both of them back. I have had occasions in my life when I have practised satyagraha against my brother and my wife, and today's occasion can be no exception. I would have to return the address and the purse, as I would return a title from a government with which I non-co-operate or a gift from a liquor seller. I want you to understand that I would compromise myself to the cause if I agreed to accept your address. I would, however, spare you a sudden shock, hold the address and the purse in trust for you. You can ponder over what I have said and decide whether you will present them on my terms or take them back because you will not give up foreign-cloth trade.

Young India, 19-3-1931

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From *The Hindu*, 15-3-1931

364. MY NOTES

To Workers

You may be tempted to go to Karachi for the Congress session. Resist the temptation. A Congress session is not a show, not a picnic. It is intended for drawing up the next year's programme; hence the rule is that only that worker goes there who has to go in order to serve. One should not delude oneself that one can learn a lot there. He who goes there at the call of duty would surely learn something. Ordinary people who can spare time, who have no work to do at their places, have a right, and some may even have the duty to attend the Congress. The duty of the worker who serves is the opposite of this. If his leader sends him there, it is incumbent on him to stick to his duty. This duty at the present time particularly holds good for Gujarat. When the refugees go back to their villages, it is the duty of every worker to stay with them.

Some Picketing Rules[1]

In picketing foreign cloth or intoxicating drinks and drugs, let it be remembered, that the aim is to convert the addict or the buyer. Our object is moral and economic reform. The political consequence is but a by-product. If Lancashire ceased to send us its cloth and the Government ceased to use the *abkari* revenue for any purpose save that of weaning the drunkard or opium eater from his vice, we should still be engaged in picketing work and allied propaganda. The following rules therefore must be read in that light:

1. In picketing shops your attention must be riveted on the buyer.
2. You should never be rude to the buyer or the seller.
3. You may not attract crowds or form cordons.
4. Yours must be a silent effort.
5. You must seek to win over the buyer or the seller by your gentleness, not by the awe of numbers.
6. You may not obstruct traffic.
7. You may not cry *hai hai* or use other expressions of shame.
8. You should know every buyer and his address and occupa-

[1] The translation of these Rules is reproduced from *Young India*, 19-3-1931.

tion and penetrate his or her home and heart. This presupposes continuity of same picketers.

9. You should try to understand the difficulties of buyers and sellers, and where you cannot remove them you should report them to your superiors.

10. If you are picketing foreign cloth, you should have some khadi or at least sample book with prices and should know the nearest khadi shop to which you could take the buyer. If the buyer does not wish to buy khadi and insists on mill-cloth, you should direct the buyer to an indigenous mill-cloth seller.

11. You should have relevant literature upon your person for distribution among the buyers.

12. You should join or organize processions, lectures with or without magic lantern, *bhajan* parties, etc.

13. You should keep an accurate diary of your day's work.

14. If you find your effort failing do not be disheartened but rely upon the universal law of cause and effect and be assured that no good thought, word or deed goes fruitless. To think well, to speak well is ours, reward is in the hands of God.

NOTE. If you think of any other rule please forward it to me.

APPEAL TO FOREIGN-CLOTH MERCHANTS

1. Remember that you hold in your hands the economic independence of India.

2. Remember that a potent cause of India's slavery is your involvement in the dirty foreign-cloth trade.

3. If you get ruined for the purpose of atoning for this sin committed by you knowingly or unknowingly, that atonement will be regarded as none too great.

4. Remember that you are responsible for the impoverishment of India, the destruction of its extensive industry and the continuing loss.

5. Remember that it is the people's dharma always to boycott foreign cloth.

6. Remember that even under swaraj, there will be no trade in foreign cloth.

7. If you sell the goods you have with you clandestinely, that is a different thing, however regrettable and shameful. But the Congress can never give you permission to sell those goods in India.

8. If you decide not to engage in this trade, you can certainly export at a loss the goods lying with you.

9. You know that efforts are afoot to extend to you such help as can be given.

10. You cannot certainly say that you had not received an adequate warning. The Congress has made great efforts since 1920 to wake you up.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-3-1931

365. TRAGEDY OF THE ELEVENTH

We can see that the present awakening among the people has gone day by day out of our control. We got its sad proof on the eleventh at the massive women's meeting in Ahmedabad. After I left, there was such a stampede that seven sisters got crushed in it and received injuries. Among them was the wife of one Shri Moolchand Asharam. She survived for a few hours and then died. Another sister whose name I do not know was injured seriously and, until I left Ahmedabad, her life was in danger. The remaining five sisters received some injuries. Who is to console and how can anyone console all these and the husband of the departed sister? How can one condole such deaths? Who can be blamed for this? Even such tragedies are like offerings at the altar of the swaraj *yajna*. Until we cultivate the ability to regulate, until we learn to organize such mammoth gatherings, accidents will certainly occur. Only through them shall we learn discipline and order. None can block awakening; meetings cannot be abandoned and police men cannot be engaged to maintain order. Nowhere are they engaged for this purpose. Only volunteers maintain order at such meetings and many have already acquired the ability to keep order.

At the present moment we have been maintaining such order as there is in meetings through a corps of volunteers. But the sad and shameful thing is that no rules as to how to maintain order at meetings have been framed for the benefit of the volunteer corps. The latter should draw up such rules and train volunteers, and should make these rules widely known among the people too. I give herewith some by way of suggestion.[1]

1. The meeting should be always held in the open when thousands are expected to attend. It should be circular in shape, the centre containing the dais to be reached by ways protected by strong wooden fences, running radius-like to the centre.

2. The dais should be made up of planks, and strong enough to support several people.

[1] The translation of the paragraphs 1-15 is reproduced from *Young India*, 19-3-1931.

3. The ways to the dais should be clear of spectators and guarded at each end by volunteers.

4. The fence should be so constructed as to leave no room for ingress through the fencing.

5. The leaders when they enter should not be surrounded by cordons of volunteers.

6. The volunteers should stick to their posts firm as a rock.

7. The way should be absolutely clear before leaders are taken to the dais.

8. Volunteers should be posted at fixed places in the meeting. They should not stand, but their presence should be indicated by flags held in their hands.

9. Volunteers ought to know flag signalling.

10. If the meeting is held in an enclosed space, it should have a sufficient number of exits, and the attendance should be strictly limited to the capacity of the space.

11. Leaflets of instructions should be distributed at every meeting.

12. The organizer should read aloud to the meeting these instructions before the proceedings begin.

13. Water and other emergency accessories ought to be available whenever needed.

14. If there is a large attendance and people arrive long before the hour of the meeting, there should be arrangement for *Ramdhun* (repetition *en masse* by the meeting of God's name) and for preliminary lectures.

15. Proper care should be taken to prevent people from rushing to the dais. They should not be allowed to push in to get a nearer seat, but should be asked to stay where they are.

These rules are given merely by way of sample. I have jotted down those that struck me while writing. I know that many important rules may have been left out, that some may even be useless. It is the task of the volunteer corps to study them and to modify them.

Lady volunteers ought to be very vigilant. They ought to prepare themselves to tackle the sudden awakening among women. Even if at the moment they need to take the help of men volunteers, they should do that. Let none say that accidents took place on account of want of possible care on our part.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-3-1931

366. TO "NAVAJIVAN" SUBSCRIBERS

I congratulate the subscribers to *Navajivan* on the help given by them and those co-workers who by self-effacement very cleverly ensured that the journal reached about ten thousand subscribers, when it was being published illegally. We had been able to supply it to almost all subscribers at that time. Despite the fact that those who did not want *Navajivan* during that period were requested to ask for a refund of the balance of their subscription, hardly anyone must have done so. *Navajivan* will continue to be sent every week to those whose subscriptions are still running. Those who were receiving the issues that were being published illegally are requested to send in their outstanding subscriptions. If they do not send in their subscriptions within about a month, the management will assume that they wish no longer to remain subscribers to *Navajivan*. Nevertheless, as they used to receive the illegal issues of *Navajivan*, I hope they will send in their subscription to cover those issues.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-3-1931

367. TO PROUD GUJARAT

Gujarat has immortalized its name and at the same time added to India's glory. The whole world has come to know Bardoli and Borsad. Europe celebrated one Thermopylae, but Tod has recorded that a Thermopylae was staged in every street in Rajputana. Those Thermopylaes were sanguinary. It is no exaggeration to say that in Gujarat, nay in India, non-violent Thermopylaes have been enacted almost everywhere. Only men took part in those other Thermopylaes. In these non-violent Thermopylaes women have played an important role.

But that is not enough.

We have to do more yet and what is more difficult. What is required for this is quiet strength, not fiery force. What a man can do when excited, he cannot do when he quietens down. We like excitement, not industry and constructive work. Now industry and constructive work are implicit in action. However, if we wish to develop our capacity for swaraj, we must build up both our des-

tructive and constructive capacities. We must clear our field of weeds; but he who lets his field lie fallow after weeding it wastes his effort and unwanted grass grows in it again. However, he who sows his field after weeding it is a wise farmer and becomes prosperous. In exactly the same way, if we do not sow seeds in the form of constructive activity, the weeding in the form of the past twelve months' non-violent movement will go waste.

Some people hold that this settlement is no settlement but that we have committed a serious mistake and have lost everything. I hope that no Gujarati will entertain such a doubt. But I do know that just as there are doubting Thomases elsewhere, Gujarat too has its share of them. It is *Navajivan*'s duty to allay their fears.

Here is a doubt:

Has any great change occurred in the circumstances to warrant my attending the Round Table Conference without those guarantees which we had demanded in December 1929 and again from Yeravda Jail?

Let us consider this question. We did not know in 1929 or while I was in Yeravda what stand the British parties and our people would take at the Round Table Conference. Today we have to decide the matter after knowing that the Conference has made some headway. That makes a lot of difference. On those two occasions, we knew nothing of the set-up of the Round Table Conference. Today we know it somewhat. Today we know that the leaders of India have asked for a fully responsible government. The British parties have accepted the demand. It is true that all those who attended the Round Table Conference have agreed to retain the Empire link. We of course are asking for the right to snap that link at our discretion. We have complete freedom to demand this right at the Round Table Conference. We shall be guilty if we do not attend the Conference, despite getting the right to demand complete independence.

Moreover, on those two occasions, we did not have a complete measure of our strength. Today we have some idea of it. If a weak person undertakes negotiations, he is a beggar. A strong man is always ready for parleys. If a strong party declines to negotiate, it is regarded as arrogant and blameworthy.

Therefore, by effecting a settlement, the Congress has shown its wisdom and has enhanced its prestige.

There are other criticisms too. The answers to them are covered by my statement[1] after the settlement and by my inter-

[1] *Vide* pp. 250-6.

view[1] to Press reporters thereafter. And since they will certainly appear in *Navajivan*, I do not refer to them here.

Readers whose doubts have been laid at rest can easily understand that if we observe in full the conditions of the settlement which we have to honour, the prestige of the Congress will rise high. And if we do not observe them or observe them half-heartedly, we shall forfeit the prestige already gained.

In addition to observing these conditions, we must do three things: boycott of foreign cloth, prohibition of intoxicants and khadi production and propaganda. I have already explained these matters thoroughly. Hence I content myself only with mentioning them here. These topics will be discussed occasionally in *Navajivan*. At the present moment through its first issue to be legally published again, I should like merely to request Gujaratis to make their full contribution to this programme.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-3-1931

368. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

BOMBAY,
March 16, 1931

WITH REFERENCE YOUR LETTER ABOUT CONGRESS REPRESENTATION IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE GIVE NAMES BEFORE WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING KARACHI 24TH AND MATTER MAY HAVE TO GO TO OPEN SESSION CONGRESS. MEANWHILE MR. BENN'S[2] STATEMENT THAT BRITISH GOVERNMENT POLICY ABOUT FINANCIAL SAFEGUARDS IS FIXED AND THAT CONFERENCE MAY NOT MEET INDIA AT ALL RENDERS POSITION DIFFICULT. IF POLICY OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT ABOUT SAFEGUARDS IS IRREVOKABLE WILL IT BE WORTHWHILE CONGRESS BEING REPRESENTED AT CONFERENCE? MUCH AS I WOULD LIKE NOT TAKE UP HIS EXCELLENCY'S TIME I WOULD DRAW ATTENTION THAT REPORTS POURING IN SAYING MANY CIVIL RESISTANCE PRISONERS BEING STILL DETAINED

[1] *Vide* pp. 263-7.
[2] Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India

INCLUDING SHOLAPUR PRISONERS AND THOSE CHARGED UNDER SECTION 124-A ALSO THAT PUNITIVE POLICE TAX CONTAI[1] BEING STILL COLLECTED. AM BOMBAY TILL NOON 19TH[2] LEAVING FOR DELHI BY FRONTIER MAIL.[3]

From a photostat: C.W. 9341. Courtesy: India Office Library; also G.N. 8956

369. SPEECH AT LABOUR MEETING, PAREL[4]

March 16, 1931

I knew that there were Communists in India, but I had not met them outside the Meerut Jail, nor even heard their speeches. I made a point of interviewing the Meerut prisoners two years ago during my tour in the U.P. and thus managed to know them somewhat. I have heard one of them this evening, and I may tell them that such as they claim to win swaraj for the working men, I have my doubts about their ability to do so. I had made the working men's cause my own long before any of the young Communists here were born. I spent the best part of my time in South Africa working for them, I used to live with them, and shared their joys and sorrows. You must therefore understand why I claim to speak for labour. I expect at least courtesy from you if nothing else. I invite you to come to me and discuss things with me as frankly as you can.

You claim to be Communists, but you do not seem to live the life of communism. I may tell you that I am trying my best to

[1] A district in Bengal

[2] Gandhiji left Bombay on February 18.

[3] The Private Secretary's telegram (C.W. 9342; G.N. 8957) dated March 17, in reply to this, read: "Thank you for your telegram. His Excellency appreciates position regarding selection of names of Congress representatives and will be ready to see you any time after your return on twentieth to Delhi. As to particular matters mentioned in your telegram he thinks it would probably be most convenient if you could have a talk to Emerson. His Excellency proposes call an informal meeting on Saturday morning of such Conference delegates as may be in Delhi for private exchange of views and he would be glad if you and two or three of your colleagues who might be here were able to attend."

[4] This appeared under the title, "A Word to the Communists", with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai which read: "Addressing a labour meeting in Bombay which was disturbed by some young Communists, Gandhiji made a Hindi speech of which the following is a condensed translation."

live up to the ideal of communism in the best sense of the term. And communism does not, I fancy, exclude courtesy. I am amongst you today, within a few minutes I will leave you. But if you want to carry the country with you, you ought to be able to react on it by reasoning with it. You cannot do so by coercion. You may deal destruction to bring the country round to your view. But how many will you destroy? Not tens of millions. You may kill a few thousands if you had millions with you. But today you are no more than a handful. I ask you to convert the Congress if you can and to take charge of it. But you cannot do so by bidding goodbye to the elementary rules of courtesy. And there is no reason why you should be lacking in ordinary courtesy, when it is open to you to give the fullest vent to your views, when India is tolerant enough to listen patiently to anyone who can talk coherently.

The truce has done no harm to the labourers. I claim that none of my activities has ever harmed the workers, can ever harm them. If the Congress sends its representatives to the Conference, they will press for no swaraj other than the swaraj for workers and peasants. Long before the Communist Party came into existence the Congress had decided that that swaraj would have no meaning which was not the swaraj for workers and peasants. Perhaps, none of you workers here gets less than a monthly wage of Rs. 20, but, I am working for winning swaraj not only for you but for those toiling and unemployed millions who do not get even a square meal a day and have to scratch along with a piece of stale *roti* and a pinch of salt. But I do not want to deceive you, I must warn you that I do not bear any ill [will] to the capitalists, I can think of doing them no harm. But I want[1], by means of suffering, to awaken them to their sense of duty, I want to melt their hearts and get them to render justice to their less fortunate brethren. They are human beings, and my appeal to them will not go in vain. The history of Japan reveals many an instance of self-sacrificing capitalists. During the last satyagraha, quite a number of capitalists went in for considerable sacrifice, went to jail and suffered. Do you want to estrange them? Don't you want them to work with you for the common end?

You have asked me about the Meerut prisoners. I want you to know that I would release every convict from our prisons, if I had the power. But I could not in justice make their release a condition precedent for the settlement. I may tell you that I am striving my utmost to get them released, and if only you will decide to co-

[1] The source has "warn".

operate with me by creating a calm atmosphere we may be able to get all of them released, including even the Garhwalis. You are talking of independence. Do not I want it as much as you? (Cries of "substance of independence".) Yes, I want substance and not shadow. For the present, I want you to cultivate a little patience and see what the Congress puts forward as its minimum when the time comes. I assure you we will repeat the Lahore resolution at Karachi and if we chance to go to the Round Table Conference we will either return with what we want or with nothing at all.

'What about the eleven points?' you have asked me. They contain the substance of independence to my mind. Peasants and working men are well protected under them. But I could not repeat the points at the time of the settlement for the simple reason that they were submitted as an alternative to the launching of civil disobedience. We have now been through civil disobedience and if we are invited we have to go to the Round Table Conference to press our national demand. If we succeed there all the eleven points are secured. You may be sure that no swaraj which does not satisfy the eleven points can be acceptable to me.

God has given you intellect and talent. Turn them to proper account. I beseech you not to lay an embargo on your reason. God help you.

Young India, 26-3-1931

370. SPEECH AT LABOUR MEETING, DADAR

March 16, 1931

I am returning from a meeting[1] of workers at Parel. I have very little time to spare, but I am confident that the workers do not need any lengthy speeches. I have just received a letter asking me several questions. I shall not deal with them here. If the writer is here he should note that replies to his questions will appear in *Young India* and *Navajivan.*

To me and to the Congress, swaraj means freedom to the masses. It means that Congress will never agree to any scheme which does not protect the rights of the workers and peasants. Rest assured that the truce has not in any way affected adversely the rights of the workers. It has not given us swaraj.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

We have not called off the movement because we are cowards. I have been receiving letters not to go ahead. Such letters did not influence me in the least. I do not think there is anything in the truce for which we need be ashamed. Unwittingly, I must have erred, but it is only human to err. In my opinion there is nothing in this truce which I can call a mistake. It might be that I was in a position to ask a few things more which I did not. But that was because I did not want to be unfair. The question of Meerut and Bengal prisoners was in my mind but I could not press for it to the extent of breaking off the negotiations.

The workers have not yet sufficiently realized their strength. They are not properly organized. If they do it they can rule India. But they must improve themselves before they are able to do it. They must clean themselves of the many vices that are a curse to them. They must give up drinking and gambling. If they do so and understand the message of peace and non-violence we can attain swaraj even with the strength of the workers. If you read the history of the South African struggle you will see that the success was due to the workers. When 60,000 workers out of the total population of 1,00,000 organized themselves for satyagraha they could attain in six months what they had not been able to do in several years.

Do not be misled that the movement is finally stopped. It is only a temporary suspension. We are pledged to the Lahore resolution of independence and if that demand is not satisfied there will be no other way for us but to continue the fight and next time I feel we will have to do it much more intensively. May God give you the strength to continue the fight.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-3-1931

371. INTERVIEW TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

BOMBAY,
March 16/17, 1931

At 10 p.m. Gandhiji received Mr. Subhas Bose who kept him engaged till 2.30 a.m. I understand Mr. Subhas presented his case for the release of all Bengal political prisoners and the right to carry on propaganda in favour of independence.

Gandhiji explained to him that the Delhi Truce Pact had only suspended hostile activities and the civil disobedience programme, and did not prevent anybody from carrying on propaganda for independence for India. As a mat-

ter of fact, the Congress could present its case for independence at the R.T.C. As regards the release of political prisoners convicted of violence and Bengal Ordinance detenus, Gandhiji is reported to have said he could not place it as a condition precedent to truce, as he was not in a position to give an undertaking to the Government that prisoners convicted of violence would not again resort to it during the truce period if released. He was sure their detention was only a question of six months at the most, and at the time of concluding peace finally the Congress would be justified in making release of all political prisoners a condition precedent.

The Hindu, 17-3-1931

372. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS, BOMBAY

[*March 17, 1931*][1]

I would surely see to it that the Government observes the truce terms just as the Congress does. It is natural that the Government would take more time as it has to function officially according to all the rules. But if we ultimately come to know that the truce terms have been violated, we too are not bound to observe them. Volunteers should spin regularly. If I were your captain I would strictly enforce that rule on you. I would not enrol you as volunteers as long as you do not agree to spin regularly. If our demand for complete independence is not accepted, then you will have to join the struggle again and that fight would be fiercer than the present one.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 22-3-1931

373. INTERVIEW TO "SCRUTATOR"

BOMBAY,
March 17, 1931

I have said nothing publicly yet and I have not yet complained but I am daily receiving evidence that in certain parts things are not going on as well as they might. I am certain Lord Irwin and the Central Government are playing the game, and doing their utmost to fulfil the letter and spirit of the settlement. But it appears to be very different with some of the provincial Govern-

[1] From *The Hindu*, 17-3-1931

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ments. It is the old question of the district officer, who is really powerful enough to set Viceroys and Governors at nought. Again and again it has been my experience that the district officer has the power of making or marring the policy of the Government. In some places there was reason and common sense, in some others there was unreason, fierceness and brutality; and in between, there was mere caution and hesitancy. Lord Irwin's spirit has not yet percolated down to the districts.

I do not think there should be any difficulty about people who are said to be guilty of a violent speech under Section 124. No one was more violently seditious in this sense than I was, and yet I am out and others are still in jail. I am hoping that, within the next few days, most of these people will be released. But at the present moment I am receiving far too many complaints to be entirely happy about the situation. I am afraid in far too many cases the line between sedition and violence was not drawn in the proper spirit.

The Hindu, 18-3-1931

374. INTERVIEW TO MERCHANTS' DEPUTATION

BOMBAY,
March 17, 1931

The members of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, headed by the President, Sir Chunilal Mehta, waited in a deputation[1] on Gandhiji last evening at his residence.

The question of trading rights was discussed. It is understood Sir Chunilal Mehta and Mr. Walchand Hirachand drew Gandhiji's attention that, from the last London Conference report, it was clear that there would be no discrimination between Indian and British industries and trades. They argued that, in the present unorganized and undeveloped state of indigenous industries, absence of discrimination would militate very strongly against the development of the latter in competition with British and foreign interests. They urged on Gandhiji the necessity of demanding protection for Indian industries at the next Conference quoting the Nehru Report in support of their argument.

Gandhiji told the deputationists that they ought to have approached Sir Tej Bahadur in the first instance, and asked him how he proposed protection to Indian industries without discrimination. The Congress had to overcome other difficulties affecting more vital issues, but he assured them that the Con-

[1] Which consisted of Walchand Hirachand, Husseinbhoy Laljee, Rattansi Morarji, J. K. Mehta and Jamnalal Bajaj

gress for its part would see what could be done to support them. In the mean while, he asked the deputationists to carry on an agitation for what they were demanding.[1]

I am not in a position to say at this stage whether the Congress representatives will attend the Round Table Conference or not but you can rest assured that the Congress is with you in your protest against this demand for so-called equality of rights made at the Round Table Conference.

Whatever other countries might have done or not done, India should take such steps to protect and develop her industries as it might suit best her own interests.

That the right of the future Indian Parliament to discriminate between Nationals and non-Nationals, whenever Indian interests require it, shall remain intact and unimpaired.

The claim of Europeans to be treated as minority community needing protection is untenable.

No one has any right to pick up a paragraph from Nehru Report and fling it in our face when other parts of the Report are discarded.

I would advise you to carry on propaganda in connection with this important matter.

As regards the report of the statement said to have been made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru about the paragraph appearing in Nehru Report of the definition of citizenship, it should be read together with the interpretation given by Pandit Motilal Nehru on the floor of the Assembly and the decision taken by the All-Parties Convention at Calcutta on the subject of the definition of a 'citizen'.

The Hindu, 18-3-1931; also *Young India*, 26-3-1931

[1] What follows is from *Young India*. This gist of Gandhiji's advice formed part of a letter dated March 19, 1931 from Walchand Hirachand to Gandhiji requesting his permission for the publication of the letter so that "the correct version be placed before the public". For Gandhiji's remarks, *vide* "The Giant and the Dwarf", pp. 342-3.

375. SPEECH AT AZAD MAIDAN, BOMBAY[1]

March 17, 1931

An age has passed since I appeared before you on my release and the impossible size of the meeting prevented me from delivering my message to you. A new age has begun and I appear before you this evening to deliver again my message which however is far different from the one on the previous occasion. That day's message was simple, today's is comparatively complex. For full twelve months we have developed a war mentality, we thought of war, we talked of war and nothing but war. Now we have to sing a completely different tune. We are in the midst of truce. With some of us, I know the very mention of the word 'truce' sends a shiver through their body. That is because we had thought of nothing but war and had believed that there could be no compromise. But that was not a position becoming a true satyagrahi. The satyagrahi whilst he is ever ready for fight must be equally eager for peace. He must welcome any honourable opportunity for peace. The Working Committee of the Congress saw such an opportunity and availed itself of it. The essential condition of a compromise is that there should be nothing humiliating, nothing panicky about it. You may be sure that whilst I was being inundated with telegrams to make peace at any price, I was absolutely unmoved by them. I am inured to such things and I was absolutely firm that I must not allow any of these telegrams to make me flinch from whatever decision my inner voice gave me. Whilst however a satyagrahi never yields to panic or hesitancy, neither does he think of humiliating the other party, of reducing it to an abject surrender. He may not swerve from the path of justice and may not dictate impossible terms. He may not pitch his demands too high, neither may he pitch them too low. The present settlement, I submit, satisfies all these conditions. One of the terms of the settlement seems to have caused some disappointment in certain quarters and some have rushed in to condemn the settlement on that account. They complain that we

[1] This appeared under the title "More about the Settlement" as a condensed rendering by Mahadev Desai. Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the meeting.

ought not to have entered into the settlement until we had secured the release of *all* political prisoners. I may tell you that we could not in justice make this demand. Not that there was any lack of will on our part, but the power to make the demand irresistible was lacking. That power will come as soon as we fulfil in letter and in spirit all the terms of the settlement that apply to us.

I may inform you that local Governments have been remiss in fulfilling their part of the contract. Some prisoners who ought to have been released are still in jail, some prosecutions—like the Chirner firing case—that ought to have been withdrawn are still going on. It is a matter for sorrow. If the remissness or failure is deliberate it would be culpable. But it would add to *our* power and make our case for swaraj more irresistible than ever. One would like to think however that such remissness would not be deliberate in view of the stupendous machinery of Government. There is likely to be unintentional delay and inadvertence. But if there is deliberate breach of faith, we have our sovereign remedy. If you look at the settlement the last clause empowers Government to set its machinery of law and order in motion in the event of failure on the part of the Congress to fulfil its part of the settlement. Need I tell you that the clause necessarily includes its converse ? Even as it would be open to Government to set its machinery in motion, it is open to us also to resort to our infallible weapon as soon as we find that there is a deliberate breach.

But the present delays need not agitate or irritate you. For there is no occasion for it. A satyagrahi has infinite patience, abundant faith in others, ample hope.

And now a word of warning. The settlement is obviously provisional. But it necessitates a change in our method of work. Whilst civil disobedience and jail-going, or direct action was the method to be followed before the settlement, the way of argument and negotiation takes its place. But let no one forget that the settlement is provisional and the negotiations may break down at any stage. Let us therefore keep our powder ever dry and our armour ever bright. Failure should not find us napping, but ready to mobilize at the first command. In the mean while let us carry on the process of self-purification with greater vigour and greater faith, so that we may grow in strength day by day.

And now a word of explanation. The settlement does in no way commit us to a position less than the Lahore resolution. It is of course open to us to revise the position taken at Lahore but nothing in the settlement would oblige us to do so. And you may be sure that we are going to ask for nothing less than independence.

Whether we will get it is another matter. It depends upon what power we can exert on the delegates belonging to the other parties in India, on what conviction we carry with them. But the fact is there that we may go the whole hog and there is nothing in the settlement to prevent us. There is the matter of the much-talked-of safeguards. Now my position is this, that it is open to us to ask for a revision *in toto* of the safeguards as suggested by Mr. MacDonald. How far we shall be able to achieve what we want will depend on the extent to which we fulfil the constructive programme which has its own three girders—communal heart-unity, complete boycott of foreign cloth and prohibition of drink and drugs. Let us strain every nerve to fulfil our programme and thus make our demand irresistible.

Young India, 19-3-1931

376. TELEGRAM TO H. W. EMERSON

BOMBAY,
[*March 18, 1931*][1]

YOUR MESSAGE HAS JUST BEEN DELIVERED TO ME. IT SEEMS TO BETRAY GRAVE MISUNDERSTANDING. BOYCOTT OF FOREIGN GOODS ESPECIALLY CLOTH PROTECTED UNDER SETTLEMENT. WHAT IS UNDOUBTEDLY EXCLUDED IS BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS AS DISTINGUISHED FROM OTHER FOREIGN GOODS. MY SPEECH AND WRITINGS IMMEDIATELY AFTER DATE OF SETTLEMENT MAKE THE POSITION CLEAR. IN OUR DISCUSSIONS TOO I ENDEAVOURED TO BRING OUT POSITION TO WHICH NO EXCEPTION WAS MADE. EXCLUSION BY SWADESHI OF FOREIGN GOODS AND FOREIGN ENTERPRISE BY LAWFUL METHODS VITAL NECESSITY. INVITE YOU RE-READ CLAUSES SIX AND SEVEN.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Forwarded on this date by the Bombay Government to the Home Department in reply to the latter's telegram of March 15, 1931; *vide* Appendix VIII.

377. SPEECH AT VILE PARLE, BOMBAY[1]

[*March 18, 1931*][2]

I am grateful to you for the purse and the address, which are rendered more welcome by the fact that the president today is my friend Sjt. Natarajan, that the welcome address was read by Mrs. Lukamani, a well-known member of the Tyabji family with whom I am bound by unaccountable ties of affection, that the purse was presented to me by Kamalabehn, a prominent lady who has not only helped the movement by most liberal contributions, but also by going to jail. I am happy to think that I am going to Delhi loaded with all this wealth of affection.

I thank you for the reference in the address to the sacred memory of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru. His death meant to me a personal loss of an irreparable character. I was not at all exaggerating, when on the day of his death, in a message to a newspaper,[3] I said that I felt more widowed than Mrs. Motilal Nehru. For her the sacred memory of her husband, coupled with a pious life, would be some compensation, but all my piety and self-restraint cannot give me the warmth of his wise counsel that I need so much today. I missed it so sorely during my conversations with the Viceroy and my conference with the members of the Working Committee. His presence would have meant a heavy load off my head and your touching reference to him recalls sacred memories of my friend and counsel.

It is needless to congratulate you on the great record of work that has been briefly described in your statement. My joy knows no bounds when I recollect that the work here was inaugurated by some of my nearest and most faithful co-workers. But now, we are entering on a stage which will try our patience and our skill to the utmost. Civil disobedience was difficult enough, but once it is understood, it is easy. A number of women practised it suc-

[1] This appeared under the title "The Vile Parle Speech" with an introductory note by Mahadev Desai which read: "Here is a condensed translation of Gandhiji's speech at Vile Parle."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-3-1931

[3] The message was sent on the 8th, two days after Motilal Nehru's death; *vide* p. 162.

cessfully and the *vanaras* also covered themselves with glory.[1] The spirit of revolution makes the difficult easy. But scrupulous obedience to irksome rules and constant work are a much more difficult process. There will be occasions of irritation and grave annoyance, but, even on those occasions, the tendering of obedience may be duty. For that obedience will in itself be a preparation for a future struggle, if it becomes necessary.

I am being blamed for having surrendered too much. We might have won much more, it is said, if we had kept on fighting. This is easier said than done. Certain things could be done in a fit of enthusiasm, but the constructive work in front of us will necessitate patient, ceaseless toil. That will be a preparation of swaraj. Governing a sub-continent like India is no easy task. It will need not only patient toil, but cool-headed statesmanship.

Complaints pour in about the dilatory methods of local Governments in implementing the settlement.

Some delay is unavoidable. I would plead for patience. If we find that there is a deliberate, continuing breach of the settlement, we have our remedy, as the Government have theirs if we break it. The last clause in the agreement implies its obvious converse. But we cannot at any and every moment unsheathe our sword. We cannot make our unfailing instrument so cheap. It is, therefore, my obvious duty to urge my co-workers to be patient. One has to consider the difficulties of a stupendous machinery like Government. It is not possible for them to reach their local Governments as quickly as it is for us. It is because the system is so rotten and so top-heavy that we had to make war against it. It takes some time for an order to reach Bombay from Delhi; then it has to be sent to the district officer who in turn passes it on to his subordinates. The vicious process is hardly complete, when some local official takes it into his head not to respect the order. We have to take all these factors into consideration, and then, if we find that the breach or the dilatoriness is deliberate or intentional, we resume hostilities. But the present interlude necessitates a good deal of precaution and patience.

You have told me about the liquor-shop picketing done in your suburbs. When you have put out 150 women in the field the work is half done. Both, foreign-cloth picketing and liquor-shop picketing, are things for which women are particularly suited. And unless you put forth your best effort, the work of those who go to the Conference will be of no avail. Argument and negotiation

[1] *Vide* also pp. 139-40.

may go on there, but it will be meaningless without constructive effort here to back it.

Let there be, therefore, no slackening of effort, no fatigue or weariness in our ranks. Foreign-cloth boycott is a stupendous business requiring the harnessing of all our resources and sacrifice of the purest type. Swaraj is close at hand, if only we exert all our powers to the utmost to grasp it. May God give you the strength and will for the task.

Young India, 26-3-1931

378. THE CONGRESS

The Congress will be upon us in a few days from now. The broken-up organizations will hardly have been put together by that time. The delegates, half of whom will be ex-prisoners, will hardly have had time to collect themselves. And yet, it will meet with a greater prestige than ever before, and with a consciousness of its new strength born of a knowledge of sufferings undergone by tens of thousands of men, women and children, and perhaps unparalleled in history in the sense that the sufferers suffered without retaliation.

But it would be wrong to brood over the sufferings, to exaggerate them, or to be puffed up with pride. True suffering does not know itself and never calculates. It brings its own joy which surpasses all other joys. We shall, therefore, be guilty of suicide if we live upon the capital amassed during the past twelve months. Whilst we must try always to avoid occasions for needless suffering, we must ever be ready for them. Somehow or other, those who will walk along the right path cannot avoid suffering notwithstanding the attempt to avoid it. It is the privilege of the patriot, the reformer and, still greater, of the satyagrahi.

The settlement, provisional though it is, has come through God's grace. During the negotiations there were times when breakdown seemed a certainty. Beyond doubt, the suffering would have been ten times multiplied if a breakdown had taken place. And yet, I would have been obliged to ask the nation to go through it, had an honourable peace proved impossible. But I am not sure that it will be possible to reach the goal without further wider and deeper suffering. The measure of our purification seems hardly equal to the prize to be won. We have not yet consciously, and on a national scale, got rid of the curse of untouchability, we have not shed distrust of one another. Great

though the awakening has been among the rich, they have not yet made common cause with the poor; their life bears no resemblance to that of the poor. Though much progress has been made in the case of drink and drugs, much more yet remains to be done; the progress made is still uncertain. The drunkard has yielded to pressure of public opinion. He has not yet definitely given up the habit. He knows the evil but has not been taught to shun it as poison. The word 'taught' has been used advisedly. The workers have confined their attention to the drink and drug shops, they have not made a serious attempt to touch the heart of the addict. We have not shed the desire for foreign cloth and fineries, nor have the cloth merchants fully realized the magnitude of the wrong they have done to the nation by their trade. Many of them still parade the doctrine of individual freedom. These and several other evils that can be easily recalled show how much still remains to be done in the matter of self-purification. And so, it is little wonder if we do not find the atmosphere of *purna* swaraj pervading us. How far, therefore, the method of consultation and conference will succeed, it is difficult to forecast. This much is certain that argument is not what will carry conviction. The British conviction will be in exact proportion to the strength we have developed. And since the nation has decided that we will acquire strength only through self-purification, if we have not attained the wisdom during these good months of grace to rid ourselves of the evils I have enumerated, then we must go through a fiercer fire of suffering than ever before. Let us, therefore, approach the Congress with a humbled spirit and with a will bent on removing every form of weakness from our midst. We must not give undue weight to conferences and the like. The past twelve months have made it clear for us that swaraj will come when it does, from within, by internal effort, not as a free gift from above or by simple argument.

Young India, 19-3-1931

379. *NOTES*

Their Part of the Obligation

Reports continue to pour in upon me from Tamil Nad, Andhra, Bihar, the Punjab, Bengal and other places to the effect that the local authorities are not carrying out the terms of the settlement or are illiberal in giving effect to it. Even prisoners convicted under Section 124A of the I.P.C. have not yet been discharged. The fact is, that civil resisters were convicted under many sections, even those dealing with violence, although they had never done or meant any violence. The Sholapur prisoners, numbering about 150, are also not yet discharged. The majority, if not all of them, are no more guilty of violence than I am. They were to be discharged. I cannot understand why they are being still detained. In Contai, things are reported to be still worse. There the punitive tax is said still to be realized. A procession too is reported to have been broken up. I have drawn attention to these cases in proper quarters and I hope that the settlement will be given effect to by the local authorities. Some delay on the part of the local Governments in giving effect to the settlement was inevitable. But there must be a limit to it. And the continuing exaction of the tax, if the report be true, is an unpardonable and manifest breach of the settlement. So much for the cases covered by the settlement.

There are also the Bengal detenus and other political prisoners. It was not possible to press for their discharge as condition of the settlement. But I can assure the public that they were not forgotten. And I am not without hope that they will be discharged in due course. I can only urge patience and in spite of reported laxity on the part of the local authorities a due discharge by us of our part of the obligation. That will enable us more effectively to secure the discharge of those not covered in name by the settlement. In any case, let the public understand that for the Congress it is only a question of months when either the power must pass into the hands of the nation or it must, God forbid, reembark, if no other course is left open, upon the well-trodden course of suffering. Those, therefore, who have faith in the national awakening will not be over-hasty or anxious about many things that need to be set right.

Foreign-cloth Dealers

Foreign-cloth dealers seem to think that the settlement gives them the licence to carry on their business just as they please. It is true that picketing is to be robbed of every element of compulsion and that those who feel they have sealed their stock through coercion, are free without the slightest molestation to unseal their packages. But they must realize that neither will picketing stop altogether nor will public opinion against foreign cloth wane. Complete banishment of foreign cloth is a vital necessity for the nation for all time, so far as we can foresee the future. If these merchants have any faith in the country they must know that swaraj is not far off. But, whether it is far or near, the agitation against the foreign cloth as against intoxicating drink and drugs will continue. And when swaraj is attained, among the first measures of such government must be prohibition of foreign cloth and drugs. One impoverishes the nation, the other destroys the very soul.

Young India, 19-3-1931

380. INTERVIEW WITH VICEROY

March 19, 1931

Mr. Gandhi came to see me today on his return from Bombay. The first point to which he drew my attention was the statement of the Secretary of State during the debate in the House of Commons, in which he had emphasized that in the considered view of His Majesty's Government there could be no abatement of the financial safeguards proposed in the Federal Structure Committee. He put the point, as I had expected, that if the attitude of the Government was unalterable on the particular proposals in this field, as distinct from the broad necessity of ensuring the general purpose of safeguarding India's credit, he was very doubtful whether it would be useful for Congress to participate.

I told him that I did not see the need for any complaint on the ground that the Secretary of State had explicitly stated the position of His Majesty's Government. His own friends and he himself were constantly stating in terms no less explicit the position of Congress. I had, for example, seen only this morning a speech of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in which he had said that Congress could agree to nothing, unless the last British soldier was withdrawn from India. It might no doubt be that Mr. Gandhi and his friends would find difficulty in accepting the statement of the considered position of His Majesty's Government, just as His Majesty's Government would find great difficulty in

accepting the position laid down by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, but surely it was unnecessary to despair of reconciliation of views by full discussion, in which it would be the duty of all those participating to bring forward arguments and reasons in defence of their position. I had no hesitation in saying that the fundamental purpose of His Majesty's Government in this matter was simply to make India's financial credit and stability as sure as it could be made. In the view of the Secretary of State and of His Majesty's Government the particular methods suggested were the best for achieving this result; but I should not suppose that if anybody could bring forward better methods, not less effective, on which greater agreement might be reached, there would be any reluctance on the part of His Majesty's Government to give them careful consideration. He said he would consider the position with his friends; and his attitude on this point, as well as his subsequent conversation, led me to feel that he would not run out over it.

I then referred briefly to the matters that he was going to discuss with Mr. Emerson.[1] These were, first of all, the complaints that I understood him to have made on the subject of particular failures on the part of Government to implement the agreement in individual cases of release. As to this, I told him that I had naturally not been able to inform myself of individual cases, but that from communications I had from Governors I was quite satisfied that local Governments were playing the game very fairly, and that it was a remarkable achievement to have got rid of something like fourteen thousand prisoners in a few days. There were no doubt a number of cases in which the element of doubt arose. These were now being examined as expeditiously as possible, but it must be recognized this examination took more time than the treatment of cases in regard to which there was no doubt, and that the discretion in doubtful cases was vested with local Governments. I told him that I thought his people were very impatient and with this view he seemed not to disagree.

We then had a good deal of discussion about the methods being employed by Congress for the encouragement of swadeshi production, and I told him that the method of blacklisting particular mills, which did not conform to terms laid down by Congress, seemed to me wholly outside the spirit of our agreement, in that it seemed to impose severe economic coercion of individual liberty. His line of defence in reply was to say that no objection could be taken to exhortation to buyers to purchase only Indian cloth; that in pursuance of this Congress were clearly entitled to make information available as to what were the mills which made Indian cloth; and that this automatically led to other mills wishing to ascertain the conditions that had to be fulfilled by them in order to qualify for inclusion in the approved list. He strenuously denied that this was either outside the letter or the spirit of an agreement

[1] *Vide* Appendix IX.

that gave full latitude for the encouragement of Indian industry. He added that their action was purely economic, and that they had expressly withdrawn by circular any injunction against the purchase of British goods as compared with foreign in branches of goods which India could not supply; and also added that many of his people had told him that without effective picketing, which in their view was impossible under the agreement, his plans could not succeed. I left this subject saying that I would have all the facts examined, and asked him to discuss the matter in greater detail with Mr. Emerson.

The last subject we discussed was the future procedure of the Round Table Conference. On this he said that it would make it very difficult for Congress to participate if no British delegation came to India before the resumption of the full Round Table Conference in England. Already there was suspicion, consequent upon the abandonment of the original idea of a British delegation visiting India. It would not be expected that a delegation coming to India would be in a position to take decisions, and the final stages could well be taken in London. But he did attach very great importance to a British delegation coming out to India in June or July for the purpose of making contact, getting into touch with Indian feeling and thought and, if this were done, he saw no great difficulties about the subsequent assembly of the full Conference in London.

I told him that Jawaharlal's attitude, as reported in the Press, seemed to me impossible. Frankly, he appeared to have no spirit of peace and all his utterances left a clear impression on my mind that he certainly regarded the present arrangement merely as an uneasy truce, which had to be used only for the purpose of strengthening Congress for the next encounter. He said that Jawaharlal was very mercurial, but was already beginning to come down. Of this, however, I told him I saw no sign.

In conclusion, he told me that he anticipated no great difficulty at Karachi and said that he proposed to attend my informal meeting[1] on Saturday and hoped to accept my invitation to bring two or three others with him.

His general attitude was friendly and he seemed not less anxious than he was last week to tread the path of peace.

As he was leaving, he asked if he might mention the case of Bhagat Singh, saying that he had seen in the Press the intimation of his execution for March 24th. This was an unfortunate day, as it coincided with the arrival of the new President of the Congress at Karachi and there would be much popular excitement.

I told him I had considered the case with most anxious care, but could find no grounds on which I could justify to my conscience commuting the sentence. As to the date, I had considered the possibility of postponement till after the Congress, but had deliberately rejected it on various grounds:

[1] *Vide* pp. 320-6.

(i) that postponement of execution, merely on political grounds, when orders had been passed seemed to me improper;

(ii) that postponement was inhuman in that it would suggest to the friends and relatives that I was considering commutation; and

(iii) that Congress would have been able legitimately to complain that they had been tricked by Government.

He appeared to appreciate the force of these arguments, and said no more.

(SD.) IRWIN

From a photostat: G.N. 8958

381. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

As promised, I send you translations of a circular and a notice issued by the Mamlatdar of Borsad. They speak for themselves. They are, in my opinion, clearly contrary to the terms of the settlement.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

382. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter[1] just received. I knew about the meeting you refer to. I have already taken every precaution possible and hope that nothing untoward will happen. I suggest that there should be no display of police force and no interference at the meeting. Irritation is undoubtedly there. It would be better to allow it to find vent through meetings, etc.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* Appendix X.

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383. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I send you two telegrams one[1] from Ranpur regarding salt and the other from Patna regarding satyagrahi prisoners. The latter is from one of the best and the most cultured of co-workers who is most careful in making statements. The wire about salt is from one who has been a member of the Legislative Council, Bombay, and is the Editor of an influential, widely-read weekly newspaper. The arbitrary limit of one mile practically nullifies the relief clause[2] of the settlement and has been evidently fixed without knowledge of the actual condition of the villages in relation to the salt areas. In my opinion there cannot be a mileage limit. The limit, as I suggested at our conversations, can be easily and justly fixed by issuing instructions that the villagers, so long as they walk from their villages to the salt areas, should not be interfered with. The relief clause was intended to give substantial help to the poor, which it can never do under the one-mile formula. I hope that both the matters will receive prompt attention. I shall thank you to return the telegrams after use.[3]

Yours sincerely,

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Dated March 20, from Amritlal Sheth, which read: "Government orders are received fixing only those villages as salt area villages which are one mile distant from creek. Out of about sixty villages reasonably entitled to benefit under truce terms only five will be benefited. This situation totally nullifies truce terms. Volunteers and villagers greatly perturbed pressing for fight. Please give guidance. I learn authorities think impossible to cope truce terms salt situation with present staff."

[2] Clause 20; *vide* Appendix VI.

[3] For Emerson's reply, *vide* Appendices XI and XII.

384. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELHI,
March 21, 1931

If Lord Sankey and Mr. Wedgwood Benn regard the safeguards evolved by the Round Table Conference as final in substance and form, then there is no use of our going to London and the Second Round Table Conference, as far as the Indian masses are concerned, must fail.

Gandhiji pointed out that, under the terms of the recent truce with Lord Irwin scope is allowed not only for a full and free discussion of the whole question of safeguards, but it is expressly stipulated that safeguards are to be considered in the interests of India.

I feel therefore that the statements in Parliament made by Mr. Wedgwood Benn and Lord Sankey that the safeguards must be in the interests of England as well as of India are not strictly in conformity with the spirit of the truce.

Concerning the Hindu-Muslim question, Gandhiji expressed grave doubts as to whether unity could be achieved before the National Congress at Karachi. He hoped however that some measure of accord would be reached which might pave the way for an eventual agreement between these two groups, whose dissensions had torn India for centuries.

Asked if he would favour Geneva for the Second Round Table Conference, Gandhiji replied:

Geneva would be desirable if the British delegation were sitting as an impartial judge over India's future status, but it is not. The British are, in a sense, our opponents. Therefore the procedure must be by direct negotiation. In such negotiations the atmosphere, surroundings, and local influences play a vital part. I am sure England would never agree to Geneva. If I had my way I would hold two conferences, the first in India and the second in England. That would make for fairness all around. But wherever the Conference is held, it is of the utmost importance that it should be convened without loss of time.

Q. Do you expect to hold the National Congress to the terms of the truce with Lord Irwin?

A. Yes, but if Bhagat Singh is hanged, as it now seems almost certain, it may have highly unfavourable repercussions upon

the younger element in the Congress who may attempt to split the Congress.

Q. Do you entertain any hope that Bhagat Singh may be saved at the last minute?

A. Yes, but it is a very distant hope.

Gandhiji laughed over the speculation in the London Press as to whether he would bring Mirabai to London.

If I go to the Second Round Table Conference why should not I bring her? She is a most useful assistant and besides she is anxious to see her mother who lives in England.

Turning from politics to general subjects, Gandhiji answered a number of questions.

Q. Do you think the League of Nations will succeed in exterminating war?

A. War will never be exterminated by any agency until men and the nations become more spiritual, and adopt the principle of brotherhood and concord rather than antagonism, competition, and brute force. Those in the West do not recognize the power of spiritual things, but some day they will and then they will be free from war, crimes of violence and things that go with these evils. The West is too materialistic, selfish and narrowly nationalistic. What we want is an international mind, embracing the welfare and spiritual advancement of all mankind.

Q. How would you cure the evil of armaments?

A. By non-violence, which will eventually be the weapon of all nations. I say 'eventually' deliberately, because we shall have wars and armaments for a very long time. It is two thousand years since Christ preached His Sermon on the Mount and the world has adopted only a fragment of the imperishable lofty precepts therein enunciated for the conduct of man toward man. Until we take all Christ's principles to our hearts, war, hatred and violence will continue.

Q. What is your remedy for the prevailing crimes of violence, divorce, and drink in the United States?

A. I would cure them all by self-purification and non-violence.

Q. Why did you refuse to allow the Ahmedabad Municipality to erect a monument to you?

A. Because man's best monument is not a thing of stone, but consists in living deeds and in memory which survives in the

minds of those he served. Such funds should be used for the uplift of the poor and not to glorify or immortalize in marble a man who merely served his brother man.

Q. How long do you expect to live?

A. Until eternity.

Q. Do you believe in immortality?

A. Yes, reincarnation and transmigration of souls are fundamentals of the Hindu religion.

Q. If all men adopted your simple mode of living, fasting and exercising, do you think they should live to be hundred?

A. Yes, but that can be determined better after I die.

Q. Which Government most nearly approaches your idea of an ideal Government?

A. None. It should be a government wherein man reaches his full stature in every phase of life, and where his interests are paramount over all others.

Q. Will socialism accomplish that?

A. Not socialism, as it is practised politically today.

Asked if he would favour the retention of American and other foreign missionaries when India secured self-government, Gandhiji replied:

If instead of confining themselves purely to humanitarian work and material service to the poor, they do proselytizing by means of medical aid, education, etc., then I would certainly ask them to withdraw. Every nation's religion is as good as any other. Certainly India's religions are adequate for her people. We need no converting spiritually.[1]

The Hindu, 22-3-1931

385. DISCUSSION AT MEETING OF R.T.C. DELEGATES, DELHI[2]

March 21, 1931

His Excellency met this morning (21st March, 1931) at 11 a.m. the Ruling Princes and the delegates to the Round Table Conference who are at present in Delhi. Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sir Hugh Cooke also attended.

[1] For Gandhiji's clarification of this paragraph, *vide* Vol. XLVI, pp. 27-9.
[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

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His Excellency opened the proceedings by welcoming the gentlemen who were present and by describing the rough heads to which, it seemed to him, discussion might profitably be directed.

These heads were five in number, namely:

(i) The statement made by the Secretary of State in Parliament "about the practical programme which we hope to pursue".

(ii) Special investigations recommended by the Round Table Conference.

(iii) What may we suppose is happening in India itself, for instance as regards communal settlement and the discussions in States regarding Federation?

(iv) How do people see the work of the Federal Structure Committee developing and when will the time be ready for its further discussions?

(v) Would it be useful for the Indian side of the Round Table Conference with additions to meet in India during the summer?

HEAD I. Under the first head His Excellency enquired what people thought of the general plan described by the Secretary of State so far as it related, in particular, to no British delegation coming to India. . . . His Excellency put to the Conference the direct question whether it was the general view that it is desirable to get out a British delegation to India. Many of the delegates answered 'Yes'. . . .

Mr. Gandhi expressed the view that, at this stage, nothing useful could be done by bringing out a delegation (though from what he said later, it might be inferred that he merely meant to convey that it was useless at present, i.e., until the communal position was more clear.) . . .

His Excellency closed the discussion on this head by remarking that the problem was whether a delegation of whatever kind to India could do useful work in clearing ground so that the Round Table Conference in autumn could get to work more quickly in London.

HEAD II. His Excellency then turned to the special enquiries recommended by the Round Table Conference. The first of these was the Franchise Enquiry. The Government of India favoured the appointment of a Commission by the Secretary of State and thought that it might tour and be employed, say, for six months. But the problem which immediately arose was whether an enquiry into the franchise must not await a settlement of the communal problem. . . . Mr. Gandhi, being asked if there were prospects of a communal settlement being reached at an early date, stated that every endeavour was being made to reach a solution from the Congress standpoint and apart from everything else that was happening here and outside. The Congress, he said, will be hard put to it to take a share in the deliberations of the Round Table Conference in India or in England unless the communal question is settled. The Congress is driven more and more to these conclusions. So he will leave no stone unturned to reach a settlement. They had

found help in making their explorations in the assurances first given by Begum Shah Nawaz and then by Sir Muhammad Shafi and by others who are not here. The main position, he said, was that the Congress will entertain no solution of the communal question which does not satisfy the parties concerned. Mr. Gandhi mentioned this point in order to show that it is the bounden duty of Congress to find a settlement. If Congress unhappily should fail in that duty, it will inform His Excellency and the country. Mr. Gandhi could not say if he had a hope of immediate solution but he found no grounds for despair as things were now proceeding. If Congress succeeded, it would make an announcement in the near future. If Congress failed, its failure would be a discredit to it, and others must take up the task. Congress will approach everyone. Difficulties are very great but not insurmountable. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya agreed with the expression of opinion made by Mr. Gandhi. Sir Muhammad Shafi approved of the admirable summary made by Mr. Gandhi and had nothing to add to it. His Excellency remarked that, as one standing outside, he could only lend all his prayers and good wishes to those slaving in the cause of peace.

It was concluded unanimously that it is no use setting up the Franchise Commission while the communal question is still pending.

His Excellency then propounded the question, "If this question is not settled, what would this conference advise His Majesty's Government to do? In these circumstances, should His Majesty's Government itself make an award?" Sir Muhammad Shafi, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir. A. P. Patro and Sir B. N. Mitra said that in these circumstances Government must make a decision. Mr. Gandhi, however, remarked:

> If we have in our helplessness to say to His Majesty's Government that we had failed, I should not like to live to make that announcement. On the domestic solution of this problem lies the future happiness of this much distressed country. I would not like to say off-hand that His Majesty's Government should arbitrate between us, for that is what it comes to; but as we proceed in our talks with Muslims and Sikhs we are fast approaching the conclusion that it will be an indispensable condition of any solution that there should be adult franchise. In the peculiar conditions of India adult franchise may appear a hard task, but it would be harder still not to have an adequate solution of our communal problems. Muslims and Sikhs feel the same. Muslims may not be unanimous, but there is a large body of Muslim opinion which feels that adult suffrage is the real solution. Let no one be frightened by the strength with which I put this proposition. Adult suffrage will not be so unwieldy as it may appear at first sight. We must consider fully the scheme which is now being evolved. At the

proper time I shall be prepared to discuss this scheme. Meanwhile I have wished to let people know in what way Congress mind is working. Adult suffrage may prove to be an indispensable condition of the communal solution.

Sir Akbar Hydari pointed out that a Franchise Committee cannot get to work on the franchise and the constituencies for the Federal Legislature until we know what the strength of the two Houses will be. His Excellency remarked that this shows how closely all questions are joined up, but you must begin somewhere, either with the owl or with the egg. People charged with particular tasks must draw alternative pictures.

HEAD II (b). His Excellency then referred to the two enquiries in the North West Frontier Provinces which the Round Table Conference had recommended. He explained the action which the Government of India had in contemplation. The conference approved. His Excellency made a similar explanation in regard to Sind with a like result. The conference also approved of departmental examination of the classification of subjects but expressed no opinion about the enquiries regarding separate railway authority.

Mr. Gandhi was understood to remark that the idea of separating Orissa had the support of Congress. . . .

HEAD V. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru asked the question "if a British delegation comes out, what then?" His Excellency expressed the opinion that the whole Conference must then meet. . . . Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru wanted to know what Mr. Gandhi's views were.

Mr. Gandhi said that when he and his friends were considering this question, they had built on three things that the Secretary of State had repeatedly said. The Secretary of State held out a prospect of a delegation to India, which Mr. Gandhi and his friends had thought was a good idea, because it afforded them an opportunity of discussing matters with the degree of freedom, which they could not take in full Conference in London. They had also welcomed the idea of a preliminary conference being held in India, and of the Round Table Conference then assembling in London, to wind up the business and to declare its considered opinion. He and his friends still adhered to that opinion. Accordingly, Mr. Gandhi was glad to hear today expressions of opinion that the idea of a delegation to India which had been abandoned by His Majesty's Government should be revived and that a delegation should come out. But the Congress did not yet fully know its own mind because of internal difficulties, such as the possibility of a failure to find a solution of the communal problem. Just as Congress would welcome the coming of a delegation to India and might indeed consider it almost indispensable, in order that Congress might have its mind informed, so it was true of British Parties or so many as might elect to come to India that their minds should be informed in this way. The third consideration leading Congress to

welcome, or indeed consider indispensable, the holding of a Conference in India did not overlook the disadvantages of which Mr. Gandhi was aware. Some persons thought that it was a handicap to meet and conduct negotiations in an Indian atmosphere. But Mr. Gandhi felt that distrust still persists. There is distrust between Indians and Europeans. There is still greater distrust of the bureaucracy, that is, of officials. He and his friends thought that impediments were being placed in the way of reaching an honourable settlement. He himself did not dread these things. He felt that if India is to take over its own Government, it will have to deal with this very bureaucracy under altered conditions. He asked himself the question if officials did not help, what will India have to face if it embarked on the serious responsibility of self-government. So far as Congress was concerned, it seemed desirable, and even necessary, to have a Conference in India. Such a Conference would not act as judges or arbitrators. If it did that, he felt that logically it should do so in a neutral place and deliver its verdict. He did not feel that these were precisely the conditions. By its sittings the Conference will both affect its surrounding atmosphere and be affected by it. It seemed to him to follow that the Conference must meet in India. If there are disadvantages of sitting in India, there are also disadvantages in sitting in London. The Conference would be incomplete if it did not face the full consequences and sit in India as well as in London. So far as time goes, Congress was impatient to reach a decision. He felt three things. First, the earlier the British delegation comes out the better; second, the earlier the Round Table Conference meets the better; third, the earlier the Round Table Conference winds up its proceedings in London the better. Referring to the various Sub-Committees which had been mentioned, Mr. Gandhi expressed himself as ignorant of their probable internal working and proceedings. But he felt that it will be necessary that all should hear the Congress view before the Committees proceed to their discussions. If these committees went on with their work now, it would be a handicap to Congress. The tentative conclusions reached in London were conclusions to which the Congress cannot at present subscribe. Congress must submit its considered view on the problems on which provisional views had been reached there. Mr. Gandhi, therefore, urged that no further steps should be taken before the Congress was fully heard. The Maharaja of Alwar asked whether Mr. Gandhi would be satisfied with a weak British delegation. Mr. Gandhi said 'Yes'. He could well understand the inability of His Majesty's Government to send the very best representatives to a Conference in India. He said he did not mind that. He felt that we should break the ground and arrive at some unanimous conclusions. We need not be always thinking of producing an effect on first-class politicians in England. That is desirable, but we are equally concerned in converting ourselves to unanimous conclusions and in concentrating upon ourselves. There are officials and communal communities here. They will remain here. They will not be transported to

London. So, all things considered, it appeared to him to be necessary that a Conference should be held in India. Indians themselves have to come together and they could not come together under better auspices than those of Congress. Indians should find themselves and find where they are before going to London. Addressing Their Highnesses, he said that, *if to his horror he found that they were divided among themselves, he would say let us not go to London.* But if they agreed and were of one mind, he would proceed to London in the greatest hope and confidence and absolutely certain of making their own position felt and appreciated by Englishmen. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya endorsed all that Mr. Gandhi had said. He said that England had never been faced with a greater problem and that it was necessary that the work already undertaken should be carried on with the least delay possible. English statesmen owed it to India that they should find or make time to come out to India. All parties should be represented. Let English statesmen so arrange their work in England that the best men could come to India. His Excellency should, he thought, make an appeal to English statesmen to that effect. The ultimate work of the Round Table Conference would, he thought, become easier if discussions first took place with the British delegation in India. An Indian delegation to London would be necessary only to give the thing its final shape. . . .

His Excellency referred to two arguments—one used by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and one by Mr. Gandhi. As regards the former, he pointed out that the formulation of the united wish of India and its presentation to His Majesty's Government did not necessitate the presence of a British delegation in India and that such an idea was inconsistent with the general Conference idea of reaching agreements through discussion between British and Indian representatives. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya explained that that had not been the intention of his remarks. As regards the point taken by Mr. Gandhi that until Congress had been fully heard no further steps should be taken, His Excellency enquired whether that referred to those special and expert investigations recommended by the Round Table Conference of which His Excellency had given a detailed account earlier. Mr. Gandhi explained that he did not object to these separate enquiries being carried on at once, but his objection was to the Federal Structure Committee meeting and continuing its explorations, until Congress had explored and declared its mind upon the general recommendations already made.

His Excellency thanked the gentlemen present for coming to the conference and for expressing their views. In the light of the statement recently made by the Secretary of State on behalf of His Majesty's Government, he himself at this stage expressed no opinion about the coming of a British delegation from England, or on the situation which might arise if that did or did not happen. There might indeed be insurmountable difficulties in the way of such a procedure. But His Excellency hoped that if the best could not be

attained, everyone would feel that we must be content with the next best method if we really meant to proceed by way of searching for agreement.

From a photostat: C.W. 9347. Courtesy: India Office Library

386. MY NOTES

A Terrible Accident

Shri Chhaganlal Joshi writes:[1]

Such accidents awaken us for a moment and later we fall into stupor again. As nature alone is responsible for this accident, we do not even get the satisfaction of blaming anyone for it.

In the event of such accidents, whom should we condole with? It is not one family alone but the entire nation that has been bereaved.

Such accidents will continue to occur. In a great struggle they are like drops in the ocean. Both the migrants and the neighbours seem to have made good use of this accident. The neighbours have rendered all possible help, the migrants have not given way to the least despair. In this manner, they have transformed a calamity into an occasion for purification and given us a reminder that death should be neither feared nor grieved over.

The Sardar and I salute the migrants and their neighbours.

"What God, World Teacher and Master has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over."

We have to march on towards our objective with our eyes shut tight.

Untouchability in the Suburbs

In the meeting at Vile Parle,[2] Swami Anand had included a sentence in his review especially in order to draw my attention to it. In the so-called national schools there, untouchables do not yet find a place. What a sad and shameful thing it is that even at the end of a twelve-month struggle this failing still persists. It may be said that the higher classes in the suburbs, after having done much, have washed it all off. Despite their contributing funds, going to prison and running other risks, if they do not wash off the dirt in the form of untouchability, all else that they have ac-

[1] The letter is not translated here. A fire had broken out in Isnar town which destroyed 19 marriage pandals. The afflicted farmers would not accept charity and showed great courage in facing the calamity.

[2] *Vide* pp. 308-10.

complished may perhaps become barren. Under swaraj, public temples, public schools and public wells will be used equally by Brahmins and Bhangis. If this does not happen, it cannot be regarded as swaraj. Rather than win swaraj in name only, let us not get swaraj so long as untouchability persists. The victory of one who fights battle in the way of satyagraha consists in fighting itself, so that such a person will never compromise the rights of the untouchable in his impatience to grasp the fruit of swaraj.

TO THE MAHATMA GOING TO THE CONGRESS SESSION AT KARACHI

Where Gandhi is the guide, and Vallabhbhai the fighter there will always be victory, wisdom and prosperity.[1]

For the Sardar and me, this couplet is not something by way of praise, but is a form of blessing. We are setting out at a difficult time. May these blessings bear fruit at such a time. They have been given by the aged Shri Narsinhraobhai. The programme at Vile Parle had commenced with these symbolic blessings. I pointed out to Narsinhraobhai that there was something comic too in it. He rejected this and said that the poem was the sincere outpouring of his heart, that there was no room in it for humour. God alone knows what we are. But in this country we should certainly wish for victory and prosperity, through whatever instrument it may come.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1931

387. OF PRINCES AND PAUPERS

The following question[2] was asked at the meeting of the Congress workers which took place in Vile Parle.

I have slightly enlarged the question, but I have not altered its sense. It is a good question and must occur to many minds. Let us consider it now.

If there was anything like *Ramarajya* in the world once, it should be established again. I believe that *Ramarajya* did exist. Rama means the *Panch*; the *Panch* implies God, implies public

[1] *Vide Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 78. "Gandhi" has been substituted for "Krishna" and "Vallabhbhai" for "Arjuna".

[2] "Swaraj of your dreams, as you say, will protect the rights of the haves as well as of the have-nots which in itself sounds contradictory. Their conflict is eternal. This may be the order of nature which you are seemingly opposing in vain."

opinion. When public opinion is not artificially created, it is pure. A government founded on public opinion is *Ramarajya* for that particular place. We find such a government in some places even today. Nowadays some landlords are competing with their tenants in the matter of simplicity, and are trying to become one with them. It is not as if all rulers are robbers. In my tours I have come across good ones as well as wicked ones. All owners are not heartless. It is true that I have not come across many instances of the wealthy acting as friends and protectors of the poor. It is also true that even in the instances that I have noticed, there is room for improvement. I have had these experiences under a government which I regard as demoniac. But is it surprising that even in Lanka there was an exception in the person of Vibhishana? Where there is one such person, we can certainly hope for many more. When an exception is multiplied, it becomes the general rule. I have spoken here of what is possible, but the person who has posed the question would not be satisfied with this.

Satyagraha is an attempt to make the possible real. Truth implies justice. A just administration implies an era of truth or swaraj, dharmaraj, *Ramarajya* or the people's raj (democracy). Under such a government the ruler would be the protector and friend of his subjects. Between his way of life and that of the poorest of his subjects, there would not be such a gulf as there is today. There would be an appropriate similarity between the King's palace and the hut of his subject. The difference between the needs of the two would be slight. Both would enjoy pure air and water. The subjects would get sufficient food. The ruler would give up eating fifty-six different kinds of delicacies and be satisfied with only six. If the poor use utensils made of wood or mud, the ruler may well use utensils made of such metals as brass. For the ruler who wants to use utensils of gold or silver must be robbing his subjects. The poor should be able to obtain sufficient clothing. Let the king have more clothes, but let not the difference be such as to cause envy. The children of both should be studying in the same primary school. The ruler should become a senior member of the family of the poor. If he does anything for the good of the poor, he should not regard it as a favour that he has conferred upon them. Benevolence has no place in dharma. It is the dharma of the ruler to serve the subjects. What has been said in regard to the ruler applies to all wealthy persons; likewise, it is the dharma of the poor not to bear malice towards the rich. That their poverty is largely due to their own fault, their own failings, is something that the poor should realize. Even while making an effort

to improve their lot, the poor should bear no ill will towards the king, should not wish his ruin, but rather hope for his improvement. The poor should not cherish the desire to replace the monarch; but should be content with fulfilling their own needs. In the swaraj which I visualize, the two would help each other in this manner.

In my opinion, in order to win this swaraj, important changes have to be made in the education of both the ruler and the subjects. Both the robber and those who are being robbed are groping in darkness. They have lost their way. Neither should tolerate this situation. But this is something of which the ruling class or the wealthy class will not be easily convinced. I have chosen to serve the poor on the principle that if one party is convinced, the other will automatically be convinced. Everyone cannot become a ruler, but everyone can be subsumed under the heading "all". And, swaraj would be here today if the poor become aware of their rights and at the same time of their duties. This awareness can be brought about by no other means as quickly as through satyagraha. We have had actual experience of this during the past twelve months. Our attainment of swaraj has been obstructed to the extent that corruption has crept into our satyagraha.

Satyagraha is the most important tool for the people's education and awakening. Self-purification is another name for satyagraha. To the ruling class one may only speak of self-purification; it takes time for any impression to be made on it. The poorer classes constantly look for some comfort, they are already aware of their sufferings, but not of the remedy. Hence they try out remedies when someone suggests these to them. In such circumstances, if they can get a devoted worker, they cling to him and accept his remedies to the best of their abilities. Hence, from a particular standpoint this class may be regarded as being eager to learn. Swaraj can also be secured through it. It should become aware of its strength and yet make only a limited use of it. When this happens, the swaraj which I visualize may be regarded as having dawned. Having attained such strength, the people can successfully withstand any force—whether foreign or native—which stands in their way.

Hence the only dharma of workers is to serve the people. Public service can be rendered only through the path of truth and non-violence. The progress of the nation will be hindered to the extent to which corruption creeps in.

Meanwhile, if the ruling class and the rich recognize the demands of the age, they would cease to become owners of the wealth they own and their capacity to earn it and rather become its trustees and establish the right of the trustee to earn his living

too. If they do not do so, ultimately a bitter struggle between the ruler and the subjects, between the rich and the poor is bound to ensue. In the hope that the force of satyagraha will check the poison, persons like me have sacrificed their all for that instrument.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1931

388. A DICTIONARY

Readers must be aware that the second edition of the dictionary published by the Vidyapith has come out. The novel feature of this new edition is that an attempt has been made in it to give in brief current meanings also. In order to compile a scientific and comprehensive dictionary, a Herculean effort and many lovers of the language are needed. This attempt of the Vidyapith is a preliminary step towards such a comprehensive dictionary. The price, which is Rs. 4, has been kept at the lowest. Copies can be had from the Principal of the Vidyapith by sending him a money order.

That errata had to be included in the dictionary is one of its drawbacks. But such shortcomings are inevitable at the present moment in our country. We are a poor nation, there is little love of language, compositors are only half-educated—errors persist because of many such reasons. I would suggest to those who use the dictionary to correct the errors before using it.

Despite its errors, I regard the dictionary as very useful. Those who love the language must write it with correct spellings. Not to do so is to show disrespect towards the language and it is also a sign of indolence. Where there is love, there is no room for indolence. However, despite this, if the tool is not there, how can even an enthusiast write correct spellings? Moreover, somewhat chaotic situation has prevailed in Gujarat, regarding spellings. The Vidyapith has ended such anarchy and, after having received the concurrence of as many learned men as possible, has adopted a uniform style of spelling. It is increasingly gaining acceptance day by day. I hope that libraries and such other institutions as also those States which accept the spellings of the Vidyapith will carry on propaganda for the dictionary. A copy of the dictionary should be found on the desk of every clerk and in every office.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-3-1931

389. INTERVIEW TO "CHICAGO TRIBUNE"

DELHI,
[Before *March 23, 1931*][1]

The Mahatma is pledged not to say anything publicly which might prejudice the present negotiations, but he consented to discuss general questions.

My method is love and truth, and no force can avail against them. Ask me any question you like. I will answer if I can.

Q. Have you still faith in the British and in British promises?

A. I had faith in them until 1919. But the Amritsar massacre and other Punjab atrocities changed my heart, and nothing has happened since to make me regain my faith. Certainly, not in the past ten months. But my faith in my own people has increased, especially in the past ten months. Consider the part played by women and children in the present movement. The world has never seen such a magnificent spectacle before, especially the awakening amongst children.

Q. How do you account for the children?

It can only be the work of God. Certainly, God is with us in this struggle.

He spun away and talked on. He still stands, he said, for his eleven points which last year formed the minimum national demand, upon the granting of which by the Viceroy he offered to refrain from launching civil disobedience. They included the total prohibition of alcoholic drinks, the abolition of the salt tax, the reduction of land revenue and military expenditure by 50 per cent., the discharge of political prisoners and a prohibitive tariff on foreign cloth.

I still stand by them as the vital needs of India, and any constitution will be judged by its capacity to satisfy these demands. The situation, however, is changed and the method whereby I hope to attain them is accordingly subject to change.

Q. If you obtain swaraj would you consider your labours finished and retire, or would you take an active part in the reconstruction of India by the Indians?

[1] The interview took place at Dr. Ansari's house before Gandhiji left for Karachi.

I should like to take an active part in the reconstruction of my country provided I retain my health and vigour and my people's confidence in me and my methods. That, indeed, would be a labour of love.

Do you think most of India's ills will be solved with the coming of self-government?

Naturally not without trouble and difficulty. I have ever been optimistic.

Q. But the great social and economic questions, such as the relations of capital and labour, landlord and tenant, your own special communal problems and those of the depressed classes—do you think mere self-government will solve those so easily?

Yes, all those problems will be fairly easy to settle when we are our own masters. I know there are difficulties, but I have faith in our ultimate capacity to solve them, not by following your Western models, but by evolving along lines of non-violence and truth, whereon our movement is based and which must constitute the bedrock of our future constitution.

Q. How could a capitalist under those conditions stand for inequalities and injustices?

No, I think these problems will be solved quickly and successfully.

Q. And your languages? What about English under the nationalist government?

English would still be retained as a cultural language. It would be as useful to us as French to Europe. Hindustani would become the national language used in courts and universities. Native vernaculars, many of which possess rich literatures, and are spoken by 20,000,000 to 40,000,000 are to be encouraged.

It is not true that I would abolish schools. I am as anxious as any to maintain our great culture by education. But in our schools today we learn only what our foreign masters want us to learn. We do not get the training we most need.

Twenty-three years ago Gandhiji wrote a book, *Indian Home Rule*[1], which stunned India and the rest of the world with its terrible onslaught on modern Western civilization. "It is Satanic, and the Hindus call it the dark age," he wrote, and envisaged the ideal State with no factories, railways, armies or navies and as few hospitals, doctors, and lawyers as are possible.

[1] *Vide* Vol. X.

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Q. Have you changed your mind about these things?

Not a bit. My ideas about the evils of Western civilization still stand. If I republish the book tomorrow, I would scarcely change a word, except perhaps a few changes in the setting.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-3-1931

390. LETTER TO VICEROY

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
March 23, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

It seems cruel to inflict this letter on you, but the interest of peace demands a final appeal. Though you were frank enough to tell me that there was little hope of your commuting the sentence of death on Bhagat Singh and two others, you said you would consider my submission of Saturday. Dr. Sapru met me yesterday and said that you were troubled over the matter and taxing your brain as to the proper course to adopt. If there is any room left for reconsideration, I invite your attention to the following.

Popular opinion rightly or wrongly demands commutation. When there is no principle at stake, it is often a duty to respect it.

In the present case the chances are that, if commutation is granted, internal peace is most likely to be promoted. In the event of execution, peace is undoubtedly in danger.

Seeing that I am able to inform you that the revolutionary party has assured me that, in the event of these lives being spared, that party will stay its hands, suspension of sentence pending cessation of revolutionary murders becomes in my opinion a peremptory duty.

Political murders have been condoned before now. It is worth while saving these lives, if thereby many other innocent lives are likely to be saved and maybe even revolutionary crime almost stamped out.

Since you seem to value my influence such as it is in favour of peace, do not please unnecessarily make my position, difficult as it is, almost too difficult for future work.

Execution is an irretrievable act. If you think there is the slightest chance of error of judgment, I would urge you to suspend for further review an act that is beyond recall.

If my presence is necessary, I can come. Though I may not speak[1] I may hear and write what I want to say.

"Charity never faileth."

I am,
Your sincere friend,

From a photostat: C.W. 9343. Courtesy: India Office Library

391. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 23, 1931

I have to thank you for your letter[2] of 21st instant regarding non-payment of land revenue in the United Provinces. At my request Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has prepared a note[3] on the

[1] Being Monday, a silence day. On the very day in his letter superscribed "confidential" the Viceroy wrote: "I have again thought very carefully over everything that you have said—and the last thing I should wish to do would be to make your task, especially at this juncture, more difficult. But I am afraid, for the reasons I sought to explain fully to you in conversation, I cannot see my way to feel that it would be right to take the action you request. . . ." (C.W. 9344)

[2] In which, alluding to the talks (*vide* Appendix IX) which he had on March 19 with Gandhiji, Emerson had quoted a telegram received from the U. P. Government and written: "You will, I am sure, agree that if the facts are as stated, the spirit of the settlement is not being observed in this respect, and I feel confident that you will take the necessary steps to remove any cause for misunderstanding."

[3] Referring to this in his letter dated March 31, Emerson wrote: "It appears from the first paragraph of this note that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is under the impression that, during the course of the conversations between His Excellency and yourself, it was understood that, while the Congress would abandon the movement in the United Provinces against the payment of land revenue and rent as part of the civil disobedience movement, they would take an organized and active part in matters relating to the payment of land revenue and rent. I am to say that His Excellency's recollection of the conversations is that, while you rightly pointed out that the abandonment of the movement against the payment of land revenue and rent would not affect the difficulties arising out of economic distress experienced by the zamindars and tenants in the payment of land revenue, respectively [and rent], there was no suggestion that the Congress intended to use their organization for the purposes indicated in the first paragraph of the Pandit's note.

"In the conversations that you and I had on the matter I certainly did not gain the impression that this was the intention. I recollect observing that the question of economic distress was a matter of revenue administration to which the Government of India and the local Government attached the greatest importance and that local Governments were alive to the necessity of giving such relief as the circumstances required."

question which I enclose herewith for your information. The action taken by the local Congress Committee as reflected in the note appears to me to be free from reproach. Naturally the propriety or otherwise of the action will depend upon the manner in which the whole thing is done. In my opinion all will be well if the local authorities do not repel the advances made by the Congress Committees and do not look upon their activities with suspicion. As you will observe from the note the whole scope of the movement is changed. It is no longer for non-payment of rent. It is a movement purely for seeking economic relief.

Young India, 20-8-1931

392. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

DELHI,
March 23, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 22nd instant regarding Congress action about foreign cloth. The draft questions and answers suggested by you seem to me to be in order.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

393. STATEMENT ON EXECUTION OF BHAGAT SINGH AND COMRADES

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1931

Bhagat Singh and his companions have been executed and have become martyrs. Their death seems to have been a personal loss to many. I join in the tributes paid to the memory of these young men. And yet I must warn the youth of the country against following their example. We should not utilize our energy, our spirit of sacrifice, our labours and our indomitable courage

[1] *Vide* Appendix XIII.

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in the way they have utilized theirs. This country must not be liberated through bloodshed.

About the Government I cannot help feeling that it has missed a golden opportunity, to win over the rebels to its side. At least from the point of view of the settlement, it was its duty to postpone indefinitely the carrying out of the death sentence. The Government has by its own act dealt a severe blow to the settlement and has shown its capacity to disregard public opinion once again and to exhibit the great brute strength it possesses.

The reliance on violence is perhaps ominous and it suggests that in spite of high-sounding and pious proclamations, it does not want to part with power. But the people's duty is clear.

The Congress must not swerve from the path it has chalked out for itself. According to my view, notwithstanding the gravest provocation the Congress should endorse the settlement and test its capacity to secure the result hoped for.

We must not put ourselves in the wrong by getting angry. We must realize that commutation of the sentences was not a part of the truce. We may accuse the Government of violence but we cannot accuse it of breach of the settlement. It is my conviction that the grave blunder committed by the Government has increased our power to win freedom and Bhagat Singh and his comrades have embraced death therefor. Let us not throw away this opportunity by doing anything in anger. It is beyond dispute that there will be a general strike and we cannot honour the deceased patriots better than by taking out absolutely peaceful and dignified processions.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 29-3-1931

394. INTERVIEW TO "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

[Before *March 24, 1931*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi has given an important interview to the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* in India. According to the special correspondent Mahatma Gandhi declared in the interview that he was certain in mind that the Congress attendance at the Round Table Conference would serve no useful purpose unless the question of safeguards was re-opened on the basis of providing India with an efficient and stable form of self-government. Mahatma Gandhi says:

[1] The interview appeared under the date-line "London, March 24, 1931".

I have been very much disturbed by the tone of Mr. Benn's statement with reference to safeguards. I must emphasize that the Round Table Conference cannot succeed if it is prejudiced by declarations which imply that certain demands made by Britain are final.

Referring to the debated question of equality of trade rights to Britishers in India, Mahatma Gandhi said:

The rights of the existing business interests must be a matter for negotiations in which India does not desire to act unfairly or ungenerously. India must retain freedom for the future economic development of her resources along lines which commend themselves to Indians.

Discussing the question of Federation, Mahatma Gandhi declared that the princes must give their subjects a certain minimum of rights as it is impossible to combine complete autocracy and democracy.

The Tribune, 27-3-1931

395. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

BORSAD,
March 24, 1931

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I had got your letter, but I could not reply to it earlier. You have given a good description of the work being done by you both sisters. What did you have in mind when saying that the atmosphere had become impure? I have been hearing many stories. That is why I ask you so that I may have more information. Visiting a drink addict daily and talking to him about the same thing over and over again does not help. Remember what I said in my speech at Maroli. You should take personal interest in the life of an addict and persuade him to take up some work. If he does not wish to spin, he may do some other work. You should encourage him to talk about his joys and sorrows and listen to him with sympathy. You should meet his wife and children, take the latter in hand and make them look more pleasant. If you serve him in this manner, he will probably give up drinking. Also you should not say that, if one of you gave all her time to one person, we cannot influence all the hundreds of thousands like him in the country in that manner. This is the only way to influence such a large number. If one person sincerely reforms himself, many

others follow his example. By serving one person selflessly, we serve all.

I understand what you say about the children.

I don't think Madhavji has committed any error. He has not informed me again about the court case against him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6812

396. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHAT SHOULD THEY DO?

"What are those scholars who left their schools during the struggle to do now?" was one of the questions asked at the workers' meeting in Bombay, but which for want of time I was unable to answer.

My answer now is:

1. The struggle is not yet over, it has assumed a different, i.e., constructive form.
2. Scholars can penetrate the homes and the hearts of the drunkard, the opium-eater and the user of foreign cloth.
3. Scholars can assist those sisters who are engaged in peaceful picketing.
4. Scholars can settle down in villages and there organize khadi work.
5. Scholars can hawk khadi in city.
6. All scholars should work at the wheel or the *takli* at least for half an hour daily.
7. For further reference they should write to the registrars of the national universities.

FOREIGN-CLOTH DEALERS

Another question asked was, now that picketing has become mild, new orders for foreign cloth are being given and the sales of existing stock are also brisk. What are you going to do to prevent this?

This question presupposes that our picketing has hitherto amounted to coercion. If such was the case, it is better that freedom of action is restored than that any single person is coerced into acting against his will. My conviction is that if the workers will carry on sustained propaganda, the buying public will be converted. We have concentrated too much upon the dealers and too little on the

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buyers. Sustained public education in this matter is what is wanted. Conversion is our motto, not coercion. Coercion is an offspring of violence. Conversion is a fruit of non-violence and love.

Can You Avoid Class War?

The third question, I find, is, if you will benefit the workers, the peasant and the factory hand, can you avoid class war?

I can, most decidedly, if only the people will follow the non-violent method. The past twelve months have abundantly shown the possibilities of non-violence adopted even as a policy. When the people adopt it as a principle of conduct, class war becomes an impossibility. The experiment in that direction is being tried in Ahmedabad. It has yielded most satisfactory results and there is every likelihood of its proving conclusive. By the non-violent method we seek not to destroy the capitalist, we seek to destroy capitalism. We invite the capitalist to regard himself as trustee for those on whom he depends for the making, the retention and the increase of his capital. Nor need the worker wait for his conversion. If capital is power, so is work. Either power can be used destructively or creatively. Either is dependent on the other. Immediately the worker realizes his strength, he is in a position to become a co-sharer with the capitalist instead of remaining his slave. If he aims at becoming the sole owner, he will most likely be killing the hen that lays golden eggs. Inequalities in intelligence and even opportunity will last till the end of time. A man living on the banks of a river has any day more opportunity of growing crops than one living in an arid desert. But if inequalities stare us in the face the essential equality too is not to be missed. Every man has an equal right to the necessaries of life even as birds and beasts have. And since every right carries with it a corresponding duty and the corresponding remedy for resisting any attack upon it, it is merely a matter of finding out the corresponding duties and remedies to vindicate the elementary fundamental equality. The corresponding duty is to labour with my limbs and the corresponding remedy is to non-co-operate with him who deprives me of the fruit of my labour. And if I would recognize the fundamental equality, as I must, of the capitalist and the labourer, I must not aim at his destruction. I must strive for his conversion. My non-co-operation with him will open his eyes to the wrong he may be doing. Nor need I be afraid of someone else taking my place when I have non-co-operated. For I expect to influence my co-workers so as not to help the wrongdoing of employer. This kind of education of the mass of workers is no doubt a slow

process, but as it is also the surest, it is necessarily the quickest. It can be easily demonstrated that destruction of the capitalist must mean destruction in the end of the worker and as no human being is so bad as to be beyond redemption, no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil.

What of the Unemployed

The fourth question was, what of the civil-resistance prisoners who are discharged and are out of employment?

If they are willing to work and are honest they can, I doubt not, be employed in some Congress organization. Nor need everyone look to the Congress and the allied organizations to give them employment. A labourer is worthy of his hire. And those who are honest and do not mind labouring, no matter what they were previous to imprisonment, can always rely upon being suited.

Sacrificing Country for Truth

Here is the fifth question:

> How can you explain away your inconsistency involved in your making fond and easy advances to the R.T.C. after the Congress deciding not to participate in it, and Jawaharlal ironically calling them only a few months ago 'old women'?
>
> Are you always going to sacrifice your country for Truth and treat us like test-tubes in your experiment of non-violence and Truth? Do you realize that you are staking the whole nation for your individual self-evolution?
>
> Many of us feel that you have become a National Habit which is useful for the capitalist but tragic for the exploited.

Manners change with the times. "Foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." If I am inconsistent I am wisely so. But I see no inconsistency between my present conduct and the past. There never was any question of permanent boycott of the Round Table Conference. The Congress refused when it could not go there on its terms, it may go now because in its opinion the way is open. And I hope that those who go will deliver the nation's message in no uncertain tones. Here there is no question of my 'sacrificing the country for Truth'. In the first place the decision is that of the Working Committee and in the second place there is no sacrifice of the country. But writing parenthetically I have no hesitation in saying that I should, if there could be such a choice, most decidedly sacrifice the country for Truth which to me is God. I further hold that no individual or nation has ever gained by the

sacrifice of Truth, there is, therefore, no such thing as sacrifice of country for Truth.

Those who join me in my experiments in Truth-seeking are not my 'test-tubes', they are my valued fellow-workers, sharing with me the joy that the search for Truth brings as no other search does.

I do not realize that I am 'staking a whole nation for self-evolution'. For self-evolution is wholly consistent with a nation's evolution. A nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed advancing and, conversely, no individual can advance without the nation of which he is a part also advancing.

The last charge is thoughtlessly made. My experiments began in South Africa and they were made on behalf of the exploited. The latter gained. They gained again in Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad. If I may share the merit of the first Borsad campaign, brilliantly fought by Sardar Vallabhbhai during my absence but in strict accord with my prescription, and then again in Bardoli, I may say that the peasants had the benefit of the two fights. What may be the last experiment on a nation-wide scale is still being tried. It is yet too soon to forecast the result. But he who runs may see that the phenomenal mass awakening cannot have taken place without the masses having added considerably to their stature. This recital has not been made here to claim credit for myself. I am but an humble instrument in the hands of God. Credit belongs to Truth and non-violence. The writer's question seems to doubt the efficacy of Truth and more perhaps of non-violence. The series of examples I have given ought to set at rest all doubt. If we were offering civil disobedience, it was for gaining *purna* swaraj and if now we have suspended it and are ready to join the Round Table Conference, other conditions being fulfilled, we shall be going to it also for the same noble end. That we may fail to achieve the end is quite possible. Even so we shall be putting ourselves in the wrong if we rejected the advance made by the Government. If we make the right use of suspension, if we carry out the terms of the settlement to the fullest extent possible, if we complete the two boycotts, if we intensify the khadi spirit, at the end of the period of grace we shall find ourselves stronger for battle, if we have not by then already gained our end. We must work away with faith in the settlement leading us to our goal.

Young India, 26-3-1931

397. THE GIANT AND THE DWARF

The reader's attention is invited to Sjt. Walchand Hirachand's letter published elsewhere. It has undergone some corrections in order to represent my views[1] correctly. The discussion to which the letter refers arose out of the formula that "there should be no discrimination between the rights of the British mercantile community, firms and companies trading in India and the rights of Indian born subjects." The formula reads innocent enough but it covers the most dangerous position.

The situation today is this. The Britisher is the top-dog and the Indian the under-dog in his own country. In the administration of the country, the Indian generally is a mere clerk. In business he is at best a commission agent getting hardly five per cent against his English principal's 95 per cent. In almost every walk of life the Englishman by reason of his belonging to the ruling class occupies a privileged position. It can be said without fear of contradiction and without any exaggeration that he has risen upon the ruin of India's commerce and industries. The cottage industry of India had to perish in order that Lancashire might flourish. The Indian shipping had to perish so that British shipping might flourish. In a word we were suppressed in order to enable the British to live on the heights of Simla. It was not a mere picturesque expression of Gokhale's when he said that our growth was stunted. To talk then of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf? Before one can think of equality between unequals, the dwarf must be raised to the height of the giant. And since millions living on the plains cannot be translated to the heights of Simla, it follows that those entrenched in those heights must descend to the plains. The process may seem harsh but it is inevitable if the millions of the plains are to be equals of the privileged few.

It is to be feared therefore that before we reach the state of equality, the levelling process will have to be gone through. Justice demands this. It will be a misnomer to call the process one of racial discrimination. There is no such question. There is room enough in our country for every British man, woman and

[1] *Vide* pp. 303-4.

child, if they will shed their privileged position and share our lot. They must then exchange the British army and the force of the cities for the goodwill of a whole nation, which is at their disposal for the asking. Our goodwill is the truest safeguard that we can offer to them and I make bold to say that it will be infinitely better and more dignified for both of us. In the process there will be apparent discrimination felt everywhere. It need not be felt by those who realize that the present is a wrong and unnatural position. To show that no racial discrimination is involved in this demand one has only to state that Indians who occupy entrenched positions behind their British patrons will also be expected to come to the level of their brethren of the plains. The true formula therefore should be this. In order to remove the existing unnatural inequalities the privileges of the ruling class and those others who have shared them shall be reduced so as to reach a state of equality between all classes and communities.

On the Indian side it must be a point of honour with us to hold British lives and honour as sacred as our own. This does not, need not, mean the ruin of British trade or interest. Those who are resident can rely on their disciplined habits, trained intellect, great industry and powers of organization to carve out for themselves careers of distinction all the while serving the country of their adoption with the loyalty they have tendered to their own motherland.

British trade where it is not hurtful to India's interest can be placed, when we reach a state of honourable association, on a favoured basis. And an India free from exploitation from within and without must prosper with astonishing rapidity. With growing prosperity, her wants must grow. With her growing wants, must grow also her imports. If at that time Britain is a partner or ally, she may well become India's chief supplier.

That is a dream I should love to realize. I have been party to the settlement for the realization of that dream. I seek every Englishman's help to enable India to gain that end. My notion of *purna* swaraj is not isolated independence but healthy and dignified independence. My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, is not devised to harm any nation or individual. Legal maxims are not so legal as they are moral. I believe in the eternal truth of *sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*[1].

Young India, 26-3-1931

[1] "Use thy own property so as not to injure thy neighbour's."

398. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

KARACHI,
March 26, 1931

I failed in my efforts to bring about the commutation of the death sentences on Bhagat Singh and his friends, and that is why the young men vented their wrath against me.[2] I was quite prepared for it. Although they were incensed against me, they gave vent to their wrath in what I would call a most dignified manner. It was open to them to do physical injury but they refrained from doing so. It was open to them to insult me in many other ways, but they confined their resentment and insult to handing me black cloth flowers representing, I imagine, the ashes of the three patriots. These also they could have showered on me or thrown at me instead of which they gave me the option of receiving the flowers from their hands which I did gratefully. Of course, they shouted, "Down with Gandhism", "Go back Gandhi". This I consider to be a legitimate expression of their anger. Having been used to such an exhibition and that in a much worse and in more serious form, I was unruffled and took these insults as only a mild expression of their deep grief and consequent anger. I am only hoping that they will exercise the restraint that they did yesterday throughout the Congress session for they know I am trying to reach the same goal with them. Only I am following a method wholly different from theirs. I have not a shadow of a doubt that as time goes they will discover the error of their ways. Whatever may be true of other countries, in this country which is teeming with famished millions the cult of violence can have no meaning. In this country of self-suppression and timidity almost bordering on cowardice we cannot have too much bravery, too much self-sacrifice. One's head bends before Bhagat Singh's bravery and sacrifice. But I want the greater bravery, if I might say so without offending my young friends, of the meek, the gentle and the non-violent, the bravery that will mount the gallows without injuring, or harbouring any thought of injury to a single soul.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Gandhiji refers to the demonstration by members (wearing red shirts) of Naujawan Bharat Sabha, on his arrival at Malir station near Karachi; *vide* also p. 348.

Does the execution of Bhagat Singh and his friends alter your position in any way with regard to the settlement?

My own personal position remains absolutely the same, though the provocation has been of the most intense character. I must confess that the staying of these executions was no part of the truce, and so far as I am concerned, no provocation offered outside the terms will deflect me from the path I had mapped out when I agreed to the settlement.

Do you not think it impolitic to forgive a government which has been guilty of a thousand murders?

I do not know a single instance where forgiveness has been found so wanting as to be impolitic.

But no country has ever shown such forgiveness as India is showing to Britain?

That does not affect my reply. What is true of individuals is true of nations. One cannot forgive too much. The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

Young India, 2-4-1931

399. STATEMENT ON KANPUR RIOTS

KARACHI,
March 26, 1931

Gandhiji who was at the Working Committee meeting was informed of the state of affairs in Cawnpore by the representative of the Associated Press and he made the following statement:

The Working Committee which is sitting at the time of giving this message having read the report of the awful communal strife going on in Cawnpore has felt troubled and grieved over the events there. I cannot too strongly condemn this strife. A committee will certainly investigate the causes, but indications have been coming in from other sources also to show that the slightest thing disturbs the mental balance. I can only hope that the poison will not be allowed to stay and that people will remain calm and not allow the harmonious relations to be disturbed. I hope also that the local leaders in Cawnpore will put their heads together and quickly restore peace. Let it be remembered by those who are in a hurry to achieve India's freedom that every such strife makes progress towards the goal more and more difficult.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1931

CWMG XLIV

400. REPLY TO INDIAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATIONS, KARACHI

March 26, 1931

A deputation of Indian merchants of Karachi representing Buyers' and Shippers' Chambers and Indian Merchants' Association led by Mr. Jamshed Mehta waited on the Congress Working Committee this morning, in connection with the demand of British commercial interests for equality of trading rights with Indians. . . .

Gandhiji who replied on behalf of the Working Committee stated that the Congress needed no urging in that connection and would take all possible steps to get the clause about the equality of trading rights totally rescinded. The Congress, he added, felt even more strongly on the question than the merchants themselves and would certainly go further than the demand put forward by the deputationists in safeguarding Indian interests.

Gandhiji compared the demand for equality of the powerful British commercial community with Indians, as a demand on behalf of an elephant to be on equal plane with an ant. Gandhiji said he had dealt with the question in *Young India* in connection with a letter addressed by Mr. Walchand Hirachand regarding the interview a Bombay merchant had with him. Gandhiji said it however was not possible nor politic to exaggerate the power of Congress as was seen in the case of Bhagat Singh and his comrades whose execution the Congress has been helpless to prevent, despite their best efforts.

But on behalf of the Congress he wanted to assure the deputationists that whether it was Dominion Status, or anything else, any constitution which impaired in any way the right of the future Indian Parliament to discriminate against non-national, whenever necessary, as in the national, interest, was worthless and would not be acceptable to the Congress. Gandhiji added that the assurance was a pledge. On his part he urged the Indian mercantile community to play a greater part in national struggle than what they had hitherto done and suggested them to treat the poorer sections of the people, including labourers and untouchables, as their own kith and kin.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-3-1931

401. SPEECH AT KARACHI CONGRESS[1]

March 26, 1931

The first speech in the Congress pandal, or the inauguration address if I may so call it, was delivered by Gandhiji on the 26th, when a vast audience listened to him spellbound. The canopy of heaven, under which the Congress is meeting for the first time in its history, lent not only special charm and colour to the address, but also a rare inspiration, to which the great silence around him also contributed. This is how he began:

We are accustomed to think of heaven as the Kingdom of God. We imagine that He sends us His messages and commands from above and we thus establish communion with Him. Until now we had a screen between God and us. I am thankful that the Reception Committee has rent it asunder and put us into direct communion with God. Let us not now by allowing impurities to creep in create a fresh screen and let us commence our business with this communion as our valuable asset. We have chosen for our march towards freedom the ancient path of truth and non-violence, and we must let God's covenant that those who tread on the strait and narrow path shall never come to grief inspire us with faith and hope.

By the executions the Government have given the nation grave cause for provocation. It has shocked me too inasmuch as my negotiations and talks had made me entertain a distant hope that Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev might be saved. I am not surprised that young men are angry with me for not having been able to save them. But I have no reason to be angry with them. For one thing, this is not the first occasion of its kind in my life. It is the duty of him who claims to serve humanity not to be angry with those whom he is serving. As for myself non-violence being my creed, I cannot afford to be angry with anybody. But even if it is not his creed, it is the duty of a genuine servant not to be angry with his masters. Anger ought to be taboo with him. But if he cannot help being angry, he must abdicate his function as servant of humanity. I for one do not want to do so and therefore I said they had a right to be angry, not I. But I must tell them I had

[1] As reported by Mahadev Desai, under the title "Under the Canopy of Heaven"

been serving the peasants and workers long before the young men were born. I have lived amongst them, cast my lot with them. Ever since I took the pledge of service, I have dedicated my head to humanity. It is the easiest thing in the world to chop off my head, it does not take the slightest preparation or organization. And outside protection I have never sought. In fact it is futile to think of protecting me for I know that God Almighty is the only Protector. Having said this, let me declare that the demonstrations[1] of the young men yesterday far from making me angry delighted me, inasmuch as there was no discourtesy about them. They might have laid hands on me; instead, they formed my bodyguard and escorted me to my car. I must confess that when I saw them, I felt that my experiences in South Africa, where I was mobbed and assaulted, were going to be repeated.

But there was no cause for apprehension. The young men were simply shouting, "Gandhi go back", "Down with Gandhism". They had a right to do so inasmuch as they thought that I had not done everything in my power to save Bhagat Singh, or that being a believer in ahimsa, I had simply neglected Bhagat Singh and his comrades. But they had no intention to molest me or for the matter of that anyone else. They allowed everyone to pass, and then a young man handed to me flowers made of black cloth. They might have thrown them on me and insulted me, but they had no such intention. Flowers are given me everywhere, I am usually indifferent about them, even when they are received from dear sisters and sometimes even chide them for wasting the flowers on me. But these I seized and have treasured them. I shall also tell you what I want to do with them. If the young men come and tell me that they should not have been angry and that their suspicions about me were groundless and that therefore they want the flowers returned to them, I shall gladly give them back. But if they do not do so, they will be sent to the Ashram to be preserved as heirlooms.

Those young men wanted to proclaim to the world that however great the Mahatma may be, they were sure that he was doing harm to India. I think they had a right to expose me, if they felt that I was betraying the country. I want you to understand my attitude. I cannot behave otherwise with these young men inasmuch as I want to win them over by love. Having flung aside the sword, there is nothing except the cup of love which I can offer to those who oppose me. It is by offering that cup that I expect to

[1] On Gandhiji's arrival at Malir station

draw them close to me. I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man, and believing as I do in the theory of rebirth, I live in the hope that if not in this birth, in some other birth I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace.

I have dwelt at length on this little episode, in order that you may not think ill of the young men. Do not seek to protect me. The Most High is always there to protect us all. You may be sure that when my time is up, no one, not even the most renowned physician in the world, can stand between Him and me.

And now a message for the young men. If you want my service, do not disown me; come and understand everything from me. You must know that it is against my creed to punish even a murderer, a thief or a dacoit. There can be therefore no excuse for suspicion that I did not want to save Bhagat Singh. But I want you also to realize Bhagat Singh's error. If I had had an opportunity of speaking to Bhagat Singh and his comrades, I should have told them that the way they pursued was wrong and futile. I declare that we cannot win swaraj for our famishing millions, for our deaf and dumb, for our lame and crippled, by the way of the sword. With the Most High as witness I want to proclaim this truth that the way of violence cannot bring swaraj, it can only lead to disaster. I wish to tell these young men with all the authority with which a father can speak to his children that the way of violence can only lead to perdition. I shall explain to you why. Do you think that all the women and the children who covered themselves with glory during the last campaign would have done so if we had pursued the path of violence? Would they have been here today? Would our women known as the meekest on earth, would women like Gangabehn, who stood the lathi-blows until her white sari was drenched in blood, have done the unique service they did if we had violence in us? With God's name on their lips she and her sisters hurled defiance at their oppressors, without anger in their hearts. And our children—our *vanarasena* (monkey-army). How could you have had these innocent ones, who renounced their toys, their kites and their crackers, and joined as soldiers of swaraj —how could you have enlisted them in a violent struggle? We were able to enlist as soldiers millions of men, women and children because we were pledged to non-violence. I beseech the young men to have patience and self-control. Anger cannot take us forward. We need not consider the Englishmen as our enemies. I have used satyagraha against them but have never thought of them as enemies. I want to convert them and the only way is the way of love. Rowdy demonstrations cannot help us. Could

they call Bhagat Singh back to life? They can only retard the advent of swaraj. I agree that the Government has given sufficient cause for provocation, but I want the impatient youth in the name of God, in the name of our dear Motherland, to throw themselves heart and soul in the non-violent struggle. I ask them to trust my unbroken experience of forty years of the practice of non-violence.

But if they will not, they might kill me but they cannot kill Gandhism. If Truth can be killed Gandhism can be killed. If non-violence can be killed Gandhism can be killed. For what is Gandhism but winning swaraj by means of truth and non-violence? Will they refuse swaraj attained through truth and non-violence? I ask them therefore not to mar the wonderful work done by the workers of Sind. The workers have in the course of three weeks created this Congressnagar, so that swaraj for the peasant, the labourer, the scavenger—all of whom have worked cheek by jowl in creating this city of huts—the lame and the blind, the starving and the well-fed, the wretch and the poor, may soon be a living reality. I beseech you not to mar the beautiful work they have done.

This leads me to the events in Cawnpore which has been a scene of carnage. This is due largely to the violence we had harboured against one another. It is the handwriting on the wall. Though we have shown ourselves capable of limited non-violence, we have harboured violence in our hearts, we have been guilty of using coercion. The papers allege that Cawnpore Hindus went mad over Bhagat Singh's martyrdom and started with intimidating the Mussalmans who would not close their shops in Bhagat Singh's honour. You know the sequel. I am quite sure that if the spirit of Bhagat Singh is watching what is happening in Cawnpore today, he would feel deeply humiliated and ashamed. I say this for I have heard him described as a man of honour. And what havoc we have done! Women insulted! Children done to death! Let no Hindu comfort himself with the thought that they were Mussalman children; let no Mussalman feel happy in the knowledge that it is Hindu children who have been killed. I do not know their religion. Let it be recognized that both Hindus and Mussalmans had lost their senses. They were all children of the soil, children of our common Motherland.

I have felt deeply ashamed of these deeds of blood, and to whoever my voice may reach I wish to declare that such things may any day prove more than I can bear. How can we, with Hindus and Mussalmans slaughtering one another, continue to assert that we have been non-violent? How can I, a votary of

truth, hug the belief that we as a nation are non-violent if the mischief spreads ? If I did so, I would be untrue to myself and to my Maker. With carnage going on about me I cannot bear to live unconcerned. Let me declare, that as soon as I feel that life is unbearable, I should hope to have the courage to fast myself to death rather than witness these blood feuds. You know by this time that I cannot bear denial of pledges solemnly and voluntarily undertaken. I would sooner be dead than see merchants and others break their pledged word, than see those calling themselves Congressmen and swearing by the creed of the Congress break it in their hearts or openly. If I can witness this contradiction with equanimity, with what face can I stand before the world and my Maker ? He will tell me I have been living a life of falsehood, a life of sham and fraud. I may not deceive myself and the world. Every moment of my existence is dedicated to the winning of swaraj by means of truth and non-violence.

I know you will say that that sort of thing has been going on all these years, and I have done nothing to stop it. Penances with me are no mechanical acts. They are done in obedience to the inner voice. I am telling you what has been going on within me all these days. The crisis may never come, either because I am unnecessarily agitated, or because I have lost courage to face reality. I must be true to my Maker, and the moment I feel that life is insupportable for me, I hope not to be found wanting. What better reparation can I do than willing surrender of the body that has ceased to evoke response and may be a hindrance to the discovery of the true way?

As he was about to close, the question[1] mentioned above was asked him not by one who wanted to be cantankerous but by one who wanted everything to be known to the public. He replied:

Well, I was not on my defence, and so I did not bother you with the details of what I did to save Bhagat Singh and his comrades. I pleaded with the Viceroy as best I could. I brought all the persuasion at my command to bear on him. On the day fixed for the final interview with Bhagat Singh's relations I wrote a personal letter[2] to the Viceroy on the morning of 23rd. I poured my whole soul into it, but to no avail. I might have done one thing more, you say. I might have made the commutation a term of the settlement. It could not be so made. And to threaten withdrawal

[1] Given as sub-title in the source, which read: "What Did You Do to Save Bhagat Singh?"

[2] *Vide* pp. 333-4.

would be a breach of faith. The Working Committee had agreed with me in not making commutation a condition precedent to truce. I could therefore only mention it apart from the settlement. I had hoped for magnanimity. My hope was not to materialize. But that can be no ground for breaking the settlement.

And it was not I alone who did what was humanly possible. The revered friend Panditji and Dr. Sapru tried their best. But why should that failure worry us? Success is in God's hands. Our failure should spur us to greater effort. That effort lies in being true to ourselves, in Hindus and Mussalmans determining to live as brothers in heart unity, in merchants and others keeping their voluntary pledges, in workers eschewing violence in thought, word and deed. May God help us to mend our ways. May He help us to be strong enough to be true to ourselves and to Him.

Young India, 2-4-1931

402. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

KARACHI,
March 27, 1931

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. You should not expect a reply from me every time. You yourself, however, should write regularly. As for my programme, I intend to reach Delhi on the 4th. My health is fairly good. Everyone is all right. Radha keeps well on the whole. Keshu has come here.

PRABHAVATI FOR BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9293. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

403. INTERVIEW TO CONGRESS WORKERS

KARACHI,
March 27, 1931

On the question of Federation, Gandhiji, in the course of his conference with workers who interviewed him, is reported to have expressed his view that the Congress should not put express conditions because the Princes were shy and were likely to be frightened. He was not prepared to allow the Princes to break away by the Congress insisting on too many conditions precedent. But he was going to use his influence with the Princes, if necessity arises, to

make them recognize the need for satisfying the States people's claims to a reasonable extent.

Gandhiji continues to feel that he is not able yet to see light in respect of the communal settlement and appears to think that the Congress would be well advised not to say anything definitely about it.

Among the earliest interviewers today were Mr. Subhas Bose and Mr. Satyamurti, both of whom pressed for insisting on the release of all prisoners sentenced in connection with the civil disobedience movement, the former going further and urging release of all Bengal detenus.

Gandhiji is reported to have assured them that there was no need to make any express conditions in these matters, because he had always insisted upon these things in his conversations with the Viceroy and he was satisfied that, after some time, all prisoners would be released. Delay might be due to the administrative difficulties or even dilatory tactics on the part of local officialdom. If the Congress found, after a reasonable time, that all prisoners who came within the pact were not released, it would certainly be justified in breaking the pact.

The Hindu, 28-3-1931

404. SPEECH ON KANPUR RIOTS, SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, KARACHI[1]

March 27, 1931

Let us not try to apportion the blame. Let us forget the fact that we are Hindus and Mussalmans. Let us remember that we are Indians, and the shame of Cawnpore is the shame of India. As for the Hindus, however, newspapers say that it was likely that Hindus were more to blame. And what for was all this carnage? How could we go so mad? I am grieved to have to inform you that Sjt. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi is reported to be missing or killed. Who would not be grieved over the death of such a genuine and earnest selfless comrade? But there is another view of the case. Rather than that a number of insignificant poor Hindus be killed, is it not well that a leader like Ganesh Shankar should have been killed? Rather than the death of a number of hapless poor Mussalmans, would not the death of Dr. Ansari in the cause of peace or unity be more welcomed? For the knife in Dr. Ansari's body would act as the knife in the bodies of us all. It was therefore fortunate that Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, who was so eminently free from communal bias, who was an institution in

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

himself, and who was the foremost worker of the place, should have laid down his life in the cause of peace. Let his great example be an inspiration to us all, let it awaken us to our sense of duty. I ask you to give your anxious consideration to the matter and help in the solution of the vexed question. Let the shame of Cawnpore teach us a lesson so that we may feel that even the loss of 300 men and women was not too high a price to be paid for permanent peace.

Young India, 2-4-1931

405. DISCUSSION WITH RED SHIRTS OF NAUJAWAN BHARAT SABHA[1]

[*March 27, 1931*][2]

A few representatives of the Red Shirts waited in deputation on Gandhiji and he had a long heart-to-heart talk with them. They explained that it was never their intention to do any physical harm to him, that his life and his health were as dear to them as to anyone else, and that individual terrorism was not their creed. They were adamant in their quarrel with the truce which, they believed, can never lead them to their goal of Workers' and Peasants' Free Republic in India. Gandhiji said:

But my dear young men, go and see Bihar and you will find a workers' and peasants' republic working there. Where there was fear and slavery ten years ago, there is courage and bravery and resistance to wrong. If you want capital to be extinct or you want to abolish moneyed men or the capitalists, you will never succeed. What you must do is to demonstrate to the capitalists the power of labour and they will consent to be the trustees of those who toil for them. I do not want anything more for workers and peasants than enough to eat and house and clothe themselves and live in ordinary comfort as self-respecting human beings. After that condition of things is brought about the brainiest among them will certainly manage to acquire more wealth than the rest. But I have told you what I want. I want the rich to hold their riches in trust for the poor or to give them up for them. Do you know that I gave up all my property when I founded Tolstoy Farm? Ruskin's *Unto This Last* inspired me and I built my farm on those lines. You will now recognize that I am, so to say, a "foundation

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-3-1931

member'' of your peasants' and workers' republic. And what do you prize more, wealth or work? Supposing you were to be stranded in the desert of Sahara with cart-loads of money, how would it help you? But if you can work you may not have to go hungry. How then is wealth to be preferred to work? Go and see for yourselves the Labour Union of Ahmedabad at work and see how they are trying to establish a republic of their own.

Q. Punjab is goonda-raj, Mahatmaji. Where do you find the change of heart?

A. But I never said that there had been a change of heart on the part of the Government.

Q. Why then did you give such a certificate to Lord Irwin?

A. Just as I have given a certificate to you, young men! I have admired your self-restraint, though I disapprove of your action against me. In the same way I was struck with Lord Irwin's frankness, sincerity and friendliness and I paid a tribute to it. That was nothing unusual for me. There was no question of a change of heart. The settlement I had never regarded as an indication of change of heart, and so the executions did not alter the position. But I should certainly have given Government credit for some change of heart if they had commuted the sentences.

Young India, 2-4-1931

406. SPEECH ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT, SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, KARACHI[1]

[*March 28, 1931*][2]

Gandhiji spoke both in the Subjects Committee and the open Congress[3] on the resolution[4] on provisional settlement. Here is a report of the English speech in the Subjects Committee:

Though the resolution before you is very brief, I venture to suggest to you that it is very comprehensive and capable of passing the most rigorous test that a man who believes in complete independence can exact. The resolution makes it incumbent upon

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's report under the title, "Gandhiji on the Main Resolutions"

[2] From *The Hindu*, 29-3-1931

[3] *Vide* pp. 364-70.

[4] For the text of the resolution, *vide* pp. 363-4.

any delegation that may take part in the Conference deliberations to bear in mind the Congress goal, or as it is called the Congress objective of *purna* swaraj as stated in the Lahore resolution, and not in the Madras resolution which was a pious wish. *Purna* swaraj is not a pious wish today. *Purna* swaraj is the incessant yearning of the soul of the nation which is impatient to get it, and its impatience was demonstrated during the past twelve months. And so it is the immediate objective that the delegation has got to keep in view in agreeing to any single thing that may happen in the Conference. But that is not enough. Some idea or some inkling of *purna* swaraj or complete independence has also been given here as essential, and so it is incumbent upon your delegation to obtain control over the defence forces, etc.

But the trap—or sting as you would call it—is in the tail of the resolution: "Provided, however, the Congress delegation would be free to accept such adjustments as may be necessary in the interests of India." Now in this there is a trap and there is no trap. There is no trap if you will choose your delegation well and trust it. There is a trap because 'adjustments' is really synonymous with 'safeguards'. The principle of safeguards is accepted in the terms of the settlement, but the safeguards that might be accepted have to be in the interests of India, and they must be *demonstrably* necessary, not merely *absolutely* necessary as it has been suggested in one of the many amendments. *Demonstrably* for our purpose is a superior word to *absolutely*. I have given my meaning of the 'safeguards' very fully elsewhere[1] and I will not dilate upon it.

Having said this, I want to say something about another amendment that has been suggested, that whatever action the delegates may take should be subject to ratification by a special session of the Congress or by the All-India Congress Committee. I venture to suggest to you with all the force at my command, that this is not only unnecessary but unbecoming of a Congress that has lived progressively for the past 45 years and has acquired a prestige unrivalled by any other organization in India and a prestige now acquired by it throughout the world. Surely this Congress is not so poor as not to be able to produce representatives who can fully represent the Congress at any conference or any assembly. Therefore if you send your delegation, that delegation should have the same powers as if the whole Congress was being transported to the Conference. Without that matters such as those that confront us really cannot be adjusted. We will be one among many parties.

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Journalists", pp. 263-7.

Those who go to the Conference are expected to have full credentials and full authority to bind their principals. But if they go there and have to say, 'We have come here, we will discuss; but we cannot bind our principals, we shall have to refer to our principals', the procedure becomes interminable, cumbrous and wholly ineffective for the purpose in view. Hence it is absolutely necessary not to put any such proviso as has been suggested.

What is the position of the Congress, *inter se*? What is the position of the Congress with reference to the intermediate bodies, the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee? Although the committees are given a general power of attorney to act on behalf of the Congress, still the right of repudiation is a right of which the Congress can never divest itself. No organization or no principal can really divest himself of this right. The power of attorney to be given to your delegation is to act within the four corners of this resolution. So long as your delegation acts within the four corners of this power of attorney, it would be improper for you to repudiate them. If they go beyond this resolution, you have every right to repudiate them. That is one thing. But the more effective repudiation comes into play when they have turned traitors and have sold your cause, or when they have become so idiotic, so unintelligent as not to be able to see the many traps that might have been laid for them and thus fall into one of these traps. Even then they would have gone outside the four corners of their power of attorney. In that case, you have absolute right to repudiate all that they may have done, and that power is good against the whole world. The power of repudiation is absolute if your agents act outside the power that you give them. You may take it from me that this is the legal position, if I may so call it. Hence I suggest to you that it is not only superfluous, not only unnecessary, for you to attach the condition of ratification to this resolution, it is unbecoming of you to do so. It will really hamper the progress of the very thing you want them to do. Therefore I hope you will, without entering upon any further discussion, withdraw this particular amendment.

I would next suggest to you, if you will follow the warning I have uttered from this platform so often, that having brought into being your Working Committee, you should not thoughtlessly or hastily interfere with the build of the resolution that the Working Committee may place before you, because you should give the credit to the Working Committee for having examined all the pros and cons and all the objections that might possibly be raised against the several parts of the resolution. It will really be like inter-

fering with the creation of your own architects. But you can do one thing, and that is to exercise the precious right which you possess, viz., the right of total rejection of this resolution. Although the thing itself is a completed whole, and you may not therefore interfere with it in detail, still you have the right of totally rejecting it. I would therefore urge you, that if you really feel that the resolution does not satisfy you as a whole, you will marshal all your forces, intellect, and resourcefulness in a full-dress debate and reject the resolution. The choice before you is either to reject or accept the resolution as it stands, because it is a resolution framed by your trusted representatives after many and anxious hours of thought which you could never give to this resolution; for one thing, you have not the leisure for it, nor can such a large body of people give one mind to a resolution of this character. So far, therefore, as the body of this resolution is concerned, tear it to pieces if you like, examine it as mercilessly as you please, and then if you come to the conclusion that after all it is not in the interest of the nation, then destroy the resolution. But if you feel that the nation cannot lose but will gain by endorsing the settlement, you must say so boldly and act up to it. Endorsement means an honest endeavour to act up to it cent per cent. I do not want you to accept this resolution in a niggardly or half-hearted spirit, or because it is a Mahatma who is behind it, or because the Working Committee is behind it. You, as representatives of the nation, will not lose in dignity or in the estimation of the world, if you, after the fullest deliberation, come to the conclusion that it should be rejected, because this settlement is, in your opinion, not worth considering and that it is really a trap laid for the people. It will then be your bounden duty to reject it.

But do not for heaven's sake let the recent executions be an obsession in your way. We shall have provocations in our march towards the goal, in our march towards the Conference. Let no provocation deflect you from the right course. Let no provocation blind your judgment. Use your intellect in an absolutely unbiased manner. Examine the settlement on its own merits. Do not be carried away also by the fact that all the prisoners covered by the truce or the provisional settlement have not yet been discharged. Let not that worry you. It is up to the Working Committee to see that all those who are covered by the truce are discharged. If a single prisoner covered by the truce remains in prison, it must be a point of honour with the Working Committee to repudiate the truce. Therefore you must not be turned away from your course by any side issues. What you should concentrate upon

is this. What does the settlement amount to? What scope does the settlement give the Congress to assert its claim? What scope is there in this resolution for the delegation, even unconsciously, to go beyond the authority it confers on them? If you find it is not sufficiently comprehensive to tie down the hands of the delegation, no matter how clever it may be, you have every right summarily to reject the resolution.

I warn the English-speaking people that next year they would not call upon a single speaker to speak in English. I hope that by next year they will have learned sufficient Hindustani to be able to follow the proceedings and really be able to speak in Hindustani also. Day after day and year after year we ourselves have accustomed the people to consider Hindustani as the common language for inter-provincial intercourse. Now it is too late to retrace our steps and habituate vast audiences to English.[1]

I have expressed my views in this matter[2] in my statement to the Press immediately after the settlement. The princes are naturally touchy, and we should do nothing to touch them on the raw, if we can help it. We may only make it clear to them that a Federation of the people and princes will have meaning only when the princes will stoop to conquer, will stoop to the level of their people, just as we ask the Englishmen to descend from the heights of Simla to the plains. But we do not want to give them any notice of this. We will trust them to conform to the spirit of the times, and I am sure that if we succeed in getting everything else the princes will offer no difficulty.

Young India, 9-4-1931

407. BHAGAT SINGH

Brave Bhagat Singh and his two associates have been hanged. Many attempts were made to save their lives and even some hopes were entertained, but all was in vain.

Bhagat Singh did not wish to live. He refused to apologize; declined to file an appeal. If at all he would agree to live, he would do so for the sake of others; if at all he would agree to it, it would be in order that his death might not provoke anyone to

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from the *Report of the 45th Indian National Congress*, pp. 104-5. In the source, what follows was translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

[2] Regarding Federation; *vide* pp. 252-3.

indiscriminate murder. Bhagat Singh was not a devotee of non-violence, but he did not subscribe to the religion of violence; he was prepared to commit murder out of a sense of helplessness. His last letter was as follows: "I have been arrested while waging a war. For me there can be no gallows. Put me into the mouth of a cannon and blow me off." These heroes had conquered the fear of death. Let us bow to them a thousand times for their heroism.

But we should not imitate their act. I am not prepared to believe that the country has benefited by their action. I can see only the harm that has been done. We could have won swaraj long ago if that line of action had not been pursued and we could have waged a purely non-violent struggle. There may well be two opinions on this conjecture of mine. However, no one can deny the fact that if the practice of seeking justice through murders is established amongst us, we shall start murdering one another for what we believe to be justice. In a land of crores of destitutes and crippled persons, this will be a terrifying situation. These poor people are bound to become victims of our atrocities. It is desirable that everyone should consider the consequences of this. Further, we want a swaraj which is theirs and for them. By making a dharma of violence, we shall be reaping the fruit of our own actions.

Hence, though we praise the courage of these brave men, we should never countenance their activities.

By hanging these men, the Government has demonstrated its own brute nature, it has provided fresh proof of its arrogance resulting from its power by ignoring public opinion. From this hanging it may be concluded that it is not the intention of the Government to part with any real power to the people. The Government certainly had the right to hang these men. However, there are some rights which do credit to those who possess them only if they are enjoyed in name only. If a person exercises all his rights on all occasions, in the end they are destroyed. On this occasion, the Government would have brought credit to itself if it had not exercised its rights and this would have been highly useful in maintaining peace.

However, it is obvious that the Government has not to date developed such discretion. It has given a clear reason for the public to get enraged. If the latter shows anger, it will lose the game which it is about to win. Some officials may even hope that the public will give vent to its anger. Whether they do so or not, ours is a straightforward path. While negotiating the settlement, Bhagat Singh's hanging was weighing upon us. We had hoped

that the Government would be cautious enough to pardon Bhagat Singh and his associates to the extent of remitting the sentence of hanging. We should not break the pledge we have taken just because our hopes have not been fulfilled, but should bear this blow which has fallen upon us and honour our pledge. By doing so under even such trying circumstances, our strength to get what we desire will increase rather than decrease, while, if we break our pledge or violate the truce, we shall suffer loss of vigour, loss of strength and it will add to our present difficulties in reaching our objective. Hence our dharma is to swallow our anger, abide by the settlement and carry out our duty.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-3-1931

408. THE ANSARI DHARMASALA

I had had plenty of experience of Dr. Ansari's generosity, but during my recent trip to Delhi I had more of it at his house. He insisted that all the members of the Working Committee should put up with him. Besides these, there were other guests also. His large bungalow having proved incommodious, tents had to be put up in his compound. There must have been some hundred guests having their meals at his home every day. On the one hand, there was his large practice and the time which had to be devoted to it and, on the other, there was a stream of people from the native States coming and going and then again there was his hospitality to be offered to so many guests and the talks to be held in connection with the work of the Congress. Despite all this, I have never found Dr. Ansari overcome by worry, become impatient or lose his temper. An ordinary man would have got tired if he had to accommodate such a large number of guests. I never found any trace of fatigue in Dr. Ansari.

What must be the explanation for such good organization? It was Begum Ansari. One day I asked Dr. Ansari in the presence of Begum Ansari, "How is it that you can cope with so many persons having their meals and so on, with you?" He replied, "The credit for all this goes to the Begum Saheba. I make over to her whatever I earn. She is very well-versed in Urdu and maintains an account of every single pie spent. She orders whatever she wishes and spends whatever she likes. Hence I have never borne the worries of running a household." Hearing this, I bowed my head to Begum Ansari. It is not that there is only one such

woman among Hindus and Muslims, there must be countless numbers of them in every nook and corner. We do not know of them.

Readers will be happy to learn that there are two kitchens running in Dr. Ansari's home. Brahmin cooks prepare separate meals for those who are vegetarians.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-3-1931

409. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTUBHAI

March 29, 1931

CHHOTUBHAI
JAMBUSAR (BROACH DISTRICT)

YOUR WIRE. SEND FULL PARTICULARS SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS. TRY PREVENT RESALE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

410. TELEGRAM TO CHHOTELAL

March 29, 1931

CHHOTELALJI
SATYAGRAHASHRAM
WARDHA (C.P.)

YOUR LETTER. REPORT BALKRISHNA'S CONDITION. HERE TILL SECOND.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 16924

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411. RESOLUTION ON BHAGAT SINGH AND COMRADES[1]

March 29, 1931

This Congress, while dissociating itself from and disapproving of political violence in any shape or form, places on record its admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of the late Sardar Bhagat Singh and his comrades Syts. Sukhdev and Rajguru, and mourns with the bereaved families the loss of these lives. The Congress is of opinion that this triple execution is an act of wanton vengeance and is a deliberate flouting of the unanimous demand of the nation for commutation. This Congress is further of opinion that Government have lost the golden opportunity of promoting goodwill between the two nations, admittedly held to be essential at this juncture, and of winning over to the method of peace the party which, being driven to despair, resorts to political violence.

Report of the 45th Indian National Congress, p. 32

412. RESOLUTION ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT[2]

[*March 29, 1931*][3]

This Congress, having considered the Provisional Settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India, endorses it, and desires to make it clear that the Congress goal of *purna* swaraj (complete independence) remains intact. In the event of the way being otherwise open to the Congress to be represented at any conference with the representatives of the British Government, the Congress delegation will work for this goal and, in particular, so as to give the nation control over the army, external affairs, finance and fiscal and economic policy, and to have a scrutiny, by an impartial tribunal, of the financial transactions of the British Government in India and to examine and assess the obligations to be undertaken by India or England, and

[1] The resolution was drafted by Gandhiji.
[2] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji
[3] *Vide* "Letter to G. Cunningham", p. 391.

the right to either party to end the partnership at will; provided, however, that the Congress delegation will be free to accept such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interest of India.

The Congress appoints and authorizes Mahatma Gandhi to represent it at the Conference with the addition of such other delegates as the Working Committee may appoint to act under his leadership.[1]

From a photostat: C.W. 9345. Courtesy: India Office Library

413. SPEECH ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT, KARACHI CONGRESS

March 30, 1931

Our young brothers and sisters are unhappy about the settlement. I have nothing but love in my heart for them. I can understand their sorrow. They have every right to doubt the wisdom of this settlement. Their opposition does not irritate me. I am not even angry. We opposed the Round Table Conference; we were also saying that we would get nothing from this Conference. What has happened now to justify our hopes of gaining something by attending the Conference? There is no magic in me, nor is there any in the Congress that will change the attitude of the Round Table Conference, and that we will attain everything. Therefore, please understand clearly that I make no promise that by attending the Round Table Conference we shall secure complete independence. My mind is full of misgivings and again and again I ask myself the question: "What shall we gain by attending this Conference?" Between what we demand today, and the demands that have been put forward at the Round Table Conference up to date, there is such an ocean of difference that the usefulness of going there may well be doubted.

But it is a sin not to do what circumstances have made it a duty to do. It is a principle of satyagraha that if there is an opportunity for talks with the party against whom satyagraha is being offered, then talks should be tried. We should strive to win over

[1] The Congress Working Committee resolution No. 3 of April 2 read: "With reference to the Congress resolution No. 5 [on Provisional Settlement] appointing the delegation to the Round Table Conference, the Working Committee is of opinion that Mahatma Gandhi should be the sole delegate on behalf of the Congress."

by love the person whom we consider our enemy. To conquer him in this manner should be the satyagrahi's resolve. If he does not possess this attribute but harbours enmity, jealousy and hatred in his heart, then he cannot be called a satyagrahi but a *duragrahi*. In the oft-repeated goal of the Congress there is no place for wilfulness. There is only place for truth and non-violence. Therefore, if we admit that there can be no compromise with those with whom we have tried the method of satyagraha, then that will be a great mistake. This error must be dispelled. Truly, I myself am doubtful of the outcome. Still, when we have been invited, when we have been asked to say what we want, to state our position rather than fight, then what other duty can we have but to do that? This is what the Prime Minister has said. The Viceroy also has uttered similar words. When I was in prison, even then he sent word to say that I could meet him whenever I wished to do so. Then he delivered a speech; and after that we were released. On my release, I wrote him a letter and as a result we decided to meet. Our meetings and talks ended in the present settlement. There is nothing in the settlement for us to be ashamed of. I do not want to explain here why certain things are not in the settlement and why certain matters were left untouched. But I shall explain to you how it became the duty of the Working Committee to make this compromise. When the Government set free the Working Committee, it became the duty of the latter either to break the law by offering civil disobedience and go back to prison, or do something other than that. Had we not exercised our discretion in choosing this second course, the world would not have cheered us, it would have censured us.

This is one question. Another thing is that we have not ended this struggle because we had grown weary. I did not like what Swami Govindanand[1] said. He said, "We were prepared to continue the struggle for another year." I agree. I may even go further and add that we could have continued this fight not for one but for another twenty years to come. We are thirty crores in number out of which one crore would fight. And a satyagrahi fights on even when all have wearied and given up the struggle. So, it is not right to say that the Working Committee has accepted the settlement because we had become tired. He who suspends satyagraha because he is tired, deceives God, deceives the nation, deceives his country. But this settlement was not concluded in this manner.

[1] A Sind Congress leader, who along with Subhas Chandra Bose had opposed the Gandhi-Irwin Pact

It was concluded because it had to be. We cannot argue that we should continue to fight because we have the strength to fight. Even if we had continued the fight for another year more, in the end this very same question would have come up. Would you even then say, "No, we shall continue to fight"? That soldier who says, "I shall keep on fighting", has false pride, and is guilty in the eyes of God. Therefore, the settlement ought to have been concluded.

Then, another thing. We do not yet quite know whether we shall reach the stage of the Round Table Conference or not. Even if we do, there is no reason to assume that we shall bring back something from there. Even if we return empty-handed you have no right to abuse us, nor can you laugh at us. Because I do not promise that, if I go, I shall necessarily bring back something or other. This is certain however: we shall not return with slavery. We shall not bring anything that is not contained in this resolution. But if we do not bring anything, how does it follow that we should hand over the work of the Congress to others? Even today the work of the Congress is in your hands. It is you that made Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel your President today. If you choose you can remove him from office tomorrow. If you wish to change the Working Committee you can do so. Therefore please do not say that it is the Mahatma who is behind this resolution. The Working Committee is behind it; so you have to let go the Mahatma. It is far better that you do not vote for the resolution. It should not be that simply because some of us have done something we should be kept on. If we have proved ungrateful or if we have acted foolishly, then certainly remove us from office. And instead of removing us on our return from the Round Table Conference, you can do so now. We are your servants; we shall resign and get away. Even if there is the slightest self-respect in us, we shall resign, and you will not be blamed for this. The world will say we did the right thing.

But if you feel that because I am a Mahatma this cannot be done, then it is weakness on your part. If swaraj cannot be had without the Mahatma, then, believe me, you will never be able to rule yourselves. When I left for Dandi, I said that even if all the leaders were jailed the fight would not stop. Those outside would continue it. You have shown it in action. Not only all the leaders, but all the workers were jailed, yet our work did not stop. The women took it up and were in turn imprisoned; even then the work did not stop.

Was Kikibehn Lalwani, who was dictator of Karachi, fit to

be made dictator? The poor lady was suffering from phthisis. But she plunged into the battle, became dictator, and entered jail. The sick woman was cured, and she became a brave fighter. So, you can see that the Mahatma is not indispensable. I may add further that to the extent I deserve the title Mahatma, it was given to me for my spirit of service. Once I give up serving others I shall cease to be Mahatma from that very moment. Therefore do not feel that because this resolution was drawn up by the Mahatma, or by the Working Committee, therefore it cannot be opposed. If after deep consideration you reject this resolution then I shall defend you before the world.

But if you accept that you must do exactly as you are told by those who have started the fight, then I tell you to be with me and put up a sincere fight. That is, do not worry if your spokesman returns empty-handed. If he brings back something so much the better; but if he does not bring anything we shall fight again. So many have gone to jail, so many have faced lathi-charges, and undergone hardships that we do not wish unnecessarily to repeat all this. But, having done our duty, if we do not get what we asked for, then our resolve to fight stands. And, when we are there those who remain here—supporters and opponents—must finish the work that remains.

I do not agree with Dr. Kitchlew that when we are away attending the Round Table Conference, the work that remains to be done should be done by the youth. Who else can picket like the women who picketed the foreign-cloth shops and the liquor shops? They shall abide by the rules of picketing that we have laid down and do the work of picketing. Men like Jamshed Mehta, who is known here by the name of 'Baghat', had to complain strongly—bitterly—against us. Let all read his article, and avoid the mistakes that he has pointed out and do picketing according to the rules laid down. Khadi work should be taken up in order to complete the boycott of foreign cloth. All this work is not only for the youth to do but for all.

I shall say a few words about the simple and candid speech of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan—a speech that so well becomes a Pathan. I was very glad to hear what he said. It is good that we invited him and gave ourselves that opportunity of hearing him. I have lived among the Pathans. I have had Pathans as my clients. I know the Pathans' nature. If the Pathans believe that they have benefited by the Congress—and I believe that they have—then I wish to assure them further that we shall do nothing that will curtail their freedom. We shall do our best to see that the

Frontier Province attains the same kind of independence as the other States will receive. I had intended to visit that province, but I regret that I shall not get the opportunity to do so. I was told that the Afghans on the other side of the Frontier Province also wished for my release. Why should the Afghans have wanted my freedom? I have worked for the Pathans of the Frontier, but I have done nothing for the Afghans. Yes, I shall certainly say that in our freedom lies theirs too. Today, however, beyond showing this much of fellowship, we are not able to render them any special assistance. On attaining freedom India has no designs to fight any other country. I can give this assurance to the Pathans and the Afghans. It is a great thing for the Pathans to join us in our fight, because we shall have a whole army of fighters.[1]

I will say one or two words with reference to what has been left out in the resolution before you. One thing that has been left out is the Federation. What is the meaning of the word 'Federation'? Is it a Federation between the princes or the States on the one hand and the provinces put together on the other? What are the conditions under which that Federation is to take place we do not know at all. But the princes have taken up one position, viz., that there shall be no intervention on the part of the Federal Government in their internal affairs. All I have suggested in connection with the Federation is that they should acknowledge that the fundamental rights of the people of the States should be the same as those of the citizens in what is called British India. If those rights are guaranteed under the federal constitution, then there should be naturally some federal institution to protect those rights, i.e., a federal supreme court or whatever you might like to call it, to which an appeal would lie. I hope the princes will of their own accord recognize these two things and also allow representation for the subjects of the States. To do this would possibly be somewhat of a derogation from the sovereignty which the princes enjoy. But if they would be part of the Federation in which the larger part is to be governed by a spirit of absolute democracy, it is up to them to part with some of their power and that of their own accord and free will. I am hoping that some such thing would happen and that is why you find no mention made of Federation in this resolution.

He also said a word about an important reservation in the resolution viz., "in the event of the way being otherwise open".

[1] What follows is extracted from *Young India*, 9-4-1931. It appeared under the title, "Gandhiji on the Main Resolutions".

Supposing that we do not arrive at any settlement whatever over this delicate question of Hindu-Muslim unity, what is to be the position of the Congress? So far as I can see at the present moment, it will be useless for the Congress delegation to take part in the Conference if we cannot possibly arrive at a proper communal solution. But I am not able just now to give you my final decision or final opinion. I do not know. Many things may happen, which may make it necessary or highly desirable that the delegation should take part in the Conference. But that is for the future really to decide.

Towards the conclusion, he addressed the following warning both to those who would reject it or accept it and gave a solemn promise of loyalty.

If the Congress rejects the settlement summarily, nothing can possibly be said against the Congress. The Congress is a paramount authority. The Working Committee is its creature. The action taken by the Working Committee, or taken by myself, may not commend itself to you. There should be, therefore, no question of toleration or patronage. It is open to every one of you to reject the resolution and to repudiate the settlement if you wish to. But if you endorse the settlement, then it is also your duty actively to support it, carry out all its items faithfully and honourably and do the various things which are set out before you in the resolution, so that you daily increase the power of the Congress and make it possible for the Congress delegation to vindicate the position of the Congress and possibly to bring the very thing for which you have suffered for the last twelve months.

One thing more. If this delegation goes as far as the Conference, it does not mean that the delegation will bring in its pocket *purna* swaraj. If it does not bring *purna* swaraj, it does not mean that it returns humiliated. Nothing of the kind. All that we expect to be able to do is to go and tell the British people and the British Minister what we want, and if we do not get what the Congress expects the delegation to accept within the terms of the resolution, we are bound to return empty-handed and receive your compliments, not curses. But you will be entitled to give us curses if we return having sold the interests of the country. That is what you have a perfect right to do. But it will not be proper for you to say, 'you were not able to fulfil your promises.' No promise has ever been made. No promise is being made now that if the deputation goes to the Conference, whether here or in England, or enters upon further negotiations, that deputation is going to bring *purna* swaraj. *Purna* swaraj will come

when the full authority of the Congress has been manifested and not a minute before. It will be the greatest achievement of the Congress to bring swaraj if it does. All that I promise faithfully to you on my own behalf and on behalf of any delegation that you might wish to send with me is that we shall not be disloyal to the Congress in any shape or form.

The appeal did not fall on deaf ears, practically all the amendments were withdrawn, and the resolution was passed without the change of a comma or colon.

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 6-4-1931

414. RESOLUTION ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND ECONOMIC CHANGES[1]

March 31, 1931

This Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what swaraj, as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress, therefore, declare that any constitution which may be agreed to on its behalf should provide, or enable the Swaraj Government to provide, for the following:

1. Fundamental rights of the people, including:
   (a) freedom of association and combination;
   (b) freedom of speech and of the Press;
   (c) freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion, subject to public order and morality;
   (d) protection of the culture, language and scripts of the minorities;
   (e) equal rights and obligations of all citizens, without any bar on account of sex;
   (f) no disability to attach to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste or creed or sex in regard to public employment, office of power or honour and in the exercise of any trade or calling;
   (g) equal rights to all citizens in regard to public roads, wells, schools and other places of public resort;

[1] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

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(h) right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf;

(i) no person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered or confiscated, save in accordance with law.

2. Religious neutrality on the part of the State.

3. Adult suffrage.

4. Free primary education.

5. A living wage for industrial workers, limited hours of labour, healthy conditions of work, protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.

6. Labour to be freed from serfdom or conditions bordering on serfdom.

7. Protection of women workers, and specially adequate provisions for leave during maternity period.

8. Prohibition against employment of children of school-going age in factories.

9. Rights of labour to form unions to protect their interests with suitable machinery for settlement of disputes by arbitration.

10. Substantial reduction in agricultural rent or revenue paid by the peasantry, and in case of uneconomic holdings exemption from rent for such period as may be necessary, relief being given to small zamindars wherever necessary by reason of such reduction.

11. Imposition of a progressive income tax on agricultural incomes above a fixed minimum.

12. A graduated inheritance tax.

13. Military expenditure to be reduced by at least one half of the present scale.

14. Expenditure and salaries in civil departments to be largely reduced. No servant of the State, other than specially employed experts and the like, to be paid above a certain fixed figure which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500 per month.

15. Protection of indigenous cloth by exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country.

16. Total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs.

17. No duty on salt manufactured in India.

18. Control over exchange and currency policy so as to help Indian industries and bring relief to the masses.

19. Control by the State of key industries and ownership of mineral resources.

20. Control of usury—direct or indirect.

It shall be open to the A.I.C.C. to revise, amend or add to the foregoing so far as such revision, amendment or addition is not inconsistent with the policy and principles thereof.

A.I.C.C. File No. 199, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

415. SPEECH ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, KARACHI CONGRESS[1]

March 31, 1931

In moving the resolution[2] on fundamental rights in the open Congress Gandhiji, speaking in Hindi, said:

This resolution is meant for those who are no legislators, who are not interested in intricate questions of constitution, who will not take an active part in the administration of the country. It is meant to indicate to the poor, inarticulate Indian the broad features of swaraj or *Ramarajya*. Before my march to Dandi I had included some of these features in my eleven points. These have been made more comprehensive. They are now presented to you in a separate resolution. They were advisedly omitted from the main resolution because that would have made the mandate for the delegation burdensome. But by passing this resolution we make it clear to the world and to our own people what we propose to do as soon as we come into power. Let Government also take note of it. Let those who may have to deal with us at the Round Table Conference also take note of the fact that the Viceroy, under swaraj, should not get more than Rs. 500 per month. The position has been made as clear as possible, in order that we may not be accused of having sprung sudden surprises on those who have to deal with us. They are also meant to forewarn all concerned. Let them prepare themselves for the coming legislation by modelling their lives in the light of coming changes.

I shall take a few instances. Clause I(d) of the fundamental rights protects the culture, language and scripts of the minority. Now though I am sure that Islamic and Aryan cultures are not mutually exclusive and fundamentally different, I must recognize that Mussalmans look upon Islamic culture as distinctive from Aryan. Let us therefore cultivate tolerance. Let us try to learn the

[1] This appeared under the title "Gandhiji on the Main Resolutions" with a sub-heading "The Twenty Points".

[2] For the text of the resolution, *vide* the preceding item.

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Urdu language and Urdu script and understand the Mussalmans' insistence on it.

Then there is the abolition of all disabilities attaching to women, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, etc. The moment this is done many of the disabilities to which the women are subjected will cease. So far as the Congress is concerned, we have admitted no such disability. We have had Dr. Besant and Shrimati Sarojini Devi as our presidents and in the future free State it will be open to us to have women presidents.

Religious neutrality is another important provision. Swaraj will favour Hinduism no more than Islam, nor Islam more than Hinduism. But in order that we may have a State based on religious neutrality, let us from now adopt the principle in our daily affairs. Let not a Hindu merchant hesitate to have deserving Muslims as his employees, and let every Congressman make religious neutrality his creed in every walk of life.

Item number five deserves the immediate attention of all mill and factory owners who should anticipate humane legislation foreshadowed in the clause.

The last item relates to the control of usury. Islam strictly prohibits the charging of interest but there is no reason why usury should not be regarded as criminal in a Hindu. The Pathans have forgotten the Islamic injunction, have followed our bad example and are known to charge from 200 to 300 per cent interest. I wish I could persuade Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan to go to our parts to wean his co-religionists from usury. Let also our bankers and money-lenders betimes make drastic reductions in their rates of interest, lest drastic legislation should find them unprepared. The peasants are being crushed to extinction. So let the money-lenders adopt 8 per cent as the maximum rate to afford them some relief.

Let the zamindars and the Maharajas be assured that the Congress does not seek to destroy them, but is determined to destroy all wrong and injustice. Let them make an earnest endeavour to understand the grievances of their tenants and introduce adequate measures of relief before legislation overtakes them. It is open to them to join the Congress as Raja Saheb of Kalakankar and Chowdhary Raghuvirnarayan Sinha have done.

Let it be understood that this resolution by no means has any finality. It is open to the A.I.C.C. to revise, amend or add to the twenty points and so let no one oppose the resolution for mere difference on matters of detail. Those however who are opposed to the policy and principle must reject it, but they must bear in mind that

the poor man's swaraj is soon coming and let them not be found unprepared when it actually comes.[1]

Young India, 9-4-1931

416. TELEGRAM TO BALKRISHNA SHARMA[2]

KARACHI,
[*April 1, 1931*][3]

I HAVE BEEN TOO BUSY TO WIRE OR TO WRITE. THOUGH HEART BLEEDS I REFUSE TO SEND CONDOLENCES OVER A DEATH SO MAGNIFICENT AS GANESH SHANKAR'S. IT MAY NOT DO SO TODAY BUT HIS INNOCENT BLOOD IS BOUND SOME DAY TO CEMENT HINDUS AND MUSSALMANS. HIS FAMILY THEREFORE DESERVES NO CONDOLENCES BUT CONGRATULATIONS. MAY HIS EXAMPLE PROVE INFECTIOUS.[4]

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-4-1931

417. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

KARACHI,
April 1, 1931

In an hour's conversation with me early this morning, Mr. Gandhi indicated in some measure the manner in which he would put his case at the Round Table Conference, his attitude on the question of safeguards, his fears and hopes for the communal problem and last, but not least, his faith in the honesty of Great Britain's present policy towards India, however mistaken that policy may be.

He said that on the whole he was very well content with the week's work in Congress.

I asked Mr. Gandhi if he felt secure in the freedom of the mandate that Congress had given him for his work at the Round Table Conference. He replied:

[1] The resolution was passed.

[2] Editor, *Pratap*, Kanpur

[3] The telegram appeared as "wired by the correspondent on April 2, 1931". However, an identical telegram addressed to Harishankar Vidyarthi, brother of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, was published under this date in the "Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial Number" of the *Narmada*.

[4] *Vide* also pp. 353-4.

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The mandate is not an absolutely free mandate, for I am bound by the terms of the main resolution[1] passed by the Congress this week. I do not think you could say that those terms are exactly ambiguous, but rather that they are fairly comprehensive.

Yet they do allow me some latitude, for obviously there must be latitude in a discussion such as we shall have at the Conference. For instance, the words "such adjustments as may be demonstrably necessary in the interest of India" mean what they say, but they give us an opportunity to modify as well as to constrict our present ideas about safeguards and other things if we find that must be done for the sake of freedom.

We are prepared to surrender what can be surrendered with honour, but there can be no dishonourable surrender.

Q. What exactly do you mean by this new term 'equality of partnerships'? Does it mean a national status like Australia's within the British Commonwealth of Nations?

A. No, it does not mean that. Until a short time ago I thought that such a status would be suitable for India, but now I have come to see that certain things stand in the way.

You see, the nations in the British Commonwealth are essentially British or, as in the case of South Africa, are closely identified with British ideas and culture. Their people are racially British and their institutions are British. We cannot say that of India. We do not aspire to identify our culture with British and the West. We are content and passionately want to retain and develop our own culture and order of society. So there is no real analogy at all between, say, Australia's status and India's future status within the British Commonwealth.

There can, however, be a partnership between Britain and India which will mean a *bandobast*[2] between the two countries for assistance, one to the other, in many things and for reciprocal obligations.

You mean, a kind of semi-contractual alliance. Just as England has an alliance with France for certain purposes of war, so you want an alliance between Britain and India, only this alliance will cover several other things besides war and will be a more fruitful and, let us say, a happier partnership than an alliance merely for war?

Yes, yes, that's it exactly.

And you do not want any more Viceroys, any more Lord Irwins?

[1] *Vide* pp. 363-4.

[2] Arrangement

No, I do not want any more Lord Irwins, any more Viceroys.

But when you get to the Round Table Conference, will you keep your mind open to conviction that Dominion Status will be suitable to India? If you come to see there that membership of the British Commonwealth would be in India's honourable interests, would you accept Dominion Status?

I am open to conviction about that, but I cannot conceive of its possibility. If I were persuaded of what you say, then I should frankly confess it and I should do my utmost to bring Congress round to the same point of view.

Acceptance of Dominion Status is outside the mandate. There must therefore be previous reference to the All-India Congress Committee and may be even to the Congress. But there will not be any quarrel about words. If there has to be a quarrel, it will be about the substance.

And what about these safeguards, Mr. Gandhi? The Working Committee admits the necessity for certain safeguards. Is one of them the retention of British troops in India?

I myself do not believe that any Army, Indian or British, is necessary at all, but there the Working Committee disagrees with me. That being so, I am prepared to agree that for a transitional period the Indian Army will need some British officers, because you have never allowed our own officers to learn all that must be learned about modern warfare. Perhaps some British regiments would be necessary also, partly for the same reasons. But they must be subject to the control of the Indian Government.

But how and why do you expect that they will be willing to serve here under an alien Government?

Well, we have known of mercenary armies in Europe in the past and though the inspiration of patriotism has supplanted pure mercenarism, the soldier still asks for and receives monetary wages for his services. Why should he not be willing to lend his services on similar terms for the common good of humanity? But if your officers and men will not serve here under our own Government—well, we shall have to do without them.

Will you not admit that English troops are necessary in communal disturbances?

I do not. If our own troops are found wanting, the most that can happen is that we might have to put up with civil war for a time. But it is better that we should have communal strife and fight our own battles against it than that we should have to

appeal to another country to set our house in order with troops over which our people have no control.

Very possibly there will be some serious communal strife when we have got swaraj, but only for a little while. If you will not help us to stop it in the way I suggest, then it may perhaps end itself in the exhaustion or destruction of one community or the other. There may be jealousies and disputes between factions, interests (if you insist on the point), even whole provinces.

It is not consistent with the self-respect of a country or a race that it should give *carte blanche* to the power of another nation or another race or individual members of it to say, 'These people cannot manage their own affairs, so they gave us a free hand to do it for them.'

Whatever the differences between us here, we are all Indians and our land is India. But I am not so pessimistic as to think that the lesson will be learned too late.

And what other safeguards have you in mind? There is finance, for instance. You have slightly alarmed some people in India who cannot afford a depreciation of the rupee's purchasing power. There are other people, Indians who have sent much capital out of the country with the intention of bringing it back to their own great profit when, as they hope, self-governing India will have sunk the rupee's value to very little.

Yes, I know that is being done and it is very bad. It must be stopped. And I know that there are people in some parts of India who do not want the rupee ratio reduced. But, I do not see why the rupee should not return to its old value of 1s. 4d.

As to the financial safeguards to be discussed at the Round Table Conference, well, we should of course, be under an obligation to pay for whatever assistance we seek from you.

The British came here first simply for the sake of trade. Now they say that they have a trust. Their rule has been disastrous for India, but nevertheless I will agree that the man in the street is honest in his belief that he has a trust to fulfil for India. The mischief is due to ignorance—the ignorance of insularity.

I have said that I cannot conceive of my accepting Dominion Status when I go to the Round Table Conference. I should welcome a closer association in equal fellowship that can make an outstanding contribution to spiritual greatness in international and inter-racial affairs.

The Statesman, 2-4-1931

418. SPEECH PROPOSING WORKING COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C. MEETING, KARACHI

April 1, 1931

Mahatmaji, in consultation with the President and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, had prepared a list overnight, which he placed before the Committee and explained the inclusion of new names and the exclusion of other names to find accommodation. . . .

Mahatmaji walked into the A.I.C.C. meeting and moved, besides the office-bearers, the following for the new Working Committee: Gandhiji, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Messrs Rajendra Prasad, Sen Gupta, Aney, Nariman, Dr. Alam, Mrs. Naidu and Sardar Sardul Singh. He said that Messrs Rajagopalachari, Pattabhi, Satyapal and Shiva Prasad Gupta had to be left to find places for Dr. Alam, Mr. Nariman, Mrs. Naidu, and Mr. Aney. Speaking in Hindi, he referred to the convention established in the matter and desired that the A.I.C.C. should accept this Congress Cabinet for the current year.

Mr. Punniah Sastri (Andhra) questioned why Bombay was given eight seats while Andhra, Tamilnad, Karnatak, and Utkal went without any.

Gandhiji replied that in these matters they ought not to think provincially. They must consider the work ahead and see if the names he had suggested were not necessary. . . .

A number of members rose and proposed names which they considered were left out. . . .

Gandhiji then replied:

It is most unfortunate that my friends from the South are not able to follow Hindustani. Otherwise most of the remarks that Mr. Satyamurti had made just now would probably have not been made. I said that the South was deliberately omitted and I said also that it was an omission purposely made by me. I made that omission deliberately in order to find accommodation that I personally thought was necessary. When I made the omission I had hoped that if I coupled the omission with the information that the omission was not the joint act of the Working Committee but it was my own suggestion it would not be misunderstood. People of the South know that some of my staunchest co-workers are from the South. They also know that I owe all that I am today to the South. I became known to India because of my identification with the South in South Africa and that identification was through an

indentured Indian, by name Somasundram[1]. Probably the Indian world and much less the whole world would not have heard of Gandhi but for the accident of Somasundram being severely hurt and receiving my assistance. Since then my connection with the South not only with Hindus but with Mussalmans and Christians ripened. What more explanation do you want from me as to why then the South was omitted in my list of members to the Working Committee? Do you suppose that because I have omitted Dr. Pattabhi I shall not get any assistance from him? After all he was a party to the contract. The relations between members at meetings of the Working Committee are not at all of a strained character. Everything was discussed in the Working Committee. All persons affected were there except Mr. Satyapal. It was an accident that he was not there. Mr. Rajagopalachari was there and do you think I am capable of omitting his name purposely. Do you think I am not going to take from him such work as he is capable of? You are mistaken if you think that is going to happen. To my friends I would say that the name of Mr. Gopabandhu Choudhri was first put in because at Utkal is to be held the next Congress. But we found that we could not take out any one of the other names we had. Therefore it was I had to withdraw that name taking the responsibility on me. Mr. Venkatappayya's name had been suggested by somebody. I tell you I cannot do without him. But I know I can get his service whenever I want.

A MEMBER. Also Mr. Rajendra Prasad.

MAHATMAJI. He was deliberately omitted last year. You do not know him as well as I do. I know him. So I summarily rejected his name at Lahore. If you want to know why Rajendrababu is put in this time, it is because the Working Committee wants his assistance.

A MEMBER: Do you not want Mr. Rajagopalachari's assistance?

MAHATMAJI: Yes, I do. I want his assistance also. But he has been removed in order to make room for others. These are the names. The whole of India knows my connection with some of them. Therefore it was no question of North or South. I was not present when the debate on the deletion of the sentence in the General Secretaries' report took place. I have not read the report of it in the newspapers. I have no time to read newspapers. Whatever I must read, I read. Other things are given to me. I know one

[1] Obviously a slip for Balasundaram; *vide* Vol. II, p. 20 and Vol. XXXIX, pp. 126-7.

sentence was deleted from the report. I overheard a conversation between Mr. Rajagopalachari and Pandit Jawaharlal on the matter. Beyond that I do not know anything. This motion has absolutely no connection whatsoever with whatever reflection you think had been cast by the report on the South. It is wholly an independent thing, and it comes out of my guilelessness, simplicity of nature and my abundant trust in them. . . .

A VOICE. Was Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's name considered?

GANDHIJI. It is deliberately not there.

DR. SASTRI. What about Mr. Rajagopalachari?

THE PRESIDENT. I withdrew it on his behalf. I know Mr. Rajagopalachari more than you do.

DR. SASTRI. The future Congress work in the South requires that Mr. Rajagopalachari should be in the Working Committee.

GANDHIJI. An endeavour will be made by the Working Committee whenever it needs to invite people from the provinces not represented here. That is all right, I suppose.

The Hindu, 2-4-1931

419. SPEECH AT JAMIAT-UL-ULEMA CONFERENCE, KARACHI[1]

April 1, 1931

There are many gentlemen belonging to the Jamiat-ul-Ulema with whom I am acquainted. Many of them are persons who have made great sacrifices during satyagraha and have helped us in many ways. I am grateful to them for this. Everyone feels that at present the atmosphere in India has become noxious. Hindus and Muslims lost their sanity in Kanpur, Banaras and Mirzapur. I have heard that the Hindus started the riots in Kanpur. I admit that it was a grave error. Ever since the time of the non-co-operation movement, I have been shouting from the house-tops that if we wish to accomplish our task peacefully, we should try to reason with all people and make an impression upon their minds. If we carry out our task through the use of force, we shall be held guilty in the court of God. Even while picketing foreign cloth and liquor shops, the people overstepped the limits. It is possible that this may have had immediate good results, but

[1] At the Idgah Maidan

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we have seen, in Kanpur, how it is fraught with danger. When reports of the atrocities committed by Hindus reached me, my head bent low in shame, I was ashamed of myself. I should feel ashamed whenever either of the two communities commits atrocities, but those committed by the Hindus naturally put me to greater shame. It is a matter of regret that till today neither of the two communities—Hindus or Muslims—has regained its sanity. Nowadays we have established the practice of returning a blow for a word of abuse and a bullet for a blow. This is an uncivilized practice. I say that not even a blow should be returned for a blow. In this matter, I humbly beg the Ulema to assist me. Please use whatever influence you have with the Muslims.

In political matters also, we quarrel with one another. Here, too, I wish to take as much help from you as possible. If we do not succeed in this, it will be practically futile to attend the Round Table Conference. I do not desire that this Government should become an arbitrator between the two of us and give an award. I shall humbly tell the Jamiat-ul-Ulema that it can be of great help in this matter. As a Congressman and as a Hindu, I say that I wish to give the Muslims what they want. I do not wish to act like a Bania. I wish to leave everything to the honour of the Muslims. I would like you to put down whatever you want on a blank sheet of paper and I shall agree to it. Jawaharlal too had said the very same thing in prison. The Pathans of the Frontier Province carry rifles and swords, but in this war they did not make use of either, like brave men they received the bullets upon their chests, they bore in silence whatever suffering fell to their lot. Jawaharlal said: "I would put a pen into the hands of such people and ask them to write down what they wanted and I would affix my signature to it." It has become the duty of the Congress to settle matters now with minority communities in this way alone. Those who belong to the Congress cannot make any distinctions between Hindus and Muslims. From here we shall be proceeding to Delhi. We have received a telegram from Maulana Shaukat Ali asking us to send a delegation on behalf of the Congress to a conference of Muslims which is being held there. Sardar Patel has already sent in the names of the members of this delegation. That conference is being held on the 4th and the 5th, where every effort will be made [for a settlement]. A mountain of difficulties faces us, but if you too try, the problem will be solved within two or three days. I too shall do likewise. I am aware that the Muslims are greatly enraged by the incidents which took place in Kanpur and other places but, at this juncture, it is our duty to resolve this issue somehow.

The Congress has, by passing a long resolution, set its own standards, from which it can be seen that the swaraj which will be established will be for benefit of the poor. The Congress belongs to the poor, it belongs to the peasants.[1]

It is not right to say that the Congress is a Hindu organization. What is the Congress to do if Muslims would not care to go into it? The Congress is based on adult franchise, and any adult Hindu or Mussalman can join the Congress. No community is excluded. Ask the Muslim friends who are members of the Congress, and they will tell you that they have not come to grief by having joined the Congress. I ask you therefore not to suspect that the Congress is a Hindu organization. I ask every one of you to join the Congress and to take charge of it. But one cannot take charge of it by force. It can be done only by willing service. Ever since the Congress was started, those who have served it have had charge of it. And yet the Congress does not belong only to them, does not stand only for them, it belongs to and stands for all. It is the swaraj Government in embryo. Its prestige is ever so much superior to that of the British Government, and the Congress President is greater than the Viceroy. Only moneyed people and men in high places know the Viceroy. One needs a motor-car to reach the Viceregal House. But the poorest man knows the Congress President (at present Sardar Vallabhbhai) and can walk up to him. The Sardar has dedicated himself to the service of the country, and he who serves the poor is great in the eyes of God. If you want to be in power under swaraj, I invite you to assume the reins of the Congress now by joining it in large numbers. It is the most powerful organization in the country, join it. We will welcome you.

At this juncture, I am reminded of the simplicity and determination of Hazrat Umer. He could not permit for himself or for his wealthy associates any luxuries or adornments. He made those who wore muslin or velvet discard those garments and made them wear khadi. He made those who were fond of finely ground flour give it up. Will not the Muslims today make such sacrifice for the sake of the poor ?

The Spinners' Association, which is an organization under Congress, has to date spent Rs. 30 lakhs for this purpose. Who received this money? I would like to inform you that the larger portion of this amount has gone to poor Muslim women, as they

[1] The paragraph that follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Young India*, 16-4-1931.

form the majority among the spinners. The larger quantity of fine khadi is woven from yarn spun by sacred Muslim hands. Many of the weavers of khadi are Muslims. Is khadi made in this manner prohibited to you under a religious injunction, whereas cloth made in Manchester is something permissible? But forget the Muslims, for that matter. It is merely an accident that the major portion of that amount goes to the Muslims, but are not Hindu weavers your brothers? Cannot articles made by them be fit enough for your use? You refer to God as Rahim, you recite *kalamas*[1]. I am an insignificant individual, but I too have read the Koran Sharif. But there is not a single *kalama* in it which gives you the right to wear foreign cloth. Although thus the Koran permits you to do nothing else, only a handful of Muslims are wearing khadi. At the most, some wear mill-made cloth, but the majority wear only foreign cloth. If the Jamiat-ul-Ulema has any love for the poor, it is its duty to take up khadi work. I know of an old woman of sixty who earns her living by spinning yarn. How much must she be earning in this way? And yet she breaks into tears if no one buys her yarn. Whether a cowrie has any value for you or not, that poor woman values it. From the money she gets from yarn every week, she does not buy tobacco or cigarettes, but lentils, vegetables, ghee and milk for her child. I have merely cited an instance to you. Do you feel no compassion for thousands of such poor people? If you do feel no compassion towards them, I tell you that you cannot attain heaven even by performing the *namaz* five times. A Hindu, with great humility, wishes to tell this to you learned Ulema. Moreover, I would humbly tell you that you may as well not recite *namaz*, but fear God and fear no man. If I am mistaken in saying this, forgive me, but understand the feeling in my heart.

Now I wish to address a few words to the Muslim zamindars of Sind. I am of opinion that Sind should be made a separate province. However, nowadays I receive hundreds of telegrams and letters from the Hindus of Sind. Today too a deputation of Hindus met me. I replied to them in accordance with my understanding of the situation, but I also asked them to go and meet Muslims first as they came and met me. Now I ask you why are they afraid of meeting you? Why do you not go to them to see their privations? Why is it that the Hindus of Sind distrust you so much? They are afraid of you. Why are they afraid of you? Is it not your duty to rid them of their fear? If

[1] From Koran, embodying the central faith of a Muslim

they are afraid of you, is it not a matter of shame to you? With a great deal of humility, I appeal to you, the Ulema, to persuade the Muslims of Sind to win the confidence of the Hindus there. I wish that the Hindus and the Muslims would jointly send me telegrams that both are agreeable to having Sind made into a separate province. Sind does not belong to the Muslims only but to both the communities. It is in your hands to make it into the best province. There are fakir-devotees like Jamshed Mehta in Sind. The Sind Muslims are a wealthy people. There are intelligent, rich Amils residing in Sind. Sindhis have gone forth to all the corners of the world. By combining all your abilities, you can turn Sind into the most advanced province. If the Hindus stop sending me telegrams, the country will save money, I can spin more yarn and devote my time to more important work. If you can do this, your achievement will produce a good impression on other provinces. This is my humble request. It is my prayer to God that my words may touch your hearts and that He cleanse the hearts of all of us.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-4-1931

420. SPEECH AT PARSI RAJAKIYA MANDAL[1], *KARACHI*

[*April 1, 1931*][2]

I did not suspect that my Parsi friends were so timid, but Sjt. Sidhwa has disillusioned me. Let me therefore reassure you that the Parsi community's interests do not need to be safeguarded in any scheme of swaraj, inasmuch as the handful of men and women belonging to that adventurous and resourceful community have never found any difficulty in any corner of the globe wherever they may have chanced to go. There were for instance only a few Parsi families in Porbandar in the days of my childhood when my father was Prime Minister there. But those families had carved out a status for themselves in the State. Why? Was it because their interests had been specially safeguarded by the State? Parsi Rustomji of happy memory enjoyed a unique position in the public life of the Indian community in South Africa not

[1] An organization of Parsis, which owed its existence to Jamshed Mehta, R. K. Sidhwa and Barjorji Bharucha. The speech appeared in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" under sub-title "Parsi Rajakiya Sabha, Karachi".

[2] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

because he enjoyed any special privileges but because he had that resourcefulness and tact and public spirit with which Parsis are specially endowed.

And who am I to safeguard your interests under swaraj? Proportionately, perhaps, out of a population of a hundred thousand your community had more jail going satyagrahis and khadi wearers than any other community, or at any rate the Hindus. I have never met with a Parsi anywhere in the world content with the lot of an under-dog and wherever you have gone you have made your way in the world. What need have you for any special guarantees or safeguards? Supposing you were given proportional representation on the legislatures and on the Cabinet, how many of you would be elected? But by your qualities of head and heart your men hold the foremost positions everywhere. I would therefore ask you to cast off such fears. You are called fire-worshippers keeping the fires eternally blazing. I assure you that your sun is never going to set.[1]

But having praised you let me now criticize you a little. How can you talk of your habit of wearing silk saris? You may as well say that you have been habituated to slavery. Sidhwa told me that 50 persons among you wore khadi, but that will not satisfy me. All of you should take a pledge to boycott foreign cloth. I congratulate you on not permitting a person who consumes liquor to be a member of the Congress. There are many among you who talk of giving up liquor, but how can they give up toddy, that tasty drink? Your mouth waters when its name is mentioned. On a sad occasion, it is toddy; and on a happy occasion, it is toddy; if it is cold, it is toddy; and if it is hot, it is toddy; this is all wrong. For one merit it may have, it has many defects. Hence the rule you have made is a good one. In accordance with it, all of you should join the Congress and do prohibition propaganda among the Parsis. Despite many threats, Mithubehn fights against the keepers of liquor-booths. A self-sacrificing Parsi like Durbari Sadhu has taken up his abode in Karadi and is doing this very work as his profession and, as a result has gone to jail. Even in remembrance of these servants, give up those poisonous drinks that dry up your blood. There are few communities which make charities to equal yours. But remember, you will not be able to maintain your ascendancy if you keep up your habit of taking liquor. The author of the *Bhagavata* has said that the Yadavas perished because of drinking. Remember another thing, that

[1] What follows is from *Navajivan*, 12-4-1931.

under swaraj the Head of State will not draw a salary of over Rs. 500; hence give up comforts and pleasures, else it will be difficult for Parsis to participate in the swaraj government.

When I arrived here, the Sardar told me to rest and said that he would go and meet the Parsis. I replied that elsewhere I would ask him to deputize for me but here that would not do. Here I must place my statement of account before you, and ask for yours. Mine is of course an open book. On scrutiny, yours shows large debits against khadi and prohibition. Clear both of them and join the Congress in large numbers, so that you will always win victory, victory, victory.

Young India, 16-4-1931

421. AFTER THE CONGRESS

The Congress is finished. It was an object-lesson in quick organization. Without the willing co-operation of nearly three thousand volunteers, men, women and children, and the public, a city accommodating twenty thousand persons with all the conveniences could not have been brought into being in twenty-five days. A band of merchants undertook the kitchen work, ensuring efficiency, economy and good service. The women volunteers vied with the men in hard work often involving prolonged vigils. But the real credit belongs to the Lord Mayor of Karachi, the great Parsi humanitarian and philanthropist, Jamshed Mehta. There are seasoned Congress workers who strove to make the organization so perfect. These I need not mention. The chief architectural feature of the Congress was its vast pandal which had no canopy but that of the blue sky. It became thus possible to ensure freedom from suffocating air and to provide ample accommodation. It saved enormous expenses. Instead of building the dais and galleries they were obtained by excavation as at the time of the Ahmedabad Congress. Another feature was the great khadi exhibition which beat all the previous ones in scientific arrangement. Although it was not part of a big show, it attracted vast crowds and was thoroughly successful from the financial standpoint.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's address was perhaps the briefest of all presidential addresses. He was able to finish the proceedings in two days—not a bad record. A day saved means much saving of expense and more of the fagged out exertion of the over-worked volunteers.

The Congress has endorsed the provisional settlement and issued in the clearest possible terms its mandate to its delegation.

Much has yet to happen before the delegation can take part in any conference that may be held. The duty of Congressmen is now clear. They must faithfully observe the terms of the provisional settlement. They must clear the atmosphere of every trace of violence and therefore first examine and purify themselves. The nation must achieve the boycott of foreign cloth and see that the gospel of the wheel spreads through every village of India. Before this can be accomplished, we must develop much greater love of the famishing millions than we have. The drunkard and the drug addict must be induced, not forced to give up their vice. These things require greater organization, greater co-operation among ourselves and a living faith in non-violence in thought, word and deed. Whether it is taken up as a policy or a creed, mind and body must act together while the policy or the creed is in operation.

While the truce lasts we must not boycott British goods as such. Last but not least, one must achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. How this is to be done I know. The Hindus have to dare to trust them and let the Mussalmans and the Sikhs take what they want. This rids the nation of all communal taint. But of this hereafter.

Young India, 2-4-1931

422. LET US REPENT

But the hatred which was created and which has been shown in words and actions has been so intolerable that it must set one to think whether release of such mighty forces of hatred all round the country is advisable. From morning till late night one heard through talks, songs, through slogans and felt such mighty torrents of hatred that it was sickening to find such a degradation in large mass of people. I use the word 'degradation' with full responsibility. It appeared that speaking lies was a matter of full licence and liberty. To attack Government officers, police officers, men who disagreed, for something which was entirely untrue, for something which never happened, was a daily common event seen on the roads and everywhere. More than words can express the cruelties and the injustice inflicted on the traders of British goods especially, and some other foreign goods were wide, intolerable and unbearable. To request a man not to deal in one article and to request another not to purchase an article is one thing, but to *force* a man by all possible means, by abusing him, by obstructing him, by making his life miserable

in every way is another thing, and there, I must admit, non-violence has miserably failed. I am certain in my mind that the hatred created and the cruelties inflicted were far from non-violence and against all principles and teachings of Mahatmaji. It was a common practice to obstruct and inflict with all kinds of tactics to make persons' lives miserable whenever one disagreed with the general movement. In every province there were different types of activities and it appears that either one had to accept such dictation of somebody or one had to go through whatever was inflicted upon him by any small or large band of children, ladies or full grown-up men. According to them, to differ in any way was pro-British, pro-Government or unfaithfulness to the country, and today one can see clearly mental victims of these forces of hatred in several houses.

But the danger is still greater. The taste of the blood—breaking laws — has been so attractive that one finds today this blessed satyagraha on the lips of everyone. As soon as you differ anywhere, be it in a school, in a house, in a group, in a circle of friends, in business, in an office, you find immediately threat of satyagraha pointed out to you at every time. Between employer and employee, landlord and tenant, parents and children, teachers and pupils, brothers and friends, everywhere this pointed bayonet of satyagraha seems to be ready for use. To break laws and rules of society or of the State seems to be so easy and handy. If a college professor suggests discipline, if a municipal officer recommends extra tax, if children are requested not to make noise, if hawkers are told to remove obstructions on roads, if changes or transfers are being arranged, if anything is done which does not suit anybody else, there is this dagger of satyagraha pointed at you. Discrimination where to use and how to use seems to have been entirely lost in the whole nation, and this is a danger signal for any nation or country. It is exactly like an aeroplane, which is being used generally to fly from one country to another speedily and is also used for throwing bombs. It is exactly like matches, which give light, and are also used for burning a house. One can clearly see this danger signal in the satyagraha weapon also. Satyagraha can be used to advantage but it can also be misused to entire destruction. I feel that unless those who proclaim satyagraha as the best weapon to the wide world did feel their responsibility in this matter, they would soon find the tables turned not only against themselves but on the whole country. If I can humbly suggest, I feel that some of the rigidly trained leaders, free from hatred, should now do nothing else but pass some years of their lives in each province and each city and village to make people understand what real satyagraha or true non-violence means, how it can be brought into operation and when it ought to be brought into operation. I would humbly suggest a regular school of non-violence in every province, where high-minded souls who thoroughly

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> understand this subject scientifically and religiously ought to be teachers to the students of policies who in return should be kept as all-time workers to go round the country, give this message and teach what it is in reality. This can be the only safeguard for saving the country in my opinion.

Jamshed Mehta, the Lord Mayor of Karachi, is a patriot of the purest type. But for his identification with the Congress to the extent he was capable of and but for his having placed at the disposal of the Reception Committee all the resources of his Municipality, the wonderful Congress city would not have been brought into being in the incredibly short space of twenty-five days. His sympathy for the satyagrahis when the campaign was going on is well known. Any criticism from one like him must therefore arrest attention. The quotation given above is an extract from Sjt. Jamshed Mehta's article in a Karachi Anglo-Gujarati weekly called *Parsi Sansar* and *Lokasevak*. The criticism I have copied follows a glowing tribute paid by him to the satyagrahis who bore sufferings without retaliation. But we have no reason to be puffed up with pride over certificates of merit. In so far as we observed non-violence we only did our duty.

It is then the warning of this true friend of humanity and his country that we must treasure and profit by. What he has said of Karachi is likely to be true more or less of other places.

Non-violence to be a potent force must begin with the mind. Non-violence of the mere body without the co-operation of the mind is non-violence of the weak or the cowardly and has therefore no potency. It is, as Jamshedji says truly, a degrading performance. If we bear malice and hatred in our bosoms and pretend not to retaliate, it must recoil upon us and lead to our destruction. For abstention from mere bodily non-violence not to be injurious, it is at least necessary not to entertain hatred if we cannot generate active love. All the songs and speeches betokening hatred must be taboo.

It is equally true to say that indiscriminate resistance to authority must lead to lawlessness, unbridled licence and consequent self-destruction.

If Jamshedji's criticism was not more than balanced by his appreciation, that is to say, if the sum total of real non-violence had not overbalanced the unreal, India would not have gone for ward as it has done. But better even than the Karachi Lord Mayor's appreciation is the undoubted fact that the villagers have instinctively observed non-violence in a manner never before

thought of. It is their non-violence that has conduced to the growth of national consciousness.

The mysterious effect of non-violence is not to be measured by its visible effect. But we dare not rest content so long as the poison of hatred is allowed to permeate society. This struggle is a stupendous effort at conversion. We aim at nothing less than the conversion of the English. It can never be done by harbouring ill will and still pretending to follow non-violence. Let those therefore who want to follow the path of non-violence and yet harbour ill will retrace their steps and repent of the wrong they have done to themselves and the country.

Young India, 2-4-1931

423. *SPEECH TO SIND DESH SEVA MANDAL*[1], *KARACHI*

[*April 2, 1931*][2]

Institutions like yours ought to be governed by strict rules and restrictions. The question put to me is whether workers who join the institution should take something for their livelihood or not. There are some who consider it below their dignity to take something and prefer to work in an honorary capacity. Some others say that even the nation's servants must get a subsistence allowance or else we shall have to seek millionaires as servants. I must say that there is false pride in holding that one would serve without taking money; there is no shame in taking just a subsistence allowance; it is one's duty. Mr. Gokhale began with Rs. 40 and never took more than Rs. 75. He lived all his life on Rs. 75. He used to be a member of commissions, etc., and whatever he got by way of allowances, etc., he made over to the Servants of India Society. He used to consider it a part of his religion to take just enough for subsistence; how can we regard that as an error? It is desirable that even a millionaire's son should not rely on his millions but should donate his property to such an institution and then like other workers draw as much as is required for his livelihood.

The other point is whether such institutions ought to be bound by rules. A man without a pledge is like a ship without a rudder. I am not convinced by the argument that here one cannot manage

[1] Sind National Service League, an institution "whose object is to organize public activities through the agency of whole-time workers, either in the capacity of permanent members or temporary workers". The speech was made on its second anniversary.

[2] From Bombay Secret Abstracts

without a hundred rupees. The Sindhis may well believe that they cannot manage with less, but my experience tells me that one can manage without difficulty on a much smaller amount. The institutions of Lalaji and Gokhaleji are well known because of their names, but there are many other institutions which function in face of difficulties and restrictions and which have people who draw barely Rs. 25 to Rs. 30. Not more than Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 are ever drawn in Orissa. Hence we should lay down our requirements taking into consideration our country's condition.

Till today we worked in a wrong way—we did all our work in cities and formulated all our schemes keeping cities in view. We stayed away from village folk, hence they have so far regarded their privations as the result of divine wrath and could think of no other causes. Institutions of public service should be located among the people, be partners of their joys and sorrows and render service by spreading knowledge among them.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 12-4-1931

424. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI,
April 4, 1931

DEAR MR. CUNNINGHAM,

With reference to your letter of the 9th March, I am now in a position to inform you that in virtue of the Congress resolution, of which copy is herewith enclosed, I was appointed by the Working Committee sole delegate to represent the Congress at any Conference at which Congress delegation is considered desirable by the Government of India, the way being open at the time for the Congress to be represented. I shall be obliged if you will kindly place this letter before His Excellency the Viceroy.

Yours sincerely,

[Enclosure:]

1. Congress resolution No. 5 of March 29th—the Provisional Settlement. . . .[1]
2. Congress Working Committee resolution No. 3 of 2nd April. . . .[2]

From a photostat: C.W. 9345. Courtesy: India Office Library

[1] & [2] For the texts of the resolutions No. 5 and No. 3 which followed, *vide* pp. 363-4.

425. UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

A well-known merchant of Bombay writes:[1]

If there is any truth in this, the traders referred to should think over it. This much is certain:

1. The import of foreign cloth into India will certainly cease.
2. Permission will never be granted to sell the stock still lying with them.
3. This boycott will succeed eventually through khadi alone. Even if it can be achieved without khadi, it will not serve the cause of crores of people. The special value of this boycott lies in its being beneficial to the latter.
4. Although the boycott of foreign cloth is bound to have political consequences, it was not conceived with a view to these consequences. When it is complete, the economic condition of crores of poor people will immediately improve and an unemployed nation will be busy at work. For crores of people living in villages, this is swaraj. They cannot derive any greater benefit than this from swaraj.

The role of picketing will become clearer once this is understood. The above letter indicates that the majority of traders are not convinced even after a struggle of twelve months. They are eager at any cost to carry on the trade in foreign cloth. Farmers have been ruined, but despite this, these traders are not prepared to carry on an innocuous business in place of their sinful one. As this is the prevailing situation, picketing should be taken up. But it should be pure, i.e., non-violent. The traders may laugh today, may abuse women, may sell their goods at places where there is no picketing; despite all this, women have got a unique opportunity. I have already shown elsewhere while discussing Shri Jamshed Mehta's article that our picketing was not free from blame.[2] Boycott which is forcibly imposed can never succeed. Hence when we have got this opportunity those women who have realized the necessity of boycott and, in addition, have also realized that picketing should be wholly peaceful, should try and evolve a technique of peaceful picketing. If they

[1] The letter is not translated here. It described how several traders had attempted to circumvent the boycott of foreign cloth.

[2] *Vide* pp. 387-90.

do not see results, they should not accept defeat. As excitement subsides, they should not be disappointed if some women who love excitement leave the ranks. They should carry on their work with steadfast faith and determination.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-4-1931

426. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 6, 1931

CHI. NARANDAS,

Mahtabbabu is a rich gentleman of Orissa, but he has given up that life now. He has come into close contact with Bhai Jivaram. He wants to spend some days in the Ashram and then open an Ashram of his own in Orissa. See that he is comfortable in the Ashram. Show him the Ashram rules, and give him every type of work to do. He is of a straightforward nature.

As you know, I have no time to write about other things. I hope to return there on the 10th. I will stay with Ambalalbhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./1; also C.W. 8155. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

427. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1931

Mr. Gandhi was shown the speech delivered by Mr. Zahur Ahmed at the All-India Muslim Conference today in which Mr. Zahur Ahmed had stated: "Mr. Gandhi had stated that there would be civil war in the country which would continue till one community was completely exhausted. I say why not test our mettle today and take decision on it?"

Mr. Gandhi told a Press representative:

There can be no more mischievous distortion of what I have said regarding internecine war than what you show me as having been said by Mr. Zahur Ahmed.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-4-1931

428. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON COMMUNAL PROBLEM

[*April 6, 1931*][1]

I see that much misrepresentation is going on with reference to my attitude on the Hindu-Muslim question. My own personal view is quite clear. It is that of full surrender to any unanimously expressed wish of the Mussalmans and the Sikhs. I would like the Hindus to see the beauty of the solution. It can come only out of consciousness of moral strength. It follows that before I can cultivate Hindu opinion on a particular formula, I must have that formula. That is not forthcoming. That which was given to the Congress deputation at the Muslim Parties' meeting on the 4th instant was not a unanimous minimum. For one thing I had the warning of the Nationalist Muslims not to accept anything that did not proceed on the principle of joint electorates based on adult suffrage. Some of the Nationalists are my oldest co-workers to whom Maulana Shaukat Ali gave certificates for honesty, bravery and true love of Islam and who have proved the truth of the Maulana's certificates. When they tell me that separate electorates are bad for Mussalmans, I must listen to them. They further claim that the Mussalman masses do not want separate electorates. Be that as it may, I cannot identify myself with any solution which is frankly based on communalism and yet has not what may be called unanimous support of the community concerned. A solution that is admittedly defective and anti-national must, to be acceptable, have the merit at least of almost unanimous support from those affected by it.

I am unable to understand the anger that is being shown against those who do not at once subscribe to the separate electorate idea. There is no doubt that it is possible for any large body of opinion to stop the country's march towards swaraj. Swaraj based on non-violence cannot be obtained if it is resisted by even a respectable minority. It is wrong to say or suggest that under swaraj there will be majority rule. In true swaraj there can only be the rule of justice. In spite of the great awakening that has taken place, I for one would be content to wait if the accredited leaders

[1] From *The Hindu*, 7-4-1931

of the Mussalmans or the Sikhs would oppose the attainment of a swaraj constitution. The fight for swaraj once begun can only end when the constitution which is its visible symbol is framed and passed. The next phase of the struggle in the absence of a communal solution may, therefore, assume a different form, the goal still remaining the same.

Members of the All-India Muslim Conference have made angry references to the occurrences at Cawnpore, Benares, Mirzapur, Agra and other places. But will anger solve the question? I find highly exaggerated statements being made. Some of them are without foundation. If the goal of these friends is freedom for Hindus, Mussalmans and all others for whom India is their home, they will not allow themselves to be deflected by such events from the path of justice. I join them in detesting the horrors perpetrated in these places. I am ashamed of them, whether perpetrated by Hindus or Mussalmans. Greater shame overtakes me when I find Hindus perpetrating butchery. But we have no data as yet for distributing blame. I do not believe in retaliation. For me as a Hindu, therefore, whether as aggressors or defenders, those who resorted to murders, arson and unnamable cruelties are undoubtedly to blame and call for the greatest condemnation. But I would implore everyone to avoid the language of anger and hatred for, without doing any good to anybody, it can only add fuel to the fire that has hardly yet died out.

A.I.C.C. File No. 332, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

429. SPEECH TO FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, DELHI[1]

April 7, 1931

I hope the English friends here will forgive me for addressing you in the national language. I recall on this occasion the War Conference in Delhi which was held in this very hall in 1918 and in which after some discussion with the Viceroy I consented to participate. But when I consented to do so I requested the Viceroy to permit me to address the Conference in Hindi or Hindustani.[2] I knew there was no need to ask for this permission, but courtesy required that I should do so, lest my speaking

[1] This appeared as a condensed translation under the caption, "Question of Safeguards". Among those present were Sir George Schuster, Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Madan Mohan Malaviya.

[2] For Gandhiji's speech, *vide* Vol. XIV, p. 375.

in Hindi should shock the Viceroy. In this very same hall today I propose to follow the same practice. And I would suggest to you, members of the Federation, that it is your duty to carry on your proceedings in the national language, looking to the fact that the members of the Federation are all Indians and that you are allowing yourselves to be influenced by the present national spirit. Whilst I was listening to the President's[1] address with attention, I wondered whether in speaking in a foreign language he would succeed in making on you and on me the impression that he desired. In no other country, dependent or independent, was such an anomaly to be met with. In South Africa, which is a thinly populated country, there has been a long struggle for precedence between English and Taal (a dialect of Dutch) with the result that the English colonists had to yield to the brave Dutch in recognizing Taal as the official language on the same footing as English.

Your President has dwelt at length on the insistence of the Englishmen that in any constitution which may be granted to India the rights of Englishmen, especially of the English commercial and mercantile firms in India, should be safeguarded. The Congress has considered this question carefully, and I should like to state its position. It has been said that Indian swaraj will be the rule of the majority community, i.e., the Hindus. There could not be a greater mistake than that. If it were to be true, I for one would refuse to call it swaraj and would fight it with all the strength at my command, for to me Hind Swaraj is the rule of all the people, is the rule of justice. Whether under that rule the ministers were Hindus or Mussalmans or Sikhs, and whether the legislatures were exclusively filled by the Hindus or Mussalmans or any other community, they would have to do even-handed justice. And just as no community in India need have any fear of swaraj being monopolized by any other, even so the English should have no fear. The question of safeguards should not arise at all. Swaraj would be real swaraj only when there would be no occasion for safeguarding any such rights.

How is it that the insistence on equal rights by Europeans comes to us with a shock of surprise? How is it that it does not strike us as natural and legitimate? The answer puts me in mind of an incident in South Africa. You know that I fought General Smuts in South Africa for a number of years. With reference to the question of race prejudice and colour prejudice there he once told me a story which impressed me very much. He said:

[1] Shri Ram

> When I was about the same time as you studying in England, I had no race prejudice or colour prejudice against your people. In fact if we had known each other we should have lived as friends or brothers. Why is it then that now we have become rivals, that we have conflicting interests? It is not colour prejudice or race prejudice, though some of our people do ignorantly talk in those terms, but there is one thing which I want you to recognize. It is this. I may have no racial legislation, but how will you solve the difficulty about the fundamental difference between our cultures? Let alone the question of superiority, there is no doubt but that your civilization is different from ours. Ours must not be overwhelmed by yours. That is why we have to go in for legislation which must in effect put disabilities on you.

I understood what he said and recognized that we could not have any other standard there. I also appreciated the fear of being swamped in these days of swift communications. If, therefore, we wanted to live in South Africa, I said to myself, we must adopt their standard of life, so long as it was not against morality.

Let us try to understand the genesis of this talk of equal rights in the light of what I have said. With all deference I would tell the Englishmen that at the back of their insistence is their insistence on living their standard and civilization. There is a wide gulf between our way of life and that of the Viceroy however good he may be. Our people, when they go abroad, adopt the manners and customs of those countries, but shed them as soon as they come back home, and if they retain them, they become strangers. It is a mercy that the Western way of life has not yet taken deep root in our country. But the fear at the back of the Indian's mind is lest he should be swamped by the onrush of Western civilization. In this problem I invite the help of all Englishmen who, if they choose to stay here, must live in conformity with our way of life and as the servants of our country. The same cause has been at the root of the clash between the Chinese and the Europeans and the Chinese and the Americans. I want our English friends to understand what I am saying. The whole trouble arises out of the Englishman's insistence on living according to his Western way of life and according to Western standards. I am quite aware that our civilization has its blemishes,—untouchability is an indelible stain on Hinduism and I have called it Satanic,—but I do not want to give Hinduism up, for the simple reason that I was born and bred in it. I would purge it of its blemishes. If then we contemplate examining so-called vested rights in the light of India's

interest, it is not because of racial prejudice but because of vital necessity. Their vested rights may not smother nascent indigenous enterprise.

Your President has paid a tribute to the Congress, and suggested, that the Congress should confer with commercial experts in economic matters. I welcome the suggestion. The Congress would always be glad of your advice and help. I may tell you that the Congress does not belong to any particular group of men; it belongs to all, but the protection of the poor peasantry, which forms the bulk of the population, must be its primary interest. The Congress must, therefore, truly represent the poor. But that does not mean that all other classes—the middle classes, the capitalist or zamindar—must go under. All that it aims at is that all other classes must subserve the interest of the poor. The Congress stands for the industrial prosperity and progress of India. The industrial classes are slowly coming within the Congress fold. During the past year they rendered it help for which we cannot be too grateful. In fact your invitation to me to address you is not due to my name, but because I am a humble servant of the Congress and representative of *Daridranarayana*. I cannot forget the services rendered by the commercial classes, but I want you to go a step further. I want you to make the Congress your own and we would willingly surrender the reins to you. The work can be better done by you. But if you decide to assume the reins, you can do so only on one condition. You should regard yourselves as trustees and servants of the poor. Your commerce must be regulated for the benefit of the toiling millions, or as Pandit Malaviya would put it, you must be satisfied with earning the 'pure cowrie', i.e., an honest penny. I do not for a moment believe that commercial prosperity is incompatible with strict honesty. I know business men who are absolutely honest and scrupulous in their dealings. It is thus easily open to you to take charge of the Congress. You know that there is no constitution more democratic than the Congress constitution, it has worked for ten years without a hitch. It is based practically on adult suffrage.

If we want your co-operation in our task, I want that of the Englishmen too. I want to remind them of the services rendered to the Congress in the past by distinguished Englishmen and Englishwomen like Hume, Yule, Wedderburn and Dr. Besant. In fact the Congress owes its birth to the genius of a large-hearted Englishman. And I want Englishmen now to join us in our work of serving the poor. It is entirely a matter of goodwill, a matter of the heart. Give your heart to the poor of India.

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In conclusion, I repeat the Congress seeks to represent all. Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations, inasmuch as we will exploit none just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through swaraj we would serve the whole world. In this task I invite your greater co-operation so that civil disobedience may not have to be resumed. With your material and intellectual co-operation heartily rendered, our demand for swaraj would be absolutely irresistible.

Young India, 16-4-1931

430. DISCUSSION WITH SIKHS, AMRITSAR[1]

[*April 8, 1931*][2]

GANDHIJI. But I am prepared to meet and discuss things with as many of you as you like. . . . Here you find me prisoner of my own people. . . . But tell me now what you want me to do. Have you anything new to tell me?

SIKHS. No.

Then why should you have said my presence was indispensable ?

S. We wanted you at the Sikh League.

Master Tara Singh summed up the Sikhs' attitude as he had done in his own speech: 'We are pledged to fight communalism tooth and nail. You suggest a national solution and we will submit to it. The total surrender that you suggest is not a national solution, we will not allow ourselves to be bullied by a community.'

But if you insist on the national point of view, the way you have adopted is hardly the way.

S. The only way to fight communalism is by counter-demands of the same nature.

[1] From "Weekly Letter"; Mahadev Desai reports: "At the place where Gandhiji was put up on an upper storey it was a bedlam let loose. From the moment of his arrival — or several hours before it—until late at night, the house was closely besieged by crowds which all hours of the day yelled and yelled until they compelled Gandhiji to go every now and then to the balcony to 'give his *darshan*'. It was most tiresome, but inevitable. Going out of this besieged house was out of the question and headache and temperature made conditions worse. The Sikh friends, who had now realized everything, were genuinely sorry for having called Gandhiji and themselves suggested that he should not go to the Sikh League."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 9-4-1931

You cannot fight communalism by communalism. But mine is the only solution, communal or national. The moment you realize that we do not want a third power to arbitrate for us, we will for the moment agree to surrender everything—not because it is the ideal solution or a just solution but because it is the only expedient. And why do you fear willing surrender to a community as such? Take my attitude on the National Flag question. The flag is my own personal creation. It has been before the country for ten years, a lot of sentiment has gathered round it, much sacrifice and suffering has been gone through to keep it flying. Do you think it is a pleasure to me to agree to its being altered? But I know that you are dissatisfied and if only to please your community I agreed to have a Committee about the flag. In the same way we might be called upon to do many things to satisfy a particular community.

But this did not seem to carry conviction.

Well, then I suggest that you should meet the nationalist Muslims, discuss the situation with them and arrive at a solution which satisfies them and you and place it before the country.

Young India, 23-4-1931

431. SPEECH AT AMRITSAR

April 8, 1931

In a joint reply[1] in Hindi Mahatmaji, though ill, in a clear and low voice said that the piece of cloth tied round his head showed that he was not keeping well. A few months ago he was a prisoner of the Government but today he was a prisoner of the people. Since he had arrived in the morning the crowd had so besieged the bungalow that he had not been able to go out once and, therefore, begged the forgiveness of the Municipality for not being able to receive their address at Town Hall. The address had referred to communal question. They were all faced with the question of this communal settlement. He was trying his best to find a solution that would satisfy all parties. It was not the work of one man or of the Mahatma alone. If they could all make up their minds that they would not be afraid of each other and would not quarrel with each other, if they really wanted to live together at peace with each other, the matter could be settled without much difficulty. It was for them to give the lead. What Amritsar would do today, the rest of Punjab would do tomorrow and subsequently the whole of India would do the

[1] To addresses, presented at the place where Gandhiji was staying, by Amritsar Municipal Committee and the City Congress Committee

same. If what they had said in their address fully proceeded from their hearts he hoped they would prove their sincerity by living up to their professions.

Replying to the address of the Congress Committee, Mahatmaji said the name of the Congress had become great in the country. The eyes of the whole world had been fixed towards the Congress. By the Gandhi-Irwin agreement they had not as yet attained swaraj. He did not know how far or near it was. But let there be no mistake. The Congress had declared *purna* swaraj, i.e., complete independence as its immediate goal, and they dared not rest till it was reached. Its early attainment depended on the nation's capacity to live up to the ideal of absolute non-violence. In proportion they had failed to do so, their progress towards it had been hindered. He did not want the nation to adopt the path of non-violence out of weakness. The non-violence which he wanted the nation to follow was really the weapon of the strong. The Congress was pledged to the creed of non-violence.

Concluding, Mahatmaji said he was feeling weak and therefore couldn't say more. He thanked both the Committees for their addresses. Whatever work they were doing in India, said Mahatmaji, if they all did with united strength, they would surely win swaraj. To him swaraj meant *insaf* raj or rule of justice.

Mahatma Gandhi then once more stood on the balcony and gave *darshan* to the crowd below. They again lustily cheered him.

The Tribune, 10-4-1931

432. OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS

There has been much heart-burning over the fact that the release of all political prisoners whether convicted of violence or otherwise should not have been made a condition of the settlement. This was clearly impossible in the sense that the demand would not have been just or wise. It could not be made as a condition for suspending civil disobedience. It could be made as a condition in a final settlement. Some people have thoughtlessly argued that I would not demand the release of prisoners convicted of violence because of my non-violence. The fact is that my non-violence to be worth anything would have made the demand obligatory on me, had it been otherwise just in my estimation. But what was not possible for me to do in connection with the settlement, I had no hesitation in recommending the Congress to do. The Congress resolution in the matter is published elsewhere. It is, I admit, sweeping in character and includes all possible prisoners or persons under restraint. It includes those who being out of India are prohibited from re-entering, and it in-

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cludes the Punjab Martial Law prisoners who have been rotting in the jails since 1915[1] and are all old men by this time. It includes also over 400 detenus of Bengal and Punjab against whom no crime has been proved. They were arbitrarily arrested and are as arbitrarily detained. It includes also the Meerut undertrial prisoners whose long-drawn-out trial is a perfect scandal. Sjt. Nariman has been appointed to make an exhaustive list of all these prisoners. It will be possible to take some step under the resolution as soon as the list is made. I hope, therefore, that all concerned will help Sjt. Nariman so as to enable him to prepare the list at the earliest possible time.

Of course the Government need not even wait for the list. I admit that from their standpoint all the prisoners will not stand on the same footing. Let them begin by releasing without being asked those at least whose case, I shall hope to show through these pages, is unanswerable. A strong Government never errs when it releases prisoners before the expiry of their sentences, for it ever possesses the power to rearrest them should they commit crimes. And political crime becomes rare when there is no political injustice.

Young India, 9-4-1931

433. NOTES

Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi

The death of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was one to be envied by us all. His blood is the cement that will ultimately bind the two communities. No pact will bind our hearts. But heroism such as Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi showed is bound in the end to melt the stoniest hearts, melt them into one. The poison has however gone so deep that the blood even of a man so great, so self-sacrificing and so utterly brave as Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi may today not be enough to wash us of it. Let this noble example stimulate us all to similar effort should the occasion arise again. I tender to the bereaved widow and her children not my condolences but my congratulations for having deserved Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. He is not dead. He lives today far more truly than when we saw him in the body and knew him not.

[1] When the Defence of India Act was passed as an "essential war measure"

HINDI OR HINDUSTANI

It is becoming increasingly difficult year after year to conduct the Congress proceedings or the A.I.C.C. proceedings in English. The majority in the A.I.C.C. do not follow English as well as they can Hindustani. And of those that do, the vast majority demand Hindi. At the open session Sardar Vallabhbhai had difficulty in obtaining a hearing for English speakers. For the next year the people from the South have promised to learn Hindi enough to be able to talk and follow the proceedings in Hindustani. If they will give three hours per day for three months most of them will have no difficulty in gaining a passable knowledge of the language. I hope the friends from the South and Bengal will make the necessary effort and save the nation's time. At any rate I propose to keep the members to their promise and not heed the demand for English if it is made in spite of the promise not to make it.

Young India, 9-4-1931

434. SOLE DELEGATE

The appointment by the Working Committee of me as the sole delegate to any conference to which the Congress delegation is desired by the Government was made after over two hours' exhaustive discussion. The idea behind it was that what was to be presented was not several points of view but only the Congress view. The Congress view was set forth in the mandate. What was not in the mandate was to be covered either by a letter of instructions from the Working Committee or instructions received from time to time. Either therefore the whole Working Committee should be appointed or only one member holding its power of attorney. The latter arrangement thus easily became the best, most efficacious and most economical in every sense of the word. For not only would money be saved but energy. What is more, Congress could not afford to keep away from the country without sufficient cause its best workers for any length of time. It is the implicit belief of Congressmen that in the end it will not be work at the Conference that will bring swaraj; it can only be work in India that can do it. Not the ability of the delegation will tell at the Conference but the power behind it. It was further thought that the Congress delegation was not designed to enter into or examine details but to discuss and examine principles and their application. And whether at the end of the Conference it was to be peace or war, every avail-

able hand was needed in the country. We want all our men and women in the country to avoid war. For the best way to ensure peace is to push up the constructive programme and to implement the conditions of the provisional settlement. Moreover the reader should know that the people directly affected by the settlement are not at all satisfied with the way in which the agents of the Government are carrying out its conditions. Constant vigilance on the spot is therefore necessary. From every point of view, therefore, the appointment of sole delegation was not only desirable but almost necessary.

But this appointment enhances my responsibility a thousandfold. My task, however, becomes light with the thought that I have but to carry out the instructions of my principals. For the rest I have to seek God's infallible guidance and 'be careful for nothing'. And then who knows that if and when the time comes, the way will be open for me to attend the Conference ?

Young India, 9-4-1931

435. LETTER TO H. W. EMERSON

ON WAY TO AHMEDABAD,
April 9, 1931

DEAR MR. EMERSON,

I thank you for your letter of 2nd instant, which shall receive immediate attention.

Though I am still feverish and travelling, I dare not delay writing to you on the matter mentioned in your letter of 31st March[1] and discussed[2] between us on 6th instant, when we met at your house. The only way I can account for the impression left on H. E. the Viceroy and later on you, is that we have been thinking at cross purposes. I could never surrender the primary function of the Congress, viz., to speak for and represent the peasantry. The Congress, as I told you, is predominantly a peasants' and workers' organization. The Congress could not possibly implement the terms of the settlement if the local authorities refused to recognize and treat with sympathy the advances of the Congress when speaking for the peasantry. The difficulties you mentioned about U.P., I am convinced, could all have been solved if the local authorities had sent for the Congress officials in their respective districts. Many

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 334.
[2] For the note on the interview, *vide* Appendix XIV.

of the Congress officials are well known to them. I suggest that any other attitude would be contrary to the spirit of the settlement, and must defeat the very purpose we both have in view. It would be wrong to accuse the Congress of breach of the settlement if the local authorities by ignoring local Congressmen render it impossible for them to implement it. After all the terms have to be carried out through the people and the Congressmen must fail if they could not interpret the people's wishes and woes to the authorities.

It is possible that the Congress officials may err as the Government officials may. These errors can be easily rectified. But the Congress may not, even on that account, be looked upon with suspicion or distrust whilst the settlement lasts.

After my investigation of the complaints received by you about Gujarat and after my interviews with Mr. Garrett[1] and then His Excellency the Governor of Bombay I shall be able to give the illustrations of the application of the principle I have endeavoured to set forth.

Lastly I hardly need to give you my assurance that I shall strain every nerve to see that the terms of the settlement are carried out by the Congress so far as it is humanly possible.

My movement is. . . .[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. W. EMERSON, ESQ.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also *Young India*, 20-8-1931

436. INTERVIEW TO "TEJ"

DELHI,
April 9, 1931

While Gandhiji was passing through Delhi on his way to Broach, he was interviewed by a representative of the *Tej* who drew Mahatmaji's attention to the news regarding the murder of the Midnapore Magistrate[3]. Gandhiji said:

I am deeply grieved. The young men who resort to such murders do no good to the country. I make an appeal to them. They

[1] J. H. Garrett, Commissioner, Northern Division
[2] The source is blank here.
[3] Peddie

must recognize that the country has gained immeasurably by the non-violent campaign. I contend that the progress would have been still greater, if there had been no violence done or preached. I still urge those who believe in the utility of political violence to stay their hands, whilst the Congress retains the creed of non-violence. If they are impatient, let them fix their own time-limit. But having done so, they must religiously abide by it and do propaganda work in that behalf.

The Tribune, 11-4-1931

437. LETTER TO NARSINHRAO B. DIVETIA

April 11, 1931

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I did not know that you had gone to live in another house. I got your gift. Many thanks for it. The *Bhajanavali* contains one more English hymn. Take up that, too, for translation, when you have free time.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Narasinhraoni Rojnishi, p. 513

438. SPEECH AT CONVOCATION, GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD[1]

April 11, 1931

My blessings were already bestowed on you, that is, on the *snatakas*[2], and the *gramdikshits*[3] when I read out the address. But my inward blessings are to be given now. I hope you will take pride in the certificates you have received and will not underrate yourselves. I also hope that you will adhere to the pledge that you have just taken. It is easy to repeat a vow that is either written or printed. To grasp it fully and make up one's mind to act upon it is difficult. I also expect that you will not utter a single thought-

[1] This appeared under the title "A Proud Record"; the first and the last paragraphs are translated from *Navajivan*, 3-5-1931.
[2] Graduates
[3] Village workers

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less or inadvertent word about the Vidyapith or other current national activities. I consider that to be the foundation of progress. The students must have this foundation; otherwise I have no doubt the superstructure will remain weak. Here a distinction has been made between the *snatakas* and the *gramdikshits* and that is right. If you want to preserve truth, you cannot do without distinguishing between the two. The curriculum for the *snatakas* is different and they have to put in more years. Because of that I hope the village *dikshits* will not think less of themselves than the *snatakas*. Theirs is no small task. I should not be surprised if they beat the latter by their record of work. I for one would say that there is more need for these *dikshits* than these *snatakas* for since the inception of the Vidyapith I have been repeating that through it we must reach the villages. The *snatakas'* ambition should also be to qualify themselves for service in the villages. We have not yet fully realized how the Vidyapith has served the nation.

I am delighted beyond measure to know of the part you have played in the great struggle. The Bihar Vidyapith and Kashi Vidyapith also distinguished themselves in a like manner. When the history of the fight comes to be written, the contribution of our Vidyapiths to the struggle will occupy a large space in it. Even the world will be proud of your glorious record. When in jail I read something about the students and teachers of the Vidyapith, I naturally drew a comparison between Government educational institutions and the national ones, and I felt that our programme for boycott of Government educational institutions had more than justified itself. When I say this, I do not lose sight of the fact that Government schools and colleges are still full of students. There is also the more painful fact that students are so eager to go to those institutions that they do not hesitate to sign the most abject apologies and to pay fines to get admission to them. I have known circulars by heads or directors of the educational department that those who may have directly or indirectly taken part in the struggle or who may have gone to jail may not be readmitted until after the previous sanction of these heads. What is one to say of those students and of those directors of education? I wonder if you know anything about the Government's attitude with regard to the Hindu University. It would have lost its grant, but for the fearlessness and the readiness for sacrifice of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji. But even if the grant had been forfeited, Malaviyaji would not have shed a single tear. He was determined that the University should rather go without the grant than that any teacher or student who served the country be penalized for his service.

Let the proud record of the Vidyapith fill the *snatakas* and *dikshits* with pride that they are the alumni of no less an institution than the Gujarat Vidyapith. Let them not feel that they had joined the institution through sheer helplessness. Let them not be depressed by the thought that they are a handful. Though a handful they are like the ocean, and though the students of Government institutions resemble by their numbers the ocean, they are as unreal as mirage. For the education that they receive and the life they are taught to live cannot give them the vital energy to win swaraj, whereas an institution like the Vidyapith can do so in a large measure as one can see from the last year's record. Let those who have helped to maintain the Vidyapith realize that their money has been spent to noble purpose and that it has come back to them with compound interest. Let them study the Registrar's report and see if any institution in India can boast of a prouder record. I invite their attention to Kakasaheb's appeal for funds and trust that the money needed will be paid up automatically.

But that led him to the question of economy in national expenditure and the duty of those who would have to run the swaraj Government in future.

I want you to study the Vidyapith accounts. You will see that strict economy has been maintained. I do not think anyone can beat me in my passion for guarding and expending public money like a miser. The reason is obvious. Public money belongs to the poor public of India than whom there is none poorer on earth. That is why I asked the Sardar to make drastic cuts in the next year's budget for Gujarat. I am hoping that the provisional settlement may lead on to permanent peace, and I shall leave no stone unturned to achieve it. But man is often powerless before Nature. I at any rate cannot strive with Nature, and Nature seems for the time being to be against us. And if God wills that there should be no peace, you may be sure that the next struggle will be fiercer than the last and will engulf us all. And it may have to be fought without any resources. Gujarat may be always ready to contribute funds, but even the resources of Gujarat are not inexhaustible. Let us therefore think twice before we expend a pie and curtail our expenditure in all directions. I have often wondered where we get all our cars from, and whether we need them really. I know I often use motor-car but let no one follow my bad example. Let the *snataka* and the *dikshit* of the Vidyapith make a point of going out to the villages on foot whenever possible. Let us be worthy of swaraj when it comes. Let us remember that we have 20 points now instead of 11 which contain the quintessence of swaraj, and let

me tell you that it was not I who fixed the maximum salary of the Swaraj Viceroy at Rs. 500 but Pandit Jawaharlal. He has given his thought to the problem and he has deliberately fixed that amount. And if that is to be the salary of the Viceroy, what is to be the remuneration of an ordinary worker? Let us keep that ideal in mind and cut our coat according to our cloth. The Government of today collects taxes by force and recovers revenue at the point of the bayonet. In swaraj we shall not be able to do so, we will have numerous Garhwalis to refuse to use arms against their brethren. Let us therefore order our affairs in the terms of the poor of the land. Let us not go to sleep, now that there is a provisional settlement. We have to be more wakeful, more cautious, more careful and let us be ready to account for every pie that we receive from the public.

It is my duty to ask you to make real sacrifices. May the *snatakas* and *gramdikshits* fare well and may God grant them the strength to observe the pledge they have taken.

Young India, 16-4-1931

439. THE NATIONAL WEEK

It may be said that I had forgotten the National Week this time, or you may say that ever since I came out of Yeravda Prison, it has been one unbroken National Week for me. Under pressure of continuous work which keeps coming up, I become oblivious of the day of the week, the date, whether according to the English calendar or the Indian one. I was not even aware of the single meal that I was to take on the 6th. Luckily, of late owing to travelling and lack of sleep, I eat practically only one meal a day, hence it may be said that I unknowingly observed the 6th.

I know that what happened to me also happened to others, as I am not aware of anyone in the camp having recalled this fact. If even a single person had thought of it, I would have known it. The truth of the matter is that the awakening of the past twelve months has made us forget such special days like the National Week. Prior to this, we pretended to be active during the National Week, thus making some amends for our year-long idleness. That idleness is no longer there and the impatience to win swaraj has kept many of us busy in the final bid for it.

This is as it should be. But it may be said that our effort is, to a small or large extent, blind. We would have reached our

destination long ago if our effort were equally matched by knowledge and discretion. Although there is enthusiasm, it tosses us hither and thither for want of a lighthouse in the form of discretion. If that were not so, the unfortunate incidents which took place in Kanpur, Benares, Agra, Mirzapur and other places would not have occurred. Both Hindus and Muslims lost their sanity. Both descended to a level lower than even that of beasts. These are no signs of eagerness on our part to win swaraj. Those Hindus who used to blame the Muslims started indulging in the very acts which they had condemned. Our peacefulness turned out to be merely verbal. Those who have learnt the lesson of peace know that a peaceful attitude has to be maintained not only towards the British, but also amongst ourselves. However, I hope to write more on this subject when I find time to do so.

What applies to peace also applies to khadi. I have regarded khadi as the very embodiment of peace, that is, non-violence. For, khadi implies pure love towards the poor, it implies unalloyed co-operation with them. Although those who give alms to the starving may be said to be compassionate, their co-operation with the poor is not untainted; they put the latter under an obligation and so regard them as inferior to themselves. Those who wear khadi made by the hallowed hands of the poor—whether it be fine or coarse, expensive or otherwise—become their comrades and always help them to become industrious as also preserve their self-respect. The propaganda for khadi becomes an important activity during the National Week.

And so too with untouchability: At the Jallianwala Bagh, the blood of all was shed together. There was no distinction there between the "touchables" and untouchables, between the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs. A further attempt is also made during the National Week to make people forget these differences. In other words, this Week is celebrated for the purpose of self-purification. This article should be in the hands of the reader on the 12th instant, so that two days of the Week would still remain. Every reader who has not undergone these three kinds of purification should wake up and make his contribution to the best of his ability.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

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440. VIDYAPITH'S APPEAL FOR FUNDS

I draw the attention of readers to the Vidyapith's annual appeal for funds. The contribution made by the national Vidyapiths in the last struggle cannot be regarded as negligible. If the part played by the professors and students—both men and women—is taken into account, it is not an exaggeration to say that the Vidyapiths have justified their existence and have given adequate return for the money spent on them. I have had personal experience of the services rendered by the professors—both men and women—of the Gujarat Vidyapith. It is my hope that the Rs. 40,000 appealed for will soon be forthcoming. It should not at all be necessary for the Principal or the professors to go from door to door. It would do credit to both the Vidyapith and the people and a double purpose would be served if the Vidyapith gives an annual account of its services and the public, without any effort, meet its demands for the coming year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

441. MY NOTES

Thoughtless Argument

The following extract[1] is from a letter written by a resident of Ahmedabad who has given his name and address.

There is a good deal of thoughtlessness in this argument. I do not harm the cause of the spinning-wheel when I stay at a mill-owner's place. Though I love the spinning-wheel, I bear no ill will towards mill-owners. I started propaganda for the spinning-wheel twelve years ago and my association with the mill-owners also dates back to the same time. This is not the first time that I have stayed with these people.

A satyagrahi bears no ill will towards anyone. He accomplishes his task through love. Even while staying with the mill-owners, I make them render some service to the cause of khadi. I take funds also from them for khadi. I have such friends among

[1] Not translated here

the mill-owners who, along with their families, habitually wear khadi. This is no outward show on their part, but it indicates their faith in khadi.

At present, the textile mills are doing no harm to khadi as the entire country has not become khadi-minded. The mill-owners would readily give up the textile mills if the entire country took to khadi and the spinning-wheel plied in every home. I believe they would not be against khadi even for a moment. I also believe that, if they are depraved enough to oppose it, their attempt to do so would prove futile. It is almost impossible to prevent the setting up of new textile mills so long as there are innumerable people who wear mill-made cloth. The mills should be prevented from competing with khadi. This has been done to some extent and attempts are being made to stop the mills' competition altogether. Hence the duty of the citizens of Ahmedabad and others is to carry on propaganda for khadi and to spread spinning far and wide. This task cannot be accomplished by bearing ill will towards the mill-owners or by severing my connection with them.

Foreign-cloth Dealers

It is a matter of sorrow that foreign-cloth dealers do not still seem to be able to resist temptation. They should realize that foreign cloth—whether English, Japanese or any other—will no more be consumed in India. The opposition to it is increasing and not decreasing and it will keep on gaining in tempo. The golden remedy for the hunger of crores of people lies hidden in giving up foreign cloth. In order to make a success of this renunciation, some have laid down their lives, thousands have suffered lathi-blows, thousands have courted imprisonment. Do not the foreign-cloth merchants regard this as an adequate sacrifice ? As compared to the loss suffered by the country, these people will find that they have no right to bemoan their own loss. The latter means their giving up a portion of the income which they have gained by carrying on an immoral trade for many years, and their being satisfied with perhaps a smaller income in future. Why do they not exchange their business for that of khadi ? The art, interest and purity in the khadi trade are not there in the trade in foreign cloth. As the former is something new, there is scope in it for the full use of one's intelligence and courage. Both self-interest and benevolence are subsumed in it. Hence if it is carried on with integrity, it will be regarded as an untainted form of business.

But the subject-matter of this article is not trade in khadi, but the abandonment of trade in foreign cloth. After giving up the

latter, merchants may trade in anything else they like. They should, however, shun foreign cloth looking upon it as sinful.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-4-1931

442. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT

[*April 12, 1931*][1]

DEAR MR. GARRETT,

Perhaps you have heard from the Government of India that I would seek an interview with you regarding the Gujarat affairs arising out of the settlement. If you are agreeable and can spare the time, I would like to wait on you today at any time convenient to you.

Yours sincerely,

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

443. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[Before *April 13, 1931*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

I get your love-letters regularly. I note that you will meet me at Bombay on 16th instant for certain. The Broach appointment is cancelled. I therefore leave Ahmedabad on 15th instant. Therefore it is likely that you will travel by the same train as I shall. I leave by the first mail.

This should reach you just the day you would be leaving Karachi. Romain Rolland cabled to Ambalalbhai inquiring about your and my health. Evidently the reporters had done the mischief. He had wired back saying both of us were doing well. I wonder if you had anything from your mother. In any case she must

[1] The meeting with the addressee requested by Gandhiji in the letter took place on this date; *vide* footnote on p. 417 as also the postscript to "Letter to J. H. Garrett", p. 419.

[2] From the reference to the addressee "leaving Karachi". She reached Ahmedabad on April 13. *Vide* pp. 419-20.

have had anxious days for nothing. Your system will be all the purer for the measles[1].

I did not tell you that my blood pressure was found to be lower than 160 which was better than the last and the nervous system was quite good. Dr. Ansari had expected deterioration in both. Of course, I am still weak and disinclined to work. But that is natural. The terrible strain of Karachi has not still worn out.

Prabhavati has gone to Patna, her father-in-law being bad. Krishnadas and Balcoba are dangerously ill. Krishnadas is in Brijkrishna's house. Balcoba has pleurisy and high fever. Krishnadas has pneumonia and is now having gas treatment.

Imam Saheb too is faring none too well. I have not yet seen him. I must go and see him. I have prohibited his being brought to me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5431. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9665

444. MESSAGE TO CONFERENCE OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH GRADUATES

AHMEDABAD,
April 13, 1931

I congratulate the graduates on the sacrifice they made in the fight but behind that congratulation is entertained a great hope. Graduates might be experiencing perhaps better than I do that the atmosphere is at present full of violence. Without entering into the reasons why it is not widely prevailing, I remind the graduates that they are the special representatives of non-violence and truth. If these two powers are dominant in their minds they might be able to rid the atmosphere of violence to a great extent.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-4-1931

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "I fell ill with chicken-pox in the Congress camp at Karachi and had to be removed to the fever hospital."

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445. LETTER TO J. H. GARRETT

AHMEDABAD,
April 13, 1931

DEAR MR. GARRETT,

Here is the promised statement about the new Mukhis or Patels whom we regard as undesirable with a summary of the evidence that can be led against them.

Babar Chatur Patel, Saijpur, Borsad Taluk:

He armed the outlaw Babar Deva with a rifle and was convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment but was later released by the Sessions Court. He has about 60 to 70 decrees against him. After his appointment, four houses belonging to the old Mukhi and two to other neighbours were burnt.

Lahri Mangabhai, Vasna, Borsad Taluk:

He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment three years ago. This Mukhi got Jhaver Gaba appointed as Rakha[1], although he knew that the latter was five times convicted. In his own street, three houses of Hijratis were burnt. He would not move to help put out the fire.

Mahomedkhan Nachhekhan, Porda, Borsad Taluk:

He has no stake in the village. He abducted a potter's wife and ultimately 'sold' her elsewhere. He similarly abducted a Dhed's wife. He is heavily in debt and there are warrants of arrest against him in the Gaekwad's territory.

Mirsab Majmudin, Davalpura, Borsad Taluk:

He was dismissed by the Baroda State for bribery. He does not belong to the village.

Jama Gaga, Palaj, Borsad Taluk:

He has been thrice convicted.

Jhaver Vaja, Ras, Borsad Taluk:

He has been imprisoned for two months for receiving stolen property. During his incumbency the crops of Ras were looted. His is a temporary appointment. He applied on the 11th instant for permanency.

[1] Watchman or guardian

Sandasar:

The Mukhi is a drunkard.

Anand and Boriavi:

These Mukhis had distress warrants against them, but these were stopped at the instance of the Collector.

Jehangirji Cawasji, Varad, Bardoli:

The affidavits in my possession show that he has a force of 100 Dublas whom he uses for terrorizing the people, he has been taking bribes, he has a canteen, he severely assaulted a teacher who was a temperance preacher, and was found guilty by a Board of Arbitrators before whom he publicly apologized.

Abumia, Buhari, Bardoli:

He was convicted for theft and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Umarmia, (1) Shaku, (2) Ambada, Jalalpur Taluk:

He was convicted for one and a half years.

Dayalji Bhaga, Dandesar, Tarsadi and Quabi, Jalalpur Taluk:

Drunkard.

Prema Gopal, Tighra, Jalalpur Taluk:

Drunkard.

Govan Rama Akoti, Bardoli:

Several statements. He was guilty of keeping people under duress and recovering without permission for his use private carts and bullocks. He has no stake in the village. Also that he refuses to pass receipt for revenue recovered.

This list is not exhaustive, nor are all the complaints against the respective parties summarized. I have given a sample list from the papers before me. There should be a full impartial enquiry into these cases and similar cases unless the general suggestion made by me is adopted. Apart from the point of view of peace and expediency, I have suggested that the appointments which are admittedly temporary and "until further orders" can in no sense be regarded as permanent in terms of the settlement. However, the consideration that generally applies to the appointment of a Mukhi, viz., that he should be of the people and more or less a representative enjoying among them a status and influence is lacking in every case. In any event there seems to have been much dilatoriness in the reappointment of Mukhis and Talatis. As to the latter, I also drew your attention to the fact that in Bardoli several Talatis have not been reappointed on grounds of retrenchment. As I told you yesterday, there are men acting for these old Talatis.

It is ominously strange that not one of the Talatis in Bardoli has been reinstated.[1]

Confiscated and Occupied Property

Property in Bardoli confiscated under the Criminal Law Amendment Act has been restored practically intact, but in Kaira District, there are serious allegations of misappropriations. A number of articles belonging to the Kaira District Congress Committee are missing (fountain-pens, watch-chain, currency notes worth Rs. 10/-, etc.). 250 maunds of fuel in possession of the Ras Chhawni seems to have been appropriated by the Police. In Tranja in Matar, 20 maunds of cotton and five maunds of tobacco in Devataj were attached. Both are undisposed of, but lying in the *chora*, instead of being restored to the rightful owners. There has been vexatious delay in restoring confiscated property. There can be no question of contumacy as the revenue is being steadily paid wherever possible. Confiscated property should therefore be returned automatically under the settlement whereas in some [cases] Mamlatdars have asked for applications from those who want their lands back. As the sowing season is fast approaching, it is essential that people should be put in possession of confiscated property as soon as possible.

Assessment

As to assessment I have suggested that there should be no coercive processes and no fines or payments on account of Rakhas should be demanded. I have suggested that in every case the Collectors should confer with our local workers and come to an understanding as to the assessment. A place like Ras where movables are taken away, locks of houses broken, houses burnt, crops destroyed can hardly be expected to pay anything. I brought to your notice a case in which for Rs. 10/- revenue, Rs. 50/- worth of grain was removed and Rs. 10/- had been kept for annas 10/-. Here is another case.

In Ober (Jambusar Taluka, Broach District), lands belonging to some of the satyagrahis were forfeited and third parties who offered to pay up the revenue dues in respect of them were put in possession of the land. They paid the revenue and took the whole crop. They think that the lands have been transferred to them for good and refuse to give up possession. On the other hand, the

[1] In his letter dated April 15, Garrett wrote: "Referring to our conversation of 12th, I am glad to inform you that 16 resigned Patels have already been reinstated in the Surat District."

Talati has passed no receipt to the original owner for dues recovered out of the crops thus made over to third parties and the original owners are asked to pay up the dues before they can be put in possession.

One Pragji Vasanji of Ugat (Jalalpur) had migrated during satyagraha and had not been able to reap his crop. He approached the Mamlatdar with an application for suspension. The latter admitted the application, but four days later issued orders for attachment of applicant's buffaloes which were returned only on his promising to pay half the assessment within a month.

I bring some of these instances to your notice to show how the spirit of the settlement is being broken probably unintentionally.

It is possible to bring counter complaints against the people. I repeat the assurance I gave you yesterday that it is Sardar Vallabhbhai's and my desire that the settlement should be observed fully by the people. Any case of breach on the part of the people brought to our notice shall receive prompt attention.

Pending Prosecutions

There are no less than 82 prosecutions in Borsad pending since long before the truce. There are several in Bardoli and Anand and Jalalpur. I append a detailed list[1]. Several cases have arisen, since the truce, as a result of the lack of information regarding confiscated lands. They are separately mentioned.

There is the case of one Ratanji Dayaram of Bajipura who with two others was prosecuted under Section 435 I.P.C. and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and fine. His companions have been released under the settlement but he is still in jail.

I gave you the name of Babalbhai, a Vidyapith student who is still in prison for disobeying the deportation order under the Foreigners' Act. His full name is Balkrishna Pranjivan Mehta. He has not only not been released, but has been asked, before he can be released on the expiry of his term, to sign an undertaking to the effect that he must inform the Dhrangadhra State of his movements whenever he moved out.

There is a similar case of Fakirbhai Dhanjibhai. He disobeyed the order before the truce.

Sold Lands

I refrain for the time being from saying anything about sold lands beyond repeating that the least that I am entitled to is the

[1] Not traceable

list of sold lands, their acreage, and the names of the buyers, the dates when they were sold and how.

Yours sincerely,

2 enclosures.[1]

[PS.]

I was thankful for the conversation of yesterday and hope that all the matters will be amicably and satisfactorily settled.[2]

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-C, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

446. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

April 14, 1931

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I was glad that you wrote to me. I have indeed received innumerable complaints against you. I had even decided to discuss them with you some time. I don't take any action on the basis of a complaint till I have discussed it with the person against whom it is made. I have followed this rule in your case too. But as you yourself have now written to me in the matter, I will avail myself of the earliest opportunity to discuss the complaints personally with you. I am arriving there[3] on the 16th.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7515. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

447. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 14, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter and your wire. I shall be in Bombay on the 16th, the 17th and the 18th. I will be staying at 7 Laburnum Road. On the 20th and the 21st, I shall be in the Ashram, when it is proposed to perform the betrothal of Senior Lakshmi. My health is

[1] Not given here; these were copies of two Notices dated April 14, 1931, issued by the Mamlatdar of Borsad to the defaulting Khatedars.

[2] Garrett replied on the same day: "I will take steps to inquire into the matters referred to by you."

[3] In Bombay; *vide* the following item.

fairly good. Perhaps I get a little temperature in the afternoon. Mirabehn arrived here yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3396

448. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

April 14, 1931

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter. You will find with this a letter from Shri Goradia. Read it and think over it.

I don't see any serious cause for a dispute.

I think that it should be possible to settle the matter peacefully with courtesy and politeness.

Do what is necessary. You who are on the spot can judge better than I. Satyagraha means the utmost humility.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9192

449. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 14, 1931

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

How much I extract from you! And what service! God will bless you; only He can reward you for this whole-hearted devotion.

My blessings to other workers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2385

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450. LETTER TO RALPH BORSODI[1]

[After *April 14, 1931*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not yet received your book *This Ugly Civilization.* When I do, I shall try to look into it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 17005

451. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
April 15, 1931

Mahatma Gandhi again visited his Ashram this morning. Asked by a representative of the Associated Press if his visits to the Ashram were a breach of the vow[2] taken by him last year, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I have been going to the Ashram recently every day to see Imam Saheb, who is very seriously ill and other patients. It is quite untrue to suggest that this is in any shape or form a breach of my vow about not going to the Ashram. The vow has reference to settling down in the Ashram and leading there the ordi-

[1] In reply to his letter dated April 14, which read: "Dear Sir: Since you made the revival of home-spinning and weaving a part of your work for India, I have followed with special interest the gallant struggle you have been making against some of the follies of industrialism. I am writing you because I believe that there are some ideas in my latest book—which is a criticism of this industrialized civilization of ours—which may be of interest and perhaps of help to you. For this reason I am sending you today through my publisher, Simon & Schuster, New York City, a copy of my book *This Ugly Civilization.* It would make me very happy to have you read it. In any event, I wish you would look over the several references made to you, which you will find paged in the index. I am very confident my analysis of the diseases from which industrialism suffers is unusual, and that the remedy I propose would utilize in a totally new way the very machines which have destroyed India's prosperity for the purpose of restoring her to economic independence and self-sufficiency. With cordial good wishes, I am, very truly yours," . . .

[2] Gandhiji, at the time of Dandi march, had taken a vow not to return to the Ashram before India attained swaraj. *Vide* Vol. XLIII, pp. 59-60 and Vol. XLVI, pp. 36-7.

nary settled Ashram life but it does not in any way preclude me from visiting the ashram for seeing the patients or in furtherance of the very thing for which the vow was taken.

Indeed, nothing in the vow prevents me from staying at the Ashram whenever I come to Ahmedabad but I deliberately refrain from doing so in order not to create any confusion in the minds of the large body of people who would not and have no time to understand the full significance of the vow. I consider it to be an important pledge having been taken by many of my companions. I wanted, therefore, to be extra cautious and hence did not stay in the Ashram even temporarily, but I should be defeating the very end of the vow if I heartlessly refuse to go there and see and console patients, or attend to some such matter.

Asked if he had permitted some of the volunteers with whom he had marched to Dandi last year, [and who were bound by the] pledge to stay at the Ashram, Gandhiji said:

If I found that it was necessary to keep any of my fellow-pilgrims for the furtherance of the cause, I should not hesitate to keep them at the Ashram without laying them open to the charge of a breach of the vow.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-4-1931

452. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI[1]

[*April 15, 1931*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Why do you worry? If you have no work to do in Kheda, you need not stay there. If it is necessary to let the Ashram workers remain at the places where they have been working, their expenses should be provided by the residents of those places. Or you should decide for yourself whether they should be kept there and their expenses met by the Ashram. You may treat your decision in this regard as mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 214

[1] In reply to his letter asking Gandhiji as to how to meet the expenses of the Ashram workers in Kheda District

[2] According to the source, this and the following letter were written about or after the Gandhi-Irwin settlement. *Vide* also the preceding item.

453. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[*April 15, 1931*]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter.

You should come and see me and discuss in detail what the duty of the Ashram workers is. A rule that applies to me does not necessarily apply to all of you. Since I suggest the rules, I ought to be strict in observing them, even outwardly, though this may not be necessary in the case of some rules. You will be able to think of numerous instances of both types of rules and understand the reasons why they ought to be or need not be observed literally.

If, when your work in Kheda is over, you have no other work before you, you also should go and live in the Ashram. You should so plan your work that, as soon as one task is completed, you have another waiting. It is certainly true that no one ought to return to the Ashram for the sake of an easy life. Does not our vow not to return to the Ashram before we have won complete swaraj mean the same thing? In other words, the Ashram is a place of ease and comfort and one goes to it for rest. But the volunteers who had joined the march are not free to enjoy such rest. But what should one do if it becomes necessary to return to the Ashram so that one may be able to work for *purna* swaraj? Or if life outside the Ashram is found easier? Be that as it may, I am not impatient, nor do I insist that my own view should be accepted. Think over all this and follow whatever rule you think proper for yourself and for others.

"The practice of yoga is to learn self-control."[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 213

[1] From a poem by Rajchandra

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PRIME MINISTER'S DECLARATION AT R.T.C.[1]

January 19, 1931

The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights.

In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period, it will be a primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and exercised as not to prejudice the advance of India through the new constitution to full responsibility for her own government.

His Majesty's Government, whilst making this declaration, is aware that some of the conditions which are essential to the working of such a constitution as is contemplated, have not been finally settled, but it believes that as the result of the work done here, they have been brought to a point which encourages the hope that further negotiations, after this declaration, will be successful.

His Majesty's Government has taken note of the fact that the deliberations of the Conference have proceeded on the basis, accepted by all parties, that the Central Government should be a Federation of all-India, embracing both the Indian States and British India in a bi-cameral legislature. The precise form and structure of the new Federal Government must be determined after further discussion with the Princes and representatives of British India. The range of subjects to be committed to it will also require further discussion, because the Federal Government will have authority only in such matters concerning the States as will be ceded by their Rulers in agreements made by them on entering into Federation. The connection of the States with the Federation will remain subject to the basic principle that in regard to all matters not ceded by them to the Federation their relations will be with the Crown acting through the agency of the Viceroy.

[1] *Vide* pp. 125 & 151.

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With a Legislature constituted on a federal basis, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to recognize the principle of the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature.

Under existing conditions the subjects of Defence and External Affairs will be reserved to the Governor-General, and arrangements will be made to place in his hands the powers necessary for the administration of those subjects. Moreover, as the Governor-General must, as a last resort, be able in an emergency to maintain the tranquillity of the State, and must similarly be responsible for the observance of the constitutional rights of minorities, he must be granted the necessary powers for these purposes.

As regards finance, the transfer of financial responsibility must necessarily be subject to such conditions as will ensure the fulfilment of the obligations incurred under the authority of the Secretary of State and the maintenance unimpaired of the financial stability and credit of India. The Report of the Federal Structure sub-Committee indicates some ways of dealing with this subject including a Reserve Bank, the service of loans, and Exchange policy, which in the view of His Majesty's Government will have to be provided for somehow in the new constitution. It is of vital interest to all parties in India to accept these provisions to maintain financial confidence. Subject to these provisions the Indian Government would have full financial responsibility for the methods of raising revenue and for the control of expenditure on non-reserved services.

This will mean that under existing conditions the Central Legislature and Executive will have some features of dualism which will have to be fitted into the constitutional structure.

The provision of reserved powers is necessary in the circumstances and some such reservation has indeed been incidental to the development of most free constitutions. But every care must be taken to prevent conditions arising which will necessitate their use. It is, for instance, undesirable that Ministers should trust to the special powers of the Governor-General as a means of avoiding responsibilities which are properly their own, thus defeating the development of responsible Government by bringing into use powers meant to lie in reserve and in the background. Let there be no mistake about that.

The Governor's Provinces will be constituted on a basis of full responsibility. Their Ministries will be taken from the Legislature and will be jointly responsible to it. The range of Provincial subjects will be so defined as to give them the greatest possible measure of self-government. The authority of the Federal Government will be limited to provisions required to secure its administration of Federal subjects, and so discharge its responsibility for subjects defined in the constitution as of all-India concern.

There will be reserved to the Governor only that minimum of special powers which is required in order to secure, in exceptional circumstances, the preservation of tranquillity, and to guarantee the maintenance of rights provided by Statute for the Public Services and minorities.

Finally, His Majesty's Government considers that the institution in the Provinces of responsible government requires both that the legislatures should be enlarged, and that they should be based on a more liberal franchise.

In framing the Constitution His Majesty's Government considers that it will be its duty to insert provisions guaranteeing to the various minorities, in addition to political representation, that differences of religion, race, sect or caste shall not themselves constitute civic disabilities.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government it is the duty of the communities to come to an agreement amongst themselves on the points raised by the Minorities sub-Committee but not settled there. During the continuing negotiations such an agreement ought to be reached and the Government will continue to render what good offices it can to help to secure that end, as it is anxious not only that no delay should take place in putting the new Constitution into operation, but that it should start with the goodwill and confidence of all the communities concerned.

The various sub-committees which have been studying the more important principles of a Constitution which would meet Indian conditions have surveyed a considerable part of the structure in detail and the still unsettled points have been advanced a good way to an agreement. His Majesty's Government, however, in view of the character of the Conference and of the limited time at its disposal in London, has deemed it advisable to suspend its work at this point, so that Indian opinion may be consulted upon the work done, and expedients considered for overcoming the difficulties which have been raised. His Majesty's Government will consider, without delay, a plan by which our co-operation may be continued so that the results of our completed work may be seen in a new Indian Constitution. If, in the mean time, there is a response to the Viceroy's appeal to those engaged at present in civil disobedience, and others wish to co-operate on the general lines of this declaration, steps will be taken to enlist their services.

I must convey to you all on behalf of the Government its hearty appreciation of the services you have rendered not only to India but to this country, by coming here and engaging in these personal negotiations. Personal contact is the best way of removing those unfortunate differences and misunderstandings which too many people on both sides have been engendering between us in recent years. A mutual understanding of intention and difficulty, gained under such conditions as have prevailed here, is by far the best way for discovering ways and means of settling differences and satisfying claims. His Majesty's Government will strive to secure such an amount of agreement as will enable the new Constitution to be passed through the British Parliament and to be put into operation with the active goodwill of the people of both countries.

India in 1930-31, pp. 652-4

APPENDIX II

VICEROY'S STATEMENT[1]

NEW DELHI,
January 26, 1931

The following statement has been issued by His Excellency the Governor-General this afternoon:

"In order to provide opportunity for the consideration of the statement made by the Prime Minister on the 19th January, my Government, in consultation with local Governments, have thought it right that the members of the Working Committee of the All-India Congress should enjoy full liberty of discussion between themselves and with those who have acted as members of the Committee since 1st January, 1930.

"In accordance with this decision and with this object, and in order that there may be no legal bar to any meeting they may wish to hold, the notification declaring the Committee to be an unlawful Association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act will be withdrawn by all local Governments and action will be taken for the release of Mr. Gandhi and others who are now members of the Committee, or who have acted as such, since 1st January 1930.

"My Government will impose no conditions on these releases, because we feel that the best hope of the restoration of peaceful conditions lies in discussions being conducted by those concerned under terms of unconditional liberty. Our action has been taken in pursuance of a sincere desire to assist the creation of such peaceful conditions as would enable the Government to implement the undertaking given by the Prime Minister that if civil quiet were proclaimed and assured, the Government would not be backward in response.

"I am content to trust those who will be affected by our decision to act in the same spirit as inspires it. And I am confident that they will recognize the importance of securing for those grave issues calm and dispassionate examination."

The Hindustan Times, 28-1-1931

[1] *Vide* p. 136.

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM GANGABEHN VAIDYA[1]

You know that there was to be a procession in honour of Lilavati and as a protest against the outrageous assault on her by the police. It was not possible for me to keep out of the procession. In fact I took it upon myself to organize the procession by placing the Ashram girls at the head of small batches of women coming from various parts of the town. Whilst I was leading my batch I was informed that Shakariben and Kalavatiben who were at the head of the Ras batch were being belaboured by the police with lathis. I immediately ran to the spot. I found that a girl was profusely bleeding. I went and cheered her up and asked the rest of the sisters to march forward reciting *Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram*. I was also asking the passers-by to keep on one side of the road so as not to obstruct the procession, when all of a sudden the police came down upon us with a shower of lathi-blows. I came in for a big share of them, receiving several on the head, the arms, the back, the face and the ears. Blood streamed out from a wound caused on my head but I did not budge an inch and asked the other sisters to sit down. Seeing that I would not be deterred the Foujdar came and arrested me and handed me over to the police. I was taken, bleeding, to the police chowki where I found Shakariben, Kalavati, Padma, Lakshmi and Madhu who had all had their share of the blows. My head was still bleeding and I sat down allowing the sun's rays to fall on the bleeding part. I was perfectly peaceful. Some time after the police came and asked every one of us if we had been injured. "Can't you see with your own eyes?" I told them. To which he replied: "You would like to be taken to the hospital?" "No", said I, "I suppose we can get well without medical aid." At this moment another police official arrived on the scene and sternly said to the man who was gloating over our agonies: "Don't you see that she is still bleeding? Take them quickly to the hospital. How could you allow them to remain here unattended so long?" Thereupon we were taken to the hospital where we found Maitri, Lalita, Lakshmi and other girls who had all been hammered and already admitted as in-patients. My wound was then dressed. It was, the doctor told me, three quarters of an inch to one inch. The others were treated, but were later turned out, evidently because they had chosen to arrest only Vasumati and me.

We are in the lock-up. My wound is being dressed daily and I am quite happy and peaceful. I have my prayers regularly, but have not yet been given

[1] *Vide* p. 136.

my *takli*. It was on this occasion that I understood somewhat the meaning of ahimsa. I was quite fearless when the blows were coming down upon me and I assure you that I had no hatred or anger in me. Even now I feel no resentment towards the police, and it is growing upon me that we shall achieve success only to the extent we cultivate the spirit of ahimsa. The other sisters bore the blows with exemplary bravery. In some cases the assaults were outrageous, many being kicked on their chests with the heels of the policemen's boots. Not one budged an inch, everyone stood unflinching at her post. Wherefrom came this sudden access of courage and strength, I wonder. God was with us I am sure. He gave us the strength.

I will not trouble you with more details. The girls will write themselves.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(14)-0-PTA

APPENDIX IV

VICEROY'S CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE[1]

Immediate, Private and Personal

I HAVE HAD TWO LONG TALKS WITH GANDHI. APART FROM THE VARIETY OF IMPORTANT POINTS RELATING TO ACTUAL TERMS ON WHICH CONGRESS WOULD CALL OFF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TO WHICH I WILL REFER LATER, THE MAIN MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE WE DISCUSSED WERE:

(A) THE SCOPE OF FUTURE CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS;

(B) THE INTENTION OF THE CONGRESS, IF THEY CAME INTO THE DISCUSSIONS, REGARDING POTENTIAL RESUMPTION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.

2. AS TO THE FIRST I TOLD HIM THAT THREE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF THE CONFERENCE WERE FEDERATION, SAFEGUARDS AND INDIAN RESPONSIBILITY, THAT THESE WERE FUNDAMENTAL, BUT DETAILED APPLICATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES WAS OPEN TO FURTHER DISCUSSION.

3. HE ASKED ABOUT THE RIGHT TO RAISE IN DISCUSSIONS THE QUESTION OF DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP BY WHICH HE PRESUMABLY MEANT THE RIGHT OF SECESSION FROM THE EMPIRE. I SAID THAT I PRESUMED HE COULD RAISE IT, IF HE SO DESIRED, BUT THAT IT WOULD BE VERY DAMAGING IF HE MADE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT. I GATHER HE DID NOT ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE POINT AND THIS IMPRESSION HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY SAPRU AND OTHERS.

4. HE ALSO MENTIONED QUESTION OF STATE SUBJECTS. I SAID I PRESUMED HE COULD RAISE THE MATTER IN DISCUSSION, BUT THAT HE WOULD FIND HIMSELF UP AGAINST THE PRINCES. HERE AGAIN, MY IMPRESSION IS THAT HE DOES NOT WISH TO PRESS THE MATTER.

5. I FEEL WE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO GET INTO A POSITION OF CON-

[1] *Vide* pp. 205 & 206.

FUSION AND MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION. I HAVE, I HOPE, KEPT IT CLEAR UP TO DATE; BUT I AM SURE IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO PERMIT CONGRESS TO SAY TO THE WORLD THAT EVERYTHING WAS OPEN FOR DISCUSSION, AND THAT THEY HAD MADE IT CLEAR AS A CONDITION OF PARTICIPATION THAT IF THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED THEY WOULD RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD PROBABLY BE BETTER NOT TO HAVE THEM IN AT ALL. MUCH DEPENDS UPON A CLEAR STATEMENT OF THE SCOPE OF DISCUSSION. IF THIS IS CONFUSED, WE MAY LATER GET A BIG LANDSLIDE IN ALL PARTIES BOTH HERE AND AT HOME AND SO LOSE ALL THE ADVANTAGE GAINED BY THE CONFERENCE. PRIME MINISTER IN HIS ANNOUNCEMENT PROMISED THAT STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN TO ENLIST SERVICES OF THOSE WHO WISH TO CO-OPERATE ON GENERAL LINES OF HIS DECLARATION, BUT I FEEL THAT IN DEALING WITH THE CONGRESS IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE CLEARER DEFINITION, AND I AM INCLINED TO A STATEMENT IN THE FOLLOWING SENSE. FEDERATION IS AN ESSENTIAL OF THE SCHEME, SO ALSO ARE SAFEGUARDS SECURING CROWN CONTROL OF DEFENCE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, THE FINANCIAL CREDIT OF INDIA AND THE DISCHARGE OF OBLIGATIONS. THE EXACT METHOD BY WHICH EFFECT MAY BE GIVEN TO PRINCIPLE OF FEDERATION AND TO SUCH SAFEGUARDS IS MATTER FOR DISCUSSION. IF CONGRESS CANNOT ACCEPT THIS POSITION THEN DISCUSSION WITH THEM WOULD BE UNPROFITABLE. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD CONSIDER AND BE PREPARED TO LET ME HAVE AS PRECISE A STATEMENT AS POSSIBLE SHOWING THE POSITION OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IN THESE MATTERS. I DISCUSSED THIS WITH SAPRU, SASTRI, JAYAKAR AND SAFI TODAY AND THEY AGREED TO ABOVE DEFINITION OF SCOPE OF DISCUSSIONS. THEY WERE AVERSE TO ANY MORE NARROW DEFINITION.

6. IN REGARD TO POTENTIAL RESUMPTION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT AFTER ITS ABANDONMENT, GANDHI TOLD ME THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE ASSURANCE THAT CONGRESS WOULD IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT, BUT THAT IF THEY CAME INTO THESE DISCUSSIONS THEY WOULD DO SO WITH THE GENUINE DESIRE TO MAKE THEM A SUCCESS AND WOULD NOT, IN ANY CASE, RESUME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE BEFORE THEIR CONCLUSION. I UNDERSTOOD HIS MEANING TO BE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO QUESTION OF RESUMPTION WHILE THE CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED IN INDIA, BUT THAT HE COULD NOT BIND HIMSELF FURTHER THAN THIS. SAPRU AND THE OTHERS REGARDED IT AS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE SHOULD BE DEFINITE UNDERSTANDING THAT PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE SHOULD PREVAIL DURING DISCUSSION IN INDIA, AND THEY CONSIDERED THAT IF THIS WAS NOT FORTHCOMING IT WAS USELESS FOR THE CONGRESS TO COME IN. I AGREE WITH THIS VIEW, BUT DOUBT WHETHER WE CAN TIE HIM DOWN MORE CLOSELY.

7. MATTERS RELATING TO GOVERNMENT ACTION, SUCH AS AMNESTY, SALT, ETC., WILL ONLY ARISE IF CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION IS SATISFACTORILY CLEARED UP. I ANTICIPATE CONSIDERABLE TROUBLE IN REGARD TO THEM, BUT WE SHALL OF COURSE CONSULT YOU BEFORE WE COME TO ANY CONCLUSION, IF WE GET SO FAR.

8. GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WAS QUITE FRIENDLY AND I HAVE LEARNT PRIVATELY THAT GANDHI IS PLEASED AND WANTS PEACE, BUT I AM

VERY APPREHENSIVE OF HIS MANOEUVRING YOU AND US INTO A POSITION WHERE CONGRESS COULD PLAUSIBLY REPRESENT THAT THEY HAD GOT BEHIND THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND HAD SECURED THE RIGHT TO REOPEN THE WHOLE SUBJECT. THE PROBLEM THEREFORE IS HOW TO SECURE OURSELVES AGAINST THIS, WITHOUT REFUSING TOO FULL A LATITUDE OF DISCUSSION WITHIN THE WIDEST LIMITS THAT CONFERENCE AGREEMENTS LEAVE POSSIBLE.

9. IF DISCUSSIONS ARE TO PROCEED FURTHER I FEEL THAT THEY MUST RESUME WIDER SCOPE. ON RECEIPT OF YOUR REPLY I PROPOSE TO SEE GANDHI MYSELF AND STATE TO HIM PRECISE LIMITS OF CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS. IF HE ACCEPTS THESE OR IF AFTER HEARING THESE HE IS PREPARED TO PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER, I PROPOSE THAT OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS SHOULD BE EXAMINED AT A CONFERENCE OVER WHICH I WOULD PRESIDE AND CONSISTING OF SENIOR EUROPEAN INDIAN MEMBERS OF MY COUNCIL—HOME SECRETARY, SAPRU, SASTRI, JAYAKAR, SAFI, CHHATTARI, PROBABLY ANOTHER MUHAMMADAN, A EUROPEAN NON-OFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE ASSEMBLY WITH GANDHI AND TWO OR THREE CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES NAMED BY HIM. I ANTICIPATE THAT, IF EVERYTHING WENT WELL, THIS CONFERENCE MIGHT MEET ABOUT THE 27TH AND WOULD ASK FOR YOUR APPROVAL TO IT.

From a photostat: G.N. 8951

APPENDIX V

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT[1]

In consequence of the provisional settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India a period of truce has been proclaimed. It is with regret that, on the morrow of this agreement, I have to strike a note of discord. I recognize that, in many respects, the terms of settlement are honourable and give evidence of the strength that the nation has gained by the sacrifice and suffering of the past year. I recognize also that the settlement is provisional, leaving all the vital questions open, and the final settlement is yet to come. But I feel that there is a certain commitment in it regarding the scope of discussions and a certain limitation of our ideal as laid down at Lahore. Safeguards and reservations are referred to and, although these are said to be in the interests of India, they may be, and I fear will be, interpreted to mean a limitation of our freedom in regard to defence, external affairs, finances and the public debt. The Congress and the Working Committee are pledged to the full control by the people of India of the defence services, the financial and economic policy, and the . . .[2] many of my colleagues of the W.C. are of opinion that the reference to safeguards and reservations does not limit their freedom in any way to work for the independence of India.

[1] *Vide* p. 242.
[2] The source is blank here.

I hope they are right and will prove their contention by their achievements in the coming Conference. But, as I cannot get over my doubts in regard to this phraseology, I am unable to accept or reconcile myself to any reference to safeguards and reservations. I do not desire however that any impediment should be placed in the way of those who interpret the words differently from me and who propose to extract independence out of them. Truce having been proclaimed by the Working Committee, I trust all of us will honour it and carry out the directions of the W.C. in regard to it.

A.I.C.C. File No. 329, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX VI

PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT[1]

The following statement[2] by the Governor General in Council published in the *Gazette of India Extraordinary* of 5th March 1931 gives the conditions on which the civil disobedience movement is to be suspended pending final terms of settlement.

1. Consequent on the conversations that have taken place between His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi, it has been arranged that the civil disobedience movement be discontinued, and that, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, certain action be taken by the Government of India and local Governments.

2. As regards constitutional questions, the scope of future discussion is stated, with the assent of His Majesty's Government, to be with the object of considering further the scheme for the constitutional Government of India discussed at the Round Table Conference. Of the scheme there outlined, Federation is an essential part; so also are Indian responsibility and reservations or safeguards in the interests of India, for such matters as, for instance, defence; external affairs; the position of minorities; the financial credit of India, and the discharge of obligations.

3. In pursuance of the statement made by the Prime Minister in his announcement of the 19th of January 1931, steps will be taken for the participation of the representatives of the Congress in the further discussions that are to take place on the scheme of constitutional reform.

4. The settlement relates to activities directly connected with the civil disobedience movement.

5. Civil disobedience will be effectively discontinued and reciprocal action will be taken by Government. The effective discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement means the effective discontinuance of all activities in

[1] *Vide* pp. 242, 247, 250, 281 & 317.
[2] Of the Gandhi-Irwin agreement

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furtherance thereof, by whatever methods pursued and, in particular, the following:

(1) The organized defiance of the provisions of any law.

(2) The movement for the non-payment of land revenue and other legal dues.

(3) The publication of news-sheets in support of the civil disobedience movement.

(4) Attempts to influence civil and military servants or village officials against Government or to persuade them to resign their posts.

6. As regards the boycott of foreign goods, there are two issues involved: firstly, the character of the boycott and secondly, the methods employed in giving effect to it. The position of Government is as follows. They approve of the encouragement of Indian industries as part of the economic and industrial movement designed to improve the material condition of India, and they have no desire to discourage methods of propaganda, persuasion or advertisement pursued with this object in view, which do not interfere with the freedom of action of individuals, or are not prejudicial to the maintenance of law and order. But the boycott of non-Indian goods (except of cloth which has been applied to all foreign cloth) has been directed during the civil disobedience movement chiefly, if not exclusively, against British goods, and in regard to these it has been admittedly employed in order to exert pressure for political ends.

It is accepted that a boycott of this character, and organized for this purpose, will not be consistent with the participation of representatives of the Congress in a frank and friendly discussion of constitutional questions between representatives of British India, of the Indian States, and of His Majesty's Government and political parties in England, which the settlement is intended to secure. It is, therefore, agreed that the discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement connotes the definite discontinuance of the employment of the boycott of British commodities as a political weapon and that, in consequence, those who have given up, during a time of political excitement, the sale or purchase of British goods must be left free without any form of restraint to change their attitude if they so desire.

7. In regard to the methods employed in furtherance of the replacement of non-Indian by Indian goods, or against the consumption of intoxicating liquor and drugs, resort will not be had to methods coming within the category of picketing, except within the limits permitted by the ordinary law. Such picketing shall be unaggressive and it shall not involve coercion, intimidation, restraint, hostile demonstration, obstruction to the public, or any offence under the ordinary law. If and when any of these methods is employed in any place, the practice of picketing in that place will be suspended.

8. Mr. Gandhi has drawn the attention of Government to specific allegations against the conduct of the police, and represented the desirability of a public enquiry into them. In present circumstances Government see great

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difficulty in this course and feel that it must inevitably lead to charges and counter-charges, and so militate against the re-establishment of peace. Having regard to these considerations, Mr. Gandhi agreed not to press the matter.

9. The action that Government will take on the discontinuance of the civil disobedience movement is stated in the following paragraphs.

10. Ordinances promulgated in connection with the civil disobedience movement will be withdrawn. Ordinance No. 1 of 1931 relating to the terrorist movement does not come within the scope of the provision.

11. Notifications declaring associations unlawful under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 will be withdrawn, provided that the notifications were made in connection with the civil disobedience movement.

The notifications recently issued by the Burma Government under the Criminal Law Amendment Act do not come within the scope of this provision.

12 (i) Pending prosecutions will be withdrawn if they have been filed in connection with the civil disobedience movement and relate to offences which do not involve violence other than technical violence, or incitement to such violence.

(ii) The same principles will apply to proceedings under the security provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

(iii) Where a local Government has moved any High Court or has initiated proceedings under the Legal Practitioners' Act in regard to the conduct of legal practitioners in connection with the civil disobedience movement, it will make application to the Court concerned for permission to withdraw such proceedings, provided that the alleged conduct of the persons concerned does not relate to violence or incitement to violence.

(iv) Prosecutions, if any, against soldiers and police involving disobedience of orders will not come within the scope of this provision.

13 (i) Those prisoners will be released who are undergoing imprisonment in connection with the civil disobedience movement for offences which did not involve violence, other than technical violence, or incitement to such violence.

(ii) If any prisoner who comes within the scope of (i) above has been also sentenced for a jail offence, not involving violence, other than technical violence, or incitement to such violence, the latter sentence also will be remitted, or if a prosecution relating to an offence of this character is pending against such a prisoner, it will be withdrawn.

(iii) Soldiers and police convicted of offences involving disobedience of orders — in the very few cases that have occurred — will not come within the scope of the amnesty.

14. Fines which have not been realized will be remitted. Where an order for the forfeiture of security has been made under the security provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, and the security has not been realized, it will be similarly remitted.

Fines which have been realized and securities forfeited and realized under any law will not be returned.

15. Additional police imposed in connection with the civil disobedience movement at the expense of the inhabitants of a particular area will be withdrawn at the discretion of local Governments. Local Governments will not refund any money, not in excess of the actual cost, that has been realized, but they will remit any sum that has not been realized.

16 (a) Movable property, which is not an illegal possession and which has been seized in connection with the civil disobedience movement, under the Ordinances or the provisions of the Criminal Law, will be returned, if it is still in the possession of Government.

(b) Movable property, forfeited or attached in connection with the realization of land revenue or other dues, will be returned, unless the Collector of the District has reason to believe that the defaulter will contumaciously refuse to pay the dues recoverable from him within a reasonable period. In deciding what is a reasonable period, special regard will be paid to cases in which the defaulters, while willing to pay, genuinely require time for the purpose, and if necessary, the revenue will be suspended in accordance with the ordinary principles of land revenue administration.

(c) Compensation will not be given for deterioration.

(d) Where movable property has been sold or otherwise finally disposed of by Government, compensation will not be given and the sale proceeds will not be returned, except in so far as they are in excess of the legal dues for which the property may have been sold.

(e) It will be open to any person to seek any legal remedy he may have on the ground that the attachment or seizure of property was not in accordance with the law.

17 (a) Immovable property of which possession has been taken under Ordinance IX of 1930 will be returned in accordance with the provisions of the Ordinance.

(b) Land and other immovable property in the possession of Government, which has been forfeited or attached in connection with the realization of land revenue or other dues, will be returned unless the Collector of the district has reason to believe that the defaulter will contumaciously refuse to pay the dues recoverable from him within a reasonable period. In deciding what is a reasonable period special regard will be paid to cases in which the defaulter, while willing to pay, genuinely requires time for the purpose, and if necessary the revenues will be suspended in accordance with the ordinary principles of land revenue administration.

(c) Where immovable property has been sold to third parties, the transaction must be regarded as final, so far as Government are concerned.

NOTE. Mr. Gandhi has represented[1] to Government that according to his information and belief some, at least, of these sales have been unlawful and

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", pp. 245-6.

unjust. Government on the information before them cannot accept this contention.

(d) It will be open to any person to seek any legal remedy he may have on the ground that the seizure or attachment of property was not in accordance with the law.

18. Government believe that there have been very few cases in which the realization of dues has not been made in accordance with the provisions of the law. In order to meet such cases, if any, local Governments will issue instructions to District Officers to have prompt enquiry made into any specific complaint of this nature, and to give redress without delay if illegality is established.

19. Where the posts rendered vacant by the resignations have been permanently filled, Government will not be able to reinstate the late incumbents. Other cases of resignation will be considered on their merits by local Governments who will pursue a liberal policy in regard to the reappointment of Government servants and village officials who apply for reinstatement.

20. Government are unable to condone breaches of the existing law relating to the salt administration, nor are they able, in the present financial conditions of the country, to make substantial modifications in the Salt Acts.

For the sake however of giving relief to certain of the poorer classes, they are prepared to extend their administrative provisions, on lines already prevailing in certain places, in order to permit local residents in villages, immediately adjoining areas where salt can be collected or made, to collect or make salt for domestic consumption or sale within such villages, but not for sale to, or trading with, individuals living outside them.

21. In the event of Congress failing to give full effect to the obligations of this settlement, Government will take such action as may, in consequence, become necessary for the protection of the public and individuals and the due observance of law and order.

H. W. EMERSON
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Young India, 12-3-1931

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APPENDIX VII

VICEROY'S CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE[1]

Private and Personal *March 4 [1931]*

CONVERSATION WITH GANDHI CONCLUDED SATISFACTORILY LAST NIGHT. WE ARE TELEGRAPHING TO YOU OFFICIALLY GIVING TEXT OF STATEMENT THAT WE SHALL ISSUE AS SOON AS YOU HAVE FINALLY APPROVED, AND AS SOON AS WE ARE ASSURED, WHICH I HOPE WE SHALL BE TODAY, THAT THE WORKING COMMITTEE ACCEPTS. IF THEY HAVE ANY MINOR VERBAL AMENDMENTS TO SUGGEST, WE WILL TELEGRAPH THEM FOR SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENT AS YOU DESIRE. WE ARE TELEGRAPHING OFFICIALLY ABOUT TIME OF RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION.

TEXT OF STATEMENT IS I THINK SELF-EXPLANATORY. IMPORTANT SECTIONS ARE BOYCOTT, PICKETING, POLICE AND SALT. SCOPE OF DISCUSSIONS. THE FIRST TWO ARE AS SATISFACTORY AS I COULD SECURE, AND WE ARE PRETTY WELL ASSURED THAT WE HAVE GOT IT IN A FORM THAT MAKES IT CERTAIN THAT PICKETING IN ITS OFFENSIVE FORMS WILL QUICKLY DISAPPEAR AND PROBABLE THAT ANY FORM OF PICKETING WOULD ONLY BE PRACTISED ON VERY SMALL SCALE. THE POLICE FORMULA IS GOOD. SALT IS A CONCESSION I DO NOT LIKE ON POLITICAL GROUNDS, THOUGH ON REVENUE GROUNDS IT IS UNIMPORTANT. BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO SECURE SETTLEMENT WITHOUT IT. YOU WILL OBSERVE THAT WE HAVE VARIED THE FORMULA ABOUT CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS AND ON THIS I WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT OWING TO MISUNDERSTANDING HE WAS UNABLE TO APPROVE AS I HAD THOUGHT ORIGINAL WORDING. BUT I THINK THIS FORMULA GIVES US ESSENTIALS WE WANT.

ON QUESTION OF DEBTS AND SECESSION WHICH ARE NOT MENTIONED, GANDHI'S POSITION REMAINS AS STATED IN MY TELEGRAM OF FEBRUARY 28TH, EXCEPT THAT HE ASSURES ME HE DOES NOT THINK THERE WILL BE ANY DIFFICULTY ABOUT HIS NOT WALKING OUT OF CONFERENCE ON ANY DEBT QUESTION BEFORE CONCLUSION OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS.

HE HAS GIVEN ME ASSURANCE THAT IN NO CASE WILL HE RESTART CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TILL CONCLUSION OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS, AND THAT AFTER THAT HE WOULD HOPE NOT TO RESTART AT ALL THOUGH HE CANNOT GIVE DEFINITE UNDERTAKING BEYOND CONFERENCE STAGE.

I MUCH HOPE YOU WILL FEEL ABLE TO APPROVE STATEMENT AS IT STANDS.

From a photostat: G.N. 8955

[1] *Vide* p. 245.

APPENDIX VIII

TELEGRAM FROM HOME DEPARTMENT TO BOMBAY GOVERNMENT[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 15, 1931

KINDLY ARRANGE TO COMMUNICATE FOLLOWING TO GANDHI FROM EMERSON. BEGINS. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAVE RECEIVED COMPLAINTS THAT CONGRESS ARE CONTINUING SYSTEM BY WHICH MILLS ARE PLACED ON A BOYCOTT LIST IF THEY DO NOT SIGN AN AGREEMENT OR DECLARATION. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IF FACTS ARE AS STATED YOU WILL RECOGNIZE THAT USE OF A BLACK LIST IN CONNECTION WITH MILLS UNWILLING TO SIGN AGREEMENT PLACES THIS SYSTEM OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF METHODS OF PERSUASION AND INTERFERES WITH THE FREEDOM OF ACTION OF INDIVIDUALS. THIS WOULD ALSO BE THE CASE IN REGARD TO ANY SIMILAR METHOD BY WHICH CONGRESS ORGANIZED THE BOYCOTT OF MILLS COMPANIES, ETC. WHICH DID NOT SIGN AGREEMENTS. IT THEREFORE SEEMS CLEARLY CONTRARY TO LETTER AND SPIRIT OF SETTLEMENT AND I ACCORDINGLY BRING MATTER TO YOUR NOTICE IN CONFIDENCE THAT YOU WILL PUT IT RIGHT. ENDS.

2. THIS IS RELEVANT TO TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE REGARDING FINLAYS WHO SHOULD BE ADVISED THAT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ARE TAKING UP THE MATTER.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX IX

EMERSON'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[2]

March 19, 1931

I had a talk for about three hours with Mr. Gandhi this evening relating to difficulties arising out of the settlement. I made it clear throughout that any opinions which I expressed were my own and not those of Government. Mr. Gandhi first mentioned the points he desired to bring to the notice of Government which were as follows:

[1] *Vide* p. 307.
[2] *Vide* p. 314.

(a) He mentioned the case of the Raja of Kalakankar in which according to the A.P.I. message, elephants, motors, etc., had been attached for arrears of land revenue. He stated that he did not himself know the facts of the case, but did know that the Raja was a Congress sympathizer. He had, he said, written to ascertain the facts. I said that Government had no information, but that I personally thought it probable that the attachment had been made in the ordinary course of land revenue administration and that, if this was so, the settlement did not of course affect cases of this kind, since the revenue administration must pursue its normal course. I promised to ascertain the facts.

(b) He next mentioned a case that occurred some months ago in the district of Colaba in connection with forest satyagraha, when in the course of a riot a Mamlatdar was accidentally shot by the police. The case, he said, was now under trial in the Sessions Court, to which it had been committed. According to his information no provocation had been given by the accused and some of them certainly had not committed actual violence. He suggested that the case against those accused, at any rate, should be withdrawn. I told him that I had not seen the papers for some months; but my recollection was that the case was one of serious violence in which the police had had considerable difficulty in escaping and that, so far as I remembered, one or two forest guards had been killed. I explained that this was not a case which we could possibly represent to the local Government and that, in so far as the Government and Congress versions differed, the Court would decide.

(c) He then got on to the question of whether offences under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and 108, Criminal Procedure Code came within the terms of the amnesty. His contention was that all such cases did come within it and that offences involving incitement to violence should only be regarded as exceptions, if the result of the incitement had been actual violence. He also urged that where the incitement has not resulted in violence it should be regarded as technical. I explained to him that, so far as I was concerned, there was no room for misunderstanding, since when technical violence was included in the amnesty the intention was made quite clear, and I mentioned the illustration that had been given when the settlement was being discussed, namely, that convictions for rioting would have to be examined on their merits and that, while a trivial fracas might properly be regarded as coming within the term "technical violence", a serious riot could not be so regarded and that all persons who were concerned in it whether they had been guilty of actual violence or not would be excluded from the amnesty. He admitted that this was so, but said that he had not realized that Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and Section 108, Criminal Procedure Code, would come within the exceptions. I explained that, under both the sections, there were cases in which persons had been prosecuted for speeches which included incitement to serious violence and that, while it could not always, or indeed ordinarily be said that the direct result was violence, there was no doubt that

speeches of this sort had gained recruits to the terrorist movement and so had been indirectly responsible for violence. In any case the criterion of actual violence had not been adopted. I said that the matter was not one merely of interpretation but of great practical importance, and I took the opportunity of stating to him the position in the Punjab and in Delhi. I mentioned the meetings in Lahore and in Amritsar, the general campaign there had been in favour of Bhagat Singh and violence generally, and the apprehensions of the local Government that a serious situation would arise. I told him that I had just received a letter from the Punjab Government giving accounts of speeches made by Dr. Satyapal and Sardul Singh Kaveeshar, both of whom were members of the Working Committee. I said that the local Government had held its hands in the desire to avoid action which was likely to prejudice the settlement, that we had told them that, while the Government of India naturally hope that the necessity of action would not arise, we did not desire to fetter their discretion if circumstances so required, and that it was no part of the settlement that action should not be taken under the ordinary law against persons who violated it. Mr. Gandhi agreed that this was so. I then mentioned the case of Delhi, told him of the meeting in honour of Chandra Shekhar Azad and the concern of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, and of the Deputy Commissioner that the situation might deteriorate, and that it might be necessary to prohibit meetings. I said that we were anxious if possible to avoid resort to the Seditious Meetings Act, but that we could not allow a situation of danger to arise, and that, if excitement grew, we might have no alternative; but in that case we would, so far as possible, restrict the use of the Act to meetings in support of violence. I then asked him if he had seen in the papers that the Governor-General in Council had rejected the petition for mercy on behalf of Bhagat Singh. He said that he had and that he was apprehensive regarding the consequences. I did not mention the date on which the execution would be carried out, but I did explain to him that the question as to whether it should take place before or after the Karachi Congress had been very seriously considered by Government who realized the difficulties of either course, but thought it would have been unfair to the condemned persons to postpone execution and also not fair to Gandhi to allow the impression to gain ground that commutation was under consideration when this was not the case. He agreed that of the two alternatives it is better not to wait, but he suggested, though not seriously, that the third course of commutation of the sentence would have been better still. He did not seem to me to be particularly concerned about the matter. I told him that we should be lucky if we got through without disorder, and I asked him to do all that he could to prevent meetings being held in Delhi during the next few days and to restrain violent speeches. He promised to do what he could.

I then applied these facts to the matter under discussion, namely, inclusion of all cases under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and Section 108,

Criminal Procedure Code, in the amnesty. I explained that we could not possibly approach local Governments with a suggestion of this kind in present conditions. The violence [*sic*] movement was a serious menace with which we could not afford to trifle, and that, before we could even think of making a suggestion of this kind, there must be a cessation of the campaign of violence and of incitement thereto. He argued that to keep persons convicted of such offences in jail increased rather than lessened the danger by embittering feeling and he said that he would himself like an understanding by which all persons convicted before the amnesty under Section 124-A, Indian Penal Code, and 108, Criminal Procedure Code, were released while no quarter was given, in regard to prosecutions, to persons who preached violence in future. He said that Government's interpretation of the settlement on this point placed him in a difficult position and he would like to consider it further. The matter was left in this position, but I said that I did not think the Government could possibly alter its position in this respect.

(d) He mentioned two specific cases under Section 124-A and Section 108, namely, that of the two Delhi women and of a Professor Kripalani in the United Provinces. I said that the former had been carefully examined and that it had been definitely considered that it did not come within the amnesty. In regard to Professor Kripalani, he said that he was sure that he had said nothing in his speeches which incited to violence. I said that I would ascertain the facts from the United Provinces Government. At the same time, however, I was able to give him facts and figures of the action taken by the United Provinces Government which, he admitted, showed that that Government had acted in a very liberal spirit.

(e) He then mentioned Sholapur cases and said that, so far as he knew, no prisoners of Sholapur had been released. I said that the position in regard to Sholapur was the same as in all other cases, namely, that the test was violence or incitement to violence not being technical violence and that subject to this test there was no distinction, whether convictions were in the civil or military courts. I said that the matter was necessarily one for the discretion of the local Government and that, while I imagined they would naturally take a serious view of offences connected with the outbreaks of violence, they would not exclude from the amnesty persons convicted of breaches of Martial Law regulations, etc., where no question of violence or incitement thereto arises. I promised to ascertain the position from the local Government.

(f) He then raised the question of additional police. He said that he had received complaints regarding realization of cost after the 5th of March. I said I thought it very improbable that any such cases had occurred, but would ascertain the facts if he mentioned specific cases. He asked that, where realization had been made after the 5th owing to non-receipt of orders by District Authorities, the sums collected should be refunded. I said that I thought this was reasonable. I again made it clear to him that it has always been con-

templated that some delay is likely to occur in the withdrawal of additional police, and that local Governments would wait until satisfied that conditions had become normal. He agreed that this was the understanding.

2. I then mentioned various matters which from the Government point of view were causing difficulty and misunderstanding.

(a) I first mentioned the question of the boycott of Indian mills by a system under which Congress placed on a black list those mills whose agents did not sign an agreement. I said that the principle on which Government stood was that the encouragement of Indian industries should not involve interference with the freedom of action of the individual and that my own view was that a system which involved placing a mill on a black list which did not take a certain course necessarily involved coercion amounting almost to blackmail, and further that any pressure on the consumer (which went beyond persuasion) to induce him to boycott the products of a mill was a breach of the settlement. I also expressed the opinion that a mill, which was placed on a black list, would have civil action for damages. Mr. Gandhi said that it was not the intention to use methods other than persuasion either with the manufacturer or consumer, but he regarded it as justifiable propaganda to let customers know that particular mills did not observe the swadeshi creed. I explained that the Directors and Agents of mills definitely objected to a boycott list as amounting to coercion and that, while, so far as I knew, they did not object to persuasion, they did most strongly object to the methods employed in the past. I said that, while I did not know the view of Government on the subject, they might not object to certificates to be used for purposes of advertisement to mills, which adopted swadeshi creed, and to the replacement of the black list by a list of swadeshi mills—such a list being used for propaganda purposes only. He said that there would be no difficulty in this.

(b) We then discussed the new scheme for the export of foreign cloth. I said that the principle in this case was that dealers should be free from any interference with their liberty of action and that no one who did not wish to join in the scheme should be forced to do so. Also that sellers and buyers who had refrained from dealing in foreign cloth should be left free without any form of restraint to change their attitude if they so wished. He said quite definitely that this was the intention. I said I could conceive that there might be dealers who were honestly convinced that the sale of their stocks of foreign cloth in India was contrary to the good of the country and who, therefore, had real scruples against selling it and that, in cases of this kind, I myself saw no ground on which objection could be taken. I then quoted to him a reported speech of Babu Rajendra Prasad of Patna, made on the 10th of March, in which the following passage occurred:

> A word to the merchants. They should not suppose that the effect of the truce was to give them perfect liberty to sell and import British cloth. The speaker was aware that they had suffered and he was grateful for

the help that they had given. But what was the suffering of the rich merchants compared to that of poor people who had lost their all, whose houses had been looted and everything found either taken away or destroyed. The merchants had at least ten years' notice not to deal in foreign cloth, and if they suffered no one else was to blame, but the Congress was anxious to see that some way was found to save them from ruin or heavy loss. The way, however, could not be to permit them to sell their stocks in India. Mahatmaji was in consultation with business magnates of Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad and Delhi and other places to devise a scheme which would enable the existing stock to be disposed of outside India. It was a very big scheme as it involved ten or twelve crores worth of foreign cloth, and there was a likelihood of loss even when the scheme was put through. This will have to be borne by dealers and possibly a way would be found to give some relief. They had to wait and see how the thing developed.

I said that the sentence underlined seemed to me to be quite inconsistent with Mr. Gandhi's position. He said that this was in fact not so and that he himself had taken the same line with merchants who asked him for permission to deal in foreign cloth. He explained that it was contrary to the Congress creed specifically to give such permission, since this would amount to repudiation of the doctrine to which they attach great importance, that it was one thing for Congress to recognize that merchants were free to do as they liked and another thing for the Congress specifically to accord this permission. I then asked him how merchants were to know how they stood, and said that Government regarded it as essential that they should be in no doubt on this point. He said he had no objection whatever to Government making the position clear. He added that, so far as he knew, there was not any doubt on the matter and that the hesitation of merchants to deal freely in foreign cloth was due to uncertainty as to what might happen in the future. I pointed out that, in accordance with what had been said in (b) above, the description of the scheme which relates to the "certification of handloom cloth made for such Indian mills as may not be under the Congress ban" would have to be expressed in different terms since no question of a Congress ban now arises. Mr. Gandhi agreed.

(c) On the general question of the boycott of foreign cloth he was quite candid and said that he had no doubt himself that the movement would gain great momentum without resort to coercion or pressure, that Indian and English mill-owners were convinced of the benefit to themselves of the swadeshi movement and that before long those who had so far stood out would voluntarily come in. He appears to be firmly convinced that the propaganda he intended to pursue would have very big results, and he pointed out quite truly that the boycott on an extensive scale of a particular class of goods must, however unobjectionable the methods might be, influence the dealers in their future

course of business and so indirectly affect their freedom of action. He was very vague about the export scheme and admitted that details had not been worked out. His chief argument in support of it was that men like Sir Ness Wadia had accepted it as workable.

(d)[1] I then got on to the more difficult question of what seemed to me failure on the part of the Congress to observe the general spirit of the settlement. I repeated what I had told Gandhi when I first met him that, if a settlement was to be a merely paper one without any intention on the part of Congress honestly to try to find a solution of constitutional problems, then it was better not to have one at all and that it was not possible for Government to stand by and watch Congress definitely organizing for a fight with no real wish to obtain peace. I mentioned in this connection various points that I myself regarded with uneasiness, e.g., Pandit Jawaharlal's circular No. 12; the message to the peasants of Rae Bareilly; what appeared to be a movement in the United Provinces to replace a no-tax campaign as part of the civil disobedience movement by similar campaign on economic grounds; various speeches of Pandit Jawaharlal; reference to a "truce" with a preconceived idea that no final settlement would be attained; talks of a future war and reference to Government as opponents and enemies. I also mentioned the way in which Congress had attempted to exploit the settlement as a victory. Gandhi saw nothing objectionable in circular No. 12 and said that he could not dismiss the possibility that peace would not ultimately be reached. At the same time, he fully accepted the position that it was wrong to refer to the settlement as a truce, to talk about a future war, to prejudge the issues and refer to Government as enemies and opponents. He also expressed disapproval of the exploitation of the settlement by Congress as a victory.

I told him that I was particularly disquieted by the indication of a campaign of the Congress in the United Provinces to stir revenue payers against Government and tenants against landlords, that it was very easy to raise a rural agitation on these lines and that the consequence could not fail to be serious. That, in so far as there was economic distress, local Governments were fully alive to the gravity of the situation and would deal with it as liberally as circumstances permitted and that any attempt by Congress as an organization to intervene would merely make the situation more difficult. I mentioned to him the report I had seen that the Congress Committee or Council in the United Provinces had made a recommendation that 50 per cent of land revenue and rents should be remitted and had advised revenue payers and tenants to withhold payments pending decision by the local Government. Unfortunately I did not have the reference with me and so could not verify it. Mr. Gandhi agreed that if the facts were as stated it was wrong to advise tenants to withhold rents. I promised to look out the reference and to let him have it.

[1] The source has "(e)".

(e)[1] I next mentioned definite disquieting reports from Gujarat saying that land revenue was not being paid, and I told him that I had seen a speech by Vallabhbhai Patel suggesting that Government would be quite content to wait a year or even two years for revenue where there was difficulty in paying it. I suggested to him that statements of this kind would naturally be taken advantage of by revenue payers who could easily pay and that, while I had no doubt that the local Government would consider any genuine cases of distress, our information was that there should be no difficulty at all in paying up by far the greater part of the revenue at once. I said that the inevitable result of unwarranted delay on the part of revenue payers would be the recommencement of coercive processes and the creation of an unfavourable atmosphere. He expressed surprise that land revenue was not coming in and said that, so far as he was concerned, there was no intention to discourage people, who could pay, not to do so.

3. He then himself mentioned certain correspondence he had with the Collector of Kaira regarding forfeited lands and other matters. He regarded the correspondence as unsatisfactory, but did not say what it was about and dropped the subject. He mentioned, however, a circular issued by a Mamlatdar of Kaira to the effect that village servants who had resigned had not only to apply for reinstatement, but had to express regret for their conduct and also to pay a penalty before reinstatement. He regarded this as contrary to the spirit of the settlement. I said that I could express no opinion on the matter in ignorance of the policy of the local Government. He said he would let me have a copy of the circular.

4. I then read to him a letter received today from the United Provinces Government mentioning a case of forcible picketing in Agra. He agreed that, if the facts were correct, it was a clear case for suspension of all picketing. I promised to let him have a copy. I also mentioned cases which had been brought to my notice by non-officials of picketing in Amritsar and Cawnpore where the transport of goods from one place to another had been prevented; but, as I had no official confirmation of these facts, I could not press for effective action.

5. The general impression left was that Mr. Gandhi is anxious to implement the settlement and to obtain a genuine solution. He seemed to be confident about the Karachi Congress; but he expected opposition from the left and said that the execution of Bhagat Singh might seriously complicate matters. He was very loyal to Pandit Jawaharlal, but, I gathered, did not regard it as altogether improbable that he would take his own line sooner or later. He recognized the difficulties that would be created by an undiluted resolution in favour of complete independence at the Karachi Congress and by a declaration that the Congress would go on fighting until they achieved this.

[1] The source has "(d)".

It seemed to me that he himself had made up his mind to see that a course of this kind was not taken and that the actual resolutions of this nature would be qualified by speeches which would avoid banging the door in the way of peace.

From a photostat: C.W. 9363. Courtesy: India Office Library; also Bombay Secret Abstracts: H.D. Sp.Br. File No. 750(57)

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write to thank you for your letter of today enclosing translations of a circular and of notice issued by the Mamlatdar of Borsad. I will bring the matter to the notice of the local Government.

2. With reference to our conversation[2] last night regarding the danger of excitement being worked up in connection with the execution of the sentences passed on Bhagat Singh, etc., the Chief Commissioner informs me that notice has been given in the city that Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose will address a meeting of protest tonight at 5.30. I fully realize your difficulties in the matter and I think that you realize the difficulties of Government and also their desire at the present time to avoid, if possible, preventive action, which may, however, be unavoidable if excitement grows. If a meeting is held tonight, it is almost certain to increase feeling, especially if speeches of an inflammatory character are made. Government will much appreciate any assistance you feel able to give to prevent this and to check the creation of conditions which, if uncontrolled, may have serious consequences.

Yours sincerely,
H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* p. 316.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

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APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[1]

HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 21, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write to thank you for your letter of March 20th, and return the telegrams enclosed with it after taking copies. I am ascertaining from the Finance Department the exact orders which have issued regarding salt, and I will let you know further what the position is.[2]

2. I have also requested the Government of Bihar and Orissa to report the facts regarding the release of prisoners.

Yours sincerely,
H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B, 1931. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[3]

D.O.No.D. 2246/31-Poll.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI,
March 28, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In my letter of the 21st of March I promised[4] to let you know what the position was regarding the salt concession. I now learn that general orders were issued on the 9th of March by the Central Board of Revenue to the various local authorities asking them that:

1. orders might be issued immediately directing all officers concerned to act forthwith in accordance with the spirit of the arrangement, and to refer

[1] *Vide* p. 317.
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] *Vide* p. 317.
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

any difficulty or doubtful point that might arise to superior authority before taking punitive action in cases where there appeared to be any abuse of the concession; and

2. draft standing orders governing the operation of the concession might be worked out, with the least possible delay, and submitted for the approval of the Government of India.

The telegram, a copy of which you sent to me, presumably referred to the draft instructions by the local authority. These have not yet received the approval of the Government of India, and the latter have no intention of imposing a limit of distance within which people must reside in order to be eligible for the concession. As you yourself recognize, it is difficult to translate the formula used in the Statement[1] of the Governor General in Council into an exact definition, but I understand that the Central Board of Revenue will prescribe as a rough working test that villagers should neither come to the salt sources nor take their salt away otherwise than on foot. From the administrative point of view the main check against the abuse of the concession will be its withdrawal from any area, after such warning as may be reasonable, where it is clearly abused. But Government hope that the people themselves will avoid the necessity of action of this kind by refraining from any abuse of the concession.

Yours sincerely,
H. W. EMERSON

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
CONGRESS CAMP, KARACHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-B. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM H. W. EMERSON[2]

NEW DELHI,
March 22, 1931

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

In accordance with our conversation yesterday, I enclose the drafts of two questions, which by arrangement could be asked in the Legislative Assembly, and of the replies thereto. I have not been able to take orders of Government thereon in time for this letter to reach you before you leave Delhi, and they may therefore be regarded as provisional. I will, of course, let you know

[1] Of Gandhi-Irwin Agreement, as announced by the Governor-General in Council; *vide* Appendix VI.

[2] *Vide* p. 335.

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if any changes are made in them. Will you kindly inform me whether you regard them as suitable?

2. I do not know the particular forms of agreement or declaration which are now signed by the agents or managers of mills, and, in any case, you will understand that Government could not place themselves in a position where they appeared to approve of any particular form of agreement. The questions and replies are, therefore, confined to the general principles included in the statement of the 5th of March and are not to be taken as connoting acceptance by Government of specific provisions of any agreement or declaration.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
1 DARYAGANJ
DELHI

[ENCLOSURE]

QUESTION

(a) Have Government seen the following notice issued by the General Secretary[1] of the Indian National Congress, which appeared in *The Times of India* of the 9th[2] of March, 1931:

> "Mills on the boycott list, mills with whom negotiations were pending and therefore were not placed on the boycott list and also Bombay mills which were temporarily placed on the approved list pending negotiations regarding some clauses of the Congress declaration, for instance, the use of artificial silk, etc., are hereby informed that my office will issue the final list of all mills by the 20th March, 1931, for the Karachi Congress, and if such mills are at all anxious not to be placed on the boycott list, they will kindly settle the matter with Mr. Shankerlal Banker (Mirzapur, Ahmedabad) and sign the declaration form on or before the 15th instant. Mr. Banker will be in Bombay on the 16th March. I hope and trust that the mills concerned will please expedite the matter. The Congress is taking up this matter earnestly and seriously."

(b) Will Government say what the position is in regard to this notice?

REPLY

(a) Yes.

(b) They understand that while methods of persuasion will be used with manufacturers, dealers or consumers, these methods will not, in accordance with the terms of the settlement, interfere with the liberty of action of individuals. They understand, further, that no boycott list of manufacturers, who are unwilling to enter the scheme, will be issued, and that any action taken

[1] Syed Mahmud
[2] The source has "10th".

will be confined to the purposes of propaganda or advertisement, e.g., the issue of a list for propaganda purposes of manufacturers or dealers who voluntarily enter the scheme, and the issue to them of certificates for purposes of advertisement.

Home Department, Political, File No. 33/6, 1931, p. 18. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX XIV

EMERSON'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

April 7, 1931

1. I had five hours' talk last night with Mr. Gandhi regarding various matters arising out of the settlement. We talked first about the communal situation, which he recognized as very serious. He obviously had little hope of an early settlement with the Muhammadans and he expressed himself as very grieved that not only was the feeling extremely bitter, but that non-Congress Muhammadans were challenging the honesty of proposals he made. I took the opportunity of rubbing in that in the present state of feeling throughout Northern India any trivial incident would suffice to start serious trouble and that it was, therefore, the more necessary that the Congress should avoid interference with the liberty of individuals, which was an important cause of the keen resentment felt by Muslims. I also emphasized the great danger of trouble spreading into the villages, especially in the United Provinces, and the difficulties that would arise in stamping it out, if it once began in rural areas. He was obviously fully aware of the danger, and the impression I gained was that he will use his influence with the Congress to avoid causes of offence to Muslims. I gathered that the Congress were already using much more discretion in picketing the shops of Muhammadans and that Gandhi's own desire was that picketing of their shops should cease.

2. We then got on to the subject of Gujarat, about which he said he was receiving very distressing accounts. Some of the new Patels were men of bad character, etc., and were making the lives of the villagers unbearable; there was no real spirit of co-operation between Government and the Congress; the latter had, for instance, asked for a list of the lands which had been sold and the persons to whom they were sold, but this had been refused, although in fact, according to his account, previous owners of land had not, in some cases, correct information on this point. It was understood that Government would remain neutral regarding the recovery of lands sold to third parties, but they were not doing so. For instance, they were using the Police to put purchasers in possession of lands they had bought, although according to law

[1] *Vide* p. 404.

the purchasers ought to have obtained possession by a regular suit in cases where they had not obtained more than formal possession from Government. Again there were some temporary Patels who had not yet been replaced by previous incumbents who had resigned. Generally, the burden of his complaint was that he had made a mistake in agreeing about the non-restoration of lands sold to third parties and the non-reinstatement of Patels whose places have not been permanently filled, and, although he had no intention of going back on the settlement, he now realized what difficulties were involved.

I then gave him the other side of the case. I told him that for every complaint he had made I had seen several from the other side, that the position, as reported to the Government of India, is that in particular taluks land revenue collections are at a standstill, continuous pressure is being brought to bear on loyalists, on purchasers of land and movable property and on new Patels, and that generally from the Government point of view the situation is very unsatisfactory. So far as Patels are concerned, I imagined that the actual position is that villagers are trying to obtain the reinstatement of the old Patels by securing the dismissal of the new ones, that the District Officers are, therefore, naturally sceptical in regard to complaints about the latter, but that I did not think that they would desire to keep any Patel in office if his conduct was such as to render him liable to dismissal under the rules. On the other hand, the District Officers would naturally defend the Patels against frivolous complaints. He admitted that the complaints were not against all the new Patels, but against some of them. I said that, as regards the neutrality of Government, this could not be interpreted as meaning that Government should not give purchasers of land the legal rights to which they were entitled, and that, if they were, in fact, entitled under the ordinary revenue law to summary possession, it was obviously right to give it.

I then read out to him extracts from the demi-official letters of the Bombay Government, dated the 2nd and 4th April, which showed clearly that in certain taluks, e.g., Borsad and Bardoli, collections of land revenue had practically stopped since the settlement. He seemed to be surprised at these figures and asked for a copy of the extracts, which I promised to give him. I said that it was absurd to suppose that this general suspension of payment was due to economic distress, that our information was that crops were very good and that cases in which persons would find any difficulty in paying were extremely few, that Government regarded the delay in payment as a serious breach of the settlement and that, even if it were true, as he said, that people in one or two villages were having trouble from the new Patels, that was no reason why land revenue should not be paid, that the Bombay Government had recently informed the Government of India that they proposed to resume coercive processes within the next ten days and on the information before them the Government of India could not possibly take exception to this proposal, although naturally both they and the local Government hoped that it would

not be necessary to resort to them, since it was clear that, once the use of coercive processes began on a considerable scale, the atmosphere in Gujarat would again become seriously disturbed and more ill-feeling would be engendered. Mr. Gandhi admitted the great desirability of avoiding resort to coercive processes, but recognized that the local Government could not reasonably be expected to wait beyond the period stated. He expressed his desire that the settlement should be scrupulously observed and said that he would be in Ahmedabad on the 12th, when he would very much like to have a heart-to-heart talk with the Commissioner of the Northern Division. I said that I thought it was an excellent idea and would pass on his wish to the Bombay Government. He said that he hoped that later His Excellency the Governor of Bombay would be able to grant him an interview.

The impression left on my mind by the talk about Gujarat was that Vallabhbhai Patel and his friends are making it as difficult as possible for Gandhi to honour the settlement; that they are holding up the payment of land revenue on one pretext or another in the hope that all Patels will be reinstated and all lands restored; that they are communicating to Gandhi all sorts of complaints, few of which have any foundation, and that Gandhi himself would like to find a way out, but cannot. I am inclined to think that when he returns to Gujarat he will play the game regarding the payment of land revenue, but that he will meet with considerable opposition and that there will be attempts to exploit any pretext for non-payment. I think it would be a good thing if the Commissioner, Northern Division, were able to hear what Mr. Gandhi has to say and to give him the other side of the picture with specific examples. Gandhi himself recognizes that the settlement must stand regarding lands and Patels, and I think it might be possible to satisfy some of his doubts and misgivings, if he were assured that

(a) the policy of reinstating Patels, whose places have not been filled, will be liberally pursued,

(b) Government, while protecting new Patels against frivolous complaints, will be prepared to deal under the ordinary revenue rules with Patels, if any, who abuse their position,

(c) local officers will give such information as might reasonably be expected regarding the sale of lands.

I venture to make these suggestions, because I am quite clear that Gandhi does not want to break the settlement and that he is fully alive to the undesirability of collection by coercive processes.

In the mean time I made it quite clear to him that the Government of India do not intend to raise any objection to the proposal of the local Government to start coercive process in the near future.

3. I mentioned the cases of delay in the payment of land revenue in the Kanara and Dharwar Districts. He said that this delay was entirely due to bad harvests and economic distress, and that when he saw His Excellency

the Governor, he would mention the matter to him. I did not pursue the subject.

4. Mr. Gandhi then raised the question of the United Provinces which he discussed for about two hours. I read out to him the gist of letters of the Collectors of Allahabad and Muttra, last week's report of the special branch of United Provinces and the instructions sent by the Provincial Congress Committee to the District Committee of Fatehpur. I told him that Sir Frank Noyce and I had recently discussed the situation with His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces, and that the Government of India and the local Government regarded the situation in several districts with great concern. There was no doubt that the situation had deteriorated very rapidly and that in one or two districts there was imminent danger of serious disorder at any time. If disorder began, it might easily spread and there was very grave danger that, although it might begin as agrarian, it would end as communal. Mr. Gandhi was very obviously surprised at the facts placed before him and he at once admitted that the following Congress activities were wrong:

(a) Advocating tenants to withhold payment of rent and land revenue in whole or part,

(b) the establishment of a Congress Tahsildar in the Muttra District,

(c) dissemination of the idea that swaraj had been attained and that revenue and rent need no longer be paid,

(d) attacks by tenants on zamindars,

(e) interference with Muslims.

He was particularly concerned about the last item and I laid stress on the fact that, if Muslims generally had reason to believe that the Congress were attempting to come between Muslim landlords and their tenants, communal bitterness would be increased and there would be grave danger of trouble. I said that Government regarded the activities of the Congress in the United Provinces in regard to rent and revenue as a very serious breach of the settlement, that it had never been contemplated that anything of the sort would be done and that Government were satisfied that, under cover of economic distress, the Congress were in fact carrying on the campaign for political purposes. I had been instructed by Government to tell him that the local Government propose to take what measures were possible under the ordinary law to deal with the situation and that the Government of India approved of this course; further it was anticipated that, if this action did not suffice, the local Government would come forward with proposals for special measures, e.g., the renewal of powers conferred by the Unlawful Instigation Ordinance or action under the Criminal Law Amendment Act; and that the Government of India directed me to let him know that, if such proposals were made, they would receive the serious consideration of Government. I added, as my own opinion, that, if Congress activities continued, action under the ordinary law would almost certainly prove inadequate and that an irresistible

case would be made out for special measures. I said that this would almost certainly break the settlement, a result which Government were very anxious to avoid, if this were possible.

I then briefly explained to him the statement of land revenue policy made by His Excellency the Governor a few days ago in the Provincial Legislative Council and said that the local Government considered that it would meet the requirements of the economic situation; at any rate, it was essential that it should be given a trial; and that, if the consequences above outlined were to be avoided, Congress should cease to interfere. Mr. Gandhi asked me whether Government considered it as part of the duty of the Congress to secure the payment of land revenue. I said that, so far as the United Provinces were concerned, I thought that Government would be satisfied if Congress abstained completely from any sort of interference, and that they would not wish to impose on Congress any obligation in this respect. I explained that the position in Gujarat was different.

Mr. Gandhi said that he had heard complaints from the other side, as, for instance, brutal treatment of tenants by landlords, and that the real problem was how the Congress could co-operate with Government in regard to the situation. He said that the methods so far pursued were on the facts given by me undoubtedly open to objection, but that was no reason why the matter should not be put on the right lines which he proceeded to develop. The proposals as they eventually emerged were that in each tahsil there should be a Congress Committee which would co-operate with the local officers in land revenue matters. In ordinary times, the Congress Committee would have nothing to do, since the full demand would be accepted as a matter of course; but in times of distress the Congress would collect facts and figures themselves, would ascertain the views of the zamindars and the tenants and would make representations to the Collector which the Collector would examine. He asked me whether Government would object to this scheme. I said that I thought that the Government of India and the local Government would object very strongly to it. He suggested that this showed distrust of Congress which was not warranted, that the reasonable course was for the Government and Congress to work together, that in fact Government were now at peace with the Congress; they had entered into a settlement with it, and that there could be no reason why this principle should not be extended. I pointed out to him that the settlement reached related to the abandonment of the civil disobedience movement in which Government and the Congress were solely, or at any rate mainly, concerned, that it was a different matter for Government to use the Congress as an intermediary in matters in which other parties were concerned, that, while it was regrettable that there was distrust, he could hardly expect Collectors of districts, in view of the facts that had been placed before him, to welcome the scheme. Moreover, however unobjectionable it might appear in theory, it was open to grave practical objections and would

certainly lead to a continuous agitation on the part of tenants, at any rate, in regard to their rents. No Government could abrogate its functions in the manner suggested and provincial autonomous governments of the future would have grave cause of complaint against the present Government, if they allowed any political party to intervene in the way suggested. Mr. Gandhi asked whether I objected to a combination of tenants, for common purposes. I said that I could not take legal objection to it, but I thought that such combinations almost inevitably led to trouble and disturbed the relations between landlords and tenants. He then said that, if there were no objections to a combination of tenants, what objection could there be to Congress representing the interests of the tenants, Congress assisting the cause of tenants by appeals to zamindars on the grounds of humanity. He suggested that zamindars themselves would find such an arrangement advantageous. I pointed out that Congress did not command the universal support he seemed to think. Muslims, for instance, were intensely hostile to it, and there were many zamindars who regarded its activities with the greatest apprehension and suspicion. In fact the general tendency of the Congress to interfere in other people's affairs was the cause of a good deal of existing unrest. I then explained that the objections would apply equally whatever political party was concerned. I asked him whether, for instance, he considered that it would conduce to harmony if the Muslim League interfered in the Punjab between a Hindu landlord and a Muhammadan tenant.

Mr. Gandhi then said that Congress had always supported the cause of tenants and that it would be impossible for him to stand by and see tenants ill-treated by landlords without trying to help them. I said that I was quite sure that the local Government would do everything to discourage ill-treatment of tenants in order to enforce payment of rent and that they would be only too glad if tenants filed criminal complaints. In any case, whatever might be the theoretical position, organized interference by Congress at the present time in matters affecting land revenue and rent would inevitably lead to serious trouble and had to be ruled out. He then asked what he was to do about it. He had previously said that he was very concerned about affairs in the United Provinces and felt that he himself would have to try to put matters right there. He had also mentioned his desire to discuss matters with the Governor. I suggested that the proper course for the Congress was to leave things alone so that the scheme of the local Government might be put into operation, that it might be presumed that, if incidental adjustments in the scheme were necessary, these would be made and that the local Government would pursue a policy in accordance with the requirements of the situation. I said that I could not say anything about his interview with the Governor, but, if one were granted, I felt sure that the Governor would be able to satisfy him that there was no intention of demanding land revenue in excess of the capacity of the land revenue payers to pay, that it was the desire of

the local Government that landlords should not demand excessive rent, and that they would actively discourage ill-treatment by landlords for the purpose of exacting rent. I gathered that Mr. Gandhi would not, in any case, be able to see the Governor before the return of Sir Malcolm Hailey.

The final understanding was that Mr. Gandhi would do what he could to stop the present activities in the United Provinces relating to land revenue and rent and that he would seek an interview with Sir Malcolm Hailey on his return. My impressions regarding this part of the conversation were that Mr. Gandhi was ignorant of a great deal that had been going on and that he generally disapproved of it. He was also evidently apprehensive regarding the possible consequences of agrarian and communal trouble combined. At the same time, the scheme of Tahsil Committees (which I take to be Jawaharlal's) had certain attractions for him and it no doubt represents one side of the Congress programme to get hold of the rural classes by acting as an intermediary between Government and the people and exercise functions which belong properly to Government. I doubt whether Jawaharlal and other leaders of the United Provinces will readily give up their programme, and I should not be surprised if Gandhi had considerable difficulties in dealing with them. In the mean time he is in no doubt regarding the action which the local Government will at once find it necessary to take and the further measures that may be necessary if the activities continue. This knowledge should operate in making him exercise greater control over Jawaharlal, for he does not want a breach of the settlement and it appeared that even before our conversation he was uneasy regarding the United Provinces.

5. I next brought up the subject of the issue by the All-India Congress Committee of a directory which includes a list of mills that had not given a certain undertaking. Mr. Gandhi said that the directory had been issued before the arrangement had been finally reached by which the Congress were not to issue any such list or to make any reference to the Congress ban. He said that he had already given instructions that no such list would issue in future. I again emphasized what Government regarded as essentials in connection with the movement in favour of Indian goods, namely, that the methods should be confined to persuasion, propaganda and advertisements and that the object should be economic and not political. I said that, if Government found that other methods were being pursued, they would take what action they considered to be necessary. Mr. Gandhi agreed.

I then mentioned the question of racial discrimination which appeared to be involved in some of the undertakings which the agents of mills had given, e.g., provisions regarding share capital and *personnel* of the management. I said that, although the matter had not been raised during the course of the conversations which led to the settlement, it should be understood that Government regarded as objectionable activities which involved discrimination between British and Indian firms engaged in business in India; that the views of the

Government of India were contained in their Reforms Despatch and that these held good. Further, although we had not received specific complaints on this matter, it was not improbable that we might receive them, and that there was no doubt that attempts to get undertakings from English firms in India involving provisions of this kind would create much feeling in India and would emphasize the necessity of making provision against discrimination in the new constitution. I suggested to him the folly of the Congress in pursuing a course which was likely to alienate English feeling and so prejudice the friendly atmosphere created at the Round Table Conference. Mr. Gandhi was non-committal on this subject, but said that he had given the question of discrimination much thought, that he recognized the advisability of going slow in matters on which British opinion was strong, that the question of discrimination mainly arose in matters such as shipping, and he gave expression to sentiments about the preservation of Indian civilization (which I see he mentioned in his address today to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry).

6. I mentioned a report just received from the Punjab Government to the effect that "a dealer in foreign cloth in Amritsar had been 'persuaded' by Dr. Kitchlew to pay fine of Rs. 3,000 to Congress funds". He had refused to make a public apology in the Jallianwala Bagh. I said that, while the dealer in question would probably say if questioned that the so-called fine was a free gift, it was very difficult to believe that this was so, and incidents of this kind which were coming to the notice of Government left little doubt that the principle of individual freedom of action was not being observed. He promised himself to make enquiries during his forthcoming visit to Amritsar. Incidentally he observed that picketing had been much reduced and that the sale of foreign cloth was on the increase, but I do not know what basis there is for these statements. I told him that we were still receiving a number of complaints from Bihar and Orissa about picketing which seemed to be worse there than in any other province. I said that I would send him another batch of complaints just received and that it was his duty to see that matters were put right.

7. I told him that local Governments had, since the settlement, deliberately abstained from prosecutions on account of political activity, so that the settlement might not be prejudiced, that there was, however, no reason why they should further abstain and that the Government of India intended to inform local Governments that they did not wish them to hold their hand in cases where they considered prosecutions to be necessary. Mr. Gandhi merely observed that it was right that those who brought themselves within the mischief of the law should suffer the consequences.

8. Amongst the complaints which Mr. Gandhi himself made were the following:

(a) The case of a few persons expelled under the Foreigners Act. I said that I would try to discuss with the Bombay Government next week.

(b) A few cases of persons expelled from Cantonment areas. I explained the position and asked Mr. Gandhi to give me information of specific cases.

(c) The general question of civil disobedience prisoners still in jail. His complaint, which was not seriously pressed, was that some prisoners coming within the amnesty had not been released. He mentioned, in particular, a case in Muttra and again referred to Sholapur prisoners. He said that this question of prisoners was causing him difficulty. I said that there could be very few, if any, cases of non-release of prisoners coming within the amnesty, and that local Governments had acted very liberally; the question was really one of leniency towards persons not coming within the amnesty, and that we could not approach local Governments even informally in this direction so long as conditions of peace were not very definitely established and Congress were not implementing the spirit of the settlement. I promised to go through a long memorandum which had been prepared for Mr. Gandhi and which he confessed he had not had time himself to digest.

(d) To my surprise he did not raise the question of political prisoners in general — in regard to whom a resolution was passed at the Karachi Congress. He apparently does not wish to ask for anything outside the settlement.

9. I found Mr. Gandhi very friendly and reasonable. He was pleased with his success at Karachi, but depressed regarding the communal situation. He did not conceal his keenness to go to the Round Table Conference or to reach a final settlement of constitutional problems. His demands will, I fancy, be far less extravagant than some of his earlier speeches indicated, and, if he goes to London, he is likely to pay more regard to the spirit in which problems are approached and the attitude of British parties towards Indian aspirations than to the actual terms of the settlement, although he will require to be convinced that, if certain demands are not met, there are adequate reasons for not meeting them. Financial safeguards will give the most trouble and after them possibly discrimination. I believe that his present intention is to go to London not with the object of wrecking the Conference by excessive demands, but to obtain a settlement which, according to his lights, he can honourably accept. I do not think he will lightly return to India and confess failure. On the other hand, he does not profess to be over-confident of success, and he is quite candid in saying that, in the mean time, Congress will attempt to consolidate their position in case there is another fight. This is the big danger involved in the present position and the practical question that will almost certainly arise sooner or later is how far Government will be able to remain inactive. Gandhi, however, realizes the disadvantage, from his point of view, of forcing Government to take action and it is to be hoped that this knowledge will act as a brake on Congress activities. I made it quite clear to him that the so-called consolidation of the Congress position might easily produce a situation which Government could not tolerate.

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CHRONOLOGY

(*December 16, 1930—April 15, 1931*)

December 16: Gandhiji was in Yeravda Central Prison from May 5, 1930.

December 21: Forty women in Delhi jail went on hunger-strike.

December 23: Madan Mohan Malaviya was released.

December 24: Viceroy issued two ordinances.

December 25: In Bombay over 200 injured in lathi-charge.

December 27: Martial Law declared in Smyrna.

December 29: Kamala Nehru was arrested.

December 30: Volunteer organizations in Meerut declared unlawful.

1931

January 4: Mahomed Ali passed away in London, where he had gone to attend the Round Table Conference along with Shaukat Ali, Jinnah and Moonje.

January 5: In Ahmedabad Kasturba Gandhi opened Khadi Bhandar.

January 6: V. J. Patel, ex-Speaker, Legislative Assembly, was released.

January 7: Rabindranath Tagore left London for India.

January 9: Dr. Hardikar of Hindustani Seva Dal was convicted.

January 10: Bombay gave rousing reception to V. J. Patel.

January 11: Bombay High Court quashed conviction of Nariman.

January 12: Sholapur prisoners executed.

January 14: Assembly session opened.

January 19: Plenary session of Round Table Conference.
Prime Minister made statement regarding future Constitution of India.

January 21: In Allahabad Congress Working Committee met at Swaraj Bhawan to consider statement of Prime Minister.

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At Borsad a procession of women was lathi-charged; Gangabehn Vaidya received injuries.

January 22: Jamnadas Dwarakadas was arrested.

January 23: Martial Law withdrawn in Peshawar.

January 25: Lord Irwin issued statement releasing Gandhiji and CWC members.

January 26: Gandhiji was released from Yeravda Jail at 11 p.m. With Sarojini Naidu, also released on the same day, drove to Chinchwad railway station; interview to A.P.I. on station platform; left for Bombay.

Jawaharlal Nehru and other Congress Working Committee members released.

First anniversary of Independence Day celebrated; meetings confirmed resolution of independence.

In Calcutta, Subhas Chandra Bose, Mayor, was arrested.

January 27: Gandhiji reached Bombay at 5.45 a.m.; interview to Press at noon; at Dr. P. S. S. Patil's place met Vithalbhai Patel; visited Congress Hospital.

Visited Free Emergency Hospital; left for Allahabad.

January 28: Reached Allahabad.

January 31: In Allahabad, original and substituted members of Congress Working Committee met at Swaraj Bhawan; Gandhiji spoke twice.

February 1: In *Young India*, Gandhiji reiterated his "faith in truth and ahimsa". Interviewed by Reuter's Special Correspondent; addressed public meeting.

Wrote to Viceroy on the lathi-charge on women's procession at Borsad.

February 3: Spoke to Allahabad Boatmen's Association.

Was met by Nawab of Bhopal; returned Nawab's visit.

Interview to *The Pioneer*.

February 4: Accompanied Motilal Nehru for treatment to Lucknow.

Police raided *Young India*; confiscated cyclostyling machine.

February 5: In interview to the Press, Gandhiji condemned continuous repression.

February 6: In Lucknow Motilal Nehru passed away; body taken to Allahabad.

Gandhiji returned to Allahabad; spoke at funeral.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, M. R. Jayakar, T. B. Sapru and other RTC delegates landed in Bombay.

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February 7: Gandhiji in message on Motilal Nehru exhorted countrymen to "deserve this hero's sacrifice by each sacrificing . . . to attain freedom".

February 9: In Press statement made suggestions on how to observe *Shraddha* Day of Motilal Nehru.
Legislative Assembly adjourned to honour Motilal Nehru.

February 10: Spoke to students.

February 12: Discussed with commercial magnates "financial safeguards in the proposed constitution".

Before *February 13:* Interviewed by *News Chronicle*, London.

February 13: Met Nawab of Bhopal at Sir S. M. Sulaiman's house; Sastri, Sapru, Jayakar, Dr. Ansari also joined.
CWC discussed political situation with some RTC delegates.

February 14: Talks continued; Gandhiji was authorized "to negotiate settlement with Viceroy."
Gandhiji wrote to Viceroy; sought appointment for meeting.

February 15: Addressed public meeting.
Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, ex-member of Legislative Assembly and substitute member, CWC, handed over Gandhiji's letter to Viceroy in Delhi.
"Motilal Day" observed.

February 16: Gandhiji left Allahabad by train for Delhi; Mahadev Desai, Mirabehn and Pyarelal accompanied.

February 17: In London, *The Daily Herald*, 17-2-1931, described Gandhiji as "an optimist and a lover of peace . . . making every effort . . . whereby co-operation can be offered".
Gandhiji detrained at Ghaziabad; after morning walk at Shahdara, drove to Dr. Ansari's house.
Spoke to people gathered in the park; received Sastri, Sapru and Jayakar, before meeting Viceroy; RTC terms and scope of Congress participation discussed.
Gandhiji held prayer meeting at Dr. Ansari's house in the evening.

February 18: At 1.40 p.m. before meeting Viceroy spoke to people assembled.
Continued talks with Viceroy from 2.30 p.m.

February 19: Summoned by Viceroy; held consultations with Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abul Kalam Azad and other CWC members; communique issued.

February 20: Gandhiji addressed public meeting.

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February 21: Interviewed by *News Chronicle*, London. Conveyed to CWC meeting result of conversations with Viceroy.

February 22: Addressed Council of All-India Muslim League.

Before *February 24:* In letter to Vithalbhai Patel who was leaving for Vienna, wished speedy recovery.

February 24: Viceroy explained to eight RTC delegates summary of talks with Gandhiji.

In Delhi Jamnalal Bajaj read out Gandhiji's message at Khaddar Pracharini Sabha meeting.

February 25: Gandhiji spoke at Hindu College.

February 26: Spoke at Sisganj Gurdwara.

February 27: Summoned by Viceroy; no final agreement.

CWC met after Gandhi-Irwin talks.

February 28: Gandhiji sent note on picketing to Lord Irwin; received from him notes on proposed settlement.

March 1: CWC altered draft formula of Gandhi-Irwin agreement without affecting the principle of its terms for truce.

Gandhiji met Viceroy at 9 p.m. Talks continued till 12.15 a.m. On return to residence at 1 a.m. informed CWC members about his discussion with Viceroy; at 2 a.m. began his silence day.

March 3: Talks with Sir George Schuster commenced at 11 a.m.; agreement reached permitting people on sea coast to pick, manufacture and sell salt; path for Congress participation in Round Table Conference cleared.

CWC meeting supported draft formula of Gandhi-Irwin agreement.

Gandhiji met Viceroy.

March 4: Resumed talks with Viceroy at night; agreement reached. CWC gave unanimous support to Gandhi-Irwin agreement.

March 5: At Viceroy's house Lord Irwin and Gandhiji signed the provisional settlement which was officially announced at 5 p.m.

CWC passed resolution endorsing the provisional settlement and called for action in accordance with it.

Gandhiji issued statement to the Press on the settlement.

March 6: Interviewed by S. Hasan Ali Khan on question of zamindars' rights.

Interviewed by *Kaiser-i-Hind*.

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Interviewed by journalists.
Addressed public meeting.

March 9: Reached Ahmedabad at 9.30 p.m.

March 10: Interview to the Press.
In speech to *vanaras*, Gandhiji appealed for boycott of foreign cloth.
Addressed public meeting on provisional settlement.

March 11: Interviewed by the Press.
At Gujarat Vidyapith, addressed Ashram inmates and students and teachers of Gujarat Vidyapith.
Spoke to volunteers; spoke at Labour Union.

March 12: *Young India* reappeared in print; Gandhiji explained implications of Delhi agreement.
Left Ahmedabad for Borsad at 6.15 a.m.; alighted at Navali; advised peasants to pay up the revenue if their economic condition was good; spoke at Borsad, Ras and Sunav.

March 14: Reached Navasari in the morning by rail; at Dandi addressed public meeting; returned to Navasari, addressed Navasari Merchants' Maha Mandal; spoke at public meeting.
Spoke at Sisora; left for Bardoli.
At Jaipur State Banquet Lord Irwin observed: "Throughout conversations with Mr. Gandhi, I felt complete assurance that I could implicitly trust his word."

March 15: Gandhiji spoke at Surat.

March 16: Reached Bombay at 5 a.m.; broke silence at 8 p.m.
Addressed public meeting at Parel and Dadar.
Interviewed by Subhas Chandra Bose from 10 p.m. to 2.30 a.m.

March 17: At 7 a.m. spoke to Congress volunteers and Desh Sevikas.
Met Shaukat Ali in Khilafat House; offered condolences on the death of Mahomed Ali.
Interviewed by *Scrutator*.
Received deputation of members of Indian Merchants' Chamber headed by Sir Chunilal Mehta.
At Azad Maidan addressed mass meeting.

March 18: At Vile Parle spoke to Congress workers.

March 19: Reached Delhi.
Met Viceroy regarding commutation of death sentences of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru.
Met H. W. Emerson, Home Secretary.

March 20: Lord Irwin paid tributes to Gandhiji's honesty, sincerity and patriotism at a dinner given by ruling Princes.

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March 21: Gandhiji gave interview to Press.
Viceroy convened conference of ruling Princes for informal exchange of views on framing the new constitution; Gandhiji and Malaviya attended.

Before *March 23:* Gandhiji gave interview to *Chicago Tribune.*

March 23: In letter to Lord Irwin appealed for reconsideration of question of commutation of death sentences of Bhagat Singh and others.
Issued statement on Bhagat Singh's execution.
Left Delhi for Karachi.

Before *March 24:* Gandhiji gave interview to *Manchester Guardian*, London.

March 24: "Day of Mourning".

March 25: Reached Karachi.
In Kanpur, Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, a prominent Congress leader, was killed while pacifying rioters.

March 26: In Karachi Gandhiji gave interview to Press.
Issued statement on Kanpur riots.
Addressed, on behalf of CWC, deputation of Indian Merchants' Association.
Inaugural speech at Karachi Congress.

March 27: At Subjects Committee meeting Gandhiji spoke on Kanpur riots.
Interviewed by Subhas Chandra Bose and Satyamurti on question of release of Bengal detenus and prisoners sentenced during civil disobedience movement.
Interviewed by Congress workers on question of Federation.
Spoke to deputation of Red Shirts of Naujawan Bharat Sabha.

March 28: At Subjects Committee meeting, spoke on resolution on provisional settlement; the resolution was adopted.

March 30: Gandhiji spoke at Congress session.
Karachi Congress passed resolution endorsing Gandhi-Irwin settlement; authorized Gandhiji to represent the Congress at RTC.

March 31: Gandhiji, in reply to the Karachi civic address, congratulated Mayor Jamshed Mehta on excellent arrangements.
At Congress session, spoke on resolution on fundamental rights; the resolution was adopted.

April 1: Gandhiji interviewed by *The Statesman.*

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At AICC meeting, proposed new CWC members.
Addressed Jamiat-ul-Ulema conference.
Spoke at Parsi Rajakiya Mandal.

April 2: Addressed Sind National Service League.

April 6: In Delhi, issued Press statement on communal problem.
Interview with H. W. Emerson.

April 7: In Delhi at Council Hall, Gandhiji spoke to Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

April 8: At Amritsar, discussed with Sikhs methods of finding solution to communalism.
Discussed boycott of foreign cloth and peaceful picketing with deputation of Piece-goods Merchants' Association.
Left Amritsar for Ahmedabad.

April 9: Passed through Delhi *en route* to Ahmedabad.
Interviewed by *Tej*.

April 10: Reached Ahmedabad.
Cancelled Broach trip owing to indisposition.

April 11: Delivered convocation address at Gujarat Vidyapith.

April 12: At Ambalal Sarabhai's bungalow, where Gandhiji was staying, met J. H. Garrett, Commissioner, Northern Division.

April 13: Addressed Gujarat Vidyapith Graduates' conference.

April 14: With Kasturba Gandhi, visited Sabarmati Ashram to see Imam Saheb who was very seriously ill and other patients.

April 15: Interview to Associated Press of India.
Gandhiji left Ahmedabad for Bombay.

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ADDENDUM

Page 134, Item 183. Add date-line :

ALLAHABAD, *February 1, 1931*

ERRATA

PAGE		FOR	READ
52	* Lines 5-6	We perceive neither	We perceive either
98	* Para 3, lines 2-3	whiteness, that of snowy moon, flower	whiteness—that of snow, moon, flower —
145	* Item 198, para 2, line 8	Kaker	Kaku
189	Para 2, line 2	what all could be placed before the Conference.	which of the conditions could be dropped.
310	* Item 378, para 3, line 9	price	prize
323	Line 9	owl	fowl
421	* Footnote 1, line 8	Somon	Simon

* Due correction made.

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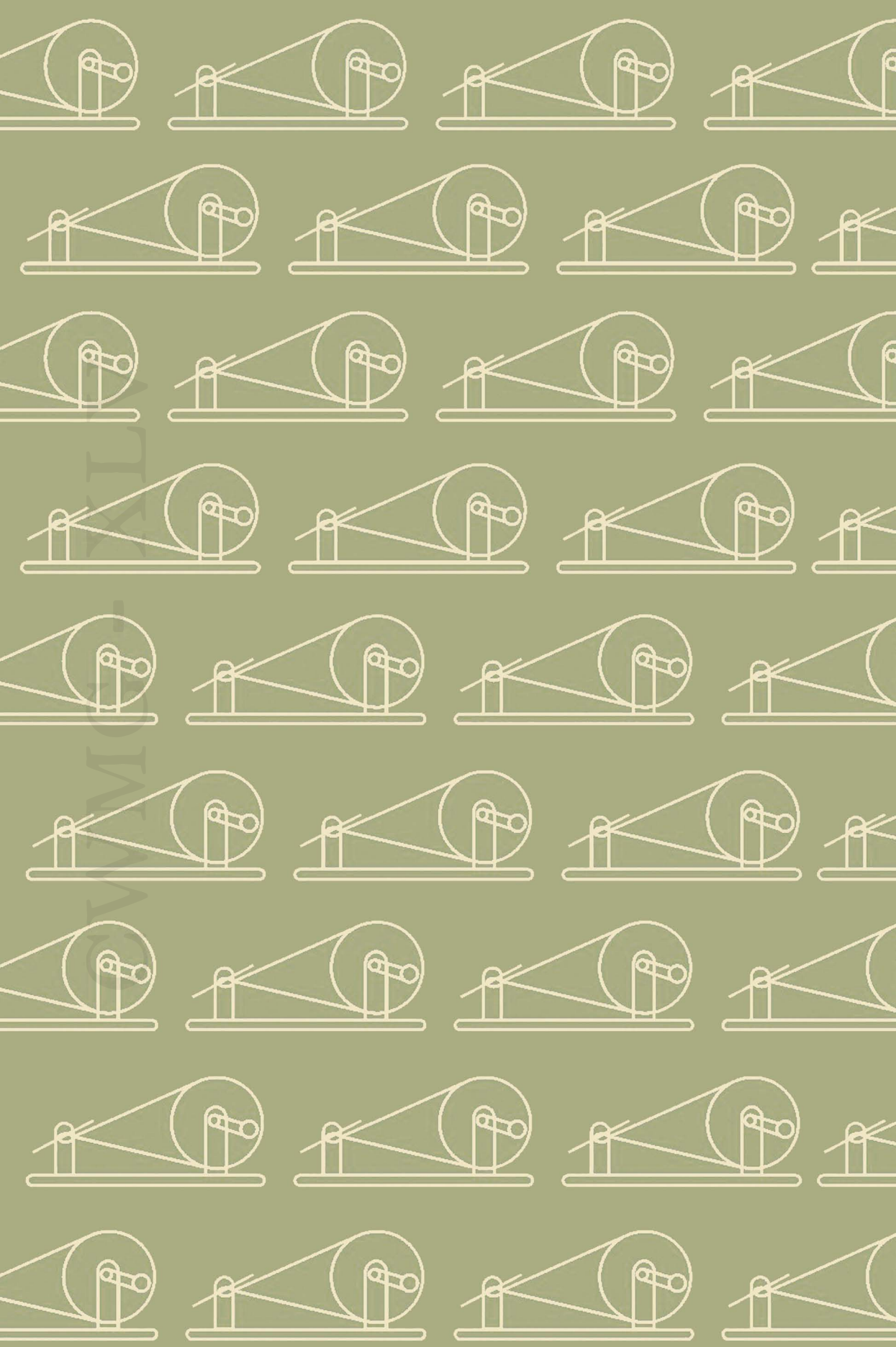
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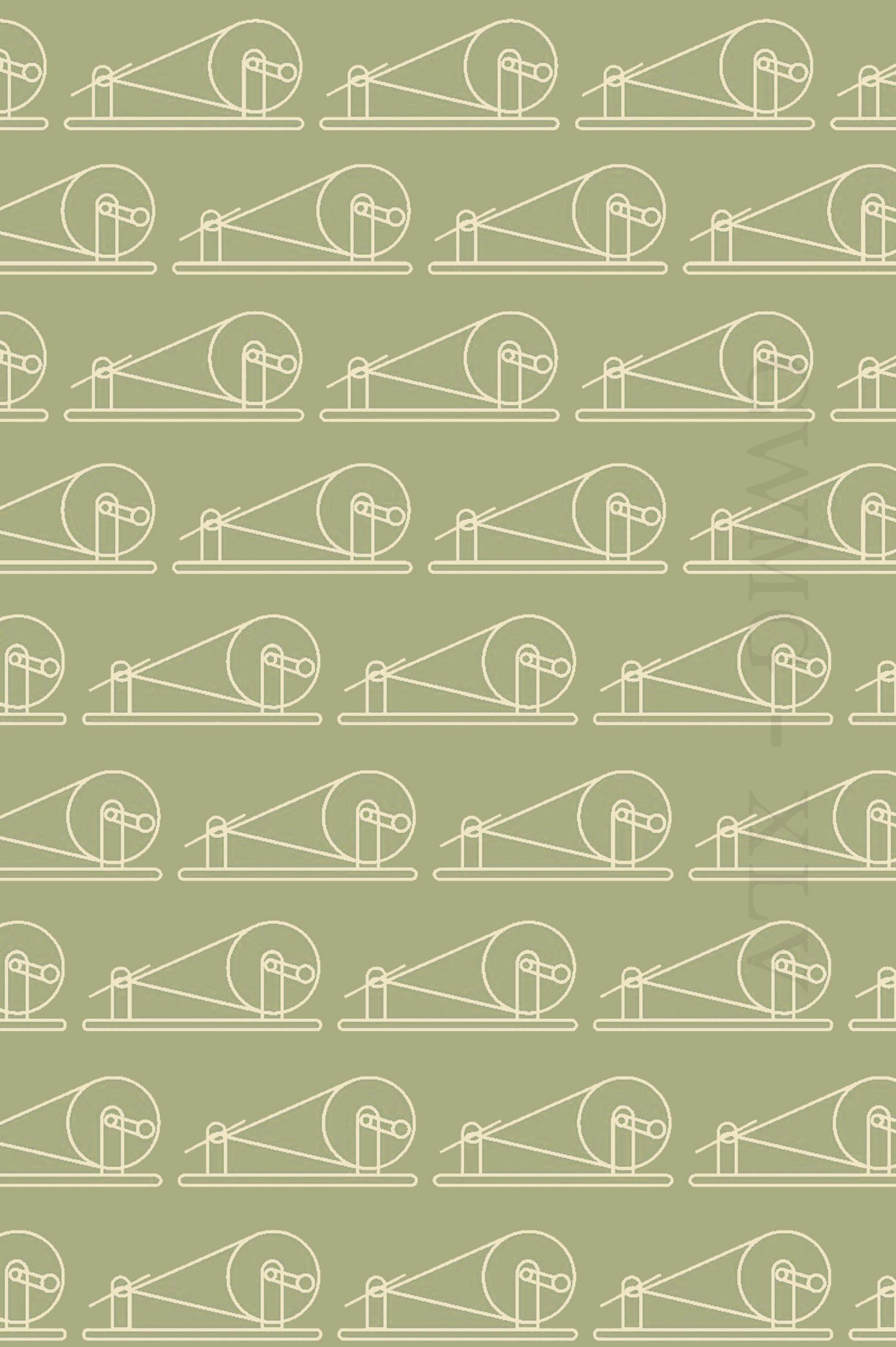
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