THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXIX

(1939)

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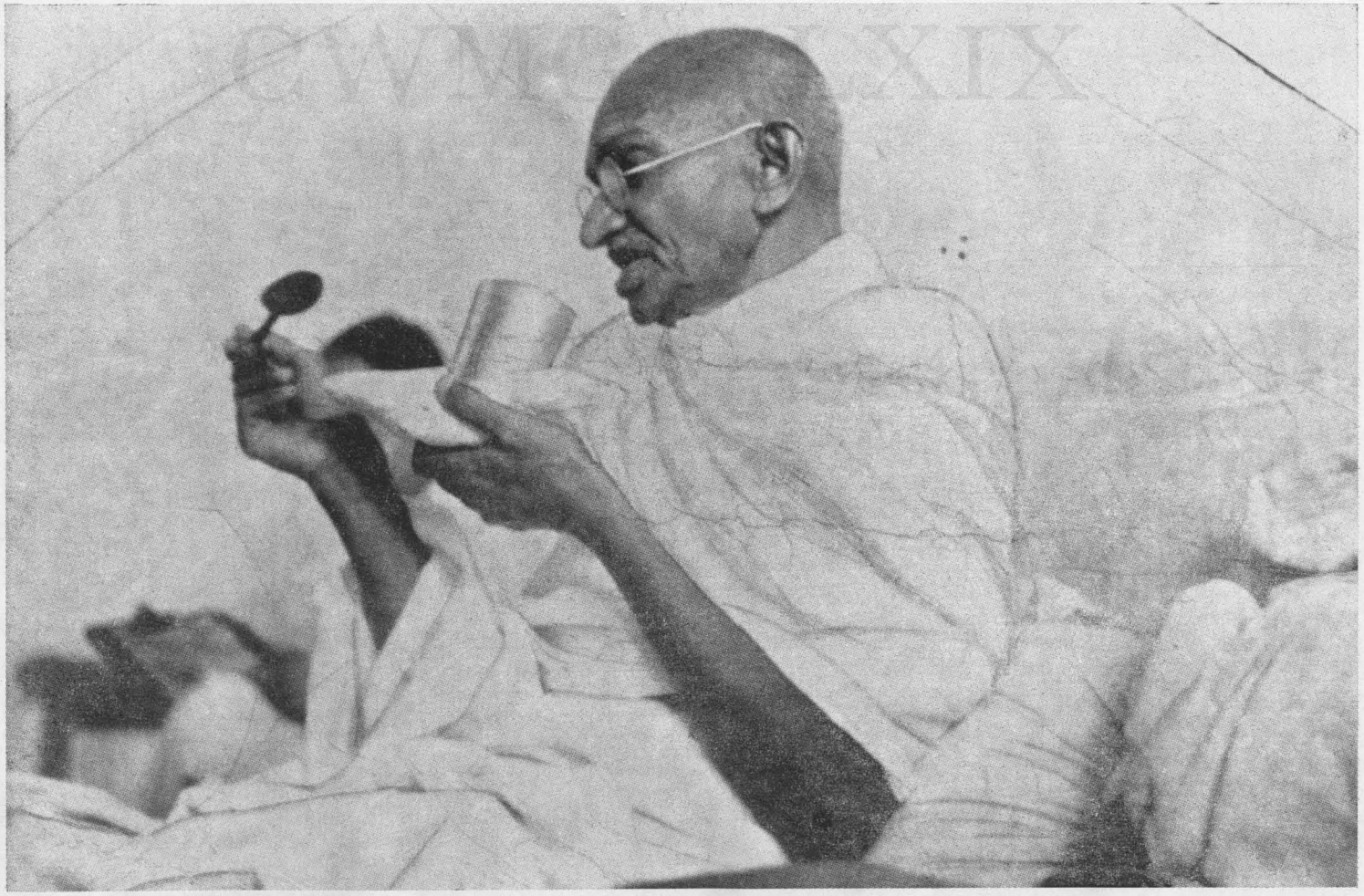
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(March 1, 1939–July 15, 1939)

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LAST MEAL BEFORE FAST, MARCH 3, 1939

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PREFACE

This volume which covers the period of four and a half months from March 1 to July 15, 1939, deals with two main questions: the popular demand for reforms in princely States and the crisis in the Congress leadership arising from Subhas Bose's impatience and Gandhiji's own conviction that the Congress had first to be strengthened and purified "so as to make it an effective vehicle for launching nation-wide satyagraha" (p. 361). The Paramount Power as well as the Princes, who had shown some readiness to join the Federation, had to be told gently but clearly that autocratic rule could not survive in the States side by side with responsible government in the provinces.

Gandhiji's personal involvement in States politics came in the wake of the movement for reforms in Rajkot, a tiny Kathiawar principality where Karamchand Gandhi had once served as Dewan and both Mohandas and Kasturba had spent their early years. The agitation led by Vallabhbhai Patel had come to an apparently successful end when the Thakore Saheb agreed to constitute a Committee of ten members, seven to be recommended by Vallabhbhai Patel and three others—officials—to be nominated by the Ruler himself. But the Thakore did not honour the agreement and, contending that he was not bound by Vallabhbhai's recommendations, without reference to him nominated four persons of his own choice to the Committee on the pretext of giving representation to the minorities, namely, Muslims, Bhayats and Harijans. The breach of agreement aroused widespread resentment and civil disobedience resulted in the imprisonment of Kasturba and Manibehn Patel. Hearing reports of repression and ill-treatment of prisoners, Gandhiji left for Rajkot on February 25 to plead with the Thakore Saheb to repair the breach of faith (Vol. LXVIII). He asked Vallabhbhai Patel to suspend civil disobedience while he himself set out on this "mission of peace".

Soon after his arrival in Rajkot on February 28, Gandhiji visited the jails and discovered for himself the severity of the repressive measures adopted by the State authorities. Realizing that "the basest human passions would be let loose if" he "allowed civil resistance to go on from day to day" (p. 34), he was impelled by an "inner urge that brooked no denial" (p. 11) to go on an indefinite fast after sending an ultimatum to the Thakore (pp. 2-5).

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The Prince's answer, which arrived minutes after the fast began on March 3, only added "fuel to the fire" (p. 14). The fast having begun, Gandhiji "passed into his haven of unperturbed calm and slept peacefully and long in the afternoon," as reported by Pyarelal. But the resolve which gave him "indescribable peace and spiritual exultation" (p. 31) had a contrary effect on his co-workers and friends. Rabindranath Tagore, Rajagopalachari, Andrews, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Amrit Kaur and Mirabehn were among those who pleaded with him to have mercy upon himself and give up the fast. The following morning Gandhiji dictated a letter to E. C. Gibson, the Resident, requesting him to transmit a message to the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, calling for "immediate intervention . . . so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb" (p. 22). The Viceroy's reply, received on the morning of March 7, suggested that the Chief Justice of India, Sir Maurice Gwyer, be requested to interpret the terms of the Thakore Saheb's letter to Vallabhbhai Patel "about the manner in which the Committee should be composed" (p. 445). To Gandhiji this seemed to "provide a basis for breaking the fast" (p. 32), which he actually did at 2 p.m. on March 7, after assuring himself of the Thakore Saheb's "immediate order for the release of prisoners" (p. 33).

Gandhiji dictated a long statement attributing the "good ending" to the prayers of millions but regarding the Viceroy "politically speaking . . . responsible for the settlement" (p. 33). Taking temporary leave of Rajkot, he advised the people to do their duty as citizens and assured them that in people's swaraj rights came, when needed, for better performance of duty (p. 52). He wanted every man and woman to get trained on these lines in order to achieve responsible government while he would meet the Viceroy and help to remove the "air of unreality about the freedom to come" (p. 66). Gandhiji returned to Rajkot on April 9, after a three-week stay in Delhi, morally fortified by Maurice Gwyer's Award upholding the stand taken by him that the Thakore was bound to appoint the seven nominees recommended by Vallabhbhai Patel. The Viceroy had further "undertaken to be responsible for the actions of the Thakore" and assured Gandhiji that he would "implement that promise to the full" (p. 115).

But the Thakore and his adviser Virawala had other plans and created endless difficulties by refusing to co-operate with Gandhiji in accommodating the representatives of the Muslims, the Bhayats and the Depressed Classes which he, the Thakore, had previously announced in violation of the Notification of December 26, 1938.

Gandhiji suggested enlargement of the Committee from ten to fourteen provided Vallabhbhai's nominees were raised from seven to eight so as to give them a bare majority of one (p. 124). The Ruler rejected the suggestion. Gandhiji then offered to include three of the four representatives of Muslims and Bhayats in Vallabhbhai's list provided they agreed to work as a team with the other nominees of Vallabhbhai. This offer also was rejected and Gandhiji was charged with breach of promise by both the Muslims and the Bhayats, (pp. 137-9 and 169). A hostile demonstration by the Bhayats at his prayer meeting on April 16 caused Gandhiji intense pain. On April 20, in the course of an interview with Gibson, Gandhiji made a "sporting offer", which he later confessed was "born of despair" as he was tired of "fighting unseen forces in Rajkot" (p. 158). The offer was that the Rajkot Rajakiya Praja Parishad should withdraw altogether from the proposed Committee and the Thakore should nominate all the members, but if the constitution framed by this Committee was not in terms of the Notification, the seven nominees of Vallabhbhai Patel could submit a dissenting report for final decision by the Chief Justice of India. Gandhiji did not even consult his colleagues before committing himself. There seemed to be no way out of the "hopeless unreality of the situation" (p. 159).

The Thakore rejected even this offer. Speaking to the Parishad workers before his departure for Brindaban (Bihar), where the Gandhi Seva Sangh was to meet, Gandhiji confessed his defeat and attributed it to moral failings, after "holding a silent court of enquiry within" (p. 163). He had discovered in Virawala extreme contempt for the Parishad people. But genuine satyagraha based on perfect non-violence "should never excite contempt in the opponent even when it fails to command regard or respect" (p. 165). He therefore urged them to "drain to the last the bitter cup of personal indignities and humiliations" (p. 166), and tell Virawala that they would relieve Gandhiji as well as the Viceroy of all responsibility and would rely on him to implement the Notification of December 26, 1938.

On the train to Bombay on April 24, Gandhiji issued a statement recalling how Virawala had met his "sporting offer" with the retort, "But if you are not satisfied . . . you want to have the report and dissent examined by the Hon. the Chief Justice . . . Why not trust His Highness and his adviser through and through?" These words suddenly illumined to Gandhiji his "imperfect handling of ahimsa" (p. 170) and so he told Virawala, "I am defeated. May you win" (p. 171).

Returning to Rajkot from the Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings at Brindaban, Gandhiji explained to co-workers the new light he had perceived and said, "My legal position was correct. But ahimsa does not go by legal rights. . . . I must be content to plod on with infinite patience. It is no mango trick . . . I am resolved to try and exhaust every resource of satyagraha to convert Durbar Virawala" (pp. 256-7). He had realized that it was his moral weakness that had prompted him to appeal to the Paramount Power and seek "adventitious aid" unbecoming of a true satyagrahi, and, therefore, wished to renounce the Award (p. 267). He took the "momentous decision" at six o'clock on the evening of May 17. Writing in *Harijan*, Gandhiji apologized to the Viceroy and Sir Maurice Gwyer for having in his weakness thrust on them a needless burden. He admitted that "in common with my co-workers, I have harboured evil thoughts " about Virawala, and further declared: "Let it be said to my discredit that I have been guilty of playing what may be called a double game. . . . Only trust can beget trust. . . . My faith in the sovereign efficacy of ahimsa burns brighter for my confession and repentance" (pp. 270-1).

Gandhiji felt that he owed it to Virawala to remove the offence of securing the Award over his head and he was ready to do "anything short of sacrificing my sense of self-respect or honour." Soon the opportunity for such atonement came to him in the form of an invitation to attend a Durbar at the Rajkot palace. He accepted it because "he who atones for sins never calculates; he pours out the whole essence of his contrite heart". By attending the Durbar Gandhiji had only obeyed the Biblical injunction: "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain" (p. 287). However, the morality of grace which Gandhiji taught and tried himself to practise did not supersede the ordinary morality of one's station and its duties. His renunciation, he thought, "should act as a double spur to the Viceregal duty of seeing that the Rajkot Notification was carried out," and he declared his belief that "the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term" (p. 376).

To friends who complained that he was disturbing national life without notice by going to Rajkot instead of attending the momentous Congress session at Tripuri, Gandhiji's answer was that Tripuri was a preparation but Rajkot was a skirmish (p. 118) and that in Tripuri there were "leaders as courageous, as self-sacrificing and as devoted" as himself (p. 36). But these leaders were divided against one another and a grave crisis erupted at Tripuri over the issue of the future direction of Congress policy. Since Subhas

Bose's election as Congress President had been widely interpreted to mean rejection of the policy hitherto followed by the Congress under Gandhiji's guidance, Pandit G. B. Pant moved a resolution expressing confidence in the old Working Committee and calling on the President to form a new Working Committee "in accordance with Gandhiji's wishes". But the differences between Bose on the one hand and the other members of the old Committee and Gandhiji on the other were so wide that Gandhiji saw no possibility of bridging them and he, therefore, advised Bose to form his own Working Committee and seek approval of the A. I. C. C. for his programme, and, if it was not accepted, to resign (pp. 96-7). Bose resigned at the A. I. C. C. meeting at Calcutta on April 29, 1939, and on May 3 formed a new group called the Forward Bloc.

The difference between Gandhiji and Bose related to Bose's insistence on giving six months' ultimatum to the British Government and starting mass action after its expiry. Gandhiji saw no atmosphere in the country for non-violent mass action (pp. 97, 126 and 279) and felt that "any mass movement . . . undertaken at the present moment in the name of non-violence . . . will bring discredit on the Congress" and "spell disaster for the Congress struggle for independence . . ."(p. 390). He even pleaded guilty "to being over-confident and hasty in launching previous civil disobedience campaigns" (p. 102) and felt that he had made "unlawful compromises" with himself in having been "satisfied with mere abstention from physical violence" (p. 314). Gandhiji's attitude to the States' people's struggle was marked by similar caution. In Travancore, Jaipur, Mewar and other States, Gandhiji advised suspension of civil disobedience because the workers had been lax in observing "the unexciting rules of preparation", in going through the necessary stages of plodding (pp. 102-3). Another very important reason was the need to avoid "brutalization of human nature" (p. 323) and also popular violence, no matter how caused or by whom instigated. To this general policy of suspending civil disobedience there were two provisos. First the "reign of law" had to replace, however gradually, the "reign of a person or persons, however well-meaning they may be" (p. 324). To enable this gradual transfer of power by peaceful means and by consent, the States' people could lower their immediate demands, not out of weakness, but only so as really to hasten their progress to their goal. "Civil liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj. It is the breath of political and social life. It is the foundation of freedom. There is no room there for dilution or compromise. It is the water of life. I have never heard of water

being diluted'' (p. 356). Secondly in order to create the atmosphere of non-violence (p. 217), the one thing needful was persistence in the constructive programme. Every satyagrahi should ''keep a regular diary and account for every minute of his time in terms of constructive service'' (p. 8). People could be knit together in a common bond only by silent service (p. 75).

At the meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, Gandhiji spoke out his mind frankly on many vexed problems. Rajkot, which was still very much of a problem, was proving for him ''the wonderful laboratory of pure non-violence'' (p. 193). Between Bose and himself the differences of opinion were not personal at all, but great and fundamental, as they related to the resources and the training in discipline and non-violence needed for the struggle (p. 210). The differences between himself and Jawaharlal were not so significant; anyhow their hearts were one. ''Without him I feel myself crippled. He also feels more or less the same way'' (p. 211). On tolerance in politics, he said, ''Let us look upon the faults of our colleagues . . . as bits of straw or dust particles and get on with them; let us see our own faults as mountains'' (p. 194). Again, we should look with equal eye on moderates and radicals, seeing our dharma with our eyes and their dharma with theirs. ''We must emphasize the points on which there is agreement. We should not stress the points of difference'' (p. 212). As for the spread of Gandhian thought, it could not be done through books but only ''through being lived''. A living example would be more valuable than a million books. ''Intellectual growth of a satyagrahi depends on his following his principles. . . . There should be unity between mind and heart. When the mind and heart are united, we become unconquerable. The mind acquires the power to solve all questions'' (p. 199). Gandhiji emphasized that the path of satyagraha was closed to those who lacked the inner strength of faith in God or faith in the *atman* (pp. 226-7). No one really lacked this faith. ''For everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to the NTH degree is God'' (p. 88).

When the celebrated Meenakshi Temple was formally thrown open to Harijans on July 8 and the news reached Gandhiji in Abbottabad, he welcomed the event and lauded the reform as even more significant than the famous Travancore Proclamation of 1936, as the change in Madurai had been ''brought about by the popular will and reflected a decided conversion of the temple-goers'' (p. 422).

Satyagraha was the active pursuit of irenic ends by non-violent means. Non-co-operation, Gandhiji told Agatha Harrison, was only a method of meeting the opponent in order to convert him

and secure his co-operation consistently with truth and justice. The technique sought to liquidate antagonism but not the antagonist himself (p. 41). Gandhiji was ever ready to concede that "there may be a different way and a better way than mine of doing a thing" (p. 256). He said: "There is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice" (p. 401). The best should not become an enemy of the good and non-violence of courage. The last thing he wanted was that our people should be turned into cowards. He would far rather that people "died bravely dealing a blow and receiving a blow than died in abject terror" (p. 313). Cowardice was far worse than violence and he urged "every believer in ahimsa to see that cowardice is not propagated in the name of non-violence" (p. 316). Speaking about the unfailing power of ahimsa, Gandhiji said: ". . . there are chords in every human heart. If we only know how to strike the right chord, we bring out the music" (p. 257).

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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.

Where an item has no date in the source, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line 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, M.M.U. to the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit and S.G. to the photostats of the Sevagram collection available in the Gandhi National Museum and Library (Rashtriya Gandhi 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. A TELEGRAM[1]

RAJKOT,
March 1, 1939

I AM UNABLE TO SAY ANYTHING. I AM MAKING DESPERATE EFFORTS. POSTPONE THE OPENING DATE OF THE EXHIBITION TO MARCH SIXTH.[2] INFORM SETH GOVINDDAS.

The Hindu, 2-3-1939

2. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[3]

RAJKOT,
March 1, 1939

In the morning, I saw peasants from Halenda Khari, Hodthali and several other places who had complaints to make about the delivery of the State's portion of the crops and against lathi charges and the like. There were nearly one hundred and fifty of them including about twenty to twenty-five women. I did not know that I was going to meet them this morning. Therefore, I had not informed the Khan Saheb[4]. Happily he dropped in after I had proceeded with the conversation. He was able to listen to what the peasants had to say and asked them certain questions also. At this stage I do not want to go into the details of these allegations. After the talk with the peasants,

[1] This was sent "in response to a request" from the Reception Committee of the 52nd session of the Indian National Congress at Tripuri. The telegram was presumably addressed to Shankerlal Banker. In "The Rajkot Fast [–I]" (*Harijan*, 25-3-1939), Pyarelal explains: "There was a desperate S. O. S. from Shankerlal Banker and Seth Govinddas [Chairman, Reception Committee] telling Gandhiji that his presence alone at Tripuri would help to pull the Reception Committee through a number of financial and other difficulties and even if he could reach there by sixth, they would be satisfied . . ."

[2] Gandhiji was to open the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition on March 3. As Gandhiji could not leave Rajkot, Jawaharlal Nehru opened the exhibition on March 6.

[3] The source says that "after the evening prayers Gandhiji reviewed the day's work".

[4] Fateh Mohammed Khan, First Member, Rajkot State Council

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I had a prolonged conversation with the Khan Saheb, as usual of a friendly character.

In the afternoon I saw co-workers and had a full discussion with them for an hour and a half over the questions agitating the public mind. The discussion with the workers was very interesting in that they asked some penetrating questions and I endeavoured to put before them my view of what the implications of true satyagraha were. I believe that they are working with a full sense of their responsibility. In this connection, I am glad to be able to say that the authorities allowed some leaders, who are in jail, to come to me because I needed their assistance for the purpose of carrying on negotiations. They were kept with me for a few hours, and taken back to their respective quarters at about 6.30 p. m.

Gandhiji told the Associated Press Special Correspondent that his talks tonight with Durbar Virawala[1] were inconclusive and that he was waiting to hear from him tomorrow to resume the talks.

The Hindu, 2-3-1939

3. *LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH*[2]

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 2, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB[3],

I write this letter not without hesitation, but duty compels it.

You know the reason for my coming here. For three days I had conversation with Durbar Virawala. He gave me cause for intense dissatisfaction. He seems to be incapable of keeping his resolutions from moment to moment. Such is my opinion based upon my three days' contact with him. In my opinion, his guidance has harmed the State.

Now I come to the object of this letter. At the time of leaving Wardha I had resolved that I would not leave Rajkot without inducing fulfilment of your promise. But I had never thought that I would have to be here for more than one or two days or that I would have to suffer what I have suffered.

[1] Dewan of Rajkot State
[2] The letter appeared as "translated from original Gujarati by Gandhiji".
[3] The addressee was the Ruler of Rajkot State.

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My patience is exhausted. I should hasten to Tripuri if it is at all possible. If I do not go, over a thousand co-workers will be disappointed and lakhs of poor people will become disconsolate. Time, therefore, has a special value for me at this juncture.

I beseech you, therefore, to adopt with a full heart the following suggestions of mine and free me from anxiety by speeding me on my return journey tomorrow.

1. You should announce to the people that our Notification No. 50,[1] dated 26th December, stands.

2. You should cancel your Notification No. 61,[2] dated 21st January. Names 2, 3, 5 and 7 of the Reforms Committee announced by you should stand and you should accept on behalf of the Rajkot Rajakiya Praja Parishad the following names:

1. U. N. Dhebar,
2. P. P. Anada,
3. V. M. Shukla,
4. J. H. Joshi,
5. S. V. Modi.

The underlying motive of this suggestion is that the Parishad should have a majority on its side.

[3.] Shri U. [N.] Dhebar should be appointed as President of the Committee.

4. You should appoint three or less than three officials as guides and advisers to the Committee. They should be such as I could accept on behalf of the Parishad. They should have no vote in the proceedings of the Committee.

5. You should issue instructions to the heads of the several departments of the State to furnish to the Committee such papers, figures and other material and assistance as it may need. You should appoint for the use of the Committee suitable quarters in the Secretariat.

6. My advice is that the advisers whom you may appoint in terms of Clause 4 should form the Executive Council and

[1] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* Vol. LXVIII, p. 135.

[2] According to *Harijan*, 4-2-1939, the Notification had given the names of the following "seven gentlemen, representing all important interests in the State, to work along with the three officers of the State . . . to draw up, after proper investigation, . . . a scheme of reforms with a view to associating the people more closely with the administration of the State": (1) P. P. Anada, President, Praja Parishad Sabha, (2) J. J. Dhirubha, (3) D. H. Valimohmed, (4) P. D. Malaviya, (5) M. M. Tank, President, Municipal Corporation, (6) Dr. D. J. Gajjar and (7) H. Abdul Ali.

that Council should be responsible for the management of the State in the spirit of the Notification of the 26th December so as not to do anything likely to be injurious to its main purpose. One of them should be the President of the Council. You will unhesitatingly endorse the actions of the Council. If you deem it fit to appoint other persons than the advisers of the Committee as Councillors, the appointment should be made in consultation with me.

The Committee should commence its proceedings on the 7th instant and finish them by the 22nd instant. The enforcement of the recommendations of the Committee should take place within seven days of their being in your hands.

7. The satyagrahi prisoners should be discharged tomorrow. Fines and execution orders should be stopped and fines already collected and confiscations should be returned.

I gather from the conversation with Mr. Gibson[1] that he will not interfere with whatever you may do in connection with the Notification of the 26th December.

If you cannot see your way to accept my suggestions before noon tomorrow, my fast will commence from that time and will continue till after acceptance.

I trust that you will not regard the language of my letter to be stiff. And if I do use stiff language or my action appears to be such, I claim that right in connection with you. My father had the privilege of serving the State when your grandfather was its Chief. Your father regarded me as a father to him. Indeed at a public meeting he called me even his guru, but I have been guru to no one; therefore, I have never regarded him as a disciple. You are therefore as a son to me. It is possible that you do not regard me as father. If you do, you will accept joyfully my submission in a moment and, in addition, you will express your regret for what has befallen your people after 26th December. You will please not consider me your or the State's enemy. I can never be anybody's enemy and have never been. I have implicit faith that in the acceptance of my submission to you lies your good, your prestige and your duty. If you will observe that in some of my suggestions I have gone outside the four corners of the Notification of the 26th December, such departure will be found to be merely superficial. You will note that in not interfering with your nominations of the persons outside the Parishad I have had solely in view your prestige. Thus the departure is purely in favour of the State. If the other departures may not be so

[1] E. C. Gibson, Resident of Rajkot State

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considered, they are solely due to, what I have considered, your breach of promise. In my view they are for the protection of both the parties and the people and for the purpose of preventing another breakdown of the Settlement.

In conclusion, I give you my word of honour that if I am then alive, I shall critically examine the report that the Reforms Committee may prepare. If I am not, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel may do so, and the examination will be such as to make sure that no damage is done to your prestige or to the State or your people.

I am sending a copy of this[1] letter to Mr. Gibson. I am not handing this letter to the Press and I entertain the hope that you will kindly adopt my suggestion so that I may never have to publish this letter.

May God bless you and give you right guidance.[2]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Harijan, 11-3-1939

4. *LETTER TO VIRAWALA*

March 2, 1939

What am I to do? I am writing this after having remained awake half the night. During the last three days, you have made me pass through a very bitter experience. I could see no desire on your part to adhere to any statement you made. All the time you appeared anxious to get out of every commitment. Last night's talk was the culmination, and I am now able to understand why it is that the citizens of Rajkot stand in terror of you.

You have invited me to study your whole career. I accepted that invitation. But you have really not left very much for me to investigate. God has not given me that much strength, that much purity and that much non-violence for, otherwise I would have been able to enter your heart. I feel ashamed

[1] The source, however, has "your"; *vide* also "Letter to E. C. Gibson", p. 6.

[2] In "The Rajkot Fast [–I]", Pyarelal explains: "Gandhiji forbade all discussion as to the merits of his step. He only remarked, 'I want the note to be delivered to the Thakore Saheb by 12 noon today. That to me is the God-appointed time and the hour'." For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix I.

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and sad that I have been unable to win you over. I believe that the influence you have over the Thakore Saheb is not an influence for his good. My heart wept night before last when I saw his mental helplessness and I hold you responsible for it.

I have just addressed a letter[1] to the Thakore Saheb and am sending this at the same time to you. You will no doubt see that letter and, therefore, I am not sending you a copy of it. Although you had given me your final decision, I would still request you to advise the Thakore Saheb to accept my suggestions. May God enter your heart.

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, p. 346

5. *LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON*

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 2, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

With the deepest sorrow but as a matter of sheer duty, I have just sent to H. H. the Thakore Saheb a letter[2] of which I enclose a copy herewith. I have not been able yet to translate it. In order to save time, therefore, I have sent you only a copy of the Gujarati original. I hope, however, to send [an] English translation in the course of the day. You will then please regard it as the only authorized translation or, as if it were, the original.

May I bespeak your full-hearted co-operation, in so far as it lies in your power, in the prosecution of my proposal?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 11-3-1939

[1] & [2] *Vide* pp. 2-5.

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6. TALK TO SATYAGRAHI VOLUNTEERS[1]

March 2, 1939

After the evening prayer Gandhiji gave a talk to satyagrahi volunteers. They had distinguished themselves by their bravery and proved their non-violent mettle. But that was not what had brought him to Rajkot. What filled him with concern was the growth and spread of the cult of goondaism. In Travancore, in Talcher, in Dhenkanal, and finally in Rajkot itself, he had noticed that the continuance of civil resistance was provoking more and more violence on the part of the authorities and brutalizing them progressively. He had therefore called a halt to civil resistance and taken upon himself the entire burden of the fight. He hoped through Rajkot to find a remedy for this cult of the cudgel and the hired bravoes with which the civil resister was being confronted. [He said:]

I see the hand of God in this. I could not have chosen a purer or a nobler means for this than the Rajkot issue. It is essentially a moral issue. Nothing could be clearer, no breach of promise could be more flagrant needing rectification.

He advised the satyagrahis to be extremely wary and beware of having any truck or making any compromise with violence. There could be no 'united front' between violence and non-violence; the two were incompatible. If, therefore, in any place, those who did not believe in non-violence were in preponderance, the satyagrahis should isolate themselves from them and refuse to be drawn into civil resistance in conjunction with them.

One of the satyagrahi volunteers, referring to what some of them had been put through by the State authorities, asked if satyagraha required them to submit to illegal and inhuman treatment to which very often they were subjected. For instance, if a police officer put a satyagrahi under arrest and ordered him to enter a prison van, the latter was bound to obey the order. But supposing he was ordered to enter a bus in order to be taken to a distant place in the jungle, there to be bundled out after a beating without even a pretext of a trial or legal procedure of any kind, was he still to obey the policeman in question? Gandhiji replied:

A satyagrahi courts suffering and submits to it willingly and cheerfully in the hope therethrough to melt the heart of the opponent. He does nothing out of compulsion. Prahlada did

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast [–I]".

not hesitate when ordered by his father to be tied to a red-hot iron post. On the contrary he eagerly embraced it and the legend says that he remained unhurt. An ideal satyagrahi would as a matter of fact be insensible to all the bodily tortures that might be inflicted upon him and experience nothing but exultation and joy under them. I know that I am far from having attained that ideal myself. But a worthy heir always adds to the legacy that he receives, and satyagraha presents infinite scope for research and further development.

A satyagrahi may, however, not obey an order that offends against his moral sense or hurts his self-respect even though it may cost him his life. Nay more, it may be one's duty to put an end to one's life, if that is the only way of protecting one's honour. Such an act would not be termed suicide. It would be the triumph of immortal spirit over the 'muddy vesture of decay' that our physical body is.

It has been my unvarying experience that God never tries a satyagrahi beyond his capacity. Somehow the strength comes to us when we need it most if we utterly rely on Him. But this needs intense preparation and self-discipline through ceaseless labour of love. Jail-going is only a small step and by no means the most important. Unaccompanied by the spirit of service, courting imprisonment and inviting beatings and lathi charges becomes a species of violence. I would therefore expect every satyagrahi to keep a regular diary and account for every minute of his time in terms of constructive service. The path of satyagraha is sharp as a razor's edge. A satyagrahi has to be ever vigilant, always in harness and never for a moment idle. Numbers do not matter in satyagraha. Even a handful of true satyagrahis, well organized and disciplined through selfless service of the masses, can win independence for India, because behind them will be the power of the silent millions. Satyagraha is soul-force. It is subtle and universal in its action. Once it is set in motion it goes forward with gathering momentum and speed till it bursts through all physical barriers and overspreads the whole world.

At the end of it he suggested to those in charge that the volunteer camp might now be dissolved and such volunteers as were not strictly required for the local work in hand might be sent back to their respective homes.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

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7. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

March 2, 1939

I am sorry to have to say 'yes' in answer to your question. I am also sorry that the information has leaked out before its time. I do not wish as yet to publish my letter[2]. All that I would like to say at this critical juncture is that it cost me a night's rest before I came to the conclusion that if the suspended struggle was not to be revived, and if the atrocities of which I have heard so much and of which I was obliged to make mention in my Press note[3] were also not to be revived, I must adopt some effective remedy to end the agony, and God gave me the remedy.

The public should not laugh at my connecting God with the proposed step. Rightly or wrongly, I know that I have no other resource as a satyagrahi than the assistance of God in every conceivable difficulty, and I would like it to be believed that what may appear to be inexplicable actions of mine are really due to inner promptings.

It may be a product of my heated imagination. If it is so, I prize that imagination as it has served me for a chequered life extending over a period of now nearly over 55 years, because I learned to rely consciously upon God before I was 15 years old.

One thing more. The weapon of fasting, I know, cannot be lightly wielded. It can easily savour of violence unless it is used by one skilled in the art. I claim to be such an artist in this subject.

It should be remembered that I am intimately connected with Rajkot and its Rulers. Regarding the Thakore Saheb as my own son, I have every right to evoke the best in his nature by means of self-suffering. If my fast, which I hope will be avoided, is to be interpreted as pressure, I can only say that such moral pressure should be welcomed by all concerned.

[1] The statement is extracted from "The Fiery Ordeal", in which it appeared with an explanatory note that "a group of Press correspondents approached Gandhiji" to confirm the rumour about his decision to go on a fast. In "The Rajkot Fast [–I]", Pyarelal explains that the statement was "dictated" by Gandhiji.

[2] *Vide* pp. 2-5.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 449-52.

A breach of promise shakes me to my root, especially when I am in any way connected with the author of the breach. And if it costs my life, which after all at the age of 70 has no insurance value, I should most willingly give it in order to secure due performance of a sacred and solemn promise.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

8. MESSAGE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

March 2, 1939

You must not be perturbed over my decision. It was taken purely in answer to the voice of God. But reason too dictated no other course. I would not like you to mention this thing to anybody. If Durbar Virawala allows the Thakore Saheb to accept my proposal, let the Thakore Saheb have the full credit for it.

You may not leave your post....[2] It should suffice for you that I am here to shoulder the burden of the Rajkot issue.

I would have liked even to save all telephonic charges in this crisis. But knowing your temperament as I do, I would not stint telephonic communications, if there are any developments to report.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

9. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

March 3, 1939

I release my letter[4] to the Thakore Saheb with a heavy heart, but I have had the misfortune many a time to perform painful duties. This is one of them. I would like all friends

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast [–I]". Pyarelal says that Gandhiji conveyed the message over the telephone.

[2] As in the source

[3] This is extracted from "The Fiery Ordeal".

[4] *Vide* pp. 2-5. In "Diary of the Fast–II" (*Harijan*, 1-4-1939), Pyarelal says: "As suggested by Gandhiji the Press . . . came . . . at 9 a. m. as by that time he expected . . . the Thakore Saheb's reply . . . Gandhiji was still hopeful that a satisfactory reply would come and the fast would be obviated. . . . At 11.15 a. m. Gandhiji's last meal was served. . . . At one minute to 12 no reply had come. Gandhiji was going to hand the text of his letter . . . he had his favourite hymn *Vaishnavajana* sung first . . . *Ramadhun* was sung next. At the end of it Gandhiji released the text of his letter . . . and straightway began dictating a statement to the Pressmen . . . "

and sympathizers rigidly to refrain from embarking on sympathetic fasts, even for one day. I know that fasting, like satyagraha, is very much abused nowadays. One finds people fasting on the slightest pretext. Often there is violence behind such fasting. If for no other reason, than for this practical reason of preventing thoughtless imitation, I was most reluctant to undertake this fast. But an inner urge brooks no denial. I can only therefore warn the people, who may wish hereafter to fast for redress of grievances, real or imaginary, against imitating me. Fasting like some very potent medicines can only be taken on rare occasions and under expert guidance. It is wrong, it is sinful for everybody to consider himself an expert.

Let the public know that at a very early age I began fasting for self-purification and then I took a prolonged fast[1] for an erring son of mine. This was soon after followed by a still more prolonged fast[2] for an erring daughter of a very dear friend. In both these cases the results justified the fast. The first public fast[3] that I undertook was in South Africa in connection with sufferings of the indentured who had joined the satyagraha struggle in South Africa. I have no recollection of a single experiment of mine in fasting having been a fruitless effort. In addition, I had the experience of priceless peace and unending joy during all those fasts, and I have come to the conclusion that fasting, unless it is the result of God's grace, is useless starvation, if not much worse.

The second thing I would like to say is that there should be no bitter speeches or writings either in connection with the Thakore Saheb or his advisers or the Resident. I have used strong language in connection with the Resident and actions of State officials. If I find that I have in any way wronged them, I know how to make reparations. Any harsh language used in connection with the Thakore Saheb or other actors in the tragedy will mar the effect the fast is intended to produce.

The breach of a solemn pact does not require any harsh or bitter language in order to enhance the enormity of the evil consequences of such breaches. What the public and the Press can usefully do is, by a dignified disapproval of the Thakore

[1] & [2] Presumably, the references are to the week-long fast in 1913 for the moral lapse of two inmates at Phœnix Settlement, and the 14-day fast in 1914; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 273-4 and Vol. XII, p. 410.

[3] On December 21, 1913, Gandhiji announced his decision to eat only once a day as "mark of inward mourning" for Indians shot dead during the strike by the indentured Indians in South Africa.

Saheb's action, to bring home to him the pressure of enlightened public opinion.

All satyagraha and fasting is a species of *tyaga*[1]. It depends for its effects upon an expression of wholesome public opinion, shorn of all bitterness. Let there be no impatience to produce the desired result because of fasting. He who has urged me to undertake the fast will give me strength to go through it, and if it is His will that I should still live for a while on this earth to carry on the self-chosen mission of humanity, no fast, however prolonged, will dissolve the body.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that my fast[2] in connection with the late Mr. MacDonald's decision on the communal question induced many persons to act against their will. I hope no such thing will happen in connection with this fast. If there are public men who think that I have erred in characterizing the Thakore Saheb's Notification of January 21 as a breach of the promise made by the Notification on December 26, they will perform a friendly act by condemning my characterization, as also the fast. It is designed undoubtedly to melt the Thakore Saheb's heart, but it is in no sense designed to coerce public opinion into bringing pressure to bear upon the Thakore Saheb or those in whose opinion his action may be free of all blame.

Another thing I would like to mention is the first paragraph of my letter[3] in which I have criticized Durbar Virawala. I can truthfully say that I am slow to see the blemishes of fellow-beings, being myself full of them and therefore being in need of their charity. I have learnt not to judge anyone harshly and to make allowances for defects that I may detect.

What has happened about Durbar Virawala is that I have been inundated by very bitter and serious complaints against him. In my conversations with him I had even made mention of those complaints, and let me say to his credit that he invited me to investigate those complaints. I told him that I would do so, and but for the intervention of the fast it was fully my desire to undertake this investigation.

I had already invited friends to put me in possession of evidence in support of specific allegations against him; but prolonged conversations with him for three days confirmed the

[1] Sacrifice

[2] In 1932; the "fast unto death", commenced on September 16, was broken on September 26. *Vide* Vol. LI.

[3] *Vide* p. 2.

impression that the complaints against him had produced upon me, so much so that I felt that the evidence that the conversations gave me was sufficient proof of the heavy indictment against him.

What I have said in the first paragraph of my letter is a deliberate understatement of my opinion. It gave me much pain to write that paragraph, but it was necessary for my mission to warn the Thakore Saheb of the overpowering influence that he exercises over His Highness. Sober and influential persons, not few but many, have repeatedly told me that so long as Durbar Virawala exercises that influence upon the Thakore Saheb there is no peace for the people.

I myself feel that there is very considerable truth in this statement, and it would be wrong on my part whilst I am embarking upon the fast to suppress this relevant truth from the public. I have sent a private and personal letter to him, which, so far as I am concerned, shall never see the light of day. But I do make a humble appeal to him, and I would like those who know him to join me in the appeal, that he should refrain from influencing the Thakore Saheb, although the latter may find it difficult to free himself from that influence. I can say much more, but I must not.

Although I have been in exile from Kathiawar for more than a generation and a half, I know how turbid Kathiawar politics is. This unfortunate sub-province is notorious for its intrigues. I have felt its deadly influence even during these four days. How I wish that my fast may contribute, be it ever so little, to the purification of Kathiawar politics. I therefore invite the Princes and politicians of Kathiawar to use my fast to rid Kathiawar of the deadening influence of the poisonous atmosphere that makes healthy living in Kathiawar so difficult.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

10. TALK WITH FIRST MEMBER, RAJKOT STATE COUNCIL[1]

March 3, 1939

GANDHIJI: It only adds fuel to the fire. I shall formally reply to it later. But may I, in the mean time, suggest to you that you should advise the Thakore Saheb that all satyagrahi prisoners may now be released? Now that I have commenced the fast there can be no resumption of civil resistance on this issue during my lifetime. The news of my fast is bound to perturb them and they might launch on a sympathetic fast. As prisoners it may be difficult to control or check them.

FIRST MEMBER: If they are not released, will the civil disobedience be resumed?

No. My fast has rendered the suspension absolute.

But must you fast? Is there no alternative? I would far rather have any amount of civil disobedience than this fast on your part.

I know that. But if at the ripe age of seventy I have to reconsider a decision taken after so much introspection and waiting upon God, I shall have lived my three score and ten years in vain. I launched upon the fast when there was no other course open to me. Can you suggest any other?

Harijan, 1-4-1939

11. NOTE TO KASTURBA GANDHI[2]

March 3, 1939

I hope you are all calm and collected. But if you cannot remain at peace there[3], you can come to me.

Harijan, 1-4-1939

[1] This and the following item are extracted from "Diary of the Fast–II". Pyarelal explains that "the First Member arrived with the Thakore Saheb's reply" when Gandhiji had just completed his statement to the Press; *vide* the preceding item. For the Thakore Saheb's reply, *vide* Appendix I.

[2] Pyarelal explains that the note was sent "with the First Member" after his talk with Gandhiji; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] The addressee was under detention at Tramba.

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12. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

March 3, 1939

I am sorry for this reply. I cannot help saying that the Thakore Saheb has been badly advised. The reply adds fuel to the fire. Considerations urged in the letter became irrelevant when he gave the following note[2] to the Sardar:

> [It is] agreed seven members of the Committee mentioned in Clause 2 of the State announcement of today's date[3] are to be recommended by Sardar [Vallabhbhai] Patel and they are to be nominated by us.

The language is unequivocal and emphatic. The Thakore Saheb, in giving that note, divested himself of the responsibility of choosing the nominees. The responsibility of nomination rests with the Thakore Saheb, but the nomination is conditioned by the fact that the names had to be recommended by the Sardar. Therefore the responsibility for making suitable recommendations devolved upon the Sardar and that devolution took place at the will of the Ruler of Rajkot. It was open to the Ruler and his advisers to negotiate with Sardar, if they did not find his recommendations suitable and to induce him to make other recommendations but if the Sardar could not be so persuaded, the Thakore Saheb, having divested himself of the responsibility to choose a nominee, had to accept the Sardar's recommendations. Reason also suggests that if the reference to the Committee was to be made good it must be a Committee of the choice of those for whose sake the Notification containing the reference had become necessary. Otherwise, what was given with one hand could not be taken away with the other.

If the choice is left to the Ruler and his advisers, there is nothing to prevent them from appointing a committee which

[1] This appeared under the title "Adds Fuel to the Fire" as Gandhiji's comments "on the Thakore Saheb's reply"; *vide* Appendix I. In "Diary of the Fast–II", Pyarelal says that the statement was "dictated" by Gandhiji after the First Member had left the place with the note to Kasturba Gandhi; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Dated December 26, 1938; *vide* Vol. LXVIII, Appendix I.

[3] The source, however, has "said announcement of this date". For the "State announcement", *vide* Vol. LXVIII, p. 135.

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would make recommendations such that they would completely nullify the spirit of the reference. However, the matter is past argument. If the Thakore Saheb's letter is the last word, my fast has to continue to the end of my time on this earth. I shall undergo the ordeal, I hope, with a cheerful heart, and I know also that what may not take place in my lifetime will take place without the shadow of a doubt after the sacrifice.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

13. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

MIRABAI
CARE BADSHAHKHAN[1]
CHARSADDA

FAST BEGUN WITH PRAYER AND REJOICING. IT IS LIKELY BE PROLONGED. YOU MUST NOT WORRY BUT CONTINUE WORK. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5431. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10026

14. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

KHANSAHEB ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
CHARSADDA

FAST BEGUN GOD'S NAME. CAUSE FOR JOY. LOOK AFTER MIRABAI. KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS SHOULD DO SPINNING OTHER CONSTRUCTIVE WORK. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Abdul Ghaffar Khan, whom the addressee was helping in teaching spinning to Khudai Khidmatgars in the Frontier Province

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15. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

RAJKUMARI
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

FAST BEGUN UNDER GREAT JOY. MAY BE PROLONGED. YOU SHOULD ALL BE ENGROSSED WORK. HOPE LOWER HOUSE[1] CONTINUES WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3904. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7213

16. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS

[*March 3, 1939*][2]

FAST BEGUN. LITTLE HOPE OF AN EARLY END. COMING TO TRIPURI SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. SORRY.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 4-3-1939

17. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[3]

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB,

Your letter[4] is painful. You seem to attach no value to a promise. You are acting like a man who promises donation and then goes back upon the promise. Have you not given much by

[1] Hermann Kallenbach; Gandhiji used to address Kallenbach as 'Lower House' and called himself 'Upper House'. *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 455.

[2] From the reference to the fast; *vide* also the three preceding items.

[3] The letter appeared as "translated from original Gujarati by Gandhiji". In "Diary of the Fast–II", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji sent the letter after he had "slept peacefully and long in the afternoon".

[4] *Vide* Appendix I.

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your Notification[1] of 26th December? Donations are but one of the attributes of princeship as they are also its ornament. By that Notification you promised a big donation. Its very core includes surrender of the right of making the choice of names of members of the Reforms Committee. But in the case in point you surrendered[2] that right by a special letter addressed to Sardar Vallabhbhai in his capacity as Representative of the Parishad. Your letter of today cancels that surrender. This action of yours does not befit you. I believe that compliance with my suggestion contained in my yesterday's letter is necessary for the due fulfilment of your promise.

May God move you to such compliance. It behoves you to give effect to the suggestion I have sent you today through the Khan Saheb. Inasmuch as civil disobedience now remains definitely suspended it seems to me to be your obvious duty to discharge the civil-disobedience prisoners.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Harijan, 11-3-1939

18. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

March 3, 1939

There is a misunderstanding about a certain telegram received by me at Segaon, of which I made use in the first Press Note[4] I issued on the eve of my coming to Rajkot. I did not think it was necessary for me to refer to that telegram. On my attention being drawn to the fact, I immediately discovered that I should have inserted in my Press Note the telegram received from Shri Nanalal Kalidas Jasani Rangoonwalla on February 24 reading:

> The State granted our request to allow Mohanbhai Gadhadawala and myself to visit the Trumba, Sardhar and Rajkot jails. There were inconveniences which were mended by the State authorities. There shall be no differentiation in treatment between the Sardhar and Rajkot prisons. Glad to inform you that fasting has terminated.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, p. 135.
[2] *Vide* p. 15.
[3] This appeared under the title "A Misunderstanding Cleared". In "Diary of the Fast–II", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji had an "informal talk" with "a group of journalists".
[4] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 449-52.

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It will be recalled that one of the telegrams received by me from the First Member made mention of this telegram and said that the telegram received from Shri Nanalal would show that the fasting was unjustified.

On my coming here I discovered that the omission by me to reproduce this telegram gave rise to the rumour that Shri Nanalal had come to the decision that the fast was not justified. There was no mention in this telegram to me to the effect that the fast was not justified. It was unnecessary to say in the telegram that the fast was justified because the sender of the telegram and other friends were trying to find out a remedy for dealing with the situation.

It has become necessary for me to clear this misunderstanding because there is an atmosphere of suspicion and disturbance, which may interfere with the working of the satyagraha machinery. Therefore, it has become necessary for me, in the interest of the cause, to inform my co-workers that there is absolutely no cause for suspicion that Shri Nanalal had come to a hasty decision about the fast. His whole reason for intervening was to find out if he can be of any assistance in terminating the hunger-strike of the prisoners, and we now know the result of this intervention.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

19. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

March 3, 1939

The longer words should be more widely spaced. Anyway the improvement is considerable and it will be good if it is sustained. If I have my way you shall turn out into a true and expert *gosevak*.

This letter[1] reached me here today, having been forwarded from Bardoli.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1919

[1] Gandhiji had written on the back of the letter from the addressee, who had requested him to make corrections in it.

20. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

[On or after *March 3, 1939*][2]

ALL WELL. ANXIETY COMPLEX NOT ALLOWED. LOVE.

MOHAN

Harijan, 11-3-1939

21. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS[3]

[On or after *March 3, 1939*][4]

YOUR COMING UNNECESSARY AT PRESENT. KEEPING WELL. LOVE. TELL MAHADEV OTHERS.

MOHAN

Harijan, 11-3-1939

22. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[On or before *March 4, 1939*][5]

GURUDEVA

YOUR LOVING MESSAGE. KEEPING WELL. HOPE YOU WILL NOT THINK OF RUNNING TO ME AS BEFORE. I KNOW I HAVE YOUR BLESSING AND LOVE.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 5-3-1939

[1] This and the following item are extracted from the addressee's article "Ordeal by Fire". C. F. Andrews explains that the telegram was "sent to me at Delhi." He had already "started when it came to Bolpur".

[2] According to the addressee, the telegram was in reply to the one he had sent to Gandhiji on receipt of a telegraphic message about the fast.

[3]&[4] *Vide* the preceding item. C. F. Andrews explains: "This was in answer to an express telegram I had sent on the train journey asking him to advise me whether I should come to Rajkot or remain in Delhi."

[5] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Santiniketan, March 4".

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23. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

KEEPING WELL FIT. STEP WAS INEVITABLE.

From a photostat: C.W. 10887. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

24. TELEGRAM TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB[1], M. L. A.
CUTTACK

ONLY ADVICE I GIVE IS GO ON WITH WORK WITH INCREASING DEVOTION AND WE SHALL SOON COME THROUGH.

BAPU

H. K. Mahtab Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

25. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

MIRABAI
CARE BADSHAHKHAN
CHARSADDA TAHSIL

KEEPING WELL. HAVE NO ANXIETY. INFORM KHAN SAHEB.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6432. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10027

[1] Chief Minister of Orissa, 1946-50 and 1957-61; Minister of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, 1950-52; Governor of Bombay, 1955-56

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26. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON[1]

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I woke up early this morning and felt like sending to the Press what I am about to write down here. I then felt like wiring the contents to H. E. the Viceroy[2]. At last the correct thing appeared to me, to pass on my thoughts to you with the request that you should wire them to His Excellency with such remarks as you may choose to make thereon.

It seems to me that in regarding the Thakore Saheb as a responsible thinking Ruler, I am, or shall I say we are all, giving currency to a fraud. I felt this when I sent him day before yesterday my letter[3] embodying my suggestions. I do not know if he was allowed even to read it, and if he was, whether he understood it in all its bearings. I am hoping that my own and my ancestral connection with his father and grandfather may provoke him to a sense of his duty. Durbar Virawala is the virtual Ruler of Rajkot. As I have already remarked in my letter to the Thakore Saheb, he is utterly unreliable. He does not like the first Notification[4]. If he could, he would undo it by packing the Reforms Committee with a majority of his nominees. At the present moment he holds no office in the State, and yet his will is the supreme law. He even issues written orders and has in the Rajkot palace his nephew who alone has access to the Thakore Saheb at all times. Sir Patrick Cadell, as you are aware, had no trust in him and had even prohibited him from remaining in Rajkot or having any connection with the Thakore Saheb. You may not know that Col. Daly had to pull him up for entering Rajkot during the first struggle. I cannot recall a parallel to such a chaos as exists in Rajkot. I do feel that this is a case for the immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb.

[1] In "The Rajkot Fast–III" (*Harijan*, 8-4-1939), Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji dictated the letter at 5.30 a. m. after "a very peaceful night".

[2] Lord Linlithgow

[3] *Vide* pp. 2-5.

[4] Dated December 26, 1938

Nomination by the Thakore Saheb of the names recommended by Sardar Patel, of unofficial members of the Reforms Committee, is part of the transaction of 26th December. Moreover as I have said in my letter[1] of yesterday to the Thakore Saheb, without some such precaution the Notification could be easily made a dead letter. I enclose herewith a copy of Thakore Saheb's letter[2] and copy of translation of my reply thereto.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10137. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

27. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

March 4, 1939[4]

It has grieved me to read the Rajkot Durbar's communique. Those who have studied the documents already published will have no hesitation in agreeing with me that the communique is full of evasions and misrepresentations of facts. I have neither the energy nor the wish to examine the communique in detail. But one omission in my letter to the Thakore Saheb and in the Press statements requires explanation. That is in connection with my reference to atrocities in my telegrams which brought me to Rajkot. The omission was due to my desire to be absolutely fair to the Khan Saheb and his subordinates, who are primarily responsible for dealing with the actions of civil resisters. But the fact that the omission, instead of being appreciated, has been turned against me,[5] compels me to put the actual state of affairs before the public.

After my visit to the two jails I told the Khan Saheb that I was much moved by the statements made by the prisoners. I told him that I was inclined to believe the allegations made by the prisoners, some of whom were personally known to me and many of whom enjoyed in society a status which entitled them to

[1] *Vide* pp. 17-8.

[2] *Vide* Appendix I.

[3]&[4] The statement appeared under the title "An Unkind Cut" as Gandhiji's comments "on the Rajkot Durbar's communique on the 5th instant". However, in "The Rajkot Fast–III", Pyarelal refers to it among the events of March 4.

[5] According to Pyarelal, it was "misconstrued as meaning that Gandhiji's enquiries and inspections of Rajkot had satisfied him of the 'falsity of these allegations' and Gandhiji was accused of withholding due expression of regret for the allegations in question".

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have their evidence believed until it was proved to be untrue. I therefore told the Khan Saheb that the allegations were so serious, covered such a wide field, and affected so many persons that the only way I could do justice to the State was to suggest a judicial inquiry by an impartial tribunal. For his own part, he at once accepted the suggestion and, at my request, even mentioned the names of certain English officials to conduct the judicial enquiry. And it was agreed between us that I should prepare a charge-sheet which he would examine and answer and, on his part, he would prepare a counter charge-sheet which I would examine and answer. After this process had been gone through and agreed charges eliminated, the balance, if any was left, would be referred to the tribunal.

The Khan Saheb also asked me what reparation I would make if the charges of utter falsehoods which he proposed to make against the civil resisters were found to be true. I said that if a representative of the civil resisters was proved to be guilty of falsehoods I would entirely withdraw from the struggle, and, so far as I was concerned, I would treat the claim for responsible government by persons capable of falsehoods to have lapsed. The Khan Saheb seemed to be more than pleased over the unhesitating reparation that I had offered.

I hope to make good the promise I have made to the Khan Saheb if I survive the ordeal that I am going through. Even on my sick-bed I am organizing collection and collation of evidence already received. I have before me more than 175 statements made by sufferers and others.

The charge against me of breach of faith is an unkind cut. My fast I hold to be part of my mission. At the end of it, whatever happens, there will be peace. The alternative to the breakdown of negotiations would have been a revival of the struggle with increasing bitterness of strife.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

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28. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939[2]

Whilst there is still strength in me, I want to thank all those who have been overwhelming me with their kind messages. I know that many hearts are praying for the right thing to be done. He in whose name the fast has been undertaken will guide India and the Paramount Power in the right path. I am dictating this message, however, in order to warn Congress workers against forgetting Tripuri. I have made every effort that is humanly possible to go to Tripuri. But God willed it otherwise. All whose duty it is to go, should unhesitatingly attend the session, and, with combined effort, cut their way through the difficulties which will confront them.

I have implored Subhas Babu not to defy medical advice, but humbly submit to it and regulate proceedings from Calcutta.

In my opinion, the one and only task before the Congress is to make supreme efforts to clean the Congress house of proved corruption and impurities. The strongest resolutions that the Congress may pass will be of no value if there should be no incorruptible organization to enforce them. I shall pray, whilst I lie on my back, that Congressmen will jealously guard the reputation which has been built up by painful effort during the past 52 years.

The All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association, which are an appendage to the Congress, stand apart, and are untouched by internal politics [of the Congress. But even these may be affected by the corruption that has crept into the organization][3]. I hope that, as usual, it will be attended by tens of thousands of people. Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Hissar have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that khadi not only revives villages and village craft, but is also the finest form of famine insurance. The phenomenal increase made by the All-India Spinners' Association in the wages of spinners has

[1]&[2] The statement appeared under the title "The One and Only Task" and was dated "Rajkot, March 6". However, in "The Rajkot Fast–III", Pyarelal says it was dictated by Gandhiji at 6 p. m. on March 4.

[3] From *The Hindu*. The *Harijan* version has: "The Congress may even be affected by corruption that has crept into the organization."

given a new hope to millions of women in the villages. They flock to the All-India Spinners' Association depot for work, but there is surplus stock of khadi. Will not the Congressmen and others denude the khadi stores of khadi and enable the A.I.S.A. to take all women who are eager to do spinning under the new wages scheme, which has succeeded beyond all expectations? Here also let us be true to ourselves and to the dumb millions whom the two Associations are designed to serve. The wages scheme cannot work if unscrupulous men sell khadi or village articles are produced at starvation wages. The only security lies in the public refusing to buy khadi and village articles except from duly certified stores.

My fast must not unhinge the minds of Congressmen at Tripuri, but if we are to work out our own salvation by truthful and non-violent means, it is essential to attend to the smallest detail. Whilst I prize the unbounded affection of the people, let them realize that my life is not worth keeping if anxiety to save it deflects the attention of the nation from the main purpose.

Harijan, 11-3-1939; also *The Hindu*, 5-3-1939

29. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI[1]

March 4, 1939

You are worrying for nothing. You ought to rejoice that God has sent me an opportunity to do His will. How could I consult you or anybody else before undertaking the fast when I myself was not aware that it was coming? God gave the signal, and what else could I do than obey? Will there be any stopping to consult you or anybody when the final peremptory summons comes as some day it must come?[2]

Harijan, 8-4-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–III". Pyarelal says that Dr. Sushila, Vijayabehn and Narandas Gandhi met the addressee at Tramba in the evening. "She was disconsolate. . . . She had addressed a pathetic note to Gandhiji mildly reproaching him for not even consulting her before launching on his fast."

[2] Pyarelal says further: "Dr. Sushila conveyed to Shrimati Kasturba an oral message too that Gandhiji has sent through her. Did she want him to entreat the State authorities to allow her to be with him during the fast? Her unhesitating reply was: 'No, by no means. I shall be quite content if they will let me have daily news of him. God who has taken care of him

30. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

RAJKOT,
March 5, 1939

CHI. MANI,

Why are you uneasy? Are such experiences new to you? You have exceeded my expectations in this matter. I have come on my own. I thought it my duty. God has inspired me to come. Do not be in the least unhappy. I am not writing any letters now, excepting one[1] to Ba and this to you.

BAPU

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER
C/O FIRST MEMBER
RAJKOT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 125

31. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI[2]

RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

MAHADEV DESAI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

IMPLICATIONS GIBSON LETTER ARE THAT VIRAWALA SHOULD BE REMOVED THAKORE SAHEB MADE SIGN MY TERMS

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during all his previous trials will pull him safely through this too. But may not one expose oneself to risk once too often?' The remark being conveyed to Gandhiji, he observed: 'Yes, that may happen. But a spiritual fast is justified not by its result but by unquestioning and joyous surrender to His will of which it is the expression. Even death should be welcome if it comes in the performance of one's highest duty'."

[1] *Vide* the preceding item. It was, however, written on March 4.

[2] In "The Rajkot Fast–IV" (*Harijan*, 15-4-1939), Pyarelal reports: "In reply to a wire from Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji wrote down the implications of his letter to Mr. Gibson of 4th March." *Vide* pp. 22-3.

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OR ANY OTHER ACCEPTABLE AND NEW GOOD DEWAN OR COUNCIL APPOINTED TO CARRY ON ADMINISTRATION IN SPIRIT NOTIFICATION DECEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH PENDING INAUGURATION REFORM CONSTITUTION. ALTERNATIVE FORMULA IS IF PARAMOUNT POWER GIVE PUBLIC ASSURANCE OF CONSTITUTION IN TERMS OF TWENTY-SIXTH NOTIFICATION AS WOULD SATISFY CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER I WOULD ACCEPT ANY COMMITTEE IMPARTIALLY CHOSEN BY NEW INTERIM ADMINISTRATION SELECTED AS SUGGESTED ABOVE. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE IS THAT I SHOULD ACT AS MEMBER WITH ANOTHER APPOINTED BY THE VICEROY SAY MR. GIBSON WITH REFERENCE IN EVENT OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US. I DO NOT THINK THE POSITION AS SUGGESTED BY "STATESMAN" IS NECESSARY. CURTAILMENT OF POWERS IS NECESSARY.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10134. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar. Also Gandhi Nidhi File (August 1976). Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

32. TELEGRAM TO GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

[*March 6, 1939*][1]

THANKS FOR YOUR WIRE[2]. IF MY FAST IS DIVINELY INSPIRED AS I HAVE CLAIMED IT CANNOT BE TERRORISM. IF IT IS ONLY A PRODUCT OF MY IMAGINATION MY LIFE IS NOT WORTH PRAYING FOR NOR WORTH SAVING. IN ASKING THE THAKORE SAHEB TO KEEP HIS PROMISE I DO NOT ASK HIM TO YIELD HIS PRINCIPLES. I FEEL I HAVE COURAGE ENOUGH TO BREAK THE FAST IF I DISCOVER A FLAW WARRANTING A BREACH. IF YOU HAD STUDIED ALL THE FACTS PERHAPS YOU WOULD NOT HAVE CHARACTERIZED MY ACTION AS YOU HAVE

[1] From "The Rajkot Fast–IV" by Pyarelal

[2] Dated March 4. According to Pyarelal the addressee had asked Gandhiji, "whether his fast did not amount to violence since its net effect would be to compel the Thakore Saheb either to give up his 'principles' or to face the prospect of becoming the most hated man in India by allowing Gandhiji to fast himself to death. He ended by exhorting him to abandon his fast 'with your own great courage and thus preserve your life for India and the Thakore Saheb's honour for his convictions'."

DONE. NEVERTHELESS I THANK YOU AND YOUR ASSOCIATES FOR THEIR OUTSPOKENNESS. YOU HAVE RAISED A PUBLIC ISSUE OF THIS. IF DESPITE MY REPLY YOU MAINTAIN YOUR OPINION IT MAY BE PUBLIC SERVICE FOR YOU TO PUBLISH YOUR WIRE WITH MY REPLY. I HAVE NO GOD TO SERVE BUT TRUTH.

The Hindu, 9-3-1939

33. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

In reply to your letter[1] of even date, will you please wire to H. E. as follows?

"I am grateful for your wire. My actions especially my fasts are never taken mechanically. They are promptings of the inner call. The call to fast came to deal with an emergency. There could be no waiting, no consultation with anybody. As to police excesses, my observations so far have led me to think that they have been far in excess of my fears. Moreover there have been so far as I can see gross illegalities and irregularities. I invite your attention to my Press statement[2] on the matter. But they did not cause the fast. Breach of promise is the determining factor. If I get your clear assurance that the substance of the terms of my letter[3] to the Thakore Saheb of 3rd instant will be satisfied, I shall gladly break the fast. The strain of the fast is nothing compared to the uncertainty of the immediate future. I may run no risk. There is anarchy in Rajkot. If I survive to tell the tale I shall relate it. Durbar Virawala should be removed. Thakore Saheb is a cipher. He does not rule. Durbar Virawala's will is law. A sympathetic Dewan should be appointed who need not have Thakore Saheb's signature to documents. Prisoners should be released before I can leave Rajkot. I have never seen things like what I have seen, and am daily seeing, in Rajkot. I appreciate your anxiety to end my fast. I have great regard for you. I feel that there is

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.
[2] *Vide* pp. 15-6.
[3] *Vide* pp. 2-5. The letter was released to the Press on March 3.

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a sympathetic bond between us. I feel too that I could rely upon your honour. But if I do not at once respond to your kind suggestion, you know the importance I attach to what to me is a calculated breach of honour and all the dark things that have come under my observation during these days of agony."[1]

This being my silence-day, I could not dictate this letter. I am writing it lying on my bed. But in order to enable you to read it with ease I am asking Miss Harrison to type it for me. The typed copy will accompany this. Miss Harrison will carry this to you.

I know how anxious these days are for you. I am sorry that I am the unwitting cause.

Yours sincerely,

PS.

After finishing this I saw your note to Miss Harrison. I shall be glad to see you tonight at 8 p.m. when my silence breaks, i. e., if that hour is convenient to you.

M. K. G.

From a copy: C.W. 10139. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

34. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 6, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please examine Kanaiyo's[2] method of keeping accounts and give your opinion on it as an expert; if you find it necessary to teach him account-keeping, please do so. The walls and doors in the school are dirty and there are cobwebs. The walls must be cleaned and the cobwebs, etc., removed.

The walls should be whitewashed up to four or five feet. Start the work immediately from tomorrow.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8556. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* Appendix III.
[2] Also called Kanu; son of the addressee

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35. DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON[1]

RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

Somehow I am able to draw the noblest in mankind and that is what enables me to maintain my faith in God and human nature.

I know Kathiawar, the land of Kathis, very brave soldiers, but full of intrigue and corruption. How could I clean these Augean stables except through this vicarious suffering? If I was what I want to be, the fast would not have been necessary. I would not then need to argue with anyone. My word would go straight home. Indeed, I would not even need to utter the word. The mere will on my part would suffice to produce the required effect. But I am painfully aware of my limitations. That is why I have to undergo all this to make myself heard.

The other way, namely, that of civil resistance, I deliberately ruled out in this case, because from what I could see it would have, under the existing circumstances, only served further to arouse the brute in those in power. The aim of a satyagrahi, on the other hand, always is to put the brute in everyone to sleep. By suffering myself I have saved the suffering on the part of the people which would have been inevitable in case civil resistance was revived.

There is nothing but an indescribable peace and spiritual exultation within me. There is no trace of ill will in my heart against anybody. I am making a ceaseless, strenuous effort not to be irritated. My heart is overflowing with goodwill even for Virawala. My fast will be worth while if it serves to move him and the Thakore Saheb to a sense of their responsibility. And, if the Viceroy should in the end decide not to concede my demand, I shall not misunderstand him. I know how difficult it is for Englishmen to grasp the meaning of the fasting method.[2]

Harijan, 15-4-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–IV". Pyarelal explains that this followed Gandhiji's 20-minute interview to Gibson.

[2] Agatha Harrison had a long talk with Gandhiji the previous morning also. For her report, *vide* Appendix IV.

36. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[On or after *March 6, 1939*][1]

SHANKERLAL BANKER
EXHIBITION
TRIPURI

SEND POONA DIRECTLY JAWAHAR'S EXHIBITION OPENING ADDRESS[2] WITH COPY DELHI.[3]

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

37. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I have received your kind letter, and as I wanted some points to be cleared you were good enough to come to me and discuss them. In my present state I want to conserve my energy and therefore I do not want to reduce them to writing. I will ask you please to wire the following message to His Excellency:

"I am grateful to you for your prompt reply[4] which was delivered to me at 10.45 today. Although naturally it leaves several things unsaid, I regard your kind message as sufficient warrant for breaking the fast and ending the anxiety of millions who are following the fast with their prayers and such effort

[1] From the reference to Jawaharlal Nehru's inaugural address at Khadi Exhibition, Tripuri, on March 6, 1939

[2] Presumably for publication in *Harijan* and other allied editions. An "abridged summary of the speech in Hindustani" appeared in *Harijan*, 18-3-1939.

[3] Gandhiji wanted to proceed to Delhi after the fast; he however reached there on March 15.

[4] *Vide* Appendix III. In "The Rajkot Fast–IV", Pyarelal explains that "after perusing the note" Gandhiji remarked: "It does seem to provide a basis for breaking the fast, but I must clear up certain points with Mr. Gibson." Gibson arrived at 11.30 a. m. and was closeted with Gandhiji for 20 minutes.

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as they can make to hasten the settlement.

It is only proper for me to say that those things [which] are not mentioned in your message are not waived by me but that I should expect satisfaction on them. They can however await mutual discussion.

As soon as the doctors permit me to undertake a journey to Delhi I shall do so.

I thank you once more for taking up so promptly and so sympathetically the matter that necessitated the fast.

I hope that the prisoners will be released as soon as possible today.

I await your reply as to publication before breaking the fast."[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10141. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

38. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

March 7, 1939

In my opinion this good ending is an answer to the prayers of millions. I claim to know my millions. All the 24 hours of the day I am with them. They are my first care and last, because I recognize no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of the dumb millions. They do not recognize His presence; I do. And I worship the God that is Truth or Truth which is God through the service of these millions.

But I also know I had the prayers and sympathy of others all the world over. And there was a persistent effort of the intelligentsia in order to bring about an honourable understanding and a speedy end of this fast. Englishmen have co-operated as well as Indians. Politically speaking, it is His Excellency the Viceroy who is responsible for the settlement.

[1] Pyarelal says further that the addressee's reply of even date was received at 2 p. m. It read: ". . . Thakore Saheb is issuing immediate order for the release of prisoners. I . . . appreciate your decision about releasing for publication only today's letters containing the Viceroy's last message to you and your reply. . . . His Excellency agrees that these can now be released for publication" (C.W. 10142).

[2] This appeared under the title "A Good Ending". In "The Rajkot Fast –IV", Pyarelal reports: "The fast was broken with the usual ceremonies at 2.20 p. m. From 2.30 to 3.20 Gandhiji dictated a long statement to the Press."

I know Englishmen do not understand the method of fast, especially on what would appear to be a purely political issue. They often feel disgusted with such method. I know also there are Indians who do not appreciate the method of fast. I hope, when I am strong, to write[1] about 'The Fast Method', because over 50 years' experience has convinced me that in the plan of satyagraha it has a definite place.

The reason why I bring fast here is because I want to give full valuation to the Viceregal gesture, and he represents the English mind. It was open to him—and I at least would have justified his action — if he had said: 'I do not understand this man's actions. There seems to be no end to his fasts. There must be a stop somewhere. He will give no guarantee that this is his last fast. We propose even this time not to parley with him until he has broken his fast.'

I know that, ethically speaking, he would have been wrong if he had taken up that attitude, but, politically speaking and examining the position from the English standpoint, I would have justified his action if he had been unbending. I am hoping that such a good ending and appreciation even of a method which the English mind cannot understand will produce not merely the righting of what I have held to be a primary wrong, but it will clear the atmosphere and help also in the general solution of the States' problem.

I do not mean to say that all States will have to follow the Rajkot precedent. Rajkot is a speciality and must be regarded as an isolated case. There are States whose problems must be considered on their merits. But public attention is riveted on the problem of the States. I hope it will be recognized that it is a problem which does not brook delay.

I would like the Princes to believe me when I assure them that I came to Rajkot as their friend and as a cent per cent peacemaker. I saw that civil resisters in Rajkot were, and could not but be, unyielding. Their honour was at stake. I had tales of atrocities poured into my ears. I felt that the basest human passions would be let loose if I allowed civil resistance to go on from day to day. That would have resulted in a bitter feud not merely between Rajkot and the civil resisters but — as the human mind works and even jumps from the particular to the general—there would have been a bitter feud between the Princes and the people.

[1] *Vide* "Fasting", pp. 51-2.

I know that, even as it is, there is a growing school of public opinion in India which is convinced that the Princes are beyond reform, and that there would be no free India unless this 'relic of a barbaric past' is done away with. I honestly differ with them, and, as a believer in non-violence and therefore in the goodness of human nature, I could not do otherwise. They have a place in India. It is not possible to wipe out all the traditions of a hoary past. I therefore hold that if the Princes will read from the lessons of the past and will respond to the time spirit, all will be well. But it will not do to tinker with the problem. They will have to take heroic measures. They need not follow the Rajkot model, but they will have to part with real and substantial powers in favour of the people.

There is, so far as I am aware, no *via media* of saving the situation and saving India from a terrible blood feud. I dare not publish the letters that I have received about the Princes, but of this I shall have to speak more later. In my present weak state of health it is an effort to give this statement. And yet whilst the effect of the fast is on me and whilst I am full of what I call spiritual exultation, I must give out the best of my thoughts just now.

Then there are the Bhayats[1] and Garasias[2]. They pleaded with me their case. I told them that they had my sympathy. They could count upon me as their friend. I want them also to live as Garasias and Bhayats, but they will also have to march with the times. They will have to remodel their lives. They will have to feel one with the people over whom they exercise a kind of sway.

Our Mussalman friends came to me, and I had no hesitation in telling them without any argument that their special interests would be safeguarded, that if they wanted separate electorates in Rajkot with reservation of seats I would see to it that they got them. Without their asking they would have had ample guarantees for the fullest protection of their religious freedom. And I told them that if they insisted upon their nominations, I would not resist them. It is necessary for me to say this in order to ease their minds and to ease the minds of the Mussalmans throughout India. I want them to feel that neither I nor the Congress can ever be guilty of diminishing an iota of the safeguards that they may need for their full growth and for the protection of their faith and culture.

[1] Kinsmen; brothers, etc., of the ruling chief
[2] Holders of gifted land; a caste of Rajputs

I must explain why I have released for publication only the Viceregal telegraphic message received today at 10.45 a.m. and my reply. There is an allusion to previous messages in these two communications. With the full consent of the Viceroy, I am refraining from publishing those communications. His Excellency has not prevented me from publishing them. I know that he does not believe in sending secret communications to public men, but, for reasons which I need not go into, I felt the force of the argument that, for the sake of the cause, it is not wise to publish them. I hope that it will never be necessary to publish them. There are in my communications allusions which were relevant, but they are not for the public. Hence the responsibility for withholding previous communications is solely mine.

One word about the Congress. My heart is there, but I see that I will not be able to reach there. I am still too weak but, what is more, if I am to give the finishing touch to the Rajkot matter and what it implies, I must not divide my attention between Tripuri and Rajkot. I must concentrate my attention solely on Rajkot at present. I have work to do here. I must hasten to Delhi as soon as I am able. I only hope that all will go well in Tripuri.

It is a strange experience for me to miss the Congress session through all these years. But it is a good thing. Why should I be so proud as to think that nothing serious can be done without me? There are leaders in Tripuri who are every whit as courageous, as self-sacrificing and as devoted as I am. I have no doubt, therefore, that though another policy may be evolved, there will be no acrimony and there will be no violence in their thoughts, in their words and in their deeds.

The last thing I would like to say is that I want to thank the Press correspondents who have been with me during all these anxious days. I have felt proud of them. They have carried out the best traditions of good journalism. They have not been newsmongers but they have been fellow-messengers of peace with me. They have shown me the greatest consideration. They have never pestered me.

I should like also publicly to thank my medical friends who have so ungrudgingly attended upon me.

I hope that the prayers of those who believe in them will still continue. In a way, my work begins from now. I begin to lead an earthly life. I have to carry on delicate negotiations. I do not want to lose the goodwill with which I am surcharged at the present moment. I think of the Thakore Saheb, I think

of Durbar Shri Virawala. I have criticized them, but only as a friend. I repeat that I am in the place of a father to the Thakore Saheb. I have done no more towards him than I could have done to my truant son. I would like them to understand the significance of what has gone on in front of them, and it would be a noble ending to this fast if I discover that they have appreciated all that I have said as from a friend, and that there will be the response from them that I expect.

Rajkot is the hub of Kathiawar, and if Rajkot is given a popular government, other States in Kathiawar will of their own accord and without any further civil resistance fall in line. There is no such thing as perfect coincidences on this earth. Its beauty lies in its multitudinous variety. There will be, therefore, variety of constitutions in Kathiawar States. But let the trunk be true.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

39. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I broke the fast, gave a message[1] to the Press and now send you my thanks for your warm letter[2]. Let me hope this contact is a foundation for lasting friendship.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10143. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

40. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[3]

[*March 7, 1939*][4]

BROKE FAST. THANK GOD.[5]

BAPU

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 33.
[3] The addressee was the Congress President.
[4] Inferred from the contents. The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tripuri, March 8". *Vide* also the two following items.
[5] The addressee's reply read: "Your telegram. Whole country is happy and relieved."

41. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

MRS. BRIJLAL NEHRU
LAHORE

FAST BROKEN. THANK GOD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7988

42. TELEGRAM TO WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION, MADRAS[1]

[*March 7, 1939*][2]

FAST BROKEN. THANK GOD.

BAPU

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

43. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS[3]

[*March 7, 1939*][4]

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH THERE IN TIME. DOCTORS INSIST ON SOME DAYS' REST AND AS SOON AS THEY PERMIT I MUST PROCEED TO DELHI TO FINISH THE RAJKOT WORK. MAY GOD GUIDE THE CONGRESS DELIBERATIONS.

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

[1] & [2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Madras, March 8", as released by S. Ambujammal, Honorary Secretary, Women's Indian Association. It was in reply to the Association's telegram dated March 6, which read: "Women's Indian Association feels intensely grieved, anxious at decision. Prays Almighty to give strength and success." *Vide* also the two preceding items.

[3] & [4] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tripuri, March 8". It was in reply to the addressee's of March 7, which he had sent "on behalf of the Reception Committee".

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44. ITS MEANING

A critic may say: 'What have you gained to warrant the breaking of your fast? Not one of the terms of your ultimatum to the Thakore Saheb has been fulfilled except the release of prisoners. But you never took the fast for their release.'

On the surface this argument is perfect. It is consistent with a vengeance. My answer is, 'The letter killeth; the spirit giveth life.' The life-giving fact is that Rajkot has become an all-India issue and the place of the Thakore Saheb has been taken up by the Viceroy whose word I have no reason to doubt. Even if the Thakore Saheb had granted all my terms, I should not have been sure of due fulfilment, though I would have been obliged to accept them. What I have deliberately put in doubt is the meaning of the famous letter[1] given to the Sardar. In my ultimatum I had acted on the assumption that it bore only one meaning. But as a satyagrahi I must always allow my cards to be examined and re-examined at all times and make reparation if an error is discovered. Hence my reading of the settlement is that God has given me much more than I had ever expected. Time will show whether my claim is justified.

RAJKOT, March 8, 1939

Harijan, 11-3-1939

45. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 8, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you have bravely borne the fast which has enriched me perhaps more than the previous ones. I am quite happy. Strength too is coming. No more just now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6434. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10029

[1] The reference is to the draft of statement for Dharmendrasinh; *vide* Vol. LXVIII, p. 135.

46. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

RAJKOT,
March 8, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

Sushila is sitting by my side. She does her work absent-mindedly. I was in fact in perfect bliss. As for the rest of the news, Sushila has written to you. To write more would mean disobeying doctors.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10398. Also C.W. 6837. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

47. TALK WITH AGATHA HARRISON[1]

March 8, 1939

Agatha had an interesting talk with Gandhiji in the morning and then in the afternoon. In the course of it she asked him the question, "Now that the Paramount Power has been appealed to intervene, would it be consistent with this attitude to go on with the anti-imperialist cry? In other words, would it be right from your viewpoint to make use of the machinery set up by the imperialist power whilst you are pledged to the anti-imperialist goal?"

Gandhiji explained to her that the inconsistency to which she referred was in appearance only. Non-violent non-co-operation did not mean mechanical isolation or complete avoidance of contact with the opponent under all conditions. In seeking intervention of the Paramount Power he had put the Paramount Power on the trial and given it a chance to do the right thing.

The Paramount Power has so far constantly been helping the Princes in their misrule. But it owes also an obligation to the people. The people of Rajkot have now asked the Paramount Power to meet that obligation. Not to do so when an opportunity occurs would be not non-co-operation, it would be folly. It

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–V" by Pyarelal.

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may even lead to the strengthening of the Paramount Power. Although non-co-operation is one of the main weapons in the armoury of satyagraha, it should not be forgotten that it is after all only a means to secure the co-operation of the opponent consistently with truth and justice. The essence of non-violence technique is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves. In non-violent fight you have to a certain measure to conform to the traditions and conventions of the system you are pitted against. Avoidance of all relationship with the opposing power, therefore, can never be a satyagrahi's object, but transformation or purification of that relationship. The people of Rajkot would never be able to end the dominance of the Paramount Power through non-violent means if they said, 'We shall not touch it even with a pair of tongs; we shall refuse to meet it even for the sake of converting it.'

The field of co-operation between the Paramount Power and the people of the States was likely to grow rather than diminish with the growth of non-violent strength and consciousness among the people. In fact he foresaw a time when the Residents and Political Agents in Indian States would become true trustees and servants of the people on behalf of the Paramount Power and be made use of by them as such.

The Congress had advised the country to boycott the reformed legislatures at the beginning of the non-co-operation movement. It regarded them as a trap and a snare. But as a result of phenomenal awakening that had taken place among the masses as a result of the schooling they got through successive civil disobedience campaigns, and the ensuing relative transformation of relationship between them and the Government, in 1937 it decided to capture the machinery of Government in the seven provinces where the Congress commanded a majority.[1]

His seeking the intervention of the Paramount Power in the present case, therefore, did not necessarily imply any fundamental change in his outlook. On the contrary it was a further step towards the ending of that system as it exists and functions today.

Harijan, 29-4-1939

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV.

48. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

[On or before *March 9, 1939*][2]

DOCTORS ADVISE ME NOT TO LEAVE BEFORE THE THIRTEENTH INSTANT. YOU DEFIED DOCTORS I DARE NOT.

The Hindu, 9-3-1939

49. TELEGRAM TO K. M. MUNSHI[3]

[On or before *March 9, 1939*][4]

PLEASE WELCOME WAFDIST DELEGATION ON MY BEHALF. HOPE THEY WILL HAVE A NICE TIME. THEIR VISIT WILL FORGE AN INDISSOLUBLE LINK BETWEEN EGYPT AND INDIA.

The Hindu, 9-3-1939

50. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

RAJKOT,
March 9, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
TRIPURI CONGRESS
[JABALPUR]

IT WILL BE FIRST CLASS BLUNDER IF RESOLUTION NOT TAKEN TO RID CONGRESS OF INTERNAL CORRUPTION. POWER SHOULD BE GIVEN TO A. I. C. C. TO

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read: "Strongly feel your presence indispensably necessary here. That is also the general feeling here" (*The Hindu*, 8-3-1939).

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tripuri, March 9".

[3] The addressee was the Home Minister of Bombay.

[4] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Bombay, March 9". Also, according to the source, "the Egyptian Wafdist Delegation to the Tripuri Session of the Indian National Congress" arrived in Bombay from Cairo on March 9.

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MAKE REQUIRED CHANGES IN CONSTITUTION WITHOUT NECESSITY THEIR BEING SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS. KEEPING WELL.[1]

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

51. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 9, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

As I am now comparatively less weak, I have begun to gather threads of information. You will agree that repressive measures, whether by way of Notifications or acts done under them or reprisals outside Notifications, should be cancelled. I collect a few out of a long list submitted to me.

1. Bans on persons.
2. Bans on newspapers.
3. Bans on organizations.
4. Confiscations and fines.
5. Closing of schools and dispensaries.
6. Sale of movable and immovable property.
7. Grains belonging to the cultivators not allowed to be removed.
8. Increase in students' fees and water charges.
9. Deprivation of freeships.

You will please see to the rectification of these matters. If you think that it is necessary to see me before you could take any action I am at your disposal.

Doctors have prohibited journeying before Monday next. I, therefore, propose to leave for Delhi on Monday evening.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10145. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 11-3-1939, an identical telegram was sent to Subhas Chandra Bose. It was read out by Sarat Chandra Bose in the Subjects Committee meeting as the former could not attend it owing to bad health. Sarat Chandra Bose said that Subhas Chandra Bose "whole-heartedly endorsed Gandhiji's view".

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52. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF RAJKOT[1]

March 9, 1939

Through the grace of God, the object of my coming to Rajkot has been fulfilled. The Thakore Saheb, and with his consent the Paramount Power, have given assurance that the Thakore Saheb's word will be honoured and Rajkot will have a constitution in terms of the Notification of 26th December 1938. This is the simple and common-sense interpretation of the telegraphic communications between H. E. the Viceroy and myself. The result has surpassed all my expectations. The honour of both the Ruler and the ruled has been vindicated and the sufferings of the people have borne fruit. Let us all offer our thanks to the Almighty. Such a happy ending would have been impossible without His grace and intervention.

I would not go into the other points mentioned in my letter to the Thakore Saheb. I have not given them up. It should be sufficient for all concerned to know that I am aware of the fact that restrictions on the Press and other repressive measures have not been withdrawn. My efforts for their withdrawal continue, and I am sure they will go shortly.

Let us not indulge in exultation over this settlement. The real work will begin now only. Responsible government will come, but will the people be able to shoulder the burden and rise equal to their task? If they are to give a proper account of themselves, they will have to begin preparing from today. They would not need, for this purpose, to hold meetings and deliver speeches. If meetings are held at all, they should be for the purpose of educating the public. Every citizen of Rajkot will have to contribute his or her mite if success is to crown our efforts.

1. There should be real Hindu-Muslim unity.
2. The canker of untouchability and the distinction between high and low must be uprooted from the heart of the Hindu community.
3. It should be realized that we have no other sanction at our disposal except that of truth and non-violence. We should, therefore, understand their working in our everyday dealings.

[1] This appeared under the title "To the People of Rajkot" as originally "issued in Gujarati".

4. The public should cultivate the spirit of corporate service.

5. Young men and women in their numbers should come forward to dedicate their lives to the service of the people.

6. We must rid ourselves of petty jealousies and bickerings and learn to be disciplined.

7. The people should shed their lethargy and occupy themselves with some useful activity like spinning, etc. Everyone should take the vow of khadi.

8. Those who are educated should help their illiterate brethren to read and write.

Harijan, 18-3-1939

53. *TALK WITH RAJKOT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS*[1]

March 9, 1939

One of the workers had admitted in the course of his talk that he accepted non-violence as a policy, not as his creed. Gandhiji explained to him that he could be satisfied with that provided the acceptance was whole-hearted and sincere. It must be without any mental reservations. The greater danger was that although many people professed to believe in non-violence, not all of them meant the same thing by that term. *Himsa* did not merely mean indulgence in physical violence; resort to trickery, falsehood, intrigue, chicanery and deceitfulness—in short, all unfair and foul means—came under the category of *himsa*, and acceptance of ahimsa whether as a policy or a creed necessarily implied renunciation of all these things.

A votary of ahimsa had therefore to be incorruptible, fair and square in his dealings, truthful, straightforward and utterly selfless. He must have also true humility. It was of the utmost importance, therefore, that there should be no confusion or misunderstanding as to the meaning or implications of non-violence. The controversy about 'creed' or 'policy' could be put aside if there was a clear, common understanding on this point.

Harijan, 20-5-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VI" by Pyarelal.

54. TELEGRAM TO NAHAS PASHA[1]

[After *March 9, 1939*][2]

THOUSAND THANKS FOR YOUR WARM KINDLY MESSAGE. I RECIPROCATE EVERY SENTENCE.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1939

55. TELEGRAM TO EGYPTIAN DELEGATION[3]

RAJKOT,
March 11, 1939

EGYPTIAN DELEGATION
REST HOUSE
JABALPUR

DELIGHTED YOUR AFFECTIONATE WIRE. I HOPE YOU ARE FINDING YOUR EXPECTATIONS SOMEWHAT REALIZED. REACHING DELHI FIFTEENTH. HOPE MEET YOU THERE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] & [2] This was in reply to a message from the addressee, the leader of the Wafd Party, which read: "Please accept Wafd's heartfelt thanks and mine for kind message of welcome to Egyptian Deputation. Egyptians, united to their Indian brethren by sacred bonds of common ideal and efforts to realize them through channels of suffering and abnegation, have ever been inspired by your great example. May God give you strength to pursue your mission for salvation of downtrodden humanity." The Egyptian delegation landed in India on March 9; *vide* "Telegram to K. M. Munshi", p. 42, and also the following item.

[3] This was in reply to a telegram dated March 11 from the delegation, who wanted to meet Gandhiji in Delhi or at any other place chosen by him.

CWMG - LXIX

56. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[*March 11, 1939*][1]

THANKS FOR WIRE[2]. DO CONSERVE HEALTH AND ENERGY. MAY GOD BE WITH YOU ALL. AM PROGRESSING.

BAPU

The Hindu, 12-3-1939

57. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
March 11, 1939

AMTUSSALAAM
GANDHI SEVASANGH
WARDHA

SHOULD GO PATIALA. HEALTH GOOD. GETTING STRONGER.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 414

58. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 11, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I am daily getting stronger. Therefore there should be no anxiety. I reach Delhi on 15th and know not how long I shall have to stay there. There is just a possibility that I would have to come back to Rajkot. I must think of nothing else before Rajkot is set on its feet.

Ba goes with me to Delhi without Kano[3].

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6435. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10030

[1] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, March 11".

[2] Of even date which read: "Have communicated to Subjects Committee your telegram [*vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", pp. 42-3] . . . Hope the Committee will follow your advice. Myself attended Subjects Committee on 8th and 9th. Yesterday, medical board banned activity . . . Hope you are improving."

[3] Also called Kanam, son of Ramdas Gandhi

59. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAJKOT,
March 11, 1939

Having been out of touch with everything since my leaving Segaon, that is, for nearly a fortnight, I do not feel competent to give a decisive opinion upon the impending resumption of civil resistance in Travancore. But I have no difficulty in stating certain general principles. The first indispensable condition precedent to any civil resistance is that there should be surety against any outbreak of violence whether on the part of those who are identified with civil resistance or on the part of the general public. It would be no answer in the case of an outbreak of violence that it was instigated by the State or other agencies hostile to civil resisters. It should be obvious that civil resistance cannot flourish in an atmosphere of violence. This does not mean that the resources of a satyagrahi have come to an end. Ways other than civil disobedience should be found out. The second condition is that disobedience should not be destructive, that is, harmful to the country. The laws to be picked up, therefore, should be those which are harmful to the people or laws whose breach will not harm the people but are likely merely to make more work for the authorities. Thirdly, it must be a movement in which the largest number of people can take part. Fourthly, students should not be invited or allowed to take part in civil resistance. There should be no secrecy. Civil resisters must conform to the minimum requirements that may be laid down for the sake of discipline or otherwise.[2]

Asked why he called[3] the students to come out of the colleges and schools in 1921 and to participate in non-co-operation and why he was opposed now to students' participation in the civil resistance movement, Gandhiji explained that the position then was different. He asked the students to empty the colleges and schools as signifying complete non-co-operation with

[1] In *Harijan* this appeared under the title "Travancore" with an explanatory note that Gandhiji made this statement when he was shown the report about the Travancore State Congress having resolved on reviving civil resistance on March 25.

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIX.

the Government. The moment a student came out of the college, he became a citizen—when he was free to participate in the movement. Gandhiji would have no quarrel if students left the colleges altogether and participated in the movement.

Harijan, 18-3-1939; also *The Hindu*, 11-3-1939

60. TALK WITH WORKERS OF RAJKOT PRAJA PARISHAD

March 12, 1939

I think the initial mistake was made when all Kathiawaris were permitted to join Rajkot Satyagraha. That step introduced an element of weakness in the fight. Thereby we put our reliance on numbers, whereas a satyagrahi relies solely upon God who is the help of the helpless. A satyagrahi always says to himself, 'He, in whose name satyagraha was launched, will also see it through.' If the people of Rajkot had thought in these terms, there would have been no temptation to organize big processions or mass demonstrations and probably there would have been no atrocities such as Rajkot has had to experience. A genuine satyagrahi proceeds by setting the opponent at his ease. His action never creates panic in the breast of the 'enemy'. Supposing as a result of rigid enforcement of the rules of satyagrahis Rajkot Satyagraha had been confined to a few hundred or even a few score true satyagrahis and they had carried on their satyagraha in the right spirit till their last breath, theirs would have served as a heroic example.

I shall soon be going to Delhi as your representative. I shall not be able to proceed with my work with self-confidence or to speak with authority unless I have the confidence that we shall be able to vindicate and do justice to the devolution of power into the hands of the people that we are fighting for. As a lifelong devotee and votary of truth, I know that my pleading will be ineffectual, it will lack power, unless it has the double backing of faith on my part in the inherent justice of the cause that I represent and in the capacity and sincerity of purpose of those who represent this cause. The question that you must seriously set yourself to answer is: 'What shall we do with swaraj, supposing we got it today?'[1]

[1] This and the preceding paragraph are extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VI" by Pyarelal; what follows is from "The Rajkot Fast–VII" (*Harijan*, 27-5-1939).

You want democracy—the rule of the people, by the people, for the people. Surely, all the 75,000 people of Rajkot cannot become rulers or administrators. Democracy must in essence, therefore, mean the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.

Service of the family has been the motive behind all our activities hitherto. We must now learn to broaden our outlook so as to include in our ambit the service of the people as a whole.

We are familiar with several conceptions of village work. Hitherto it has mostly meant propaganda in the villages to inculcate upon the village masses a sense of their rights. Sometimes it has also meant conducting welfare activity among them to ameliorate their material condition. But the village work that I have now come to place before you consists in educating the villager in his duties.

Rights accrue automatically to him who duly performs his duties. In fact the right to perform one's duties is the only right that is worth living for and dying for. It covers all legitimate rights. All the rest is garb under one guise or another and contains in it seeds of *himsa*.

The swaraj of my conception will come only when all of us are firmly persuaded that our swaraj has got to be won, worked and maintained through truth and ahimsa alone. True democracy or the swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through the suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated ahimsa.

We cannot afford to have discord in our midst if we are to educate the people. We must all speak with one voice. If we want to weld the various sections into one people—and that is the *sine qua non* of democracy—we may not, in rendering service, make any distinction between those who took part in our struggle and those who did not.[1]

Harijan, 20-5-1939 and 27-5-1939

[1] *Vide* also "Appeal to People of Rajkot", pp. 52-5.

61. *FASTING*

Fasting is an institution as old as Adam. It has been resorted to for self-purification or for some ends noble as well as ignoble. Buddha, Jesus and Mahomed fasted so as to see God face to face. Ramachandra fasted for the sea to give way for his army of monkeys. Parvati fasted to secure Mahadev Himself as her Lord and Master. In my fasts I have but followed these great examples no doubt for ends much less noble than theirs.

I do not propose to discuss the merits of my recent fast beyond answering a suggestion whether I left Segaon with the knowledge that I was going to fast. I have become a coward of late for fasting. My fast in August 1933[1] though short-lived was a perfect torture to me. I had prepared for death the very day I was discharged. I had made over many of my medical stores to the nurse in charge. Since then I have dreaded fasts. The twenty-four-hour annual fasts of 6th[2] and 13th[3] April have shown me since then that my system is ill able to undergo any protracted fasting. Therefore when I left Segaon there could be no question of my light-heartedly thinking ahead of any fast in Rajkot. Had I made any such resolution, I was bound by a promise to friends that I should give them due notice. Thus there could be no pre-meditation. It came upon me all of a sudden and out of the intense agony of the soul. The days preceding the fast were days of deepest prayer. The experience of the night before the determination to take the fast had choked me. I did not know what to do. The morning following told me what I was to do, cost what it might. I simply could not have taken the resolution but for the belief that God wanted me to take it.

So much for the Rajkot fast.

Fasting is a potent weapon in the satyagraha armoury. It cannot be taken by everyone. Mere physical capacity to take it is no qualification for it. It is of no use without a living faith in God. It should never be a mechanical effort nor a mere imitation. It must come from the depth of one's soul. It is

[1] *Vide* Vol. LV.

[2] & [3] The week was observed as 'National Week' in memory of the total hartal on April 6, 1919, in protest against the Rowlatt Act (Bill No. 29, 1919) and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre on April 13 of the same year.

therefore always rare. I seem to be made for it. It is noteworthy that not one of my colleagues on the political field has felt the call to fast. And I am thankful to be able to say that they have never resented my fasts. Nor have fellow-members of the Ashram felt the call except on rare occasions. They have even accepted the restriction that they may not take penitential fasts without my permission, no matter how urgent the inner call may seem to be.

Thus fasting though a very potent weapon has necessarily very strict limitations and is to be taken only by those who have undergone previous training. And, judged by my standard, the majority of fasts do not at all come under the category of satyagraha fasts and are, as they are popularly called, hunger-strikes undertaken without previous preparation and adequate thought. If the process is repeated too often, these hunger-strikes will lose what little efficacy they may possess and will become objects of ridicule.

RAJKOT, March 13, 1939
Harijan, 18-3-1939

62. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF RAJKOT[1]

March 13, 1939

In swaraj based on ahimsa people need not know their rights, but it is necessary for them to know their duties. There is no duty but creates a corresponding right, and those only are true rights which flow from a due performance of one's duties. Hence rights of true citizenship accrue only to those who serve the State to which they belong. And they alone can do justice to the rights that accrue to them. Everyone possesses the right to tell lies or resort to goondaism. But the exercise of such a right is harmful both to the exerciser and society. But to him who observes truth and non-violence comes prestige, and prestige brings rights. And people who obtain rights as a result of performance of duty, exercise them only for the service of society, never for themselves. Swaraj of a people means the sum total of the swaraj (self-rule) of individuals. And such swaraj comes only from performance by individuals of their duty as citizens. In it no one thinks of his rights. They come, when they are needed, for better performance of duty.

[1] This appeared under the title "To the People of Rajkot" as "the translation" of Gandhiji's second appeal. For the first appeal, *vide* pp. 44-5.

Whilst I was expounding these views to a meeting of workers it was decided that volunteers should be called for who would go to the villages and tell the people what under swaraj they would be expected to do. Thus men or women who would go to the villages would tell the village people that it would be their duty to keep their villages clean and make them self-supporting. They must not expect the swaraj government to do these things for them. Our villages are on the verge of destruction owing to the disappearance of village industries. They can be revivified only by a revival of village industries. Among these industries the spinning-wheel occupies the centre. The others easily arrange themselves around the wheel. If the people of Rajkot realize their duty, they would wear khadi of their own spinning. Thus everybody will learn the value of industry, and if all will engage in industries conducive to the welfare of the State, several lakhs of rupees will be saved for the people by the people. And it can be shown that by putting into practice the ideal of self-help and self-sufficiency they will have to pay the lowest taxes and realize a greater degree of happiness in the sum than is possible under any other system. Those who labour for the State pay their taxes just as much as those that pay them in coin. Coins are but a measure of labour performed. They have no other value. If I buy a rupee worth of flour, I have paid for the labour of cultivation, carrying and grinding. Therefore, the real owner of wealth is one who puts in a certain amount of labour with a conscious productive aim. It is the same thing whether I pay the State one rupee or its equivalent of labour as tax. Often it will be found that payment in labour is of greater value to the State than payment in coin. Payment in labour invigorates the nation. Where people perform labour voluntarily for the service of society, exchange of money becomes unnecessary. The labour of collecting the taxes and keeping accounts is saved and the results are equally good.

Every man and woman should be educated along the lines mentioned above. The property of the State is the property of the people, the Thakore Saheb is their trustee. As trustee the Thakore Saheb and other members of his family should perform their duty. Through the performance of their duty to the State they earn the right of taking a certain amount of money from the State. If the Ruler and the ruled perform their duty in this way, there is no room for mutual bitterness.

Under responsible government everyone, from the king to the poorest citizen, must prosper. Under swaraj based on non-violence nobody is anybody's enemy, everybody contributes his

or her due quota to the common goal, all can read and write, and their knowledge keeps growing from day to day. Sickness and disease are reduced to the minimum. No one is a pauper and labour can always find employment. There is no place under such a government for gambling, drinking and immorality or for class hatred. The rich will use their riches wisely and usefully, and not squander them in increasing their pomp and worldly pleasures. It should not happen that a handful of rich people should live in jewelled palaces and the millions in miserable hovels devoid of sunlight or ventilation.

Hindu-Muslim differences, untouchability, vertical differences between high and low, these must not be. I have referred to these in the previous leaflet. It is necessary here, perhaps, to say a word about the Garasias and the Bhayats. They are also a limb of the people. Swarajists have to show to them that they have nothing to fear from the former. In non-violent swaraj there can be no encroachment upon just rights; contrariwise no one can possess unjust rights. In a well-organized State, usurpation should be an impossibility and it should be unnecessary to resort to force for dispossessing a usurper. But some Garasia friends have begun to fear the Congress. But if they use their *garas* as trustees and are or become industrious, they have no cause for fear. The Congress cannot keep its prestige if it tramples upon just rights. Its prestige is solely due to its ceaseless efforts to secure universal good. The conference of the Garasias is in session at Rajkot at the present moment. They had an orderly procession today, part of which I witnessed from my bed. A volunteer wrote down for me the maxims inscribed on their banners. They are so good as to arrest attention. Here they are:

1. Educate yourselves, abstain from spirituous liquors and cultivate simplicity.
2. Garasdars believe in constructive programme.
3. Say not mine is right, but say what is right is mine.
4. Avoid pomp, jealousy and bad habits.
5. We do not believe in encroaching upon other people's rights.
6. It is our duty to protect the afflicted.
7. Forgiveness is the virtue of the strong.
8. Speak only that which has value and never a word thoughtlessly.
9. Be manly if you will be free.

May the association have the strength to put their maxims into practice.

The programme that I have sketched above can be carried out only if Rajkot puts forth worthy young men and women

for it. They must have faith in it. We have not sufficiently cultivated the habit of silent service. We must cultivate it. I asked for a band of such silent workers at yesterday's meeting. They gave me their names. If they have a living faith in truth and non-violence and will do their work with full concentration, the people of Rajkot will certainly be able to shoulder the responsibility that is coming to them. The names that were given to me are as follows:

1. Shri Uchharangrai N. Dhebar,
2. Shri Jethalal H. Joshi,
3. Shri Popatlal P. Anada,
4. Shri Ramjibhai Manekchand Doshi,
5. Shri Saubhagyachand Virchand Modi,
6. Shri Jamnadas Shah.

The reader will see from the names that those who have not an abiding faith in truth and non-violence have wisely kept themselves aloof. But they have assured me that they will not oppose the programme to be chalked out by this band in terms of this leaflet. They have further assured me that they will willingly perform such tasks as may be entrusted to them if they can conscientiously do so. I congratulate these workers upon their restraint and patriotism.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

63. A LETTER

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 13, 1939

I have put you to much trouble. God will compensate you for it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 223

64. DISCUSSION WITH HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA AND OTHER WORKERS[1]

March 14, 1939

Gandhiji, after giving them a careful hearing, explained to them his idea about 'intensification'. They had broken virgin soil in launching upon

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VII". Pyarelal explains: "Haribhau Upadhyaya and some other workers met Gandhiji on the train and discussed the Jaipur situation with him. A stalemate had set in there. They wanted . . . the movement to be 'intensified'." *Vide* also the following item.

satyagraha in Jaipur. The popular response had exceeded their anticipations and even expectations. So far so good. But it was bad horsemanship to run a good horse to death. Instead of seeking further to spread out the volume they should now set to deepen the foundations and inculcate inward strength. He proposed some stringent tests and preparatory training as an indispensable condition for participation in satyagraha hereafter. Pending the attainment of the minimum standard laid down by him the civil disobedience part of satyagraha might remain suspended; that would not mean suspension of satyagraha itself. He invited them to Delhi for further discussion, if it was thought necessary.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

65. MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF JAIPUR

March 14, 1939

I am told the people of Jaipur have maintained peace during the satyagraha. Let everyone remember that the individuals or groups that fully observe truth and ahimsa in the pursuance of their aim are ever victorious.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 76

66. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL

NEW DELHI,
March [*15*][2], *1939*

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

Owing to the facilities kindly given to me I was able to see the three prisoners on hunger-strike in the Delhi Jail and I am glad to be able to say that they accepted my advice and gave it up—perhaps it is more correct to say suspended it. I tried to persuade them to give the assurance required by the Government. But they said they did not want to purchase their freedom by giving any undertaking. They were prisoners without any trial and so they should be discharged without any condition as so many others have been discharged. I felt the force of

[1] *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] Inferred from the reference to this letter in the following item. The sources, however, has "16".

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their objection. But I told them that in order to enable me to work for their release, they should give me satisfaction that they believed in the Congress policy of non-violence and that they would work under the Congress. This they readily agreed to do, and they gave me, too, a letter reducing their assurance to writing. But they wanted to make it plain to me that I was not to use that letter for securing their freedom, nor to ask the Government to discharge them on the strength of that letter. I wish you could see your way to discharge these prisoners unconditionally. If you do so it will strengthen my hands in the prosecution of my mission of non-violence on the political field.

I see in the letter that was sent to me by Mr. Puckle[1] another condition that they should not enter this or that province. Surely it is a superfluous condition. If the Governments of the provinces concerned do not want them to remain within their jurisdiction they would issue orders of prohibition. Why should the Government of India attach those conditions?

I am sending this letter with Mahadev Desai so that he can give you, if you require it, a graphic description of the conversation that took place between the three prisoners and myself.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON. SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL, C.S.I., ETC.
HOME MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

From a copy: C.W. 7814. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

67. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 15, 1939

1. I had hoped to send you this letter in the afternoon. But from the Viceroy's House[2] I went directly to the prisoners in the Delhi Jail who were hunger-striking. Contrary to my expectations I had to be with them for full two hours. I am happy to be able to say that they listened to me and broke their fast in my presence. They were being forcibly fed. I am now writing[3] to Sir Reginald Maxwell about their discharge.

[1] F. H. Puckle, Home Secretary

[2] In "The Rajkot Fast–VII", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji had a two-hour meeting with the Viceroy.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

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2. I now reduce to writing what I tried to explain in the course of our conversation. As I read your telegram[1], the Chief Justice[2] is to interpret the letter[3] given to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on the 26th December last by the Thakore Saheb. Assuming that it accords with our contention, the Committee has then to be set up with seven nominees of the Sardar and three officials nominated by the Thakore Saheb, the Thakore Saheb selecting the President of the Committee out of the ten.

3. The next thing contemplated in your telegram is that if there is a difference of opinion between the Sardar's nominees on the one hand and the officials on the other[4] as to the meaning of the Notification of 26th December, the Chief Justice is to be the referee whose decision will be final. This as I read your telegram is its technical meaning, so far as the two references to the Chief Justice are concerned. So far as the framing of the constitution is concerned, the majority decision should prevail.[5]

4. This letter need not go further so far as my promise to write to you on the two points raised by me is concerned. But perhaps it is fair to you for me to draw your attention to the fact that the advisers of the Thakore Saheb have committed[6] him to certain nominations, from which commitment it might be embarrassing even for the Paramount Power to recede. I refer to the nominations of two Mussalman members and one Bhayat. Perhaps you are aware of this difficulty and also of the several ways out that I have suggested. If you are not, I shall be glad to explain them to you. As I reflect upon our conversation, it seems to me that it was inconclusive in more ways than one. Consideration for your time was weighing heavily upon me, and as everything else, as I thought, appeared to you to be smooth-sailing, I did not wish to tax you any further. You will agree that there should be no misunderstanding about the several steps that have to be taken for implementing the conditions in terms of which I broke the fast. It would be terrible if it

[1] Conveyed through E. C. Gibson, Resident; *vide* Appendix III.

[2] Sir Maurice Gwyer

[3] In the source, Viceroy's marginal note reads: "Right, I don't know what the C. J. will do; e. g., C. J. may interpret Notification as meaning President in addition to ten members."

[4&5] Viceroy's marginal note reads: "No. Any members. Not between this or that group (see my wire). The question of a majority decision is very definitely within the terms of the remit to the C. J. I don't know what he may say."

[6] Viceroy's note reads: "We are back on the Notification of December 26th and Thakore's letter to Sardar Patel."

becomes my duty to object to any step after it is announced. I therefore suggest that I should be made aware beforehand of the announcement or announcements[1] that may have to be made in connection with the Rajkot affair.

5. And there are, as I mentioned to you, several other matters brought out by me in what has been termed my ultimatum to the Thakore Saheb and about which assurance has been given to me in your two telegrams. Another conversation between us seems to me to be necessary for a proper and final elucidation of the various points arising out of the interchange of the telegrams between us.[2] As I think over the hurried talk that you gave me about the States in general and the policy you contemplate to adopt in the immediate future, a feeling of disturbance creeps over me. I do not want to reduce to writing, unless you desire otherwise, the vague fear that is seizing hold of me on the assumption that I have understood you correctly. I would therefore like to have the interview for this purpose also.

Could you please send me a time?[3]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a copy: C.W. 7813. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

68. DISCUSSION WITH PHILIPOSE[4]

DELHI,
March 15, 1939

Satyagraha does not begin and end with civil disobedience. Let us do a little more *tapascharya* which is the essence of satyagraha. Suspension thus conceived can never do harm to the movement. The opponent will find that his battery is exhausted when we do not act up to his expectations, refuse to have any firework displays or put ourselves at his disposal for brutal

[1] Viceroy's note reads: "What 'announcement' ? I contemplate none."

[2] The rest of the paragraph is from the C.W. source.

[3] According to Pyarelal, on March 16, "Gandhiji had . . . another interview . . . from 5 to 7.30 p. m. The interview was conclusive. . . ."

[4] The discussion is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VII". Pyarelal explains that the discussion which took place in the afternoon was "about the Travancore situation".

assaults of his goondas. We must meet all his provocative and repressive measures with a coolness and an exemplary self-restraint even at the risk of being charged with cowardice. If there is no cowardice in us, we are safe; ours will ultimately be reckoned an act of rare bravery.

Meanwhile we should watch how things shape themselves. I am thinking out new plans of conducting the movement in view of the terrorist methods that some States seem to have adopted. We have to develop that technique of rendering futile the employment of hired hooligans against peaceful citizens.

An able general always gives battle in his own time on the ground of his choice. He always retains the initiative in these respects and never allows it to pass into the hands of the enemy.

In a satyagraha campaign the mode of fight and the choice of tactics, e. g., whether to advance or retreat, offer civil resistance or organize non-violent strength through constructive work and purely selfless humanitarian service, are determined according to the exigencies of the situation. A satyagrahi must carry out whatever plan is laid out for him with a cool determination giving way to neither excitement nor depression.

For a satyagrahi there can be only one goal, viz., to lay down his life performing his duty whatever it may be. It is the highest he can attain. A cause that has such worthy satyagrahi soldiers at its back can never be defeated.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

69. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

NEW DELHI,
March 16, 1939

MIRABEHN
UTMANZAI
CHARSADDA TAHSIL

NOT GOING RAJKOT. HERE SOME DAYS. YOU CAN COME IF YOU LIKE. KEEPING WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6436. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10031

70. LETTER TO SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 16, 1939

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

Mahadev Desai has given me a gist of his talk with you when he delivered my letter[1] to you. I thank you for giving him the time you did. He told me of the suggestion you made. As I wanted to take no step without knowing the prisoners' wishes I sent him to them. And I am able to say that I am satisfied that they have no belief in violence as a method for achieving India's freedom, and they have no intention of joining any organization whose activity is violent. I hope that on the strength of this letter you will be good enough to announce the release of the prisoners unconditionally. I hope, now, that the condition about movement from province to province will be entirely waived.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON. SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL, C.S.I., C.I.E.
HOME MEMBER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

From a copy: C.W. 7812. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

71. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

DELHI,
March 16, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter. I deliberately do not want to write much. It is my firm belief that we should not increase our demands. We may withdraw civil disobedience if the Praja Mandal is recognized unconditionally and civil liberties are granted.[2] Of course the prisoners must be released.

I hope you are keeping well and mentally also you are at your best. Do you do any reading? Do you spin? What is

[1] *Vide* pp. 56-7.
[2] The Praja Mandal suspended civil disobedience on March 23.

your weight? You should take fruit, etc. It is *moha*[1] to be obstinate about this. We may not pander to the palate, but we should give to the body what it needs as a medicine.

Blessings form
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3001

72. *INTERVIEW TO GOBIND BIHARI LAL*[2]

[*March 16, 1939*][3]

Gandhiji started the interview about America and my personal experience in my adopted country. . . . He talked to me in Hindustani, the national language of India. He said:

You have not forgotten our language? Not even after a quarter century spent in the United States? That is gratifying indeed.

In reply to my first question . . . Gandhiji tensely retorted:

India is not far from political independence, pure and simple.

Mahatma Gandhi said not a word of anger against the British Government. He emphasized the fact that now the real problem of India's freedom and advancement was one of self-organization. . . . He pointed out:

The outsiders may not realize the fact that the majority of the provinces of British India (as distinct from the parts ruled by the Princes) are now administered by the Nationalists, by Ministers of the Congress Party. That roughly shows that the Nationalist movement is already in the seats of political power in this country.

The great question now was of the Government of India as a whole. When the Central or Federal Government came into the hands of the Indians, India would become like Ireland—virtually an independent country. But according to Mahatma Gandhi, and the Nationalists, the scheme of Federation evolved by the British Government in 1935 was not the one to give self-government to India. He said:

[1] Ignorant attachment

[2] The interviewer was Science Editor of the Hearst Newspapers. He represented the International News Service at the Tripuri Congress. Gandhiji received him in the afternoon.

[3] Bihari Lal explains that the day before the interview Gandhiji received a donation of Rs. 10,000 from a woman. According to *Gandhi—1915–1948: A Detailed Chronology*, this donation was made on March 15.

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The present Federation scheme cannot be accepted without damaging the cause of India's independence. The Viceroy will try to have the scheme accepted. The Nationalists, many of the Princes, religious fanatics and others will oppose it—for diverse reasons. It is a very tense situation. The Indian atmosphere is in fact heavy with impending storms.

QUESTION: What will Nationalist India do if war comes?

GANDHIJI: I cannot answer in advance. But this is certain that a free India will join hands with other real democracies, and will always help in promoting the cause of democracy and humanism throughout the world.

I was curious to know how under his guidance, employing a new technique of non-militant rebellion, he has integrated millions of Indians in a fervent struggle for "self-rule". He explained:

Real self-rule is emancipation from India's own traditional inequalities as well as from those imposed from outside.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-5-1939

73. DISCUSSION WITH HYDERABAD ARYASAMAJ LEADERS[1]

March 16, 1939

Mixing up of motives is damaging in any species of satyagraha, but in religious satyagraha it is altogether inadmissible. It is fatal to use or allow religious satyagraha to be used as a cloak or a device for advancing an ulterior political or mundane objective.

As with regard to the goal so with the means, unadulterated purity is of the very essence in this species of satyagraha. The leader in such a movement must be a man of deeply spiritual life, preferably a *brahmachari*—whether married or unmarried. He must be a believer in—as in fact everybody participating in such a movement must be—and practiser of the particular religious observance for which the movement is launched. The leader must be versed in the science of satyagraha. Truth and ahimsa should shine through his speech. All his actions must be transparent through and through. Diplomacy and intrigue can have no place in his armoury. Absolute belief in ahimsa and in God is an indispensable condition in such satyagraha.

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VII". According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I, "The Deputation including Lala Deshbandhu Gupta and Professor Sadhikar waited on Gandhiji with regard to Aryasamaj Satyagraha in Hyderabad State."

In religious satyagraha there can be no room for aggressiveness, demonstrativeness, show. Those who take part in it must have equal respect and regard for the religious convictions and susceptibilities of those who profess a different faith from theirs. The slightest narrowness in their outlook is likely to be reflected magnified multifold in the opponent.

Religious satyagraha is, above all, a process of self-purification. It disdains mere numbers and external aids since these cannot add to the satyagrahi's self-purification. Instead, it relies utterly on God who is the fountain-head of all strength. Religious satyagraha, therefore, best succeeds under the leadership of a true man of God who will compel reverence and love even of the opponent by the purity of his life, the utter selflessness of his mission and the breadth of his outlook.[1]

Harijan, 27-5-1939

74. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 17, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I now return the draft reference to the Chief Justice of India which you kindly gave me yesterday. I showed it to Sardar Patel and neither he nor I wish to add anything to it. I have taken a copy of the document.

I tender my apology again for having taken so much of your time yesterday. I hope, however, that you think as I do that it was well spent, if only for avoiding, as far as it is humanly possible, any further misunderstanding on the Rajkot matter.

I thank you once more for introducing me to Lady Linlithgow.[2]

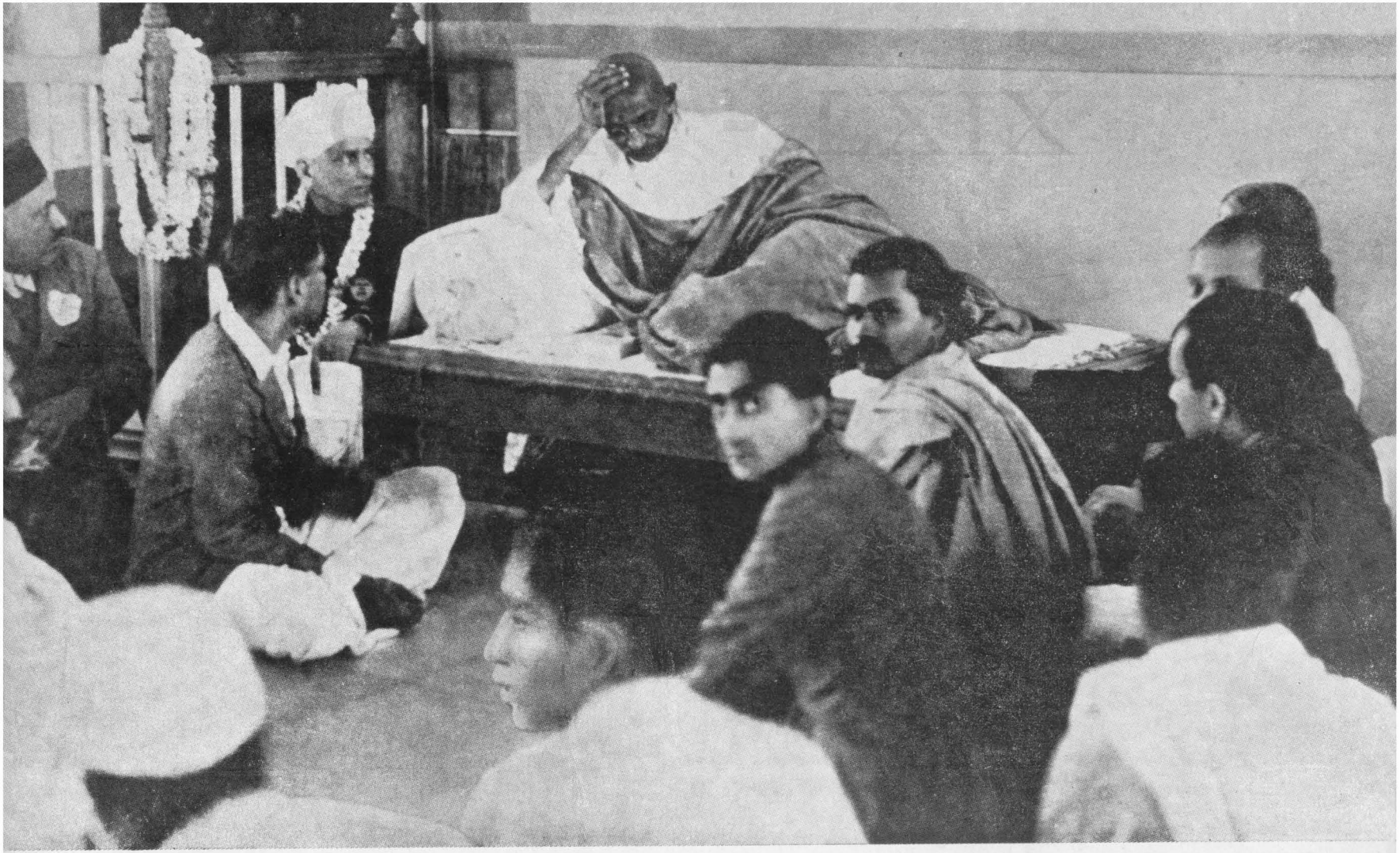
I am,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10149. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Pyarelal adds: "Miss Agatha Harrison, who came shortly afterwards, asked . . . 'Is it true, Gandhiji, that genuine satyagraha can never provoke reprisals?' 'Yes,' replied Gandhiji. 'Genuine satyagraha is a spiritual exercise. As such it can only evoke the best, not the worst, in man'."

[2] Acknowledging this on March 18, the Viceroy said: " Thank you very much . . . for sending me back the Terms of Reference to the Chief Justice. I am glad that you should have no comment on them."

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IN DELHI, RESTING AT LAKSHMINARAYAN TEMPLE AFTER THE OPENING CEREMONY

75. LETTER TO YESHWANTRAO HOLKAR

DELHI,
March 17, 1939

MAHARAJA SAHEB[1],

I have not forgotten the sweet memories of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan[2]. I hope that the work of setting up a Hindi University in Indore is making progress.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

76. A HARIJAN TOUR

The following account by Shri Rameshwari Nehru of a tour undertaken by Shri Thakkar Bapa and her in the Central India and South Rajputana States will be read with interest.[3]

Harijan, 18-3-1939

[1] Of Indore

[2] From April 20 to 23, 1935; *vide* Vol. LX.

[3] Rameshwari Nehru, Vice-President, All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh, reported: "The object of the tour was to consolidate the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh wherever it existed, to start new centres where our work did not exist and to do propaganda for the removal of untouchability." The report, which subsequently appeared in four fortnightly instalments, is not reproduced here.

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77. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 18, 1939

UCHHRANGRAI DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT

EXPEDITING THINGS HERE.[2] MEANWHILE SUBMIT TO WHATEVER MAY HAPPEN. KEEP ME INFORMED.

BAPU

Harijan, 3-6-1939. Also from a copy: C.W. 10147. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

78. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 18, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I hope you will not say, 'Oh ye of little faith.' My faith in you is abundant, but I am filled with the fear that you have not visualized my difficulty about Rajkot. There is an air of unreality about the freedom to come. The people of Rajkot are used to the utmost freedom of expression of opinion and of action, so long as it is non-violent. But today on the eve of getting self-government they have practically no liberty. A copy of a telegram[3] received from there is already in front of you. Here is copy of another:

> Khan Saheb (First Member of the Council) orally informs that he considers Seva Mandal literacy campaign undesirable in existing circumstances and desires its stoppage till negotiations over. Dhebar.

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VIII".

[2] The C.W. source has: "Expedite everything." *Vide* also the following item.

[3] The telegram, which was from U. N. Dhebar, said: "State's policy unchanged. Gives Izara for fruit selling. Azad chowk foundation being dug two workers not allowed to remain in Kherdi. Cultivators being pressed for fine and removal charges. Permission disallowed to carry their own share. Third instead fourth share demanded from sympathetic cultivators."

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If the people of Rajkot cannot enjoy ordinary liberty today, how will they two or three weeks hence get full liberty? In order that the whole thing may not end in a catastrophe, I suggest that you ask the Resident to take full charge and make himself responsible for preparing the way for popular control. Supposing that there is a proper constitution framed, there is no one in Rajkot to deliver the goods, the invisible hand of Durbar Virawala will deliver nothing. I suppose you know that he has no official status, if he told me the truth.

Pray pardon me for this infliction, and that too on a Sunday. But you should know the reality as I see it.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10135. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

79. MESSAGE TO EGYPT[1]

March 18, 1939

I have nothing new. I would repeat what I said in my telegram[2] to you on your arrival that there must be a real bond of friendship between India and Egypt. It is not a mere courteous wish. It is a wish from the heart. There is such a lot which is common between the cultures of the two countries. Besides, India has such a big Muslim population. Friendship between India and Egypt should help to solve many of our domestic troubles.[3]

Harijan, 27-5-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VII". Pyarelal explains that the Egyptian Delegation, which met Gandhiji "at noon", requested for "a message to Egypt".

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to K. M. Munshi", p. 42.

[3] Concluding, Pyarelal adds: "The message was translated into Egyptian language by an interpreter to the leader of the Deputation. At parting he . . . said in Egyptian: 'We pray for your long life, as you are the hope not of India only but of the whole world. The work that you are doing is for the whole of the Orient.' 'That is my hope at least,' replied Gandhiji."

80. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

March 18, 1939

These two temples have been constructed at the instance of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and are the result of the munificence of the House of Birlas, principally of Shri Jugal Kishore Birla who is particularly inclined in this direction. It would have been in the fitness of things if the temples had been opened by Malaviyaji who inspired their construction. But as he is not here, it has fallen to my lot to perform the ceremony.

It is my hope that both these temples will make a special contribution to promote the religious sense of the worshippers. The temple of Buddha admits of no untouchability. But even in the temple of Krishna untouchability and the idea of high and low are taboo. For me, untouchability and the idea of high and low have no room in Hinduism. There are the varnas, but none of the varnas is superior to the other. Varna does not connote superiority; it connotes different functions and different duties.

Whoever has more of the earthly or spiritual goods has to perform more service to the community, has to be more humble. The moment untouchability and the sense of high and low crept in, Hinduism began to decline. Hinduism is based on the firm foundation of truth and non-violence and, therefore, there is no room in it for conflict with other religions.

It must be the daily prayer of every adherent of the Hindu faith that every known religion of the world should grow from day to day and should serve the whole of humanity. I hope that these temples will serve to propagate the idea of equal respect for religions and to make communal jealousies and strife things of the past.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

[1] This appeared under the title "Equal Respect for Religions" with an explanatory note which read: ". . . Gandhiji performed the opening ceremony of the Lakshmi Narayan Temple and the Buddha Vihar . . . in Delhi. The vast concourse of people . . . made it difficult for Gandhiji to enter the Temple precincts and the microphone arrangements broke down. He therefore . . . later issued to the Press what he would, under normal conditions, have spoken."

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81. NOTE TO JAIPUR SATYAGRAHA COUNCIL

March 19, 1939

My opinion is that the departure of the batch of satyagrahis for Jaipur should be postponed till I have further considered the matter.

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 6166. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *The Hindustan Times*, 20-3-1939

82. REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS

The four days' fast set me thinking of the qualifications required in a satyagrahi. Though they were carefully considered and reduced to writing in 1921[1] they seem to have been forgotten. As satyagraha in the form of civil disobedience is being offered or contemplated in several States, it is necessary to reiterate the qualifications and to dispel false ideas that seem to be prevalent among many workers.

Moreover the greatest care is necessary at the present moment when violence, not non-violence, seems to pervade the air. Indeed it may be reasonably argued that in an atmosphere surcharged with violence there is no scope for non-violence. This argument may be carried too far, so far that non-violence may be made wholly ineffective; whereas it is claimed to be the only effective force for counteracting violence no matter how terrible. But when violence pervades the air the expression of non-violence may not be through civil disobedience. And if it is to be civil disobedience, it must be hedged in by adequate restrictions. In satyagraha, it is never the numbers that count; it is always the quality, more so when the forces of violence are uppermost.

Then it is often forgotten that it is never the intention of a satyagrahi to embarrass the wrongdoer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The satyagrahi's object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoers. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward convictions.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 100-1.

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Keeping these observations before his mind's eye, the reader will perhaps appreciate the following qualifications which I hold are essential for every satyagrahi in India:

1. He must have a living faith in God, for He is his only Rock.
2. He must believe in truth and non-violence as his creed and therefore have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.
3. He must be leading a chaste life and be ready and willing for the sake of his cause to give up his life and his possessions.
4. He must be a habitual khadi-wearer and spinner. This is essential for India.
5. He must be a teetotaller and be free from the use of other intoxicants in order that his reason may be always unclouded and his mind constant.
6. He must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid down from time to time.
7. He should carry out the jail rules unless they are specially devised to hurt his self-respect.

The qualifications are not to be regarded as exhaustive. They are illustrative only.

NEW DELHI, March 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-3-1939

83. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO R. SANKAR[1]

March 20, 1939

R. SANKAR[2]
TRAVELLERS' BUNGALOW
MADURA

WAS NOT UNPREPARED FOR ARRESTS. THEY WILL BENEFIT CAUSE. ISSUING STATEMENT[3].

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of even date informing Gandhiji of the arrests of Pattom Thanu Pillai, President, Travancore State Congress, and G. Ramachandran, Member of A. I. C. C. and Travancore State Congress Working Committee, and other members.

[2] President, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee

[3] *Vide* pp. 73-5.

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84. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

MY DEAR C. R.,

Read this[1] from Satyamurti and do what you think is right. The conscience clause does appeal to me as right. But my 'right' may be your 'wrong' and *vice versa*.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 10889. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

85. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Shaukat has just brought your note. The news you give me is astounding. I only hope that there is a misunderstanding. Did you get the name of the Congressman?[2] I am inquiring.

I hope Maulana Saheb[3] is much better. Please give him my love and tell him I am anxious to see him. I shall do so as soon as I can safely leave.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] *Vide* Appendix V.

[2] In his reply dated March 22, the addressee, *inter alia*, said: "I do not know the names of the Congressmen who are supposed to have approached a Government official in Delhi. The names have not been mentioned to me."

[3] Abul Kalam Azad

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86. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

DELHI,
March 20, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

How are you? Are you quiet now? I do not find time to write. But what about you? What did you observe in the Congress? Are you keeping good health? We shall be in Delhi for a couple of days more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10020. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

87. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 20, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I have been able to attend to letters properly for the first time only today. I went through your letters carefully. Do not, for the present, send the letter to Baburamji. I am returning it. I hope Jamnalalji will be released shortly. We shall arrange to get this work done through him. In case we fail, resignation is certainly there as the last resort.

I have not replied to Gopinath. However I will do that, saying that in view of the prevailing circumstances he may carry on with the Roman script for some time. I would be glad if the Government of Bombay were to do what you want it to do.

Could not Diwakar be made President of the Hindustani Board? Or co-opt Shankarrao and make him the President. Perinbehn perhaps may not do justice to the office of President. Kazi is not necessary. I would certainly like Brelvi. He is a straightforward man. But Dev's objection does deserve consideration. Narahari cannot be burdened with this responsibility.

I am not writing separately to Amritlal. You must be taking care of your health. My programme is uncertain. I am in Delhi for the present and staying at Birla House.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7974

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88. DISCUSSION WITH TRAVANCORE SATYAGRAHIS[1]

March 20, 1939

Suspension should never bring despondency and weakness in a satyagraha struggle. Even though people may be ready and non-violence ensured, and suspension is ordered through a miscalculation of the general, it cannot jeopardize the future of the movement. Satyagraha means readiness to suffer and a faith that the more innocent and pure the suffering the more potent will it be in its effect. Helplessness is thus ruled out in satyagraha. Suspension of civil disobedience, if it resulted in an accentuation of repression, would itself become satyagraha in its ideal form.

Today the opponent is afraid of your numbers. You cannot expect him to show a change of heart while he is filled with panic. He senses in your action a spirit of retaliation which irritates him the more. It thus becomes a species of violence.

Your struggle hereafter may have to be restricted to a few men only, but their satyagraha will tell. While we are playing with non-violence we are only giving a chance to the powers that be in Travancore to organize the brute in man. This must not be.[2]

Harijan, 3-6-1939

89. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

I observe that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar[4] had no better use for the two Travancore stalwarts, Shri Thanu Pillai and Shri Ramachandran, than to send them to prison. They will give a good account of themselves in prison as they have done

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VIII". Pyarelal explains that the Travancore satyagrahis who called on Gandhiji in the afternoon feared that "indefinite suspension of civil disobedience would bring in depression from which it would be difficult for the people to recover."

[2] *Vide* also "Discussion with Philipose", pp. 59-60.

[3] The statement appeared under the title "Read the Signs".

[4] Dewan of Travancore State

outside. But I cannot congratulate the Travancore Durbar on their action.

When I was in Rajkot I had seen Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's statement in condemnation of what he was pleased to term outside interference. May the Princes summon whatever outside assistance they may choose, and not the people? There is no restriction on the outside help the Princes may take. The popular party has put many voluntary restrictions on such help. After all, what am I doing except to give advice as an expert in the science of satyagraha? By doing so I promote the spirit of non-violence and the cause of peace. The connection between the people of the States and of the so-called British India is organic, vital and indissoluble. There is no such connection between the Princes who are and who pride themselves on being independent of one another. The common tie between them is that of subservience to the Paramount Power, without whose permission, implied or explicit, they cannot move a blade of grass.

But the Paramount Power itself growingly lives on the will of the nation, including the people of the States. If the nation realizes that it can develop invincible strength through truth and non-violence, the Paramount Power will be voluntarily replaced by the power of the people. It, therefore, seems to me that Sir C. P. Ramaswami and those Dewans who think like him are bad advisers of their Princes and ill serve them. The effort to ignore the Congress and Congress workers and to prevent its natural influence working in the States is like that of a child who by the little palm of his right hand tries to stop an onrushing flood. This attempt to stifle the legitimate aspirations of the people of the States surely sows seeds of bitterness on the one hand between the people of the States and their Princes to whom they want to be loyal, and on the other between the Princes and the Congress which wants to help them if it is allowed to do so.

I ask the Princes and their advisers to read the signs of the times and march with them. They may succeed by frightful measures in sending for a time the freedom movement underground, but they will never be able to crush it altogether. I venture to think also that the Paramount Power will have to shed their nervousness and overcautiousness. If they owe a duty to the Princes, surely they owe a duty to their people. The days when the people could be ignored are gone.

If the Princes will not listen, let the Paramount Power tell them in plain terms that they may not expect the latter's assistance

in suppressing their people. The Paramount Power who draw Ministers in many Provinces from the Congress may not sit still when neighbouring States heap insults upon the Congress. It is an anomaly that demands quick handling.

To the people of Travancore I suggest that the cause has benefited by the premature arrests of the two stalwarts. The benefit can only accrue if they will use the arrests wisely. If there is the slightest risk of violence breaking out, let there be no demonstration by way of processions and the like. Let them all devote themselves to constructive work. The date of launching out upon civil disobedience must not be anticipated. If I am to continue to advise, let me study the situation and let them await my opinion[1] before resuming civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is but a minor part of satyagraha. Let the people, including the most illiterate and the downtrodden, be knit in a common bond by silent service. In this work even the students can take their due share. Let the satyagrahis remember that haste is waste. Their freedom was assured when they took the solemn vow of fighting for it through truth and non-violence, that is, through enlightened and disciplined self-suffering. For I know that they will never go back upon their vow.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

90. DISCUSSION WITH JAIPUR SATYAGRAHIS[2]

March 20, 1939

Provoking lathi charges or receiving lathi blows on your body in a spirit of bravado is not satyagraha. True satyagraha consists in the readiness to face blows if they come in the course of performing one's duty.

Today the whole atmosphere in the country is reeking of violence as was evidenced at Tripuri. Under violence I include corruption, falsehood, hypocrisy, deceit and the like. If our satyagraha is to survive this atmosphere, we ahimsaites shall have to be more strict with ourselves. Let only the purest and the most innocent go to jail. It does not matter if they have to remain immured behind the prison bars for a whole lifetime. Their sacrifice will fill the prison with a sweet fragrance and its influence

[1] *Vide* pp. 78-9.

[2] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VIII".

will even travel outside and subtly transform the entire atmosphere. They will never long for their release nor doubt that their sacrifice is being 'wasted'. They will realize that a consecrated resolve is more potent in its action than mere physical action can ever be. The discipline that they will be acquiring in prison will help the non-violent organization of the people outside and instil fearlessness among them.

So much for those who are in prison, what about those outside? They must engage in constructive work as the embodiment of the active principle of ahimsa. If it does not appeal to them, it will only betray their lack of faith in ahimsa.

The other thing is internal. They must cultivate a living faith in God—an attitude of utter reliance on Him to the exclusion of all external aids. A single satyagrahi imbued with such faith will inspire the whole people by his example and may induce a heart change even in the opponent who, freed from fear, will the more readily appreciate his simple faith and respect it.[1]

Harijan, 3-6-1939

91. INTERVIEW TO "THE NEW YORK TIMES"[2]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *March 23, 1939*][3]

Asked what advice he would give the Congress regarding his attitude, should the Paramount Power become involved in a European war, Mahatma Gandhi pleaded that that was too difficult to answer at that time.

He demurred also to a question whether he wished India to take her independence within the British Commonwealth of Nations or outside it. Gandhiji said:

That again is difficult. I cannot exactly tell where I myself stand on that. Both are difficult questions.

CORRESPONDENT: But don't they go to the root of the situation?

GANDHIJI: Wise journalists never go to the root.

[1] Pyarelal adds: "As a result of the talk it was decided to suspend the Jaipur Satyagraha indefinitely." *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] & [3] The newspaper was represented by its special correspondent, F. E. Birchell. The interview, which was reported by Reuter, appeared under the date-line "New York, March 23", as "an Associated Press message from New Delhi". A brief report of the interview was also reproduced in "The Rajkot Fast–VIII".

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When asked if he was content with the result of the Tripuri Congress, the Mahatma was still smilingly evasive:

Contentment is bliss. That is one of your proverbs, isn't it?

C. Then let me ask: Is India making progress to your liking?

G. (Thoughtfully) Yes, it is. I get frightened sometimes; but there is progress at the bottom and that progress is sound.

The greatest difficulty is Hindu-Muslim differences. That is a serious obstacle. There I cannot say I see visible progress, but the trouble is bound to solve itself. The mass mind is sound if only because it is unselfish. The political grievances of both the communities are identical, so are the economic grievances.

During further conversation, the correspondent asked Mahatma Gandhi if in the present unrest he had got some message which he might carry across the world, moving men's hearts towards peace. His eyes gleamed at the word "peace" and he bent his head in thought.

G. I don't see at the moment an atmosphere which would carry my voice to all nations. Perhaps I am far in advance of the times.

C. Might not it be said with equal truth that the times are falling behind you?

G. If you like. I am thinking over your suggestion. Should I again allow myself to become the laughing-stock, as has sometimes been the case? Should I? But why not? Laughter is wholesome. Perhaps it may be a good thing. So take this as coming from me:

I see from today's papers that the British Prime Minister is conferring with Democratic Powers as to how they should meet the latest threatening developments. How I wish he was conferring by proposing to them that all should resort to simultaneous disarmament. I am as certain of it as I am sitting here, that this heroic act would open Herr Hitler's eyes and disarm him.

C. Would not that be a miracle?

G. Perhaps; but it would save the world from the butchery that seems to be impending. Isn't that enough for one morning?

The Hindustan Times, 24-3-1939

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92. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

U.N. DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT

AUTHORITIES HERE SUGGEST THAT YOU SHOULD PUT BEFORE RESIDENT ALL FACTS YOU TELEGRAPHED HERE AND ANY OTHER COMPLAINT AND SEEK RELIEF. YOU CAN SHOW HIM THIS IF NECESSARY.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10136. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

93. STATEMENT SUSPENDING TRAVANCORE SATYAGRAHA[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

I have had long chats[2] with Shri Philipose about the situation in Travancore. I have also carefully studied the resolution of the last Working Committee of the State Congress and the well-thought-out elaborate plan of action to be taken all over Travancore together with great precautions embodied in it to ensure non-violence. I have also read the telegram received by Shri Philipose wherein he is told that if civil disobedience is further suspended, there will be much heart-burning and disappointment.

But after having weighed the pros and cons I have come to the conclusion that it will be in the interest of the cause not to start civil disobedience on March 25 and to suspend it till I advise resumption.

In satyagraha there is no such thing as disappointment or heart-burning. The struggle always goes on in some shape or other till the goal is reached. A satyagrahi is indifferent whether

[1] The statement appeared under the title "Suspend Civil Disobedience". In "The Rajkot Fast–VIII", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji issued the statement "after final consultation with Travancore friends".

[2] *Vide* pp. 59-60.

it is civil disobedience or some other phase of the struggle to which he is called. Nor does he mind if, in the middle of the civil disobedience march, he is called upon to halt and do something else. He must have faith that it is all for the best. My own experience hitherto has been that each suspension has found the people better equipped for the fight and for control over forces of violence. Therefore, in advising suspension, I dismiss from my mind the fear that it may lead to desertion and disbelief. If it does, I should not feel sorry, for it would be to me a sign that the deserters did not know what satyagraha was and the movement was better without those who did not know what they were doing.

The reasons that have prompted me to tender this advice are these: If it is true that the Travancore Durbar have drafted untrained raw men as police in order to strike terror among satyagrahis, it behoves the satyagrahis not to tempt the Durbar whilst suspension is a possibility. In view of the inhumanities which I believe have been perpetrated in various States, I am myself thinking out a new orientation of civil disobedience. I may fail. But if I am to succeed at all, I must have the quiet which can be produced only by suspension of civil disobedience wherever I am guiding it.

This suspension gives one a chance of mobilizing public opinion in favour of the movement for liberty in Travancore. It gives also an opportunity to the Travancore Durbar to reconsider their view of satyagrahis and their demands.

The Princes are themselves agitated over the tremendous awakening that has taken place among the people in the States. Suspension in Travancore and elsewhere gives them breathing time and an opportunity of thinking out their course of action free from the burden of dealing with civil resistance.

Lastly, it is wise to allow the recent Viceregal message to the Princes to work itself among them.

The satyagrahis of Travancore should know too that I have advised[1] suspension of civil disobedience in Jaipur for similar reasons and I am likewise holding the hands of workers in other States. But I give my assurance to Travancoreans and all concerned that I shall not sit idle during suspension, nor shall I be long in coming to a final decision, assuming that in the mean while no relief has come in the States in which civil disobedience was going on and is under suspension.

Harijan, 1-4-1939

[1] *Vide* pp. 75-6.

94. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

ON THE TRAIN,
ADDRESS AS AT BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
March 24, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I do hope this will find you steadily progressing towards complete recovery.

I enclose herewith copy of Sarat's letter to me and my reply. If it represents also your sentiments, then and then only my suggestions are applicable. Anyway, the anarchy at the Centre should end. In accordance with your request, I am keeping absolutely silent, though pressure is being put upon me to give my opinion on the crisis.

I saw the resolution[1] for the first time in Allahabad. It seems to me to be quite clear. The initiative lies with you. I do not know how far you are fit to attend to national work. If you are not, I think you should adopt the only constitutional course open to you.[2]

I shall have to be in Delhi still for a few days.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] The resolution, sponsored by Govind Ballabh Pant in the Subjects Committee at the Tripuri Congress, read: "In view of various misunderstandings that have arisen in the Congress and the country on account of the controversies in connection with the Presidential election and after, it is desirable that the All-India Congress Committee should clarify the position and declare its general policy. The Committee declares its firm adherence to the fundamental policies of the Congress which have governed its programme in the past years under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and is definitely of opinion that there should be no break in these policies and that they should continue to govern the Congress programme in future. The Committee expresses its confidence in the work of the Working Committee which functioned during the last year and regrets that any aspersions should have been cast against any of its members. In view of the critical situation that may develop during the coming year and in view of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress and the country to victory during such crisis, the Committee regards it as imperative that the Congress executive should command his implicit confidence and requests the President to nominate the Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji."

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

95. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 25, 1939

RASHTRAPATI BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE[1]. WAS YESTERDAY IN ALLAHABAD SEE MAULANA AS HE WAS ANXIOUS FOR TALK. POSTED LETTER[2] FROM TRAIN. AWAITING YOUR COMMUNICATION. HOPE PROGRESS STEADY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

96. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNIL BOSE

[*March 25, 1939*][3]

YOUR WIRE[4]. GOD SAVE ME FROM NEWSPAPER[5] INVENTIONS AND THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THEM.

The Sunday Statesman, 26-3-1939

[1] Dated March 24, which read: "In view of your suggestion to Sarat regarding Congress work and impossibility of my meeting you immediate future consider necessary start consultations with you through post. Am writing."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

[4] Which read: "Doctors have not the slightest objection to your visiting Subhas at Jealgora. In fact, your kind visit will be most heartily welcomed." According to the source, this was "in connection with a Press report from New Delhi that doctors had objected to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose receiving visitors, and that, therefore, Gandhiji was unable to visit him at Jealgora."

[5] The manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary has "Press".

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97. TELEGRAM TO R. K. JHA

March 25, 1939

JHA[1]
DRUG CONGRESS

IT DOES.[2]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

98. BOMBAY THE BEAUTIFUL

'Handsome is that handsome does' is a neat proverb. I have often said that it is wrong to call Bombay beautiful only because of the fine approach to the harbour or for its many beauty spots so long as it contains dirty *chawls*, overcrowded lanes and uninhabitable hovels, which serve as dwelling places for its Harijans. But when Bombay goes dry,[3] as it will very soon, it will become truly beautiful even for this one singularly beautiful act and it will deserve the title in spite of the blemishes I have mentioned. For when its labouring population has the temptation of drink removed from them, with the improvement in their condition which always follows the exorcism of the drink devil, it must become easier for the Bombay Municipality to deal with the problem of providing better habitations for the poor classes. The Bombay Government, and especially Dr. Gilder, deserve the thanks of the citizens of Bombay, nay of the whole Province, for the courage with which they have approached their task. I know that many Parsis who depend upon drink traffic for their living will be affected. Bombay is the stronghold of the Parsis. Then there are its fashionable citizens who think they need their spirituous drinks as they need water. I have

[1] President, District Congress Committee, Drug

[2] The addressee, in his telegram dated March 25, had asked Gandhiji whether the statement suspending Travancore satyagraha (*vide* pp. 78-9) contemplated similar action in Nandgaon State. According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I, satyagraha in Rajnandgaon and Chhuikhadan States in Chhattisgarh division was suspended on April 10. *Vide* also p. 110.

[3] Prohibition came into force in Bombay on August 1, 1939.

every hope that they will all rise to the occasion, think of their poor brethren, even if they do not appreciate abstinence for themselves, and set an example to all India and make good the claim of Bombay not only to be beautiful but also the first city in India.

Prohibition in Bombay will mean a big fall in revenue. The Finance Minister has to balance his budget. He has to find money. He has to levy new taxes. Let there be no complaint from those who will have to bear the burden. Dislike of taxes, be they ever so reasonable, is proverbial. I understand that the Finance Minister has met all just objections. Why should those who will have to bear the burden not feel a pride in being given the privilege of contributing to the great experiment? It will be a proud day for Bombay if prohibition is ushered in amid the rejoicings of the whole population. Let it be remembered that this prohibition is not a superimposition. It is being introduced by Governments that are responsible to the people. It has been a plank in the national programme since 1920. It is coming, therefore, in due fulfilment of the national will definitely expressed nearly twenty years ago.

NEW DELHI, March 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-4-1939

99. *'SUSPENSION SHOULD CONTINUE'*

Shri Philipose has received the following telegram from Trivandrum:

> Arrests continue. Kunjukrishna Pillai and others arrested. Kuzhitharai Krishna Pillai, President, arrested today (24th). Korah nominated President. Inform Gandhiji.

I had not expected that arrests would continue even after the suspension of civil disobedience. But of course my expectations need not be fulfilled. Suspension was advised for reasons publicly stated by me. If Travancore authorities consider it necessary to continue arrests, satyagrahis may not complain. Civil disobedience gives cause for arrest or makes some action by the authorities necessary. Therefore, as a rule, suspension without any previous understanding with the State is generally followed not only by discontinuance of arrests but even by discharge of those convicted for disobedience. If the Trivandrum wire is correct, authorities in Travancore have adopted an unexpected

course. Their action need not perturb or perplex satyagrahis. Suspension should still continue. I have no doubt that such arrests will help the popular cause more than if civil disobedience was continued, assuming, of course, that there was no cause for arrest other than that the arrested persons were satyagrahis. Since suspension has been declared I hold it to be unnecessary to appoint a President instead of the one arrested. The object of appointing successive Presidents in place of those arrested no longer subsists. There must be a provision in the ordinary constitution of the State Congress for conduct of business in the absence of the President.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that satyagrahis were unprepared for the exigency created by my advice. Let them console themselves, if they can, by the fact that though they may not just now appreciate or understand what may to them appear to be new technique, it has been advised by one who claims to know the science of satyagraha. It calls for infinite patience and boundless faith in its efficacy. Everything comes right for those who watch, wait and pray.

Since writing the foregoing I have seen the official reaction to suspension. An Associated Press message says that official opinion seems to be that civil disobedience is neither given up nor even suspended. If there was any ground for suspicion, it should be dispelled by the State Congress second President, Shri N. Srikrishna Pillai, who, according to another Associated Press message, says:

> Civil disobedience has been suspended at the instance of Mahatmaji,[1] and it will be resumed only with his sanction, whatever time it may take. My instruction to the country is that the State Congress workers should preach the technique of non-violence (as different from non-violent direct action) to the masses as well as the message of khadi and swadeshi. The State Congress, as it stands at present, does not contemplate any direct action without command from Mahatmaji. I know that picketing of liquor shops is not breaking of any law and it is not prohibited by Government. Yet, fearing trouble and misunderstanding, we are not launching even that.

This emphatic statement puts the matter beyond any suspicion. I am hoping that civil resisters who were eagerly looking forward to the resumption of civil disobedience will conform to the letter and the spirit of the presidential instructions and

[1] *Vide* pp. 78-9

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thus show that if they understood what 'disobedience' was they understood equally well what 'civil' meant.

I am convinced that much of our trouble has arisen from our not putting due emphasis in our actions on the implications of the word 'civil' which is the very opposite of criminal, uncivil and violent. Let the suspension enable the members of the State Congress and the Travancore public in general to realize the tremendous implications of non-violence, and I promise that its practice in thought, word and deed will hasten the progress towards their goal as nothing else will.

NEW DELHI, March 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-4-1939

100. JAIPUR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The cry comes from Jaipur that some civil resisters are disappointed over the suspension and are not as enthusiastic to tackle the constructive programme, which is chiefly the spinning-wheel and khadi, as they were for fight. If this is the general feeling, the suspension is doubly justified. For the reluctance betrays lack of appreciation of ahimsa without which resistance becomes a species of violence. Those who lightly talk of freedom in the States and hope to attain it through civil resistance, evidently do not know what they are talking about. Will they not learn the lesson of the Provinces? Provincial Autonomy[1], such as it is, has been won by civil resistance however inferior it may have been. But do they not realize that it is likely to break down if Congress Ministers cannot carry on without the aid of the Police and the Military, i. e., without British guns? If the partial autonomy was won by non-violent means, it must be held also by such means and no other. From recent experiences it seems clear that the country is not ready to hold power through non-violent means. Though for the past twenty years—the period of the greatest mass awakening—the people have been taught to abjure the use of arms including brick-bats and the lathi, and to rely upon non-violence pure and simple, we know that Congress Ministers have been obliged to resort to violence to suppress popular violence real or imaginary. It is clear also that the country cannot be made ready for the use of violence without training. Was our non-violence that of the

[1] Granted under the Government of India Act of 1935; *vide* Vol. LXV.

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weak? Hindu-Muslim tension is to me the acid test. The Congress corruption is a sure sign of violence. Swaraj within the States is not to be obtained by any non-violent trick. It will be won, if it is to be won, by non-violence of the strong, i. e., by hard work, patient and mute suffering, service of the poor, the hungry and the forsaken of society, and a voluntary obedience to the laws of the State and society in so far as they are not repugnant to public and private morals. Unless non-violence of the strong is really developed among us, there should be no thought of civil disobedience for swaraj, whether within the States or in British India. And as an indispensable test—by no means infallible—of non-violence I adhere to habitual spinning and habitual use of khadi by the would-be civil resister. The Jaipur satyagrahis, if they desire to take part in any civil disobedience struggle that may take place in future, should understand the implications of non-violence and apply themselves with zest to the fulfilment of the minimum conditions I have prescribed. Let them also know that what applies to them applies to all future satyagrahis that I may have to deal with.

This, however, does not mean that the fight for swaraj stops. It only means that civil disobedience is not to be so cheap as I fear I have, indirectly if not directly, made it. But I am never too old to learn. One is ever young in the felt presence of the God of Truth or Truth which is God. But if civil disobedience is henceforth to be a very dear commodity, I hope, God willing, to show that it will prove to be infinitely more effective and faster moving than the alloy with which we have so far contented ourselves.

NEW DELHI, March 27, 1939
Harijan, 1-4-1939

101. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 27, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

AWAITING YOUR LETTER. AS YOU SAY IN YOUR STATEMENT IT IS DESIRABLE WE MEET. RAJKOT AFFAIR TIES ME DOWN TO DELHI OR I WOULD RUN TO YOU DESPITE WEAKNESS. I SUGGEST YOUR COMING HERE AND LIVING WITH ME. UNDERTAKE

NURSE YOU TO HEALTH WHILE WE ARE SLOWLY CONFERRING. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

102. LETTER TO SIR MAURICE GWYER

March 27, 1939

I had kept my reply[1] ready. In the mean time, I got your letter. Even then, it does not warrant any change. Let me add that I repudiate[2] the story regarding fraud[3]. In fact, the question does not arise at all.

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] In the source, Mahadev Desai explains: "Bapu had already kept his brief reply ready last night [March 26]. Next morning, he was going through a few changes suggested in it. He was about to despatch the letter at 11 a. m. when in the mean time he got Chief Justice's letter saying 'you should write in detail as I do not wish to give *prima facie* ruling on preliminary objections.' "

In "The Rajkot Fast–VIII", Pyarelal reports the following under March 26: "Although Sardar had sent in his submission as required by the Chief Justice on the 17th instant, further proceedings had been held up because no statement had been received on behalf of the Rajkot Durbar. This delay was irksome to a degree but it could not be helped. Durbar Virawala at last arrived yesterday to represent the Rajkot Durbar before the Chief Justice. He submitted a statement covering forty typed foolscap sheets. A copy of it was sent to the Sardar for reply. The Durbar's statement was full of vituperation against the Sardar. It questioned the validity of the Thakore Saheb's letter to the Sardar of December 26th which it alleged had been obtained by the Sardar from the Thakore Saheb 'under duress' and by 'fraudulent means'. The Sardar's reply to it was brief, barely covering half a sheet. The bulk of the Rajkot Durbar's submission, he pleaded, consisted of irrelevant and libellous statements, unsupported by evidence. These he requested should be ordered to be expunged. As for the Thakore Saheb's letter of even date with the Notification No. 50 of December 26th, it was self-explained and admitted of only one meaning, and extraneous evidence was inadmissible for its interpretation. He therefore prayed that the Chief Justice give his interpretation of the said Note of 26th December last without permitting any further procrastination. The hearing took place at half past three in the afternoon at the Chief Justice's residence. At the request of the Chief Justice the Sardar gave a brief narrative of the events from the time he came into the picture till the signing of the Thakore Saheb's note to him of December 26th. The judgment was reserved for another date" (*Harijan*, 3-6-1939).

[2] & [3] In the source, these two words are transliterated.

103. INSCRIPTION IN A BOOK[1]

Ramanavami, March 29, 1939

Life is only for *yajna*.

[From Hindi]

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

104. DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON[2]

March 29/30, 1939

The thing[3] is incredibly simple. But the simplest things have the knack sometimes of appearing to us as the hardest. If our hearts were opened, we should have no difficulty. Non-violence is a matter of the heart. It does not come to us through any intellectual feat. Everyone has faith in God though everyone does not know it. For, everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to the nth degree is God. The sum total of all that lives is God. We may not be God but we are of God—even as a little drop of water is of the ocean. Imagine it torn away from the ocean and flung millions of miles away. It becomes helpless torn from its surroundings and cannot feel the might and majesty of the ocean but if someone could point out to it that it is of the ocean, its faith would revive, it would dance with joy and the whole of the might and majesty of the ocean would be reflected in it. Even so it is with all non-violent activities. Take spinning for half an hour daily. It is nothing unless it is tacked on to non-violence. Take the counting of beads. A monkey also can count them but devotees count them to get nearer to God. I want everybody to spin as a token of his faith in non-violence, as a token of his identification with the dumb millions. Then alone shall we feel the upwelling of non-violent strength in us.[4]

[1] Gandhiji wrote this on a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which G. D. Birla had brought with him when he went to seek Gandhiji's blessings on his birthday.

[2] & [3] The discussion is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VIII". Pyarelal explains that "Agatha Harrison was discussing the difficulties experienced in training people in non-violence".

[4] According to Pyarelal, what follows was said on March 30.

The non-violence that we have offered hitherto has not been the non-violence of the brave. As a weapon of the weak, as an expedient, it was good enough. It did answer its purpose for a while. But how long can the non-violence of the weak last? I have not been able to answer for Europe because I have not worked it out in India. And yet I would not rewrite those chapters in our history. God fulfils Himself even through the weakness of His instruments sometimes. But if we now do not overhaul the basis of our non-violence and if we continue to drift in the old style, it would be nothing short of a catastrophe. We shall not have evolved the non-violent strength and courage, and, faced with a crisis, might behave like cowards.

Harijan, 3-6-1939

105. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNIL BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

DR. SUNIL BOSE
JEALGORA

VIEW YOUR WIRE[1] I UNRESERVEDLY WITHDRAW MY SUGGESTION[2]. ON NO ACCOUNT WILL I ENDANGER PROGRESS TOWARDS RECOVERY. I WILL ACCEPT YOUR SUGGESTION AND SHALL DEAL BY CORRESPONDENCE WITH QUESTIONS RAISED IN SUBHAS'S LETTER. TELL HIM THIS WITH MY LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] Dated March 29, which *inter alia* read: "From experience . . . feel . . . long journey . . . will cause . . . set-back . . . aggravation . . . suggest you both correspond . . . urgent problems leaving other problems for future discussion."

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", pp. 86-7.

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106. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I have delayed my reply to your letter of 25th[1] instant for the sake of having your reply to my wire[2]. I got Sunil's wire last night. I have now got up before morning prayer time to write this reply.

Since you think that Pandit Pant's resolution[3] was out of order and the clause relating to the Working Committee is clearly unconstitutional and *ultra vires*, your course is absolutely clear. Your choice of the Committee should be unfettered.

Your several questions on this head, therefore, do not need any answering.

Since we met in February, my opinion has become strengthened that where there are differences on fundamentals, as we agreed there were, a composite committee would be harmful. Assuming, therefore, that your policy has the backing of the majority of the A. I. C. C., you should have a Working Committee composed purely of those who believe in your policy.

Yes, I adhere to the view expressed by me at Segaon at our February meeting that I would not be guilty of being party to any self-suppression by you, as distinguished from voluntary self-effacement. Any subordination of a view which you may strongly hold as in the best interests of the country would be self-suppression. Therefore, if you are to function as President, your hands must be unfettered. The situation before the country admits of no middle course.

So far as the Gandhi-ites (to use that wrong expression) are concerned, they will not obstruct you. They will help you where they can, they will abstain where they cannot. There should be no difficulty whatsoever, if they are in a minority. They may not suppress themselves if they are clearly in a majority.

[1] The source, however, has "26th".
[2] *Vide* pp. 86-7.
[3] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 80.

What worries me, however, is the fact that the Congress electorate is bogus and that, therefore, majority and minority lose their full meaning. Nevertheless, till the Congress stable is cleansed, we have to manage with the instrument we have for the time being. The other thing worrying me is the terrible distrust among ourselves. Joint work is an impossibility where the workers distrust one another.

I think there is no other point in your letter that needs answering.

In all you do, may you be guided by God. Do be well quickly by obeying the doctors.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

So far as I am concerned, our correspondence need not be published. But you have my permission to publish it, if you think otherwise.

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

107. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR[1],

I am grateful to you for your kind letter.

Dr. Moonje's letter is striking. You may depend upon my not rushing to print without first reference to you on matters relating to Hyderabad. I expect great things from you. I cannot forget our talks on our return journey from London. We were to have embarked on a joint mission of peace between the two communities, but God had willed otherwise. I was to go to prison instead. But though seemingly we could not work together, the wish has persisted with me, as I am sure it has with you. You have opportunities, which I have not, to fulfil that wish. I am watching you with a friend's interest. I am looking forward to the reforms adumbrated in your letter.

Every day I look for the news that you have discharged the State Congress prisoners. You know that I have prevented resumption of satyagraha by that body. Unless you have definite

[1] Dewan of Hyderabad State

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information to the contrary, I would like you to believe me when I tell you that if you treated them with sympathy, they will help and not hinder you in your effort to open a new era in Hyderabad.

I thank you for your reference to my fast.

I hope you are well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6842

108. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your two letters[1]. Both were good.

I send you copies of correspondence.

The events in U. P. disturb me.[2] My solution is that you should become Prime Minister or dissolve the Ministry. You must get control over the unruly elements.

I have had three days heart-to-heart conversations with the socialists who were here. Narendradev will report to you. If he does not of his own accord, you should make him.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 354

[1] Dated March 22 and 24, forwarding copies of correspondence with Subhas Chandra Bose. Jawaharlal Nehru had also informed Gandhiji of his telegram to S. C. Bose that ". . . Gandhiji . . . keenly feels Congress work suffering owing lack direction office arrangements also national international crises demand ceaseless vigilance . . ." (Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939).

[2] In "The Rajkot Fast–VIII", Pyarelal explains: "Communal riots in Allahabad exercise Gandhiji's mind very much." *Vide* also the following item.

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109. A DISCUSSION[1]

March 31, 1939

QUESTION: What would you do in Allahabad, if you were there?

ANSWER: I would scrap the existing Congress machinery. It is a burden today. If there were half a dozen genuine Congressmen only on the Congress register today, they would be real messengers of peace. But today their effort is smothered under the weight of numbers. If all Congressmen whose names are on the Congress register today were worth their salt, they would offer themselves to be cut to pieces before the communal trouble proceeds any further. But today each wants to use the dagger against his fellow. We have either to revise everything in terms of non-violence or give up non-violence and rebuild the organization.

Harijan, 3-6-1939

110. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR LETTER[2]. REPLY[3] FIRST LETTER POSTED YESTERDAY. ALL-INDIA MEETING MUST HAVE PRECEDENCE. PROCEDURE RULE TWO SAYS EMERGENCY MEETING REQUIRES SEVEN DAYS' NOTICE WHICH CAN BE GIVEN THROUGH PRESS. LOVE.[4]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast–VIII" by Pyarelal, who explains: "Today when the little 'domestic group' at Birla House met as usual at 7 a. m., naturally the communal situation at Allahabad came in for discussion."

[2] Dated March 29, which informed Gandhiji of the addressee's proposal to call for the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee meeting in Calcutta about April 20. Subhas Bose had requested Gandhiji to decide whether they should hold the meeting before or after the Gandhi Seva Sangh Conference scheduled to meet in Bihar at about the same time.

[3] *Vide* pp. 90-1.

[4] The addressee's telegram of even date, *inter alia*, read: ". . . any date after 20th preferable. . . . shall be guided by your wishes."

111. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your wire was duly received. I needed it. The headache must go. Kallenbach went today. He was fretting. He will take the steamer to Aden and thence to Durban. The house is empty. Here is a copy of letter from Subhas.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3905. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7214

112. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Your dear letter is before me. How I wish I could give you and Ammajan the fullest satisfaction and occupy the place I used to have in the family. I live in the hope that I shall be restored some day. That is my heartfelt prayer.

Love to all who may be with you and send it to Saroj[1].

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9674

[1] Saroj Nanavati

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113. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 31, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I do get your letters but I have simply no time. In order to preserve my strength I have almost given up writing letters.

Tell Balkrishna that he must gain more weight. The strength will return. My programme for the present cannot be certain. I have no idea when I may return to Segaon.

How are Chakrayya, Rajbhushan getting on with their work? Is Balvantsinha in good cheer? Is Parnerkar keeping good health? And how are Bhansalibhai, Chimanlal and Shakaribehn? Yashodhara should be given some more time. How is Mathew and what is he doing? Please write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4312; also S.G. 75

114. LETTER TO NARAYANI DEVI

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

Keeping in view the present situation I think the satyagraha, or the preparations for it, going on in the Indian States should be suspended. It would be good, therefore, if in Mewar too the satyagraha was suspended.[1] Constructive work must of course go on and what I write these days should be studied.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI NARAYANI DEVI[2]
MEWAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9132

[1] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I, this was done on April 4.

[2] Secretary, Mewar Praja Parishad

115. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 1, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JHARIA

YOUR WIRE[1]. FIX DATE THAT SUITS YOU BEST. I SHALL ACCOMMODATE MYSELF TO YOUR DATE. LOVE.[2]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

116. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I have yours of March 31, as also the previous one.[3] You are quite frank and I like your letters for the clear enunciation of your views.

The views you express seem to me to be so diametrically opposed to those of the others and my own that I do not see any possibility of bridging them. I think that each school of thought should be able to put forth its views before the country without any mixture. And if this is honestly done, I do not see why there should be any bitterness, ending in civil war.

What is wrong is not the differences between us but loss of mutual respect and trust. This will be remedied by time, which is the best healer. If there is real non-violence in us, there can be no civil war, much less bitterness.

Taking all things into consideration, I am of opinion that you should at once form your own Cabinet fully representing your views, formulate your programme definitely and put it

[1] *Vide* footnote 4, p. 93.

[2] The addressee, in his reply of even date, suggested April 28 for the Working Committee meeting and the 30th for the A. I. C. C. meeting.

[3] For the addressee's letters of March 29 and 31, *vide* Appendix VI.

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before the forthcoming A. I. C. C. If the Committee accepts the programme, all will be plain-sailing and you should be enabled to prosecute it unhampered by the minority. If, on the other hand, your programme is not accepted you should resign and let the Committee choose its President. And you will be free to educate the country along your own lines. I tender this advice irrespective of Pandit Pant's resolution.

Now for your questions. When Pandit Pant's resolution[1] was produced, I was on my bed. Mathuradas, who happened to be in Rajkot that day, one morning brought me the message that there was to be a resolution expressing confidence in the old horses. I had not the text before me. I said it would be good so far as it went, for I had been told at Segaon that your election was not so much confidence in you as censure of the old horses, especially the Sardar. After this, I saw the actual text only in Allahabad when I went to see the Maulana Saheb.

My prestige does not count. It has no independent value of its own. When my motive is suspected or my policy or programme rejected by the country, the prestige must go. India will rise or fall by the quality of the sum total of the acts of her many millions. Individuals, however high they may be, are of no account except in so far as they represent the many millions. Therefore, let us rule it out of consideration.

I wholly dissent from your view that the country has been never so non-violent as now. I smell violence in the air I breathe. But the violence has put on a subtle form. Our mutual distrust is a bad form of violence. The widening gulf between Hindus and Mussalmans points to the same thing. I can give further illustrations.

We seem to differ as to the amount of corruption in the Congress. My impression is that it is on the increase. I have been pleading for the past many months for a thorough scrutiny.

In these circumstances, I see no atmosphere for non-violent mass action. An ultimatum without an effective sanction is worse than useless.

But, as I have told you, I am an old man, perhaps growing timid and over-cautious, and you have youth before you and reckless optimism born of youth. I hope you are right and I am wrong. I have the firm belief that the Congress, as it is today, cannot deliver the goods, cannot offer civil disobedience

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 80.

worth the name. Therefore, if your prognosis is right, I am a back number and played out as the generalissimo of satyagraha.

I am glad you have mentioned the little Rajkot affair. It brings into prominent relief the different angles from which we look at things. I have nothing to repent of in the steps I have taken in connection with it. I feel that it has great national importance. I have not stopped civil disobedience in the other States for the sake of Rajkot. But Rajkot opened my eyes; it showed me the way. I am not in Delhi for my health. I am reluctantly in Delhi, awaiting the Chief Justice's decision. I hold it to be my duty to be in Delhi till the steps to be taken, in due fulfilment of the Viceroy's declaration in his last wire[1] to me, were finally taken. I may not run any risk. If I invited the Paramount Power to do its duty, I was bound to be in Delhi to see that the duty was fully performed. I saw nothing wrong in the Chief Justice being appointed the interpreter of the document whose meaning was put in doubt by the Thakore Saheb. By the way, Sir Maurice examines the document not in his capacity as Chief Justice but as a trained jurist, trusted by the Viceroy. By accepting the Viceroy's nominee as judge, I fancy I have shown both wisdom and grace and, what is more important, I have increased the Viceregal responsibility in the matter.

Though we have discussed sharp differences of opinion between us, I am quite sure that our private relations will not suffer in the least. If they are from the heart, as I believe they are, they will bear the strain of these differences.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939; also *Crossroads*, pp. 140-2

117. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
JEALGORA

POSTED FULL REPLY[2] YOUR LETTERS. MY ADVICE THEREIN IS IRRESPECTIVE OF PANDIT PANT'S RESOLUTION

[1] *Vide* Appendix III.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

AND IN VIEW DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE VIEWS HELD BY TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT YOU SHOULD FORTHWITH FORM YOUR OWN CABINET FULLY REPRESENTING YOUR POLICY. YOU SHOULD FRAME AND PUBLISH YOUR POLICY AND PROGRAMME AND SUBMIT SAME TO A. I. C. C. IF YOU SECURE MAJORITY YOU SHOULD BE ENABLED TO CARRY OUT YOUR POLICY UNHAMPERED. IF YOU DO NOT SECURE MAJORITY YOU SHOULD RESIGN AND INVITE A. I. C. C. TO ELECT A NEW PRESIDENT. GIVEN HONESTY AND GOODWILL I DO NOT FEAR CIVIL WAR. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

118. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have your letter full of tenderness.[1] The problem you set before me is difficult. I have made certain suggestions[2] to Subhas. I see no other way out of the impasse.

I do hope you are keeping your strength.

Charlie is still in the hospital.

With love.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4650

[1] The addressee's letter dated March 29 read: "At the last Congress session some rude hands have deeply hurt Bengal with ungracious persistence. Please apply without delay balm to the wound with your own kind hands and prevent it from festering."

[2] *Vide* the two preceding items.

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119. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I hope you had my letter[1]. I have been conferring[2] with Aryasamaj leaders about their satyagraha. Their demands seem to be so small that they should lend themselves to easy adjustment. Is not this possible?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6843

120. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

No time to send anything more than love. Copies of Subhas correspondence of course.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3906. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7215

121. NOTE TO LADY RAZA ALI[3]

April 2, 1939

There is no God but Truth.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7750

[1] *Vide* pp. 91-2.
[2] *Vide* pp. 63-4.
[3] As given in the G.N. Register. Raza Ali was Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, 1935-38.

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122. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

April 2, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

It is not proper that you don't write to me. I am fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10010. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

123. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

You are asking for a message for the Matunga [Khadi] Exhibition.[1] What message can I give? I am of course crazy about khadi and will remain so till I die. Hence I pray that everyone becomes as crazy about khadi as I am. Know that if this craze spreads among our millions, swaraj is at our door step.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10841. Courtesy: Purushottam K. Jerajani

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 6-4-1939, reported Gandhiji's message with a note: "The Tirupur Famine Relief Khadi Exhibition will be opened at the Nappoo Hall, Matunga, under the auspices of Khadi Sales Depot today at 8 a. m. by Mrs. Gosibehn Captain. The Exhibition will remain open till April 16."

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124. THE STATES

A clear understanding of the suspension of civil disobedience in the States is necessary if the people are to reap the full benefit of it. One result—not unexpected—seems to have been that some States have stiffened their attitude and are resorting to repression they had not perhaps thought of before suspension. Where this happens there is no cause for losing heart. Repression itself affords a training in satyagraha, even as an unsought war affords a training for the soldier. Satyagrahis should discover the causes of repression. They will find that repressed people are easily frightened by the slightest show of force and are unprepared for suffering and self-sacrifice. This is then the time for learning the first lessons of satyagraha. Those who know anything of this matchless force should teach their neighbours to bear repression not weakly and helplessly but bravely and knowingly. Thus, for example, a State declares an association illegal. The members may submit either because of fear of punishment or knowingly because they do not yet wish to offer civil disobedience. In the latter case, they husband their energy and develop the will to resist non-violently. Individual members of the association will still carry on activities that may not be regarded as in themselves illegal. They will also carry on constitutional agitation to secure legal recognition for their organization. And if in spite of voluntarily working within the four corners of the local laws workers are arrested or otherwise ill-treated, they would cheerfully submit to the sufferings involved. So doing they will examine themselves whether they bear any ill will or anger towards their persecutors, they will ask themselves whether they feel the presence of God as their true Helper and Guide in their difficulties. Indeed such training if properly and persistently taken will generate in the learners a power of calm, non-violent resistance which in itself will become invincible and therefore may render further effort by way of civil disobedience wholly unnecessary.

I am afraid I must plead guilty to being over-confident and hasty in launching previous civil disobedience campaigns. No harm seems to have accrued to the country because I had always my hand on the pulse of the country and, thank God, had no hesitation in retracing the step taken if I scented danger or discovered an error of judgment or calculation. This much harm must, however,

be admitted. The people having become used to laxity about previous preparation now find it irksome to conform to the strictness in the observance of the unexciting rules of preparation. And yet they are much the most important part of satyagraha training. Potent and active non-violence cannot be cultivated unless the candidate goes through the necessary stages which require a lot of plodding. If, however, I have succeeded in showing that repression, if properly understood, evokes natural and spontaneous resistance in a satyagrahi, perhaps this knowledge will rob[1] the constructive effort and the waiting of their seeming insipidity. Indeed the fact that these things appear insipid betrays want of appreciation of satyagraha and the beauty and efficacy of non-violence. In other words, the spirit of satyagraha has not sunk deep and violence still lurks even though unconsciously in the seeker's breast.

I hope, therefore, that repression, wherever it is resorted to, will not depress the repressed people but will accelerate the pace of the constructive effort. It is necessary so far as it is possible to convince the powers that be of our absolutely non-violent intention. Such conviction is half the battle won. In order to carry this conviction home there must be sufficient curb on our speech and writing as our action must be non-violent beyond doubt.

NEW DELHI, April 3, 1939

Harijan, 8-4-1939

125. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1939

UCHHRANGBHAI DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT

OUR POSITION COMPLETELY VINDICATED.[2]

BAPU

The Hindu, 4-4-1939. Also C.W. 10167. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] The source has "role".

[2] The reference is to Sir Maurice Gwyer's judgment in favour of Vallabhbhai Patel on the interpretation of the terms of the "Settlement" of December 26, 1938. In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Vol. II, pp. 356-7, Narahari D. Parikh explains: "Virawala personally argued his case. Sardar Patel, on his part, narrated briefly the story leading up to the Settlement of the 26th December. After reading the statements of both and hearing their arguments,

126. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE,
April 3, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I learn that the belated Award[1] will be sent today to the Political Department. I wonder if I could have a copy today? And will you please send me an appointment for discussing the next step?[2]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

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Sir Maurice Gwyer delivered his judgment on the 3rd of April. The following extracts from the judgment will show how completely the Sardar was vindicated: '. . . In my opinion, the true construction of each document is that the Thakore Saheb undertakes to appoint the persons whom Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel may recommend, and that he does not reserve to himself any discretion to reject those whom he does not approve. . . .' The judgment went on to say that one could not build up such an argument solely on the basis of the word 'recommend'. . . . And in the opinion of the Chief Justice, the statement in the Notification that Shri Vallabhbhai Patel would recommend the names of the members of the Committee was intended to convey the meaning that the names so recommended would be accepted by the Thakore Saheb."

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Viceroy's reply of even date read: "Many thanks for your letter of today which I have just received. I am at once passing your request to the Political Department. I have as little knowledge myself as you have of the Chief Justice's time-table or the arrangements he contemplated. I shall of course be delighted to see you whenever you like; but I suggest that you may prefer to consider the situation further in the light of the terms of the Award whatever it may be, before we make any definite arrangement."

127. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1939

DEAR BARDOLOI[1],

You are embarking on a great experiment[2], perhaps the greatest for Assam. You have my prayers for the success of your experiment. If Assam can really get rid of the opium habit, the face of its people will be changed. But before that happens you will have to add to prohibition much constructive effort. You will require skilled medical assistance to enable you to find out a substitute for opium which will kill the craving and rebuild the shattered bodies of the opium-eaters. May you be blessed with all the strength and wisdom you would need.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Statesman*, 24-4-1939

128. TELEGRAM TO B. G. KHER

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

KHER, PREMIER
BOMBAY

HOPE YOUR LITERACY CAMPAIGN WILL SUCCEED FULLY. SARDAR JOINS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 5-4-1939

[1] Premier of Assam

[2] The opium prohibition movement to be launched by the Assam Government in Sibsagar and Dibrugarh on April 15

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129. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS ASKING ALL KINDS QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR CORRESPONDENCE. HAVE REFERRED THEM ALL TO YOU. I HAVE DISCLOSED NOTHING TO ANYONE EXCEPT COLLEAGUES AND CO-WORKERS. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

130. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

THANK GOD ONE STEP FINISHED. HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3907. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7216

131. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

I have read long accounts of a great Parsi meeting in Bombay protesting against prohibition in Bombay. I note that Parsi ladies also took part in the meeting. I have also some letters from Parsi friends appealing to me, as the author of prohibition as a

[1] This appeared under the title "Prohibition and Parsis". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 5-4-1939.

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chief plank in the Congress programme, to ask the Bombay Ministry to desist from their policy of prohibition.

It is not clear whether the objection is to prohibition as such or to the new taxation. All India knows the intimate connection that subsists between the Parsis and me. It hurts me to think that this race of the greatest philanthropists in the world should ally itself to a campaign against a cause whose basis is purest philanthropy. The hurt is all the greater for the knowledge that even Parsi ladies have allied themselves to the campaign. I see that unworthy threats were used at the meeting and the rights of minorities were pleaded. I can only hope that all the heat shown at the meeting was due to the momentary passion, and that the innate philanthropy of the Parsis will assert itself. I venture to suggest that the Parsis will be among the first to benefit by the prohibition policy. It is wrong to suggest that drink has done or is doing no harm to the Parsis. The Parsis will be the gainers for the diversion of Parsi liquor-sellers to some other means of livelihood.

Let me remind the objectors that prohibition does not affect unfermented toddy which is called *nira*. Therefore no Parsi will be deprived of his *nira* which, I admit, is as healthy as sugarcane juice and perhaps cheaper if a means can be discovered of preventing quick fermentation which *nira* undergoes more than other sweet juices.

The objectors departed from truth when they raised the cry of attack on religion. I have read the carefully drawn prohibition rules which provide for special permits for the use of spirituous liquors for *bona-fide* religious rites. The rules also provide for their use for medicinal purposes. And so far as taxation is concerned it ill behoves philanthropists to grumble at taxation for a cause so noble as prohibition which means the welfare of ignorant millions. I hope, therefore, that the nobler element, of which there is so much among the Parsis, will assert itself and help the glorious movement which promises to deliver the labouring population from a curse which is destroying them body and soul.

Harijan, 8-4-1939

132. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 4, 1939

Shri Philipose, who is specially with me to keep me informed of events in Travancore, has received a revealing wire from the President of the Travancore State Congress. It appears that though the leaders who were arrested and imprisoned in anticipation of the contemplated civil disobedience were released, arrests of others on some pretext or another continue. These are active, well-known workers. What is worse, special police, who are without uniforms and are untrained, are reported to be acting like goondas. They break up meetings by creating rowdyism, and beating drums. They molest parties of workers doing constructive work. Thus a party of 11 persons led by Shri Verghese, a well-known lawyer, was brutally assaulted in Quilon on March 31, and robbed of their cash. Several were seriously injured and are laid up.

Assuming that the information furnished to me is correct, it is a serious reflection on the authorities. I can only hope that such repression will die out if only for want of retaliation on the part of the people. Let the workers realize that they have one fruit of civil resistance in spite of its suspension. They have the privilege of undeserved suffering. And, if they can undergo it without malice and anger, they will find themselves nearer their goal than hitherto. At least I have no reason for revising my opinion[2] as to the necessity of suspension. Indeed this thoughtless repression proves the wisdom of suspension.

Harijan, 8-4-1939

[1] This appeared under the title "Repression in Travancore". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 5-4-1939.

[2] *Vide* pp. 78-9.

133. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE[1]. NO DATE GIVEN OUT FROM HERE. MISSED CONFIRMING YOUR WIRE[2]. FORGIVE. LEARN TODAY GANDHI SEVA SANGH POSTPONED[3] OWING PLAGUE. FIX ANY DATE CONVENIENT TO YOU. AS TO PUBLICATION LEAVE ENTIRELY TO YOU. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

134. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

NEWSPAPERS HAVE KNACK OF HIDING TRUTH. THEY MANUFACTURE NAMES PLACES OF ORIGIN ALSO IMAGINE THINGS. DON'T KNOW WHAT HAS HAPPENED "PATRIKA" OFFICE. I CAN ONLY ASSURE YOU THAT NO ONE TO MY KNOWLEDGE HERE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEWS.[4] TELL ME WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE ME DO. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

[1] Of even date, which read: ". . . My view publicity should be arranged in [the] fulness [of] time by our mutual agreement. Papers report from New Delhi All-India Congress Committee fixed twenty-eight but no reply received from you."

[2] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 96.

[3] The Sangh held its meeting at Brindavan (Bihar) from May 3 to 7.

[4] In his telegrams of even date, Subhas Bose had said that according to A. P. I., United Press was issuing forecasts concerning their correspondence; also that reports in *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *The Leader* bore "clear indications" of news leaking from Delhi. *Vide* also p. 106.

135. LETTER TO R. K. JHA

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

BHAI JHA,

Have received your letter. The telegram could not be replied to. I wish satyagraha at both the places, Rajnandgaon and Chhuikhadan, to be suspended for the time being. I am writing[1] in *Harijan*. It should be carefully read and people should be educated.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 12-4-1939

136. LETTER TO MULKRAJ

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

MY DEAR MULKRAJ,

I have your note of 26th ultimo.

With regard to the reinvestment of Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund that is lying in fixed deposits in the Central Bank of India and the Punjab National Bank,[2] I am of opinion that it should be deposited half and half in the Central Bank of India and the Bank of India respectively. The deposit in[3] the Punjab National Bank should be withdrawn.

I would like you to send me the respective rates of interest paid by the Central Bank of India and the Punjab National Bank.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* "The States", pp. 102-3.

[2] The addressee, Secretary of Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund, informed Gandhiji that money was lying with The Punjab National Bank, without fetching any interest.

[3] The source has "from".

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137. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

April 5, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

There has been no letter either from you or from Kanchan. Why so? I may expect letters from you both, may I not? As for me, things are hanging in mid-air just now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8562. Also C.W. 7047. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

138. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You know I do not write letters these days. Do come for the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I learn today that it has been postponed on account of the plague. The date will be announced later.

I understand about the dictionary. You should not mind such things. It is true that I was trying to avoid giving Shankaran a separate dictionary but one must get the things one needs. Study well. It will be good to learn Urdu as well. The health, of course, has to be improved. I have no idea when I shall be arriving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1920

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139. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

NEW DELHI,
April 5, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I have your letter. I never even dreamt that I had anything more to do or say after all that had happened. I only quote your own words here. Yes, Raihana, I do admit that Mother and you people are not deceitful and this I admit sincerely. I never believed that you people could ever be deceitful. Is Saroj with you ?

I am happy to hear that Mother is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 9675

140. MESSAGE FOR THE NATIONAL WEEK

NEW DELHI,
[On or before *April 6, 1939*]

The best way to celebrate the National Week is for everyone to manufacture or buy as much khadi as possible and thus help the needy and famine-stricken millions, whether Hindu or Muslim. Remember that genuine khadi can only be had from stores certified by the A. I. S. A.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-4-1939

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MAHADEV DESAI READING THE VICEROY'S LETTER, APRIL 7, 1939

141. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
April 6, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Who can help feeling distressed over the turn things are taking?[1] Let us hope that the cloud would be soon lifted.

The Rajkot Award[2] is but one step towards the objective. I have still to watch the next step. However, I telephoned to Dr. Khan Saheb today. He has promised to telephone and tell me if he wants me. I was agitated over the raids that have become a feature there. I have to see the Viceroy today. I might have to go to Rajkot in connection with the Committee.

My love to Indu. I take it that Krishna[3] is also going. This means that you will be in Bombay on 15th?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I note what you say about the tension there.[4]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

142. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR TELEPHONE MESSAGE. RAJKOT WORK TAKES ME RAJKOT TONIGHT. COULD NOT POSTPONE WITHOUT

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, in his letter of April 1, had referred to a riot that broke out on March 29 at Baradari Hall, Lucknow, and had commented that communal riots were becoming political and superficial, with no passion or emotion about them. He thought that the local leaders of the Muslim League must be held responsible for what was happening.

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, pp. 103-4.

[3] Krishna Hutheesing, addressee's sister

[4] The reference is to the communal tension in Allahabad.

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SACRIFICING IMMEDIATE DUTY BUT MOMENT I CAN DISENGAGE MYSELF FROM RAJKOT I SHALL BE AT YOUR DISPOSAL. MEANWHILE URGE YOU ACCEPT MY ADVICE. FORM YOUR CABINET AND PUBLISH YOUR PROGRAMME. REACHING RAJKOT SUNDAY MORNING. LOVE.[1]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

143. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
[*April 7, 1939*][2]

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE[3]. AM HELPLESS. MUST PROCEED RAJKOT. SUGGEST YOUR SENDING SARAT OR OTHER REPRESENTATIVE RAJKOT. HE CAN FLY. DO NOT EXPECT RELEASE FROM RAJKOT FOR TEN DAYS. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

144. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you for your letter[4] received and the full and unequivocal assurance contained therein. Armed with it, I leave tonight in the confidence that there will be no hitch in the due

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] From *The Hindu*, 13-5-1939

[3] Of even date, in which the addressee requested Gandhiji to arrange for their meeting before leaving for Rajkot. *Vide* also the preceding item.

[4] The Viceroy in his letter of even date said: "I have taken time further to consider our conversation of yesterday, with every desire to assist you and with full appreciation of your attitude. But with much regret I am clear, after careful and earnest thought, that it would not be possible for me to accept your view in regard to the appointment of an official Chairman; and I see nothing for it but that the Committee as agreed between the Thakore Saheb and Mr. Patel, constituted in the light of the Chief Justice's ruling, should proceed with its work. Let me, however, repeat what I told

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fulfilment of the terms of the Thakore Saheb's Notification of 26th December last.

My reply will be incomplete if I did not express my regret that it was not possible for you to accept my suggestion that the question whether your wire to me of 6th March last cancelled that of the 5th, or whether it merely explained and amplified the latter, should be referred to the Chief Justice of India.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7818. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

145. A LETTER[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

I hope that you will have a successful meeting. There is no doubt that the proposed measure[2], if it becomes law of the Union of South Africa, will mean slow death of the Indian community in the Transvaal. It is the fashion of the day to condemn many of Hitler's acts as so many breaches of Pacts. What is it if the proposed measure is not an attempt to commit a flagrant breach of the Cape Town Settlement of 1914[3] and subsequent declarations of the Union Government?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

---

you yesterday, that so far as I have undertaken to be responsible for the actions of the Thakore Saheb on this whole case, I will implement that promise to the full through my Resident, and that you need have no doubts on that point and that in my judgment all arrangements should be made in Rajkot and not here."

[1] This was, presumably, addressed to Bhawani Dayal, President of the Natal Indian Congress who, according to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I, visited India at this time and held meetings at several places with a view to enlightening the Government and the people about the conditions in South Africa.

[2] According to *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, the reference is to "the Asiatics (Transvaal) Land and Trading Bill, which required that Indians must agree to live in lands separate from others, that they must not be allowed to acquire lands in 'European quarters' and that they must ply their trades in non-European quarters."

[3] *Vide* Vol. XII, Appendix XXV.

146. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 7, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. I am off to Rajkot. Mahadev will tell you all about it. Of course there is no Brindavan[1] now. The Talimi Sangh will meet on 12th, 13th, 14th. I can't attend. I shall try to go to Subhas if I can from Rajkot. I am quite fit.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3908. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7217

147. LETTER TO M. M. MALAVIYA

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter through Sundaram. I got the wire too. It will be a pilgrimage for me to come for your *darshan*. I shall try my best.

I am trying to do something about Bannu. It is a difficult matter.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 10229. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi

148. LETTER TO DINESH SINGH

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

CHI. DINESH,

I had your letter and your mother herself arrived. She stayed with me for a couple of days. My efforts are continuing. You should not worry but concentrate on studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The reference is to the Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", p. 111.

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[PS.]

Mother's health was improving. She has also taken some medicines from here.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8673

149. HAVE I ERRED?

Some friends have been expostulating with me for involving myself in the Rajkot affair. I sum up their argument below:

> In giving so much attention to Rajkot to the exclusion of all else you seem to have lost all sense of proportion. It was your obvious duty to be at Tripuri. If you had been there, things would have taken a different turn. But you chose to undertake an indefinite fast. You had no right thus to disturb national life without notice. Why should you fast to make a Prince keep his promise? The people of Rajkot were offering civil disobedience. They would have become stronger in any case if you had not suddenly stopped the movement. Surely, democracy cannot be built by your method. And then you, who taught India to shun Viceroys and Governors and such other functionaries who used to fill us with awe, are now found dancing attendance on the Viceroy and awaiting His Excellency's pleasure when great affairs demand your attention elsewhere. You are believed to oppose Federation, but you recognize the Chief Justice of the Federal Court and will not leave Delhi till His Lordship has delivered his Award. Truly the ways of mahatmas are strange.

To the hasty reader this argument must make a forcible appeal. But one who goes a little deeper into the subject and knows the working of satyagraha should have no difficulty in seeing the falsity of the argument. Nor is there anything new in what I have done and am doing about Rajkot. Geographically Rajkot is a tiny spot on the map of India, but the disturbance which I felt called upon to deal with was symptomatic of a universal malady. My endeavour in Rajkot was meant to nip the evil in the bud. I am of opinion that the result of the endeavour has so far benefited the whole of India. I acted the part of a wise general who never disregards the slightest weakness in his defences. Kheda and Champaran are but instances in point. Whilst they lasted they occupied the attention of the whole of India, and whilst the fight was going on I had to devote the whole of my time and attention to them. It is a rare

occurrence to have to deal with the whole front at the same time. We must distinguish between preparations for war and actual outbreak of a skirmish, be it ever so insignificant in itself. Tripuri was a preparation, Rajkot was a skirmish.

The fast is a most efficacious weapon in the armoury of non-violence. That it can be used only by the fewest possible persons is no objection to its use. It would be foolish for me not to use the talents given to me by God on the ground that others or all do not possess some of them. I have never heard it said that use of special talents placed at the service of democracy can retard its even growth. I hold that such use stimulates it as the Rajkot fast undoubtedly has. And why is the Rajkot fast to be condemned, if the nation benefited by the previous fasts? It is open to the critics to say that the previous ones were also criticized. So they were. But my point is that the nation gained by every one of them. What does arrest the growth of the democratic spirit is the outbreak of violence. I must ask the public to believe me when I say that if my fast did nothing else, it prevented much violence.

I have no sense of shame about going to H. E. the Viceroy. I had invited him as the Crown Representative to perform his duty by intervening to enforce performance of a promise by a tributary of the Crown. I had not gone as a petitioner depending upon his mercy. It would have been churlish on my part to have sought his intervention and yet not to respond to his invitation to see him to discuss things. I have already acknowledged the handsome manner in which he acted during the fast. It was open to him to disregard it and take his time in deciding whether and when if at all he should intervene. But he did not do so. He recognized the nation's anxiety. And I have no doubt that his humane instinct, too, had a share in cutting short his tour in Rajputana in order to determine his action with sufficient quickness. I have no apology to offer for my attendances on the Viceroy. It is part of satyagraha to lose no opportunity of converting one's opponent or coming to terms with him on strictly honourable lines. I repeated on a small scale with Lord Linlithgow what I did with Lord Halifax when as Lord Irwin he was Viceroy of India.

Lastly, as to my acceptance of the Chief Justice of India as the interpreter of the Thakore Saheb's letter of 26th December last sent to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The Thakore Saheb interpreted it one way, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel another way. The Viceroy suggested interpretation by the Chief Justice of India. What was I to do? Was I to say he must not because he was Chief Justice of a Court which was a creation of the Government of

India Act? My sense of propriety would rebel against any such objection. Federation has come no nearer by my accepting Maurice Gwyer's nomination as judge of the meaning of a document. If it comes as an imposition, it will come because of our impotence born of our inability to bring into non-violent subjection the forces of violence that are growing in the country and the increasing indiscipline and corruption in the Congress against which I have been raising my voice for the past twelve months.

It may interest the reader to know that Sir Maurice did not interpret the document in his capacity as Chief Justice of the Federal Court but as a jurist of established repute. He who reads the judgment cannot fail to notice the pains he bestowed upon it.

ON THE TRAIN FROM DELHI TO RAJKOT, April 8, 1939

Harijan, 15-4-1939

150. TELEGRAM TO DHARMENDRASINH[1]

AJMER STATION,
April 8, 1939

HIS HIGHNESS THAKORE SAHEB
RAJKOT

REACHING RAJKOT SUNDAY MORNING CONNECTION WITH ACTION TO BE TAKEN PURSUANCE AWARD.

GANDHI

Harijan, 22-4-1939

151. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 8, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. I am on my way to Rajkot. Only God knows when it will all end. I have a fear that you yourself tore up the papers relating to the budget. Prepare it afresh and send it. It is only in May that we shall now be able to attend to the Gandhi Seva Sangh affairs. It will be excellent if the Hindi propagation work in Assam is properly organized. We should meet

[1] This is extracted from "Rajkot Events".

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their request for free teachers. The money for that can be raised in Calcutta. Why not ask all the Provinces to give an account of the Hindi work done? I don't think you will get any. How can they send any when there is no account to give? All the same you may try. Do you take proper care of your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7973

152. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI[1]

[*April 8, 1939*][2]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

How is your health? I hear from Krishnachandra that Rajbhushan is not making much progress either in Hindi or in spinning. Is there any letter from Vijaya?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7973

153. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[*April 8, 1939*][3]

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Why such a long letter? I admit my mistake. My nature is responsible for it. Only those who demand insistently get anything from me. I have not the ability to judge everyone. Nevertheless, my confessing my error does not in any way reduce your own. Your lack of method is terrible though you are not at all careless. Your attachment, too, is equally terrible. That is why you have not finished any work. Let the brothers alone even now. Where do you have any money to give? Do not take even a pie from the family. Beg for Jugatramji. Take up a job and live on the salary. You will thus set an example for the brothers.

Forget me, and surrendering yourself to God make an effort.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1&2] This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.
[3] The date has been inferred from information supplied by the addressee.

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[PS.]

How much did you spend on having the watch repaired?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2474

154. WHAT TO DO?

Here is an important letter[1] from a Principal who wishes to remain anonymous:

> A troubled conscience seeks the reasoned opinion of others to help to solve the following pressing question: Is the carrying out of the pledge of the Peace Pledge Union (the late Dick Shepard's organization for opposing war by the refusal to resort to violence under any circumstances whatever) a right and a practicable course of action in the present conditions of our world?
>
> On the side of 'Yea' there are the following arguments:
>
> 1. The world's greatest spiritual teachers have taught and exemplified in their own lives that an evil thing can only be destroyed by good means, and never by evil means, and any sort of violence . . . is undoubtedly an evil means, whatever may be the motive. . . .
>
> 2. The real causes of the present violence and misery can never be removed by war. . . .
>
> 3. . . . War . . . even if it ends in victory, means . . . destruction of such liberties as remain to us . . . for no modern war can be waged . . . without the complete regimentation . . . It is better to die in conscientiously resisting oppression non-violently, than to live as a pawn in the regimented society . . .
>
> On the side of 'Nay' there are the following arguments:
>
> 1. Non-violent resistance can only be effective in resisting people who are capable of being moved by moral and humanitarian considerations. Fascism . . . has no scruple . . . in employing any degree of brutality . . .
>
> 2. To refuse co-operation in violent resistance . . . in defence of democratic liberty, is tantamount to helping those who are destroying that liberty. Fascist aggression has undoubtedly been encouraged by the knowledge that the democracies contain numbers of people who are unwilling to fight in their defence, and who would even oppose (and thus obstruct) their own Governments . . . This being so, the conscientious objector to violent means of defence becomes not merely ineffective in promoting peace, but actually helpful to those who are breaking it.
>
> 3. War may destroy liberty, but if the democracies survive there is at least some possibility of regaining part of it, whereas if the Fascists are allowed to rule the world, there is no chance at all. . . .

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

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> The solution of this question is obviously terribly pressing . . . But is it not really just as pressing for those in other countries, say South Africa, Egypt, or Australia which may have to face the possibility of invasion, or in an India which in the event of 'complete independence' might be faced with the possibility of invasion by Japan or by a pan-Islamic combination?
>
> In the face of such possibilities (say rather probabilities), ought not even every keen conscience (whether in a young body or in an old) to be certain exactly what is the right and practical way of action? . . .

Nothing need be said about the arguments in favour of the Peace Pledger's resistance. Those against resistance deserve careful examination. The first argument, if it is valid, cuts at the very root of the anti-war movement. It is based on the assumption that it is possible to convert Fascists and Nazis. They belong to the same species as the so-called democracies or, better still, war-resisters themselves. They show in their family circles the same tenderness, affection, consideration and generosity that war-resisters are likely to show even outside such circles. The difference is only of degree. Indeed Fascists and Nazis are a revised edition of so-called democracies if they are not an answer to the latters' misdeeds. Kirby Page in his brochure on the toll of the late war has shown that both the combatants were guilty of falsehoods, exaggerations and inhumanities. The Versailles Treaty was a treaty of revenge against Germany by the victors. The so-called democracies have before now misappropriated other people's lands and have resorted to ruthless repression. What wonder if Messrs Hitler and company have reduced to a science the unscientific violence their predecessors had developed for exploiting the so-called backward races for their own material gain? It is therefore a matter of rule of three to find out the exact amount of non-violence required to melt the harder hearts of the Fascists and the Nazis, if it is assumed, as it is, that the so-called democracies melt before a given amount of non-violence. Therefore, we must eliminate from consideration the first and the fatal argument if it could be proved to have any content in it.

The other two arguments are practical. The pacifists may not do anything to weaken their own Governments so as to compel defeat. But for fear of so doing they may not miss the only effective chance they have of demonstrating their undying faith in the futility of all war. If their own Governments go mad and make martyrs of war-resisters, they (the Governments) must suffer the consequence of the unrest of their own creation. The democracies must respect the liberty of individual non-violent

conscience however inconvenient it may be. From that respect there will spring hope for the world. This means that they put their conscience and truth before their country's so-called interest. For, regard for one's conscience, if it is really such, has never yet injured any legitimate cause or interest. Therefore, it comes to this that a pacifist must resist when he feels strongly that, whether so-called democracies live or die, the tug of war will never end war and that it will only end when at the crucial moment a body of pacifists have at any cost testified their living faith by suffering, if need be, the extreme penalty. I know the point for me to consider is not how to avoid the extreme penalty but how to behave so as to achieve the object in view. Where the very disturbing but potent factor of faith is part of one's conduct, human calculations are of no avail. A true pacifist is a true satyagrahi. The latter acts by faith and therefore is not concerned about the result, for he knows that it is assured when the action is true.

After all, what is the gain if the so-called democracies win? War certainly will not end. Democracies will have adopted all the tactics of the Fascists and the Nazis including conscription and all other forcible methods to compel and exact obedience. All that may be gained at the end of the victory is the possibility of comparative protection of individual liberty. But that protection does not depend upon outside help. It comes from the internal determination to protect it against the whole world. In other words, the true democrat is he who with purely non-violent means defends his liberty and therefore his country's and ultimately that of the whole of mankind. In the coming test pacifists have to prove their faith by resolutely refusing to do anything with war whether of defence or offence. But the duty of resistance accrues only to those who believe in non-violence as a creed—not to those who will calculate and will examine the merits of each case and decide whether to approve of or oppose a particular war. It follows that such resistance is a matter for each person to decide for himself and under the guidance of the inner voice, if he recognizes its existence.

RAJKOT, April 9, 1939

Harijan, 15-4-1939

155. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[1]

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB,

You must have received my wire[2] sent from Ajmer yesterday.

It is necessary now for you to appoint the Committee in terms of Sir Maurice's Award[3].

It seems to me that you will desire to include the four names you have already notified. So long as the Sardar's nominees have a bare majority on the Committee, he will gladly accept those names. Thus, if the four names remain and the three officials are to have the right to vote, the Sardar will have to nominate eight members.

If you withdraw the four names, the Sardar will have to give seven names. Will you kindly let me have your opinion? Will you please also let me know who the three officials will be and of them who will be the president of the Committee?[4]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Harijan, 22-4-1939

156. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I arrived here this morning in connection with the fulfilment of the terms of the Thakore Saheb's Notification. Sardar Patel too flew here this morning on my invitation.

I believe that His Excellency has sent you certain instructions in connection with the matter. If you think that we should meet I am at your disposal whenever you like.

[1] The letter is extracted from "Rajkot Events" in which it appeared as a "translation".

[2] *Vide* p. 119.

[3] *Vide* footnote 2, pp. 103-4.

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix VII.

I have sent a letter[1] to the Thakore Saheb of which I send you copy of translation herewith.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From a copy: C.W. 10171. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

157. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

BHAI BHOLANATH[3],

I have your letter of March 23. I have fully discussed the matter[4] with Haribhau Upadhyaya. Kindly consult him.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1310

158. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

Your letter[5] of 6th instant has been redirected here.

I suggested a meeting of the foes to have it out among themselves without any reservation. But so much has happened since that I do not know if it is worth while. They will only swear at one another and bitterness will become more bitter. The gulf is too wide, suspicions too deep. I see no way of closing the ranks. The only way seems to me to recognize the differences and let each group work in its own manner.

I feel myself utterly incompetent to bring the warring elements together for joint work. I should hope that they can work out their policies with becoming dignity. If they do so it will be well with the country.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] In his reply, the addressee expressed concern for Gandhiji's "hot and tiring journey" from Delhi to Rajkot, and indicated his readiness to meet him "at any time".

[3] A Congress worker of Alwar

[4] The reference is to the refusal of the Alwar administration to register the Alwar Praja Mandal.

[5] *Vide* Appendix VIII.

Pandit Pant's resolution I cannot interpret. The more I study it the more I dislike it. The framers meant well. But it does not answer the present difficulty. You should, therefore, give it your own interpretation and act accordingly, without the slightest hesitation.

I cannot, will not, impose a Cabinet on you. You must not have one imposed on you, nor can I guarantee approval by A. I. C. C. of your Cabinet and policy. It would amount to suppression. Let the members exercise their own judgment. If you do not get the vote, lead the opposition till you have converted the majority.

Do you know that I have stopped civil disobedience wherever I have influence? Travancore and Jaipur are glaring examples. Even Rajkot I had stopped before I came here. I repeat that I breathe violence in the air. I see no atmosphere for non-violent action. Is not the lesson of Ramdurg[1] enough for you? In my opinion it has done immense injury to the cause. It was, so far as I can see, premeditated. Congressmen are responsible for it as they were in Ranpur. Do you not see that we two honestly see the same thing differently and even draw opposite conclusions? How can we meet on the political platform? Let us agree to differ there and let us meet on the social, moral and municipal platform. I cannot add the economic, for we have discovered our differences on that platform also.

My conviction is that working along our lines, in our own way, we shall serve the country better than by the different groups seeking to work a common policy and common programme forged out of irreconcilable elements.

I sent you wires[2] from Delhi about my utter inability to go to Dhanbad. Rajkot I dare not neglect.

I am well. Ba is down with malignant malaria. This is the fifth day. I brought her with me when she had already commenced it.

I wish you will conserve your health by taking decisive action, leaving the result to God. Your reference to your father is touching. I had the pleasure of meeting him.

I forget one thing. Nobody put me up against you.[3] What I told you in Segaon was based on my own personal observations.

[1] Ramdurg Praja Sangh had resorted to violent means to compel the Ruler to give them more concessions. *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 453-6.

[2] *Vide* pp. 113-4.

[3] The addressee had said: "At Tripuri the Old Guard cleverly dropped out of the picture and more cleverly pitted me against you."

You are wrong if you think that you have a single personal enemy among the Old Guard.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

159. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SHREE RASHTREEYASHALA, RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Shri Ghanshyamsinh Gupta and Shri Deshbandhu Gupta have followed me to Rajkot to seek my advice after the utter breakdown of negotiations between the Government and the Aryasamaj by reason of H. E. H.'s Government's denial of the reports about negotiations.

I may state that for some time I have been advising the Aryasamaj friends who have regard for my opinions to suspend the civil disobedience part of their movement and give a chance to negotiations. I need not go into the reasons that actuated me to give the advice. The friends were seriously considering my advice, when a door seemed to them to open to its acceptance on grounds other than those I had advanced. I refer to the negotiations. They thought that if their minimum demand could be satisfied they would discontinue the civil disobedience. But as stated, their hope was frustrated. Now they want me to guide them as to the next step. They wanted to issue a manifesto stating their ground for entertaining the opinion that actual negotiations had started.

On reading the manifesto I felt that before I could give them guidance I should write to you myself and know your own opinion.

If the information I gather from the manifesto is true, the Nizam Government's denial is inexplicable. Here are the relevant paragraphs from the draft manifesto which has been withheld for the time being at my instance:

> About the last week of February, the Divisional Commissioner and the Collector of Gulburga interviewed Mahatma Narain Swami Maharaj, the leader of the movement, in Jail with a view to ascertain the grievances of the Aryas, and promised to move the higher authorities to explore the possibilities for an amicable settlement.

On the 27th March, 1939, Mr. S. T. Hollins, the Director-General of Police and Jails, Hyderabad State, Nawab Ghos Yarjang Bahadur, Commissioner, Gulburga Division, Mr. Razvi, the Collector, Gulburga District, and the Superintendent, Gulburga Jail, interviewed Mahatma Narain Swamiji Maharaj, Kunvar Chand Karanji Sharda, Lala Khushalchandji and Swami Vivekanandji in the Gulburga Jail and Mr. S. T. Hollins made certain proposals, the substance of which was that H. E. H. the Nizam's Government would take no objection whatever to the hoisting of the *Om* flags, that no permission would be required for building *yajnashalas* and *havan-kundas* and all Arya-samajs and Mandirs at present existing without any permission having been obtained would be recognized, and in the matter of building new temples, machinery would be provided to secure the granting of sanction within 15 days of the application, sanction not to be withheld on any ground other than the ground of its location being such as to give rise to communal disturbances and full liberty of preaching religious doctrines (*dharma-prachar*) with due regard to the feelings of the followers of other faiths would be secured.

Mahatma Narain Swamiji and his colleagues expressed their willingness to recommend the above proposals as the basis for negotiating the settlement, provided the settlement conformed to the spirit of the Sholapur Resolutions. Swamiji made it clear to Mr. Hollins that the authority to call off the satyagraha movement rested with the Sarva Deshik Sabha.

Mr. Hollins thereupon undertook to arrange a meeting of the representatives of the Sarva Deshik Sabha and the Government Officers concerned at Hyderabad and also to arrange for the transfer of Swamiji Maharaj and his three colleagues to Hyderabad for participating in the discussions. On the request of the Swamiji, Mr. Hollins and the Commissioner Nawab Ghos Yarjang Bahadur promised that the representatives of Sarva Deshik Sabha would not be molested and their records would not be seized or otherwise interfered with.

Swamiji Maharaj, having been thus assured, called Swami Swatantranandji, Secretary, Satyagraha Committee, Sholapur, by telegram and also forwarded the notes recording the substance of the above conversation duly countersigned by Jail Superintendent, to the President, Secretary and some other members of the Sarva Deshik Sabha. On the 7th instant when I, Messrs G. S. Gupta and Deshbandhu Gupta saw Narain Swamiji in Gulburga Jail, the Jail Superintendent told us that before putting his own signature he had shown the notes of the conversation contained in Swamiji's letters to the Talukdar, Gulburga, and had got his approval.

Swami Swatantranandji went to Gulburga and interviewed Narain Swamiji Maharaj who asked the former that an emergent meeting of

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the working committee of the Sarva Deshik Sabha should be immediately convened at Sholapur before 10th April 1939.

Swami Swatantranandji convened the meeting at Sholapur and wrote to Sir Akbar Hydari sending him a copy of the gist of the conversation Narain Swamiji Maharaj had with Mr. Hollins and his colleagues and informing him that the representatives of the Sarva Deshik Sabha would be reaching Hyderabad to meet the State representatives on the 9th April to discuss the question and requesting him to communicate the time and place of the meeting. In a letter dated the 1st April, 1939, Swami Swatantranandji also wrote to the Superintendent, Gulburga Jail, informing him that in addition to the members of the Executive body of the International Aryan League, the gentlemen named in the letter would represent the Sarva Deshik Sabha at the Hyderabad meeting.

Swami Swatantranandji received a letter No. 2697, dated the 3rd April, 1939, from the Superintendent, Central Jail, Gulburga, which is very important, as it throws considerable light on the present controversy; it reads as follows:

"With reference to your letter No. 37060, dated the 31st March, '39, received today, I write to inform you that it has been decided to hold the meeting of your representatives with Mahatma Narain Swami, Mr. Khushalchand and others at Gulburga but not at Hyderabad. Please get all your representatives to Sholapur and send to Gulburga by the morning mail of the 7th April, 1939, so that they may see Mahatma Narain Swami and others beforehand and be ready for the 8th instant to talk with the State officers.

"I assure you that your representatives would never be harassed by police nor would your papers be seized here provided there would be no demonstration on your part. Kindly let me know the date and time of their arrival at Gulburga by telegram so that necessary arrangements may be made here. I am writing this to you with the approval of the First Talukdar, Gulburga."

The letter speaks for itself and shows that the Jail Superintendent wrote with full authority because he distinctly states that the deputation was to meet the State officials on the 8th April, 1939.

While the leaders of the Aryasamaj were on their way to Hyderabad, Hyderabad Government issued the surprising communique that the news published in certain sections of Press that H. E. H. the Nizam's Government were negotiating with the International Aryan League with a view to arrive at some settlement or compromise was totally incorrect.

The letter dated 3rd instant and signed by the Superintendent of the Central Jail, Gulburga, seems to be conclusive. I suggest that even if Mr. Hollins and other officials were over-enthusiastic and went beyond their authority, their action should

be endorsed by H. E. H.'s Government for the sake of the good name if for nothing else. Public confidence in the word of such a great Government as H. E. H. the Nizam's ought not to be shaken, but perhaps there is a sound answer to what *prima facie* appears to be unanswerable. May I expect an early reply? I am fixed up in Rajkot at present.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10216

160. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I thank you for your kind note[1]. Thanks, I am none the worse for the journey.

Today is my silence day. May I come to you at 3 p. m. tomorrow?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10172. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

161. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Fasting can do you no good. It appears that here everything will turn out right. Qureshi, too, must not worry. No one need come. Sushila's letter will tell you about Ba.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 415

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 125.

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162. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 11, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

"As you were" sums up my position here. No end of difficulties in the midst of honeyed words. I am glad I sent for the Sardar. He being by my side I feel a kind of safety which I would not in his absence. He must know and endorse every step I may take.

Here is copy of further correspondence with Subhas Chandra Bose. What is one to do? Resoluteness seems to be the only answer if one has faith in one's judgment.

Ramdurg is a pointer. No more civil disobedience till non-violence has asserted itself.

I hope you have got rid of your cough and headache. I am quite fit. Ba has sixth day of malaria. It is steadily decreasing.

I am off to Gibson's now. This is being finished in the 'library'[1]. Very little letter-writing. It is an eternal round of interviews.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3909. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7218

163. TELEGRAM TO JIVANSINH D. JADEJA

Express

RAJKOT,
April 12, 1939

JADEJA JIVANSINHJI DHIRUBHA[2]
PRIVATE SECRETARY
SANAND

HAD EXPECTED SEE YOU HERE. IN SPITE OF CHIEF JUSTICE AWARD HAVING GONE AGAINST THAKORESAHEB'S

[1] Gandhiji used this expression for lavatory.

[2] He was nominated by the President, Rajkot Bhayats and Garasdars Samaj, to represent the Bhayats and zamindars of Rajkot on the Reforms Committee which the Thakore Saheb had agreed to appoint.

CONTENTION HE DESIRES HIS NOMINATION OF YOU AS MEMBER REFORMS COMMITTEE BEING INCLUDED IN SARDAR'S LIST. THUS HE DISOWNS HIS OWN RESPONSIBILITY. THEREFORE YOUR NAME WILL DROP OUT UNLESS YOU ACT AS SARDAR'S NOMINEE AND UNDERTAKE TO WORK AS ONE TEAM ALONG WITH HIS OTHER NOMINEES SUBJECT OF COURSE TO ASSURANCE THAT BHAYATS' JUST RIGHTS WILL BE PROTECTED BY THEM. PLEASE WIRE REPLY AS I MUST SEND LIST BY TOMORROW LATEST.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10175. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

164. LETTER TO GARASIAS

[On or before *April 13, 1939*][2]

It is understood that Mahatma Gandhi has written a letter to the Garasias (Bhayats), stating that he is unable to include a Bhayat on the Reforms Committee, for which seven representatives are to be nominated by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel according to the Gwyer Award.

It is stated that Mahatma Gandhi had pointed out that, in view of the decision of the Thakore Saheb not to increase the number of members of the Reforms Committee, if the Bhayats' representative is included among the seven nominees of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, then what is a majority for the Parishad, according to the Gwyer Award, would be reduced to a minority. He is also stated to have pointed out that his assurance[3] to the Bhayats early in March was never unconditional, and that it had always been understood that the Parishad should have a majority on the Reforms Committee.

Mahatma Gandhi regrets to note that the Bhayat Association has not thought it necessary to continue the negotiations to find out a *via media*.[4]

The Hindu, 13-4-1939

[1] *Vide* also the following item.

[2] The letter was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, April 13".

[3] In "The Rajkot Fast–VI" Pyarelal explains: "In the middle of a crowded programme on March 11, a letter from the Bhayats was handed to Gandhiji asking for permission to wait in deputation upon him to request him to give them an assurance regarding their representation on the Reforms Committee similar to what he was believed to have given to the Mussalmans. Gandhiji, anxious to save their time and his own for which he was hard pressed, sent them a laconic, hurried note which would have the effect of placing them on a level with Mussalmans, so far as the question of their representation on the Reforms Committee was concerned." *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", pp. 138-41.

[4] *Vide* also the preceding item and "Letter to Ranjitsinh", pp. 137-8.

165. TELEGRAM TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

DOCTOR AMBEDKAR, M. L. A.
BOMBAY

SO FAR AS I CAN SEE AT LEAST FOUR MEMBERS WILL FULLY REPRESENT DEPRESSED CLASS INTERESTS. NAMES BEING CHOSEN BY SARDAR.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10176. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

166. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

MINE[1] CROSSED YOUR LETTER[2]. CAN ADD NOTHING HELPFUL. CONVINCED BEST COURSE NATIONAL INTEREST FOR YOU IS TO FORM CABINET OF YOUR UNFETTERED CHOICE AND FORMULATE PROGRAMME. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

167. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JHARIA

YOUR WIRE[3]. GANDHI SEVA SANGH THIRD MAY TO TENTH. BETTER IF WORKING COMMITTEE TWENTY-EIGHTH

[1] Of April 10; *vide* pp. 125-7.
[2] Of April 10, recapitulating principal points of previous letters
[3] Dated April 14, which read: "Am perturbed by persistent Press reports yourself not coming Calcutta during A. I. C. C. meeting and Gandhi Seva Sangh

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INSTANT A.I.C.C. TWENTY-NINTH. SHALL MAKE DESPERATE EFFORTS ATTEND. BA'S FEVER ABATED. NO DANGER. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

168. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH[1]

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939[2]

NAMDAR THAKORE SAHEB,

I am able to answer your letter[3] dated April 10, 1939, only today.

It pains me to note that you have shaken your responsibility off your shoulders. The Muslim and the Bhayat names to which you refer were nominated by you. My promise therefore meant and could be interpreted to mean only that I on my part would help you to fulfil your promise even if the Chief Justice's Award went against you. It passes my understanding how anyone can interpret my promise to give what I had no power to give. I am acting only as the Sardar's and the Parishad's trustee. It is obvious that I may not give anything outside the terms of my trust. Therefore, my promise can only mean that if you desire to retain the names in question, I would help you on behalf of the Sardar to do so subject to the majority of the Sardar's names remaining intact. I hold that it is impossible to put more meaning into my word. Unfortunately you have taken an extraordinary step and thrust upon me the responsibility of accommodating in the Sardar's list the names of your nominees. What pains one is that you should misconstrue my promise in a manner that would render nugatory the right secured by the Sardar.

Conference being postponed till second week May. Your presence during A.I.C.C. meeting absolutely necessary. Will first week May for A.I.C.C. meeting suit you better?"

[1] The letter is extracted from "Rajkot Events", in which it appeared as a "translation" along with a note by Vallabhbhai Patel, which read: "This letter is written by my consent and the names given here should be taken as submitted by me."

[2] According to *The Hindu*, 17-4-1939, the letter is dated April 15.

[3] *Vide* Appendix VII.

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Therefore, although after your letter the only thing that remained for me was to send you seven names on behalf of the Sardar, I entreated three out of the four nominees named by you to allow themselves to be included among the Sardar's nominees and to work as one team with the rest. But my entreaty has ended in failure. I have exhausted all effort to honour your nominations if it were at all possible. You have mentioned a fourth name in your letter. I did not think it necessary to put Shri Mohan Mandan to the trouble of coming to me to discuss things, as he is not a Harijan.

The exclusion of the above four names, however, does not mean that the representatives nominated by the Sardar will not guard the special and legitimate rights of Muslims, Bhayats, Harijans or any other section. These members recognized no caste distinctions so far as the Committee and service of the people are concerned. They have before them only the cause of the Rajkot people as a whole. They are on the Committee because the party they represent conducted the fight for the rights of the Rajkot people. You appreciated their endeavour and gave the right of nominating the names of seven Rajkot State subjects outside the officials to the Sardar or the Parishad. These names are as below:

1. Shri Popatlal Purushottam Anada[1], B.A., LL.B.,
2. „ Popatlal Dhanji Malaviya[2],
3. „ Jamnadas Khushalchand Gandhi[3],
4. „ Becharbhai Walabhai [Wadher][4],
5. „ Jethalal [Harikrishna] Joshi[5],
6. „ Vrajlal Mayashanker Shukla[6],
7. „ Gajanan Bhawanishankar Joshi[7], M.A., LL.B.

Let me once more entreat you to listen to me. You say that you are unable to enlarge the Committee. This is not right. The Chief Justice's Award does not mean any absolute obligation to limit the number of the Committee to ten. The two parties can make any alterations by mutual agreement. The Sardar is still desirous of helping you to keep your four nominees. The only condition is that the Parishad's majority should not

[1] Member of the Kathiawar Bar and of Praja Pratinidhi Sabha

[2] Member of the mercantile community, President of the local Social Service League

[3] Principal, Rajkot Rashtriya Shala (national school); participated in satyagraha in South Africa

[4] A constructive worker; had taken interest in Harijan service

[5] Teacher, Rashtriya Shala; Secretary of the local Social Service League

[6] Teacher in Rashtriya Shala

[7] Secretary, local Ramakrishna Mission

be affected in the extended Committee. According to the Chief Justice's Award, the Sardar has a majority of four at present. Instead of that, for your sake and for the sake of avoiding bad blood, the Sardar is willing to reduce it to a majority of one.

Can you expect anything more?

In your Notification of December 26th, the time-limit for the Committee to complete and submit its report to you was fixed at one month and four days. May I remind you that the limit may not be exceeded?

During the second satyagraha struggle there were confiscations, fines and other repressive measures. It is hardly necessary to remind you that these should be now cancelled.[1]

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Harijan, 22-4-1939

169. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I got your letter. I wrote one letter to you at Dehra Dun. You don't seem to have received it. Write to me now.

Ba has completely recovered now. You needn't, therefore, come for her sake.

If you feel inclined to go to Bihar, do go. There is of course plenty of work to be done there. But it may be desirable now to wait for Shankar[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 950. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

[1] According to *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1939, the addressee replied, *inter alia*: "I very much regret to find that in spite of what I wrote to you no representation whatsoever on the Committee has been given to the Mahomedans or the Bhayats and that the representative for the Depressed Classes has also been omitted although about his qualifications a special recommendation was made. I write to say that according to the opinion of the Legal Adviser of the State only one gentleman out of the seven, viz., Mr. Bechar Wala Wadher, happens to be the subject of Rajkot; the other six do not appear to enjoy that status. I have, therefore, to request you to let me know in detail the grounds on which you hold them to be eligible for appointment on the said Committee."

[2] Satish D. Kalelkar, who later married the addressee

170. LETTER TO KHWAJA HASAN NIZAMI

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,[1]
April 14, 1939

KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am grateful to you for sending me the Koran in Hindi. I have high regard for Urdu, am trying to learn it and want it to prosper.

I am of the opinion that those Hindus who want to serve both [the communities] should know Urdu and should read Urdu newspapers and books. Similarly those Muslims who want to serve both [the communities] should know Hindi and should read Hindi newspapers and Hindi books.

From a copy of the Urdu: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

171. LETTER TO RANJITSINH

April 15, 1939

I have received your letter[2] of the 14th instant. I have personally explained to you that you are giving an entirely different meaning to my written promise. If the meaning which you have given is the real meaning of it, the result would be that I took a vow to give what I did not possess. I was then going

[1] As in the letter-paper

[2] In this, the addressee, President of the Kutch-Kathiawar-Gujarat Garasia Association, had said: ". . . You were firm in your opinion that one of the Bhayats can remain as a member of the Committee only if he works in team with Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel. If we agree to it, we lose our right to an independent vote, and no one who has got self-respect can agree to this suggestion. You have given us a promise to give one seat to the Bhayats without any condition. We strongly believe that there is no other meaning to it, and we still hold this view. If a Bhayat of Rajkot is not appointed on the Committee, the Bhayats have decided to offer satyagraha, and, the Rajkot Bhayats' Garasia Samaj being part of the Kutch-Kathiawar-Gujarat Association, we shall have to uphold the decision of the central body, and in that contingency, we fear the situation in Rajkot will become worse. . . ." According to the source, an English translation of the Gujarati correspondence between Gandhiji and the addressee was "released to the Press on behalf of the Garasia Association".

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to Delhi to obtain a decision from the Chief Justice. If that decision was against the Sardar I had nothing to give, because your representative was well protected. But if the decision was in favour of the Sardar and if the Sardar raised protest against the appointment of more than seven representatives, obviously your representative's name would vanish. Only those persons could be in the list of the Sardar who could work as part of a team. Having this fact in view, I wrote a letter to you that you were safe because the Sardar would not protest if his purpose was served, and the Thakore Saheb would keep your name intact. The only meaning of my promise was that the Sardar would not raise any protest if his purpose was served. Where had I any authority to give a promise to others which would carry a meaning contrary to the above?[1]

It appears to me to be quite clear as daylight that, if your representative is not prepared to work as one team, it would be very clear to you that he cannot be included in the list of the Sardar. Therefore, if you intend to have your representative included in the Committee, you should request the Thakore Saheb to do so, and I have already written to him a letter[2]. As a friend I tell you that your threat about agitation and satyagraha, etc., is out of place.[3]

The Hindu, 18-4-1939

172. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[4]

April 15, 1939

There has been for me unusual delay in sending on behalf of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel names of seven representatives to sit on the Reforms Committee in terms of the Thakore Saheb's Notification of December 26 last and in terms of the Chief Justice's Award. The delay shows the measure of my anxiety as well as Sardar Patel's to include in the list the Thakore Saheb's four nominees whose names he had published in his now defunct Notification of 21st January last. In accordance with the Award

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Garasias" p. 132.

[2] *Vide* pp. 134-6.

[3] According to the source, "in the course of a lengthy reply" the addressee "asserted that Gandhiji's promise to give one seat to the Bhayats was unconditional."

[4] This is extracted from "Rajkot Events". The statement appeared in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 16.

his nominees automatically dropped out, but the Thakore Saheb could have retained them with the co-operation of Sardar Patel. My first act on arrival in Rajkot on the 9th was to offer to His Highness in writing the Sardar's co-operation in retaining the names. To my regret and to my astonishment the offer was summarily rejected. The public knows from the Thakore Saheb's reply, which was handed to the Press on his behalf, in what terms it was rejected. He has allowed to be inferred that the Award left no scope for increasing the number of members of the Committee. On the face of it this is not right. With mutual consent there is ample scope for adjustment. The Thakore Saheb is not bound by the Award not to increase or even decrease the number on the Committee, if in wanting to do so he secures the Sardar's co-operation.

When this unfortunate decision became known to me, with the fullest co-operation of the Sardar I set about exploring means of accommodating at least two Muslim representatives and one Bhayat representative among the seven. This could not be done unless they could see their way to agree to work as one team with the Sardar's other nominees. If this condition could not be fulfilled, the very object of giving the Sardar, i.e., the Parishad, the right to select all the seven members could be easily frustrated. But in spite of making all efforts it was humanly possible both for the Sardar and me to make, we failed and, therefore, the public will find that all the four nominees of the Thakore Saheb have been omitted.

This, however, does not mean that the Committee will not represent all interests that could have been covered by the four nominees and several other interests, not specifically represented, for I have not known a single such committee in the world which could cover specifically and sectionally all imaginable interests. The very essence of democracy is that every person represents all the varied interests which compose the nation. It is true that it does not exclude, and should not exclude, special representation of special interests, but such representation is not its test. It is a sign of its imperfection.

I do not claim perfection for the Rajkot Committee, but any attempt on the part of the Sardar to accommodate all the special interests, without the indispensable safeguard that I have suggested, would have failed to produce a constitution which could be satisfactorily worked in the interests of the whole of the people of Rajkot. I venture to suggest that the Sardar's nominees have been selected after fulfilling the first indispensable condition of

team-work, so that they would all make a conscientious effort to represent each in his own person the whole of the interests of the people of Rajkot. Therefore, it will be doubly the duty of the seven members to safeguard and protect all the special and legitimate rights of the Muslims, the Bhayats and the Harijans of the Rajkot State.

As to the Harijan representation, I may say that Shri Mohan Mandan, the fourth nominee of the Thakore Saheb, an estimable citizen of Rajkot though he is, is in no sense a Harijan any more than the seven nominees whose names have now been submitted to the Thakore Saheb on behalf of the Sardar.

The Garasia Association has accused me in forcible language of a breach of promise in excluding their representative from the list of seven. All I can say is that they have hopelessly misread and misunderstood my letter[1] of March 11. I do not propose at present to go into the immediate circumstance in which I hastily penned my reply to their note, but it has got to be read in conjunction with the statement[2] with which I left Wardha on what I have described as a mission of peace. I then stated, as an indispensable condition of acceptance of any permutation and combination that might be offered for the composition of the Committee, that on it the Sardar's nominees should have at least a bare majority of one. The letter of March 11 has got to be read together with that condition. Nothing whatsoever happened on March 11 to make me waive that condition.

Assuming for the moment that I forgot to incorporate the condition in my letter, the Garasia friends would be expected to read my letter with the missing condition. But I go a step further, that to read into my letter the meaning that the Garasia Association gives it, is to frustrate the very object which was sought to be secured by the Thakore Saheb's letter to the Sardar. With the meaning that he attached to it and which meaning the Chief Justice's Award has fully upheld, I had no right to throw away that precious right. I should be guilty of a breach of trust if I did so. It should be remembered that the fast was taken for the purpose of vindicating the Sardar's position and, therefore, if you like, to repair the breach of faith which I had imputed to the Thakore Saheb. The Award has done it. Is it to be expected that at a time when I was proceeding to Delhi in the full expectation of the Sardar's contention being upheld, I was to

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 132.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 449-52.

undo in advance the effect of such a happy termination of the Delhi visit? I have more than fulfilled my promise contained in my letter of March 11 addressed to the Garasia Association by offering to reduce to one the majority of four which the Award gives to the Sardar's nominees. I think I deserved better treatment from the Association. All their appeal should have been to the Thakore Saheb to seize the opportunity given by me of rehabilitating his nominees. Instead of choosing that obvious course, they have chosen the wrong course. I have reminded the Garasias that, when I returned from my self-imposed exile, at the end of 1914, I gave them ample proof of my friendship and concern for them. They had first met me in Bhavnagar. Since then they have been off and on seeking my guidance and advice. Many of them know that it has been always at their disposal. But no mischief is yet done. As I have said, they may rest assured that all their just rights will be respected by the Sardar's nominees.

Harijan, 22-4-1939

173. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 16, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

As I know that you were in possession of my letter[1] of yesterday to the Thakore Saheb, I gave myself time to write to you informing you of my having sent the letter. It has been a most anxious and taxing time for me. I have been experiencing difficulties I had little thought of. But of this when the proper time comes.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10177. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

174. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RANJITSINH[2]

April 16, 1939

What I have written has been written as a duty. There is not the slightest intention to throw off my responsibility in writing that I am working on behalf of Sardar Patel. I, however, showed the legal position. It did not at all mean that I was in

[1] Presumably, a reference to the letter dated April 14; *vide* pp. 134-6.

[2] According to the source, this was in reply to the addressee's letter dated April 15; *vide* footnote 3, p. 138.

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the least prevented by the Sardar. The use of the word 'trustee' only meant that I cannot give a promise beyond my authority.

You have written also about other matters to which it is possible to reply, but I did not wish to take your time. A time will come when you will agree that, in whatever I have written or said, there is no breach of promise, nor any disregard for your comrades. The words which you put in the mouth of the Sardar are nothing but an illusion.[1] I have asked those who were present at that time. They heard like this: 'What guarantee can be believed regarding the rights of the Bhayats when the Paramount Power is investigating the rights of Princes?' The meaning was that there is no permanency of rights in respect of anyone. Therefore, when you have a guarantee from the Parishad, you should accept it. You have misconstrued also my innocent words at the end. But what wonder is there that words uttered by either of the parties are misconstrued when mutual confidence is lost?

The Hindu, 18-4-1939

175. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

April 16, 1939

What has hurt me most about this evening's demonstration[3] is that the demonstrators chose what was for me a solemn hour of the day. For years all India knows I have offered without practically a breach my evening prayers in open congregation. Why did they seek my prayer time to molest me, and what had the numerous men, women and children, who at the end of the day had come to offer their humble prayers to the one and only God of us all, done to deserve such interference? Why was it not enough, seeing that I do not go out except for prayers, to shout their slogans and wave black flags as I entered the prayer ground? Even that would have been bad enough. But they continued vigorously to shout their slogans throughout the prayers. And they were

[1] The source explains that the addressee had referred to "threats which Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel used to the Association's deputation in Gandhiji's presence on the 14th instant". Ranjitsinh had said: ". . . when Mr. Dhebar started to talk about the statement of the rights of Bhayats by the Durbar that such rights would be preserved, we told Mr. Dhebar that nobody can touch our rights. At that time Sardar Patel said, 'Who are they (Garasias and Bhayats) when the Rulers are made to bend down?' "

[2] This is extracted from "Rajkot Events". The statement appeared in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 17.

[3] For Pyarelal's account of the incident, *vide* Appendix IX.

all my countrymen. Their cries pierced me like arrows whilst I was trying to concentrate my mind on the words of the prayers. I have not attained the power of meditation which makes one impervious to all disturbances from without. They knew that if they had invited me to attend their meeting in order to witness their hostile demonstration and their wrath, weak as I have been, I would have gone there and tried to appease them.

I maintain I have not committed any breach of promise. To my knowledge, throughout my public and private career, I have never broken a promise. Here the very motive for a breach of promise is lacking. But lest I might have made a promise, however hastily, which could bear another meaning than the one I had put upon my letter to the Bhayats of March 11, I asked as many legal friends in Rajkot as I could get together and warned them to give their unbiased opinion and told them that their reputation would be lost if they sought to support without full cause my own reading of my letter. I have their reasoned and unanimous opinion in my possession, fully supporting my meaning to the exclusion of any other.

I fear the demonstrators have not served their cause by their unwarranted interference with the prayer of innocent men and women. There are tremendous difficulties in the way of getting due fulfilment of the Award of the Chief Justice. I am not free to go into these difficulties at the present stage. But I appeal to those who feel grieved at my conduct in excluding certain names from the Sardar's list to bear with me. They may adopt all the just means to redress their grievances. The method they adopted today was very far from being just.

Harijan, 22-4-1939

176. UNHAPPY TRAVANCORE

The following is the substantial translation of the resolutions passed by the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress in the first week of the month:[1]

> The Working Committee records its appreciation of the decision taken by the Acting President and the Council of Action to suspend civil disobedience pursuant to the advice[2] of Mahatma Gandhi. The Working Committee desires to emphasize the need at this juncture for local and

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* pp. 78-9.

taluk committees to concentrate on the constructive work and strengthen the organizational side of the movement. . . .

Khadi: The Working Committee appoints a sub-committee consisting of Sjts. Elankath Ramakrishna Pillai (Convener), G. Ramachandran and K. M. Bhoothalingam Pillai to submit an exhaustive report on the facilities available in the State for the spinning and weaving of khadi and to submit a scheme for the same. This Committee is further directed to choose and recommend further centres where work can be immediately commenced.

Indigenous weaving: For the purpose of encouraging indigenous weaving (which is an important industry in the State), the Working Committee constitutes Sjts. R. Shankar (Convener), K. S. Thangal and M. G. Koshi as a sub-committee to submit a scheme for the same.

Official goondaism: The Working Committee views with deep concern the rowdyism that is being inspired to suppress the State Congress activities. The Committee recalls the hooliganism instigated by the police in the State Congress meetings during the months of May and June last year. Until the release of political prisoners in November last, State Congress meetings were sought to be prevented either by prohibitory orders or by hooliganism or by declaring the State Congress illegal. After the release, though numerous meetings were held before the middle of January, there were no disturbances whatever. In the mean time the Government began recruiting what is called the special Police. These special policemen have no uniform and their pay was fixed at Rs. 5 per month. Towards the middle of January 1939, these special policemen commenced attending meetings at Neyyattinkara and Parur taluks. These so-called policemen and the rowdies under them have since been endeavouring to break up State Congress meetings. . . . Even after announcing on the 22nd the suspension of satyagraha, volunteer *jathas* and meetings for constructive work have been subjected to goondaism . . .

Exhortation to workers: Last November, when the political prisoners were released, it was believed that we had at least secured the liberty to bold public meetings. The present situation, however, is worse than what existed in August last when the State Congress was declared illegal. The Committee deeply appreciates the firm faith in non-violence evinced by those who attended the recent State Congress meetings. This rowdyism is the result of the persistent policy of repression continued by Government even after the suspension of satyagraha. Not only is the Government unwilling to grant any of the demands of the State Congress but it is continuing to arrest State Congress workers on some pretext or other and endeavouring to obstruct even the carrying out of the constructive programme of the Congress. Whatever be the force of the repression and the extent of rowdyism that the Government may release,

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> the State Congress will continue its work awaiting further instructions from Gandhiji. While protesting against the hooliganism inspired and encouraged by the Government the Committee exhorts the people to carry on the work of the Congress with courage and with non-violence.

I would like the workers to realize that events there have more than justified suspension of civil disobedience. The authorities have provided them with ample opportunity for the exercise of patience and restraint. They have also provided them with opportunity for suffering without civil disobedience. If, therefore, the workers can go through the ordeal without losing faith or heart and prosecute quietly and resolutely the constructive programme, swaraj will come automatically. This is a bold statement; some will call it ridiculous. Nevertheless it comes from the deepest conviction.

What worries me, however, is the statement in the concluding paragraph that "the State Congress will continue its work awaiting further instructions from Gandhiji." This declaration of faith in me is both touching and embarrassing. Let the workers know that whilst my advice and guidance are always at their disposal, I have no further instructions to give till new light dawns on me. I have prescribed a well-tried remedy. And I am quite capable of saying, 'Go on repeating it, for it is never-failing.' I am not likely easily to advise resumption of civil disobedience. There is too much violence and untruth in the air to warrant resumption anywhere. And in the case of Travancore, as I have said, resumption is superfluous.

With reference to the alleged goondaism by the State, the public are bound to put implicit faith in the allegations, unless there is an impartial inquiry made. Surely the mere denial by the authorities, no matter how often repeated, can carry no conviction. Nor will it serve the intended purpose if a local whitewashing commission is appointed. Confidence can be restored and truth brought to light only if the inquiry is made by outside judges of unimpeachable impartiality.

RAJKOT, April 17, 1939

Harijan, 22-4-1939

177. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR LETTER WIRE.[1] PLEASE RETAIN DATE MEETING A.I.C.C. TWENTY-NINTH. SHALL ATTEND. IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME IMPOSE COMMITTEE ON YOU. IF YOU WILL FORM ONE LET A.I.C.C. DECIDE. COMPOSITE CABINET SEEMS TO ME IMPRACTICABLE. AS YOU HAVE LIFTED BAN SHALL TRY ISSUE PUBLIC STATEMENT IF I GET TIME. LOVE.[2]

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

178. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR

THOUGH IN HELL FEEL GOD'S PRESENCE AND AM WELL. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3910. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7219

[1] The addressee in his two communications of April 15 had said that he could not give effect to Gandhiji's advice regarding a homogeneous Cabinet and that the only alternative was for Gandhiji to nominate the Cabinet.

[2] The addressee's telegram of even date in reply to this read: "If you issue statement, kindly permit me release correspondence. My last letter posted fifteenth."

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179. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO S. SATYAMURTI[1]

April 17, 1939

SATYAMURTI, M.L.A.
NEW DELHI

AM AGAINST PROCLAIMING DAYS FOR GRIEVANCES.

GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

180. LETTER TO RANJITSINH[2]

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

KUMAR SHRI RANJITSINHJI,

I have seen the handbill issued by the Rajkot Bhayats and Garasdars' Committee. The allegations made therein are serious. What has come to my notice is completely the reverse of it. There is only one solution for it. We both may appoint an arbitrator and obtain his decision on all complaints.

The object of my walking, instead of going in car, was plain, i.e., the processionists may have an opportunity to say and do what they might want to. In deciding to go on foot I was confident that they did not desire to cause any injury to my person. But, in case they were inclined otherwise, I wanted them to feel that they had me wholly at their disposal.

There is no Congress here. There is only Praja Parishad. No handbill was issued by it. Of course, I have issued a public appeal[3] which is sent herewith.[4]

Yours,

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1939

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated April 16, seeking Gandhiji's blessings for observing May 14 as 'Kenya Day'.

[2] This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence . . . in Gujarati". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's statement to the Press on the demonstration; *vide* pp. 142-3.

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix X.

181. LETTER TO RANJITSINH

April 17, 1939

I notice in the papers that you intend to obtain the interpretation of my letter through the Chief Justice and that you have appealed to the Viceroy for it. I do not think that this is a fit case for the Chief Justice to be bothered with. Nor is there any room for persuasion on the part of the Viceroy in this behalf so far as I am concerned. If you people should desire it and the Chief Justice is agreeable, I, on my part, am always ready. My suggestion is that we may place this case before any Judge in Bombay. If reference to an arbitrator will satisfy you, I am quite game for it. But, there is one more condition and that is that, pending the reference to and decision by the arbitrator, the work of the Committee should not be held up. If your interpretation is accepted, I shall accept your representative by withdrawing one of the Sardar's nominees from the Committee.

[PS.]

While I was writing this letter, I received your second letter. The answer to it is included in the foregoing. But even if the Chief Justice takes up your reference, would it not be necessary to have an arbitrator to go into the allegations made in your handbill?[1]

The Hindu, 19-4-1939

[1] In his letter of even date, the addressee acknowledged receipt of Gandhiji's "reply written in the afternoon to my letter of the morning" and thanked him "for agreeing to obtain the decision of an arbitrator". He informed Gandhiji that a telegram was sent to the Viceroy "to get this matter decided by Sir Maurice Gwyer". Ranjitsinh also assured Gandhiji: ". . . I am taking steps for cessation of all kinds of demonstration started by Bhayats against you."

182. LETTER TO RANJITSINH[1]

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

KUMAR SHREE RANJITSINHJI,

I have received your letter. May a misunderstanding never arise between us hereafter. As soon as I saw in the papers I decided to write[2] to you that if you would be satisfied by the appointment of an arbitrator there could possibly be no objection to it on my part.

I suggest that we may select for the purpose some Judge in Bombay. I have no objection against the Chief Justice, but I am not prepared to give him all this trouble. It seems to me to be improper. That means that if you persist in it, you have to obtain his consent.

Whoever is appointed as arbitrator, my condition should not be forgotten. The Committee's work should not be held up till the arbitrator's decision.

You have not replied to my other request[3], viz., that we should obtain an arbitrator's decision on the allegations made in your today's handbill.

Yours,

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1939

[1] This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence . . . in Gujarati". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* postscript to the preceding item.

183. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYA

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYA[1],

Perhaps you will like to read the enclosed. It was so good of you to respond to the call of poor Orissa.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10211. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

184. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

I don't get a single minute free. I am writing this in the 'library'.

Ramji's letter is enclosed.

Qureshi's salary may be raised. It would not be right for Sardar to pay his debt. That will not be to his good either. Let him give up other activities and mind the store only and pay off his debt. According to me he will be doing public service and will be contributing to Hindu-Muslim unity even by doing that. It wouldn't be desirable that he should become altogether dependent on others. You may show all this to him. If, however, you yourself hold a different view, please let me know.

You must take whatever freedom may be necessary for your health. Why not consult the vaid who is treating Vasumati? Sometimes the remedies of such vaids succeed. Consult Dinshaw also. Don't be negligent about regaining your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9117

[1] Dewan of Mysore State, 1912-18

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185. TELEGRAM TO RANJITSINH

[After *April 17, 1939*][1]

IF SIR MAURICE GWYER CONSENTS TO ARBITRATE I AM WILLING.

The Hindu, 2-5-1939

186. THE TRAGEDY OF TALCHER

The reader will recall the twenty to twenty-five thousand refugees of Talcher State in Orissa.[2] They are living under great difficulties in the forests of Angul in British Orissa. I rely upon these figures because they are vouched for by Thakkar Bapa and Shri Harekrushna Mahtab. Both of them have a reputation to lose. Moreover Thakkar Bapa is purely a humanitarian and social reformer of long standing. He does not dabble in politics.

Only a few days ago it was announced in the Press that a settlement had been arrived at and that the refugees were about to return to their homes. This news was immediately contradicted and it was stated that the Raja of Talcher had refused to honour the pact entered into by Major Hennessey, Assistant Political Agent for Orissa States North.

This was the pact signed on 21st March last:

1. Reduction of the Miscellaneous Cess from five annas to three annas per rupee of rent, and an undertaking that after the settlement to be started about next November, the combined rent and cesses will not be higher than the Angul rent and cesses with the same classes of land.
2. The abolition of monopolies on the necessaries of life except hides, skins, horns, *ganja*, opium, bhang and liquors.
3. State administrative machinery should not be used for enforcing fines, etc., levied by Ecclesiastical Courts and Panchayats.
4. Compulsory labour (*bethi*) should be abolished except when necessary for public purposes and then on payment of wages at ordinary rates.

[1] Inferred from the reference to Maurice Gwyer; *vide* letters to the addressee, pp. 147-9. The telegram appeared under the date-line "Rajkot, May 1".

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 318-20.

5. The abolition of special taxes (poll-tax) on industrial castes.

6. There should be no victimization of refugees on their return to the States.

7. Constitutional Reforms enabling the people to participate in the administration through their representatives will be introduced as soon as the schemes are approved by the Political Department.

8. There shall be no interference with freedom of speech and meeting provided that there is nothing subversive or disloyal to the Ruler or his administration in those speeches or meetings.

9. People should be allowed to kill wild animals in the State on their own property without any penalties or fees.

There were present at the time Major Hennessey, F.R.S.A., I.A., BAR-AT-LAW, Major Gregory of the Military Intelligence Department, Shri Harekrushna Mahtab, Adjutant Woods of the Salvation Army, and the Revenue Commissioner representing the Orissa Government.

Major Hennessey, I understand from Thakkar Bapa, was quite confident that he had the authority of the Raja of Talcher to sign the pact. How the Raja can now refuse to endorse it is difficult to understand.

But the mystery deepens when one recalls the terms of the *sanad* under which the Raja holds Talcher. Here are the relevant clauses of the *sanad* issued to the small Orissa States by the present Viceroy on 26th February 1937:

3. That you shall do your utmost to suppress crime of all kinds in your State.

4. That you shall administer justice fairly and impartially to all alike.

5. That you shall recognize and maintain the rights of all your people and on no account oppress, or suffer them in any way to be oppressed, and that, in particular, you shall charge yourself personally with the welfare of the aboriginal population of your State.

6. That you shall act in accordance with such advice as may be given to you by the Agent to the Governor-General, Eastern States, or such other Political Officer as may be vested with authority in this behalf by H. E. the Viceroy.

Under Clause 6 of the *sanad* the Raja is bound to act in accordance with such advice as may be given to him "by the Agent to the Governor-General, Eastern States, or such other Political Officer as may be vested with authority in this behalf by H.E. the Viceroy".

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The Raja has therefore no option but to carry out the wishes of the Assistant Political Agent. The question is, why is there all this delay in carrying out the pact? The interests of over 20,000 refugees living on sparse food and practically without shelter are at stake. Delay is not only dangerous; it is criminal.

RAJKOT, April 18, 1939

Harijan, 22-4-1939

187. TELEGRAM TO LORD LINLITHGOW

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

MAY I REMIND YOU OF 20,000 TALCHER REFUGEES?[1]

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

188. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

CERTAINLY PUBLISH CORRESPONDENCE[2] WHICH WOULD RENDER STATEMENT UNNECESSARY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

189. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

MULKARAJ
JALLIANWALABAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

INVEST AT ONCE BANKS RECOMMENDED[3] AT THEIR RATE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Viceroy's reply dated April 25 read: " . . . I am . . . most anxious to see a satisfactory solution . . . without delay, and all possible assistance is being given by my representatives in securing this." *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 146.

[3] *Vide* p. 110.

190. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I get your letters; but how can you know my predicament? How do you expect me to send you a telegram, send you some [note], when I cannot even go to sleep till 1 o'clock at night. Others do not expect such things from me.

Why should I have to worry over your fast? You began it in the name of God. He was watching over you. Was that not enough?

I am reasonably well. Some discomfort is there but I keep cheerful. The rest from Sushila's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 417

191. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

LEAVING DEFINITELY TWENTY-FOURTH. REACHING CALCUTTA TWENTY-SEVENTH MORNING. MIGHT STAY AT SODEPUR. HEMPRABHA DEVI HAS ALWAYS INSISTED. DR. ROY HAD ANOTHER SUGGESTION FROM MEDICAL STANDPOINT. SINCE YESTERDAY AM LAID UP WITH FEVER WHICH IS INCREASING. HOPE IT WILL BE UNDER CONTROL BEFORE DEPARTURE. DESPITE MANY SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED IN YOUR LETTERS FEEL HELPLESS CARRY OUT TERMS PANT'S RESOLUTION IN THIS ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL DISTRUST SUSPICION AND IN FACE OF MARKED DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN GROUPS. I STILL MAINTAIN YOU SHOULD BOLDLY FORM COMMITTEE. IT WOULD BE UNFAIR TO YOU WITH THE VIEWS YOU HOLD. LOVE.
BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

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192. TELEGRAM TO YESHWANTRAO HOLKAR

RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

MAHARAJASAHEB HOLKAR
INDORE

HAD LONG CHAT WITH ADC LAST NIGHT. GAVE HIM PERSONAL LETTER. THANKS FOR SENDING HIM.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

193. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I am lying on my back with severe headache and slight temperature which has up to now been diagnosed as gastric flu which seems to be raging about in Rajkot and especially in the house in which I am accommodated.

I came here on the 9th instant. It is the 19th today. A matter which need not have taken more than a day has taken ten days. Unfortunately, we hold different views about the cause. I become confirmed in my opinion that Durbar Virawala is at the back of all this delay. I have proof enough which may not hold water in a court of law but it is enough for all practical purposes and certainly enough for me. I have no grudge against Durbar Virawala. I would love to convert him. It would be a triumph of non-violence if I could do so. And I could, if I had your active co-operation. But I know you cannot give it so long as you hold the very high opinion you do of his ability, efficiency and straightforwardness.

I send you herewith copy of the latest letter[1] from the Thakore Saheb. It speaks for itself. If the proposition laid down in the letter were to be acted upon, there would never be a Committee formed in terms of the Award of the Chief Justice of India. The whole plan laid out in Delhi bids fair to be completely

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 136.

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frustrated if you, as the local representative of the Paramount Power, do not actively intervene. I invite your attention to the fact that in the Thakore Saheb's letter to the Sardar dated the 12th January four out of the seven names were accepted. In an Appendix to the voluminous papers attached to the Thakore Saheb's case, signed by Durbar Virawala as his political adviser, occurs the analysis of all the seven names recommended by the Sardar. Only two have been objected to because of their residential disqualification. How is it that now suddenly the qualifications of all but one have been challenged? And if I am to bear the burden that is sought to be placed upon me, there will be no end to the preliminaries and there will be no enquiry.

I do not like the idea of troubling you or seeking the intervention of the Paramount Power. But I see there is no way out of the difficulty.

The Bhayats and Garasias Association has also taken up what I consider to be a most unreasonable attitude. As soon as I read in the papers that they wanted my so-called promise to be submitted to impartial scrutiny, I wrote[1] at once accepting the proposal. But as I sensed danger of interminable delay I said the proceedings ought not to interfere with the Committee's work and that if their contention was upheld, the Bhayats' nominee would immediately be accepted and one name withdrawn. The Association, however, would not listen to my proposal. They would hold up the formation of the Committee till the Judge was selected and his award was available. Acceptance of my proposal would not have resulted in the Committee functioning before the award but it would certainly have resulted in the case being decided expeditiously enough. I have given the opinion that the Chief Justice of India ought not to be troubled over the issue though I should have no objection to Sir Maurice adjudicating if the Government of India could be induced to invite him to do so and if he accepted the invitation. I have suggested instead a Judge of the Bombay High Court. I have no doubt that you could manage this thing easily. I suppose the Judge could fly here tomorrow or the day after. I have not much to submit to him nor can the Bhayats have much either. The Judge need not take long to give his judgment. What I fear and suspect is that there is no desire anywhere to play the game. You do not mind my thinking aloud before you. I would be less than just to you if I suppressed my innermost thoughts whilst I looked up to you as the

[1] *Vide* p. 148.

local Crown Representative to see that the Committee was properly set up and its work proceeded with, smoothly and without delay.

I must leave Rajkot on the 24th instant by the 1.10 afternoon train and hasten to Calcutta, thence to Brindaban. I would return here at the earliest possible moment which cannot be before the 7th proximo. Meanwhile Shri Dhebarbhai will be acting on my behalf. But I hope that during the five days that I am here, much work will have been done.

May I remind you that my fast was only suspended and if all my efforts fail and no headway is made I must resume it? It won't be without serious reflection. I do not want to do so. I have not the physical energy for it. But a peremptory call of duty knows no mundane difficulty. The matter is so serious that I would like you to convey at least the substance of this letter to His Excellency. I am loath to interfere with his much-needed rest. If you think that there is substance in my complaint and that you have the will and the powers to deal with it I would much rather that His Excellency were kept undisturbed.

Of course I am at your disposal, if you think that a personal talk is necessary; in that case you need not mind my fever. I will come. I have an appointment with Dr. Ambedkar for half past eleven.

For the moment I am not replying to the Thakore Saheb's letter.[1]

From a copy: C.W. 7820. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

194. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 19, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

Thank you for your prompt reply. My fever is still rising. Therefore I must not rebel against the good doctor. The fever went up to 101.2 at half past twelve. I shall therefore hope to call on you tomorrow at 2 p.m., if that hour is convenient.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10179. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] The addressee, in his reply of even date, said: "I am very sorry indeed to hear that you are ill . . . of gastric flu . . . I know how trying they are . . . I shall be very glad to have a talk with you . . . Any time that suits you will suit me (preferably not between 5 and 7 p.m.) but I hope you won't think of coming unless your doctors approve" (C.W. 10180).

195. TELEGRAM TO VIRCHAND PANACHAND SHAH[1]

RAJKOT,
April 20, 1939

VIRCHAND PANACHAND
PARISHAD
JAMNAGAR

SORRY. SUFFER SILENTLY WITHOUT IRRITATION ALL REPRESSION. NO PARISHAD IN THIS CONDITION.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

196. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 20, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

This is the offer which you admitted as sporting, and which I made at our interview. I must confess that it was born of despair. I am tired of fighting unseen forces in Rajkot—a situation I have never been obliged to face throughout my life. The offer is that Parishad should withdraw from the proposed Committee altogether and that the Thakore Saheb should nominate his own Committee in terms of the Notification, that this Committee should be formed at once and should present its report to the Thakore Saheb within one month and four days from its formation.

If the Constitution that will be framed by the Committee is not in terms of the Notification, the Rajkot Rajya Praja Parishad, represented by the seven nominees, should have the right to dissent from it and the Committee's report, and the dissenting report should be submitted to the Chief Justice of India as if the Parishad was represented on the Committee in terms of the Award.

I had expected to send the note at once but as I told you my offer might create consternation among the Parishad people and so it did. The method I have adopted is a novel method.

[1] This was in reply to a telegram of even date from the addressee, who had informed Gandhiji of the situation in Jamnagar.

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As I said in my letter[1] of yesterday, the Parishad was entitled to have the terms of the Chief Justice's Award enforced by the Paramount Power. The suffocating atmosphere made me suddenly think of the drastic remedy I suggested to you. The offer I made to you carried no reservation but I did not want to do violence to my colleagues and therefore I gave time for discussion, telling them that it was open to them to repudiate my offer, for I had no such absolute powers as I arrogated to myself during our talk. I could have said, though I felt like it when making the offer I did, I should consult my colleagues before I gave my final word. I did not feel like taking that precaution. Such was the strength of my conviction as to the correctness of the position I took up. There seemed to me no way out of the hopeless unreality of the situation. I am happy to be able to say that my colleagues, though they are filled with grave doubts, recognize the correctness of the position.[2]

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10182. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

197. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 21, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I have just received your note for which many thanks. I am not aware of any amplification unless you regard the deprivation of Parishad representation as such.

Of course I shall be glad to meet D. S. Virawala whenever he has time to come to me. Perhaps you and he desire that we three should meet. I am willing anyway.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10184. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] *Vide* pp. 155-7.

[2] In his reply dated April 21, the addressee said: ". . . you have given in fuller detail and with certain amplifications the proposal which you outlined at the time of our discussion yesterday . . ." *Vide* also the following item.

198. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1939

SECRETARY
JALLIANWALABAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

ONE LAC FIFTY THOUSAND CENTRAL REST PUNJAB NATIONAL SIX MONTHS.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

199. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ[2]

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1939

SECRETARY
JALLIANWALABAGH [MEMORIAL FUND]
AMRITSAR

I APPROVE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

200. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[3]

April 22, 1939

We had a friendly conversation and lot of ground was covered. We discussed several proposals.

The Hindustan Times, 23-4-1939

[1] *Vide* also pp. 110 and 153.

[2] This was in reply to a telegram of even date from the addressee, who had proposed some arrangement for the reinvestment of the Fund. *Vide* also the preceding item.

[3] According to the source, Gandhiji gave this statement "on behalf of himself and Virawala", after their discussion in the "evening". *Vide* also the two following items.

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201. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO VIRAWALA

[*April 23, 1939*][1]

Mahatma Gandhi, in a letter to Mr. Virawala, declines to have the Reforms Committee elected on the basis suggested by Mr. Virawala.

In the course of his letter, Mahatma Gandhi points out that if four out of the seven seats are reserved for certain communities, then the present majority would be converted into a minority.[2]

The Hindu, 24-4-1939

202. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 23, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I had full five hours' discussion yesterday with Durbar Shri Virawala and the enclosed rejection of my sporting offer is the result. The Parishad Committee hangs in the air. And the formation of the Committee promises to be still further delayed pending the investigation of the meaning of my promise so-called, whereas my consent to the reference to arbitration is conditional upon the formation of the Committee not being delayed.

[1] Inferred from the addressee's reply to this letter published in the source.

[2] The source added that, in his reply, the addressee said: "I have received your letter of today's date, from which it is clear that the proposal discussed last night, which was based on the principle that the members of the Reforms Committee should be elected, is not acceptable to you. . . . Thakore Saheb feels that it is impossible to accept the other proposal which we discussed (the reference here is to Gandhiji's proposal that the Thakore Saheb should nominate his own Committee and that the Rajkot Praja Parishad, as represented by Sardar Patel's nominees, should have the right of submitting a dissenting report, if necessary, to the Chief Justice of India). . . . His Highness has sent the statement showing reasons for eligibility of six persons proposed on the Committee . . . for examination; and if . . . any doubt exists, the matter will be referred, as agreed by you, to the Judicial Commissioner of Western India States Agency . . . ." *Vide* also the following item.

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I take it that if the question of determining the meaning of the expression "State subjects" is referred to the Judicial Commissioner the reference will be shown to my representative Shri Dhebarbhai and that the Parishad will have the right, if necessary, to be represented by counsel. All this need not be necessary if the pure legal point is referred to the Judicial Commissioner on a joint statement of the case.

Lastly, the question of remission of fines, etc., still remains and is passed over.[1]

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

I take it that the correspondence between us may be released for publication.

From a copy: C.W. 10185. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

203. SPEECH AT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS' MEETING, RAJKOT[2]

April 23, 1939

As you know for the last fifteen days I have striven hard to find a solution to the Rajkot tangle. But I am sorry to have to confess to you that in this I have failed. I am most grieved over our failure to arrive at a settlement with the Bhayats and the Mussalmans. But I have the conviction, and I want you to share that conviction with me, that our labour has not been wasted. Providence has its appointed hour for everything. We cannot command results; we can only strive. And so far as I am concerned it is enough satisfaction for me to know that I have striven my utmost to discharge the duty that rested on me.

In making my 'sporting offer' to Mr. Gibson yesterday[3], I know I was making a big surrender; I could have demanded that the Thakore Saheb be made to implement his promise in full, and if I had insisted on it, the Paramount Power would have

[1] *Vide* also the two preceding items.

[2] This appeared under the title "Heart-searching" in *Harijan*, which reported only "a gist of Gandhiji's talk" at the meeting held in the evening. The *Harijan* version used here has been collated with the Gujarati text published in *Harijanbandhu*.

[3] *Harijanbandhu* has "day before yesterday". However, Gandhiji appears to have made the "sporting offer" at an interview with Gibson in the evening of April 20. *Vide* footnote on p. 157; also "Letter to E. C. Gibson", pp. 158-9.

probably been forced to intervene. But I felt that such a course, though legitimate, would under the circumstances not be the best course for any of the parties concerned. And so I chose instead the alternative of putting your head into the lap of the 'enemy'.

Let me explain to you the working of my mind in making that offer. I hold it to be an axiomatic truth that true ahimsa never fails to impress itself on the opponent. If it does, to that extent it is imperfect. All the time that I have been engaged in the Rajkot question, this question has been forcing itself upon me: 'Why has our ahimsa failed to gain recognition from the State authorities?' In South Africa whatever the Indians had won as a result of satyagraha did not leave any ill-feeling behind it. For eight long years General Smuts fought uncompromisingly against the claims of the Indian community. But in the end he recognized the justice of the claims and became my lifelong friend. He helped me a great deal even in London during the Round Table Conference and had he his way he would have helped me to get everything. When the final settlement was arrived at in South Africa he had said: "I on my part had inflicted severe hardships on Gandhi's men but they had borne them silently. How long could I inflict severities on such people?"

Do not believe that it is more difficult to win over Virawala than it was to win over General Smuts. Time and again the question arises in my mind: 'Why should what was possible in South Africa be not possible here? Why can't Virawala say the same thing which General Smuts had said?' What was possible in South Africa should be possible in Rajkot too. There we were a handful of Indians pitted against the entire Boer population. Here numbers are on your side. There our fight was against a Government and the governments are always fettered by rigidity. But here you have only to gain entrance into the heart of one man. Surely there must be something seriously wrong about us and our ahimsa if we cannot do even that. I want you to put your supreme effort into this. To say that there can be no peace in Rajkot so long as Durbar Virawala is there, is to speak not the language of ahimsa but of *himsa*. The attribute of ahimsa is to run straight into the mouth of *himsa*. If the cows had wisdom they would in full understanding run straight into the mouth of a lion and if they did so it is possible that the lion would lose the taste for cow's flesh.

I have been holding a silent court of enquiry within myself. How is it that I came to Rajkot on a mission of peace but have ended by antagonizing Durbar Virawala and the

State authorities? I had banked upon the ancestral family relationship existing between me and the Thakore Saheb, but instead I had to seek the intervention of the Paramount Power. 'What a lapse from grace is this?' I said to myself. I feel crestfallen and humbled. Should I absolve the Paramount Power altogether from its promise? Or should I confess my folly from the house-tops? I have been thinking furiously on these lines. But my self-confidence seems to have deserted me for the moment. However, I leave the thoughts with you for what they are worth to ponder and think over. Capacity to convert the heart of Durbar Virawala is the acid test of your ahimsa as it is of mine.

The discovery I have made after introspection is this. No matter what concessions you succeed in getting from the State authorities, it is only to the extent they are the result of a true heart-conversion on their part that you will be able to enjoy or digest them. But if you wish to launch a successful satyagraha to win your rights, your speech must improve. If you do so, your actions and general behaviour will take a different form. Ahimsa is not the weapon of the coward. It is the highest manly effort. It is the dharma of the brave. If you wish to be a satyagrahi you should get rid of ignorance, indolence and the like. You must cultivate constant vigilance. There should not be any trace of inertia in you. Only then can ahimsa function. When you have imbibed true ahimsa, your speech, action and general behaviour will reflect love and willy-nilly your enemies will have to recognize it.

Let me explain my meaning further by an illustration. Yesterday I was engaged for five hours in a talk with Durbar Virawala. He was the same as before. But I had gone there with the dawn of a fresh spirit, as a result of my heart-searching, upon me. My reaction to him this time was different. 'We are after all what nature has made us, and it is no use quarrelling with nature,' I said to myself, and I tried to get as much as I could to get under his skin, to view questions from his own angle. I did not mince matters and even told him some home truths. Gently, in my own language, I gave him a glimpse of his crookedness. But there was no irritation on my part or resentment on his. It was a different atmosphere. He said: "It is my bad luck that I cannot convince you of my inability to give you more than this." I replied: "I agree that I am prejudiced against you. I am afraid of you. But I am prepared to be locked up with you in a room till we arrive at unanimity. Please

remove my fears." Khan Saheb Fateh Mohammad Khan was also present on the occasion. He also joined the discussion and pressed Durbar Virawala somehow or other "to find a solution for the agitation. People are tired of it."

I have not the time to share with you all the pleasant recollections of this interview. But there was one thing in this interview that galled me and to which I draw your attention. He had an unmixed contempt for the Parishad people. I had noticed that before too but I had laughed it away. But now it hurt me. Why should your satyagraha excite his contempt of all things? I can understand ahimsa inspiring a kind of fear, the sort of fear that a mother feels when her child gets offended and goes to sleep hungry. But genuine satyagraha should never excite contempt in the opponent even when it fails to command regard or respect. This is not super-refinement on my part. Satyagraha is nothing if not a ceaseless quest after perfection. A satyagrahi therefore turns the searchlight inward relentlessly to weed out the defects that may be lying hidden there still. Thereby he increases his capacity to serve the cause he has espoused a thousandfold.

Tell me if this definition of ahimsa is beyond you and you are free to choose your own path. I will render all possible help from outside.

I have asked you always to rely upon your own inner strength instead of banking upon outside help. But I now want you to go a step further and wish to see a different kind of strength in you. You must now cease to look for guidance from without. Satyagraha should become to you an independent inspiration. It should be intolerable for you and me both that you should depend in every little thing on my advice. I am therefore going away, throwing the whole burden on you. You must make a firm resolve that you will now arrive at a settlement according to your inner light and conviction and that, too, with Durbar Virawala, not without him. Now you will have to make your choice between ahimsa and *himsa*. You may drop ahimsa if you find that it does not suit you or is likely to make cowards of you. I only wish that you should never become cowards. It is possible that some day you will come to learn pure ahimsa from disciplined *himsa*. But it is a dangerous condition if you, like Trishanku, keep on hanging in mid air between *himsa* and ahimsa. The country is also faced with this same problem as you are. You should solve it for yourself immediately. If you cling to ahimsa, that ahimsa should not be the one bequeathed

by me but should originate from independent inspiration. But if you decide to follow the path of ahimsa, then you should know that it will be an empty name unless it aims at the conversion of the heart of the opponent.

Let me offer you a few concrete suggestions in this connection. If you accept the approach that I have indicated, I would like all the seven of you, whom the Sardar has nominated, to go to Durbar Virawala and tell him that you have decided to relieve me of all responsibility in connection with Rajkot, that you would also like to relieve the Paramount Power too of its responsibility in this behalf and rely instead entirely on your capacity to induce him to implement the Notification of December 26. Ask him to tell you as to what you should do to win his heart. Hold yourself in readiness to drain to the last the bitter cup of personal indignities and humiliations. It was only when I had learnt to reduce myself to a zero that I was able to evolve the power of satyagraha in South Africa.

Ahimsa must express itself through acts of selfless service of the masses. I cannot think of a better symbol of it or medium for its expression than the spinning-wheel.

Ahimsa is a science. The word 'failure' has no place in the vocabulary of science. Failure to obtain the expected result is often the precursor to further discoveries. It is in that spirit that you should approach and pursue your present mission.

Harijan, 6-5-1939, and *Harijanbandhu*, 14-5-1939

204. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

GOING TODAY CALCUTTA[1] WITH BA VIA BOMBAY. BOTH TOLERABLY WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3911. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7220

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains that Gandhiji was going to Calcutta "for negotiations with Fazlul Haq's Ministry with regard to the political prisoners who had been put in jail under the Bengal Ordinance".

205. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
CARE LUCKY
BENARES

DR. BIDHAN SUBHAS CONSENTED MY STAY SODEPUR. MOST ANXIOUS MEET MALAVIYAJI. IMPOSSIBLE BREAK JOURNEY GOING CALCUTTA. WILL BREAK ON RETURN.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7821. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

206. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

A thousand apologies for the enclosure referred to in my yesterday's letter[1] having been omitted. I am practically on my back. I had left the matter to one of my helpers. It goes herewith.

Yes, the procedure will naturally be left to the Judge. But the parties can decide whether this is to be given on written pleadings or by personal appearance. That is how I conceive the thing.

I shall respect your suggestions about release of correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10186. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] *Vide* pp. 161-2.

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207. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AND RADHA KOTHARI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

CHI. MANEKLAL AND RADHA,

May Chi. Manu's wedding pass off smoothly, and may they be happy and be an ideal couple.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

208. LETTER TO VIJAYA GANDHI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA[1],

Which birthday of yours will it be? English girls conceal their age. Are you also doing something of that kind? Be that as it may. May you live long and still remain young for ever! But you must not neglect spinning. You must do more spinning this year than you did last year.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

209. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY,
April 24, 1939

Rajkot seems to have robbed me of my youth. I never knew that I was old. Now I am weighed down by the knowledge of decrepitude. I never knew what it was to lose hope. But it

[1] Narandas Gandhi's daughter-in-law and wife of Purushottam Gandhi

[2] This appeared under the title "I Am Defeated". The statement was published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 25.

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seems to have been cremated in Rajkot. My ahimsa has been put to a test such as it has never been subjected to before.

I have given fifteen precious days to have the Committee, contemplated in the Award of the Chief Justice of India. But I seem to be as far from it as ever. I have found unexpected difficulties in my path. The Award was acclaimed throughout India as a complete victory for the Sardar. But it has been effectively used against me for accusing me of a breach of promise to the Muslims and the Bhayats. The promise that the Thakore Saheb had made was on my return from Delhi transferred to my poor shoulders. The plain meaning of all I had said could only be that I should help the Thakore Saheb to carry out his promise, though, according to the Award, I need not. Whatever the reason might be, both the Muslims and the Bhayats relieved the Thakore Saheb of the duty of fulfilment of the promise.

Failing to placate the Muslims and the Bhayats, I sent the Thakore Saheb seven names of the Parishad. In reply I was called upon to prove that six out of the seven names were Rajkot State subjects. One would have thought that I would at least be given an inkling of the objections. If every statement made by men presumed to be fairly honourable could be challenged, it might take a year to finish an inquiry into the facts of each case. But I have sent the required proofs.

When I seemed to have come to the end of my resources and my patience, I sent a letter of complaint to the Resident as the local representative of the Paramount Power seeking his aid in terms of the Viceregal assurances given to me. He invited me to an interview. And whilst we were discussing the ways and means an idea flashed across my mind that I should end the agony by forgoing the right of nomination of members of the Committee, and so I made what I thought, and the Resident admitted, was a sporting offer. It was that the whole Committee should be selected by the Thakore Saheb to report in accordance with the terms of the Notification of 26th December last, provided that its report should be shown to the Parishad, and that if they found that the report did not carry out the terms of the Notification, their dissenting note and the original report should be sent to the Chief Justice for his decision. The Resident sent my offer to Durbar Shri Virawala, but H. H. the Thakore Saheb has turned it down.

Agonizing experiences of the fifteen days have resulted in my making the discovery that my ahimsa should be voted down as failure if the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Shri Virawala were

to feel that they had to give anything under pressure from above. My ahimsa demanded that I should remove that feeling. And so when the opportunity came to me, I tried to assure Durbar Shri Virawala that I took no delight in invoking the assistance of the Paramount Power. Apart from ahimsa, my connection with Rajkot should impose that restraint on me. I assured him that my spontaneous offer to Mr. Gibson was an effort in that direction. He immediately retorted: "But if you are not satisfied with His Highness's Committee's report, you claim the right to scrutinize the report in the light of the Notification, and if the Parishad dissents, you want to have the report and the dissent to be examined by the Hon. the Chief Justice of India. Do you call this removing the feeling of pressure? Why not trust His Highness and his adviser through and through? You may not get all you want, but whatever you get will be charged with his goodwill and will carry a promise of full delivery. Do you know what the Parishad people have said about the Thakore Saheb and me? Is that the way of a people desiring reforms from their Prince?" There was bitterness in his speech and contempt for the Parishad people. But with the sudden consciousness of my imperfect handling of ahimsa, instead of carrying the blow, I recognized the force of his argument as showing want of faith in the essential goodness of human nature and littleness of my own belief in ahimsa. And so our conversation went on and covered many proposals. But it was inconclusive. I was no nearer solution of the tangle. Nevertheless, I parted with the feeling that we had come to know each other better, and that in trying to woo Durbar Shri Virawala I was on the right track.

And so I presented[1] this new line of approach to my coworkers. They had more than once told me that Durbar Shri Virawala was the source of all the evil that had descended upon Rajkot and that his removal would mean for them full swaraj. I had no difficulty in showing them that what they were thinking of was good government, not self-government. At this meeting, which only took place yesterday, I told them that if they accepted my explanation of ahimsa, they would have to set their heart not on getting rid of Durbar Shri Virawala, but on converting him. This they could do only if they would set about finding his good points and working at them. They must develop infinite faith in the capacity of ahimsa to neutralize every person of *himsa*. True ahimsa lay in running into the mouth of *himsa*. If cows

[1] *Vide* pp. 162-6.

could be credited with intelligence, it is conceivable that given a sufficient number of such cows who would run into the tiger's mouth, the latter would lose the relish for cow flesh and change his nature. They must, therefore, shed their fear of Durbar Shri Virawala and their disbelief in the power of ahimsa to achieve the seemingly impossible.

They listened to this (to them) new doctrine with attention. I did not ask them whether they were convinced. I hope they were. They would quite legitimately have asked me: 'Are you yourself so convinced of the correctness of this extraordinary attitude you have commended to us as to tear the Award to pieces and simply rely upon the goodness of Durbar Shri Virawala's heart?' If they had asked this question, I would have been obliged to say: 'I have not yet found the requisite courage. Ahimsa accrues only to the courageous.'

And so I have left empty-handed, with body shattered, hope cremated. Rajkot has been to me a priceless laboratory. My patience has been sorely tried by the tortuous politics of Kathiawar. I have asked the workers to confer with Durbar Shri Virawala, to forget me and Sardar Patel, and if they get enough to satisfy their least wants, they may accept the offer without reference to either of us. I have told Durbar Shri Virawala, 'I am defeated. May you win. Placate the people by giving as much as possible and wire to me so as to revive the hope which I seem to have lost for the moment.'

Harijan, 29-4-1939

210. POPULAR VIOLENCE IN RAMDURG

I have said not a word about Ramdurg up to now. I had a wire from Dr. Hardikar not to commit myself till I had heard from him. And Rajkot left me not a moment for any other work. I have only now on the train read the report prepared by Shris Diwakar, Kaujalgi and Hardikar. I have also a revealing note from Shri Diwakar. I have studied Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande's note on the tragedy. I had a visit from Shri Munnavali, President of the Praja Sangh, and Shri Magadi. The report of Shris Diwakar, Kaujalgi and Hardikar is a dispassionate document and satisfactory in so far as it goes. This is its conclusion:

> In the end we feel that the officers have acted tactlessly to a great extent and allowed the police to have their way. We believe

that they could have controlled the situation if they had acted a little more patiently and put the workers of the Praja Sangh on their honour as they had done many a time. But though there was provocation, we do not think that it was so great as to arouse the brute in man and it must be laid at the door of the highly inflammable temper of the people. They seemed to have readily believed the rumours and got infuriated.

But there is absolutely no justification for any kind of violence even under the greatest provocation. In fact, the greater the provocation the greater is the opportunity and necessity for showing a non-violent spirit. That being our ideal we cannot defend any the slightest violence under any circumstances. The events only show that the Praja Sangh had no control over the forces of violence which were hiding in the people. It is a matter for the deepest regret, and this tragedy is sure to act detrimentally against all popular movements in States. It is a clear warning to all workers in the field and everyone must realize that before one feels sure that the people are rightly trained and disciplined in non-violence it is unwise to begin any great mass movement.

A study of the evidence before me leads me to the conclusion that whatever the provocation, the popular fury was wanton, cruel and deliberate. Over two thousand villagers had collected with the set purpose of wreaking vengeance. They were intent upon releasing the President and the other prisoners. Congressmen cannot escape blame for the savagery of the people. The villagers were having the wrong lesson given to them. Ranpur in Orissa was the first finger-post. Ramdurg is the second. No one has denied the fact that the Raja Saheb of Ramdurg was a friend of the Congress. He deserved better treatment. I am not just now concerned with the truth or otherwise of the evidence on provocation. There are grave enough charges. But it has never been the Congress policy to plead provocation, howsoever grave, in justification of popular violence. We shall lose all if we play with this fundamental provision of the Congress. I had remarked before the Ramdurg outbreak that I smelt violence in the very air I was breathing. I am very sensitive to the slightest exhibition of violence or untruth. They are twins.

I am quite clear that the Provincial Congress Committees as well as the Working Committee when it is formed must take strong measures to purge the Congress ranks of violence in thought, word and deed. What little I read of the public Press shows that there is often a departure from truth and non-violence. How this evil can be remedied I do not know. The Press managed or owned by Congressmen might be amenable to moral control. I

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am, however, inclined to think that the greatest mischief is done by Congressmen working in the villages. It ought not to be difficult to bring these under rigid discipline.

I suggest an impartial enquiry into the events. The Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee should entrust it to a High Court Judge. If the Raja Saheb will help, the task will be easy. But even if he does not, there should be no difficulty in getting at the truth.

There is another untoward result of the Ramdurg movement. It has taken a communal turn. There are two parties, Brahmin and non-Brahmin. My own feeling has hitherto been that Karnataka had remained fairly free from the curse. But the cuttings and papers that have been sent to me show that the evil has gone deep enough to demand an immediate remedy. I have been asked to offer guidance in the matter. It would be presumptuous on my part to give any guidance without a proper study on the spot of the tension. I can only suggest that if there are enough Brahmins and non-Brahmins interested in removing the tension, they should tour the affected area, find out causes and deal with them. The tension is a symptom of the growing spirit of violence in the country.

ON THE TRAIN TO BOMBAY, April 24, 1939

Harijan, 29-4-1939

211. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

BOMBAY,
April 25, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

AFTER FULL DISCUSSION SARDAR AND I HAVE DECIDED THAT HE SHOULD NOT ATTEND CALCUTTA MEETING[1].

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7822. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Of the A. I. C. C. *Vide* also p. 175.

212. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
April 25, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Well, I am going from the frying pan into the fire.[1] What a test for me! You will have seen my Rajkot statement[2]. It gives you a glimpse into my mental state. To be in Bombay was like breathing fresh air—Bombay which I used to avoid.

I am on grape juice and glucose. That alone keeps the fever and many complications down. I do not know how long I shall have to prolong the fruit diet.

Your long letter is deeply interesting. You are making your way. You will conquer difficulties if you keep your health.

Ba, Navin[3] and Dhiru[4] are with me. Kanam remained with Ramdas. He was disinclined. He wept. But it was much the best. Ba herself is none too well. I expect to reach Brindaban on 3rd and Rajkot about 12th. I can come to the Frontier Province only after finishing Rajkot.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6437. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10032

213. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE CALCUTTA TRAIN,
April 25, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You won't think I have neglected you. There was no time to do anything else. My latest note[5] on Rajkot will give you a slight idea of the torture I have gone through. And it is not yet over.

I have a nasty cough which won't leave me. I am keeping otherwise fit only by restricting myself to fruit juices. No milk. I

[1] *Vide* footnote on p. 166.
[2] & [5] *Vide* pp. 168-71.
[3] & [4] Sons of Vrajlal Gandhi

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am keeping my strength remarkably well. Have no anxiety. The cough does not interfere with my sleep.

Ba is with me and so are Navin and Dhiru. They have made wonderful progress. Amtul Salaam was in Bombay. She is going to Ahmedabad.

Don't expect more from me. I am washed out. I expect you in Brindaban on 3rd May. The best route is for you to go to Patna, there cross the river and take the train at Sonepur for Bettiah.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3912. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7221

214. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"[1]

April 27, 1939

QUESTION: Had Mr. Gandhi come to Calcutta on a peace mission seeing that he had advised Sardar Patel not to come to Calcutta?

ANSWER: Yes. The reason for Sardar Patel not coming was that it was in the best interests of the country to absent himself from Calcutta.

Q. Had Mr. Gandhi found a way out of the conflicting demands?

A. I have not come with a solution in my pocket. I have no pocket. I cannot say what will be the result of my talks with Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. What is the use of forecasting when the result will be known soon?

Q. Had Mr. Gandhi heard it said that Mr. Bose was an undesirable man?

A. I never heard that. He was elected by the Congress. He could not be in the Congress so long if he was an undesirable man. I have no reason to believe that Mr. Bose is "undesirable".

Q. Has Mr. Bose shown a desire to be more accommodating since the Tripuri vote?

A. He is acting in accordance with certain principles he holds.

[1] The source reported that Gandhiji, "who was slightly ill and bore signs of fatigue", gave the interview "while travelling on the Bombay Mail between Kharagpur and Calcutta".

Q. Can the latest note—34 pages—from Mr. Bose form a basis of peace talks?

A. Thirty-four pages? I did not count them. The correspondence must form the basis of our conference.

Q. Had Pandit Nehru reported to him on his recent talks with Mr. Bose at Dhanbad?

A. Yes.

Q. Were they favourable?

A. Always. All Congress people work for peace.

Q. Would a final rupture with Mr. Bose divide the Congress?

A. Of course it would. But why should there be a rupture? I am hoping for a settlement.

Q. Has it been the case that Mr. Bose's orders have been disobeyed by subordinate Congress bodies?

A. I do not know of a single case of disobedience, and if I did, I would be greatly surprised. He is the Congress President.

Q. Was he, Mr. Gandhi, not responsible, indirectly, for this as, when during his fast, Congress Ministries threatened to resign independently of directions from Mr. Bose?

A. There could be no resignations without reference to the President. There is no question of insubordination.

Q. Has the non-existence of the supreme Congress executive, the Working Committee, for such a long time delayed Congress decisions on larger issues like Federation, formulation of its policy and war?

A. There has been some delay. The non-existence of the Committee is a cause, and delay in that case is inevitable.

Q. Is it true that during the Munich crisis the Committee was in continuous session at Delhi to decide on Congress attitude to war?

A. Yes. We discussed thoroughly our policy of non-violence.

Q. Can the present "tangle" be said to be weakening the Congress bargaining power with the British?

A. I should not say "bargaining" but "settlement".

Q. Since the Congress impasse there has been no Parliamentary Committee to control the work of the Congress Provincial Ministries. Has this led to independent action by the Ministries?

A. Not to my knowledge.

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Q. What is the present machinery to give advice to the Ministries? Do they ask for your or Sardar Patel's advice?

A. The machinery is the President. Sardar Patel's or my opinions are not asked for. I have been out of it since my retirement[1] from the Congress.

Q. Would the Central Congress be able to get the Congress Ministries to work in the same spirit under a new Parliamentary Committee, when it is formed, as of old?

A. I see no reason why they should not.

Q. Has it not been a good thing that the Provinces have regained independence of action?

A. They have not regained it. The President is there with as much power as the old Board had.

Q. Apart from purging the Congress of corruption, what would he suggest as necessary to set up the Congress as a well-knit party organization?

A. The purging of corruption is the first indispensable condition to the smooth running of the Congress. Once the corruption is banished the Congress will carry on its great work.

Q. Would it be better for the Congress to have a really democratic constitution, or to be entirely subject to a leader?

A. The Congress does not lack democracy. The Congress *is* democratic.

Mr. Gandhi then gave the following special message to the *Statesman* readers:

I can assure them all that we are not going to discuss personalities but policies. Mr. Bose discussed principles only in his correspondence with me. So far as I recollect, there were no personalities or grievances in his communications to me. But I have vivid recollections of seeing principles and policies in the letters.

Mr. Gandhi then repeated his Rajkot statement:

> Ahimsa accrues only to the courageous and so I have left Rajkot empty-handed, with body shattered and hope cremated. I have told Mr. Virawala: "I am defeated. May you win. Placate the people by giving as much as possible and inform me so as to revive the hope which I seem to have lost for the moment."
>
> Rajkot seems to have robbed me of my youth. I never knew that I was old. Now I am weighed down by the knowledge of decrepitude.

[1] In October 1934; *vide* Vol. LIX.

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I never knew what it was to lose hope. But it seems to have been cremated in Rajkot.

Mr. Gandhi went on to say:

I am broken down. I am now conscious of old age. It was useful when people said, 'Hello, 70 years — no, 17'. Now I feel myself to be even 80.

Mr. Gandhi has developed a cough and, commenting on this, said:

I am a stranger to a cough. Yet this has been persisting for 15 days.

The reporter then asked Mr. Gandhi if there was going to be a war. His reply was to the effect that the journalist would probably know more about that than he himself. However, Mr. Gandhi went on to say in his opinion the best way for peace was to disarm. [He said:]

If I could get the three great nations, Great Britain, France and the U. S. A. with a tithe of my faith in non-violence there would be no war.

He did not agree that in the event of the nations disarming, Germany and Italy would march into other countries and even take British colonies.

The people of Germany and Italy would not want war. Their leaders would realize that too. The leaders dare not go to war. Peace will reign in the universe. If I were a leading statesman in England, I would shudder at the prospect of war.

At the close of the interview, Mr. Gandhi gave the following message:

I am fighting for peace, I shall die for peace, peace in the Congress, peace in the States, peace on earth and goodwill amongst men. To set the seal upon that, if I feel the power, I am quite capable of fasting unto death to prevent Western humanity, which is getting ready to embark upon suicide on a scale hitherto unknown to the history of the world.

Referring to his talks with Mr. Bose, he said:

All India hopes and I hope that there will be no rupture.

The Statesman, 28-4-1939

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215. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
April 27, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read your letter. You should go away from Segaon for some time. Perhaps that will give you peace of mind. I hope you will not suffer the same fate as Janakiprasad did. Would you like to go to Pondicherry? Or to Ramana Maharshi? I think you should do some such thing. But if you don't feel inclined to leave the place and go anywhere, then live where you are and learn to be content.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8559. Also C.W. 7056. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

216. 'AN INSULT TO INTELLIGENCE'

The following[1] from a correspondent will be read with interest and profit by those who oppose prohibition.

Harijan, 29-4-1939

217. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 29, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA WEST

EXPECT YOU BRINDABAN THIRD. LEAVING HERE MONDAY NIGHT. YOU CAN JOIN PATNA. FAIRLY WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3914. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7223

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, who described the arguments advanced in favour of alcoholic drinks to be "an insult to intelligence", had explained that "the loss of revenues from liquor will be more than offset by increased revenue from other sources".

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218. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SODEPUR,
April 29, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

You have asked me to give you in terms of Pant's resolution the names for the Working Committee. As I have told you in my letters and my telegrams, I feel myself utterly incompetent to do so. Much has happened since Tripuri. Knowing your own views, knowing how you and most of the members differ on fundamentals, it seems to me that if I give you names, it would be an imposition on you. I have argued this position at length in my letters to you. Nothing that has happened during the three days of closest conversation between us has altered my view. Such being the case you are free to choose your own Committee. I have told you, too, that you could discuss with the ex-members the possibility of mutual approach and that nothing would please me better than to know that you were able to come together. Into what has happened since, I need not go. You and the ex-members present will make the position clear before the A.I.C.C. Only it has been a matter of the greatest grief to me that a mutual settlement has not been possible. I hope, however, that whatever is done will be done with mutual goodwill.[1]

With love.

Yours,
BAPU

A. I. C. C. File No. 1145, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] According to a report in *The Hindu*, 29-4-1939, Subhas Bose read out this letter at the A. I. C. C. meeting the same day, in the evening, before he announced his resignation.

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219. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SODEPUR,
April 29, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I hope you do not feel neglected. I have been sending you wires which you must have received.

I have carefully gone through your notes of the interview with G. It is a good account. We must now allow things to run their course. You should not mind my being discredited or misunderstood. That is no novel experience for me.

Since sending you the telegram[1] I find that my route may be changed. And I see that you could get a direct train to Bettiah from Lucknow. It is worth considering. I may send you another wire.

Sushila returns tonight. She must tell you all about my health.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3913. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7222

220. A LETTER[2]

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
April 29, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I learnt from Chi. Krishnachandra's letter that your daughter is no more and that you are grief-stricken. But why grieve over death? One who is born must die. Some will die today, some tomorrow. That is why the wise tell us that birth and death are in the hands of God. We should remember it and put up with death. But the death of the dear ones must certainly teach us to remember their virtues and also emulate them.

[1] *Vide* p. 179.

[2] This was presumably addressed to Krishnachandra's mother; *vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", p. 247.

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May God grant you peace.

Your brother,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4313; also S.G. 130

221. JAIPUR PRISONERS

The Jaipur Durbar communique on the treatment of Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj and the other prisoners reads like a laboured defence of the *status quo*. The question about Sheth Jamnalalji is simple. It is admitted that he is locked up in an out-of-the-way place[1] where the water is said to be 'heavy' according to the Indian notion. It is admitted that the place is difficult of access. He has been given no companion. Why this isolation? Is he a dangerous character? Is he an intriguer? One can understand detention as he chose to defy the ban on his entry into his own birth-place.

The authorities know that Shethji is an ideal prisoner. He believes in meticulous observance of jail discipline. It is cruel to isolate him as he has been isolated from the outside world. The greatest want of prisoners is the companionship of their equals in thought, manners and customs. I suggest that without much ado he be transferred to a place which is easily accessible and healthy and where he is allowed company.

The special pleading with reference to the satyagrahi prisoners in Lamba is much worse. They admit that the place selected for their incarceration is an old snake-infested fort. But they point out that in spite of the place being snake-infested no one has as yet been bitten by the reptiles! Must the Jaipur Durbar's conscience wait for snake-bites before it is stirred to action? It should be remembered that these prisoners were transferred to Lamba because they had the presumptuousness to hunger-strike for better treatment. The strike would have continued but for my intervention.

The much larger question of the object of satyagraha still remains unsolved. And yet it is not at all large. It is aimed at getting the Praja Sangh recognized. The Durbar have laid down the impossible condition of recognition, viz., that its officials should not be members of any political organization outside the State. Thus Sheth Jamnalalji himself could not remain

[1] Moransagar

President of the Sangh because he is connected with the National Congress. Satyagraha has been suspended at my instance[1] in Jaipur as in many other States. It would not remain suspended for ever. I entertain the hope that the States concerned will placate the advanced and awakened section of their people. And I suggest to the Jaipur Durbar that they are going the wrong way by keeping them locked up even though their satyagraha has been suspended. In any case what I must call the inhuman treatment of the prisoners, including Sheth Jamnalalji, might surely stop at once.

SODEPUR, April 30, 1939

Harijan, 6-5-1939

222. TELEGRAM TO DHARMENDRASINH[2]

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1939

H. H. THAKORESAHEB
RAJKOT

GRATEFUL YOUR WIRE[3]. NOTHING WILL PLEASE ME BETTER THAN TO FIND THAT YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE HAVE COME TO HONOURABLE UNDERSTANDING WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. MY WIFE AND I KEEPING FAIRLY WELL.

GANDHI

Harijan, 6-5-1939

[1] *Vide* pp. 75-6.

[2] This and the following item are extracted from "Rajkot Correspondence".

[3] Dated April 29, which read: "I am sincerely grateful to you for rightly advising the leaders of agitation to approach me as a Ruler together with other members representing various interests. . . . If they do so, I assure you, I and my officers will do our utmost to meet their legitimate and reasonable demands. . . . My ardent desire is to come to a settlement as early as possible. . . ."

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223. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA[1]

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1939

DURBAR VIRAWALA
RAJKOT

I SHALL NOT MISUNDERSTAND YOU AND SHALL HOLD YOU TO YOUR PROMISE TO COME HONOURABLE SETTLEMENT. ASK YOU NOT BE ANGRY DHEBARBHAI WHO IS GOOD MAN. NEITHER SARDAR NOR I HAVE ANY DESIRE INTERFERE WITH MUTUAL HONOURABLE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN HIS HIGHNESS AND PEOPLE. EXPECT REACH RAJKOT ABOUT TWELFTH UNLESS MEANWHILE YOU SEND ME GOOD NEWS.

GANDHI

Harijan, 6-5-1939

224. INTERVIEW TO SANTI ROY AND OTHERS[2]

SODEPUR,
April 30, 1939

They pointed out to Gandhiji that the political prisoners were asked not to start any agitation till April 13 pending his negotiations with the Bengal Government; the date had expired, but a large number of young men were still rotting behind prison bars.

In reply, Gandhiji said that he quite remembered that the date had expired but as Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of April 29, which read: "Am grateful for letter of twenty-sixth. My statement being of prior date kindly request not to misunderstand. Am doing utmost for settlement. . . . Dhebar going to Bombay consult Vallabhbhai. . . . brings Vallabhbhai in again in spite of your advice to keep him aloof. Most earnestly request Vallabhbhai not to interfere and delay settlement. . . ."

[2] This appeared as reported "in the course of a statement to the Press by Santi Roy, Convener of Political Prisoners' Release Day Committee, who along with Niranjan Sen and Anukul Chatterjee had met Gandhiji".

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were doing their utmost in this connection he could not do anything without consulting them. In course of the talk, says Sjt. Santi Roy, Gandhiji incidentally remarked that the attitude of the Bengal Government in this respect was "illogical".

The Hindustan Times, 10-5-1939

225. *LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH*

1.20 a. m., May 1, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Such hard *tapascharya*[1] as you desire to do is not to be undertaken in haste. He who wishes to know what ahimsa is must first learn to practise the *yamaniyamas*[2]. That is no small matter. Do all observe them with real sincerity? How many pray? How many spin and card, or show love to their neighbours? How much love do we show each other in Segaon? We learn the lessons of ahimsa and truth from such seemingly small details. My rigidity also arises from my imperfection. That is why I have so far tolerated the laxity of co-workers. Ponder over the difficult vows of *yamaniyamas*, *shama*[3], *dama*[4], etc., mentioned in the verse cited by you.

We are shortly leaving for Brindaban.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8563. Also C.W. 7049. Courtesy: Chimanlal N. Shah

[1] Self-suffering as moral discipline
[2] Rules of moral discipline and religious observances
[3] Overcoming
[4] Suppressing

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226. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

May 1, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I am sending with this a copy of Ramachandran's letter. I do not know whether you wrote to him as I had advised. If you have not written, do so now. It is your duty to pacify Ramachandran. Does Saraswati write to him? You cannot treat that family as your enemy. If you sincerely repent of your error, you will keep advancing. Your obstinacy and ego ought to lose their excessive strength and Saraswati should become mature. If you don't write to me at all, I shall keep worrying.

We are at the moment busy getting ready for the journey to Brindaban.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7359. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

227. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

CALCUTTA,
May 1, 1939

U. N. DHEBAR
RAJKOT

YOU MUST NOT LOSE HEART. YOU SHOULD RESOLUTELY FOLLOW OUT YOUR OWN PLAN TILL MY RETURN.[1]

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10187. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] Gandhiji was going to Brindaban; *vide* the two preceding items.

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228. TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR

MOTIPUR,
May 2, 1939

DHEBARBHAI, VAKIL
RAJKOT

YOUR WIRE. HAVE WIRED KALIDASBHAI CO-OPERATE WITH PARISHAD PEOPLE. YOU SHOULD YIELD UTMOST CONSISTENTLY WITH YOUR CAPACITY SHOULDER BURDEN. DOING ALL I CAN FROM HERE. IF FINAL SETTLEMENT NOT REACHED RETURNING FOR CERTAIN. WIRE BRINDABAN CHAMPARAN.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10188. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

229. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 3, 1939

DURBAR SHRI VIRAWALA
RAJKOT

YOUR WIRE[1]. MY WIRES MUST BE READ TOGETHER. AM MYSELF DEVELOPING NEW TECHNIQUE. MY DESIRE NOT TO INTERFERE DOES NOT MEAN MY REFUSAL GUIDE THOSE WHO SEEK GUIDANCE BUT I WANT DHEBARBHAI OTHER PARISHAD PEOPLE RELY ON THEIR OWN RESOURCES AND ACT INDEPENDENTLY OF ME OR SARDAR. IT WILL BE OUR TRIUMPH AND YOURS WHEN THEY DO SO BUT THEY WILL NOT DO SO IF YOU TREAT PARISHAD PEOPLE WITH CONTEMPT AND REGARD THEM AS LOAFERS. DHEBARBHAI MAY NOT BE STATE SUBJECT IN TERMS NOTIFICATION BUT IS NO OUTSIDER. MOREOVER HE REPRESENTS ME AND IS ONLY PERSON I KNOW WELL ENOUGH FOR PURPOSE. I ASK YOU TRUST HIM. HE HAS ONE

[1] Virawala's telegram of May 3 read: ". . . It has been a painful surprise to His Highness and myself to read the publication of your telegram to Dhebar stating that he should resolutely follow out his own plan till your return. This telegram is contradictory to your instructions for direct settlement between His Highness and his people . . ."

DEFECT. HE LEANS TOO MUCH ON SARDAR OR ME. SARDAR HAS TOLD HIM HE MUST REFER ONLY ME IF HE MUST. I AM TRYING MAKE HIM SELF-RELIANT. I DON'T WANT COME TO RAJKOT BUT MY NOT COMING DEPENDS UPON YOUR BEING JUST AND GENEROUS AND CARRYING OUT YOUR PROMISE TO SEE THROUGH SETTLEMENT NOT BY SLIGHTING HONOURABLE PEOPLE BUT BY TREATING THEM AS SUCH.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 10190. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar. Also C.W. 7825. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

230. SPEECH AT OPENING OF VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION, BRINDABAN[1]

May 3, 1939

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Very few sisters have come, of course, but let those who have come hear me. I have been told that a notice was sent out yesterday, in the name of Prajapati Babu[2] though not actually by him. The notice said that plague had broken out here and hence there would be no meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and no exhibition. There would also be no provision for water, and even if there was, people should not drink it. This notice was distributed by a friend here. One can only call him a friend, for how could he be called an enemy? This led to a fear that people perhaps would not turn up. They would think that the exhibition had been postponed. It was suggested to me that it might be advisable not to open the exhibition today but to postpone it till tomorrow. I said the exhibition should be opened, even if only five persons turned up. At least we have arrived. As you see, the arrangements here have been made with a large audience in mind. I had only a brief look at the exhibition. I could not see it thoroughly. Doctors have prohibited me from making public speeches. Hence, I shall not be able to say much. I was even advised not to come here. But, having come here after so many years, I could not resist the temptation of seeing you and

[1] The exhibition held at Kumar Bagh was organized by the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Present on the occasion were Kasturba Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel and Kishorelal Mashruwala, President of Gandhi Seva Sangh. The meeting was held in the morning.

[2] Prajapati Misra, Organizer, Gandhi Seva Sangh

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speaking to you. It is now many years since I first came to Champaran. Many of you were not even born at the time. Then also I had emphasized the point that you must put your spare time to some use. In those days we had selected the loom. We had no knowledge of the spinning-wheel then. We did not know how to spin. Chhotelal[1], the man through whom this work was started, was summoned from Kochrab. He was a very industrious man. He did whatever work was entrusted to him. But even for him the task was difficult. Poor Chhotelal is no more and his work has remained undone. But though his work remained incomplete, it brought good results. The atmosphere in those days was one of despair. People were frightfully lazy. And the people of Champaran were inclined to be lazy, too. They would sit round me and harass me. I would tell them that they should learn some industry. And so Chhotelal was called. But who would listen to poor Chhotelal? Chhotelal is dead, but his work remains to be done. I am reviving for you Chhotelal's sacred memory.

That is why I am inviting you all to see the exhibition. It is not a very big exhibition. I have not come out of it particularly inspired. But it is a useful thing for Champaran. Let the people of Champaran have an idea of the things that are being made. For instance, the use of innocent leather. I call that leather innocent which does not involve slaughtering of cattle. After the cattle are dead, they are split open and their bones, their flesh, their hide, everything is utilized. A *bhumihar*[2] Brahmin is carrying on this work. I was very happy to see that, when nobody knew how to make string-gut, this man had made even that and made it well. I even saw in the exhibition a tool for making *taklis*. It is a small tool. It is not a big thing. He makes six or seven *taklis* in a day and just manages to live. He may be making four annas a day. Perhaps he is satisfied with that much. But how can I be satisfied? I would like to give one anna for an hour's work. But how to provide work for all? They would have work when all of you think honestly and start wearing khadi and realize that you have to serve *Daridranarayana*. But this place is now flooded with textiles from the mills of Japan, England and Ahmedabad. You buy that cloth thinking it is cheap, while you find the khadi prepared

[1] Chhotelal Jain, who committed suicide on August 31, 1937; For an obituary, *vide* Vol. LXVI, pp. 95-7.

[2] Landless

by the poor expensive. I can then only say that you do not deserve to live in India. You call the things made by the rich cheap. My economics does not accept this. If you realize this, you must know where your duty lies. My economics consists in buying the things made by the poor people at a higher price.

There are a number of such things in the exhibition. There is paper from Nepal, the like of which you will find nowhere else in India, or in the world. No other hand-made paper can compare with it. It is like silk. It is worth seeing. You can use it for air-mail if you wish.

There is yet another thing. You can have a drink there. It is called *nira*. There are millions of palm-trees in Bihar. This is a juice extracted from those trees. It can be converted into liquor also. But *nira* is not liquor. I have a Brahmin boy living with me. He has devoted his whole life to it. It has no alcoholic content at all. Liquor can be made from almost anything. It can be made from grape juice. It can also be got from steeping rice and fermenting it. We can make *gur* from *nira* which tastes like honey. It is better than the *gur* made from sugar-cane. The sugar-cane *gur* is too sweet. This is much better. You can make crores of rupees worth of such *gur*. Cane sugar is a bad thing. It is not fit to eat. *Gur* is good. It provides salts. *Gur* is never harmful for the system. Sugar is. I recommend that you should go and see how *gur* is made from *nira*. People say that palm-*gur* is intoxicating. This is a wrong impression. I suggest you should definitely taste it. Doctors have recommended that I should take *gur*. I take this same *gur* every day. But I am never tired of it. Sugar-cane juice is very sweet. This is not so sweet. Nature has seen to it that it cannot be processed in a factory. It is prepared in Andhra Pradesh where palmyra trees grow in thousands. There are millions of these trees in Bihar, and that *gur* could be prepared here as well. We can completely eradicate our poverty through it. This is the only remedy for our poverty.

You can see the exhibition by paying the entrance fee of one anna. There is another thing worth seeing. They extract oil there. There are many such things that can be produced in villages. If we revived all those things, we would not become affluent but we would be able to get rid of our poverty. Today we do not have enough to eat. Women do not have enough clothes to wear. These things would then be available. We would not get silver and gold and money. But silver, gold and money are worth nothing compared to this wealth. The nation which

can produce things like these possesses real wealth. Such a nation alone is truly prosperous. If you visit this exhibition you will realize all this. Now that I have said this much, please take it that I have opened the exhibition.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan(Brindaban, Bihar)ka Vivaran, pp. 2-4

231. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN[1]

May 3, 1939

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have just heard Kishorelalbhai. I do not intend to comment today on the topics he has covered in his speech. Nor do I intend doing so later. I would like to dwell briefly on the four or five questions that were placed before me last evening. But even before I proceed to do this perhaps if I recapitulate here what I have written about Rajkot it will help to clarify my position today. I would like to draw your attention to a point on which Kishorelal has dwelt in the course of his speech. He has said that if we are truly non-violent, the heart of the person who considers himself our enemy will, in the face of our non-violence, gradually melt. It is in the very nature of non-violence to rush into the jaws of violence. And it is the nature of violence to rush forward to devour anything that comes its way. Non-violent people cannot practise non-violence among themselves, because they are all non-violent. The test for a non-violent person comes when he has to face a violent person. I have assumed all this from the beginning and I have been conducting various experiments in non-violence in my own life. But I cannot say that I have always been successful—successful in the sense of melting the heart of the opponent. I even doubt if I have been able to carry on these experiments exactly in accordance with my idea of non-violence. The realization that I had not been able to reach the point I had intended came to me with added force in Rajkot.

[1] The fifth session of Gandhi Seva Sangh was held at Brindaban from May 3 to 7, 1939. The speech, as summarized by Mahadev Desai, appeared under the title "The New Technique" in *Harijan*, 13-5-1939.

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I repeatedly asked myself the question why we had failed to melt Durbar Virawala's heart. The simple answer I got was that in our dealings with him we had not been wholly non-violent. Even those who considered themselves satyagrahis abused Virawala. I have myself been saying things. I could not control the tongues of all. I have no doubt been trying to control my own tongue. But I could not control the tongues of my colleagues. Many satyagrahis do not even realize that in giving tongue to such things we violate non-violence. It is my laxity that I have ignored this. Take the Ali Brothers for instance. Their tongues were sharp. I knew them intimately. Even today I can certify that there was a time when they never held back anything from me. When we were touring in connection with the Khilafat they used to tell me frankly whatever they had in their hearts. Even if they had some terrible thought they would express it to me. I still cherish many such sweet memories of them. Subsequently their opinion of my non-violence and my love for Muslims changed considerably. The bitter experiences of the later times have not diminished the sweetness of our earlier relations. They created considerable bitterness among Muslims with regard to truth and non-violence. But I have forgotten all those things. There were other colleagues too who similarly used harsh words. They said what they liked of opponents.

In short, I have not been as firm in this matter as I should have been. So long as our people did not go beyond words I paid no attention to what they said. I remained indifferent to violence in speech. Later this became a habit and I even stopped taking notice of it.

I suddenly saw a new light when I proposed to Mr. Gibson at Rajkot that the Thakore Saheb should form a Committee of his own choice. Even Mr. Gibson admitted that I had made a sporting offer. Whatever I had been doing prior to that was self-evident in my life. In trying to accomplish my purpose I even showed the British Government their duty. I pointed out that it was its duty to protect its subjects. That was the reason why I wired to the Viceroy. I did not beg for anything from the British Government. I just made them do their duty. But one great flaw in this was that I brought Government pressure to bear on the Thakore Saheb, or say, Durbar Virawala. The feeling came to me again and again that the experiment I was conducting was fraught with risks. So I went to Mr. Gibson and told him that the Thakore Saheb should form his own Committee. This was a new thing for me and for the country. I

acquired a new tool and a new method. It was like changing my house.

But even today I am not prepared to tear up the Gwyer Award. I wish to make use of it. Such is my weakness. But what am I to do? I can only follow the dictates of my heart. But, if I can summon the strength to obey the dictates of non-violence, I would tear to bits or burn the Award. I should have reassured Virawala. I should have told him: 'See, I have torn up the Gwyer Award. I shall have nothing to do with the British Government. If I have to resort to satyagraha now it will be against you. And the experiment will be my sincere effort. What would it matter even if I had to die in my attempt to convert the Rajkot authorities? As yet I have not been able to persuade myself that I do not want British help in the Rajkot matter. But this thing is boiling inside me. Now Rajkot is for me the wonderful laboratory of pure non-violence. My reason prompts me to conduct my experiment in total non-violence in that very place. Let the world say I am mad. Let people mock at me for throwing away a thing I had got with such great difficulty. My reason says that is what I should do. The heart is still not ready. This is my weakness. This means that there is still something lacking in our non-violence. That is why our experiment in Rajkot was not pure and did not succeed. The blame does not entirely lie with Virawala. Let us see what he can do when we offer pure non-violence. I cannot conduct such an experiment in pure non-violence, just sitting here in Champaran. I shall have to turn Rajkot into my laboratory. But right now my heart does not prompt me to do such a thing. This is a sign of my weakness. There is no doubt that we are making some mistake somewhere in the matter of Rajkot. We must have the courage to correct that mistake.

What applies to Rajkot applies also to the Congress. There are dissensions in the Congress, and for these too we are responsible. Those who call themselves Gandhians are not less so. I say to you once again that you should not call yourselves Gandhians. It is a meaningless label. Call yourselves votaries of non-violence. Gandhi is worthless—imperfect, a mixture of good and bad, strength and weakness, power and impotence. Let your claim therefore be that you pursue truth, are votaries of truth, you pursue non-violence, are votaries of non-violence. That claim is sufficient. The term 'Gandhian' is meaningless. Non-violence does not contain any such mixture. If you search your hearts from the point of view of non-violence, you would realize

that the responsibility of the rift within the Congress lies with us and none else. Can you truthfully say that you have followed non-violence within the Congress? Did you bare your chests to the arrows of your opponents? Did you not try to turn and shoot them in this direction and that? Did we welcome criticism from others? No. We challenged it with our tongues. We were pleased when other people criticized the critics. All this is a sign of violence. You can say that so far I had not set such a harsh test. My words, too, occasionally tend to be harsh. But the fault lies with me, not with non-violence. You can also say that you have never claimed to have followed non-violence to this extent. But this too is the fault of my method of working. I have been somewhat lax in this regard. Let us acknowledge these faults as our own and not ascribe them to non-violence. Let us not bring non-violence to ridicule for faults which are ours. Let us look upon the faults of our colleagues in the Congress as bits of straw or as dust particles and get on with them; let us see our own faults as mountains. Even if others consider us their opponents, let us not consider them so. We are as much full of violence as they are. It is the nature of a serpent to hiss. But we have taken a pledge of non-violence. We wish to conquer that propensity of ours. We assert that we shall protect, not devour, the Princes. We even talk of converting them. But I am afraid that we talk of converting them because it has become a fashion to do so. Deep in our hearts we do not believe in it. This is a sign of violence in us. Truly speaking we do not have the slightest hope that the Princes will ever be converted. We feel the same about our colleagues in the Congress. I must frankly tell you that this is a sign of violence, and it is precisely because of this that there is so much dissension in the Congress.

This is what I am constantly thinking and that is why I am trying out a new technique with Durbar Virawala. Please believe me when I say that I am not going to run away like a coward from the Rajkot problem. I am not going to let down my co-workers thus. Nothing so perverse will happen. If I do any such thing, you can take it that I have lost my reason. I have certainly grown old. But there is not as yet any evidence of mental decay. I am doing my work with great care. In the last resort we are going to fight. But we shall have to change our strategy. We shall have to revise the logistics of our forces. So I am working to strengthen the position of our co-workers in Rajkot. I have dwelt on this point at some length so that you may understand it.

I shall now say a few things about the Sangh. From what I have said you will understand the way my mind is working. I have a feeling that we shall have to retrace our steps a little. I had said[1] at Hudli that we must expand our field a little, that we should also take part in politics. But, even if we have plunged into politics, we must practise non-violence in that field too. We must be very firm in this. Don't mind if on that account only twenty members are left in place of today's two hundred. I also find that the Sangh too is not free from the faults which are in the Congress. The Congress is a big organization, the Sangh is small. The evils that are found in the Congress in a larger measure are to be found in the Sangh in a smaller measure. There are mutual jealousies, quarrels and also conceit. I do not see people working with one heart, one mind. I am not saying this from personal experience. I do not even know all the members. I do not recognize all the faces. I do not know the names of many. I do not know where each of them comes from and what work he is doing. I am saying this on the strength of the material I have received. It is a pity that Jamnalalji is not present here today. He is connected with a number of institutions. He keeps on telling me about his difficulties. Why do we have to face so many difficulties in running institutions? Why do all these faults creep in? If two hundred individuals could work with one mind, one heart, we could, without mentioning any particular worker, call any one of them and tell him, 'Go to Travancore and achieve success in the work there.' But Kishorelal today does not have the courage to say this. He has to consider the qualifications, temperament and inclination of each individual worker.

I am not saying all this to find fault with you. This speaks of the shortcomings of all of us. It seems to me that we shall have to give thought to this matter. We shall have to be more firm in the principles and in observing the rules of our institution. If this leads to a depletion in our membership, it cannot be helped. I have already stated that the strength of satyagrahis lies not in numbers but in the spirit, in other words, in God.

Hence it is that I expect every satyagrahi to have a living faith in God. A satyagrahi possesses no other strength. One can derive strength from God only if one has boundless faith in Him. How can one ever offer satyagraha without such faith in God? Anyone who says that he has no such faith in God should leave the Sangh and forget about satyagraha. I would like to ask how many of you have a living faith in the spinning-wheel.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, p. 121.

About the spinning-wheel, I have said boldly and unashamedly that it is the infallible means to swaraj. It is a unique symbol of non-violence. You may become a great expert with the spinning-wheel, but your working at it would be futile if you did not regard it as a symbol of non-violence. If we have a living faith in the spinning-wheel we shall find in it immeasurable strength. I regard the spinning-wheel as a greater symbol of non-violence than civil disobedience. In civil disobedience there is a possibility of jealousy and violence. But the spinning-wheel is faultless. Some people may make fun of it. The spinning-wheel can evoke ridicule but never violence. Even those who ply the spinning-wheel and ply it with diligence and faith do not regard it as a symbol of non-violence. Those who have entered politics do not regard it as a symbol of non-violence. They ply it as a ritual. I have been lax in this respect too. Now I am paying the price. I had expressed my faith in the spinning-wheel way back in 1920. Now 1940 is approaching. I repeat on the strength of my experience of twenty years that there is nothing so effective as the charkha for demonstrating the power of non-violence and winning swaraj. Today I have acquired knowledge also along with faith. This combination of faith and reason has strengthened my conviction. I stand by whatever I have written so far on the subject of the spinning-wheel. I would once again tell those who want to be satyagrahis but have no faith in the spinning-wheel that they should forget about satyagraha.

Prajapati Misra said that spinning-wheels are being plied in five villages. This is just a mockery. Why is not the spinning-wheel plying in every home in Champaran? I can make fun of the spinning-wheels plying in five villages, and if I so choose, I can also make you cry. There is nothing very exciting even in the exhibition here. Poor Laxmi Babu and Mathuradas are doing some spade work. But how is that going to satisfy me? Bihar has so many wonderful workers. Why is the charkha not plying in every house in Champaran? When they realize that the spinning-wheel is a thing that can give them extraordinary strength, the whole face of Bihar will be transformed. But the few workers that are there are not enough. There are thousands of women plying the charkha today—women to whom I cannot pay a wage of eight annas. They do it for their bread. I do not speak of those who do it for a living. I speak of those who will ply the spinning-wheel, considering it a symbol of non-violence. The spinning-wheel will transform the life of the individual who becomes a votary of non-violence and truth. He will render an account of his every

minute. He will consider it sinful to waste time. God alone is witness to one's thoughts. But such a man will have no useless thought in his mind. His speech will have a unique quality and everything pertaining to him will have a divinity about it.

The spinning-wheel possesses all this power. But it is not self-evident. Outwardly the spinning-wheel is a lifeless object. It acquires power from determination. Let us look at it with devotion. What is there in clay? But if a devotee shapes a lump of it into a ball and decides that Lord Shankara is residing in it, that same lump of clay can become a *kamadhenu*[1]. What is there in mere clay? Another man would just throw it away. Shankara does not reside in the clay. It is the faith that is Shankara. What is in Ramanama? What is the secret of the power it possesses today? Millions of people have uttered the name of Rama with great faith. It is the power of their devotion. Thousands of people are in the habit of repeating Ramanama. They derive no benefit out of it, because they have no devotion in their hearts. In *Kaliyuga*, even Ramanama can deceive. But the spinning-wheel can never deceive. It will at least produce yarn. I have got hundreds of people who would stand witness to the fact that even physical desire loses its edge if one sits down to spin with determination. Prabhashanker Pattani is dead. He was not a man who could have ever deceived me. He had written to me that when he sat with the spinning-wheel at night, he forgot all mundane affairs. The miracle of the spinning-wheel was revealed to him. It is another matter if he could not stick to it for good.

It was necessary to say this much in praise of the spinning-wheel because it is the most important among all the weapons that we possess. Let all of you make a resolution. That is why so much emphasis is laid on it. That is the reason why it has become so essential for the satyagraha of my conception. I wrote *Hind Swaraj* in 1909[2]. Its language may be crude but even today my pen is not prepared to polish it. I had not seen even a single spinning-wheel at the time. Not only this, I had even confused a loom with a spinning-wheel. That was exactly why I had mentioned the loom rather than the spinning-wheel in that book. But I have continued to have faith in the spinning-wheel right from those days. It has been for me a symbol of non-violence from that time on. Today I have this much strength that I can

[1] A mythical cow that was supposed to give whatever was asked of her

[2] The source has "1908"; *vide* Vol. X.

tell those who do not share this belief to quit. If those people from Travancore or Mysore or Jaipur tell me that they do not believe in such a thing, I would tell them that I cannot carry on the satyagraha with their help. They may offer satyagraha on their own responsibility, but I cannot help them.

Thus, I have presented this thing to you in a new form. Each one of us has come here to perform a *yajna* for five or six days, to purify his thoughts, and subject himself to rigorous introspection. He will tell himself that judging by the language, he gave way to anger, showed malice towards this or that person, betrayed the Sangh. Many of those who realize their errors will voluntarily remove themselves and serve the Sangh from outside, even as I am serving the Congress from outside. I claim to serve the Congress more than I did when I was a four-anna member. I have absolutely no doubt about it. Similarly let some people serve the Sangh from outside. Let those who choose to remain inside constantly examine their thoughts. All of us are probably aware that some people have got into the Sangh who have proved to be conceited and corrupt. We certainly cannot claim that everybody who has got into the Sangh has got a stamp of purity. I do hope some members of this kind will go out of their own accord. They will be serving better from outside.

Let me now come to the circular[1]. I do not wish to find fault with it. Whatever has happened has happened. Let the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh be in the Congress. Let Sardar, Rajendra Babu, etc., be in the Congress. Let other members support them. It is their business. But the Gandhi Seva Sangh as an institution should not get involved in this. This is not within the purview of the Sangh. If the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh feel called upon to interfere in political matters let them do so on their own responsibility. But even here it can only mean their carrying out the tenets of truth and non-violence. We shall no doubt face defeat if we do not remain within the limits of truth and non-violence. We cannot be party to all the

[1] The circular issued by Kishorelal Mashruwala explained that out of seven Congress Working Committee members who recommended Pattabhi Sitaramayya for the Congress Presidentship, six belonged to the Gandhi Seva Sangh and that the members realized Gandhiji's interest and involvement in the election only when he declared (*vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 359-60) that he considered Pattabhi Sitaramayya's defeat as his own. The circular reminded the members of the Sangh that it was their primary duty to stay together, sinking all differences. It also condemned the wild allegations against Vallabhbhai Patel as false and mischievous vilification, adding that Gandhiji found him absolutely irreproachable.

things that are permissible there, because, being members of the Sangh, we become trustees of truth and non-violence. We can certainly allow those members to function who enter politics carrying with them the yardstick of truth and non-violence. But the function of the Gandhi Seva Sangh is altogether different. The Sangh is not concerned with what happened at Tripuri or who voted in whose favour. That is not our field. That is the field of Sardar, or those who went to Tripuri.

So much for the circular. Let me now come to the corruption within the Congress. The best remedy for the corruption is first for us to become pure. Let us make the atmosphere as clean as we can through our personal contact, because the Congress too wants to attain independence with truth and non-violence. The Congress too is a non-violent organization and, if I can have my way, I would lay down strict conditions for it. But the Gandhi Seva Sangh is not opposed to the job of purifying the Congress. From one point of view the burden on our heads is light and also heavy. Those of us who wish to shoulder the burden of purifying the Congress may well do so. But that burden does not fall on everybody. On the other hand, our responsibility is very heavy because we have made ourselves the self-appointed trustees of non-violence. Thirteen of our members are on the Congress Working Committee. They will look after the task of purifying the Congress. If they do not, they will be proved worthless.

I shall now take up the question of the spread of Gandhian thought. Gandhian thought can hardly spread through books. Indeed it will be propagated best through being lived. Truth and non-violence are propagated in this manner. If we place a million books on one side and a living example on the other, the value of the example will be greater. Books are lifeless. I do not suggest that we should write no books at all. We may write books and also publish newspapers if we wish. But I want to suggest that they are not a necessary means for us. Intellectual growth of a satyagrahi depends on his following his principles. We go on repeating 'ahimsa', 'ahimsa' with our tongues but do nothing to sharpen our intelligence. We have become somewhat lethargic. The *Gita* says that there should be unity between mind and heart. When the mind and the heart are united, we become unconquerable. The mind acquires the power to solve all questions.

We do not become non-violent simply because we do not hit anyone. We indulge in violence through our thought and reasoning. This is not a sign of a sharp intellect. Keeping ourselves

alert is an indication of sharp intelligence. When we are faced by an opponent, we should understand his viewpoint. Let us see what Jayaprakash there is saying. There is an ocean of difference between him and me. But non-violence means that we must have the patience to listen to the opponent. This is the characteristic of non-violence. This is what is meant by rushing into the mouth of the enemy. A non-violent person tells his opponent not to trouble himself too much for he is going to him on his own. It does not mean that we should become soft. We must keep our intelligence sharp. If we can, we should reply to the arguments of our opponent. We should try to understand his arguments from his point of view, and accept whatever may be acceptable. If I try to understand the point of view of my opponent, it does not mean that I have accepted everything he has said, or that I have flattered him. If we train our mind thus, we can continue to propagate truth and non-violence all through our life. This cannot be done through a monthly or bi-monthly or quarterly. My co-workers will tell you how carelessly *Young India* used to be brought out by me. *Young India* did serve a useful purpose. In the end it just died, but satyagraha did not die. My work did not stop when *Young India* ceased publication. A satyagrahi knows that he cannot depend on external aids. Rather, he depends on inner strength. He who has faith in God will go ahead with faith in himself.

It has also been asked what we should do in the face of considerable opposition to Gandhian thought and the needless poisoning of the minds in Maharashtra. I have already answered this question. We should purify ourselves. If things are going wrong in Maharashtra, let us kill Shankarrao Deo. If things are going wrong in Karnataka, let us kill Gangadharrao. Do you agree, Shankarrao, Gangadharrao?[1] What more can I say in this matter?

I have been asked my opinion of the Aryasamaj satyagraha. After much testing I must tell you what I feel about it. What is going on in Hyderabad in the name of satyagraha is not dharma. Nor is it being conducted for the defence of dharma. There is much fraud in it. No one who believes in truth and non-violence can participate in it. I have got enough evidence. I have passed it on to Guptaji. The poor man had come to me. He is very much upset.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan(Brindaban, Bihar)ka Vivaran, pp. 7-15

[1] They nodded their heads in agreement.

232. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 4, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my letter or letters (I forget). Khan Saheb is here and will be till 7th. I leave on 8th for Rajkot *via* Benares breaking the journey for the night in Benares to see Malaviyaji. How long I shall have to be in Rajkot I do not know.

Khan Saheb told me you were happy and were doing your work.

Here it is not all village work or village atmosphere. Plenty of motors and city amenities. These jar on one. You will be surprised to know that there is no mosquito to be found in this camp. This is due not to man's effort but nature's disposition.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6438. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10033

233. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

BRINDABAN,
May 4, 1939

MY DEAR AGATHA,

This is just to tell you I have been thinking of you.

On the Federation[1], so far as I can see, it has receded into the background. If it comes, it will be an imposition. If the governing world in England really wants to part with power, much can be done. I hope to send to A. Moore[2] a longish letter in answer to his questions. I shall send you a copy.

The war is a difficult question for me to tackle. I do not know myself what advice I can give Congress.

[1] The reference is to "Federation of India" embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935.

[2] Arthur Moore, Editor, *The Statesman*

The letter[1] to Hitler has not yet formed itself. It won't be long. Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Love to all the friends.

From a photostat: G.N. 1507

234. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[2]

BRINDABAN,
May 4, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Take Mathew to Nagpur and get him admitted to David's dispensary if possible. Why need you stay in Nagpur for three months? Can't he be treated in Wardha? If [you think] it is absolutely necessary to stay, think how . . . and send me . . . at this address up to the 8th . . . and after that wire at Rajkot. . .

[*Blessings from*]
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8561. Also C.W. 7050. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

235. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

May 4, 1939

MY DEAR MATHEW,

You have become a problem. I have ask[ed][3] Munnalal to take you to Dr. David and see if you can be kept in Nagpur or whether you can be kept in Segaon or simply sent to Nagpur for treatment. You should be patient and not worry. Whatever happens has to be suffered cheerfully. If you have any suggestion of your own don't hesitate to make it.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1550

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXX, "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939.
[2] The letter is damaged at several places.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LXIX

236. SPEECH AT TEACHERS' TRAINING CAMP, BRINDABAN[1]

May 4, 1939

I should like to tell you what I saw today. First I visited the exhibition.[2] It is very good. They say in size it is one-fourth of the Tripuri exhibition. The one-fourth that I saw pleased me immensely. It does not mean that my happiness would have been four times as much if I had seen the whole exhibition. In the Tripuri exhibition, the major contribution was from the Jamia Millia of Delhi, while here they have contributed nothing. Their contribution was indeed very large. I was able to visit the exhibition today only for a few minutes. It is certainly very large. If I had a whole day I would have seen the whole of it and could have gained much. I would have seen to what point they have taken basic education, how much they have succeeded in planning education through a craft and how they correlate the craft with other subjects.

I would like you to study this exhibition. Observe everything very carefully. Let me give you only one example. We did not know that a carding-bow made from *munj* grass can be so efficient. It is so good that in some respects it is even better than the bow made of catgut. For fine carding it is excellent. Every fibre of the cotton is separated. Besides it is not harmful to health. Even a person like me whose heart has become weak can comfortably card his cotton with it. It is also nice to look at. No effort is required in plying it. One derives only pleasure. This is just an example to show what progress we can make in such small things. It is the invention of someone who has devoted all his mind and inventive genius to it.

I should like you to study and assess the exhibition from this point of view. There is no limit to the progress we can make. We are not good teachers if we are not able to develop originality in us through this kind of education. Education through a craft is the pivot of basic education. You must cultivate your creative instinct to be able to develop your mind through various

[1] The camp was organized by the All-India Talimi Sangh to prepare teachers under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

[2] This was organized by Ashadevi Aryanayakam to demonstrate the various aspects of basic education.

crafts and teach innumerable things by putting your creative genius and resourcefulness to use and discover new things.

Today we are dependent on only two crafts. Let us take these. We have found two men who could develop their minds through these crafts. That is why Ashadevi and Aryanayakam could carry on their work. We found Vinoba for the *takli*. And we have found another gentleman to show us how one can develop one's mind through cardboard-making. These two men showed us how full of possibilities the two crafts are. If you cannot do as they did you will never develop creative instinct. If such men were not there neither Zakir Saheb nor Ashadevi could have achieved anything. I would like you to see the exhibition with a view to developing creative instinct through this system of education. It is not our aim to teach industry and handicraft in the traditional way. We want to make crafts a living medium of education.

I then went to the school. I found the teacher quite intelligent. All the boys were plying *taklis*. I claim that I know the science of the *takli*, the charkha and the loom very well. Although I lack skill in working them, I know much about them. I immediately noticed that there was something wrong somewhere. Either the teacher himself did not know how to spin on the *takli* or the boys were taught wrong. I detected the flaw immediately. The boys were taking four times as long over an operation that should take half a minute. They kept on twisting the *takli* when they drew the thread. That is not the right method of drawing yarn. The yarn should get the twist as we draw it. There is no need to give any further twist. The yarn instead of becoming strong becomes useless if it is twisted even just a little more than necessary. And also one can never increase one's speed.

I also noticed a few more shortcomings which I do not mention here. I have told Nayakamji that a teacher who is not doing well in his craft should be considered useless, however intelligent he may be. However much he may have read of the science of the charkha and the loom, he is not fit to be a teacher if he cannot spin well. He cannot even become a clerk. He is utterly useless. It is our claim that the mind can be developed through a craft and that is our yardstick. That is the central point of our scheme.

I will therefore first see the quality of the teacher's yarn—whether it is even or not, whether it is strong or not. If it has these qualities I will say that he is a good artisan but if his

proficiency in the craft does not help him to develop his intellect, he will not have originality. He will go on plying the charkha and the loom for generations and never make any improvements. That has been the history of India. That is so because there was no correlation between the hand and the mind. Artisans never paid any attention to the improvement of their tools and methods of work and those who did mental work were not concerned with the crafts. So both lost their creative instinct.

I will test the intelligence of the teachers also from this point of view. They should learn their craft in this way and take pleasure in it. The scheme will come to naught if teachers do not train themselves in this manner. If it gets known that the scheme has failed in this manner, the people will laugh at them. However, that is not what I am afraid of. I will be satisfied only when I see that things are happening as I had wished. If they are not, then even if the whole world praises us for our work I will not be deceived. I am feeling apprehensive although the basic education scheme is much admired today. The teachers working under the scheme are feeling jubilant. But maybe we are deceiving ourselves. I should like you to learn the art of gaining knowledge through a craft. That art and knowledge is a rare thing. You must utilize your knowledge of B.A. and M. A. degrees to this end. It should be your duty to make education, which is a dull and drab affair today, a lively and fascinating subject. It is my claim that by the method I have suggested a rare enlightenment will be produced.

To me intellectual education and bookish education are not the same thing. In my opinion a man whose intellect is not correlated with his hands is not intelligent. Would you call a man an authority on the Vedas if he has memorized words from the Vedas and has learnt by heart its commentaries? What I would ask is how far he has assimilated the real meaning of the Vedas. His conduct will be an indication. I have set before you the main idea behind this scheme.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-7-1939

237. TELEGRAM TO K. P. PILLAI

May 5, 1939

KAINIKKARA PADMANABHA PILLAI
KRISHNA VILAS, KUNNUMKUZHI
TRIVANDRUM

REACHING RAJKOT TWELFTH. CAN MEET RAJKOT AFTER TWELFTH.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

238. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN–I

May 5, 1939

Here are some questions received from Annada Babu. He says he is asking the questions not for himself but for others.

QUESTION: Your statement[1] after Subhas Babu's election has somewhat changed the situation. Why did you not issue any statement at the time of the election? Some people are of the view that the present situation would not have arisen if you had issued a statement at the time of the election.

ANSWER: It is true that I did not issue any statement. According to Annada Babu that has changed the situation. What he means is that the situation would not have taken the turn it did if I had issued a statement earlier. But the statement issued by Sardar Vallabhbhai and others contained a small sentence which suggested that I too was connected with it. Moreover, there was no particular occasion then. I saw no need to issue a statement at the time. It became necessary subsequently. It is a long story. I shall not go into it. It was not a question of my having been sluggish. Nor was there any mistake in explaining the situation to the country. I had conveyed to Subhas Babu what I felt. That is the way I work. In the end all that remains is for me to put up with any misunderstanding that may have arisen. If there are any more questions from anyone on the point they will be welcome.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 359-60.

CWMG - LXIX

Some people are under the impression that you were not in favour of the Pant resolution. What was your reaction when you first knew about the resolution? Why did you write to Subhas Babu that the more you thought of it the more you disliked it? Kindly explain.

First of all, you are all aware that I was confined to bed at the time. It is not my way to interfere in something with which I am not concerned. That is why I remained indifferent to the developments at Tripuri. So much so that I even avoided reading the newspapers in those days. My mind was preoccupied with Rajkot. Someone reported to me that Pantji intended to move some such resolution. I understood at the time that the resolution would express confidence in the old Working Committee. I stated that while expression of confidence was all right I would have done something more if I was there. I had said even at Wardha that if they had the courage they should bring a motion of no-confidence against Subhas Babu. It would have been a straightforward thing to do. If the delegates to the Congress felt that they had made a mistake in electing Subhas Babu, this was the only civilized way open to them. But probably the atmosphere was not quite favourable then. I had a feeling that Subhas Babu would form his own Working Committee. But that did not happen. Then it was that the Pant resolution came up. All I heard was that the resolution expressed confidence in the people who had gone out. I said if that was all there was in the resolution it was all right. But I had nothing to do with it. I saw the resolution later. Then followed an exchange of letters with Subhas Babu. The letter to which Annada Babu has referred is not before you. When I read the Pant resolution, I found that it contained a suggestion that Subhas Babu should be guided by me. I thoroughly disapproved of the idea. So much so that I refused to do anything of the kind. I stuck to my refusal to the end. It is possible that this may lead to some misunderstanding. I shall have to put up with it. How can I do a thing which I consider wrong? I told him that he should form a Working Committee of his choice, formulate a programme and implement it. I would clear the atmosphere if I could. If not, the work would go on and gradually we would be able to change the atmosphere. That is why when at Calcutta I was asked to name the Working Committee I found the idea repugnant. There I had some material, in view of which I felt it would be wrong to do so. Nobody had such material at Tripuri. Subsequent exchange of letters further confirmed me in my opinion. Later

on I also came to know about the ill-feeling generated. How could I announce any names under those conditions? It would be subjecting Subhas Babu to coercion. Can the ship of the nation sail smoothly if I subject Subhas Babu to coercion? It would be like sinking it. I said I would not do it. I also said that if they wanted to have the old members of the Working Committee back, they should consult among themselves and if they were agreeable both sides could work together. But I would not be party to imposing any names on Subhas Babu. The more I think about that resolution, the more I dislike it. I cannot serve the nation according to the terms of that resolution. However much anyone may insist, I just cannot choose names for the Working Committee. My doing so would be coercion against Subhas Babu. And coercion is violence. How can I resort to it? I have told you of my feelings as to the Pant resolution. Even if people think that I have served the country well it surely does not give me the right to use coercion against anybody!

What was the difficulty in giving the names when Subhas Babu himself had agreed to accept any names you suggested?

What the question means is that through the Pant resolution Tripuri ordered me to do a certain thing and ordered Subhas Babu to do a certain thing. Subhas Babu was willing to do as ordered, then why did I defy it? Where was the question of coercion in giving the names for the Working Committee in pursuance of that order? Seemingly the argument is attractive. But it is fallacious. Supposing somebody were to come to me tomorrow and say that I had been ordered to abuse him and hit him, should I then start indiscriminately to abuse him and hit him as I please? When there was such a gulf between me and Subhas Babu, would it have been civilized behaviour to inflict some names on him merely by virtue of that right? Having a right surely does not mean that I should exercise that right in utter disregard of my sense of proportion. If someone were to behave with me thus I would not like it. Supposing tomorrow I am given the right to abuse everybody, would it then become my duty to exercise that right? There is a distinction between right and duty. The exercise of right depends on one's sense of duty. It is my duty to follow dharma. I do not think only of my own importance. It is of no consequence to me. I think in terms of the nation. I do what I consider my duty.

Cannot your correspondence with Subhas Babu be published? If not, will you please explain why?

At one stage it had been decided to publish the correspondence. Later on, after Jawaharlal's arrival it was decided to withhold the publication. It was also decided that I should not issue any statement. It would not be in the interest of the nation. In this my attitude was that Subhas Babu should do only what suited him. This should be our only attitude if we are non-violent. It is none of our concern to publish any correspondence. We should withhold the publication as long as we can. It becomes our duty to publish the correspondence only when someone does something contrary to what he has written in a letter. There is no such question here. That is why I have left it to Subhas Babu. If any misunderstanding arises from the correspondence not being published, it will not bring any particular harm. The other person will publish it when he thinks it is necessary to do so. When it becomes ancient history, it will be abandoned.

Let me now come to Shankar Rao's two questions. I shall take up the second question first because it is related to the same topic.

You have mentioned in one of the letters to Subhas Babu that there are fundamental differences between you and him. What are those differences?

It would be better for me not to mention the correspondence between us. That would make the explanation too long. I shall explain the thing briefly. I think he still holds the view he had expressed at Jalpaiguri.[1] I saw that I could not associate myself with any part of it. It includes giving an ultimatum to the Government. He holds that we possess enough resources for a fight. I am totally opposed to his views. Today we possess no resources for a fight. Today the whole atmosphere is so steeped in violence that I cannot think of fighting. How did the violent incidents take place at Ranpur in Orissa and Ramdurg in Karnataka? Pantji could not control things at Kanpur. We have no control at all over the Shias and Sunnis in Lucknow. There is no limit to communal strife. We cannot carry on by controlling just a handful of Congressmen. It had ever been our boast that the whole country was with us. Today we are not able to control more than a handful of people. Workers and peasants too were supposed to be entirely with the

[1] In *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. II, p. 106, Pattabhi Sitaramayya explains: "At Jalpaiguri, the Bengal delegates met and passed [a] resolution asking that six months' notice be given to Britain and mass [civil] disobedience should be embarked upon."

Congress. We do not have the same hold among the peasants of Bihar as we used to. Is this a situation favourable for starting a struggle? There is a difference between the work of the Congress and that of the people who believe in violence. If today I am asked to start the 'Dandi March', I have not the courage to do so. How can we do anything without the workers and peasants? The country belongs only to them. I am not equipped to issue an ultimatum to the Government. The country would only be exposed to ridicule. But Subhas Babu thinks that we are ready for the struggle. This is a great and fundamental difference of opinion. We differ in our ideas of the resources needed for the struggle. My conception of satyagraha is not his. Is this difference of opinion not fundamental? I cannot give out all these things to the Press right now, because it would not do any good. I shall write about it when the time comes. So much for the fundamental differences. It has been covered in our letters also. I have put the matter to you simply. It has nothing to do with personal differences.

The same is true of the corruption in the Congress. There the difference between me and him is one of degree. He also agrees that there is corruption. But he feels that it is not of such proportion as to cause worry. But in my view, we shall not be able to do anything so long as this corruption persists. For me there is no difference between civil disobedience and office-acceptance. Both are part of the satyagraha movement. Thus my point of view and assessment of the situation are altogether different from his. He does not mean the same thing by satyagraha as I do. Hence, sometimes even the difference of degree becomes a fundamental difference. I have become so impatient of the corruption prevailing in the Congress that I should not hesitate to bury the organization if the corruption cannot be removed. In a non-violent organization there can be no place for some of the things that pass in a violent organization. The example of a violent war cannot apply here. Now you will have understood what I mean by fundamental differences.

Are not your differences with the socialists and Jawaharlalji also fundamental? Would you take up a similar attitude with regard to them?

No. My differences with the socialists are of a different kind. Do not confuse the two. They differ with Subhas Babu on the question of giving an ultimatum to the Government. I do not know who exactly supports him on the point. That is why in

spite of my having sharp and even fundamental differences with the socialists my attitude towards them is different. Moreover, we cannot put the socialists and Jawaharlal in the same category. Jawaharlal does not lend his name to any socialist group. He believes in socialism. He mixes with the socialists and consults them. But there is considerable difference between their methods of work. The differences between me and the socialists are widely known. I believe in change of heart and in working for it. They do not. They make fun of the spinning-wheel. But even so the socialists are coming nearer to me every day. Or, you may say that I am moving nearer to them. Or, that we are moving nearer to each other. I cannot say how long it will continue. It is quite likely that one day our ways will part. The same thing happened with Subhas Babu. The Jalpaiguri resolution brought our differences to the fore. There are certainly differences between Jawaharlal and me. But they are not significant. Without him I feel myself a cripple. He also feels more or less the same way. Our hearts are one. This intimate relationship between us has not started with politics. It is very much older and deeper. We shall leave it at that.

I shall come now to Gangadharrao's question.

The socialists say that while you are tolerant and liberal, we others are intolerant and narrow-minded. For instance you might be prepared to take them on the Working Committee but we would not agree to it. What is the reason for this?

How can I say? How can I answer that? You should search your own hearts for the reason. I can only say that in this matter you must follow me. You must be as gentle of speech as I am. The socialists come to me frowning, but they leave smiling. This does not mean that I do not express to them my differences with them. I tell them frankly what is in my heart. I do not flatter them, but try to enter their hearts. I have faith in their honesty. I try to understand their point of view. I find time to talk to them. You should treat them with the same courtesy. I can go so far to help you.

Now one more question remains. But it is very important. Other things are of only passing importance. You are all in Gandhi Seva Sangh. I have read its constitution. It contains many things. You believe in certain principles. If the question Annada raised had been raised on the Congress platform it would have been a different matter. But when it is raised on the Sangh platform I feel a little grieved. Why should you

entertain such doubts? The differences between me and Subhas Babu are of a passing nature. But if this leads to bad blood between us, the country will be ruined.

Differences of opinion should never lead to bitterness. You are all believers in religious tolerance. I would suggest that you must broaden the definition of religious tolerance. We must also include in it the moderates and the radicals. We must see equality between the moderates and the radicals. We should have respect even for those who call themselves radicals. We must look at the views of the radicals from their angle and those of the moderates from theirs. We should see our dharma with our eyes and those of others with theirs. This is religious tolerance. This means that we must emphasize the points on which there is agreement between us. We should not stress the points of difference. Just because I respect Islam and Christianity I do not become a Muslim or a Christian. What I mean to say is that I respect these religions as much as I respect my own religion. But I would not be converted to either Islam or Christianity. What is the sense in my reading the Koran or the Bible, if I remain intolerant? This is not the correct meaning of the expression 'religious tolerance'. In politics too let us take our differences in the same light. Let us regard the socialists too in the same way. If we take this attitude our differences would be only temporary and we would try to end the quarrels as far as possible. If we do not do so, we shall become narrow-minded. We shall get entangled in small quarrels. Man shapes himself after the dharma he follows. If we forget larger issues and remember only the small points which cause differences, the country will be completely ruined.

Why is it so difficult to discover the points of agreement? The royal road of non-violence consists of mutual trust and willingness to understand another's point of view with an unprejudiced mind. In this connection I take up once again the matter of that circular[1]. I have read it again. The central point in it is the same. The central point is the Sardar. Many people have a feeling that the Sardar does not work properly. Deep down in their hearts they feel that he has been unfair in the cases of Nariman, Khare and Subhas. But they should frankly express themselves. This is the inviolable dharma of the votaries of ahimsa. This is our dharma in relation to the whole world. If we feel distrust or anger for anybody, it is our duty to go straight to that person and understand his point of view. We should remember

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 198.

two statements from the Bible. In the matter of morality the word of the Bible or any other scripture should be considered as authentic as that of the Vedas. One of these statements is: "Agree with thine adversary quickly"[1] and the other statement is : "Be ye angry, and sin not : let not the sun go down upon your wrath"[2]. To me these utterances are as precious as anything in the Vedas. This is the very root of ahimsa. Indeed ahimsa has to rush into the mouth of *himsa*. If you feel that the Sardar has been unfair to Subhas Babu, unfair to Nariman and unfair to Khare, let me say that the blame for the Khare affair and the Nariman affair lies with me. I am not saying this to protect the Sardar. I am making a statement of fact. But it is now irrelevant. I call myself a seeker of truth, a speaker of truth and a satyagrahi. I will not therefore deliberately give support to those resorting to injustice. But if you have anything against the Sardar in your hearts, you should go and speak to him. If you are not satisfied with his explanation or if there is still something rankling in your heart, it becomes your duty to relieve the Sardar from the Sangh. Thereby he would not cease to belong to the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I freed myself from the Congress and continued to serve the Congress. Your relieving the Sardar from the Sangh would not mean that you have become his enemies or he has become your enemy.

What I say of the Sardar I say of everyone. We have Appa Patwardhan here. He is a great mathematician. With the help of mathematics he can explain the mechanism of the charkha in great detail. He has faith in the charkha, he believes in khadi and ahimsa. But supposing he begins to have doubts, he loses confidence in the honesty of the members, must he then continue in the Sangh? Must he necessarily cease to serve like other members of the Sangh simply because he is no longer a member? Or because he cannot be a member of the Sangh, does it mean that he is worse than the rest of us? But when there is mutual distrust there cannot be any Sangh. Only so long as we honestly believe that no one belonging to the Sangh can deliberately act improperly will our path be easy. As soon as a doubt arises in our heart we must seek mutual explanations. I do not wish to suggest that those who thus suspect the Sardar are bad while the Sardar is good. I would never utter such a thing. I have merely indicated the way. The Sardar himself

[1] *St. Matthew*, v. 25
[2] *Ephesians*, iv. 26

has been saying that if there are any suspicions concerning him he would not like to remain in the Sangh. You may be aware that a few days ago there was a heated exchange of words between the Sardar and Jamnalalji. Jamnalalji said he would leave the Sangh. The Sardar said Jamnalalji had created the Sangh. Why should he leave? Rather, he himself would leave. Then both of them wanted to be relieved assuring they would continue to work for the Sangh. But neither of them left because at heart they had nothing against each other. Whatever misunderstanding was there, was cleared. There was no question of bad blood. Similarly the Sardar is seeking to be relieved today. If there is even the slightest suspicion concerning him in our hearts we must drive it out. If a large number of people have suspicions about him he must go out.

But there should not be a single person who has distrust about any member. These things do not seem very important so long as they are limited in extent. But if they become widespread the Sangh will be destroyed. Then the conclusion to be drawn will be that in the present age no organization of satyagrahis and votaries of ahimsa can be formed. But it is my claim that it is very easy to organize those who believe in truth. In my life I have made special attempts to make a collective dharma of truth and non-violence. But if distrust becomes widespread in our organization, if, even at the end of fifty years, I have to confess that the believers in truth and non-violence cannot be brought together as an organization; then I shall declare it—confess it shamelessly — and say that after fifty years I have come to the conclusion that the unique idea I had developed in my life cannot be worked through an organization, that it is not capable of being organized. Then the Sangh will have to be discontinued. But today I have hope in my heart. I consider it my supreme dharma to see truth and non-violence organized.

Now I come to Deo's first question. It is the principal question.

> In what way are the constructive programme and non-violence closely related? Kindly explain.

If the constructive programme is not closely related to non-violence, what else can be? Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, prohibition and the fourth is charkha. The relation of the first three items with non-violence is very clear. How can anyone who believes in non-violence regard anybody as untouchable even for a moment? How can he allow his mind to degenerate

by taking alcohol? How can he have feelings of hostility against the Muslims or any other religious group? There cannot be any mass satyagraha unless all this is taken for granted. This is true for me and for Subhas Babu. Even Subhas Babu cannot start a satyagraha unless these conditions are fulfilled.

Now for the charkha. To me the charkha is the symbol of non-violence. As I have already said, its basis is dedication. The same is true of Ramanama. Ramanama has no independent power. It is not a quinine pill, which has a power of its own. One may or may not trust that power. It is as effective when A has malaria as when B has it. It destroys malaria germs wherever they may be. Ramanama has no such independent power. A *mantra* acquires power through dedication. *Gayatri* is a *mantra* for me. I have willed *moksha* through it. For a Muslim his *kalma* is the *mantra*. There is a great difference in a Muslim reading *kalma* and my doing so. When a Muslim reads *kalma* he becomes a different man, because he has willed his *moksha* through it.

The charkha has no independent power that will give you swaraj. But if I am resolved that I shall learn the lessons of non-violence through charkha and secure swaraj through it, it becomes for me a tangible means for attaining swaraj. The place that Gandhi Seva Sangh has given to the charkha is not merely to provide a little money to the poor. What is the economic necessity of having mass spinning for half an hour? And where is the need for silence? After all, how much are you going to spin in half an hour? The nation resolved in 1920 to attain swaraj through non-violent means. We have filled the charkha with the power of that resolve. Since then this process has been continuing. Impelled by that resolve we ply the charkha here. The charkha is thus a symbol of the resolve of all of us — Hindu and Muslim, rich and poor, young and old. What closer relation can I point out? So long as every house does not have a charkha, so long as there is not total prohibition, so long as there is no Hindu-Muslim unity and complete removal of untouchability we cannot have the mass satyagraha which Subhas Babu wants and which I also want. Till then we cannot be fit for civil disobedience.

The right of civil disobedience will come only when we have learnt willingly to obey the laws we ourselves have created. Today I do not feel like telling Deo to go and offer satyagraha at Kolhapur, or telling Ramachandran and Radhakrishna to start satyagraha in Travancore and Jaipur. Two months ago I was willing to give them the permission. Things which did not appear

to me ugly two months ago appear ugly to me now. That was why I had given permission to Jamnalalji. But certain things to me have assumed today a greater importance and greater value.

I discovered these things in the laboratory of Rajkot. The great strength I acquired through that experiment brought very happy consequences. I can make you laugh by describing things that happened at Rajkot. I am drinking deep the elixir of the strength I acquired at Rajkot. I am beginning to gain control over the atmosphere. My task is becoming easier. I cannot get work out of many people, because I have become more strict. But what does it matter if I can only find five persons at Rajkot? I shall complete the work with their help. If there are five persons, I can start my campaign only with them. I had said in 1920 that we could start the work even if there was only one true satyagrahi available, and we would definitely be victorious. Probably Vallabhbhai will testify to this. It is my endeavour to become such a satyagrahi.

When the question of the Rowlatt Act arose I said that there was a way out, but that I could not all by myself do anything. For I was an imperfect satyagrahi. I might be able to do something if some people joined me. Then Shankerlal came, Horniman, Sarojini, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Umar Sobhani — the poor man is dead now—all came. I got support from all these people. It was such a conglomeration — but it awakened India and added to my strength. I want warmth and help from everyone. In trying to get co-operation from all and organizing them I increase my own strength. My power of introspection is increasing. I am a very selfish person. I do not merely watch you when I give you time. I place much value on my time. If I feel that by giving you time I would not be bringing some benefit to myself I would not be doing any such suicidal thing. I give you time because I find that I stand to gain something by doing so. It is of no consequence to me whether you gain something or not. What I am concerned with is whether I gain anything. I see if I am not heading for a downfall. I do not give you time in order to entice you. I only increase my strength. And my strength has increased that way. I have reached the age of seventy years. But my powers have not dimmed. I realize my responsibility. I would keep my vow, whatever it may be. What does it matter if I am left alone? I did the same thing in the Transvaal. I had taken a vow that I would give a fight to the Transvaal Government even if I was the only one to do so and

win. The concept of satyagraha was not even born yet. Millions of people can thus be organized by a mere act of will. I have countless proofs of this. What happened when we decided to have the hartal[1] on April 6? We had not organized anything. But people fasted and responded to the call of hartal throughout the length and breadth of the country. That was the beginning of swaraj for the country. That task was accomplished by sheer determination. But because of lack of training in constructive work it could not be continued. So long as you do not value the constructive programme and are not convinced that civil disobedience cannot be carried on without it, you will ever be disappointed. The constructive programme may take time but there is no other way.

We cannot make satyagraha complete without the constructive programme. An atmosphere of non-violence cannot be created without it. This is the only way of my working. That is why when Surendra went to Gujarat I told him that if nobody wanted his services, if nobody came to him he should think of the charkha and spin for all the twenty-four hours. If we did it with a resolute mind that alone would be an act of service. I have absolutely no doubt about it. My conviction is becoming stronger and stronger day by day.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan(Brindaban, Bihar)ka Vivaran, pp. 30-40

239. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

BRINDABAN,
May 6, 1939

SUBHAS BOSE
CALCUTTA

RELEASE CORRESPONDENCE. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindu, 13-5-1939

[1] In 1919, against the Rowlatt Bill; *vide* Vol. XV.

240. *ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN–II*

May 6, 1939

I have here some slips which the President has passed on to me. One of them is from Appasaheb Patwardhan. I shall first deal with his question.

QUESTION: In what way can the members try to put into practice the principle of a living wage?[1]

ANSWER: There is no harm in adopting any means which is morally proper. One individual may take to carpentry for a living. He can earn Rs. 15 from this work. Or, he can take to carding or tailoring. A member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh would choose only those occupations which are available to thousands of people earning their livelihood by doing manual work. But he will not work merely to earn his livelihood. He is aware of the hardships people have to undergo while earning their livelihood. But as far as he himself is concerned, as he earns his livelihood he also renders some service. Apart from these occupations, members can also supplement their income through teaching. Anyone who requires more and who also has Appa's knowledge of mathematics can even become a professor[2]. But these are exceptions as far as I am concerned. I would always prefer manual work for a livelihood.

I am either unable to understand your theory of trusteeship or my reason cannot grasp it. Will you kindly explain it?

It is the same thing whether you are unable to understand it or your reason does not accept it. How can I explain such an important principle in a few minutes? Still I shall try to explain it in brief. Just imagine that I have a crore of rupees in my possession. I can either squander the amount in dissipation or take up the attitude that the money does not belong to me, that I do not own it, that it is a bequest, that it has been put in my possession by God and that only so much of it is mine as

[1] According to the source Gandhiji misunderstood the question and interpreted "living wage" as work for a living.

[2] Gandhiji has used the English term.

is enough for my requirements. My requirements also should be like those of the millions. My requirements cannot be greater because I happen to be the son of a rich man. I cannot spend the money on my pleasures. The man who takes for himself only enough to satisfy the needs customary in his society and spends the rest for social service becomes a trustee.

Ever since the idea of socialism became popular in India, we have been confronted with the question as to what our attitude should be towards the Princes and millionaires. The socialists say that the Princes and the millionaires should be done away with, that all must become workers. They advocate confiscation of the properties of all these people and say that they should be given the same wages as everyone else — from Rs. 5 to eight annas a day or Rs. 15 a month. So much for what the socialists say. We too assert that the rich are not the owners of their wealth whereas the labourer is the owner of his labour. He is, therefore, from our point of view, richer than the rich. A zamindar can be recognized as the owner of one, two or ten *bighas* of land. That is to say, of as much as may be necessary for his livelihood. We also want that his wages should not be higher than those of the labourer, that he should maintain himself on eight annas a day and use the rest of his wealth for the welfare of society. But we would not take away his property by force. This is the most important point. We also wish that the Princes and the millionaires too should do manual work and maintain themselves on eight annas a day, considering the rest of their property as national trust.

At this point it may be asked as to how many trustees of this type one can really find. As a matter of fact, such a question should not arise at all. It is not directly related to our theory. There may be just one such trustee or there may be none at all. Why should we worry about it? We should have the faith that we can, without violence or with so little violence that it can hardly be called violence, create such a feeling among the rich. We should act in that faith. That is sufficient for us. We should demonstrate through our endeavour that we can end economic disparity with the help of non-violence. Only those who have no faith in non-violence can ask how many trustees of this kind can be found.

You may say that such a thing can never happen. You may consider it as something not in keeping with human nature. But I cannot believe that you are not able to understand it or that your reason cannot grasp it.

I fully endorse your views about varnadharma. But putting it into practice is a really complicated matter. Will you please elucidate?

Today castes have become mongrelized. Varnas have disappeared. In such a situation how should those believing in the varnas proceed? This is what this question implies. Today there is only one varna. Call it the Shudra varna. We cannot say Atishudra since we do not believe in untouchability. We do not believe in a fifth varna. Hence only the fourth varna, that is, Shudra is left. Let all of us consider that we are Shudras. Then there will be no feeling of high or low left. Envy and discrimination will automatically disappear. This is the only thing that would be fitting in the prevailing atmosphere. Brahmins are a rarity these days. Who possesses learning which is unique and will make for the welfare of the world? And where is the man who will expect nothing for that learning? As for the Kshatriyas there are none left in India. If there had been any, the country would not have lost its freedom. India would not remain in her present condition if great learning and great valour could be found here. So far as the Vaishyas are concerned, Vaishyadharma is a varnadharma. It is not merely an occupation to earn money. It is a duty, not a right. They should use their wealth for the benefit of society. Many of the occupations which the Banias follow are immoral. Earning too much money is also immoral. Many of these occupations cannot be included in varnadharma. This means that today even the Vaishyas are not there. Only some money-grubbing professional people are left. Three varnas have thus passed out. That leaves us the Shudras. They possess no learning. They consider themselves slaves. They do not serve with knowledge. That is to say, there are not really even Shudras left in India. In other words, we cannot say that even one of the four varnas is still extant. Even so, since we believe in varnadharma, let us accept the dharma of service. Let us adopt Shudradharma. This does not mean that we should discard learning. We should acquire as much learning as we should. We should acquire as much valour, that is, fearlessness as we can. We must develop commerce and industries to the greatest possible extent. If we do all these things out of a sense of service and devotion, true Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas may be born amongst us. Then there would be no feeling of high or low among them. If we do something like this something may happen in future. When such varnadharma prevails, all the bickerings that go on in the name

of communism, socialism, Congressism, Gandhism, casteism, etc., would be over. Now there are a few questions from Balubhai.

When Shri Thakar and I started village uplift work, Gandhiji had laid down an important condition, that the people of the area we want to serve should furnish us free accommodation as a proof of their desire for our service. Now, I would go further and lay down the condition that we should go only to those villages where people are eager for village reforms and, when the time comes, the village leaders are prepared to do physical work and spend money from their own pockets. Where the village leaders are not co-operative, no improvement is possible—no matter how long the village workers stay there. I would like to know how far this opinion of mine is valid.

There are many other social workers like Balubhai and Thakar in Maharashtra. They were very optimistic when they first started work. But now they say that however much they work, so much poison has spread there that persons wearing Gandhi caps are looked upon with contempt. Even the services of the people wearing Gandhi caps are forsaken. It is possible to feel disheartened under these circumstances. Many years ago Balubhai and Thakar had come to consult me before starting their work. I had suggested to them that one test of whether or not the villagers were keen about their services would be that they should at least provide the material for building a hut. Now Balubhai feels that this condition is not enough. He suggests that some more conditions should be laid down. But I am not prepared to go beyond this. This condition does not lay down a limit. If the village people also give us food, why should there be any objection from my side? I have only suggested the minimum condition we should lay down. And we must consider it the maximum. There is no need to go beyond this.

The same thing happened to me at Sevagaon. I asked the people in the village whether I should shift to their village. Land was provided by Jamnalalji. Our people are very courteous. They talked to me very respectfully. But they said whatever they had to say. An old man came to me and said: "You can come to Sevagaon. You will be doing us an honour. But we shall not allow the untouchables to enter the temples. You should not expect any such thing from us." Despite this I went there and have stayed there. If the people fulfil our one condition and give us some place to stay we should not feel disheartened.

How long can poison last? The newspapers say all sorts of things about the Gandhians, about me and about the Sardar. If we are as they represent us, then they are right in saying what

they do. We must then confess everything. Why should they accept our services if we are really that bad? They would not accept even medicine from our hands. They would be having a lurking fear that we might give them poison along with the medicine. If there is an unworthy motive in our giving them medicine they can refuse to have it saying they would rather die. If someone comes to serve me but harbours a secret wish to kill me in the end I would not trust such a man and tell him so. If people really have such suspicions about us, we must remove them by dedicated service. We must create confidence among the people that our intention is only to serve, and we mean no harm to them. If we turn back in disappointment in the face of their protests, then we are not giving them even a chance to test our *bona fides*. The test for us would be only when we persist in our work. If we stick on even when they have burnt down our hut, then the wrong impression about us will be removed. They will relent when they see that we are not perturbed even when they burn our hut, beat us, abuse us or stop our water.

The newspapers are publishing all sorts of things about us; but why should we feel ashamed? Yes, we should feel ashamed of whatever truth there may be in those reports, and should try to rid ourselves of the blemishes. If we are not as evil as they paint us, why should we be bothered? And, why should we be afraid of confessing to anything evil that may be in us? If the *Vividhavritta*[1] reports that a particular person is a drunkard or this or that, whatever truth there may be in the report should be admitted. The person concerned should acknowledge that he does take a stealthy drink at night, and occasionally indulges in sensuous pleasures. If we admit our faults and know that they exist, there is a chance of our correcting ourselves. We must tell the people that we have certain faults in us, and would gradually overcome them. Escaping from a situation can never be part of our code of behaviour. That is not the way a satyagrahi can follow his duty. If our faith is complete, there is no reason to despair.

Now you may ask what you should do about a livelihood while you are staying in the villages. Appa had asked the same question. You should do manual work. You can sweep the approaches to the village or do some other things, and maintain

[1] Marathi weekly published from Bombay

yourself on the few pice you may earn. If you get foodgrains in lieu of money, you should manage with that. You may not always get money from the Gandhi Seva Sangh. What does it matter if your body is ruined? One who has determination will face any hardships that may come his way and this will bring him hope out of despair.

The next question is from Achyut Deshpande.

When a small clan in a Princely State claiming the right of conquest or kinship with the ruler not only opposes the people's fight for justice but helps the ruler in crushing such a movement, even violently attacking those who participate in the movement, the people come to have the same attitude towards it as towards the ruler. Is this not natural? What can one do to heal the breach thus caused between two sections of the population? Would it not be practicable for a time to ignore this problem? Is it wrong to think that the problem would be more easily solved through being ignored?

I have not been able to understand this question fully. But the answer to what little I have understood has been furnished in the discussion we have been having for the past two or three days. This precisely is the reason why I have suspended the campaign in the States and why I do not have the courage to start a countrywide movement. Where there is a danger of ill will or violence being generated it is our duty not to start any agitation. For it will not last. It will create misunderstandings. People will stray into erroneous paths. It will not be enough for us ourselves to be non-violent.

Take an example. I stay at Segaon. Suppose there is a snake there. I will have to remove that snake from there and confine it to a place where people will not feel endangered by it. Or, suppose there is an outbreak of the plague somewhere. I go there to help. For myself I depend on the protection of God. But should I, for that matter, go to the people without bathing or washing myself? There is the risk of people catching the contagion. My non-violent duty consists in my going to others only after washing myself. Then suppose smallpox breaks out in a village. A few among us do not believe in vaccination and so do not get themselves vaccinated. Still they want to serve the people. We are convinced that vaccination has failed. But it would not be proper to be carriers of the disease among the people whom we want to serve. Hence our non-violent duty lies in either getting ourselves vaccinated or quitting the place. The lesser dharma of not getting ourselves vaccinated disappears in front of this paramount dharma. I was asked to give my view

about the legislation concerning vaccination in Bombay and Madras. I told Dr. Varki that those who did not believe in vaccination should either leave the area or get themselves vaccinated. This is ahimsa. In a way it is easy, in another way it is not so easy.

Take another example. We have planted a small orchard at Sabarmati. Monkeys come and pillage it. People feed these monkeys. So they stay on there. You go to Mathura and Brindaban. There are so many monkeys around that people cannot live in peace. But in the adjoining cantonment area there is not a single monkey. It is not ahimsa dharma thus to feed the monkeys. It is unjust to other people. The same is true of our campaigns. Not only our opponents, but also our supporters are full of violence. Other people want to destroy swaraj altogether. This means that there is no real co-operation from the people. If we launch a movement for swaraj they want to attack us. If we insist on continuing satyagraha under such conditions we would be postponing swaraj. The answer to the question is clear. Our small groups of five or ten members should give up the idea of satyagraha. We shall never be destroyed because we are ready to be destroyed. But their opposition will die out. Those who oppose swaraj want to destroy the poor. So they lose nothing if we continue our movement in an atmosphere of violence, whereas the poor would be completely ruined. We are prepared to be ruined ourselves but we do not wish the poor to be ruined.

I am conducting the same experiment in Rajkot. That is why I say that Rajkot has become my laboratory. I have suspended the satyagraha there—or rather the civil disobedience. The word satyagraha is not appropriate here. Today I have suspended civil disobedience everywhere and I am concentrating on constructive programme, because it does not involve this kind of risk.

Bapu, part of my question still remains unanswered. You have just explained that today, when there is so much violence in the air, there is a danger of communal and other disturbances. Those who are in the movement may very well face beatings and suffer hardships, but those who are not prepared for it should not be made to do so. Hence civil disobedience should be suspended and we should concentrate on constructive programme. All this is clear; but even while engaging ourselves in the constructive programme, it is necessary to increase our strength and teach non-violence to the people who want to join the movement. Now, suppose we want to hold a meeting or take out a procession. Now this meeting or procession is harmless, and there is no question even of violent words. Even then a section of the

people (such as Garasias in Rajkot, some Maharashtrians in Baroda, some Muslims in Hyderabad) under the impression that we are not loyal to the Government and want to harm that section loses its temper, abuses us and assaults us. Thus our movement arouses anger in them and a wall rises between them and the supporters of the movement. Under such circumstances, because there already is a lot of misunderstanding, our attempts to arrive at a compromise or establishing closer contacts with them will be like pouring oil over the flames.

Under these circumstances, am I correct in saying that instead of forming Hindu-Muslim or Garasia and non-Garasia unity committees, and thus making vain efforts at unity, it would be better and more practicable for us to keep off the whole thing?

Yes, that is correct.

This question has been asked by Moolchand Agarwal. He has been putting questions to me over a long period of time.

There is no awakening among people on account of child-marriages, funeral feasts, *purdah* and untouchability. But some people believe that we must concentrate only on political work, for social-reform activities serve no purpose. They say that social reforms will automatically follow once political rights are realized. Will you kindly explain the place of social reforms in the work of nation-building?

This is a much-delayed question. It should have been asked in 1920. In my view there is no special political field which is not related to social reform. They are both interrelated. If we do not earnestly go about the work of social reform, no political reforms are possible. I would, therefore, give the first place to the work of social reform and only the second place to purely political work, if there is such a thing. I took help from the sanatanists, whether for Gujarat Vidyapith or for the khadi work. But when they said that I should abandon my work for the removal of untouchability I told them that I would rather do without their help. The Mulji Jetha Market promised Rs. 35,000, but on some such condition. I told them that they could keep their money, I would do without it; but as for the removal of untouchability, I wanted it immediately. Till today I have not received the Rs. 35,000 from them. But the work for swaraj did not stop. It is dangerous to allow such things to find a place in our hearts. Let us not allow even such notions as 'social' and 'political' any place in our thinking. Let us not hinder national progress.

It is true some sense of discretion will have to be shown. It would not be proper to go and resort to satyagraha when someone

in our community calls people for dinner. It is enough if we avoid going to that feast ourselves. There are so many areas of social-reform activity that can go on side by side with political work. There too we shall stick to non-violence. But satyagraha is a mighty weapon. It cannot be used everywhere. Its use has to be limited.

Now, there is a question from Mahavir Prasad Poddar.

Should a person who has not been able to convince his family or neighbours about sharing food with the Harijans be a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh?

So long as he has not set right the behaviour of his family members towards the Harijans or has not been able to do so he cannot be a member of Gandhi Seva Sangh. Till such time as he has not settled the quarrel at home, he should serve from outside. Must he then go on quarrelling with the members of his family and his wife? Should he beat his wife and turn her out of the house? Certainly not. Let him not accept untouchability for himself. He should patiently put up with the protests of his family. He should win them over through non-violence. For him, his house itself becomes a laboratory. He cannot come to Gandhi Seva Sangh till he has won over his wife through love.

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ: Should the path of satyagraha be considered closed to those who do not honestly believe that only persons with faith in God should join satyagraha, or to those who are socialists or atheists?

I am sorry, but I shall have to say, 'Yes'. God alone is the strength for a satyagrahi. He wants to walk on his own legs. He does not want a stick for support. He does not depend on any strength from outside. Faith in God is an inner strength. Hence the path of satyagraha is closed to those who do not accept this. They must take the path of unarmed protest. They can even be non-co-operators. But they can never be satyagrahis. Because anyone who does not believe in God will be defeated in the end. Should I then admit that there can be no victory through non-violence? On the contrary, I would say that with non-violence there never can be any defeat. Faith in God is itself the power behind non-violence. Hence we must put up with it even if somebody feels hurt. But it should be made absolutely clear that this path is not meant for the people who do not believe in God. There is no other way. The socialists who do not understand my point of view would say that I have worked out a trick for getting rid of them. I cannot help it. I shall

face even that charge. You may say that this will keep out many gallant co-workers while hypocrites professing faith in God but without any evidence of it in their practical life will get in. But I am not talking about hypocrites. I am rather talking of those people who are ready to sacrifice their all in the name of God.

Instead of asking me such a question you should have asked me why I had been sleeping for the last twenty years. You should have asked me why I have taken so long to wake up. I would plead guilty to such a charge. I would only say that after all I am not a perfect satyagrahi descended from heaven. I have not come with a ready-made technique of satyagraha. Nor have I brought any book from heaven to which I can refer and tell everything in advance. I am with you in the midst of society. I place before you any new thing which I may happen to discover through my experiments with and my experience of satyagraha.

KRIPALANI: Does this mean that the non-believers like the Jains and Buddhists cannot join the satyagraha movement?

If there are some Jains or Buddhists who do not believe in the *atman* they cannot join satyagraha. But these people do believe in the *atman*. And those who believe in the *atman* believe in God. Their quarrel is only with a particular idea of God. I do not want any disputation over it. A certain Jain even asked me at Rajkot. I gave the same reply. He then remembered that the Jains too believed in Divine Power. Anyone who accepts the existence of a Power that helps us in all situations is not a non-believer. He is a believer in God. What does it matter if he is a Jain or a Buddhist? But if some Jains and Buddhists themselves say that they cannot join satyagraha because they do not believe in God I shall not argue with them. I shall say that they are right.

KRISHNAN NAIR: What is the criterion for judging whether a person does or does not believe in God? If an individual accepts God as a metaphysical probability but not as a mysterious Power, will he be called an atheist?

This is a subtle question. It is not even necessary to go so deep into it. I do not insist that everybody should have the same idea of God as I have and describe Him in the same vocabulary that I use. There is no ready-made test to determine whether somebody does or does not believe in God. Still, it is

possible to test it. But this point will be settled tomorrow,[1] since today my time is over.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan (Brindaban, Bihar)ka Vivaran, pp. 50-9

241. TALK TO RURAL RECONSTRUCTION WORKERS[2]

May 6, 1939

It is a tragedy that many of you should be coming from cities or should be accustomed to life in the cities. Not unless you switch your minds off the cities to the villages can you serve them. You must realize that it is not cities that make India, but the villages, and that you cannot reconstruct them unless you revive the village life with its defunct handicrafts. Industrialization cannot bring life to the moribund villages. The peasant in his cottage home can be revived only when he gets back his craft and depends for his necessaries on the village and not on the cities as he is compelled to do today. If you do not grasp this basic principle, all the time that you give to rural reconstruction work will be wasted.[3] Build your villages anew. Infuse new blood in villages which are in the grip of ruin. Save the teeming millions who need your assistance.

There is one thing more that I would ask you to bear in mind. Whoever wants to qualify himself for the service of the village must go about with his mind and his eyes pure and must look upon every woman as his mother or sister.

Harijan, 24-6-1939; also *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8-5-1939

[1] *Vide* pp. 231-2.

[2] This is extracted from "Gandhi Seva Sangh–IV". Mahadev Desai explains that "the rural reconstruction workers were engaged by the Bihar Government".

[3] The rest of the paragraph is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

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242. IS NIRA OBJECTIONABLE?

Among the fourteen points that Parsi friends have raised against the prohibition campaign, there occurs this strange passage:

> Mahatmaji persuades the Parsis to drink *nira* (sweet, unfermented toddy), but the Parsis very well know the properties of *nira*. Moreover the British Government had already tried this *nira*-drinking experiment free of tree-tax, but it failed because *nira* produces cold, flatulence, diarrhoea, etc. The experiment was already tried in Mahatmaji's Ashram at Segaon and there fatal results were pronounced.

I do not know what the Bombay Government tried. But I do know what *nira* is doing and has done to those who are trying it. It is wholly wrong to say that the experiment at Segaon Ashram failed and that it produced fatal results. It has never been known to have produced any of the bad results ascribed to it by the writer. On the contrary *nira* is still being freely drunk by many in Segaon and that with profit to their health. Moreover it is turned into syrup or *gur*, and in that condition I and many others use it almost daily. As *gur* it is sold in large quantities. It is better relished than sugar-cane *gur* because of its being less sweet. As to the deaths that occurred in Wardha, not in Segaon, the investigations have clearly showed that the deaths were due not to *nira*-drinking but to cholera. Nothing has been shown to establish any connection between the deaths and *nira*. Supposing the patients had developed cholera without drinking *nira*, would it have been right to say that cholera was induced by the ordinary food that they had eaten? I may mention that several people had taken in Segaon with impunity the same *nira* that had been taken in Wardha.

If the thirteen other points are based on as weak a foundation as this (No. 13) is, surely there is no case against prohibition. And I make bold to say that the rest are no stronger. I have picked out the thirteenth in the hope that my personal testimony may put the opponents on their guard against making statements they cannot substantiate. Opposition based on reason must always command respect. This one seems to me to lack that essential quality.

BRINDABAN, May 7, 1939

Harijan, 13-5-1939

243. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

May 7, 1939

CHI. VALJI,

If Chitre spins yarn worth Rs. 10, he will certainly get that much. If he engrosses himself in the work, his problems will be solved. The Wardha rates are the highest. I am ready to assess the value of his yarn at those rates.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI
GONDAL
KATHIAWAR

From Gujarati: C.W. 7484. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

244. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 7, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I received your letters. I also answered them. What can I do if my letters do not reach you? Today I am sending you a telegram[2] as well. I pass through Ahmedabad on the 12th on way to Rajkot. Sushilabehn is of course with me and Mahadevbhai also will be there.

You are keeping well, I hope. I also had talks with Mridulabehn about you.

I hope something has been settled about Qureshi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 418

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] This was sent on May 8; *vide* p. 245.

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245. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

May 7, 1939

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

Balvantsinhaji is a member of the Segaon Ashram. He is devoted to the cow. He has served the cow since his childhood. Please depute someone to guide him to the dairy and also arrange for him to visit the Government farm.

Has the dispute regarding the mosque been settled?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2627

246. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN–III

May 7, 1939

Let me begin with Radhakrishna's question which I took up yesterday[1] but could not finish. The question about God has been more or less dealt with. A discussion on it was going on. Shri Krishnan Nair had raised a subtle point. But it does not allow much scope for discussion. I am indifferent about the names or attributes which a man may apply to God. I had made a general statement that any man who had no faith in God could not stay a satyagrahi to the end. What I had meant was that so long as the satyagrahi is not convinced that there is some great subtle Power that would give him strength in all situations, he cannot face tyranny, strife and humiliations and sustain his non-violence. These days we do not suffer anything which may be described as torture. Nobody places us on burning coals or pierces us with needles. This would be the extreme form of cruelty. But in the face of even such torture not to have any malice against the torturer is non-violence. Man cannot show such supreme non-violence in the face of such suffering relying on his own efforts. So long as he does not have faith in some Power and feel the presence of that Power behind him he will not have the strength

[1] *Vide* pp. 226-8.

calmly to put up with such tyranny. This Power that thus sustains is God. Not to bear any malice towards the tyrant even on such occasions is another name of faith in God.

QUESTION: Can those persons who habitually wear khadi but do not spin nor feel inclined to spin join the satyagraha movement?

ANSWER: No. Those people cannot be chosen for civil disobedience. Listen carefully. I am talking about civil disobedience, not satyagraha. Satyagraha is a universal term. Civil disobedience requires special preparation. Satyagraha includes even constructive programme. Those who do not spin can be satyagrahis, but they cannot take part in civil disobedience.

What should we tell those who do not wear khadi but who feel for the country—lawyers who are prepared to abandon their practice, men and women who want to come forward selflessly to put up with hardships?

Millions of people cannot join civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is meant for those who have purified themselves and who have learnt to obey laws in humility. Only they can determine which law should be disobeyed and how and when. They willingly obey not only the laws of the State but of all other organizations. They do so not out of fear of punishment but deliberately out of a sense of duty. That alone gives them the right to break laws. It is like taking a dose of poison. If a man takes a dose of poison without proper knowledge about it, he dies. The more I think the more I realize that civil disobedience is no ordinary weapon. Everyone cannot use it. Everyone can certainly insist on truth. All those who have joined civil disobedience today are not people of this kind. Except those who are qualified for civil disobedience other people do not offer real civil disobedience. They indulge in angry, violent disobedience. Quite likely they are all good men. Maybe they are better than we are. But they do not fit into our pattern. Hence they should keep away.

What should be the criterion of complete faith in truth and non-violence? He who has faith in truth and non-violence should wholly keep away from violence and falsehood in his daily life. Under these circumstances, can someone in whose house there is a business of foreign cloth or mill-cloth or who, in some way or the other, helps in diverting Indian money out of the country, or who is harming the interests of the country by some other act, be a satyagrahi? Should his professed faith in truth and non-violence be accepted or should further investigation be made?

In my view no person indulging in such practices can join civil disobedience. Should he be kept out of civil disobedience

or should he be allowed to join? I have myself been rather weak on this point. I have not exercised as much firmness as was necessary. I am facing the consequences and the country is paying for it. Such a person cannot join civil disobedience. He can be of help in other ways. What is the point in investigating in the case of a person whose actions speak for themselves?

How should the character of a person be investigated?

This question has already been answered in the above discussion.

What should be considered the limit of non-addiction? Should *bidi*, pan and tea be regarded as addictions?

It is a difficult question. I have drawn the line at taking of intoxicants. He who takes intoxicating things suffers from intellectual degeneration. How can he insist on truth? So in this matter the limit is quite clear. But I have not the heart to get rid of a man who, though he smokes, is a great devotee of God. I can take a bold stand in the matter of prohibiting the use of opium, *ganja*, bhang, alcohol, etc. So I have drawn the line at these things. I am a staunch enemy of tobacco also. I do not like even tea. I feel disturbed when I see people chewing pan the whole day. But this is my personal view.

Should one resort to fast and similar methods in jail in the face of inhuman conduct—not necessarily humiliating—such as bad food and harassment?

In this matter it is difficult to lay down any rigid rule. A satyagrahi is born to face all kinds of difficulties. He should not every time be thinking of honour and humiliation. He who is over-sensitive or is too delicate of body should not go to jail. As a rule, any person who joins civil disobedience should be prepared to face all kinds of difficulties in jail. He should not agree to anything which is opposed to his self-respect and integrity. Those who have delicate hearts should remain outside. Fasting normally should not be resorted to.

Once the satyagraha is launched, newspapers are stopped. Bulletins are stopped. People joining *prabhat pheris* are liable to be arrested. Under these conditions do you not think that propaganda would cease if no persons except those who are permitted to be satyagrahis are allowed to join the *prabhat pheris*, distribute bulletins or join any other activity which may be liable to lead to the arrest of these persons?

I do not think the adoption of such a policy would lead to the stoppage of all propaganda. So long as a few individuals go to jail, their incarceration itself would mean a lot of publicity. I believe that this is the true propaganda for civil disobedience. It does not matter much if newspapers, bulletins and *prabhat pheris* are stopped. I have seen that an attempt to continue these things anyhow involves the danger of all types of persons being drawn into civil disobedience. The Yeravda Prison became filled with people during the satyagraha of 1931. I was able to meet a few of the detenus and freely talk to them. They told me that good people had come in the beginning. But those who came later looked like goondas. They broke jail rules, used abusive language and indulged in physical fights. The question was not what they did. The question was what they did not do. A boy may get up, distribute a bulletin and go to jail. What purpose would be served by carrying on the satyagraha with the help of such people? I find lack of faith, lack of courage behind such questions. What have we got to do with crowds of people? It is our belief that even if there is one true satyagrahi, swaraj is bound to come. Why should we be so impatient? Swaraj may come now or later.

Given the above conditions only very few people would be qualified to go to jail. But what about those people who cannot fulfil those conditions and yet are desirous of serving the country? What should they do?

This question has been already answered.

What should we do when people go to *prabhat pheris* without informing us or do other propaganda work and get arrested?

We must keep on telling these people that they are harming the cause of satyagraha by their actions. What can we do if they do not heed us? Let us leave them to their fate. Some of them will go to jail. Of those some will tender apologies and come out. Others would do their terms of imprisonment. What can we do about them?

Propaganda is a means of public awakening. How will this be possible in the absence of propaganda and demonstrations?

If we are true and honest, true propaganda would go on even when we have gone to jail. Let us not worry about the propaganda that would be stopped. Propaganda is of two kinds: violent and non-violent. There is no harm if the propaganda which consists in bitter things being written and abuses being hurled against the adversary is stopped. There is no need to do

any propaganda from our side in the face of violent propaganda against us. I am told that the newspapers are showering abuses on me and the Sardar. They abuse others as well. Should we bring out papers in order to retaliate and waste our money, effort and time in it? Should we set up an organization to explain our stand? How long can we go on answering every single thing that may be said against us? A satyagrahi cannot do such a thing. Such criticism is like a storm. Storms come and also earthquakes. Let them come. They will go as they come. That storm is worse than a natural storm. But why should we fight against it? It has got to be faced. At the most, we may die trying to put up with it. We shall continue our work with this resolve.

Following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, people were permitted to collect salt for a year. The Government has recently promulgated an order that it will be possible to collect salt only within the limit of time it may fix from year to year. Till now people could carry salt on their heads anywhere they chose. Now this facility has been limited to the villages near the sea-shore, with the result that people are not in a position to benefit from this facility. What should we do under these circumstances?[1]

In this matter I should frankly tell you that our own people are responsible for this order. We have not abided by the restrictions laid down under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Hence these excesses. They reap what they sow. There are no such obstruction where people observe certain conditions. Such things are happening because people have started trading in salt.

Do you believe that the philosophy of the Aryasamaj encourages violence?[2]

I have never said that. What I say is that they consider the use of both violence and non-violence legitimate even as an ordinary *sanatani* Hindu does. According to them, it is wrong to remain non-violent when it becomes one's duty to resort to violence. We, on the other hand, believe in only non-violent resistance. This is the distinction between us.

But even you considered it a duty to have calves and dogs killed?[3]

Then you should say it does not lie in my mouth to talk of non-violence. I would accept it. I shall agree. I am willing to pull my ears for it. You are familiar with the cases of the calf and

[1] This was asked by A. Vedaratnam.
[2] This was asked by Moolchand Agrawal.
[3] *Vide* Vol. XXXVII, pp. 310-5.

the dogs incident. I have already said what I had to say in the matter.

A resolution about the Aryasamaj satyagraha in Hyderabad too was shown to me. I had given my frank opinion in the matter. I had made it clear that whatever I had said was not meant for the Press. In my view, that satyagraha is not in keeping with dharma, nor is it conducted in the spirit of dharma. Those who do not regard non-violence as the supreme dharma can go only so far with non-violence. Those who do not possess a non-violent outlook cannot offer non-violent satyagraha. I am conscious of the limitations of civil disobedience. But it would not be right for me to issue any such statements in the newspapers that may bring harm to somebody. I am a worshipper of satyagraha. Why should I unnecessarily express my views about something with which I am not concerned ? Why should I criticize everything that may be happening anywhere? This is not the way of non-violence. I do not wish to indulge in such irrelevant action. Of course, I do try to persuade my co-workers to give it up. What is going on today does not add to the prestige of the Aryasamaj or religion. I would appeal even to Sir Akbar Hydari that he should change his attitude. I am doing everything that the duty of a friend may demand. I am doing nothing more. The day I feel it is my duty to make a public statement, I shall do so. But the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh should not go beyond the limits I have set.

Then there is one last point. Prajapati Babu has done much work for this convention. But there has been much unnecessary expenditure too. This is a blot on our work. There is gas-lighting here, even electric lighting. At this rate there will be no limit left. We must fix certain limits. On the other side arrangements about lavatories, etc., are not of the best. According to my conception of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, this is not an annual celebration. This is an educational institution for us. We should never forget that we have to proceed every day in the direction of simplicity, a rural outlook, of sanitation and cleanliness. We do not come here for having a celebration or an excursion. This convention is a training camp for us. It provides us a wonderful opportunity for introspection, for exchanging notes about one another's experiences and having training in restraint and discipline. The accommodation and sanitation here should be so perfect that even if we have to stay here for seven months instead of seven days, we should not feel like going back. But after only six days here I feel impatient to get away. Why

should this be so? I have a fear that if I do not run away from here soon the place will become more unclean. Thus we have to work very hard, for we are still far away from the ideal I have set.

The fact that people have turned up here in such large numbers is an indication of their love. Expression of love is good up to a point. But even in this there should be some restraint which is not to be found here. This too is a matter of practice.

I do not mean to say that nothing here is deserving of praise. I appreciate good things. You have done much work, gone to much trouble. But I do not have to praise you for it. You have not done these things in the expectation of praise, have you? If you have done these things for praise, my praise by itself would be the fruit of your work. My job is to criticize. I cannot say how these shortcomings can be overcome. I can only criticize. Sanitary conditions in our conventions should be perfect. Arrangements about meals, etc., should be clean and hygienic. Please take my comments in the right spirit. Try to see that wherever this convention meets next year, these shortcomings will not be there.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Panchama Varshik Adhiveshan(Brindaban, Bihar)ka Vivaran, pp. 63-9

247. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES BOARD MEETING, BRINDABAN

May 7, 1939

If, judging from the small attendance here, you and others thought that the Village Industries Board was a failure it would not be surprising. For the annual meeting of any organization, an attendance of eighteen would be considered small. But I would not be surprised or pained even if we had to manage with less, even fewer than eighteen, or do wholly without them. This is what I feel about this Board. We must keep its constitution and organization a little strict. Too many people cannot be fitted into it. Many names were therefore omitted because the rules were not being observed. Such an organization as the Village Industries Board should be judged not by its numerical strength but by the work it does. Of course it has not done much work so far. But whatever little work has been done is done thoroughly and

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after a few years you will see the deep effect of that work. The office-bearers are sincere workers. I can assert that they devote their entire energy to the work.

These days people's eyes are fixed on the towns. So there is a slackness in the work of the Village Industries Board. It is also difficult in the present circumstances. Millions of the poor cannot subsist on the little money they can get. We want to give them, through village industries, sufficient for their maintenance. We have taken up this activity with that aim.

The office-bearers of the Village Industries Board have faith that the salvation of India lies in the salvation of the villages which in turn depends on the revival of village industries and not on big machinery. By effecting improvement in the old village industries we can provide crores of rupees to the hovels of the poor.

You will find the Village Industries Board a very small organization compared to the Charkha Sangh[1]. And compared to the latter the work done by it is also very little. There is a reason for that. The Charkha Sangh is many years old now. The method of its working is now well established. Besides this, another reason for the successful working of the Charkha Sangh is that they are concerned with only one industry. But there are so many industries in villages. So the Village Industries Board has to be concerned with many industries. It is easier to become an expert in the work of the Charkha Sangh. In the Village Industries Board we shall require many experts. Our universities should produce experts who can scientifically bring about improvements in the village industries. Today we do not get such experts and therefore it is difficult to increase our activities. We have to find our experts among the oil-men, carpenters, etc., in the villages. They do not come from high schools and colleges. It is difficult to achieve success on a large scale as long as we do not get men entirely devoted to village industries who are at the same time intelligent *ghani*[2] experts and paper-making experts. Now I would like to associate these activities with ahimsa. This activity appears to be very uninteresting. But the result is interesting if we have patience. I will be happy if those who are members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh dissociate themselves from politics and concentrate on the activities of the Village Industries Board. You seem to be happy that the Working Committee is full of Gandhians. But I am not happy about it. That has increased our

[1] All-India Spinners' Association
[2] Oil mill

responsibility. We have become overburdened. What is there in it to be happy about? Yesterday Rajendra Babu was telling me that they were facing more difficulties and putting up with more trouble because of our men, that Gandhians quarrelled among themselves, contested elections against one another. This is hypocrisy. This is madness.

The question before us is how we can save ourselves from this kind of thing. My answer is that there is work to do in the Charkha Sangh, in the Village Industries Board and in the Talimi Sangh. Engage yourselves whole-heartedly in that work and hypocrisy will disappear. Swaraj will come quicker through that work than through elections. We cannot win swaraj through today's politics. We have a mountain of *himsa* before us. Many people today are quarrelling in the name of Gandhi. One man says 'I want to go;' and another man says 'I want to go.' Such people make a laughing-stock of Gandhism. If you wish to save yourselves from such things, you should withdraw from politics. There are so many activities for you. If you engage yourselves in these activities, the progress of both will be quicker.

In my opinion the Hindu-Muslim tension can also be removed by these activities. If village industries are revived, millions of villagers will get full wages. Here the interests of Hindus and Muslims do not clash and both the communities will be saved from conflicts that characterize politics. If the activities of the Village Industries Board are carried on in such faith, we can never give them up. We will go on working for all the twenty-four hours. That is why I told you in the beginning that though this thing appears so small and unrewarding I see nothing wrong in that. I only see good coming of it.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 8-7-1939

248. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BRINDABAN[1]

May 7, 1939

Just a few decades ago, I never knew what Hindustan was nor did Hindustan know what I was. I came to Champaran in 1917 with a view to redressing the grievances of the peasantry who were mere toys in the hands of the planters. I came here with my heart open and had no other instrument for the fight except the armament of truth and non-violence. Today you love me and adore me. I accept your loyalty with gratitude. But there was nothing extraordinary in me. There was sincerity and devotion in me to lift you up from the economic, social and political morass. I only wish that you could also follow the principles I follow. What I said to you in 1917 still holds good. The indigo curse was removed because you were non-violent. You have the same weapon at your disposal. The need for it is greater today than in 1917.

Do not idle away your time and do not waste the national wealth through foreign purchases. Try to increase the national wealth through the introduction of spinning-wheel which is the panacea for all ills.

Have faith in yourselves. Approach the Congress Government for what you want. Strive hard. Speak nothing but the truth. Always be non-violent. Be ready for service and sacrifices. March ahead with the *mantra* of ahimsa.

I am but a representative of the *Daridranarayana*. India is the poor and humble abode of millions, famished, hungry and illiterate. We have taken the vow to lift them up and give them food and education and bring them happy and prosperous days. Do not neglect the masses who are so many *Daridranarayanas*. Be ready to face privations and destitution to serve them.

The money will be utilized for giving bread to the hungry and clothes to the naked. The money will be spent for Champaran

[1] *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reported that the meeting, held in the afternoon, was attended by about 50,000 people, and "a purse of Rs. 20,000 was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of Champaran as a mark of its respect and loyalty to him." A short summary of the speech was reported by Mahadev Desai in *Harijan*, 20-5-1939.

and its neighbours. It is for the service of the *Daridranarayana* that the money will be spent.

It pains me to hear the *kisans* resorting to violence. They fight with zamindars. If you want to abolish zamindari, it is well and good. Do so through non-violence. Why do you terrorize zamindars? Co-operate with zamindars and tell them that they were to serve the tenantry. There should be no abuse, no filth, no violence, no beating of *amlas* by *kisans*. You must learn to love one another. The protection of ahimsa and its use will give you back what you have lost. Muslims and Hindus should live in amity. They must live as brothers. They must spin. They should cultivate tolerance and devotion for service and sacrifice. If this is done, independent India is not a distant possibility.[1]

I think it is obvious enough that Hindu-Muslim unity, prohibition and abolition of untouchability are impossible without non-violence. There remains only the spinning-wheel. How does it become the symbol of non-violence ? As I have already explained, the essential thing is the spirit in which you regard it, the attributes you invest it with. It is not a quinine pill, which has certain inherent properties in it apart from what you think about it. The spinning-wheel has no such inherent property. Take the *Gayatri Mantra*. It cannot have the same effect on non-Hindus as it has on me, nor can the *kalma* have the same reaction on me as it has on the Muslims. Even so the spinning-wheel in itself has nothing which can teach ahimsa or bring swaraj. But you have to think it with those attributes and it is transformed. Its obvious value is the service of the poor, but that does not necessarily mean that it should be a symbol of non-violence or an indispensable condition for swaraj. But we, since 1920, connected the wheel with swaraj and non-violence.

Then there is the programme of self-purification with which the spinning-wheel is again intimately connected. Coarse homespun signifies simplicity of life and therefore purity.

Without the spinning-wheel, without Hindu-Muslim unity and without the abolition of untouchability there can be no civil disobedience. Civil disobedience presupposes willing obedience of our self-imposed rules, and without it civil disobedience would be a cruel joke. This is what came to me with redoubled conviction in the laboratory at Rajkot. If even one man fulfils all the

[1] What follows is reproduced from *Gram Udyog Patrika*, which reports that Gandhiji then answered a question: "What is the relation between constructive work and ahimsa?"

conditions, he is capable of winning swaraj. I am still far from being that ideal satyagrahi. I said the same thing at the time we met to organize a satyagraha campaign against the Rowlatt Act. When it was started we had only a handful of men, but we built up a considerable organization out of that handful. As I am an imperfect satyagrahi I want your co-operation. In the process of organizing and seeking your co-operation I myself grow, for my introspection never ceases. Even the time I am now giving you is as much in my own interest as in yours, or at least in my own interest, if not in yours. For as I examine myself I am growing and evolving. No one is too old to grow, certainly not I. In the Transvaal, satyagraha was born; but a few thousands wielded it there. Millions have wielded it here. Who knew that on the 6th of April 1919 millions would rise up like one man in response to the call I had made from Madras? But the constructive programme is essential for the ultimate success. Indeed today I think we should be untrue to the nation if we did not fulfil the programme of the spinning-wheel as a symbol of non-violence, no matter how long it takes.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-5-1939; also *Gram Udyog Patrika*, June 1939

249. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND OTHERS[1]

BRINDABAN,
[On or before *May 8, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI: You won't count nearness to Patna an advantage. We want to go to the villages. Is Bihar going to drag us back?

RAJENDRA PRASAD : Time is very short, the city affords various conveniences, there would be less expenditure.

But that means that we change the policy we have been carrying out for the last three years? Why not Brindaban itself?

Sonepur was discussed but it is a glorified village.

I want you in the heart of a village. Don't emulate Haripura and Faizpur. You should excel both in simplicity and in freedom from splendour.

[1] This is extracted from "Gandhi Seva Sangh–IV" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "Rajendra Babu and other Bihar workers had discussion with Gandhiji on the venue of the next Congress which is to be in Bihar. Phulwari Shareef, which is only four miles from Patna and is said to have various other advantages, had been proposed."

[2] Gandhiji left Brindaban on May 8, 1939.

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Visitors are a problem, especially in Bihar where we would have lakhs of them.

You should make arrangements for them as the Aryasamajists do. They ask everyone to come with their provisions, lanterns and so on. They only provide them accommodation (under the trees) and water. For this last no water-works are necessary. Whatever you do, do not accept defeat and run to Patna. No need for electricity at all, and as we meet in winter no fans would be needed. Start work from 8 to 11, and then from 2 or 3 to 7. A little winter's sun would be more agreeable than otherwise. No, you must try your best to change your decision for Phulwari. Everyone must be asked to bring his or her own lantern. You can say beforehand you can give so much and no more.

Even so we should have to spend a lot on construction. We must afford protection against cold?

Why not use your grass for warmth both above and below? There should be no need for cots excepting for the ill and the infirm.

And we won't get money. Both zamindars and *kisans* are against us. Gate-money will be much less.

I do not agree. Have it somewhere but not near a city. And you have had tube-wells here very cheaply.

We will have tube-wells, but we have to cope with the need of nearly 60,000 gallons per hour. But electric light may be dispensed with.

I hate it. We must not think in terms of illumination. Make the place attractive in other ways during the day. Don't copy what is bad. No one will blame you if you have no fire-works and no illuminations. You want cleanliness and simple wants satisfied. Give the simplest food. But I agree that you must spend on water. Collect one pice per head from each of the 70,000 villages and satisfy your needs. Then it will be a Congress worth going to or seeing. Decide on the principle of a village. I don't mind where it may be, and you will gain strength by getting every village to contribute its mite. Volunteer corps must be enough and efficient. They must be experts in sanitation. No smell and no dirt must be allowed. Organization of this must begin early.

The volunteer corps will cost us a good deal — probably Rs. 50,000.

I don't mind it, but the ultimate benefit accruing will be great. There should be no wastage in training. We may forget

uniforms, etc., which go to waste, but the body of youth for our service is for all time an asset of no mean value. Therefore don't stint in water and volunteers.

Even the simple huts put up here have cost a lot.

I hear so. But there must have been some mismanagement somewhere if it has become so expensive.

Our problem is of rain which generally comes then. Patna would have been convenient from that point of view. We could shift into pukka buildings in case of need.

There is no escape from it now. Manage somehow. Don't give hot water, don't give fruit, don't give any delicacies. Give me the contract for fruit. If anyone comes to me for it, I shall ask him to return to Bombay.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

250. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA

[*May 8, 1939*][1]

YOUR WIRE[2]. HAVE BASED MY REMARK ON YOUR STATEMENTS ABOUT THE PARISHAD PEOPLE BUT THAT IS A MINOR MATTER. WHAT WORRIES ME IS THE FACT THAT YOU SHOULD TURN MY ASPIRATION INTO A PRESSING REQUEST THAT I SHOULD NOT COME TO RAJKOT WITHOUT BEING INVITED BY HIS HIGHNESS. I MAY NOT DESERT MY COMRADES. YOU MAY EXPECT ME TO USE MY NEW LIGHT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL CONCERNED. I MUST THEREFORE REACH RAJKOT ON THE TWELFTH INSTANT. PRAY EXCUSE. THIS WIRE IS NOT FOR PROPAGANDA. IT IS A FRIENDLY APPROACH.

The Hindu, 10-5-1939

[1] From *The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I

[2] Dated May 5, 1939, which read: "Your wire of third. I wonder what led you to suggest that I did not give proper treatment to Parishad people. All my sincere and *bona-fide* efforts to get their co-operation have failed as Dhebar differed from all who met on fourth. . . . My personal view and appeal to you . . . is that . . . you should come to Rajkot only when invited by His Highness and not before. Your coming now will prejudice direct settlement. Let Sir Maurice Gwyer's Award have its natural course without any outside interference including yours if settlement fails."

251. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 8, 1939

AMTUL SALAAM
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI
AHMEDABAD

WROTE SEVERAL LETTERS.[1] WELL. PASSING THROUGH AHMEDABAD TWELFTH MORNING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 419

252. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 8, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have both your long letters. Both are important.

I had a long chat with Khan Saheb. He has doubts about Kishanchand's scheme. He said he won't be happy about anything till I was in the Frontier Province. You will therefore go slow. If Kishanchand can secure Khan Saheb's approval and goodwill without using my name, by all means go on with your or his project. Let there be the clearest possible understanding. We may not rush things.

We go today to Benares to see Malaviyaji, we leave on 10th for Bombay, leave Bombay on 11th for Rajkot, go to Ahmedabad on 3rd June for Working Committee; leave Ahmedabad on 7th for Rajkot or Frontier.

I am well and have stood the strain well. I expect Sushila has been giving you details about my health.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6439. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10034

[1] *Vide* p. 230.

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253. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL[1]

As at Rajkot,
May 8, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

How I wish I could accept your very kind invitation. But Rajkot still holds me. And as soon as I finish Rajkot, I am bound to go to the Frontier Province. You will therefore please excuse me and plead for me before His Highness too.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

From a photostat: G.N. 2181

254. LETTER TO RAVINDRA R. PATEL

Brindaban,
May 8, 1939

CHI. RAVINDRA,

I got your letter. Personally I like your decision to settle there. If you take proper interest in the work you will learn much there. You should know that there is no shame at all in earning money by honest means.

I hope you are leading a studious life. Don't let a single moment be wasted.

Blessings from
Bapu

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7456

[1] Dewan of Mysore State

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255. A LETTER

[*May 8, 1939*][1]

I am merely going on a pilgrimage. If his[2] health is all right, I will talk a little about Hindi. The rest you will have to attend to. If you think it necessary to send any wires, you may do so. It will all depend on how I fare in Kashi.

I shall be reaching there tomorrow at 1 p.m. and will spend the night there.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7972

256. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You will have got my letters. I had sent a letter[3] for Mother too.

Do help Lilavati to the extent you can but do not reduce the time devoted to carding.[4]

Why not get Hari's wife treated at the leprosy hospital there?

I have written[5] about Mathew. It was by mistake that Mahadev directed that no post should be sent there. Now a telegram has been sent. The newspapers should come to you, so also the mail and you can then forward the things you think worth forwarding. Social activity is as necessary as individual activity. Each one of us is unique as an individual but we are also social beings. If there is no society we too are nothing. That is why it is our dharma to take part in community prayers and community *yajnas*.

Today we leave for Kashi, then on to Bombay and from there to Rajkot. Jayabehn will go straight on to Wardha with someone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4317. Also S.G. 77

[1] From the reference to "Kashi", where Gandhiji arrived on May 9.
[2] Madan Mohan Malaviya's; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", p. 201.
[3] *Vide* "A Letter", pp. 181-2.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", p. 252.
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Munnalal G. Shah", p. 202.

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257. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 8, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your sweet letter. Even my defeat is my victory, is it not? I lost to Virawala but I am now trying to win him over. Yes, I must say that in all my life I had never experienced such despair. But has not Manilal Nabhubhai said that "Among lacs of disappointments there is eternal hope hidden"? So there is no reason for you to feel disheartened. My faith in God will ever be with me.

You and Saroj are a unique pair! Saroj is at one place and you at another. Yet you can write on behalf of both!

Yes, you have the privilege to fully open your heart to me. It is even your duty. Many salutations from me to Mother. We leave for Rajkot today.

Love and blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 9673

258. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ON THE WAY TO BENARES,
May 9, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I purposely restrained myself from troubling you whilst you were touring and taking part-holiday.

Many thanks for your prompt reply[1] about Talcher. The condition there defies analysis. One day hope rises high and then it is dashed to pieces. It is not now the Raja's plighted word, it is that of the representative of the Paramount Power that is being weighed. The people won't understand the fine distinctions as to when an official speaks with authority and when he speaks without. I know you are watching and feel confident that you will see that the people of Talcher are freed from harassment well before the rains begin.

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 153.

The very simple affair of Jaipur still hangs fire. I just understand that some prisoners have been discharged. Civil disobedience having been discontinued there seems to be no cause for keeping any prisoners and that too in a snake-infested old fort. Nor is there any meaning in keeping Sheth Jamnalalji practically in solitary confinement, the cause for his detention having disappeared. The authorities were afraid that he was entering Jaipur State to promote civil disobedience. And the demand of the people is less than elementary. They would be satisfied if they have the guarantee of civil liberty. I should have thought that Jaipur would present no difficulty.[1]

Lastly, Rajkot. The Award has been a halter round my neck. The situation has taxed and is still taxing all my resources. I am applying what appears to me to be a new and difficult technique. Though I am not giving up the support of the Paramount Power, I am keeping it as much as I am able in the background and am trying to woo Durbar Shri Virawala. On going back to Rajkot from Delhi I saw that I had a mountain of difficulties to face owing to the Award itself. They are all still there. And they are piling up. But I see that even for decency's sake I must not run to you or your representative on every pretext. I shall come when I must. Meanwhile, I shall try to woo Durbar Shri Virawala and see if I can get anything approaching the Notification of the Thakore Saheb. If you have leisure you will watch what is happening in Rajkot. I must say that my experiences of the working of the political department are not happy. I observe that the Viceroy, no matter how strong he may be, is not powerful enough to carry out his intentions even as the Congress President is not with his voluntary departments. You will not mind the comparison. A knowledge of our little difficulties enables me to send out my sympathy to you instead of blaming you for what appear to me to be innumerable pin-pricks.

Having wandered in Calcutta and Brindaban, an out-of-the-way village in Champaran, I return to Rajkot hoping to reach there on 12th instant.[2]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* also "Jaipur Prisoners", pp. 182-3.
[2] For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* Appendix XI.

259. A MESSAGE

[On or after *May 9, 1939*][1]

I observe that Senapati Bapat is reported to have said that I approved of his plan of drowning himself because India had not attained swaraj within the time stipulated or expected by him. When I saw the report I gave no credence to it. But I am overwhelmed by correspondents asking me whether I was consenting party and, if I was, on what grounds. I must say that I have no recollection whatsoever of having approved of the contemplated step. I do remember his having discussed the proposal among many other things. But I cannot conceive of my consenting to anybody drowning himself for the sake of winning swaraj. If I have any influence over Senapati Bapat I would urge him not to take the fatal step, assuming that he is correctly reported. I would urge him and his disciples to live for swaraj and embrace death when it comes to them naturally and in due course.

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

260. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

KATNI,
May 10, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
CARE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
LUCKNOW

READ. UNDERSTAND DECISION WRONG UNNECESSARY. HOPE COUGH BETTER. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3915. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7224

[1] Gandhiji had scribbled the message on the back of a telegram dated May 9, 1939, which was addressed to him.

261. LETTER TO HABIB KESHAVJI

May 10, 1939

BHAI KESHAVJI[1],

I have preserved your letter of August 13, 1938. I came upon it while looking through some old letters in the train.

You are right. The problem here is a difficult one. But please believe me I am the same man that I was there. Even today I would lay down my life if thereby I could bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. I did fast once for 21 days.[2] My efforts are continuing.

What shall I write about the conditions there? Since I cannot guide you brothers [there] from this distance, I merely watch the developments helplessly.

Do write to me. May God bless you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 979. Courtesy: Habib Keshavji

262. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1939

MIRABEHN
C/O PREMIER
PESHAWAR

ACT ACCORDING MY LETTER[3] POSTED FROM BRINDABAN. GOING RAJKOT TONIGHT.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6441. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10036

[1] A South African Indian. He had in his childhood met Gandhiji in South Africa.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXV.
[3] *Vide* p. 245.

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263. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1939

CHI. LILA,

Your complaint is justified. I have not been able to write to you as often as I should have done. I shall be more careful henceforth. Jaya must have reached there safely. Mahadev is accompanying me. Pay careful attention to your study. In that lies your good. Don't mind Mathew having left. Learn what English Krishnachandra can teach you.[1] Hari's condition is a pitiable one. Ba will stay here for four or five days for her treatment and then join me at Rajkot. Keep on writing to me.

Ask Jaya to give me an account of her experiences.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9377. Also C.W. 6652. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

264. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BOMBAY,
May 11, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Yes, it would be good if you could rid yourself of your fondness for books. You can certainly purchase on my behalf any religious book you may need, but for the rest you should seek your brother's help. What I mean is: have just one book. Draw all your wisdom from that one book. What better do you need than the *Ramayana*, the *Gita* or *Ishopanishad*?

Balkrishna's fever causes concern. Sushila will write about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev will remain with me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4314. Also S.G. 76

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Krishnachandra", p. 247.

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265. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

May 11, 1939

To one of the Pressmen who enquired about his health Gandhiji said:

I am so so. I can't say my cough has left me.

QUESTION: What is your next step with regard to Rajkot?

GANDHIJI: Naturally it would be to take up the threads where I left them and where they are left.

Knowing that the last words of the sentence were significant, one of the Pressmen repeated: "Where you left them and where they are left?" Gandhiji clarified the words without delay.

You are all aware that something has happened between the time I left Rajkot and the present moment.

He referred to the discussion of the scheme of reforms between the State people's representatives and the Rajkot authorities. He added:

This scheme has not yet been found acceptable to the Praja Parishad.

It was asked if this scheme of reforms suggested by Durbar Virawala did not amount to a breach of promise made by the Thakore Saheb in his Notification of December 26 last, according to which the conferring of the widest powers on the people had been promised.

Mahatmaji replied in the negative. He said that Durbar Virawala was not offering anything in terms of the December Notification. It was an independent offer. There was no question of a breach of promise as it was a scheme under discussion between the two parties. If the parties concerned accepted it, it would be a mutual settlement.

Q. Are the terms of reference suggested by Durbar Virawala in his telegram to you on the question of representation of Muslims and Bhayats on the Reforms Committee acceptable to you?

[1] The source says: "Resting on a cot covered with khadi in a spacious room in Birla House, Mahatma Gandhi received a batch of Pressmen this afternoon, with a pleasant smile on his face, remarking with a twinkle in his eye: 'Here comes the gang.' In spite of a strenuous journey last night, Mahatma Gandhi looked exceedingly fit and cheerful. He was busy reading a bundle of letters as the Pressmen were ushered in. They squatted on the ground close to the cot and started the process of 'pumping', as Gandhiji referred to the interview."

G. No.

Referring to this query further, he said that the complainants and he would present their cases to the Chief Justice. Pleadings would contain prayers of parties. Gandhiji added:

Perhaps they are [seeking] a way to avoid any terms of reference.[1]

You have had enough for the day.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-5-1939

266. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

May 12, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

We arrived in Rajkot today. I got your letter. You shouldn't worry. Don't let yourself rust. Do prepare for the Kovid examination. Give the help asked of you. Go prepared for lessons every day so that you can teach well. Procure a book of Hindi grammar. The text to be taught would be a prescribed one, so you should have no difficulty.

For the present I shall have to stay in Rajkot. In June I shall have to go to Bombay for two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10011. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Here the source says that as "the Pressmen were just settling down to the interview in right earnest", Mahadev Desai reminded them of the strenuous journey Gandhiji had and he suggested "that it was better the interview was cut short."

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267. SPEECH AT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS' MEETING, RAJKOT[1]

May 12, 1939

I wonder why my statement of 24th[2] April should have perturbed some of you. I said nothing new in it. It was a summary of what I had told[3] you in detail just before I left Rajkot.

So far as Vajubhai[4] and his colleagues' statement is concerned, let me tell you I have rather liked it inasmuch as it has served to bring out in clear relief the fundamental differences between his group and me. The Council of Action, it is stated, was constituted by the Parishad for the specific purpose of conducting the civil disobedience fight. Now that it has been called off *sine die*, its function has lapsed. I can quite understand the objection to negotiating a settlement in its name. But I am not conducting the negotiations in the Council's name.

Let me explain my own position in this matter. When the Award was first announced, under the exultation of the moment I allowed myself to say that the result of my Rajkot fast had exceeded my expectations. But I now find that the Chief Justice's Award has become a halter round my neck.

I did not come here at your invitation. I came here because Rajkot is the home of my childhood and because I felt I would be able to keep its Ruler to his promises. In the various steps which I have taken since my arrival here, I had been guided solely by my inner light and the logic of circumstances. Nobody is under any obligation to join me in my present experiment. Anybody who feels differently from me is perfectly free to go his way, and if the people of Rajkot decide to carry on the fight

[1] This is extracted from "New Light" by Pyarelal, who had summarized the speech "for the sake of brevity". Pyarelal says: ". . . Gandhiji had learnt that . . . some Parishad workers . . . felt perturbed at the idea of negotiating a settlement with Durbar Virawala. . . . A few . . . had declared their disbelief in the philosophy of 'converting your enemy'. Some others were of opinion that . . . the December 26 Notification should be insisted upon. Gandhiji elucidated his own position . . . within two hours of his arrival in Rajkot . . . "

[2] The source, however, has "23rd"; *vide* pp. 168-71.

[3] *Vide* pp. 162-6.

[4] Vajubhai Shukla

by following different methods, I would not mind it. I am humble enough to know that there may be a different way and a better way than mine of doing a thing. In no case do I want to see our people turn into cowards.

I welcome too the suggestion about calling the Parishad and obtaining its mandate with regard to the future lines of action. But I would like you not to shut your eyes to the realities of the situation. I am trying the delicate and difficult technique of negotiating a settlement with Durbar Virawala by appealing to the better self in him, while at the same time I am pursuing the stages contemplated in the Award. The Rajkot issue is not so simple or superficial as it might appear at first sight. Behind it are ranged other and powerful forces.

Eighteen days have elapsed since I discussed[1] with you the new line of approach to the Rajkot question. The passage of time has confirmed my opinion. I confess I was guilty of impatience when I wrote to Mr. Gibson[2] about the interminable delays and to the Bhayats[3] about their suggestion to refer to the Chief Justice the meaning of my assurance to them. Such impatience reflects little credit on my ahimsa. My legal position was correct. But ahimsa does not go by legal rights.

I have now realized that I must be content to plod on with infinite patience. It is no mango trick that can be performed in the twinkling of an eye. It calls for a more potent force even than civil disobedience, viz., the application of the active principle that lies at the core of ahimsa. This is the new light that I sense I have seen. I see it but dimly. And I am therefore unable to define it.

I should very much like, if I could, altogether to give up the shelter of the Award before proceeding with the work of appeasing Durbar Shri Virawala. But that requires courage, fearlessness and ample faith. If I had these, I should not hesitate to plunge into a blazing fire. But such faith cannot come by mechanical means. One must wait and pray for it. I had no idea of what jail life was like when I launched on satyagraha in South Africa. But once inside the prison it became to me like a palace, a sanctuary, a place of pilgrimage, where I learnt things which probably I would not have outside.

If I had to act only for myself, I would not probably have hesitated to take the plunge. But as a custodian of the people's

[1] *Vide* pp. 162-6.
[2] *Vide* pp. 155-7.
[3] *Vide* "Letters to Ranjitsinh", pp. 147-9.

interests I wonder if I should run any risks. Thus has conscience turned me into a coward and I am vacillating between doubt and faith.

My ahimsa tells me that I must tear up the Award. But the reason is not yet fully convinced. 'What is the meaning of not seeking aid from the Paramount Power,' I argue to myself, 'when you are trying to secure the co-operation of Durbar Shri Virawala and the Thakore Saheb? Are they not all parts of one and the same system?' Thus I am caught in the net of my own reasoning. All this I know is a sign of lack of faith on my part.

I cannot, while there is this conflict between the head and the heart within me, offer to take you along with me or be of much use to you as a 'guide'. I have no set theory to go by. I have not worked out the science of satyagraha in its entirety. I am still groping. You can join me in my quest if it appeals to you and you feel the call.

A representative is bound to consult his principals and take his instructions from them at every step. But a physician cannot afford to do so regarding his patients. He must be guided solely by his instinct and vary his treatment according to his reading of the symptoms as they might develop from moment to moment. He cannot accept dictation of the patient. I stand in a dual capacity in relation to you. I am your spokesman whom you have also accepted as your physician. You must implicitly follow the treatment laid down by your physician so long as you have faith in him. If he no longer commands your confidence, you must appoint in his place another who does.

Only a prospective mother knows what it is to carry. The onlookers notice her illness and pity her. But she alone knows the travail. It is I who have conceived satyagraha. Mine alone, therefore, must be the travail and the suffering. I am not joking. I am in dreadful earnest. I shall enter the fiery gates and pursue my mission even if I am the only person left to do so—I am resolved to try and exhaust every resource of satyagraha to convert Durbar Virawala. If I succeed, you will all share the fruit. If I fail, the responsibility will be entirely mine and what I do will in no way affect you.

When I was a little child, there used to be two blind master performers in Rajkot. One of them was a musician. When he played on his instrument, his fingers swept the strings with an unerring instinct and everybody listened spellbound to his playing. Similarly there are chords in every human heart. If we only know how to strike the right chord, we bring out the music.

Durbar Virawala is no exception to the rule.

Have I set Durbar Virawala completely at his ease? Have I applied truth and ahimsa only in my dealings with him? Have I not threatened him with the Award?

We want to set up democracy in Rajkot. A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience. I do not want anybody to give up his convictions or to suppress himself. I do not believe that a healthy and honest difference of opinion will injure our cause. But opportunism, camouflage or patched-up compromises certainly will. If you must dissent, you should take care that your opinions voice your innermost convictions and are not intended merely as a convenient party cry.

Today our democracy is choked by our internecine strife. We are torn by dissensions — dissensions between Hindus and Mussalmans, Brahmins and non-Brahmins, Congressmen and non-Congressmen. It is no easy task to evolve democracy out of this mobocracy. Let us not make confusion worse confounded by further introducing into it the virus of sectionalism and party spirit.

I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to this present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

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268. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

RAJKOT,
May 12, 1939

Gandhiji said that he was deeply grieved that the Union Government seemed to have no finality about their policy[1] in respect of Asiatics. Their past declarations were being disregarded and some of the recommendations made by their own Commissions were also being set at naught.

There was no wonder, he said, that a section of British Indian settlers in South Africa resented this policy, and in despair were thinking of resorting to civil disobedience. He could only hope that wiser counsels would prevail and that the Union Government would retrace their steps and respect the rights acquired by British Indian settlers.[2]

The Hindu, 13-5-1939

269. TALK WITH PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS[3]

RAJKOT,
[On or after *May 12, 1939*][4]

The statement I made on leaving Rajkot correctly represented my state of mind. The views I expressed are, if anything, stronger today. I own that I was impatient. The Award which was a tainted fruit made me impatient. That impatience was a slur on my ahimsa. It was that impatience that made me say to the Bhayats and Mussalmans that I was not prepared to wait for Sir Maurice Gwyer's Award on their reference, the work of the Committee must go on. There was no Committee then, but impatience made me speak so.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Award must be renounced. How can I woo Durbar Virawala and also keep the sword of the Award hanging over his head? But where is

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 115.

[2] *Vide* also "Message to Indians in South Africa", pp. 292-3.

[3] & [4] The talk is extracted from "A Momentous Decision" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: ". . . on May 12 . . . in a personal letter to Durbar Shri Virawala . . . Gandhiji mentioned 'the double game' he was playing and . . . he loathed it . . . he lost no opportunity of thinking aloud before co-workers."

the courage? The faint-heartedness is unworthy of a satyagrahi who must have nothing but faith in God to sustain him.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

270. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I heard about your having been taken to Jaipur. Improve your health fully. The weight should not go down any further. You must eat fruit in sufficient quantity. Don't eat anything between meals. You may take some Ayurvedic medicines if you wish. Write to me at Rajkot. For some time now I shall have to stay here. You needn't worry about things here. Mahadev is with me. He is keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3003

271. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You did a very good thing in visiting the patient. Do keep me informed from time to time. Write to him that I often inquire after his health. Take proper care of your health also. Sushila will write to you in detail about it. Her health has gone down considerably.

Ba is in Bombay and will come here after four or five days. I am well. The nights are cool here, and so we don't feel the heat very much.

The struggle will drag on. There is no cause for worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3532

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272. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I have your letter. It was for your own good that I did not bring you up to Viramgam. For your sake I drank the mango juice you had prepared even though I had no desire for it. What can I do if you go on fidgeting unnecessarily? You have no faith either in God or in me. Your heart is full of misgivings which consume you. You are always in a harassed state. I tell you, you must do the work you have been doing. You will gain everything through it.

I am quite well. There is no cause to worry about the Hindu-Muslim problem.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 416

273. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL[2]

RAJKOT,
May 14, 1939

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
BHAVNAGAR

DUMB-FOUNDED. GOD WILL GUIDE US. HOPE NANABHAI[3] OTHERS WELL. AWAITING FURTHER PARTICULARS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Urdu.
[2] This was sent on hearing about an unsuccessful attempt on Vallabhbhai Patel's life in Bhavnagar.
[3] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

274. *INTERVIEW TO TRAVANCORE NATIONAL CONGRESS DEPUTATION*[1]

May 13/14, 1939

The deputationists first explained to Mahatmaji in detail the changes introduced by the Government in the electoral system of Travancore.

Mahatmaji said that he understood the system as it existed and also the present change, and asked:

Is this all that you have to discuss with me?

Mr. Kainikkara said that they would like to discuss everything concerning the political situation in Travancore.

GANDHIJI: Do you know the charge against you?

KAINIKKARA: We know there is a great deal of misrepresentation about us and that we are under a cloud.

G. It is said that your organization, the Travancore National Congress, is a bogus organization, that you are not an independent body and that you are an instrument of the Government. What do you say to this?

KAINIKKARA: We repudiated the charge. We need only say that most of us in the Travancore National Congress have been in the political field from the days of the Non-co-operation Movement. That cannot be said of many of the members of the State Congress.

G. If that be so, what have you to say regarding the treatment of the lady, Miss Annie Mascarene? Why is it that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar refuses to enquire into that matter?

KAINIKKARA: Regarding Miss Mascarene, we do not wish to say anything. We would rather not discuss her. . . . We could not demand an enquiry for we know from actual experience the outrages perpetrated by the followers of the State Congress. . . .

Mahatmaji asked us whether therefore we are justifying all the arrests, etc., made by the Government.

[1] Extracted from a report of the statement which, according to the source, was issued by the deputationists, Kainikkara Padmanabha Pillai, M. L. A., Kottoor Kunjukrishna Pillai, M. L. C., and K. P. Kayyalakkal, "with the approval of Gandhiji". E. John Philipose of Travancore State Congress was also present.

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KAINIKKARA: We are not. Some arrests may be right and some may be wrong. But how can we throw the whole blame on the Government? It is well-known that Chengannoor is a State Congress stronghold. There . . . huge banyan trees were cut down to obstruct traffic, and culverts and bridges were broken. . . . Can it be said that none of the State Congress workers saw this? . . . Why did they not at least help to find out the culprits? . . . It may be better for Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar to institute an enquiry . . . but we who know the actual facts by experience cannot make the demand.

G. Do you say that it is the measures adopted by the Government that re-established peace?

KAINIKKARA: No. You did it. Peace was established with the stopping of civil disobedience. If civil disobedience were to be started again all the disturbances would recur.

G. Then you admit that, at the worst, the mistake on the part of the State Congress was that they had no control over their followers.

KOTTOOR: No, not only that. Their first fault is that they started civil disobedience without assuring themselves of their control. Their next fault is that they did not stop it even when they found their real position, and their gravest fault is that they never seriously checked their followers for the fear that they would lose their followers. . . .

Then Mahatmaji asked us what our fundamental difference was with the State Congress.

We told him that we had been demanding Responsible Government for the last twenty years. . . . At that time, the Christians opposed the demand for Responsible Government. In 1932, the Christian-Ezhava-Muslim agitation for communal representation gave a new turn to Travancore politics. . . . Now that the legislature is decidedly based on communal representation and the Christians dominate the communal clique, they are demanding Responsible Government.

G. Therefore you question the good faith of the Christians.

KAINIKKARA: We do.

G. At the beginning I put a sharp question about you. Now I put another question about them. We are trying to reach the truth.

KAINIKKARA: Yes, we do question the good faith of the Christians.

G. Suppose they agree to nationalize the legislature, then what objection do you have?

KAINIKKARA: Then we have no objection.

On the next day we met at 8 p. m. after prayers. . . . Mahatmaji then

explained the position of the State Congress as he had understood it. He said that the State Congress, including the Christian section in it, was not anti-national. The far-seeing Christians, even those that might have been at one time communal, have seen that communal arrangements and pacts will not serve them in the end. He illustrated it by the experience of the Muslims in Bengal. He said that therefore the sinister motives that they alleged against the Christians were not real and the State Congress was national and would be prepared to nationalize the constitution of the legislature.

Mr. Philipose explained that the attitude of the Christians in the State Congress was entirely national. He also said that the organization was not communal and that all communities were in it.

KAINIKKARA: It is enough that we make our position clear and definite. Our position is this: We object to communal representation and Responsible Government going together. We insist on the reorganization of the legislature on purely national lines. By nationalizing we mean the removal of nominations and reservations and the application of a common principle in respect of franchise, delimitation and system of voting.

G. That is reasonable. Now my task will be to wait for the others. How I wish to have at least one of you with me till they arrive.

KOTTOOR: But Mahatmaji, you have not told us your opinion about the change in the voting system.

G. It does not very seriously concern me. For, after all, it does not solve the difficulties.

KOTTOOR: I hope, however, that you do not consider the change anti-national.

G. The position is this. The arrangement that subsisted was anti-national. You think that by this change at least one evil is removed. But in my view what is left is still anti-national. The whole thing must be changed. It must be made national.

PHILIPOSE: It would be good, if it came before the elections.

KAINIKKARA: We have no illusions about Responsible Government coming within three weeks.

G. Let Responsible Government take its own time. If the present anti-national system could be changed before that, even that would be a great thing.

Mr. Kayyalakkal said that for the last many years they, the Ezhavas, had been trying to remove social and religious inequalities. Realizing that temple-entry alone could solve the problem, his brother-in-law, Mr.T. K. Madhavan, placed the matter at Gandhiji's feet. By the grace of H. H. the Maharaja

and the blessings of Mahatmaji, they had got it now. Now Gandhiji must bless them and help them to live as one with the rest of the Hindus and to contribute their share for the prosperity and well-being of the Hindu community as a whole.

G. Blessings you always have in plenty. Help I have given. Now you have to help yourselves.

Just then the clock struck and Gandhiji smilingly said: "The curfew tolls," and Mr. Kainikkara completed, "the knell of parting day". Gandhiji repeated:

Yes, exactly, the knell of parting day.

The Hindu, 2-6-1939

275. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I have to acknowledge your kind letters of 11th and 25th ultimo.

As you are aware, during the eighteen days before the 12th instant, Calcutta and Brindaban in Champaran claimed my attention. I was unable to see the Aryasamaj friends during those days. But they waylaid me on the 10th as I was journeying back to Rajkot. This accounts for the unavoidable delay in acknowledging and dealing with your important letters. I don't propose to go into the past nor into the replies the Aryasamaj friends have favoured me with.

The minimum requirements of the Aryasamajists are:

1. Absolute freedom for the practice and preaching of the Vedic religion and culture, with due regard to the feelings of the followers of other faiths.

2. Full freedom for starting new Aryasamajas and building of new Aryasamaj *mandirs*, *yajnashalas*, *havankundas* and the repairing of the old ones without obtaining any permission from the Ecclesiastical or any other department of the State.

Your letters lead me to think that you have no serious objections to conceding these. If my reading is correct, why wait for the reforms or the establishment of the ecclesiastical court? You will considerably enhance the cause of peace, if you could

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possibly make the suggested gesture. The Aryasamajist civil disobedience will then stop at once.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 8016

276. LETTER TO BHAVANRAO SHRINIVASRAO PANT[1]

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DEAR RAJA SAHIB,

I do hope that things are shaping well. Transition stages are always difficult. You have taken a long step. But the heart does not always keep pace with the intellect. I would urge you therefore never to doubt the wisdom of the step taken by you. Let the things go forward, even though they may seem to go too fast.

I see you are going to Badrinath. I hope you will have a happy time there from the spiritual standpoint.

Yours sincerely,

THE RAJA SAHIB OF AUNDH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

277. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

Nanabhai had given me news of you. I am glad that you have gone there and that Manubhai[2] is with you. Do come here on your way back. But don't be impatient. Ba is not here at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7111. Also C.W. 4603. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] *Alias* Balasaheb Pant Pratinidhi
[2] Addressee's husband

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278. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

I sent you a letter[2] from here. You saw what happened in Bhavnagar?[3] The lesson it has for you is that you must stay in Ahmedabad and do the work of service. That will result one day in Hindu-Muslim understanding.

I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 420

279. TALK WITH PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS[4]

[*May 15, 1939*][5]

What is it that prevents me from throwing the Award overboard? It is not only faint-heartedness but it smacks of diplomacy. If I want Durbar Virawala to act on the square I must relieve his fears too. Why should he have to remain in fear of the Paramount Power and not do what he can of his own free will? I am talking so much of ahimsa, but I am not walking fearlessly into the mouth of *himsa*. A satyagrahi seeks no adventitious aid—not of worldly forces, not of the Paramount Power. He deals directly with his opponent and wins him by love and utter self-surrender to God. The very difficulty of implementing the Award, the very fact that it has proved a Pandora's box shows that God wants me to throw it away, however seemingly fruitful of future good it may be. God seems to be speaking to

[1] In the source Gandhiji had added here: "Harijan Ashram".
[2] *Vide* p. 261.
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", p. 261.
[4] & [5] The talk is extracted from "A Momentous Decision" by Mahadev Desai, who narrates it in sequence with Gandhiji's talks to "his co-workers"; *vide* pp. 259-60. By way of introduction Mahadev Desai explains that "in three days, Gandhiji had advanced a few more steps", presumably, after he arrived in Rajkot on May 12.

me in strident tones: 'Your victory was no victory. Throw it away!' You want me to go on with the work of the Award, because it belongs to you. But how can I go on with it when my courage fails me, my hands are shaking and I am faltering? It is a moral issue with me. The consciousness of the wrong of the initial step I took oppresses me and I cannot go on with it, however much you may want me to go on with it. What will you do with such a halting, faltering general? I must throw the Award overboard and you in your turn may throw the general overboard.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

280. TALCHER

Talcher promises to be much worse than Rajkot. In Rajkot it was the Ruler's word that was broken. In Talcher it is the Paramount Power's. In Rajkot the State atrocities were not the subject of scrutiny. In Talcher the sorry condition of the numerous refugees is almost everything. Hence delay is criminal and may mean loss of one year's crop to several thousand cultivators. The other relief promised by the Political Agent, Major Hennessey, relates to paltry things so far as the Ruler of Talcher is concerned but they are serious enough for the people.

It has been whispered to me that I have been guilty of injustice to Major Hennessey and hence to the Paramount Power by attributing to them breach of promise; for, it is said, Major Hennessey promised nothing, he merely undertook to convey to the Ruler the wishes of the people concerned. It is further said that even if it is proved that he made any such promise he did so without authority.

I cannot admit either of the pleas. Major Hennessey signed the document without any reservations. Shri Harekrushna Mahtab described the tragedy with a wealth of detail which compels conviction. He has been an eye-witness of the events narrated by him. So far as I am aware Major Hennessey himself has never denied or has not been given an opportunity of denying the allegations made about him.

There seems to be no doubt that the Ruler of Talcher is in no mood to do justice to his people unless he is made to act according to the *sanad* I have already reproduced[1] in these columns.

[1] *Vide* p. 152.

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The representative of the Paramount Power can even require the smaller States of Orissa to perform acts in the interest of their people. Can there be any doubt as to the necessity of redressing every one of the injustices mentioned in the memorandum signed by Major Hennessey? Indeed redress has been long overdue. Why is the Ruler being humoured by the Political Department in his wholly indefensible attitude? Why is the welfare of several thousand refugees being lightly regarded? Is not the prestige of the Paramount Power being used to sustain the admitted evils? Surely there is something radically wrong somewhere in all this.

RAJKOT, May 16, 1939

Harijan, 20-5-1939

281. TELEGRAM TO KANTHI

May 17, 1939

KANTHI
K. P. C. C. MEMBER
HUBLI

MY WRITING CAN PERMIT NO COERCION.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

282. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

RAJKOT,
May 17, 1939

I said[2] at Calcutta on the 24th ultimo that Rajkot had proved a laboratory for me. The latest proof of the fact lies in the step I am now announcing. After an exhaustive discussion with my co-workers I have come to the conclusion at 6 o'clock this evening that I should renounce the advantages accruing from the Award of the Chief Justice.

I recognize my error. At the end of my fast I had permitted myself to say that it had succeeded as no previous fast had done. I now see that it was tainted with *himsa*. In taking the fast I sought immediate intervention of the Paramount Power so

[1] This appeared under the title "Confession and Repentance". The statement was also published in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* of May 18.

[2] *Vide* p. 171. Gandhiji was on his way to Calcutta.

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as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not the way of ahimsa or conversion. It was the way of *himsa* or coercion. My fast to be pure should have been addressed only to the Thakore Saheb and I should have been content to die if I could not have melted his heart or rather that of his adviser, Durbar Shri Virawala. My eyes would not have been opened if I had not found unexpected difficulties in my way. Durbar Shri Virawala was no willing party to the Award. Naturally, he was in no obliging mood. He therefore took advantage of every opportunity to cause a delay. The Award, instead of making my way smooth, became a potent cause of angering the Muslims and Bhayats against me. Before the Award we had met as friends. Now I am accused of having committed a breach of promise, voluntarily and without any consideration, made by me. The matter was to go to the Chief Justice for decision as to whether I was guilty of the alleged breach of promise. The statements of the Muslim Council and the Garasia Association are before me. Now that I have taken the decision to renounce the Award, there is no occasion for me to answer the two cases. So far as I am concerned, the Muslims and Bhayats can have anything the Thakore Saheb may be pleased to give them. I must apologize to them for having put them to the trouble of preparing their cases.

I owe an apology to the Viceroy for the unnecessary strain I have put upon him in my weakness. I apologize to the Chief Justice for having been the cause of putting him to the labour which, had I known better, he need not have gone through. Above all, I apologize to the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Shri Virawala. So far as the latter is concerned, I must also own that, in common with my co-workers, I have harboured evil thoughts about him. I do not here pause to consider whether the charges made against him were true or not. This is not the place to discuss them. Suffice it to say that the way of ahimsa was not and had not yet been applied to him.

And let it be said to my discredit that I have been guilty of playing what may be called a double game, i. e., hanging the sword of the Award over his head and wooing him and expecting him of his own free will to advise the Thakore Saheb to grant liberal reforms.

This method I admit is wholly inconsistent with ahimsa. When all of a sudden I made what is known as a sporting offer to Mr. Gibson on 19th April, I discovered my weakness. But I had not the courage then and there to say, 'I do not want to have

anything to do with the Award.' Instead I said, 'Let the Thakore Saheb appoint his own Committee and then the Parishad people will examine the report in terms of the Award, and if it is found defective it can go to the Chief Justice.' Durbar Shri Virawala detected a flaw and very properly rejected the offer, saying: 'You are still hanging the Award over my head and want to become a court of appeal over the Thakore Saheb's Committee. If such is the case, you must take your pound of flesh and no more.' I saw the force of his objection. I told him, too, that I lacked the courage then to throw the Award overboard, but I would still plead with him to come to terms with the people as if the Award was not in existence and as if the Sardar and I had also withdrawn. He promised to try. He tried in his own fashion but not with a large heart. I do not blame him. How could I expect large heart when he knew my faint-heartedness in clinging to the Award?

Only trust can beget trust. I lacked it myself. But at last I have regained my lost courage. My faith in the sovereign efficacy of ahimsa burns brighter for my confession and repentance.

I must not do an injustice to my co-workers. Many of them are filled with misgivings. My exposition of ahimsa is new to them. They see no cause for my repentance. They think that I am giving up a great chance created by the Award. They think too that as a political leader I have no right to play fast and loose with the fortunes of 75,000 souls, maybe of the whole of the people of Kathiawar. I have told them that their fears are unjustified, and that every act of purification, every accession of courage, adds to the strength of the cause of a people affected by a movement of satyagraha. I have told them, too, that if they regard me as the general and expert of satyagraha, they must put up with what may appear to them to be my vagaries.

Having now freed the Thakore Saheb and his adviser from the oppression of the Award, I have no hesitation in appealing to them to appease the people of Rajkot by fulfilling their expectations and dispelling their misgivings.

Harijan, 20-5-1939

283. DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI[1]

[*May 17, 1939*][2]

MAHADEV DESAI: How was it wrong to ask the Paramount Power to intervene? You did not insist on the letter of your vow. Otherwise you might have said you could not break the fast until your demand was satisfied. But you were content with the arbitration of the Chief Justice. Even so in 1918[3] when you fasted during the Ahmedabad labour strike you did not insist on the 35 per cent increase in wage but you contented yourself with the mill-owners consenting to an arbitration. In fact, if the Thakore Saheb had yielded to your demand without the intervention of the Paramount Power, he might have charged you with having coerced him. But here the arbitration which was the result of the fast ought to have been given [to] you even without the fast.

GANDHIJI: You are right. But why don't you see that in 1918[4] the arbitration was offered by the mill-owners? If the Thakore Saheb had offered arbitration of his own accord, it would have been splendid. But here I appealed to the Paramount Power. That is why the arbitration has been infructuous. I had no business to be impatient. Instead of waiting on God and allowing my fast to work itself I sought outside aid. It was a grave blunder.

But why not wait until Sir Maurice Gwyer gives his decision on the new reference? Let not the Mussalmans and Bhayats have the pretext of saying you fought shy of the Chief Justice's decision.

Why must I wait to take the right decision? It cannot await a moment's delay. I know that the reference is mischievous and we must win. That might give greater value to the renunciation. But I am not renouncing the Award in order that the world may acclaim the act. By no means. I am freeing myself from a terrible oppression. I have made my decision and am feeling free as a bird.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

[1] & [2] The discussion is extracted from "A Momentous Decision". Mahadev Desai explains that they had the discussion after the statement to the Press "was ready . . . and before it was typed"; *vide* the preceding item. Vallabhbhai Patel was also present.

[3] & [4] The source, however, has "1917"; *vide* Vol. XIV.

284. TALKS WITH CO-WORKERS, RAJKOT[1]

[After *May 17, 1939*][2]

I proved myself of little faith. If I had staked my all on my faith in God and on the efficacy of my fast in melting the Thakore Saheb's and Durbar Shri Virawala's heart, the worst that could have happened would have been my death. But it would have been a worthy death. And if the Thakore Saheb and Virawala had not let me die, they would have come to me as friends and given me what I wanted. In any event the result would have been better than the breach of my faith in God and making Durbar Virawala my enemy by appealing to the Viceroy to intervene and even to turn him out. I am amazed at my own folly in thus antagonizing him and still expecting to convert him. His own generosity is, I think, out of proportion to the provocation I had given him.

My hands are shaking and my steps faltering.

The very possession of this Award has made me a coward, and I am afraid if I were to retain it, it would make cowards of you too. A satyagrahi does not depend for his strength on external means. His strength comes from within, from his reliance on God. God becomes his shield when he throws down all his earthly weapons. But if he were to hide a fire-arm in his pocket, his inner strength would go and he would cease to feel invulnerable. The Award was very like a fire-arm in the pocket of a votary of ahimsa like me. It stood between me and my God. It shamed me and made a coward of me. I have thrown it away as Christian did his load of sin, and I am feeling again free and invulnerable and one with my Maker.

You ought to understand and appreciate the rejection of the Award. It was well-nigh impossible for you to have (to use the legal language) that decree executed. I could have got it done, but at the cost of enormous labour and time and the

[1] The talks are extracted from Mahadev Desai's first three articles serialized under the title "The Decision and After". The first four paragraphs are reproduced from the first article of the series, the last four from the third of the series, and those in between from the second.

[2] Gandhiji had taken the "decision" to renounce the Gwyer Award on May 17, 1939; *vide* p. 269.

legal talent that I still possess. Meanwhile your energies would have been rusting, and your hands would have been crippled. You would have learnt nothing from the skill with which I should have been tackling the fresh hurdles that were being daily placed in my way. I have saved you from the burden of my sin. You are, at worst, 'as you were'. If you want foolishly to march to jail, you are now free. Only you must not look to me. I can carry you forward along my own lines. It may be that I am unfit to lead you. You can then discard me, and you have every right to do so. You may not tolerate a general who changes his tactics every now and then. But if you will have me, you must have me on my terms.

I have not yet known a general who has not altered time and again the plans of his campaign and made eleventh-hour alterations in his orders. The ordinary fighting soldier knows nothing of these plans. In fact they are a closely-guarded secret unknown to all but the general himself. That is why Tennyson wrote those immortal lines — "Theirs not to reason why, theirs not to make reply, theirs but to do and die." But these words apply, if you please, to a satyagrahi army more appropriately than to the ordinary army. For a military general may change his plans in view of the changing situation every day. A military strategy depends on the changing tactics of the enemy. The satyagrahi general has to obey his inner voice, for over and above the situation outside he examines himself constantly and listens to the dictates of the inner self. But both in satyagraha and military warfare the position of the soldier is very nearly the same. He knows no rest, no certainty of movements, the only certainty for him is to face heavy odds and even death. His promise to be under discipline and to obey the general's command applies even during the period of suspension of hostilities. But I have not asked for this kind of discipline. I have always tried to carry conviction to my co-workers, to carry their hearts, and their reasons with me. I shall go on doing so always, but where you cannot follow, you will have to have faith. In ordinary warfare one soldier cannot reason why. In our warfare there is enough scope for reasoning, but there is a limit to it. You will go on arguing until you are convinced, but when no conviction comes, you must fall back on faith.

There is now the way of negotiation open to you, but if you cannot think of it, it is open to you to fight. In fact if I had not cast away the Award, the fight would have been long delayed. I have saved you a few months. But you can overthrow my

leadership and be free. From the point of view of satyagraha there is nothing but good coming out of the decision. A general is none the worse for realization of his weakness and for atoning for his sin. In fact sin, ignorance, weakness are synonymous, and in asking for the Viceroy's intervention and clinging to the Award I was guilty of all the three. When a general purifies himself as I have done, far from weakening his army he adds to its strength enormously.

There should not be the least little suspicion in your mind that Durbar Virawala cannot be converted, no matter how non-violent you may be. Do you mean to say that he is the concentrated essence of evil in Kathiawar? Let me assure you that we in his position might have done no better. Every one of us is a mixture of good and evil. Is there not plenty of evil in us? There is enough of it in me and I always pray to God to purge me of it. The difference that there is between human beings is the difference of degree, and you must always try to place yourself in the position of the man you are about to judge. Virtue lies in discovering the best in your opponent and in appealing to it.

This depends on individual workers cultivating non-violence in thought, word and deed, by means of a concentrated effort in the fulfilment of the fourfold constructive programme. Maximum of work and minimum of speech must be your motto. In the centre of the programme is the spinning-wheel—no haphazard programme of spinning, but scientific understanding of every detail, including the mechanics and the mathematics of it, study of cotton and its varieties, and so on. There is the programme of literacy. You must concentrate exclusively on it, and not talk of any other thing. The work should be systematic and according to time-table. Don't talk of politics—not even of non-violence—but talk to them of the advantages of literacy. There is prohibition of drink and intoxicating drugs and of gambling. There is medical relief by means of the propagation of simple rules of hygiene and sanitation and elementary preventive measures, and of cheap home remedies and training intelligent village folk in these.

There should not be one house in Rajkot with which you have not established contact from the point of view of pure service. You have to cultivate the Mussalmans, serve them unselfishly. There are the Harijans. Establish living contact with them.

All this constructive work should be for its own sake. And yet be sure that it will develop the quality required for non-violent responsible government. That is how I began my work in South Africa. I began with serving them. I did not know

myself that I was training them for civil disobedience. I did not know myself that I was so training myself. But you all know what happened in the end.

This constructive programme may go on endlessly. Why should you be tired of it? Do you know the Hundred Years' War in England? If they fought for a hundred years, we should be prepared to fight for a thousand years, inasmuch as we are a continent. That we will have given our contribution to the fight for freedom, will be our reward.

That is the mass constructive programme I want you to do, and that is the basis of the training for the non-violence of the brave. It is whole and indivisible, and those who do not believe in it wholeheartedly must leave me and work according to their own lights.

Q. If the situation is different, if the people in a State are to a man ready to offer the utmost they can?

A. Then I would say to them: 'Be reduced to ashes.' But that will be on one condition, viz., that you have reached the state of non-violence of my description. If I can have that assurance, I would say that though it is unequal battle you may fight single-handed in spite of opposition from the Paramount Power and the States. I would be the last person to cool the zeal and ardour of the people.

Q. But would it not suffice if the workers were pledged to carry out the programme and carried it out faithfully?

A. Hardly. For you have to give a visible demonstration of the fact that the whole of the State obeys your discipline. You want responsible government for all, not merely for the workers.

Gandhiji gave two instances. In 1922 he was sent to jail. He gave express instructions[1] to the effect that there should be no hartal, no demonstrations, work should go on as usual. A Secretary of State had described the situation in his derisive way: "When Gandhiji went to jail not a dog barked." But Gandhiji accepted it as a compliment and said that he was responsible for the quiet that prevailed. The people had literally carried out his instructions. Another instance: In 1921 there were the riots in Bombay. Gandhiji declared a fast until the rioters came to their senses.[2] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani was then living. He had complete control on the mischievous element, and he said to Gandhiji: "Please break the fast. I know these men, they are under my control and I assure you they will be quiet." Gandhiji said:

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXIII, pp. 84 and 87.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 466-7.

You should be able to say that with regard to all whether they belong to your party or not. To acquire that control the people should fulfil the constructive programme in all its details. Non-violence has failed in exact proportion to the failure of the charkha. There are other items—prohibition, Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability. It is difficult to submit individuals to the test in these items. There is room for self-deception. Not so in the matter of the wheel. The work can be measured from day to day.

You have to take up the programme with apostolic zeal. I cannot give you a new programme. Civil disobedience is for the few who are saturated with the spirit of non-violence and are ready for the utmost sacrifice. Constructive programme is for all. It is to be accepted by all actively and not as a lip profession. It has got to be worked or not worked. Khadi is worn or not worn. Let this fourfold programme be the acid test of your followers. Otherwise of course don't the cinema companies and cigarette sellers have a large enough following? Don't be deluded by those who gather about you and shout '*Inquilab zindabad*'[1] or swear at someone or other.

Banish all idle thoughts from your hearts and concentrate only on the thoughts you must have. You will thus obtain marvellous control over yourselves and others. A good man's thought never goes in vain. Thought-control means maximum of work with minimum of energy. If we had that control, we should not have to put forth the tremendous effort we do. Non-violent action does mean much silent work and little speech or writing. These will always be necessary because thought-control is not an easy thing. Nevertheless we have to cultivate that habit if we will have non-violence reigning supreme in this land and if we are to have responsible government through unadulterated non-violence.

CO-WORKER: Whether we stand the test or not, you alone can say, not we.

GANDHIJI: No, I cannot presume to say that. If you can affirm that you have living faith in God, no matter how you define God, it should be enough. You believe in some principle, clothe it with life, and say that it is your God and you believe in it. I should think it enough. I fasted apparently with complete faith in God. But instead of God I called the Viceroy to

[1] "Long live the revolution."

my aid. The satyagrahi has no other stay but God. For the moment my faith in God was dead.

Q. But then an atheist like Bradlaugh[1] may have the capacity to sacrifice all. But you would rule him out as a satyagrahi?

A. I am afraid I would. Such a man is worthy of my reverence; but such a one would himself say he is not a satyagrahi of my definition. But I may be doing an injustice to his memory. I never had the privilege of meeting him. He might have had a living faith in an indefinable, self-acting Power whilst he declared himself an atheist.

Harijan, 3-6-1939, 10-6-1939 and 17-6-1939

285. INTERVIEW TO STEEL[2]

RAJKOT,
[After *May 17, 1939*][3]

STEEL: What is your idea of independence?

GANDHIJI: By independence I mean complete withdrawal of British power from India. It does not exclude partnership between two nations enjoying equal independent status and terminable by either at will. It need not be different from Dominion Status. But perhaps Dominion Status won't be a happy term to use for a continent like India which is ethnologically and politically different from other Dominions like South Africa, Canada, Australia, etc. But perhaps this term is as elastic as the English Constitution. And if Dominion Status could be so defined as to cover a case like India and if India could come to an honourable agreement with England, I would not quarrel about words. If British statesmen feel it convenient to use the word Dominion Status about India rather than any other, in order to describe that honourable agreement, I will not quarrel.

S. But there are elements in the Congress like Subhas Bose and his group who want absolute independence outside the British Empire.

[1] Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891), English free-thinker and radical who became known as a free-thought lecturer under the name of "Iconoclast".

[2] Of *The New York Times*. The interview appeared under the title "No Quarrel about Words" by Pyarelal.

[3] From Steel's concluding question and Gandhiji's answer to it, it is evident that the meeting took place after Gandhiji had renounced the Gwyer Award on May 17.

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G. It is only a question of terminology. I won't admit any difference between Subhas Babu and myself on this point though we may use different language. Supposing such free and equal partnership as I have postulated were feasible, Subhas Babu won't say 'No' to it. But today if such a proposition were put to him, he will probably say, as he well may, it is ruled out for him. For he would say the British are not likely to yield so easily as some might think. If he talks to me like that, I won't combat him but would say that I prefer to use the language that I use as being more suited to my temperament and my faith in the essential identity of human nature.

Gandhiji's interviewer next wanted to know if there were any negotiations going on between him and the authorities in connection with the 'Federation'.

G. None whatsoever. All suggestions to this effect that one sees in the Press are mere figments of imagination. The present Viceroy is not made that way. He does not believe in doing things secretly. He puts all his cards on the table and likes taking the public into his confidence. At any rate that is my impression. I think he does believe that no cause is damaged by open negotiation.

But I feel certain that the 'Federation' won't come whilst it is not acceptable to the Congress or the Mussalmans or the Princes. I am inclined to think that the British statesmen won't impose Federation upon an unwilling and dissatisfied India, but will try to placate all parties. That, at any rate, is my hope.

It would be first-class tragedy if it is imposed upon India. The federal structure cannot be brought into being in the midst of sullenness and opposition. If the 'Federation' is not wanted by any of the parties, it would be the height of impudence to force it.

S. What is the alternative?

G. The alternative may be to offer something that would be acceptable to all or either of the three parties.

S. But you do not believe with Subhas Bose that the best alternative would be to issue an ultimatum?

G. That is the fundamental difference between Subhas Babu and myself. Not that the ultimatum is in itself wrong, but it has to be backed by an effective sanction and there are today no non-violent sanctions. If all the parties come to an honourable understanding, an effective sanction could be easily forged.

Referring next to the communal situation, Mr. Steel asked whether, in Gandhiji's opinion, the Hindu-Muslim situation was getting worse.

G. Apparently yes, perhaps. But I have every hope that ultimately we are bound to come together. The interests that are common to us and that bind us together are so tremendous that the leaders of both the sections must come to terms. Force of circumstances will compel them to do so. That we appear to be farthest apart from one another today is a natural outcome of the awakening that has taken place. It has emphasized the points of difference and accentuated prejudices, mutual suspicions and jealousies. Fresh demands that are coming into being every day with the new leadership have further made confusion worse confounded. But I hope out of chaos order is going to emerge.

S. Are not the differences between the Muslim League and the Congress unbridgeable?

G. The differences are insubstantial.

S. You think the time is not ripe for an ultimatum; what then should the next move be?

G. To put our own house in order. Immediately we have done that and brought the various elements together, we should be ready.

S. What help do you expect from the U.S.A.?

G. I expect a lot of help from the U. S. A. by way of friendly criticism, if it must be criticism. What I find today is that it is either excessive praise of Indian effort or hopelessly unenlightened criticism. Your Press has made very little effort to enlighten American opinion on the right lines.

S. Does your renunciation of the Award imply an abandonment of effort?

G. By no means. On the contrary, having eased myself of the burden of error, I feel as light as a bird and freer to continue my effort to solve the problem of the Indian States.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

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286. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

RAJKOT,
May 18, 1939

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I got your loving gift quite a few days ago, but have not been able to write till now. May you live long and prove yourself a good woman. I wear the *kachha*[1] sent by you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9425

287. DISCUSSION WITH KASTURBA GANDHI[2]

[*May 18, 1939*][3]

GANDHIJI (smilingly): But why would you not plead my case?

KASTURBA: But how can I? I do not myself understand.

But you must understand. You remember the time in South Africa when you were dying and the doctor said you would not live unless you took chicken broth?

Oh yes, I remember.

Well, if you do, don't you also remember that though I allowed you to do as you liked you said you would prefer to die but you could not take chicken broth?

Yes.

That was because you were firm in your faith in God. You knew that God would keep you if He so willed, but that you would not care to live by breaking your vow not to touch meat.

[1] Underwear

[2] This is extracted from "A Momentous Decision". Mahadev Desai explains: "Gandhiji's aged sister, ignorant and unlettered but a devout soul, was terribly perturbed over the decision and was disconsolate as she had heard someone say that Gandhiji had been defeated. The news had come to Kasturba with a shock; she also perhaps shared the sister's feelings. She pleaded with Gandhiji to console the aged sister."

[3] According to Mahadev Desai, the discussion was on "the next day" after the one he had with Gandhiji on May 17; *vide* p. 272.

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Yes.

Even so I should have fasted until the Thakore Saheb and Durbar Virawala had come to me relenting and saying, 'Please break your fast. We are going to fulfil our promise.' Instead I wavered. I thought I must seek the aid of the British Government, lest I should die. It was a sin. And if I got the Award by committing the sin, I must give up the fruit of sin.

But Thakore Saheb and Virawala are placing obstructions in the way. If they were not doing so, the Award would work all right and there would be an end to all the trouble. They are so obstreperous.

They are so, because of my initial blunder. I irritated them and I have no right to expect better treatment from them. It is not they who are putting the obstacles. It is God acting through them who is putting the obstacles. It is God who has thus opened my eyes and shown me the way. And the sooner I wash my hands of the sin the better. Don't you think so?

Yes. But what of the repressive ordinances, the fines, etc.? We have given up everything and they are still going on as usual.

What does that matter? We have to do our duty, trusting them to do theirs. Why don't you see that because I failed in my duty and was impatient to reap the result of my fast or to break it soon that God has punished me thus? But I am not defeated. Tell sister there is no defeat in the confession of one's error. The confession itself is a victory.

Harijan, 27-5-1939

288. TALK WITH A CHILD[1]

[On or after *May 18, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI: The Award was a cobra. And when we have a cobra in the house how do we feel?

CHILD: We are afraid.

Well then so long as the Award was there both Durbar Shri Virawala and I were afraid of it, and were trying to dodge it.

[1] & [2] This talk is extracted from "The Decision and After–I". Mahadev Desai explains: "As much light was shed on the situation by his talk with a child the other day as was done by his talk with Kasturba [*vide* the preceding item]. The child had no doubt about the rejection of the Award. But he was wondering what we had gained by the rejection."

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But it would not be dodged. I have gently put it out of the house and we are both now free from fear.

I see that it was necessary to discard the Award, but what have we gained?

Is it a small gain to have been rid of a venomous cobra and thus rid of fear? It was a cobra in the house. We can now live in the house like a happy family. Durbar Shri Virawala and I not only sought to dodge the cobra but we used to shun each other. We at least meet each other now as friends!

But what is it worth? What is there in Durbar Shri Virawala to draw out?

What is there in you? Well, if there are any virtues in you, even so there are in Durbar Shri Virawala. And if I hug you as my own child, why should I not hug Durbar Shri Virawala as a member of the family? I know you; I do not know Durbar Shri Virawala. But we have to be friends with him and to make the best of the virtues that he surely has. As you have *atman* in you, even so has he. Indeed there is no human being but has something valuable in him, some quality of the *atman*, if we can but observingly distil it out.

But what are we to do after the cobra is gone? With the cobra seems to have gone even the house — all that we had won.

No, nothing else is gone. The Notification is still there. And we are the wiser for the experience of the past three months. I had taken a wrong route, I have retraced my step. We thought that we could achieve much by hard swearing. We know that it had a contrary result. We have examined the quality of our ahimsa. It was poor. We had made enemies of our opponents. We have to win them by love, and the way is now clear for us. Our fight for freedom is not over. It cannot be over. But we are now free to carry it on in a better atmosphere and with cleaner weapons.

Harijan, 3-6-1939

289. MESSAGE TO INDIAN MERCHANTS' CHAMBER

[On or before *May 19, 1939*][1]

May the new habitation of the Indian Merchants' Chamber prove a blessing to the whole of India. I have many pleasant recollections of Lalji Naranji[2]. I am glad his memory is being honoured.

The Hindu, 20-5-1939

290. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT, RAJKOT STATE MUSLIM COUNCIL

[On or before *May 19, 1939*][3]

A moral question cannot be decided by a third person. It can only be decided by one's own conscience.

Gandhiji adds that what was to be decided by the Chief Justice was their claim to secure a right based on Gandhiji's words. Now there remained nothing for them to claim, inasmuch as he had renounced the Gwyer Award itself.

As for the charge of breach of promise, Gandhiji says that, if he had the least suspicion of having committed a breach of promise, they would not have had to go to an arbitrator. He was fully aware of what he had said. All that was however now a matter of the past.[4]

The Hindu, 20-5-1939

[1] The message was reported under the date-line "Bombay, May 19".

[2] A commercial pioneer

[3] The letter was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, May 19".

[4] In his reply, the addressee said: "We regret to note that you have dexterously evaded the important points raised in our letter. . . . issue of 'breach' of a promise given to Muslims cannot be ignored."

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291. TELEGRAM TO TANZEEM-UL-MOMININ[1]

[On or after *May 19, 1939*][2]

MY CONSCIENCE CLEAR. DEPUTATION CAN COME ANY DAY EXCEPT MONDAY BEFORE TWENTY-FOURTH.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

292. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

RAJKOT,
May 20, 1939

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Don't say I have neglected you. I was in travail and could not write letters, etc. Now that the burden is off my mind I can think of writing to you and other co-workers.

About Federation don't expect much from me. I am where I was. In practice there is no essential difference between, say, Subhas and me so far as opposition is concerned. In theory, I suppose, there is.

About the States my opinion is in a flush. The latest Rajkot statement[3] may assist you somewhat.

My position in the event of war would be personally no participation. What course the Congress will take, it is difficult to say. You will probably know it before this reaches you.

Talcher is shaping badly.[4] Charlie is distressed if not disgusted. There has been a betrayal. Let us hope the Viceroy will see it through.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1508

[1] & [2] The telegram was in reply to the one dated May 19, 1939, from the Tanzeem, an association of Muslims, which sought an interview with Gandhiji to a deputation of Shias in connection with the Shia-Sunni trouble that broke out in Lucknow on April 7, when about 600 Shias were arrested for publicly reciting *Tabarra*. According to *The Hindustan Times*, 24-5-1939, a deputation consisting of the "President, Secretary and members of the Executive Committee of Tanzeem" arrived in Rajkot on May 23. *Vide* also "A Letter", p. 293.

[3] *Vide* pp. 269-71.

[4] *Vide* also pp. 268-9.

293. LETTER TO KISHANSINH CHAWDA

RAJKOT,
May 20, 1939

BHAI KISHANSINH[1],

I am feeling a little lazy after the agony of the last few days. I am therefore dictating the letters lying in bed.

I got your letter. I am not surprised at what you tell me. But it is a mark of a non-violent man that he will not hurt even a violent person. The latter will either change or destroy himself through his own violence.

The future alone will show what the result of my experiment is.

You should not have helped Harilal. He has lost all sense of shame. He begs for help from everybody, and spends the money on drink. His habit of begging could perhaps be pardoned if he used the help well.

Weren't you saved by God? May you live long now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9835

294. TALK TO CO-WORKERS[2]

[On or after *May 20, 1939*][3]

Have I ever in my life been guilty of flattery? Have I ever resorted to flattery even in public interest? I declared years ago that I would not sell truth and non-violence even for the freedom of my country, and I have repeated it many times since. Would he who said it resort to flattery? When Durbar Shri Virawala invited me to go to the palace, he even said that I had justified my claim to be as the father of the Thakore Saheb, that

[1] A Gujarati writer

[2] & [3] The talk is extracted from "The Decision and After–I". Mahadev Desai explains that some of the Parishad workers were angry with Gandhiji for attending the Durbar at the palace. According to *Gandhi—1915–1948: A Detailed Chronology*, Gandhiji attended the Durbar on May 20, 1939.

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the latter would gladly come and see me, but that he would be happy if I went there. He said I need not attend the Durbar which was to be held, but that he would ask the people to wait a while to see me when I went there. I saw what he meant, but I was determined to attend even the Durbar if he had so desired. I would have attended it even if he had told me that it was in celebration of the Thakore Saheb's victory and my defeat. I had offended him by having secured the Award over his head, and I owed it to him to wipe out the offence by attending the function. It was a debt I owed and I was in honour bound to repay it with interest. He might have asked for even an act of humiliation from me, and I might have done anything short of sacrificing my sense of self-respect or honour. But he asked me to do nothing of the kind. The invitation was natural and polite. The Durbar was held to announce the repeal of repressive legislations, etc., and the formation of the Reforms Committee. He who atones for sins never calculates; he pours out the whole essence of his contrite heart. I may tell you that my atonement is not yet over. I know that I am speaking in a language that is beyond you, but if you have had even a slight glimpse of true ahimsa, you should feel that all that I am doing now is the most natural thing for me.

A non-violent fight is sharp as the edge of the sword, sharpened on the whetstone of the heart. A straight fight in an equal battle takes some bravery; but braver is he who, knowing that he is fighting an unequal battle, knowing that he would have to sacrifice 95 as against 5 of the enemy, faces death. That is why we still extol the prowess of Pratap and Shivaji. But a satyagrahi risks all and offers of himself a willing and pure sacrifice. Without the will and the purity the sacrifice is nothing worth. I assure you that what I have done is what every true satyagrahi ought to do. "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

Harijan, 3-6-1939

295. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

RAJKOT,
May 21, 1939

MY DEAR PRITHVI SINGH[1],

I was delighted to receive your letter. I did receive the previous letter, and I have been in correspondence with Shantilal about your book[2]. There is a hitch about the book being released for publication. I think there is no hurry about it.

I see that you have finished one year, and am glad that you have gained considerable inward experience. You must have seen from my recent writings how much value I attach to spinning as an aid to the growth of the spirit of non-violence, that is to say when spinning is done as a symbol of non-violence. Mechanically considered too, a person who spins for hours together, takes delight in it, will not be easily ruffled. He is able to meditate all the while he is spinning, provided his wheel is in perfect order, when the music of the wheel is an aid to contemplation. And he is no spinner who has no control over his wheel. I do wish that your second year is commenced with the resolution to achieve perfection in spinning as an aid to the development of non-violence. Your experience and experiment will help me considerably, as I believe you to be accurate in reading your own heart. Not many are able to do so. Men are more self-deceived than deceiving.

I am glad you like my first statement[3] on Rajkot. Now you have before you the second[4]. It was a difficult statement, but now the whole burden is off my shoulders.

Mahadev is now completely restored, and is with me. Jamnadas is at Bombay.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5634. Also C.W. 2945. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

[1] A revolutionary, who surrendered to Gandhiji after absconding arrest for 16 years; was sent to jail but later got discharged; *vide* Vol. LXX, "The Old Revolutionary", 25-9-1939.

[2] The addressee's autobiography, *Kranti Pathka Pathik*, written in jail

[3] *Vide* pp. 168-71.

[4] *Vide* pp. 269-71.

296. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO KHENGARJI SAVAI[1]

[Before *May 22, 1939*][2]

Gandhiji, it is stated, has pointed out in his letter that the satyagraha conducted by the Cutchi Prajakiya Parishad was suspended at his instance, but he has since come to know that there has been interference in the day-to-day activities of the Parishad.

Gandhiji hopes that better counsels will prevail and steps will be taken to ease the present tension.

The Hindu, 22-5-1939

297. THE JEWISH QUESTION

The Managing Editor of *Jewish Frontier*, published at 275 Seventh Avenue, New York City, was good enough to send me a copy of the March number of the magazine with the request that I should deal with its reply to my article[3] on the Jews in Germany and Palestine. The reply is very ably written. I wish I had space for reproducing the whole of it. The reader will, however, find the main argument reproduced[4] in this issue of *Harijan*.

Let me say that I did not write the article as a critic. I wrote it at the pressing request of Jewish friends and correspondents. As I decided to write, I could not do so in any other manner.

But I did not entertain the hope when I wrote it that the Jews would be at once converted to my view. I should have

[1] The addressee was the ruling chief (Maharao) of Cutch.

[2] The letter was reported under the date-line "Cutch-Bhuj, May 22".

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 137-41.

[4] In his reply entitled "We Are Treated as Subhumans: We Are Asked to be Superhuman", Hayim Greenberg had said: " . . . the spiritual leader of young India . . . blames us for not exhibiting the heroism of militant pacifism in those lands where Jews are persecuted . . . he accuses us of following an aggressively nationalist . . . policy in Palestine and of a desire to deprive the Arabs of their fatherland. . . . I cannot avoid the suspicion that so far as Palestine problem is concerned, Gandhi allowed himself to be influenced by the anti-Zionist propaganda being conducted among fanatic pan-Islamists. . . ."

been satisfied if even one Jew had been fully convinced and converted.

Nor did I write the article only for today. I flatter myself with the belief that some of my writings will survive me and will be of service to the causes for which they have been written. I have no sense of disappointment that my writing had not to my knowledge converted a single Jew.

Having read the reply more than once, I must say that I see no reason to change the opinion I expressed in my article. It is highly probable that, as the writer says, "a Jewish Gandhi in Germany, should one arise, could function for about five minutes and would be promptly taken to the guillotine". But that will not disprove my case or shake my belief in the efficacy of ahimsa. I can conceive the necessity of the immolation of hundreds, if not thousands, to appease the hunger of dictators who have no belief in ahimsa. Indeed the maxim is that ahimsa is the most efficacious in front of the greatest *himsa*. Its quality is really tested only in such cases. Sufferers need not see the result during their lifetime. They must have faith that if their cult survives, the result is a certainty. The method of violence gives no greater guarantee than that of non-violence. It gives infinitely less. For the faith of the votary of ahimsa is lacking.

The writer contends that I approached the Jewish problem "without that fundamental earnestness and passionate search for truth which are so characteristic of his usual treatment of problems". All I can say is that to my knowledge there was lack neither of earnestness nor of passion for truth when I wrote the article. The second charge of the writer is more serious. He thinks that my zeal for Hindu-Muslim unity made me partial to the Arab presentation of the case, especially as that side was naturally emphasized in India. I have often said that I would not sell truth for the sake of India's deliverance. Much less would I do so for winning Muslim friendship. The writer thinks that I am wrong on the Jewish question as I was wrong on the Khilafat question. Even at this distance of time I have no regret whatsoever for having taken up the Khilafat cause.[1] I know that my persistence does not prove the correctness of my attitude. Only it is necessary for everyone concerned to know where I stand today about my action in 1919-20.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that this writing of mine will give no satisfaction either to the Editor of *Jewish Frontier* or

[1] For Gandhiji's view on the Khilafat, *vide* Vol. XVI, pp. 344-5.

to my many Jewish friends. Nevertheless I wish with all my heart that somehow or other the persecution of the Jews in Germany will end and that the question in Palestine will be settled to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned.[1]

RAJKOT, May 22, 1939
Harijan, 27-5-1939

298. WITHDRAWN

In *Harijan* of December 24 there is a long report of my talk[2] with missionary friends from Tambaram on non-violence and the world crisis. When during the talk I took the illustration of the Jews, I am reported to have said:

> It is true that the Jews have not been actively violent in their own persons. But they called down upon the Germans the curses of mankind, and they wanted America and England to fight Germany on their behalf.

On reading the last sentence a dear friend wrote to me a fiery letter and challenged me to produce my authority for my remark. He said that I had been hasty in making the statement. I did not realize the importance of the rebuke. I did, however, want to produce support for my statement. I put Pyarelal and later Mahadev on the search. It is not always an easy task to find support for impressions one carries when speaking or writing. Meanwhile I received a letter from Lord Samuel supporting the contradiction of the friend referred to above. Whilst I was having the search made I got the following letter from Sir Philip Hartog:

> May I take the opportunity of saying that I agree with what my friends Mr. Polak and Lord Samuel tell me they have written to you about the attitude of the German Jewish refugees, of whom I have myself seen hundreds since 1933? I have never heard one of them express publicly or privately the desire for a war of vengeance against Germany. Indeed such a war would bring further misery to the hundreds of thousands of Jews still in Germany as well as untold suffering to millions of other innocent men and women.

I put greater diligence in my search. The searchers were not able to lay hands on any conclusive writing. The manager

[1] *Vide* also the following item.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 201-7.

of *Harijan* put himself in correspondence with the Editor of the *Jewish Tribune*, Bombay, who sent the following characteristic reply:

> This is not the first time that I have come across the imputation made against Jews that they urge countries like England and America to go to war against Germany on account of its persecution of Jews. Jews have never urged the democracies to wage war against Germany on account of its persecution of the Jews. This is a mischievous lie that must be nailed to the counter. If there is a war, Jews will suffer more than the rest of the population. This is a fact gleaned from the pages of history. And the Jew is a great lover and advocate of peace. I hope you will refute any such allegation that is made against them.

In the face of the foregoing weighty contradictions now enforced by the Editor of the *Jewish Tribune* and of the fact that I cannot lay my hands on anything on the strength of which I made the challenged observation, I must withdraw it without any reservation. I only hope that my observation has not harmed any single Jew. I know that I incurred the wrath of many German friends for what I said in all good faith.

RAJKOT, May 22, 1939
Harijan, 27-5-1939

299. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[1]

RAJKOT,
May 23, 1939

It has been a matter of grief to me that the Union Government have not respected their own agreement regarding their treatment of British Indians. There has been a policy of progressive stringency in their anti-Asiatic drive. One had hoped that what is known as the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914[2] was the last word in this matter. It was also hoped that with virtual restriction of Indian immigration, there would be progressive amelioration in the condition of domiciled Indians. But that hope was dashed to pieces. Much deterioration has taken place since. There have been Round Table and other conferences, agreements have been reached, but never has any finality been felt by the Indians. Evidently the Union Government would not be happy

[1] This appeared under the title "The Latest Menace". The message was also published in *The Hindu*, 24-5-1939.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XII, Appendix XXV.

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till they have either driven away Indians whom they have given legislative protection or reduced their status to such an extent that no self-respecting Indian would care to remain in South Africa. I have therefore not discountenanced their reported decision to fight this latest menace of segregation through civil resistance, if necessary. There must be perfect cohesion and union among the Indians who are divided into groups. And their resistance will be vain if they are not resolute in self-suffering. Public opinion in India including that of Europeans will, I hope, back the Indians in their unequal fight and call upon the Indian Government to exert its influence with the Union Government. Lastly, I appeal to the best mind of South Africa to see that simple justice is not denied to the Indian settlers who have done no wrong to the country of their adoption.[1]

Harijan, 27-5-1939

300. A LETTER[2]

RAJKOT,
May 23, 1939

DEAR FRIENDS,

I am sorry that you had to come all the way from Lucknow with regard to the Shia-Sunni trouble. You have asked me to study the case and give you my opinion on it. Though I am ill able to shoulder any further burden, I cannot resist your appeal. I shall try to find out from the other party also what their side is and give my opinion as early as I can. However my wish will be that some mutual adjustment would be possible and I shall be absolved from the necessity of giving my opinion.[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India", p. 259.

[2] This was presumably addressed to the office-bearers of the Tanzeem; *vide* "Telegram to Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", p. 285.

[3] For Gandhiji's opinion, *vide* Vol. LXX, "Letter to President, Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", Before 4-8-1939.

301. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK[1]

RAJKOT,
May 23, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter only today. Immediately after reading it I passed it on to Narandas. I had read about Deo in the papers. The remedy is patient endurance and time. You need not even reply to the charges, nor attend their meetings. If Deo had not attended the meeting, Dr. Khare would not have got so excited. If the opponent is not present, the critic finds no interest in abusing him.

I see no need for you to give up associating with Deo. So long as the hearts of both of you are pure and your association is exclusively for service, I see no necessity at all for you to give up Deo or change your work. Maybe it is necessary for you to change your outward behaviour. That is for you to judge. I might be able to judge if you were to see me and I could have a heart-to-heart talk with you.

I am hoping to arrive in Bombay on the 2nd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10399. Also C.W. 6838. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] In *Bapuna Patro–5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne*, the addressee explains that Dr. Khare, after resigning from the Central Provinces Ministry, had gone to Poona and made a public speech criticizing the Congress and Shankarrao Deo, who was then a member of the Congress Working Committee, with such vehemence that the audience got infuriated and manhandled Shankarrao Deo. The next day Shankarrao Deo addressed a public meeting. Dr. Khare's followers tried to disrupt the meeting by hooting. They questioned also the character of the addressee and the propriety of her relations with Shankarrao Deo.

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302. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RAJKOT[1]

May 23, 1939

I have come here to give an account of myself. I want to render account not before the Parishad alone, but before all the people of Rajkot belonging to all groups.

I came to Rajkot with no good thoughts about Mr. Virawala. I believed that the Thakore Saheb had broken his promise and from within I was prompted to undertake the fast. But my mind weakened and the very next day I wrote to the Viceroy for intervention. Now I see that it was an act of sin. Its outcome was the Award, and its consequences are known to you. As time went on, I realized my error and immediately renounced the Award.

I believe I have opened a new page in the history of Rajkot by my repentance and by the frank admission of my failure. In this I require your help. I cannot go on single-handed. If the ruler and the ruled both join hands and do their duty, this apparent failure would turn into a victory. This necessitates unity among the people.

Unity is the root of strength and progress. The Parishad must embrace and convert every section of the people. Some may not join hands with the Parishad owing to their weakness and others due to differences of opinion, even then they are with us.

I want the Parishad people to realize the implications of ahimsa. Ahimsa trusts the opponent, ahimsa does not attribute motives, it harbours no evil thoughts as I did in the case of Durbar Shri Virawala. Whether he really answered to the description that was being given of him or not, was beside the point. I shamed my ahimsa by suspecting him; whereas if I wanted to convert him, my love for him should have increased every day. If I had to use harsh words for him, they should have been such as I might have used only for my father, mother, wife or son. And you behaved no better. The Parishad workers put no curbs on their tongue and indulged in unrestrained language. You have now to begin a new chapter. You must bid good-bye to this inclination to indulge in unrestrained language. You have

[1] The meeting was held in the evening at Arya Chowk.

to understand ahimsa as you have not understood it before. Ahimsa means that you have to trust those whom you have come to regard as untrustworthy. Unless you do so, you can never convert them. Mahadev Desai and Mohanbhai who have been having daily talks with Durbar Shri Virawala tell me that his attitude has undergone a complete change. Don't tell me that this change may be only momentary. The momentary change may well become permanent some day. Ahimsa has no limits, and patience too has none. We lose nothing thereby. What I did lose was when I allowed my ahimsa or soul to be besmirched. I began the process of self-purification by discarding the Award. That process is still going on and it was for me but a step in the process to attend the Durbar.[1]

If you want to follow me you must have the faith that you could enter into the heart of your adversary by ahimsa. If you are true and confident of yourself, you may not think ill of Mr. Virawala. If you do, your ahimsa is not perfect. I ask you to have trust in me who has been a devotee of ahimsa for over fifty years.

Gandhiji referred to the anomaly of the State issuing another notification continuing the ban on the newspapers which he considered illegal and painful to the people. Gandhiji advised the people not to be disheartened over such matters. He asked them to stop reading papers which indulged in violent language, and advised them to boycott them if they embarrassed the cause by using such language. He also appealed to the Press to refrain from writing anything which might increase bitterness. Gandhiji appealed to the State also to have faith in the good sense of the people. He added:

There is not a single person in the whole world who does not deserve our love. To achieve unity of soul is the greatest *purushartha*[2]. I wish both the Ruler and the ruled in Rajkot may arrive at an understanding and thus become happy. I wish your administration to be such as to make it ideal. The late Thakore Sir Lakhajiraj has laid a strong foundation on which you can easily build an ideal structure.

I hope the [Reforms] Committee would work on the basis of the Notification No. 50 of December last. As for me, I have laid down all my weapons. Hence I can only make a request. I advise the Parishad workers to give full co-operation to the

[1] This paragraph is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Decision and After–I" in *Harijan*.

[2] Goal of human life

Committee and place before it their evidence and aspirations. I am still groping in the dark. I have not yet sufficiently found light. When I am fully enlightened I will place my programme before you and guide you, if you would want my guidance. Otherwise I will remain in my humble home.

Gandhiji said that there must be some Muslims as well as Bhayats present at the meeting. They had said a lot of things and bitter, too, about him.

However, I would wish they would carry my message. What brought me to Rajkot to make peace?

Replying himself, he recalled that he was closely connected with Rajkot and its ruling family. He was brought up in Rajkot. His father had served as Dewan in the State and lastly he was closely connected with the late Thakore Sir Lakhajiraj who had considered him as his guru.

The Hindustan Times, 24-5-1939, and *The Hindu*, 24-5-1939

303. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ANAND BHUWAN, RAJKOT,
May [*23*][1]*/24, 1939*

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter[2] of 15th instant.

Without wishing to enter into any controversy, I would like to say about Talcher that the whole of the evidence supplied by Shri Harekrushna Mahtab and enforced by Miss Agatha Harrison and others goes to show that, so far as the known facts go, there was the clearest possible belief that Major Hennessy was acting with authority. But whatever the fact may be, I hope that the poor ryots would not have to suffer long.

But the main purpose of this is to tell you formally what you must have seen from my public statement[3], that I was obliged, for conscience's sake, to renounce the Gwyer Award. It took me some time to detect that I had erred in asking Mr. Gibson[4] to send you the wire of 4th March. And having detected the error, I took further time to summon courage enough to throw away the obvious advantages of the Award and all it

[1] From the last sentence of the letter
[2] *Vide* Appendix XI.
[3] *Vide* pp. 269-71.
[4] *Vide* pp. 22-3.

meant. But at last I saw that even though I was acting for the public, I must discard a gain which from a moral point of view had appeared to me to be unlawful. Fast I have held too sacred a weapon to be used lightly. I betrayed unworthy weakness—a sure sign of violence—when instead of allowing the fast to run its course I invoked your assistance. From that moment it ceased to be a spiritual act. I would see nothing wrong in seeking your assistance if I was fighting along purely constitutional lines. Indeed the rich experiences I have gained during my travail show that if the Paramount Power is to do its legal duty it is bound to take a much more active part than it has hitherto taken about the rights of the ryots in the States. But this is by the way. My object just now is to apologize to you for all the trouble I caused you by my weakness. And may I ask you also to convey my apology to Sir Maurice Gwyer for the labours that he had to go through for delivering his Award? I know that the correct procedure for me was to let you have my recantation before the world knew anything about it. But I was having daily talks with Durbar Shri Virawala through Mahadev Desai. Every hour's delay added to my agony. I was dying to put myself right with him. I could accept nothing until I had disengaged myself from what I have stigmatized as a double game. And then too there has been delay in sending you this apology as my dealing with the aftermath of the recantation with my weak body left me little time for composing this letter. I wanted some leisure for it. I stole it partly last night and the rest this morning.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

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304. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

RAJKOT,
May 24, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

Why did you fall ill? Take the medicine suggested in the letter which Sushila is writing to you. But make this change in it. What you are suffering from is not dysentery but an infection which you have contracted here.[1] To cure it you should live for some time only on fruit juices and glucose. The fruits should include pineapples, pomegranates, *musambis*, oranges and grapes. Take about 50 ounces of juice and 2 to 4 ounces glucose. If you do this you will be able to keep up your strength. If you cannot drink this quantity of juice, you may drink less. If you think that the quantity of glucose also is too much, take less. Put a mud-pack of clean earth on the abdomen at night, cover it up with a piece of dry cloth and then wrap a piece of khadi round it. Remove the khadi piece when you wake up at night. Keep me informed. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 951. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

305. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

RAJKOT,
May 25, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Balkrishna is not going away for years and I shall be back only by the middle of July. Therefore there would have been no harm even if you had accompanied Balkrishna. Anyway your decision was good enough. Balkrishna's going is taking so much time that very soon it may get cold there and then it will be no use going. Anyway whatever is deemed best should be done. I must know soon about it.

[1] The addressee explains that conditions in Rajkot were so bad that most of the workers accompanying Gandhiji were stricken with one disease or another.

About the books for you I said what I did after full thought. Sushila is laid up with fever.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We reach Bombay on the 2nd and thence to the Frontier Province around the 5th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4316

306. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Of course I will give you the time you may need for explaining all you wish. But you must cease grieving. Weeping and brooding over injustices done to oneself is no virtue, it is definitely a vice. It is better cheerfully to submit to injustices than even unwittingly to do any injustice to anyone.

I forgot to tell you that P. was better after my severe talking to him. Only boundless love can cure him of his malady. I lack it. I lose patience with him as with no one. Have I ever told you that somehow or other I never spoke to Chhotelal or Pyarelal without losing temper? The wonder to me is that Ch. never resented my explosions. He is gone. I feel responsible for his suicide. My harsh treatment of P. when I discovered his love for Y. must be held to be unforgivable. Had I treated him sympathetically things would have taken a different turn. As it was, I had practically banished him to Orissa. My ahimsa failed me. But neither Ch. nor P. ever complained. On the contrary they read love in every act of mine. If Mahadev has time he must tell you what I mean.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3655. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6464

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307. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

How did you fall ill? Did you make a mistake about food? Shakaribehn must have called on you. You may keep her there as long as you wish.

Sushilabehn has fallen ill. She has low fever and diarrhoea.

We will leave this place on the 1st and reach Bombay on the 2nd morning. We shall have to stay in Bombay for three days. If you wish to stay with us during those days, join us at Surat. You will have got well by that time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10012. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

308. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. SHAMALDAS[1],

Can't you improve the language of *Janmabhoomi*? If you accept the policy of ahimsa, it is very necessary that you should make a conscious effort to change your language. If ahimsa is to find its way through the violence that is spreading all around, the newspapers which believe in ahimsa must transform themselves completely. Think over this. I don't wish that you should do anything for my sake, but if you are sincerely convinced of what I am saying, make the change.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 5802

[1] A nephew of Gandhiji, and editor of *Janmabhoomi*, a Gujarati daily published from Bombay

309. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Sushila is having fever. Nothing more remains to be done for that student. However please ask or write to Rajendra Babu about the matter. Tell him that it is not your job to collect money for them.

It is certainly good that you are having medical treatment. Sushila thinks that you must get your private parts examined by a woman doctor. Without such examination it will not be possible to prescribe the right treatment. Get yourself examined, therefore. Do continue milk and fruit. It would be very nice if you come to Segaon when I return there. We shall be starting from here on the 1st. After staying there for three or four days, we shall go to the Frontier Province. Kanti is here, and of course Saraswati too. Amtul Salaam is in Ahmedabad. Ba's health is all right and so is mine.

What have you done about your plan for studying?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3513

310. TELEGRAM TO CANTONMENT ASSOCIATION

RAJKOT,
May 27, 1939

CANTONMENT ASSOCIATION
ALLAHABAD

TELL BRIJMOHAN HIS FAST UNWARRANTED. HE SHOULD BREAK IT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

311. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 27, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

Your letter too seems thoughtless to me. There is anger in it also. There is arrogance even in your manner of asking for forgiveness. But then how can you change your nature? Do you consider your marrying in this way a marriage? You are deceiving yourself by believing so. How many people you have hurt by your action you do not know, and you do not feel sorry for that. It seems even the sorrow you expressed before me was momentary. However one cannot swallow what one has spat out. If you would release me, I am ready to be released. I am sure you will continue to receive money from Devdas. At present you get it through me. But it would suit me if he sends it directly to you. Your writing to me that I should forget you shows your impertinence. You know that I cannot forget you. Yes, the hopes which you had encouraged me to build on you seem to have been shattered. No matter how much you slight me, I will not cease to be your well-wisher. Wake up and shed your cruelty, be straightforward and humble, learn gentleness and get rid of the poison in you. Look upon all those who flatter you and please you by their sweet words as your enemies. You have hurt a good many people. Don't pride yourself on having made Saraswati your slave. Think of the pain caused to Ramachandran.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7360. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

312. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

RAJKOT,
May 27, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I had received the letter regarding Bal. I got Kaka's wire. I think the problem is over now. I shall be in Bombay from the 2nd to the 5th at any rate. It may perhaps be possible to meet during those days. God alone knows whether I shall get the time. From Bombay to the Frontier Province.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10788

313. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

May 27, 1939

BHAI SUBEDAR[1],

I got your letter. You have suggested a very difficult way. It seems almost impossible to harmonize mutually contradictory points of view and run the Government. It is one thing to do justice to all points of view and be generous to those holding the minority view, but to include all parties in the Ministry seems another matter altogether. I have made no attempt at all to study the working of the different Ministries and do not know their problems. All the same I intend to put your suggestion before the Bombay Ministry. But before doing that I intend to put your letter before Sardar. You do not object to that, do you? I will not proceed further before I hear from you.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From Gujarati: C.W. 5803

[1] An economist

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314. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 27, 1939

BAPA,

I have read the cutting sent by you. Will they let me set right the affairs of the Comilla Ashram? Bengal politics are in a curious state. They wouldn't eat themselves nor let others eat. In such circumstances what can one do?

The Talcher chapter[1] has become complicated. Let me see.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1183

315. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
6.20 a.m., May 28, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is the fourth letter I am writing without the break of a day. I can't feel happy till I have convinced you that we are all authors of our own misery. If we have imbibed the first principles of ahimsa we must learn to put up even with real injustices from dear ones and that without grief. We do nothing strange when we requite felt love. But our love becomes potent when we rejoicingly suffer felt injustice. This really resolves itself into what I started this letter with, that justice and injustice have no existence apart from our feeling. I want you therefore to imbibe this first lesson of ahimsa and assure me that there will be no more of weeping or harbouring secret and silent sorrow and grief. If you cannot learn this from me, you will learn nothing.

Love.

TYRANT

[1] *Vide* pp. 268-9.

[PS.]

7.30 a.m.

Khurshed has written to you about Women's Congress. I would favour the idea, if it appeals to you.

From the original: C.W. 3656. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6465

316. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 28, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

This note will be brought by an old client of mine, Shaikh Farid. He had a store in Pietermaritzburg. He has to go there because of the death of his brother. But he doesn't know anybody now in Pietermaritzburg. Ascertain his need and introduce him to somebody if you can or do whatever else may be necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
"INDIAN OPINION"
PHŒNIX

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4896

317. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

RAJKOT,
May 28, 1939

CHI. SHARMA,

When did we ever decide that I was to answer you each time you wrote? I was so tied up that I had no alternative. My health is good. We set out from Rajkot on the 1st. We shall be in Bombay till the 5th or 6th and then on to the Frontier Province. How did you get the stomach trouble and what did unboiled milk have to do with it?

Some books on physiology, etc., had been ordered for you.

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Send me the titles and other details. How useful did they prove to you? A worker at Segaon needs similar books.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 279 and 280

318. LETTER TO RANJIT

May 28, 1939

BHAI RANJIT,

I have your letter. In the West, boys in many schools take their bath completely naked. Perhaps in your school they are imitating some of their ways. If that is so, it should not be considered sinful. The whole question deserves careful thinking. You should try to ascertain more facts.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

319. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

MIRABEHN
CARE MANGALSAIN BANKERS
ABBOTABAD

HOPING LEAVE BOMBAY SIXTH JUNE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6443. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10038

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320. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter arrived today after unexpected absence. But I was not worrying. There is enough here to occupy me. Heat is your enemy. Stenches and crowds add to the difficulty. From your telegram I infer that you are safely in Hazara. I hope it is cooler or rather less hot there. I expect to get away on 6th from Bombay for the Frontier Province. But God disposes.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6442. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10037

321. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

It is perfectly true that you do not get justice. I cannot myself manage to write. I have asked Kanu. I have tried numerous arrangements, but when I myself am lax how can I blame anybody else? I will see if I can be regular now.

I have been trying to do what I can about the problem there.[1] It will be good if I get regular reports from there. Do you think the movement will go on well?

What does the fact that you didn't get permission for even one assistant indicate? I had thought that it would be child's play for Manilal to secure such permission.

I am all right. We leave this place on June 1 and go to Bombay. After four or five days there, we go to the Frontier Province.

[1] The reference is to the South Africa Union's policy of segregating Indians; *vide* "Message to Indians in South Africa", pp. 292-3.

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The rest if someone writes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4897

322. LETTER TO VINODINI AND SAMYUKTA GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. VINODINI AND SAMYUKTA[1],

I have your joint letter. I am glad that you wrote to me. You must follow the doctor's advice. But the real support is Ramanama. That is the only true remedy. I will arrive in Bombay on the 2nd.

I am not writing separately to Jaya. She must be regaining strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

323. TO PARSI FRIENDS

Parsi friends continue to favour me with their letters, some of which do not err on the side of politeness. Some are affectionate and so simple that they believe me to be capable of performing wonders. Among these writers there is one who writes with a lacerated heart and sends me cuttings which contain palpable falsehoods. He asks me to appeal to the Parsis with a view, at least, to purging the opposition of indecency. The language used in the cuttings is not translatable. The families of those who have incurred their ill-will have not been left alone. Vulgarity is too mild a term for characterizing some of the writings. One writer uses language of violence which certainly brings him within penal laws. But the writers have no fear of the law. The writings before me are a fair sample of 'civil' liberty. I call these writings terrorism of minorities. One writer has given the prohibition campaign a communal turn and has not hesitated to say that Congress Hindus have plotted to ruin the Parsis!

[1] Daughters of Jaisukhlal Gandhi, a nephew of Gandhiji

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Surely abuse is no argument. Let the Parsis who are interested in opposing prohibition carry on whatever agitation they like. But let it be decent, non-violent and within bounds.

Must one hundred thousand Parsis hold up an overdue reform which promises to bring a ray of hope in the dungeons of the labouring population which far outnumbers the whole of the Parsi population? Every legitimate ground of complaint has been removed by Dr. Gilder. No Parsi whose health requires the use of spirituous liquors will be deprived of them. If Parsi religious rites really demand the use of the fiery liquid, they shall be supplied. Then there is the economic question. Many poor liquor dealers will be hard hit by the deprivation of their means of livelihood. I understand that the Ministers are taxing themselves to devise some legitimate method of dealing with them. But it will surely be very difficult, if not impossible, for them to do anything, if the wild ferment is kept up and terrorism short of physical violence is applied. Not that the Ministers should not do justice because of terrorism, but it incapacitates them for taking effective action. For instance, it is necessary for the heads of the Parsi Panchayat to confer with the Ministers and in consultation with them think out a plan whereby prohibition in Bombay can be inaugurated with the least possible hardship. This can be done only if all parties recognize that prohibition has come to stay.

My correspondents have asked me to use my influence with the Ministers for withdrawing their measure. They should know that I have my limitations. If I have any influence, it is due to my never crossing the boundary line. Let all concerned know that I have never interfered with the Congress Ministers although many of them have been and are my valued co-workers. Having withdrawn from the Congress, it would ill become me to interfere with their work. The very purpose of my withdrawal would be defeated. What is more, I am most interested in prohibition. No one in India perhaps knows its beneficial effect as well as I do and therefore no one feels its necessity as keenly as I do. I have seen with my own eyes people otherwise sane lying in the gutter. Having identified myself with labour, I know what ruin drink has brought to the homes of labourers given to drink. I know that they will not touch liquor if it was not within reach. We have contemporaneous evidence that drinkers themselves are in many cases asking for prohibition. Have I not my eldest son who was intelligent, brave, patriotic and capable of sacrifice, and who has been ruined by the drink habit and who is today lost to his parents and lost to society and exists on the misplaced charity of

generous donors? This is not an exception. It is a typical case, as I can say from a knowledge of sons of persons in the so-called higher walks of life. As I write these lines, illustrations of unimpeachable authenticity crowd on my memory. I can therefore only ask my Parsi correspondents and others like them in return to help the Ministers in their noble and philanthropic mission; for I feel convinced that whatever may be said for or against Congress Ministers about their popular measures, their prohibition programme, if they are able to put it through to the end, will go down to posterity as unquestionably the noblest measure of all. It is no vote-catching device. Prohibition is an integral part of the programme of national self-purification. Twice has it been demonstrated what was possible in the shape of closing of liquor shops even through voluntary effort. Let the great Parsi community, men and women, discarding the unbecoming vituperation, rise to the occasion and help the great reform movement which, if it succeeds, will not only enrich India morally and materially but will serve as an impetus to similar effort in the Western world. Many eyes outside India are watching this experiment anxiously and prayerfully.

I grant that many Parsis drink moderately and without any visible bad effect. That is an argument not for opposing prohibition but for ensuring that they get their drink if it is proved to be a medical necessity. They should be patriotic enough to recognize that as against their limited experience is the universal experience of the deadly effect of the drink habit.

RAJKOT, May 30, 1939

Harijan, 3-6-1939

324. TELEGRAM TO APPASAHEB PANT

RAJKOT,
May 31, 1939

APPASAHEB PANT
AUNDH

CAN SEE FOR FEW MINUTES ANY DAY FROM SECOND TO SIXTH AT BOMBAY EXCEPTING MONDAY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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325. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE, RAJKOT[1]

May 31, 1939

It is growing upon me every day that we shall have to lower our key, our demand for full responsible government will have to remain in abeyance for some time. Not that we are not entitled to it, but it is clear to me that we have not the will for it, we are not ready to pay the price. There is an awakening, but it is not the awakening of active non-violence of the brave. Not that I have suddenly realized this point. The realization was there, the will to face the conclusion was not there, and I am reaping the fruit of that weakness of the will. I have been weak-willed ever since Bardoli onwards, but my co-workers deluded themselves into the belief that we had attained the requisite non-violence and I shared their delusion.

I do not repent of this. It is likely that if we had acted otherwise there would not have been the awakening we see today. But that seems to lead one to a rather dreadful conclusion, viz., that compromise with non-violence was necessary for a widespread awakening! But that is not the conclusion. The conclusion is that God chooses as his instruments the humblest and weakest of His creatures to fulfil Himself.

Today with [this] great realization I would not lead another Dandi March. The breach of the salt laws was a perfect proposition, but violence of the mind had crept in almost from the beginning. All that we had learnt then was that it was expedient to refrain from the use of physical violence. This was the non-violence of the calculating Bania, not of the brave Kshatriya. This non-violence of the calculating Bania has not, could not have, carried us far. It could not possibly avail to win and retain swaraj, to win over our opponent who believed in the use of arms.

Today I sense violence everywhere, smell it inside and outside Congress ranks. In 1921 even the goonda element outside the Congress was more or less under our control. Perfect non-violence is difficult. It admits no weakness. It made me take the false step

[1] This is extracted from "The Decision and After–III" by Mahadev Desai. Gandhiji was speaking at the Executive Committee meeting.

of approaching the Viceroy in order to end my fast. It was unpardonable on the part of a general who claims to derive his whole strength from God. But God gave me the courage to retrieve the blunder, and we are all the stronger and purer for it.

I am not tired of repeating again and again that we should be non-violent in thought and word and deed. We had been saying so, but there was no emphasis on the first of these. A dissolute character is more dissolute in thought than in deed. And the same is true of violence. Our violence in word and deed is but a feeble echo of the surging violence of thought in us.

Are you prepared to go with me so far? Does all that I say carry conviction? If so, violence should be eschewed from the innermost of our thoughts. But if you cannot go with me, do go your own way. If you can reach your goal in any other way, do so by all means. You will deserve my congratulations. For I cannot in any case stand cowardice. Let no one say when I am gone that I taught the people to be cowards. If you think my ahimsa amounts to that, or leads you to that, you should reject it without hesitation. I would far rather that you died bravely dealing a blow and receiving a blow than died in abject terror. If the ahimsa of my dream is impossible, you can reject the creed rather than carry on the pretence of non-violence.

Fleeing from battle—*palayanam*—is cowardice, and unworthy of a warrior. An armed fighter is known to have sought fresh arms as soon as he loses those in his possession or they lose their efficacy. He leaves the battle to get them. A non-violent warrior knows no leaving the battle. He rushes into the mouth of *himsa*, never even once harbouring an evil thought. If this ahimsa seems to you to be impossible, let us be honest with ourselves and say so, and give it up.

For me there is no laying down arms. I cannot do so. I am trying to be the warrior of my description and, if God wills, I may be that during this life. Such a warrior can fight single-handed.

Let me give a bit of my own experience in South Africa. When thousands joined the movement, I had not spoken to them, not even seen them. Papers they could not read. My heart was working in unison with them. Living faith is all that is necessary. It is evident that I have not the capacity today to inspire faith in the millions. This needs superior living faith in non-violence and in God. This faith is self-acting, and illumines man's life more and more every day. In the pursuit of my earnest research I may seem to act strangely. I should not grumble

if everyone left me in the honesty of his conviction. Let no one stick to me in the blind faith that something will happen. Such [faith] will hinder rather than help the cause.

Harijan, 17-6-1939

326. TALK WITH A MUSLIM FRIEND[1]

[*May 31, 1939*][2]

I have been talking of non-violence these 20 years but I have made unlawful compromises with myself. My mind goes back to the days of Khilafat agitation. I had the friendship of thousands of Muslims then. When at a meeting of the Muslim League before 1920 I asked for the supreme sacrifice, two or three names were given by Khwaja Saheb Abdul Majid, but I believed that many would come forward at the right time. And they did. But looking back upon those times I see that I compromised non-violence. I was satisfied with mere abstention from physical violence.[3]

The fact is I have never placed unadulterated ahimsa before the country. If I had done so, there would have been complete Hindu-Muslim unity. No doubt I kept on saying there would be no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity, but I should have seen that there was no Hindu-Muslim unity because there was not that insistence on unadulterated ahimsa on the part of all, whether Hindu or Muslim. No wonder my new technique puzzles many. But I must go on. If I am right, the puzzles will be solved.

Harijan, 17-6-1939

[1] & [2] The talk is extracted from "The Decision and After–III". Mahadev Desai explains that Gandhiji was "speaking on another occasion", and includes this after his report of the speech at Executive Committee meeting of Kathiawar Political Conference; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] Here Mahadev Desai has omitted "instances" given by Gandhiji.

327. MESSAGE TO NAWANAGAR STATE PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE[1]

May 1939

If you cannot do anything else, at least wear pure khadi and identify yourselves with the poor.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Sevamoorti: Shri Virchand Panachand Shah, p. 121

328. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

RAJKOT,
June 1, 1939

VALLABHRAM VAIDYA
DHANWANTARI BHAVAN
RAIPUR, AHMEDABAD

PLEASE MEET KATHIAWAR MAIL[2] TONIGHT AHMEDABAD STATION.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 2905. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

329. LETTER TO NRISINHPRASAD K. BHATT

ON THE TRAIN,
June 1, 1939

BHAI NANABHAI,

I wanted to write to you as soon as I got your wire, but could not do so. Now I am writing this in the train. The path of those who worship ahimsa under all circumstances is straight. Such a person will not indulge in fighting even in self-defence. But he who does not have that strength has but to run away—that is,

[1] According to the source, the third session of the Conference was held some time in "May, 1939".

[2] By which Gandhiji travelled to Bombay

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play the coward—if he does not attack the attacker. Cowardice is worse than violence because cowards can never be non-violent. So such people should learn to defend themselves. Under its constitution members of the Parishad[1] can be said to be wedded to non-violence. But here such ahimsa is of no use. A person who has full faith in non-violence should be a thousand times more fearless than an armed man. Such fearlessness is not gained by joining some organization. Hence every member of the Parishad should find an independent way for himself. It is the duty of every believer in ahimsa to see that cowardice is not propagated in the name of non-violence. So we must frankly tell the common people that we are unable to guide them. It is not proper that they should look to us. If they can independently think of non-violent ways they will not ask us and if they do ask us we should give them only one guidance that they should not be weak under any circumstances. They should learn to deal with the attacker. It is possible that if they observe restraint and if a handful of us can manifest true ahimsa, the attacker too may turn to ahimsa.

Please explain all this to all our workers there. The talk of secret settlement that is going on in Bhavnagar is harmful. Settlement can be with straightforward people. Here there is nothing of the sort.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

330. DISCUSSION WITH TRAVANCORE STATE CONGRESS DEPUTATION[2]

ON THE TRAIN,
[*June 1, 1939*][3]

QUESTION: What about swaraj that we have been fighting for? How does Gandhiji's faith in non-violence burning brighter than ever help those who want swaraj here and now? Does not the emphasis on non-violence of his conception make of swaraj a very remote vision hardly to be fulfilled?

[1] Kathiawar Political Conference

[2] & [3] The discussion is extracted from "The Decision and After–IV". According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 2-6-1939, the deputationists, Pattom Thanu Pillai, Verghese and Philipose, were travelling with Gandhiji from Rajkot to Bombay. *Vide* also "Statement on Travancore", pp. 322-5.

GANDHIJI: For me, it is true, as I have often declared, ahimsa comes before swaraj. I would not care to get power through anarchy and red ruin, among other things, because I want freedom and power even for the least among the people. This can only be when freedom is won through non-violence. In the other case the weak must go to the wall, only the physically strong and fit will remain to seize and enjoy power.

But you too cannot help putting ahimsa before everything else if you really mean business. *Ahimsa must be placed before everything else while it is professed. Then alone it becomes irresistible.* Otherwise it will only be an empty hulk, a thing without potency or power. A soldier fights with an irresistible strength when he has blown up his bridges, burnt his boats. Even so it is with a soldier of ahimsa.

Q. But how will this lowering of the pitch work out in action? How will it help us in attaining our goal of responsible government?

G. Today when we talk of responsible government, it frightens the States authorities. The Paramount Power too do not like it. They think it will result in red ruin and anarchy. The argument is unsound but let us give them credit for honesty. If you follow my advice, therefore, you will say, 'We, for the time being, forget swaraj. We shall fight to vindicate the elementary rights of the people, to remove corruption.' In short, you will concentrate your attention on details of administration. The authorities won't be frightened, and it will give you the substance of responsible government. That has been the history of all my work in India. If I had only talked of swaraj, I would have come a cropper. By attacking details we have advanced from strength to strength.

What did I do at the time of the Dandi March? I reduced our demand for complete independence to my eleven points.[1] Motilalji was at first angry with me. "What do you mean by lowering the flag like this?" he said. But he soon saw that if those points were conceded, independence would stand knocking at our door.

Let me explain to you the working of my mind. As I have already told you, I had thought that responsible government in the States was within easy reach. We have now found that we can't at once take the masses with us along non-violent lines. You say that violence is committed by a few hooligans only; but capacity to obtain non-violent swaraj presupposes capacity on our part to control the hooligans too as we temporarily did during

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLII, p. 434.

the non-co-operation days. If you had complete control over the forces of violence and were ready to carry on the fight with your back to the wall in defiance of the Paramount Power, looking neither to me nor to the Congress outside for guidance or help, you would not need to lower the key temporarily even. In fact you will not be here to seek my advice at all.

But that is not your case, on your own admission. Nor, so far as I know, is it the case anywhere else in India. Otherwise people would not have suspended civil disobedience in many places even without my asking.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

331. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF VICTUALLERS' ASSOCIATION[1]

BOMBAY,
[*June 2, 1939*][2]

Gandhiji congratulated them on the restrained language of their representation. They had every right to go to him, as he was specially attached to the Parsis. [He said:]

What I gather from your representation is that far from being opposed in principle to prohibition, you have pointed out the difficulties and hardships involved. But I am afraid you have come to the wrong man. I never interfere with the work of the Ministries. But on prohibition I am keener even than the Ministers. I confess I have not studied the economic aspect of the question. With me it is a creed and I would, if I could, fulfil it at any cost. If I had the administration in my own hands, I should study all the figures you have given. I am sure the Ministers have studied them, and you should approach them. They

[1] This and the following item are extracted from "The Anti-Prohibition Deputations" by Mahadev Desai, who explains that "the first deputation consisted of representatives of toddy, country liquor and foreign liquor dealers". Their representation addressed itself mainly to the hardships and sufferings that would be the result of several thousand Parsi families being thrown out of employment; their being reduced to poverty and even bankruptcy; illicit sales and clandestine breaches of the law; impossibility of disposing of 50 to 60 lakhs of rupees worth of material by August 1; the loss on having to dispose of costly furniture. *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-6-1939, reports that the deputation, which met Gandhiji in the afternoon, was led by M. B. Baria. It included R. R. Patel, R. D. Shroff, Phirozeshaw Shroff, J. D. Crawford and M. M. Surve.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-6-1939; also *Gandhi—1915–1948*

would gladly discuss the whole question with you and try to show the way out of the difficulties you have pointed out.

They also raised the question of short notice. The Congress Election Manifesto[1], they said, did not contain this programme, and the decision to introduce it in August had come upon them as a bolt from the blue. In reply to this Gandhiji said:

The Congress Election Manifesto is principally a political document and naturally does not contain the prohibition programme. But prohibition has been in the forefront of the Congress programme since 1920. With me it has been a passion ever since my close contact with the Indian immigrants in South Africa and also with the South Africans. I have seen with my own eyes the terrible scourge drink can be. It has ruined people morally, physically, economically and it has destroyed the sanctity and happiness of the home. My heart bleeds as I think of the disaster that comes in its wake and I have really pined for the immediate introduction of prohibition. When the Congress decided to accept offices, I thought it had a golden opportunity to introduce it at once, but it was the Ministers who pleaded for fixing the time-limit at three years. To my mind, therefore, there is no question of short notice. It is coming several years too late. Hundreds and thousands of women have in the past picketed liquor shops, suffered insults and assaults. In one case a woman volunteer was so hit on the forehead that the evil effect still persists. There was no compulsion. It was all peaceful persuasion, and it had succeeded so remarkably that in some provinces the excise revenue was almost reduced to zero. As for its effects here in India I would like you to study the condition of workmen in factories, and I would like to tell you also the boon prohibition has been to them in Ahmedabad.

One of the gentlemen in the deputation said that 12 to 15 thousand tappers would be adversely affected and that fresh toddy had great medicinal value.

It is *nira* you are referring to. For I agree it is a refreshing drink, and we make *gur* out of it.[2]

If the tappers took to tapping the juice for *gur*-making, there was no question of their unemployment. In Bengal tons of *gur* was prepared from *nira* and in South India *arrack* was prepared from *gur* made out of fresh juice.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, Appendix III.

[2] Then Gandhiji offered them a plate of palm-juice and date-palm juice.

But the gentleman maintained that it was impossible to draw fresh *nira* from a tree more than ten times during a season and that *gur* was not a feasible proposition. Gandhiji said that the evidence in his possession was to the contrary. He would, however, inquire.

Harijan, 10-6-1939

332. *INTERVIEW TO PARSI DEPUTATION*[1]

[*June 2, 1939*][2]

The gravamen of their charge was that the prohibition policy was tantamount to coercion as the community had for centuries indulged in drink without being any the worse for it. There was the argument of dislocation of trade and financial and economic structure of the province, of the hardships it would cause to traders and tappers, and the interference with the religious rites of the people. They said they also resented the distinction between Asiatics and non-Asiatics, and even suggested that not only the Parsis but Mussalmans and Hindus were also opposed to the policy!

Some of the gentlemen have been friends of Gandhiji for years, especially Sir Cowasji. And so he was the most vehement in his attack, but the utmost friendliness prevailed during the discussion.

COWASJI: Drunkenness is bad, not drink. And for the sake of a few who drink, why penalize the whole community? I take two or three glasses of sherry every day and I know hundreds of others who talk of prohibition but who do drink and will do so in spite of prohibition.

There was obvious defiance in his voice, but Gandhiji disarmed it by ultimately reminding Sir Cowasji how he had helped him (Gandhiji) in the past at various junctures, and how he expected him to stand by him at this!

Sir Cowasji had a hearty laugh.

Mr. Khareghat, the veteran temperance reformer who, said Gandhiji, reminded him of Dadabhai by his silvery beard, entered a curious plea:

I do not drink, nor am I dealer in drinks. But this policy will ruin thousands, and I want you to realize your error and do as you did in Rajkot. I would then honour you with all my heart. According to our religion it is the duty of the host to offer the guest good bread and good wine.

GANDHIJI: But it must be unfermented wine. Whatever it may be, one wonders how this can be a *religious duty* at all! What would a poor man do?

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "The deputation was headed by Sir Cowasji Jehangir and its other members were Sir J. C. Koyaji, Sir H. P. Modi, Messrs Khareghat, A. D. Shroff and Saklatwala." *Vide* also the preceding item.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 3-6-1939

SAKLATWALA: I do not drink, and thank God I have enough property to enable me to pay the property tax. But why should others regulate my life? I tell you, although I do not drink, if someone came and told me I might not drink, he would make my blood boil.

GANDHIJI (smilingly): Even so you do not steal, and yet there is the law against thieving. Would you therefore steal to defy the law?

H. P. MODI: We do not believe in prohibition. Why do you tempt us to break the law? We want to be exempted. Drink has become part of our social habit, our daily life, and we *want* to drink.

GANDHIJI: As I told[1] the deputation that preceded you, you have come to the wrong man. There is a wide gulf between you and me. It was Dadabhai Naoroji who taught me prohibition and the distinction between prohibition and temperance. Individual liberty is allowed to man only to a certain extent. He cannot forget that he is a social being, and his individual liberty has to be curtailed at every step. I would appeal to you to consider one thing. What is your population? One lakh at the most in a population of 35 crores. You have become famous in the world not as residents of Persia but as Indians. I want you to consider not in terms of your one lakh but in terms of India, not the narrow interest of your whole community but of the large interests of the whole country. How can you interrupt and ruin a noble experiment? You say you cannot get rid of this, so very much you are wedded to it! You are not fair to yourselves there. You have given up so many things. You gave up your language and adopted Gujarati, you changed your dress, you changed many of your manners and customs. Why must you then stick to this one infirmity? You may plead your weakness, but for Heaven's sake don't advance the plea of individual liberty. There you have given away the whole case. You have sacrificed much for India, sacrifice this bad habit too. I have seen men and women wallowing in gutters in South Africa and families ruined.

H. P. MODI: Where do you see the ruin in India?

[GANDHIJI:] I tell you I have seen it with my own eyes. There is the tragic case of my own son. 60,000 men in Ahmedabad are blessing the prohibitionist. I claim that the moral conscience of the public is with me. The issue between us is the narrowest possible. Do you want to press the question of a few individual consciences to the extent of ruining a whole country?

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

But are there not other evils? There is gambling, for instance.

None so disastrous as this, and this breeds the rest. But I am for the abolition of gambling too. This evil, however, ruins the victim body and soul.

The same thing would happen if you were to overeat! You are talking of the 60,000 mill-hands in Ahmedabad. Why not listen to the appeal of 50,000 Parsis of Bombay? Drunkenness is unknown amongst us.

Let us assume that for a moment. It proves that you are temperate. Well, then why will you not carry your temperateness a little further and co-operate in this the greatest of all moral reforms in India? And remember there is ample provision for those who need drink for their health or religious rites. I suggest your working along these lines but not seeking to ruin the reform.

But why draw the line between Europeans and Indians?

Call it my weakness, and agitate for including the Europeans too in the prohibition. They will, like us, profit by being included in the general law. Their health will not suffer for they will have all the drink they may need for their health.

Harijan, 10-6-1939

333. STATEMENT ON TRAVANCORE[1]

BOMBAY,
June 4, 1939

I have had prolonged conversations[2] with Shri Pattom Thanu Pillai, Shri Verghese and Shri J. Philipose over the situation in Travancore. My rich experiences in Rajkot show me that civil disobedience in Travancore was suspended at the right time. The Rajkot recantation teaches me that it is not enough to have withdrawn the charges against Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer. But it is necessary to recognize that Travancoreans have not only to reckon with the Maharaja, but also with his Dewan. I also observe that several Travancorean critics have asserted that suspension has led to greater repression. These critics do not know that suspension was not advised in order to avoid repression, nor even in

[1] In *Harijan*, this appeared under the title "New Technique in Action". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 4-6-1939, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-6-1939.

[2] *Vide* pp. 316-8.

expectation of its being stopped. It was advised in order to avoid popular violence, no matter how caused or by whom instigated, if it was instigated. It was also advised in order to avoid brutalization of human nature. These two objects may be said to have been attained in a fair measure. It was also advised in order to pave the way for an honourable understanding with the authorities and to educate the people in the true way of ahimsa. These objects have still to be worked for. Here my new light, which I seem to see dimly, enables me to tender advice which, but for the light, I would perhaps not have been able to give with as much confidence as now.

I am convinced that direct negotiations should be opened with the authorities. Hitherto the State Congress people have talked at the authorities and the latter at them. The result has been a widening of the gulf between the two. It would not do for a satyagrahi to argue that the approach must be mutual. That assumes the existence of the spirit of satyagraha in the authorities, whereas satyagraha is offered in respect of those who make no claim to be satyagrahis. Hence the first and the last work of a satyagrahi is ever to seek an opportunity for an honourable approach. Now this is impossible so long as the heart is steeled against a belief even in the possibility, let alone advisability, of such approach. And hitherto the impossibility has been unquestionably assumed. I have been a tacit party to it. I now know better. If the leaders have active ahimsa in them, they must cultivate a belief in the perfect possibility and necessity of such approach. And if they have that belief, the way will surely be open to them. In my own person, it is well known, I have always acted on that principle. In making such an approach it would be necessary to lower the key of our note. Our aim must remain what it is, but we must be prepared to negotiate for less than the whole so long as it is unmistakably of the same kind and has in it inherent possibility of expansion. I have found that nowhere, with the only exception of Aundh[1], are the Princes ready to part with all the power in favour of the people. Nor is the Paramount Power anxious for the people in the States to receive full responsible government. If I interpret its mind correctly, assuming that an institution can have a mind, it would be sorry if any State of importance copied the example of Aundh. But, what is most important of all, the States people themselves, as a mass, are nowhere prepared to pay the price.

[1] The reformed Aundh constitution became law on January 21. It aimed at total transfer of power to the people.

There is no mistaking the awakening that has taken place in the States. But it is not enough for the great purpose to be attained. It will be well to recognize this fact. In aiming beyond our capacity we are likely to lose all. I would give much to have in all the States a reign of law instead of the reign of a person or persons, however well-meaning they may be. I can then see my way to build up responsible government on the solid foundation. But responsible government, which is only a gift without the will and the power of the people behind it, will be a mere paper responsibility, hardly worth the paper on which it may be printed.

The second object of suspension is closely related to the foregoing. If it is a fact that the atmosphere for immediate responsible government among the States is not propitious and that the people are not ready to pay the price, it follows that they should have the proper training for it. I am not likely, lightly and in the near future, to advise mass satyagraha anywhere. There is neither adequate training nor discipline among the people. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the people at large should pass one or more positive tests. Mere abstention from physical violence will not answer our purpose. In the centre of this programme of positive tests I unhesitatingly put the spinning-wheel and all it means. If there is quick response, this can be a short course. But it may well be a long course if the people do not make an enthusiastic response. I know no other programme than the fourfold constructive programme of 1920. If the people do not take it up whole-heartedly, it is proof enough for me that they have no ahimsa in them, or not the ahimsa of my conception, or, say, they have no confidence in the present leadership. For me there is no other test but what I have ever put before the nation since 1920. The new light tells me that I must not weaken as I have done before in exacting the discipline I have mentioned. I can quite clearly see my way to advise civil disobedience wherever the conditions mentioned are amply fulfilled. That civil disobedience will be individual but in terms of ahimsa far more effective than any mass civil disobedience of the past. I must own that the past movements have been more or less tainted. I have no regret for them. For I knew no better then. I had the sense and humility to retrace my steps whenever I discovered blunders. Hence the nation has gone forward from step to step. But the time has come for a radical change in the direction indicated.

Thus my opinion on Travancore has resolved itself in the enunciation of my present mental condition and its reaction on the Travancore situation.

To sum up: (1) suspension of mass civil disobedience should be indefinite; (2) there should be the will among the State Congress people to open a way to honourable negotiation with the authorities; (3) there should be no anxiety about those satyagrahis who are in prison or new ones. If the spirit of satyagraha is rightly assimilated, these imprisonments and disabilities should hearten the people; (4) the pitch of the immediate demands should be lowered if necessary, in order to quicken the progress towards the final goal; (5) the condition precedent to any civil disobedience is the fulfilment by the general mass of the constructive programme as a test, if nothing more, of their coming under the discipline of the State Congress.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that it is open to the workers to reject my advice. They should adopt it only if it appeals to their heads and their hearts and tallies with their own reading of the local situation of which I own they must be better judges.[1]

BOMBAY, June 4, 1939

Harijan, 10-6-1939

334. TELEGRAM TO C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYER

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI
TRIVANDRUM

HOPE IF STATE CONGRESS ADOPT MY ADVICE[2] YOU WILL MAKE GENEROUS RESPONSE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] In "The Decision and After–IV", Mahadev Desai explains that the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress passed the following resolution: "We accept Gandhiji's advice, and our acceptance fully warranted by the circumstances; but the responsibility for acceptance is entirely our own."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

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335. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA

NOT EVEN ABLE WRITE THREE DAYS. ALL WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3916. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7225

336. TELEGRAM TO PHIROZSHAH DAMRI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

PHIROZSHAH DAMRI
BHAVNAGAR

READ DAILY PRESS AND "HARIJAN". DOING MY BEST.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

337. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Many thanks for your letter of 30th ultimo and telegram.

I am pleading with the Aryasamajists to give up civil disobedience and with you to grant their minimum request. It is unfortunate that the talks with Mr. Hollins broke down.[1] I would still suggest your making a gesture. Of course new constructions should be subject to permission which should be governed by fixed rules and times. You alone can end the agony. Why wait for the constitutional reform?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6844

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, pp. 127-30.

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338. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I wish your function success. You certainly have the blessings of us both.

Blessings from
BAPU

MITHUBEHN PETIT
KASTURBA SEVASHRAM
MAROLI

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

339. LETTER TO BHOLANATH

BOMBAY,
June 5, 1939

BHAI BHOLANATH,

I got your letter. The aims should not be changed now. Developments in Jaipur and other places may be awaited.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1376

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340. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W.

FRONTIER VISIT POSTPONED. REACHING SEGAON EIGHTH MORNING. EXPECT YOU THERE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3917. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7226

341. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

MIRABEHN
CARE POSTMASTER
MANSEHRA

AGAIN HELD UP[1] TILL END MONTH.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6444. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10039

[1] The reference is to the postponement of visit to the Frontier Province; *vide* the preceding item.

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342. *INTERVIEW TO KOLHAPUR STATE PRAJA PARISHAD DEPUTATION*

BOMBAY,
June 6, 1939

That he would not object to any State, which is really ready for it, resorting to the direct step of civil resistance towards achieving responsible government and that he always recommended it to such States but that he would not be willing to allow any State to launch satyagraha unless he was satisfied that the State was fully prepared for it, was the view expressed by Gandhiji. The deputation asked Gandhiji several questions to which he gave answers. The following are some of the questions and answers:

Q. Even in spite of the fact that at present the Kolhapur State authorities are not in a mood to negotiate with the Parishad workers, in view of your latest statement[1] on the Travancore State should negotiations be started with the State authorities?

A. My statement is meant only for the Travancore State. I know more than anyone that the State authorities in any State are never willing to have negotiations with their people. This I have realized from the talks I had with Mr. Virawala in Rajkot. Negotiations should always be started in an honourable way and for such negotiations there should be a suitable and proper atmosphere. If that is not possible in your State, it is far better for you not to start negotiations at an immature time. I found that opportunity and I have issued that statement concerning Travancore only.

Q. What should the workers do on whom notices have been served by the Durbar to be present before the court failing which their properties will be confiscated?

A. There is no objection in being present before a court. But it would be noble to lose the properties remaining outside the State and to work for ideals, like Garibaldi, Mazzini, etc. It is a sin even to hold properties in a State where no law prevails. Here you may think that the people will think in a different way about your staying outside the State and they will get demoralized. But if you really lose your property and if the people are

[1] *Vide* pp. 322-5.

convinced that you work sincerely for them, you need not fear demoralization of any kind in them. You should always be sure that self-sacrifice carries public support.

The Hindu, 10-6-1939

343. NOTES

Leaders Must Lead

A Cutch worker came in yesterday and said:

> Some leaders in Cutch are telling the people there that but for your stopping civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it.

I must deny having stopped civil disobedience in Cutch or for that matter elsewhere. All I gave was my opinion. I had told Shri Mulraj who had come to consult me that the workers should weigh my opinion in the light of their own personal experience of things and adopt it only if it coincided with their own experience. It should be noted that my opinion was not given publicly. If it was not acceptable to the local leaders, it need never have been published. Even now in Cutch as elsewhere responsible leaders are free to act according to their own judgment. We should never develop the requisite qualities of leadership, unless leaders shoulder responsibility and even dare to commit mistakes in acting contrary to the advice of persons like me. Here there would be no question of indiscipline, for I am not in active command anywhere. I give advice as an expert when reference is made to me. Those who seek my advice will wrong themselves and those whom they lead, if they will suppress their own judgment when it seems contrary to mine, especially when mine is not based on direct local knowledge.

Jaipur Again

Things are moving much too slow in Jaipur. The papers reported that a settlement between the Durbar and the people was imminent and that Seth Jamnalalji and his co-workers would be free. The matters in dispute seem to be incredibly simple. Civil disobedience was decided upon only to vindicate civil liberty. It was resorted to when even the right of the Praja Mandal to function for the purpose of educating the people in a constitutional manner to agitate for local responsible government in the

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State was questioned. Some time ago a communique was issued by the Durbar setting forth the conditions for the recognition of the Praja Mandal. Surely the Durbar could easily have adjusted the conditions to suit the civil disobedience leaders. Thus, for instance, the condition that "no office-holder of the local association shall be also an office-holder of any political association outside the State" seems to be vexatious. Why should Seth Jamnalalji be disqualified from being President of the Praja Mandal by reason of his being a member of the Working Committee of the National Congress? Or is the condition specially aimed at him? An explanation is necessary. There are other conditions which too require elucidation. The last two are:

> 1. That the Association shall undertake to represent aspirations and grievances of the people of the Jaipur State through the proper channel as they develop from time to time under the constitution established by His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur, and
>
> 2. that membership shall be restricted to persons domiciled in Jaipur State.

Both are vague. Why should the people not be free to advocate reforms in advance of what the State is prepared to grant? But the meaning of the penultimate condition seems to restrict this natural right. And the term 'domicile' is a risky legal term of little political use. Why should not the homely word 'resident' be used instead?

BOMBAY, June 7, 1939

Harijan, 10-6-1939

344. LETTER TO SATYANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 8, 1939

MY DEAR SATYANAND[1],

Pyarelal has preserved many letters for me to read when I can. I can just now find yours of 31st March in this bundle. I have devoured its contents with avidity simply because it is your letter.

[1] S. E. Stokes, Christian missionary, social worker and close associate of C. F. Andrews; an American naturalized as a British subject; married an Indian Christian and lived in Kotgarh near Simla; a Congress worker; was arrested in 1921.

I never knew that you had gone to Vienna. What was the operation for? Was it not successful? I have never appreciated the homage paid to the Vienna surgeons. However this is all by the way. I do hope your incapacity is not permanent.

As to the great question raised by you, my reading of *Gita* and interpretation of ahimsa is different from yours. I do not believe that killing in war can ever be done without anger or zest. As I believe in unadulterated ahimsa I am groping as to India's duty. I am shirking the national solution. I discuss without coming to a decision. My own individual conduct is determined. But I quite agree with you that national can be exactly the opposite. My present mood is to ask the Working Committee to decide for itself. It was not without cause that God prompted me to cease even to remain a four-anna member of the Congress. Hence there is no moral obligation on me to give an opinion. At the same time if I felt the call, I should not hesitate to announce my opinion. As it is I am praying for light.

How is Mrs. Stokes? What are the children doing? How long were you away?

Mahadev was ailing as you might have known. He is fully restored now. He is with me. Pyarelal has stayed in Bombay for his teeth.

We all go back to Bombay on 21st.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

345. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON,
June 8, 1939

CHI. NARAHARI,

Amtulbehn seems to have engrossed herself there in working among the Muslim women. Guide her and give her whatever help you can. She has taken the money with her and will credit it there, but see that the work is not held up for want of funds. Either Sardar or I will remit the money. Mridulabehn[1] is going to talk to Sardar about it.

I have told Ramjibhai that if he does not trust you, he should not expect any guidance from me.

[1] Mridula Sarabhai

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His letter is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We will be returning to Bombay on the 22nd.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9116

346. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,
June 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I could not write to you from Bombay. We reached Segaon today. Pyarelal has stayed back for nursing Manjula and attending to his own teeth. We are going again to Bombay on the 20th. Thence probably by the 1st of July to the Frontier.

What I wrote[1] to you was not in the spirit of fault-finding. It was to give expression to my own feelings. The desire to stay with me is not at all a wrong thing. It is only when such desire comes in the way of service that it should cause concern. There was no such problem in your case.

You have to stay there with Balkrishna as long as it suits him. Balvantsinha says you can go to Panchgani whenever necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4318

347. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 9, 1939

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Your letter and enclosures make sad reading. Distribution of a few thousand rupees among the people would be a false salve for conscience. The work you may provide would be a fraud for they will eat only Rangoon rice. The case presented by

[1] *Vide* p. 299.

Hemprabha is one not for finding temporary work for a few but it is for an agitation for banishing rice mills and Rangoon rice. To this end you should see Subhas Babu, Dr. Ray, and the Premier. You will not hesitate to see the other Ministers if found necessary. You should put before them a faithful picture of the condition of the villagers and trace the cause of the misery. You will equally strongly present your remedy. You will find perhaps that all the parties will take up the cause and you will have solved a ticklish problem without much difficulty. Should it prove otherwise you will still have done the only possible thing. Your diagnosis must be faultless and your remedy perfect. Could you give the villagers any of the processes in match-making, road-making, tank-digging or any other work of public utility ?

Who are the villagers ? If they are Muslims your work will be easier. If my idea does not commend itself to you and you need funds for starting relief, you should go to the Marwari Relief Society and Ghanshyamdasji.

Tell Hemprabha that I read up the papers she sent me regarding Annada. Annada has a reply for everything she has to say.

Love.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

348. LETTER TO BINODE KANUNGO[1]

[On or after *June 9, 1939*][2]

What can I do about the undoubtedly improper appointments? If a proper complaint is made before the Working Committee something may be possible. Where public opinion is unsound and non-existent the things you describe will happen.

Yours,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] &[2] The letter was in reply to a joint letter dated June 9 from Binode Kanungo and Gurchandra Das who had protested against the appointment of Gobinda Misra, Bansidhar Ratha and Godassi Mahapatra as Inspectors of Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee.

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349. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
June 10, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. Absence of wire from you had prepared me for your 'No'. Though we were all expecting you last evening for certain and I had made all sorts of preparations for you, your letter makes it clear that you did well in not coming, not because I had no work for you but because your work there which is also mine is more important than what I had devised for you. It would be better for you to be with me in August when I expect to return from the Frontier.

I am not going to Kashmir unless J. L. comes and takes me there.

I wish you will cease to think that I misunderstand you. Whatever be the truth, you *must* be cheerful.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Sharda came in today from Surat.

From the original: C.W. 3918. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7227

350. MEANING OF PROHIBITION

His Grace the Archbishop of Bombay has been kind enough to send me a letter[1] and a copy of his address to the Rotary Club against prohibition. I have read both with the respect and attention their author deserves.

My study of His Grace's letter and address at once revealed a serious flaw for which I must be held primarily responsible. The word prohibition is a misnomer for what the Bombay Government and the other Provincial Governments where the Congress controls the Ministries are doing regarding the liquor trade. What the Governments are in reality doing is not prohibiting drink but

[1] The letter dated June 1, from T. D. Roberts, the Archbishop, was published separately in the same issue of *Harijan*.

they are closing liquor shops which are absolutely under Government control. The shop-owners have no statutory protection save what they get from year to year. Every owner of a liquor shop knows that his licence may not be renewed next year. He may be even outbidden if he possesses a country liquor or toddy licence as these are auctioned every year. Therefore the licensees have no vested interest in their licences beyond the year for which they are held and then too subject to the observance of the stringent conditions laid down for them. Therefore I claim that the law for the abolition of liquor licences "is an ordinance of reason for the common good made and promulgated for the community by the competent authority". All that the State is doing is to remove from the drinker the temptation or the facility which the State considers is harmful to him except for medicinal purposes.

The Archbishop says: "To win the allegiance of body, of mind and of heart needed by any law . . . that law must be just," that is to say, "the conscience of millions must say this is just." I have no difficulty in endorsing the proposition. Viewed in the manner indicated by me the State does not need to carry with it the conscience of millions. But I hold that India is the one place in the world where the conscience of the millions would justify the law of abolition of the State trade in intoxicating liquors and drugs. There is no need to take any referendum. It consists in the overwhelming number of legislators approving of the law. Let me remind His Grace of the past history of this great reform movement. It began with the grand old man, Dadabhai Naoroji. In 1920 it became an integral part of the Congress constructive programme. In the absence of political power the Congress arranged an elaborate programme of picketing liquor and opium shops. In this programme thousands of men and women took part all over India. All communities including Parsis took part in the picketing programme. Attempts were made even in the days of Non-co-operation to induce the authorities to undertake the abolition legislation. Without exception they pleaded financial inability, never the impropriety of so-called interference with the right of the people to be supplied with liquor by the State. Indeed one Minister told me that if I would help him to raise the revenue needed to make up for the loss caused by the drop in the drink revenue, he would introduce prohibition at once. It is an open secret that the reform has been delayed simply for the sake of the revenue. In other words, the people have been tempted to drink for the sake of raising the revenue. The black history of the opium trade bears out the truth of this statement.

Those who speak in the name of individual freedom do not know their India. There is as much right of a person to demand drinking facilities from the State as there is to demand facilities for the supply of public women for the satisfaction of his animal passion. I hope that those who pride themselves on their moderation in drinking will not feel hurt by the illustration I have taken. In this country we are not used to legislation for the regulation of vice. But in countries like Germany the houses of women who sell their virtue are licensed. I do not know what will be more resented in those countries, the stopping of the licences for the houses of ill fame or the houses of drink. When woman realizes her dignity she will refuse to sell her virtue and those members of the sex who are jealous of its honour will move heaven and earth to have legalized prostitution abolished. Will it be then contended that such abolition will go hard with the prostitutes and their dependants whose only means of livelihood depended upon this calling?

I plead that social workers cannot work effectively so long as licensed liquor dens continue to lure the drinkers to enter them. It is curious that in all India any opposition to prohibition comes from the Parsis. They pride themselves on their temperance and resent what they call encroachment upon their personal liberty. They also make it a grievance that the Europeans have been given facilities, thus constituting a bar sinister against Asiatics. I have already pleaded[1] with the Parsis that they should rise superior to their habit and allow the great reform to proceed with their active co-operation. As to the alleged bar sinister let me point out that a bar sinister is imposed from without. In the case in point we the Asiatics voluntarily recognize the limitations of the Europeans. But even they have to secure exemption and submit to regulations. The proper course for the Parsi friends would be to agitate, if they wish, for the removal of the discrimination, not use it for securing similar exemption for themselves.

His Grace has further argued that if the price to be paid for removing the temptation of drink from the drunkard "is out of all proportion to the good attempted", the reform is harmful. The proposition is well stated, but it is a matter of opinion whether the price to be paid is out of all proportion to the good attempted. I have endeavoured to show that the whole of the excise policy has been not to supply any felt want but to increase the revenue. I would invite the Archbishop to study the history of

[1] *Vide* pp. 320-2.

the excise administration. He will find that all the advanced legislators have condemned the policy in unmeasured terms. The price that is being paid for the attempted reform is insignificant if the history is borne in mind. And even the insignificant price will not have to be paid, if the Archbishop and the influential Parsi friends will lead an agitation for the reduction in the wholly indefensible army expenditure and free the money thus saved for the purpose of bringing about all-India abolition of the liquor traffic. It is an overdue reform. They should congratulate the Bombay Ministers on their courage in levying a tax which was the easiest to be borne. But I have no doubt that the Ministry will gladly remit the tax, if they are helped by the Central Government. Only they could not delay the reform whilst they were fighting the Central Government single-handed. Let all the parties recognize the necessity of the reform and demand justice from the Central Government and the hardship referred to by the Archbishop will be reduced almost to a nullity.

There is a curious question asked of Dr. Gilder[1]. To do the Archbishop justice I must copy the question in his own words:

> Does he admit that there are several kinds of intoxication which have nothing at all to do with drink? Drunkenness paralyses the reason and wrecks homes. But the intoxication of false ideals is now wrecking whole nations and the world itself. Moreover, does Dr. Gilder admit that such intoxication is highly infectious? He will hardly deny it, knowing as he does the recent history of the nations. Then will he tell us, 'Is India necessarily immune from the infection of false ideals which intoxicate?'

This suggests that the exercise by the State of the undoubted discretion to stop the issue of drink-shop licences is a false ideal which intoxicates and which has infected Dr. Gilder. Of course everything is possible in this world. But I venture to suggest that this abolition being a half-century-old national cry is not likely to be a false, intoxicating and infectious ideal. An ideal that is false and intoxicating and highly infectious must in its nature be temporary.

The last paragraph of the address is a question addressed to me. The half dozen lines are packed with suggestions which hardly answer known facts. Thus His Grace suggests, among other things:

> Prohibition tends to be regarded by its advocates not as one possible course but as the only possible religion.

[1] Dr. D. D. Gilder, Health and Excise Minister of Bombay

Nobody has called it a religion. After having stated the proposition His Grace ends:

> The author of the creed of truth and non-violence will not resent this last question: 'Is he still quite certain that all religions are true?'

In any other mouth I would consider the question to be unpardonable. But I do not expect a busy administrator like the Archbishop of Bombay to study all a man like me may say or to verify his quotations. His question to tally with what I have said should have been: 'Is he still quite certain that all the known great religions of the earth are equally true?' My answer to this revised question would be, 'Emphatically yes.' Only the revised question is obviously irrelevant to the Archbishop's thesis.

His Grace has propounded a conundrum in his letter which now hardly needs a separate answer. So far as I know the Ministers have no qualms of conscience. They are robbing no one. All trade is precarious. Liquor trade is doubly so everywhere. The Bombay Government are straining every nerve to see that poor traders do not suffer avoidable hardships.

There is one sentence in the letter which makes me pause:

> The last few months have convinced me that the cause of charity in Bombay is threatened with a shattering blow.

All the Archbishop's beliefs have been based, as I think I have shown, on unproved assumptions. I should want proof for this unqualified assertion. If the cause of charity is threatened as stated, I would request him to produce the proof before the Ministers and I doubt not that they will soon set the thing right.

The Archbishop's last paragraph in his letter is worthy of his high office. Only his offer appears to be conditional.[1] Let him and his assistants and disciples unconditionally become total abstainers and help the noble cause of temperance. They will lighten the task of the law-giver and help to make of the abolition of liquor traffic the success that it deserves to be in this land where the public conscience, i.e., the conscience of the dumb millions, is undoubtedly in favour of the abolition.

SEGAON, June 11, 1939

Harijan, 17-6-1939

[1] The Archbishop had said: " . . . I would gladly promise—as so many thousands of priests have done—never to drink alcoholic liquor except at the times when we believe its use enjoined by God in His own temple. . . ."

351. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 12, 1939

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have your letter.

Of course everything is forgiven you. The fact is I have not felt offended against you. My love burns as bright as ever. It is little worth if it cannot stand the heart pourings of loved ones. I simply gave you my reactions[1] to your letters. You are as much wanted here as ever. You will find me not in the least altered or if altered, it will be for the better. I shall know how much more tender you are than I had believed you to be.

Navin is in Bombay tending his sister. His address is care Dr. Shah, Polyclinic, Queen's Road, Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3919. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7228

352. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters the same day. Not having been able to write to you for three days I have sent you [a] wire in Hindi which I hope you had no difficulty in understanding.

Of course I shall try to soothe . . .[2] . But she is a most difficult person to please. But my effort continues after my own style.

I have written to Sir Kailash[3]. Copy of the letter Mahadev will send with this.

[1] *Vide* pp. 300, 305 and 335.

[2] The name is illegible in the source.

[3] Kailash Narain Haksar, Personal Adviser to the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. Gandhiji was to visit Kashmir as Haksar's guest. The visit was, however, cancelled; *vide* Vol. LXX, "Statement to the Press", 22-7-1939.

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I do hope you are more composed than before.

Syed Mahmud and his children were in Segaon for three days. They went this evening.

No more just now.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3920. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7229

353. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 13, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I got your letter. I do not know how to keep you happy. I have told you that I accept financial responsibility to the tune of Rs. 2,000. I have also told you that you can say you recognized me alone and no one else [as the source of the money]. But I did not say nor did I mean that I would not take the money if Sardar gave it. How can I accept such restrictions? I am not different from Sardar. Why should it take so much of my time to explain such a simple thing? I have said you can spend moderate amounts on medicines. Have I not made everything clear now? Don't make a mountain out of a mole-hill.

I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

This will be posted on the 14th.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 421

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.

354. *INTERVIEW TO MYSORE CONGRESS REPRESENTATIVES*[1]

SEGAON,
June 13, 1939

If the proposed reforms are unacceptable as you fear they are likely to be, you may take no part in working them. But regarding offering any opposition to them you must be the best judges. What I have said in my statement[2] on Travancore does not apply wholly to any single State. You must study the general principles laid down in it and do what you think fit. Do not ask me to judge whether Mysore is well organized or ill-organized. You are the best judges. Facts themselves are opinions. If you are ready, you are ready, irrespective of what I may say.

The readiness may be of two kinds. You may be able to embarrass Government sufficiently by making a big enough demonstration which invites shooting or compels them to yield. But the demonstration may not be non-violent as I am defining it. Not that my definition has changed. There is only a difference of emphasis. I formerly compromised non-violence in the belief that thereby India would progress further on the path of non-violence, but that belief was not fulfilled. So the non-violence that you display may appear to be effective but it may not be unadulterated non-violence in thought, word and deed. If it is not, I should rule it out. What I would *not* rule out today I cannot say. I have come up to the point of saying, in the language of the Vedic seer, '*neti*', '*neti*' ('not this', 'not this'), but I have

[1] The interview is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Decision and After–IV" in *Harijan*. *The Hindu* reported: "H. C. Dasappa, President, Mysore Congress, acquainted Gandhiji with the present political situation, struggles undergone, agreements entered into at Sardar Patel's and Mr. Kripalani's intercession, Government's recent denial of agreement itself and how the State Congress had to withdraw from Reforms Committee and constitutional bodies. He referred to uncontradicted forecasts of reforms recommended by Reforms Committee which contemplates introducing a very dilute diarchical form of government and which is quite disappointing and unacceptable. Mr. Dasappa said: 'Considering all circumstances, it is impossible to achieve responsible government without struggle and the country (State subjects) was prepared for carrying the struggle on strictly peaceful lines.' "

[2] *Vide* pp. 322-5.

not yet been able to say, 'it is this', 'it is this'. That is because I have not seen the full light yet.[1]

That school says, 'We believe both in violence and non-violence, for sometimes non-violence answers, and we resort to non-violence because it appears to be best under the circumstances.' But for me means and ends are convertible terms, and non-violence and truth are therefore the end, so long as the end conceived has not been attained. But in Rajkot I compromised the means; I was weighed in my own scales and found wanting. But no harm has been done because I retrieved my error immediately I saw it. My surrender was not due to weakness, it was a surrender out of the fullness of strength. It came out of non-violence which for me is the weapon of the bravest and not of the weak. I will not be guilty of encouraging cowards amongst us, or of allowing people to hide their weakness under cover of non-violence.

You will say that you will not make a declaration about non-violence or satyagraha or civil disobedience. It need not on that account be the reverse of any of these. But you will say, 'After having read all that Gandhiji has written, or has been written about in *Harijan*, we have come to the conclusion that we must not bandy about these technical expressions. Whether you call it violent or non-violent, we offer what resistance we can and what we feel our people are ready to offer.' If you want further guidance, you should approach Vallabhbhai who has been handling this movement and Pandit Jawaharlal who is the Chairman of the States Committee. I come in as author of satyagraha, but for the moment I am bankrupt. My faith is brighter than ever but I have not seen the full light. I am advising Travancore, Rajkot, and to a certain extent Talcher, as I have been constantly guiding them. But even with regard to them I have been tendering my advice which it is for them to accept or reject.

But I would ask you to see the Sardar who has a marvellous capacity of separating wheat from chaff. He is no visionary like Jawaharlal and me. For bravery he is not to be surpassed. If he had any sentiment in him, he has suppressed it. Once he

[1] Referring to "this middle course" which is neither violence nor non-violence, Mahadev Desai explains: "Mr. Case gave the appropriate word for it—*Non-violent Coercion*—which he made the title of his book. . . . In fact there is a school of thought in India which makes no secret of it, and says, 'Satyagraha of Gandhiji's definition is not for us, non-violent coercion is what we understand'!"

makes up his mind he steels it against all argument. He has all the making of a soldier. Even I do not argue with him, but of course he allows me to lay down the law. He will always be the people's man. He cannot hit it off with the people in power. See him. He has studied the situation, and he may be able to make concrete suggestions. Have the setting from Jawaharlal and the concrete suggestions from the Sardar.

I love Mysore and Mysoreans. I like spending days together at Belur and Halebidu but I cannot go there for sightseeing. I can go there only if duty calls.[1]

Harijan, 24-6-1939; also *The Hindu*, 16-6-1939

355. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 14, 1939

DEAR PRITHVI SINGH,

Your letter of 27th May is very good. It shows that you have no difficulty in understanding the working of ahimsa. There are many who swear by ahimsa [but] have not understood my step.

I have not given up the attempt to secure possession of your book.

Attempts continue to be made about the release of the political prisoners. There are difficulties [in] the way. But for those who only know the non-violent way, success is contained in the effort itself. And prisoners who believe in non-violence regard prison-life and the outside with indifference. They serve whether in prison or outside.

I hope to go to the Frontier Province early July when both Mahadev and Pyarelal will be with me. One of them will surely see you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5635. Also C.W. 2946. Courtesy: Prithvi Singh

[1] This paragraph is reproduced from *The Hindu*, which added: "It is understood that Gandhiji received an invitation also from Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, to take a trip to Mysore for health, which also Gandhiji found impossible to accept."

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356. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 14, 1939

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your letter. Now that [Amritlal] Nanavati is with you, get well soon.

There is no harm in your having written to your distant cousin about Harbhai. Send me more details about the Home School when you get it. I shall certainly be surprised if you again start teaching the girls. Do go to Ahmedabad for treatment if you think it necessary to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 952. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

357. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SEGAON,
June 14, 1939

It is a pity that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose and Lalit Chandra Das had to resign from the Prisoners' Release Advisory Committee[2] when they found that they could not make further headway and that their views differed from those of their colleagues and of the Government. They had no option. I had hoped, when the Committee was formed, that they would evolve a joint scheme whereby the question of political prisoners would be solved on an all-India basis and on non-party lines. Provincial autonomy should have meant at least the release of all political prisoners throughout India especially when they declared their faith in non-violence as the vast majority, if not all, have done. The releases already

[1] This is extracted from "Bengal Political Prisoners". According to the source the statement was given "in releasing the letter" dated May 31, 1939, from Sarat Chandra Bose, Leader of the Opposition, Bengal Legislative Assembly; *vide* Appendix XII.

[2] Appointed by the Bengal Government; it started working from December 1938.

effected have shown that there is no danger of revival of terrorism such as the country has known. Therefore I would suggest that Shri Sarat Chandra Bose and Lalit Chandra Das be reinvited to serve on the Committee and a formula be found so as to satisfy their viewpoint. It would be unfortunate if a hurricane agitation were to be restarted on an issue which does not warrant any such agitation and which is capable of being decided by mutual accommodation. I hope that my appeal[1] to the Government of Bengal not to abandon the policy of conciliation they had adopted on this very important question of the release of political prisoners will not go in vain. It ought to be enough for them that the prisoners have declared their faith in non-violence. I hope that the prisoners will not be restless but will allow friendly effort to take its course without the interruption of a hunger-strike or the like. I would ask them to continue the dignified restraint they have so wisely observed.

Harijan, 24-6-1939

358. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

WARDHAGANJ,
[*June 15, 1939*][2]

MIRABAI
CARE BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

COME SEGAON EIGHTEENTH OR REACH BOMBAY TWENTY-FIRST.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6440. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10035

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXVII, pp. 18-9 and 395-7; also Vol. LXVI, pp. 303-5.
[2] The postmark is illegible in the source. *Vide*, however, the following item.

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359. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I wonder if I ever told you that you were to write to Sardar Datar Singh, your dairy friend, whether he is now prepared to receive Balvantsinha in his dairy near Lahore and give him the necessary training. You will remember that he said he would gladly take him as soon as he had put his branch dairy in Lahore in order. You will tell him all about Balvantsinha, that he has considerable practical experience of handling cattle but that he has no knowledge of English. He belongs to Khurja and hence his mother tongue is Hindi. He is now picking up Urdu.

Lilavati[1] went today to Bombay for her matriculation. She was wavering but I told her it was the best thing to do. Sharda has come in. I have no doubt that she is bearing. She is likely to be in Segaon for a few months. Shankaran is not overwell.

Mira seems to have become ill on the high altitude and is due in Birla House tomorrow. I am asking[2] her to see me in Bombay.

I hope you are well and that you had a good time at the educational meeting.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3921. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7230

[1] Lilavati Asar
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

360. LETTER TO KAPILRAI PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

BHAI KAPILRAI,

I have your letter. Let us hope that there will be no partiality in Bihar. But I cannot interfere. I think you should personally go and see Munshiji in Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KAPILRAI PAREKH
GORJI'S BUNGALOW
RAIKHAD, AHMEDABAD

From Gujarati: C.W. 9828. Courtesy: Kapilrai Parekh

361. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 15, 1939

How many Parsis are likely to be affected by the new tax? How much truth is there in the contention that the charities will be seriously affected by it? I see that I can get these figures only from the office there. Collect them. We must give an appropriate reply to this argument. If there is none, we should rectify the error.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 173

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362. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 15, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

I have your letter. Everything will work out well. Be patient. Don't worry yourself over money. Keep in touch with the Muslim Leaguers. When you were invited by them to a dinner, you should have gone. You should not be angry with them even in your heart. Propagation of khadi is our mission. Do not forget the vow to wear khadi. One may spin thin yarn and weave fine and coloured cloth. If we gave up the vow to wear khadi, we would be lost.

Take care of your health.

Ba and Kanam[2] may perhaps go there when I leave for the Frontier. Give the enclosed to Lakshmidasbhai[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 402

363. A LETTER

June 16, 1939

For me if ahimsa is not applicable to all walks of life, it is no use. My experiments therefore must have that end in view. I may correct myself a thousand times but I am not likely to give up an experiment in which visible results have been attained. This earthly life is a blend of the soul and the body, spirit and matter. We know the soul only through the body and so shall we know true ahimsa through its action in the daily life.

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

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] Son of Ramdas Gandhi; also called "Kana" and "Kano"
[3] Lakshmidas Asar

364. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1939

CHI. DEVDAS,

I had carefully preserved your letter of the 30th. I could reach it only today. I could never be unmindful of Jawaharlal's feelings. But when it becomes one's dharma to express a certain view, what else can one do? When saying something becomes absolutely necessary, it would be violation of truth to suppress it for anybody's sake. I restrain my pen to a great extent for the sake of Jawaharlal. I had long talks with him and even showed him your opinion. One may say that as a result we came to understand each other better. The differences, however, persist. We will bear with each other. You also should do the same. Time will do its work.

I understand your views regarding the people around me. Let me deal with the problems in my own way.

The programme is as follows: [From June] 21 [to] July 1, Bombay, then most probably in the Frontier Province.

Ba and Kanam will most probably go to the Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati. Today[1] Lilavati left for Bombay for her studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2031

365. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have read all your letters. Whether the climate there suits Balkrishna's health can be judged only after an adjustment of diet. Wai has less rains and you can perhaps get good milk there. If Wai suits you better you can go there. It is said that

[1] *Vide*, however, "Letter to Amrit Kaur", p. 347.

Panchgani is good for T. B. patients despite the rains. We have to be guided by Balkrishna's reactions. If he does not feel better there, come over here. We are leaving for Bombay on the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4319

366. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. AMRIT,

Yes, a tyrant I am, but non-violent. My tyranny too arises from love. Therefore it only does good to the victim, does it not?[1]

I hope you had no difficulty in deciphering my wire. I purposely wrote the wire in Hindi to make it ununderstandable save by you. It was my first or second attempt to send my wire in Hindi. If it was tyranny, it was tyranny of love.

The draft Muslim League resolution[2] on Basic Education is revealing.

If I succeed in going to the Frontier, you will join me at some station during my return journey and have the luxury of travelling third class with me on your line!!!

I understand . . .'s[3] message. I am writing to him.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3922. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7231

[1] This paragraph is in Hindi.

[2] The resolution which rejected the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education was passed by the Working Committee meeting of the League held in Bombay on July 2 and 3.

[3] The name is illegible in the source.

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367. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

DEAR ATULANAND,

I have your letter. I can make no suggestions. My mind somehow runs in a different direction. The disease has gone too deep for books to help. Some big action is necessary. What, I do not know as yet. I wish you could see this very obvious thing.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY
166/A JATIN DAS ROAD
P.O. KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: C.W. 1481. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

368. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 17, 1939

CHI. VANAMALA,

Your friend is sitting near me and I have heard from her plenty of stories about your sense of humour. I hope you are adding to it there. I have your letter. Guess who this friend of yours is. Perfect your Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5787

[1] Reproducing a part of this letter in *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 338, Louis Fischer explains: "Atulanand continued to concentrate on the Hindu-Muslim tension and suggested a book about it". *Vide* also Vol. LXVI, p. 86.

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369. A LETTER

June 18, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I delayed writing to you in the hope of being able to send you a more helpful reply to your kind letter of the 15th ultimo. But I cannot go beyond saying that you should act in accordance with your lights. You should be the sole judge of the situation there and seeing that our own non-violence has been found to be skin-deep, I have not the courage to propose anything worthy of your consideration. This does not mean that my faith in non-violence has suffered any diminution.

Yours sincerely,

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

370. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 18, 1939

MY DEAR SATYAMURTI,

I am quite at one with you about Congressmen not being able to belong to any other political organization. But nobody will go so far. Your other suggestions are also worthy of consideration. My influence is limited as it should be. After all I am not in touch with the working of the organization. I suggest your pressing your points at the A. I. C. C. meeting[1]. But you must not come at the sacrifice of your health. I am keeping your letter with me. I shall let Rajen Babu and others see it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also C.W. 10199. Courtesy: Government of Tamil Nadu

[1] This was to be held in Bombay from June 24 to 27.

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371. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI[1]

June 18, 1939

BHAI KAKALBHAI,

I got your misty vapourings about Rajkot. I glanced through the thing. I saw nothing in it but rhetoric. But isn't rhetoric your life? How then can you help yourself? If you have patience, one day you will realize the truth of these remarks of mine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

372. LETTER TO MULRAJ

June 18, 1939

BHAI MULRAJ,

I have your English letter. I thought you could write in Gujarati. I am sure you will be able to read this. Otherwise ask someone to read it to you. I adhere to my view. Even in Travancore and Jaipur where I have some control over the movement, I give advice only when asked. What else, then, can I do for Kutch? Please, therefore, understand that I [accept] no responsibility for stopping civil disobedience in Kutch.[2] The responsibility rests entirely on you workers. You may make public use of this letter.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] Congress worker of Saurashtra and editor of Gujarati daily, *Prabhat*, published from Ahmedabad

[2] *Vide* also "Notes", sub-title, "Leaders Must Lead", p. 330.

373. HOW FAR?

With reference to my advice[1] to the States people to lower their demands if necessary, a correspondent asks:

> How far are the people to go and what reduction if any is suggested or contemplated, for instance, in the Jaipur demand which has been practically framed by you?

This question would never have arisen if my language had been properly attended to. In the first place, I have added the proviso 'if necessary'. This must be clearly proved and each committee should judge the necessity and the extent of the reduction. In the second, there can be no question of reduction where the people are ready for the sacrifice involved in the development and the consolidation of the strength to enforce the demand. Take the case of Rajkot itself. Award or no award, if the people in general had the capacity for the required measure of sacrifice and if they had been ready for swaraj, nothing would have kept them from their prize.

It would be wrong to say or believe that but for my mistake the people of Rajkot would have got what they wanted. My mistake has been admitted. But it must not be held responsible for the failure of the famous Notification. The talk of demoralization resulting from my 'bad handling' of the situation is nonsensical. In satyagraha there is no such thing as demoralization. Those who are truthful, non-violent and brave do not cease to be so because of the stupidity of their leader. Of course there would be demoralization or rather exposure, if the three virtues were put on for the occasion and were to fail on the real test being applied. People who are strong by nature displace weak leaders and go about their business as if they never needed a leader. If they needed one, they would soon elect a better one. Workers in the States should try to understand the Rajkot case, if they will profit by it. If it is too complicated for them, they should leave it alone and go forward as if it had not happened. Nothing will be more misleading than to think that before my so-called mishandling of the Rajkot case the Princes were so trembling in their shoes that they were about to abdicate their powers in favour of their people.

[1] *Vide* pp. 322-5.

What they were doing before I even went to Rajkot was to confer among themselves as to the ways and means of meeting the menace, as they thought it to be, to their very existence. We know what Limbdi did.[1] The talk of combining with the Muslims, the Garasias and even the Depressed Classes against the Congress workers was in the air. My action has resulted in the discovery of the unholy combination. A true diagnosis is three-fourths the remedy. The workers are today in a position to devise remedies to combat the combination. It simply resolves itself into the necessity of Congressmen or satyagrahis gaining control over the forces arrayed against them. They are as much out to gain liberty for the Muslims, Garasias, Depressed Classes and even the Princes as for themselves. The satyagrahis have to show by cold reasoning and their conduct that the Princes cannot remain autocrats for all times, and that it is to their interest to become trustees of their people instead of remaining their masters. In other words, what I have done by correcting myself in Rajkot is to show the true way to the satyagrahis. In following it, they may find it necessary to lower their immediate demands but only so as to really hasten their progress to their goal. Therefore there can be no lowering out of weakness. Every lowering must be out of due appreciation of the local situation and the capacity of the workers to cope with it. Here there is no room for demoralization and rout. In cases like Jaipur of course there can [be] no question of lowering. The demand itself is in the lowest pitch. There is no room in it for lowering anything. In essence it is one for civil liberty. Civil liberty consistent with the observance of non-violence is the first step towards swaraj. It is the breath of political and social life. It is the foundation of freedom. There is no room there for dilution or compromise. It is the water of life. I have never heard of water being diluted.

Another question has been raised by another correspondent. He says:

> You expect us to work by negotiation. But if there is no wish on the other side and the only wish is to humiliate the party of freedom, what is to be done?

Of course nothing is to be done except waiting and preparing for suffering and promotion of constructive work. Absence of wish for negotiation by authority may mean despise or distrust of the party of freedom. In either case silent work is the remedy. Negotiation has been mentioned as a substitute for the ignoring of,

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXVIII, pp. 434-7.

i.e., the despise of, the constituted authority whether it is the Dewan or any other. And what I have pleaded for is desire and readiness for negotiation. It is not inconceivable that the stage of negotiation may never be reached. If it is not, it must not be for the fault of the satyagrahis.

SEGAON, June 19, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

374. WILL KHADI KILL KHADI?

When the increase in the spinners' wages was decided upon by the A.I.S.A., the Maharashtra Branch was the foremost in giving enthusiastic support to the proposal. It has the direct guidance of Shri Vinoba. It has worked out the increase programme with a precision not approached by the other provinces. The result is that the other provinces not having increased the wages to the same extent as the Maharashtra Branch are able to undersell the latter's khadi and do not hesitate to send their stock to the areas covered by the Maharashtra Branch. Unscrupulous merchants are not slow to take advantage of the situation. Thus uncertified stores have sprung up in Nagpur, Wardha and elsewhere. The unwary public, not knowing the new arrangements and eager to buy cheap khadi, prefer to patronize uncertified stores, thus doing great damage to the Maharashtra Branch stores. The result is that the Maharashtra Branch has either to reduce wages or to close down its business. This would amount to khadi killing khadi. Khadi-lovers should know that the economics of khadi are different from and often contrary to the ordinary economics of the competitive system which is not governed by the principle of the greatest good of all, i. e., of the least among the downtrodden. Thus I have endeavoured to show in these columns that if khadi is to fulfil its mission,

1. there must be progressive increase in the rise of the wages of the spinners till the minimum of one anna per hour is reached.
2. The ideal is that each village should produce and use its own khadi. From this it is clear that the least that should be done at present is that each province should produce enough and no more for its own requirements, permission being given for the sale outside its limits of such khadi as can only be produced by that province. For instance, Andhra can export, say, 80 counts khadi outside its limits but not coarse khadi no matter how cheap it is.
3. No profits can be made for the sake of profits. The wage-earners are the shareholders and the proprietors in this the

greatest co-operative organization in the world. If, therefore, there happen to be profits made in any single year, the proper use to make of them is to devote them to increase the number of spinners so long as there are any to be provided for, otherwise to increase the wages of the existing spinners.

4. Any province that makes an attempt to increase the wages of spinners to the desired level should be encouraged by the other branches and khadi-lovers.

5. The general public should restrict their use of khadi to the khadi produced in their own provinces although it is dearer than in the other provinces. They must trust the A. I. S. A. to do its best for every province.

6. The policy of the A. I. S. A. no doubt should be to reach uniformity of wages and prices throughout India. But till that ideal condition is reached the public should have humanitarianism enough to know that they have a duty by the wage-earners of their own province. It is almost as bad to have inter-provincial competition as it is to have competition with the outside world.

The immediate thing to be wished for is that all uncertified stores should be closed. Congressmen and others should warn the public against buying from such stores, and provincial branches should resolutely refuse to sell their stock outside except at the instance of the provincial agencies concerned of the A. I. S. A.

SEGAON, June 19, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

375. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have read the titbits in your letter to Mahadev Desai. What is to be done with the Princes? Gods confound those whom they want to destroy. It may be that their days are numbered. Only as believers in ahimsa we have to so act that we do not become directly or indirectly instruments of their destruction.

You have asked me to pray for you not in the letter before me but in the previous ones. I am doing it daily. I do not want to find fault with your logic or, which is the same thing, your reason. But we shall talk to our hearts' content when we meet, not even fearing explosions and storms. They clear the

air. You must therefore reserve all your tears. Do not spend up all behind closed doors. I smiled to myself to read your reference to Hansa. You successfully hid your grief even from her as from everybody else. Shall I bestow one more title[1] on you? Can you guess?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3657. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6466

376. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1939

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Now that I write to you quite regularly, you can't complain. What was all the fight there about? Who were the persons involved? I suppose you have written and given me this information. You would certainly get help from here if the [Indian] community there had strength of its own.

My health is good. Ba's indifferent. We are leaving for Bombay tomorrow. From there we shall perhaps go to the Frontier Province. Ba may go to Sabarmati and stay there during that period.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4898

377. ITS IMPLICATIONS

I am sorry that my recent statements about States have perplexed even those who have hitherto had no difficulty in understanding my writings or my actions. But the Rajkot statements, my actions in Rajkot, and the statement on Travancore have made 'confusion worse confounded'. Pyarelal and latterly Mahadev have been manfully trying to interpret for the readers of *Harijan*, both my writings and doings. I know that they have somewhat helped to clear misunderstandings. But I observe that something is required from me directly. I must therefore try

[1] *Vide* p. 383.

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to give the implications as I understand them of my recent writings and actions.

I had better first say what they do not imply. Thus my ideas on civil disobedience—individual, group or mass—have not changed, nor have my views about the relations between the Congress and the Princes and the people changed. Nor has my view undergone any change that it is essential for the Paramount Power to do its duty towards the people of the States—a duty which it has woefully neglected all these years. My recantation had reference only to my distrust in God, in whose name the fast was undertaken, and my seeking to supplement His work by Viceregal intervention. For me to rely upon the Viceroy, instead of God or in addition to God, to act upon the Thakore Saheb, was an act of pure violence which the fast was never conceived to imply or use in the remotest degree.

The positive implication of the Rajkot chapter in my life is the discovery that the non-violence claimed for the movement since 1920, marvellous though it was, was not unadulterated. The results though brilliant would have been far richer if our non-violence had been complete. A non-violent action accompanied by non-violence in thought and word should never produce enduring violent reaction upon the opponent. But I have observed that the movement in the States has produced violent reaction on the Princes and their advisers. They are filled with distrust of the Congress. They do not want what they call interference from it. In some cases the very name 'Congress' is anathema. This should not have been the case.

The value of the discovery lies in its reaction upon me. I have definitely stiffened in my demands upon would-be satyagrahis. If my stiffness reduces the number to an insignificant figure, I should not mind. If satyagraha is a universal principle of universal application, I must find an effective method of action even through a handful. And when I say I see the new light only dimly, I mean that I have not yet found with certainty how a handful can act effectively. It may be, as has happened throughout my life, that I shall know the next step only after the first has been taken. I have faith that when the time for action has arrived, the plan will be found ready.

But the impatient critic will say, 'The time has always been there for action; only you have been found unready!' I cannot plead guilty. I know to the contrary. I have been for some years saying that there is no warrant for resumption of satyagraha.

The reasons are plain.

The Congress has ceased to be an effective vehicle for launching nation-wide satyagraha. It has become unwieldy, it has corruption in it, there is indiscipline among Congressmen, and rival groups have come into being which would radically change the Congress programme if they could secure a majority. That they have failed hitherto to secure it is no comfort to me. The majority has no living faith in its own programme. In any case satyagraha through a majority is not a feasible proposition. The whole weight of the Congress should be behind any nation-wide satyagraha.

Then there is the ever-growing communal tension. Final satyagraha is inconceivable without an honourable peace between the several communities composing the Indian nation.

Lastly, there is the provincial autonomy. I adhere to my belief that we have not done anything like justice to the task undertaken by the Congress in connection with it. It must be confessed that the Governors have on the whole played the game. There has been very little interference on their part with the ministerial actions. But the interference, sometimes irritating, has come from Congressmen and Congress organizations. Popular violence there should not have been whilst the Congressmen were in office. Much of the ministerial energy has been devoted to dealing with the demands and opposition of Congressmen. If the Ministers are unpopular, they can and should be dismissed. Instead they have been allowed to function without the active co-operation of many Congressmen.

It will be contrary to every canon of satyagraha to launch upon the extreme step till every other is exhausted. Such haste will itself constitute violence.

It may be said in reply with some justification that if all the conditions I have mentioned are insisted upon, civil disobedience may be well-nigh impossible. Is that a valid objection? Every measure carries with it conditions for its adoption. Satyagraha is no exception. But I feel within me that some active form of satyagraha, not necessarily civil disobedience, must be available in order to end an impossible situation. There must be either effective non-violent action or violence and anarchy within a measurable distance of time. I must examine this position on a future occasion.[1]

SEGAON, June 20, 1939

Harijan, 24-6-1939

[1] *Vide* "Non-violence *v.* Violence", 4-7-1939.

378. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

Please find enclosed a letter from Amritlal. Return it to me today along with the prescription.

The very next day after your visit I gave instructions to Jivanji to print the *Autobiography* in the Nagari script and sell it at one anna less.

There is no reply from Sardar. I will insist on getting one. I will be going to the Mahila Ashram at 4 and to Jamnalalji's bungalow at 4.30. Vinoba will be there. Have you agreed to keep Prabhu Dayal?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10922

379. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

BOMBAY,
June 21, 1939

NANAVATI
CARE PAREKH BROTHERS
BHAVNAGAR

CONSULTED SUSHILA SEGAON. SHE SAID JIVRAJ SHOULD NOT BE WORRIED IN ANY CASE. IF DIAGNOSIS CORRECT TREATMENT NOT LIKELY TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THERE. MY EMPHATIC OPINION IS CHANDAN SHOULD HAVE AYURVEDIC TREATMENT. THEREFORE SHE SHOULD PROCEED AHMEDABAD. SEVERAL AYURVEDIC PHYSICIANS THERE. WELL-EQUIPPED HOSPITALS ALSO THERE. WEATHER THIS TIME FAVOURABLE. OTHER RESPECTS ALSO BOMBAY UNDESIRABLE. CAN GIVE NO PERSONAL ATTENTION. ACCOMMODATION BIRLA HOUSE IMPROPER. ONLY PROPER PLACE FOR ALLOPATHIC TREATMENT WOULD BE HOSPITAL. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED MY CHOICE IS AHMEDABAD UNLESS CHANDAN AND HER FATHER HAVE

FAITH IN NATURECURE IN WHICH CASE SHE SHOULD BE SENT POONA TO TAKE TREATMENT UNDER DINSHA MEHTA WHERE KAKASAHEB AND BAL TREATED.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 953. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

380. LETTER TO AMRITLAL SHETH

June 21, 1939

BHAI AMRITLAL,

I was pleased to see your letter. I did not even know for certain where you were living and what you were doing. I hope you keep good health.

I cannot guide you in the Limbdi affair. Perhaps the right course will be to obey the dictates of your heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

381. LETTER TO NATHALAL

June 21, 1939

BHAI NATHALAL,

Your letter came into my hands only today. I cannot see the post every day as soon as it comes. Your unhappiness is completely imaginary. You should forget that woman. Let her stay at her father's if she wishes. If it is necessary to give something for her maintenance, send her a fixed amount. Why should you be unhappy because of her shortcomings? We believe that a wife is our property. But in fact she is not. What difference does it make even if she is married to you? If you wish to divorce her and if that is possible, you may do so. Do not be deterred through any false regard for society. Even the parents' authority will be of little use in this matter. You should, therefore, stop being unhappy. Cast off the load from your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

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382. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

BIRLA HOUSE, MALABAR HILL,
BOMBAY,
June 22, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant.

Though it is a pity that prisoner Prithvi Singh cannot be discharged, I have no difficulty in understanding your decision. I must await another opportunity.

The case of Jaipur is hanging fire. I wonder if a solution may be expected. As far as I know the Maharaja himself was quite willing to set free Sheth Jamnalalji and the other prisoners, to recognize the People's Association and to respect full civil liberty so long as it did not cross the bounds of non-violence.

There is one other matter which I had better mention in this letter. I understand there are Princes who are desirous of seeing me but they have hesitation in doing so for fear of the disapproval of the Political Department. As I had said during our talks[1] in New Delhi, I am of opinion that they should be free to meet any person so long as they do so openly. It would be a good thing if a declaration of your policy on this subject were made either openly or privately as may be thought advisable. I feel that it would not be enough if the permission is given in individual cases like mine. Seeing that the people of the States have intimate connection—political and social—with Congressmen and others all over India, is it not wise and proper to encourage the practice of Princes establishing friendly relation with those who have influence over their people? To treat Congressmen and others as outsiders seems to be so unnatural that the barrier cannot last long. It would be a pity if it is broken after a clash and creation of bad blood. I wonder if you have noticed that some States have invited or welcomed visits of anti-Congress personalities. I do not complain of this but it is in striking contrast

[1] On April 4, 1939

to the opposition fostered often by the Political Department to the visits of Congressmen.[1]

Yours sincerely,

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

From a copy: C.W. 7827. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

383. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

BOMBAY,
June 22, 1939

MY DEAR UMA[2],

Why did you think I would not give my blessings? The friend said he was satisfied with the talk I gave. And in proof of what I say here is [the] thing duly signed. I hope you are flourishing. My going to the Frontier is uncertain.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI UMA DEVI
ISHAR HILLS
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

From a photostat: G.N. 1201. Also C.W. 5096. Courtesy: Uma Devi

384. ADVICE TO CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE

June 22, 1939

It is understood that Gandhiji suggested that any amendment to the Constitution which was being given effect to should find favour with the general body of Congressmen in the country. His opinion seems to have been that such changes of far-reaching importance should not be decided by a mere majority vote. This suggestion of Gandhiji is regarded in responsible Congress circles as a hint particularly to drop the Clause[3] for the present.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-6-1939

[1] For Lord Linlithgow's reply to this, *vide* Appendix XIII.

[2] Wanda Dynowska, a Polish lady

[3] The reference is to the proposed amendment to Article V (c) of the Congress Constitution. In his Presidential Address at the A. I. C. C. meeting on June 24, Rajendra Prasad said: "With the object of tightening up the Congress

385. A.I.C.C. RESOLUTIONS

[*June 23, 1939*][1]

1. The All-India Congress Committee views with grave concern the measures proposed by the Ceylon Government with reference to their Indian employees and hopes that it may be possible to find a way to avoid the most undesirable and grave conflict that, as a result of these measures, is threatened between such near and ancient neighbours as India and Ceylon.

The Committee cannot contemplate without much concern a quarrel between the two countries which are separated only by a strip of water but which have a common culture and which have been intimately connected from times immemorial. The Committee desires to explore every means of avoiding conflict and, therefore, appoints Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to go to Ceylon and confer with the authorities and representative associations and individuals on behalf of the Working Committee and do all that may be possible to effect a just and honourable settlement.

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organization, attempts have been made to amend the Constitution. The Tripuri Congress gave special authority to the A. I. C. C. for this purpose. . . . Among the recommendations made by the Constitution Sub-committee was the addition of some words to Article V(c) of the Constitution so that the rule applying to communal organization might also be applied to other anti-national organizations. The Working Committee agreed with this recommendation. . . . It appeared to the Working Committee that there was a fear in the minds of some Congressmen that the proposed change in Article V(c) was intended to be used to penalize opinion or to suppress organizations. This fear was entirely unjustified. . . . When, however, any organization is continually being attacked and run down by another organization, it is improper for the same person to be a member of the executives of both organizations. This produces not only conflict between the organizations but continuous internal conflict within them. It was with a view to avoid this and thus to have greater harmony even between the organizations that the amendment to Article V(c) was suggested. But in view of the suspicions some members have, the Working Committee have decided not to press for the change . . ." (*The Indian Annual Register, 1939*, Vol. I, pp. 355-6).

[1] The resolutions were drafted by Gandhiji on this date; *vide* the following item. These were passed by the A. I. C. C. at its session held in Bombay from June 24 to 27.

2. The A. I. C. C. regrets the attitude of the Union Government towards Indian settlers. It betrays utter disregard of the obligations undertaken by the predecessors of the present Government. The policy[1] just initiated by them is in direct breach of the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement of 1914,[2] the Cape Town Agreement of 1927,[3] the Feetham Commission of 1932[4] and the subsequent undertakings on behalf of the Union Government. The A. I. C. C. notes with pride and satisfaction the firm stand taken up by the Indians of South Africa. They will have the sympathy of the whole Indian nation behind them in their fight for self-respect and honourable existence. The A. I. C. C. trusts that there will be no dissensions among them and that they will present a united front. The A. I. C. C. appeals to the Union Government to retrace their steps and carry out the promises of their predecessors to adopt a policy of progressive amelioration in the status of the Indian nationals in South Africa, 80 per cent of whom are born and bred in that sub-continent and to whom South Africa is their only home.

3. This meeting of the A. I. C. C. resolves that no Congressman may offer or organize any form of satyagraha in the Administrative Provinces of India without the previous sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee concerned.

4. The Working Committee has repeatedly laid stress on the desirability of co-operation between the Congress Ministry, the Congress party and the Provincial Congress Committee. Without such co-operation misunderstandings are likely to arise with the result that the influence of the Congress will suffer. In administrative matters the Provincial Congress Committee should not interfere with the discretion of the Congress Ministry, but it is always open to the executive of the Provincial Congress Committee to draw the attention of the Government privately to any particular abuse or difficulty. In matters of policy if there is a difference between the Ministry and the Provincial Congress Committee,

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 115.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XII, Appendix XXV.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXXIII, pp. 63-4 and 117-9.

[4] Also called the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act Commission under the Chairmanship of Justice Feetham, appointed by the Union Government of South Africa, "to enquire into the occupation by Coloured persons of proclaimed land in the Transvaal". As the Commission "was unable to finish its work before April 30, 1935, as had been hoped, the Union Government of South Africa took steps early in the year to amend the Transvaal Asiatic Land Tenure Act of 1932, so as to extend the protection provided by it to April 30, 1937" (*India in 1931-32*, p. 85 and *India in 1934-35*, pp. 92-3).

reference should be made to the Parliamentary Sub-committee. Public discussion in such matters should be avoided.

5. This Committee views with grave concern the prolonged strike at Digboi and expresses its sympathy with the strikers in their distress.[1] The Committee regrets that the Assam Oil Company has not seen its way to accept the modest suggestion of referring the question of the method and time of re-employment of the strikers to a Conciliation Board to be appointed by the Government of Assam.

In the opinion of this Committee no Corporation, however big and influential it may be, can be above public criticism or Government supervision and legitimate control. Moreover as was declared at the Karachi session the Congress policy is that there should be State ownership or control of key industries. The oil industry is undoubtedly a vital key industry. This Committee therefore hopes that better counsels will prevail with the Company and that its directors will accept the modest suggestion made on behalf of the Committee by the President of the Congress. If, however, the directors do not see their way to do so, the Committee advises the Assam Government forthwith to undertake legislation for making the acceptance of the decisions of Conciliation Boards obligatory and further give notice to the Company that the Committee may reluctantly be obliged to take such steps as may be necessary to stop renewal of the lease to the Company on its termination. At the same time that this Committee urges the Company to fall in with the just suggestion made by the Committee, it hopes that the Labour Union will be ready to listen to the Committee's advice and if they were to retain Congress and public sympathy they will be ready and willing to abide by the advice that may be tendered to them by the Committee.

6. The All-India Congress Committee is strongly of opinion that immediate steps should be taken for the formation of a separate Andhra Province.

Harijan, 1-7-1939

[1] The workers of Assam Oil Company, Digboi, had been on strike since April 3 on account of the discharge of some 63 workers from service.

386. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
June 23, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is just 6 a. m. Amtul Salaam is as busy as ever doing nothing useful and wasting her time in preparing my breakfast. She is disconsolate because I can't give her hours. She defies analysis. She baffles me. There is something wrong in my handling her.

Mira is here silently watching everything. She is without occupation as she has not to go to the Frontier. I am now considering what use to make of her talents.

Jawaharlal is quite convinced that I have put back the clock of progress by a century or thereabout by my Rajkot misdeeds. I am equally sure that I have rendered great service by my good deeds in Rajkot. We have not found an umpire. Therefore we are none the wiser for our assertions. He thinks I am impossible for an organization. He is right there. But I am helpless. Of course there is this thing possible. I can voluntarily retire from all activity. It may come but only by a call from God. I am praying.

This news must not disturb you. I am as cheerful as ever. The differences do not worry me. I am drafting resolutions[1] for the Committee and Jawaharlal is drafting a statement. There is no coolness between us. Perhaps we have come nearer for the discovery of the wide divergence of views.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3658. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6467

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

387. LETTER TO PATTOM THANU PILLAI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

DEAR THANU PILLAY,

You have all the copies of the wires exchanged between the Dewan and me. My suggestion is, you or he who is considered the most suitable amongst you should write to Sir C. P. referring to the wires and seeking an appointment as a preliminary to establish direct contact to enable you to answer and clear out the charges made against the Congress in Sir C. P.'s wires. This you will do, if you have assimilated the new technique. The new technique is not a mere idle expression. It has great potency. You will closely follow the columns of *Harijan*. If you have understood it, there must be new access of faith, courage and hope.

BAPU

From a photostat: Pattom Thanu Pillai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

388. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Today I must write to you. Sharda is all right. When she goes to Surat, Shakaribehn may go and stay with her, or she may come away after watching for some time how Sharda feels at Surat. I see no cause at all for worrying.

I had expected some information about Balvantsinha today. Permission for him to go to Lahore has been received.

I got Munnalal's letter. Let the book remain there for the present.

Ba is still weak, though she is a little better today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10597

389. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

June 24, 1939

DADACHANJI,

This morning I saw the monthly that you left yesterday. I read Baba's article. I just glanced through the other articles also. As I understand it, Baba's wish seems to be that if I approve of what he says in his article I should myself translate it. But there are many Gujarati translators more proficient than I am. I cannot say 'I approve of it' nor would I say 'I do not,' for either way it would be presumption. So, in other words, 'I am just wondering what all this is.' Send me the other issues also. I admit that my curiosity for understanding Baba and his works has increased. If Baba agrees, I wish to send one of my co-workers to Meherabad. Thus, after getting to know him in my own way, if [his articles] appeal to me, I shall certainly translate them. I will be guided by God in this. Let me know through a postcard after meeting Baba or even otherwise whether I should send one of my co-workers to Meherabad.

Vandemataram from

DADACHANJI
SORAB BHARUCHA HOUSE
VINCENT ROAD, DADAR, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

390. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 24, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. I have wired that Balvantsinha be sent to Panchgani and he may have reached there by now.[1] If he has not arrived and you intend to stay there till I return to Segaon,

[1] Balvantsinha did not go to Panchgani as the wire was not dispatched; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", p. 379.

I have no objection. You may do what you consider proper. I received no letter from you today.

Sushila may reach here tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4321

391. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. There is no need to consult a lady doctor. You may engage a tutor. I will pay up to Rs. 25 for him. But then please see that you plunge yourself whole-heartedly in your studies. After engaging a tutor, you will not be free to move from place to place. If your household chores also take up too much of your time, engaging a tutor will serve no purpose. When the tutor devotes one hour you must devote four hours for studying by yourself. Only then will you benefit by it. Let me know what you finally decide. But take care of your health whatever you do.

My tour of the Frontier Province is still not certain. I am here up to July 1 at any rate. Sushila will return from Segaon tomorrow. She is better now. Ba is ill, though. She has a cough.

I am all right. The diet remains the same, one and a half pounds of milk. Amtul Salaam is with me. Lilavati has joined a high school for study. Would you like to do the same?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3476

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392. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

You must have read the resolution[1]. It is not proper that I have not received any information about the fight there. There is no news about the struggle either. Everyone believes that I am being kept informed. But there has been no information from that side. Who is Dadu[2]? There was a cable from him. After that there has been nothing. I am preparing the ground for whatever help can be given. But if I get no regular news from there at all, nothing can be done.

Ba is with me. She keeps indifferent health. Ramdas and Devdas also are here. Lakshmi is here on her way to Madras.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4899

393. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
June 25, 1939

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Only today Kanu told me about Krishnadas's health and I was shocked to hear the news. He says he is staying with Radha and has got very much emaciated, and that tuberculosis is suspected. How did this happen to him? If you wish you may take him to Rajkot. Dr. Variava there is a very kind and efficient doctor. If you get all the requisite facilities there, let him stay on. There is no harm in proceeding on the assumption that he is suffering

[1] Of A. I. C. C. on the attitude of the Union Government towards Indian settlers; *vide* p. 367.

[2] He was leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa; *vide* also letter to the addressee, p. 359.

from tuberculosis. Let him drink plenty of milk and eat as much butter as he can digest. Also green vegetables and fruits. Garlic is considered very good for tuberculosis. He had better go to Ahmedabad and get himself X-rayed. Give me all the details. I am here till July 1. It should be kept in mind that rest is the main thing. Talking and movement also should be reduced to a minimum. Manojna must be all right. You and Kashi should not get alarmed. Ba is with me. She gets slight fever daily.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10090. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

394. NOTES

INDIA'S AMBASSADOR OF PEACE TO CEYLON

The A. I. C. C. has done well in choosing its best man[1] to proceed to Ceylon as the nation's Ambassador of peace. It is, at least it should be, impossible for India and Ceylon to quarrel. We are the nearest neighbours. We are inheritors of a common culture. There is daily contact between the two countries. From Rameshwar one almost steps on to Ceylon and finds that one is on no foreign land. But even as blood brothers sometimes differ, so do next-door neighbours. And like brothers, they usually adjust their differences and are often more closely knit together after the clearance. So may it be between Ceylon and India through the efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

No better man could have been chosen for the task. The Indian side is clear. Several thousand men who have been in Government service for years, whether as day workers or other it does not matter, are being dismissed for no fault save that they are Indians. Private firms have been, it is said, told to copy the Government. Now this procedure seems to be extraordinary, arbitrary and unjust. But we do not clearly know the other side. It will be for the Pandit to study the Ceylon Government case and make due allowance for everything that might be justly pleaded on their behalf. Let us hope that both the Ceylon Government and the Indians in Ceylon will make the way smooth for an honourable settlement.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru; *vide* p. 366.

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I must confess that these acute differences come upon me as a revelation. I have a vivid recollection of my visit[1] to Ceylon. There seemed to be most cordial relations between the Indians and the Ceylonese. The monks and the laymen of Ceylon vied with the Indians in lavishing their affection on me. I do not remember anybody having complained to me about acute differences between the two. Why has the partial responsible government that Ceylon enjoys made all the difference that we witness today? It will be for the Pandit to unravel the mystery.

Rajkot—Was It a Betrayal?

I have always felt that whatever Gandhiji has done at any time from his spiritual standpoint, has been proved to be correct from the practical point. He is not great for his enunciation of spiritual theories which are to be found in the scriptures of all countries. His contribution to the world is his showing the way to put into practice, in the ordinary day-to-day life, those great spiritual theories. For me, if any of Gandhiji's actions done from a spiritual point of view failed to prove that it was *the* correct thing to be done from a practical standpoint, then he would be considered to have failed to that extent. Let me apply that test to what he did in Rajkot.

When he discovered that his fast became vitiated by his having requested H. E. the Viceroy to intervene, he renounced the Gwyer Award. The practical effect was to free him from Rajkot. But did his renunciation free the Viceroy from the obligation of seeing that the Rajkot Notification was acted upon according to the Chief Justice's interpretation? In my opinion Gandhiji's renunciation casts a double duty on the Viceroy. And if the Viceroy does not perform his duty, the people of Rajkot are free to act as they choose, and the Congress will have a powerful case against the Viceroy if the Notification proved abortive.

This is an abridgement of an article sent by a noted Congressman for publication in *Harijan*. He has built up an elaborate case in defence of my action regarding Rajkot, in reply to the criticism that I had betrayed the cause of the Rajkot people. The heading of this note is the correspondent's. I need not weary the reader with the whole of his argument. After all, time alone is the true test. It will finally show whether my action was right or wrong. But the abridgement is given for the novelty of the thought about the Viceroy's duty. I had no thought of the consequence of the renunciation. As soon as I saw that my fast had

[1] In November 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXV.

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become tainted for my seeking Viceregal intervention, I renounced the Award. But now that my correspondent mentions it, I must admit the force of his reasoning. My renunciation should act as a double spur to the Viceregal duty of seeing that the Rajkot Notification No. 50 is carried out according to the interpretation put upon it by the Chief Justice. So far as I am concerned my renunciation debars me, in this instance, from invoking Viceregal intervention. I also endorse the correspondent's statement that if any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be unpractical it must be pronounced to be a failure. I do believe the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term.

BOMBAY, June 26, 1939
Harijan, 1-7-1939

395. SOUTH AFRICA RESOLUTION

It is a matter of congratulation that the South Africa Resolution[1] of the A. I. C. C. escaped complete disfigurement which the learned Dr. Lohia's amendment would have caused. I tender him my thanks for having listened to Pandit Jawaharlal's advice to respect the opinion of an expert like me who had passed the best part of his life in South Africa and who had not lost touch with that great country after retiring from it. This incident is an illustration showing that mere learning, mere humanitarianism divorced from actual experience may spell disaster to the cause sought to be espoused. Dr. Lohia's amendment had as much place in the resolution as mine would have in a resolution framed by him as an authority on socialism to meet a socialist difficulty. If I made any such attempt, he would very properly say, 'Don't pass the resolution if you don't like it, but don't disfigure it. It would defeat the purpose for which it is framed.' What I have said about the South Africa resolution applies more or less to the Working Committee's resolutions. That Committee is the expert body on matters relating to the Congress. It is dangerous to tamper with its resolutions unless reason convinces the Cabinet of the soundness of alterations suggested by members of the A. I. C. C. Acceptance of this practical advice, which I tendered more than once when I was a member of the Working Committee, would facilitate the despatch of national business.

[1] *Vide* p. 367.

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Having said this let me say for the information of Dr. Lohia and his fellow humanitarians that I yield to no one in my regard for the Zulus, the Bantus and the other races of South Africa. I used to enjoy intimate relations with many of them. I had the privilege of often advising them. It used to be my constant advice to our countrymen in South Africa, never to exploit or deceive these simple folk. But it was not possible to amalgamate the two causes. The rights and privileges (if any could be so called) of the indigenous inhabitants are different from those of the Indians. So are their disabilities and their causes. But if I discovered that our rights conflicted with their vital interests, I would advise the forgoing of those rights. They are the inhabitants of South Africa as we are of India. The Europeans are undoubtedly usurpers, exploiters or conquerors or all these rolled into one. And so the Africans have a whole code of laws specially governing them. The Indian segregation policy of the Union Government has nothing in common with the policy governing the African races. It is unnecessary for me to go into details. Suffice it to say that ours is a tiny problem compared to the vast problem that faces the African races and that affects their progress. Hence it is not possible to speak of the two in the same breath. The A. I. C. C. resolution concerns itself with the civil resistance struggle of our countrymen on a specific issue applicable solely to them. It is now easy to see that Dr. Lohia's amendment, if it had remained, would have been fatal to the resolution which would have become perfectly meaningless. The appeal to the Union Government would have lost all its point.

But good often comes out of evil. The amendment, wisely withdrawn, shows to the Africans and to the world in general that India has great regard and sympathy for all the exploited races of the earth and that she would not have a single benefit at the expense of the vital interest of any of them. Indeed the war against imperialism cannot wholly succeed unless all exploitation ceases. The only way it can cease is for every exploited race or nation to secure freedom without injuring any other.

My examination of the South Africa resolution would be incomplete if I did not warn the Indians in South Africa against building much on the resolution itself. It is a potent resolution only if the Indians take the contemplated action. The motherland will not be able to protect their self-respect, if they are not prepared to protect it themselves. They must therefore be ready to suffer for it. The struggle may be prolonged, suffering great. But they will have the moral backing of the whole nation. In

this Hindus, Muslims, and all political parties including Europeans are united. The Government of India may feel powerless. I fancy they are not so powerless as they imagine. I am reminded of the 'Thought for the Day' in *The Times of India* of the 24th instant. It begins, 'We have more power than will.' I know their sympathy is with the Indians. If they have the strength of will, they have the power. Our countrymen in South Africa know the conditions of satyagraha. The foremost condition is unity among themselves.

To the Union Government I would say, "You have never proved your case. Your best men have admitted that there is no difficulty in your absorbing the two hundred thousand Indians in your continent. They are but a drop in the ocean. Remember that 80 per cent of them are born in South Africa. They have adopted your manners, customs and costume. They are intelligent. They have the same feelings and emotions that you have. They deserve better treatment than to be regarded untouchables fit only to be relegated to ghettos. This is not playing the game. And you should not wonder if, at last, Indians say, 'We shall rather die in your jails than live in your segregation camps.' I am sure you do not want to go to all that length. Let it not be said of you that you had no respect for your promises."

BOMBAY, June 26, 1939

Harijan, 1-7-1939

396. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BOMBAY,
June 26, 1939

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter just now. To me also you are just a girl of ten. May you always remain the same. I am submerged in work here. I shall be here up to the 1st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10400

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397. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

BIRLA HOUSE, BOMBAY,
June 26, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I got your letter. Consent for the dairy was received four days ago. I had drafted a telegram about Panchgani and given it to Pyarelal but I learn today that it was not dispatched. What shall I do? After all our family is what it is! Every moment I realize that I am personally responsible for this confusion. But I cannot overcome this shortcoming at this stage.

I shall not send you to Panchgani now. Get ready for Lahore. Sardar Sir Datar Singh has agreed to make all arrangements. When will you leave? If you let me know, I shall send him word.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1921

398. THE NATIONAL FLAG

The question of the use of the national flag still continues to agitate the public mind. It was designed when non-co-operation was at its height.[1] It was accepted without reserve, without opposition, by all communities. The Muslims and others vied with the Hindus in hoisting, carrying and honouring it. I recall having listened to the Ali Brothers enthusing over its praises from many a platform. It was conceived as a symbol of the peaceful revolt against imperialistic exploitation of a nation pledged to non-violence through a mighty, constructive and united effort through the spinning-wheel and khadi signifying out-and-out swadeshi and identity with the poorest in the land. It also symbolized unbreakable communal unity, the colours being specially and deliberately designed and chosen. That flag can admit of no competition as national flag. At national gatherings it should command unquestioned and universal respect. But it has to be admitted

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 561-2; also Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 338-9.

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that it does not command that respect today. Instead of being a symbol of simplicity, purity, unity, and through these a determined revolt against exploitation, moral, material and political, it nowadays often becomes a signal for communal quarrels. Even among Congressmen attempt is sometimes made to prefer the red flag to the tricolour. Some Congressmen do not even hesitate to run it down.

In these circumstances I personally would like to remove it from public gatherings and not unfurl it till the public feel the want and impatiently demand to see it restored to its original and unique place. But the vast majority of Congressmen who have suffered under this well-tried banner and drawn inspiration and strength from it will not go the length I would like them to. I therefore suggest that where there is any opposition in a mixed gathering, the flag should not be hoisted. This can happen in schools, colleges, local boards, municipal councils and the like. The flag should not be insisted on when there is opposition even from one member. Let it not be called the tyranny of one person. When one person among many offers opposition and if he is allowed to have his way, it is proof of magnanimity or farsightedness on the part of the overwhelming majority. I have no doubt that this is the most effective non-violent way of dealing with the question. My advice applies even to those places where the flag is already flying. It was triumphantly flown in many places when the nation was offering non-co-operation on a scale perhaps hitherto unknown in history. Times are changed. Opposition wherever it is offered is fomenting communal dissensions. Surely it is wisdom on the part of those who treasure the flag and unity to submit to the opposition of a minority be it ever so small.

What I have said about the flag applies *mutatis mutandis* to the singing of the *Vandemataram*[1]. No matter what its source was and how and when it was composed, it had become a most powerful battle-cry among Hindus and Mussalmans of Bengal during the partition days. It was an anti-imperialist cry. As a lad, when I knew nothing of *Anandmath* or even Bankim, its immortal author, *Vandemataram* had gripped me, and when I first

[1] The song occurs in *Anandmath* by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. In 1937, the Congress Working Committee meeting in Calcutta passed a resolution that "Whenever and wherever *Vandemataram* is sung only the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organizers to sing any other song of unobjectionable character in addition to, or in the place of, *Vandemataram* song."

heard it sung, it had enthralled me. I associated the purest national spirit with it. It never occurred to me that it was a Hindu song or meant only for Hindus. Unfortunately now we have fallen on evil days. All that was pure gold before has become base metal today. In such times it is wisdom not to market pure gold and let it be sold as base metal. I would not risk a single quarrel over singing *Vandemataram* at a mixed gathering. It will never suffer from disuse. It is enthroned in the hearts of millions. It stirs to its depth the patriotism of millions in and outside Bengal. Its chosen stanzas are Bengal's gift among many others to the whole nation. The flag and the song will live as long as the nation lives.

BOMBAY, June 27, 1939
Harijan, 1-7-1939

399. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 27, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Sushilabehn is here now. She will write everything in detail. Balvantsinha's letter is enclosed. I shall not send him there now. You may stay there for the present. If you need anyone's help, you may take it. We shall see what can be done after I return [to Segaon]. As long as you stay there, you must be at ease. I have forgotten to write about the book. Ask for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4320

400. LETTER TO PURATAN J. BUCH

BOMBAY,
June 28, 1939

CHI. PURATAN,

Amtulbehn has been working among the Muslim women. Both of you should help her as much as you can without allowing your Harijan work to suffer.

I did not like it at all that Anandi[1] did not come along

[1] Addressee's wife

beyond the Sabarmati station. I very much wanted to enjoy a few minutes' fun with her and was disappointed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9173

401. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

VISHRAM VATIKA, JUHU,
June 28, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I had received your earlier letter. Now I have the second one. As long as there is the least hope from the Viceroy, we should neither think nor write about the breakdown of negotiations.

A copy of my letter[1] to the Viceroy must have been sent to you the same day; but perhaps I could not instruct anyone. If it has not been received, you will get a copy now with this. The reference to waiting on the Premier should be overlooked.

Keep me informed about the satyagraha by Muslims.

Jamnalal's knee causes anxiety. The main thing is rest. Does he take enough fruits? It is also necessary to take green leafy vegetables. Oil should be eschewed. What about the vaid who used to treat him? Is the hospital all right? Send the leg X-ray for Sushila's examination.

I may leave for the Frontier Province on the 2nd. Mahadev has been sent to Rajkot. The work which was progressing there is, I am afraid, likely to suffer a set-back.

Ba is slightly unwell. She will be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9125

[1] Dated June 22; *vide* pp. 364-5.

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402. TELEGRAM TO SIR J. G. LAITHWAITE

June 29, 1939

HAVE BEEN JUST SUPPLIED WITH TALCHER'S REVISED DECLARATION. HAVING STUDIED IT CAREFULLY MUST SAY IT DOES NOT MEET SITUATION. GIVES NO HOPE REFUGEES. I CONCLUDED THAT DECLARATION IS THE BEST HIS EXCELLENCY CAN SECURE FROM RULER. IF SO I MUST ADVISE REFUGEES HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY TO CONTINUE SUFFER TILL DESIRED RELIEF IS FORTHCOMING. BUT BEFORE MAKING PUBLIC DECLARATION I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF I MAY WHETHER HIS EXCELLENCY CAN DO ANYTHING FURTHER REDEEM HOPE CONTAINED IN DOCUMENTS SIGNED BY POLITICAL OFFICERS.[1]

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

403. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

VISHRAM VATIKA, JUHU,
P. O. SANTA CRUZ, BOMBAY,
June 29, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER[2],

Your ban about your letters renders it impossible for me to answer all questions. They are either passed on to Mahadev or destroyed as soon as I have read them.

[1] The addressee's telegraphic reply dated July 2 read: "Your telegram of 29th June, and my interim reply of 30th Talcher refugees. According to His Excellency's information Raja's latest declaration supplementing his previous announcement fulfils substantially all expectations held out to refugees. Position has been fully explained to a responsible Minister of Orissa Government who has undertaken to do his best to get refugees to return on these terms. It seems to His Excellency that genuine well-wishers of refugees should unite in offering this advice so that they may return to their homes before weather conditions increase their difficulties. Any other course means sacrificing their interest for a purpose which it appears clearly impossible to justify."

[2] New title given to Amrit Kaur; *vide* p. 359.

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I have advised you about Jawaharlal Nehru's invitation. In my opinion the whole of his planning[1] is a waste of effort. But he can't be satisfied with anything that is not big.

Here there is interruption and if I am to catch the post I must stop.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3659. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6468

404. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR[2]

June 30, 1939

Just a line to say you will not grieve over your mother's death. Living faith in God is tested on these occasions.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6076. Also C.W. 3406. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

405. LETTER TO SAIYID ASGHAR HASAN

July 1, 1939

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 19th ultimo. As I get the time, I try to read the literature you have sent me. It is a difficult job for me. I have so many things on hand that I cannot do justice to the study required. Meanwhile it grieves me that the matter[3] cannot be adjusted by the united effort of the two sections. Adjustment seems to me, an outsider, to be simple.

From your letter I gather that nothing emerged from your visit to the Maulana Saheb.

JANAB SAIYID ASGHAR HASAN SAHEB
RETIRED SESSIONS JUDGE
TANZIMAL M. VICTORIA STREET
LUCKNOW, U. P.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru was Chairman of the National Planning Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress in 1938.

[2] This was written by Gandhiji on Mirabehn's letter dated June 30, 1939, to the addressee; *vide* also "Letter to F. Mary Barr", p. 393.

[3] This was in connection with the Shia-Sunni differences; *vide* also "A Letter", p. 293.

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406. INDIANS IN BELGIAN CONGO

The case of our countrymen in Belgian Congo does not admit of easy treatment. It consists in the prosecution, alleged to be political, though technically under the Gold Law of Belgian Congo, of certain Indian settlers for being in possession of illicit gold. In the case as stated in the circulated pamphlet it is suggested that the accused were arrested without just cause. Witnesses for the Crown are said to have been perjured. Every obstacle is being placed in the way of the accused being properly defended. The expectation of our countrymen in Congo is that we should send eminent counsel from here to defend them. Representations have been made to the Government of India on their behalf. This is essentially a case, however hard in itself, in which effective public action is hardly possible. But it is undoubtedly a case in which the Government of India can do much. It can through the Foreign Office in England ascertain the exact position. The British Consul can be instructed to watch the case and see that the accused get a fair trial. Indeed British Consuls have been known to have been instructed to engage counsel to watch cases on behalf of their proteges. I hope that the Government of India are giving attention to this hard case of the Indians of Belgian Congo.

BOMBAY, July 3, 1939

Harijan, 8-7-1939

407. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

CHI. MAMA,

We shall start[1] on Wednesday the 5th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3841

[1] For the Frontier Province

408. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKWASA

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

BHAI MANGALDAS,

As I made some important changes, I got the draft retyped. The original draft also is enclosed. I am here till the 5th at any rate. If you think it is necessary to see me, do come. I have not checked the revisions in the copy retyped.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 4683. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakwasa

409. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

BOMBAY,
July 3, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have both your letters. The last one was excellent. Learning to remain untouched by either respect or disrespect is the first lesson to learn. Without laws the sun and the other heavenly bodies would not move and even the trains would not run and hundreds of thousands of people would die. Nothing in this world can function without laws. Hence wherever you go, you will have to abide by certain rules. And when we consider ourselves smaller than even a particle of dust, by whom would we feel insulted or pained ? Having said this, I should add that I believe your good lies in staying where you have peace of mind. If you do not get peace in Segaon, then you may assume that my company is not *satsang*[1] for you. You are bound to derive peace from *satsang*. That is why I suggested[2] that if you got no peace in Segaon, you should go to Aurobindo Ashram or Ramanasramam.

[1] Company of good men
[2] *Vide* p. 179.

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I see that many people who have not found peace with me have found it with them. Just now your duty lies in Segaon only.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Sharda went yesterday to live with her husband. She is still in Bombay. They will leave for Surat this evening. Tell Shakaribehn that Sharda benefited a lot by staying here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8573. Also C.W. 7029. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

410. PARSIS AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC

How I wish Parsis will shed their anger and look at the liquor policy of the Congress square in the face. If they have made it a principle to resist by all means at their disposal the Government's undoubted right to refuse to auction or sell liquor licences, there is no argument left to be advanced. It is the assertion of a principle against principle. But I hope they have taken up no such uncompromising attitude. The deputation of licensees and tappers took up no such attitude.

But apart from the question of principle there are objections raised against the working out of the policy. They are chiefly about:

(a) the right to use wines for religious purposes,
(b) the right to have liquor on medical, i.e., health grounds,
(c) racial discrimination,
(d) compensation to those who will be thrown out of employment, i.e., tappers, contractors and liquor-dealers, etc.,
(e) the effect of the property tax on charities.

All these are pertinent questions demanding clear answers. Ministers are bound to remove every valid objection that can be advanced against the working out of the policy.

The right to use wines on religious or health grounds has always been recognized by Dr. Gilder.

I understand that in law there will be no racial discrimination. It may appear to be in the administration of the law. No one will be entitled to have the permit for the asking, not even the Europeans, if only so that the law might not be evaded. Every case will be examined on merits. Even Europeans will be expected to respect the liquor policy of the country and, wherever

they can, to refrain from asking for permits. The Archbishop of Bombay, in spite of his unconvincing opposition[1] to the closing of liquor shops, has gracefully announced that he and many under him are not going to ask for permits for their personal use. Many Protestant divines, I understand, have already announced similar self-denial. I should not be surprised if many European laymen copy the estimable example of the European divines. Nevertheless there is no doubt that in the administration of the law there will be more indulgence to Europeans than to those like Parsis for whom India has been their home for centuries. But I have not the shadow of a doubt that every genuine case will be considered with sympathy. May not the Parsis be expected to fall in with the general sentiment, especially when it conduces to the conservation of the social and economic welfare of the labouring classes? Enlightened Parsis must surely recognize the necessity of checking the drink evil while there is still time.

The points (d) and (e) cannot be dealt with at all satisfactorily without the hearty co-operation of the parties concerned. Thus, so far as the charities are concerned, it is surely up to the trustees of these charities to support their case with facts and figures. Some hardship no doubt there will be. Every tax is a hardship. But I should be surprised if any single charity is seriously affected. After all, the tax calculated to bring in from the city of Bombay about Rs. one crore is so widely distributed that no individual or corporation will be hit beyond endurance. But it is for those who contend otherwise to prove their case.

Liquor-dealers have to present their case with full detail so as to enable the Government to deal with it. I understand that most owners of stocks of wine have not even furnished the information asked for by the Government. How is the Government to deal with them, if they will sullenly refuse to help the Government to help them? I know that the Government are taxing themselves to meet every case of proved and avoidable hardship. I use the word 'avoidable' purposely. The 'Taj' will certainly be affected, but that is as much as saying that the liquor shopkeepers will be affected. The 'Taj' is a mighty liquor-dealer. The house of Tata is resourceful enough to devise other and better ways of supporting the many charities for which it is so justly famed. I dare say that the charities themselves will bear richer fruit for their being purged of the questionable income from the drink traffic. Let it not be said of the Parsis, known the world over as the greatest

[1] *Vide* "Meaning of Prohibition", pp. 335-9.

philanthropists as a class, that they lagged behind, nay actually obstructed a reform which was urgently needed for the sake of saving the helpless labouring population from social and economic ruin.

BOMBAY, July 4, 1939
Harijan, 8-7-1939

411. NON-VIOLENCE v. *VIOLENCE*

I must resume the argument about the implications of the Rajkot step, where I left it the week before.[1]

In theory, if there is sufficient non-violence developed in any single person, he should be able to discover the means of combating violence, no matter how widespread or severe, within his jurisdiction. I have repeatedly admitted my imperfections. I am no example of perfect ahimsa. I am evolving. Such ahimsa as has been developed in me has been found enough to cope with situations that have hitherto arisen. But today I feel helpless in the face of the surrounding violence. There was a penetrating article in *The Statesman* on my Rajkot statement. The editor had therein contended that the English had never taken our movement to be true satyagraha, but being practical people they had allowed the myth to continue though they had known it to be a violent revolt. It was none the less so because the rebels had no arms. I have quoted the substance from memory. When I read the article, I felt the force of the argument. Though I had intended the movement to be pure non-violent resistance, as I look back upon the happenings of those days, there was undoubtedly violence among the resisters. I must own that had I been perfectly tuned to the music of ahimsa, I would have sensed the slightest departure from it and my sensitiveness would have rebelled against any discord in it.

It seems to me that the united action of the Hindus and the Muslims blinded me to the violence that was lurking in the breasts of many. The English who are trained diplomats and administrators are accustomed to the line of least resistance, and when they found that it was more profitable to conciliate a big organization than to crush it by extensive frightfulness, they yielded to the extent that they thought was necessary. It is, however, my conviction that our resistance was predominantly non-violent in action and will be accepted as such by the future historian.

[1] *Vide* pp. 359-61.

As a seeker of truth and non-violence, however, I must not be satisfied with mere action if it is not from the heart. I must declare from the house-tops that the non-violence of those days fell far short of the non-violence as I have so often defined.

Non-violent action without the co-operation of the heart and the head cannot produce the intended result. The failure of our imperfect ahimsa is visible to the naked eye. Look at the feud that is going on between Hindus and Muslims. Each is arming for the fight with the other. The violence that we had harboured in our breasts during the non-co-operation days is now recoiling upon ourselves. The violent energy that was generated among the masses, but was kept under check in the pursuit of a common objective, has now been let loose and is being used among and against ourselves.

The same phenomenon is discernible, though in a less crude manner, in the dissension among Congressmen themselves and the use of forcible methods that the Congress Ministers are obliged to adopt in running the administrations under their charge.

This narrative clearly shows that the atmosphere is surcharged with violence. I hope it also shows that non-violent mass movement is an impossibility unless the atmosphere is radically changed. To blind one's eyes to the events happening around us is to court disaster. It has been suggested to me that I should declare mass civil disobedience and all internal strife will cease, Hindus and Muslims will compose their differences, Congressmen will forget mutual jealousies and fights for power. My reading of the situation is wholly different. If any mass movement is undertaken at the present moment in the name of non-violence, it will resolve itself into violence largely unorganized and organized in some cases. It will bring discredit on the Congress, spell disaster for the Congress struggle for independence and bring ruin to many a home. This may be a wholly untrue picture born of my weakness. If so, unless I shed that weakness, I cannot lead a movement which requires great strength and resolution.

But if I cannot find an effective, purely non-violent method, outbreak of violence seems to be a certainty. The people demand self-expression. They are not satisfied with the constructive programme prescribed by me and accepted almost unanimously by the Congress. As I have said before, the imperfect response to the constructive programme is itself proof positive of the skin-deep nature of the non-violence of Congressmen.

But if there is an outbreak of violence, it would not be without cause. We are yet far from the independence of our

dream. The irresponsibility of the Centre, which eats up 80 per cent of the revenue, grinds down the people and thwarts their aspirations, is daily proving more and more intolerable.

There is a growing consciousness of the terrible autocracy of the majority of the States. I admit my responsibility for the suspension of civil resistance in several States. This has resulted in demoralization both among the people and the Princes. The people have lost nerve and feel that all is lost. The demoralization among the Princes consists in their thinking that now they have nothing to fear from their people, nothing substantial to grant. Both are wrong. The result does not dismay me. In fact I had foretold the possibility of these results when I was discussing with the Jaipur workers the advisability of suspending the movement, even though it was well circumscribed with rules and restrictions. The demoralization among the people shows that there was not non-violence in thought and word, and therefore when the intoxication and excitement of jail-going and the accompanying demonstrations ceased they thought that the struggle was over. The Princes came to the hasty conclusion that they could safely consolidate their autocracy by adopting summary measures against the resisters and placating the docile element by granting eye-wash reforms.

Both the people and the Princes might have reacted in the right manner—the people by recognizing the correctness of my advice and calmly generating strength and energy by quiet and determined constructive effort, and the Princes by seizing the opportunity afforded by suspension, of doing justice for the sake of justice and granting reforms that would satisfy the reasonable but advanced section among their people. This could only happen, if they recognized the time-spirit. It is neither too late for the people nor the Princes.

In this connection I may not omit the Paramount Power. There are signs of the Paramount Power repenting of the recent declarations about the freedom to the Princes to grant such reforms to their people as they chose. There are audible whispers that the Princes may not take those declarations literally. It is an open secret that the Princes dare not do anything that they guess is likely to displease the Paramount Power. They may not even meet persons whom the Paramount Power may not like them to meet. When there is this tremendous influence exercised over the Princes, it is but natural to hold the Paramount Power responsible for the unadulterated autocracy that reigns supreme in many States.

So if violence breaks out in this unfortunate land, the responsibility will have to be shared by the Paramount Power, the Princes, and above all by Congressmen. The first two have never claimed to be non-violent. Their power is frankly derived from and based on the use of violence. But the Congress has since 1920 adopted non-violence as its settled policy and has undoubtedly striven to act up to it. But as Congressmen never had non-violence in their hearts, they must reap the fruit of the defect, however unintentional it was. At the crucial moment the defect has come to the surface and the defective method does not seem to meet the situation. Non-violence is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion. We have failed to convert the Princes, we have failed to convert the English administrators. It is no use saying that it is impossible to persuade persons willingly to part with their power. I have claimed that satyagraha is a new experiment. It will be time to pronounce it a failure when Congressmen have given it a genuine trial. Even a policy, if it is honestly pursued, has to be pursued with all one's heart. We have not done so. Hence Congressmen have to convert themselves before the Paramount Power and the Princes can be expected to act justly.

But if the Congressmen can or will go no further than they have done in the direction of non-violence, and if the Paramount Power and the Princes do not voluntarily and selfishly do the right thing, the country must be prepared for violence, unless the new technique yields a new mode of non-violent action which will become an effective substitute for violence as a way of securing redress of wrongs. The fact that violence must fail will not prevent its outbreak. Mere constitutional agitation will not do.

BOMBAY, July 4, 1939
Harijan, 8-7-1939

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412. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

BOMBAY,
July 4, 1939

CHI. MARY,

I wrote a few words[1] on Mira's letter to you. I have a few minutes to write more fully. If you feel the call to go and serve your father, you will answer it without hesitation. You will do what is possible for the continuity of work begun in Central Provinces. I know you will give a good account of yourself wherever you are. It will be risky to bring out Father to India. He won't stand the climate of this country.

Your letter to Narandas is interesting. If you are not to go, you will be safe in taking up the rural reconstruction committee. I hope to leave for the Frontier Province tomorrow. Ba is likely to go with me. She is quite well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6077. Also C.W. 3407. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr. Also *Bapu,—Conversations and Correspondence*, p. 178

413. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

BIRLA HOUSE,
MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY,
July 4, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I am writing to Mary Barr.

The note you gave me about khadi is still lying with me. I shall dispose of it at leisure. Is anything special going on there?

A letter from Manju is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, p. 384.

[PS.]

We are leaving for the Frontier Province tomorrow. Ba will probably accompany me.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8557. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

414. *ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK*[1]

July 4, 1939

I was delighted to visit the Indian enterprise.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-7-1939

415. *FOREWORD TO "THE LATEST FAD"*

I have gone through these pages from beginning to end. The booklet will supply a felt want. It is an attempt to answer the many doubts that have assailed inquiry about what has been called my 'latest fad' and that too in the domain of education! Acharya Kripalani who has spent many years as an educationist has tried to show that this 'fad' has a sound bottom to it.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN, July 6, 1939

The Latest Fad

416. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I have simply not been able to write to you as regularly as I had liked. Even the 'library' claimed other work. You tell me you asked me a question about non-violence. I have forgotten all about it. Please repeat. I have assumed that Mahadev deals with the questions he can, for your letters are given to him as soon as I have done with them. If you permit me to

[1] The source reported that "Gandhiji, accompanied by Vallabhbhai Patel, Devdas Gandhi and Dr. Sushila Nayyar, paid a visit to the Chemical and Industrial and Pharmaceutical Laboratories (CIPLA) Ltd.", Bombay, in the afternoon.

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retain them with the note at the top 'Not to be read' and trust that then they will not be, I would be better able to cope with your questions.

I hope all the patients are better if not well and that your flu was a passing affair.

I am writing to Datar Singh. I should have written earlier. But as you were protecting me, I did not hurry.

You should have sent me copy of your letter to Jawaharlal.[1]

I do not like your repeating you are dead. You are not dead. You have to give me much work. Any time I might have to send you to Travancore or some such place. As it is you are doing khadi and Harijan work there. Your contribution to the Education Board is quite effective. And if you have better perception of things and do not feel any conscious injustice on my part, surely there is no occasion for this deadness!

We are only four travelling—Mahadev, Bablo[2], Kanu and I. Pyarelal had a little throat operation which will detain him for three or four days. Ba won't come without Sushila and the latter could not come leaving Pyarelal to his fate. They three will follow later if I find that my stay in Frontier Province will be prolonged.

Nothing is certain about my movement. Ordinarily I should return to Segaon when you will join me. Nothing is certain about Talcher.[3] The latest from the Viceroy[4] means cutting off all contact with me. Mahadev should send you a copy of his letter and of my reply[5], if I draft it today.

The question of my retirement has been exploded for the time being at any rate.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3923. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7232

[1] *Vide* also p. 384.
[2] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai
[3] *Vide* pp. 151-3 and pp. 268-9.
[4] *Vide* Appendix XIII.
[5] Gandhiji sent a brief reply on July 12, 1939.

417. LETTER TO S. K. BOLE

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I have read your letter to the Prime Minister with great care.[1] I think that if you will help the Ministry you will find that no tapper need give up his tapping and there need be no unemployment. The whole of the *nira* can be turned into *gur*. Those who are used to alcoholics won't be satisfied with non-alcoholic *nira*.

I am sorry for the threat issued in your last paragraph. Request for help and threat go ill together.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4879

418. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

CHI. KANCHAN,

Though I do not write to you I do think of you. I hope you remember what I told you. I hope you are calm. Study well. Take full advantage of the quiet you have got just now and improve your knowledge. Who conducts the prayers at present? What prayers are sung in the morning and in the evening?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8292. Also C.W. 7051. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] A group of forty Bhandaris, led by the addressee, met Gandhiji on July 5 at Bombay Central and gave him a copy of their petition addressed to the Premier of Bombay; *vide* also pp. 397-8.

[2] The addressee subsequently sent an explanation; *vide* Vol. LXX, "An Explanation", 7-8-1939.

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419. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ON THE TRAIN,
July 6, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

You have only to place the spinning work at Ahmedabad on a sound footing. Do whatever Lakshmidasbhai suggests in this connection. Do not spend more than Rs. 2,000 this time. Help Mridulabehn in every possible way. Do not bribe anyone into doing work. You have to do the work while preserving your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 422

420. BHANDARIS AND PROHIBITION

As the train taking me to the Frontier Province was steaming out of the station, Rao Bahadur Bole handed me a copy of the petition of the Bhandaris of Bombay addressed to the Prime Minister. He pressed me to read it and send him my reply. I read the petition after resting my tired limbs and sent him my reply.[2]

The petition is an interesting document and deserves public notice. According to it the Bhandaris got the concession to tap trees as early as 1672 as a mark of favour for military services rendered to the then British Power. Then they lost the concession. But they were able to continue their occupation, and to the present that is the occupation of about 8,000 people.

The petitioners say they are not against prohibition but they plead for gradualness extending to a few years.

Then comes the sting at the very tail end. It runs:

> If the Government fail to pay heed to all these entreaties and leave the Bhandaris to their fate as it falls upon them, we do not know what course these poorly educated and uneducated people may

[1] The superscription is in Urdu.
[2] *Vide* p. 396.

follow in their sheer disappointment. We are afraid they may even go to the length of adopting not only Congress methods of seeking relief but adopting more drastic measures in their frenzy.

The threat, in my opinion, vitiates a good case and raises grave doubts about the *bona fides* of the signatories. Are the Government to yield to cold reason or to the cold steel?

If the Bhandaris have a good case, why do they not rely upon its commanding public sympathy? Let me inform the public that the Ministers are trying their best, in spite of threats, to remove every kind of injustice. In these days of the growing violence of the mind, threats must be regarded as the ordinary lot of Ministers elected under the extensive democratic franchise. They may not be deterred even at the cost of their offices or lives from doing what they hold to be their duty, nor can they afford to be angry and refuse to do justice because as in the case under consideration, the petition for justice ends by issuing an ugly threat. I have, therefore, pleasure in informing the public that the Ministers are applying themselves to the task of keeping every tapper employed at the very work to which he has been used. Only the tappers have got to help the Ministers to apply the remedy. It consists in the tappers tapping *nira* during the *nira* season and turning it into *gur*. This requires honest care and attention. The pots have to be treated as has been pointed out in these columns. The *nira* need not be drunk. Pure *nira* cannot take the place of toddy which contains a certain percentage of alcohol and which therefore changes in quality. Pure *nira* is food even as sugar is. Toddy, even sweet, is not in the same sense and to the same extent as *nira*. Hence *nira* will be turned into *gur* which can compete with the ordinary *gur* which is often dirty, adulterated, full of grit. Palm *gur* is any day more tasty than sugarcane *gur*. It can be eaten raw whereas sugarcane *gur* being much sweeter does not admit of being eaten raw. And palm *gur*, when it is manufactured under State supervision, will always carry with it the guarantee of being pure. Many sweets can be manufactured out of palm *gur*. But in order to accomplish this great task wholehearted co-operation of the Bhandaris is necessary. If they are in earnest, they will help the Government and help themselves. What to do during the off-season will be a question. I have not been able to study the condition under which toddy is drawn. But this is a matter of detail and adjustment.

ON THE WAY TO PESHAWAR, July 7, 1939

Harijan, 15-7-1939

421. CABLE TO GENERAL J. C. SMUTS[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[On or after *July 7, 1939*][2]

WHY IS AGREEMENT OF 1914 BEING VIOLATED WITH YOU AS WITNESS? IS THERE NO HELP FOR INDIANS EXCEPT TO PASS THROUGH FIRE?[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

422. WAR SPURS INVENTION OF NEW MACHINE

The invention of a revolutionary type of spinning machine that will raise the daily output of the individual Chinese spinner from its present standard of one pound of yarn a day to an average of between twenty and thirty pounds, by Mr. Kanya Nieh, of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and a graduate of Cornell University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was announced in Chingkiang on May 26. The invention, stimulated and hastened by the demands of China's war-time economy, represents the fruit of six years of research and experimentation, during the last twenty-two months of which the inventor was constantly moving about the country as he followed the National Government in its transfer to the interior of the province. . . .

Mr. Nieh's new frames are based somewhat remotely on the old native spinning methods of China. He studied and analysed according to modern principles all the motions that go into the process of spinning until he had reduced each one to its essential scientific function—then he constructed a machine which utilized and intensified all the useful motions in the old process of spinning, and which discarded the useless motions which serve only to waste the individual's energy and time. The machines that Mr. Nieh has built according to these principles of scientific analysis are strong, sturdy machines that are at the same time extremely cheap. They are built basically of wood, with copper used as the chief metal. Iron and steel are used only at a few key parts, while the cogs are made of hard wood. The new machine is so made

[1] Jan Christiaan Smuts (1870-1950); South African soldier and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24 and 1939-48

[2] Gandhiji reached Abbottabad on July 7, 1939.

[3] *Vide* also pp. 115, 292-3 and 367.

that it works almost automatically with a minimum of exertion on the part of the operator. The energy to operate the machine is supplied by a foot treadle which the operator keeps in motion. . . .

The actual introduction of the new machine to the people will fall to the lot of the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives and several private concerns. The Chinese Industrial Co-operatives plan to establish in the coming year over 10,000 co-operatives, of which at least thirty per cent will be textile co-operatives. It is the belief of the Co-operatives that of the normal consuming capacity of Free China of 10,000,000 bolts of cloth a year, at least, 3,000,000 will be produced by its co-operatives within the next twelve months. In the production of these textiles, the new spinning frames will play an important part. It is planned to introduce the new machine to its users at the rate of two machines per family. Cotton yarn, now selling in the interior at 2.30 dollars per pound, will be reduced to a fraction of its former cost.

The foregoing[1] was received by Shri Aryanayakam[2] from a friend in China. I wish I could give more details about this invention. For me its merit lies in China finding it necessary to introduce village, in the place of town, production.

Harijan, 8-7-1939

423. JAIPUR

Those who are interested in Jaipur affairs have been living in suspense for they had learnt that some talks were taking place between the Prime Minister[3] of the State and Sheth Jamnalalji. I regret to have to inform them that nothing worth has come out of the talks. Therefore the struggle continues. Even civil disobedience continues in a way though it is suspended in regard to further formation of *jathas*[4] for courting arrest. Those who courted arrests remain in the State prisons. They have not sought release. They will come out in due course on the termination of their sentences. Shethji's detention[5] is indefinite. And he will not come out by undertaking to leave the State on release, and the authorities will not permit him to remain in Jaipur as a free man in spite of the fact that further courting of arrests has stopped. Thus they will not allow Shethji even to do constructive

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[2] E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh
[3] Sir Beauchamp St. John
[4] Batches
[5] In Jaipur jail

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work among the people. They know that they have no fear of any secret propaganda on his part or his saying one thing and doing the contrary. His reputation for [the] strictest honesty is too well established to admit of any doubt.

Some complication has arisen because Shethji is suffering from pains in the knees. The State Medical Officer advises Shethji to go to Europe or at least to the seaside for treatment. He is himself doing all he can, but he is of opinion that change of place is indicated. Shethji whilst he is under detention would not go out of Jaipur even for the sake of getting well. He thinks that self-respect requires unconditional release. He will not think of a change so long as he is under a ban for which he feels there is no justification. Since civil disobedience is suspended there is no warrant whatsoever for detaining Jamnalalji in custody. Why won't the authorities release him and arrest him when he commits an offence against the laws of the State? To say the least there is something uncanny about the treatment of Sheth Jamnalalji. It is the duty of the Jaipur authorities either to justify the indefinite detention or to release him unconditionally.

The Jaipurians have been asking me how long the embargo on their civil resistance will last. I can only answer, as long as the atmosphere demands suspension. Meanwhile let them carry out the constructive programme. I retain the opinion that no one is fit for offering civil disobedience who has not satisfied the conditions I have laid down. And there is always a saving clause about all my advice. No one need follow it unless it appeals to his head and heart. No one who has honestly the inner call need be deterred from obeying it because of my advice. In other words, it applies only to those who are not conscious of any inner call and who have faith in my riper experience and soundness of my judgment.

Though the talks have broken down, the authorities are not absolved from the duty of finding a solution for the impasse. Absence of civil disobedience does not mean cessation of agitation in some form or other for securing the rudiments of freedom for which the fight was undertaken. Public opinion will give the authorities no rest. Let the Jaipurians, therefore, know that so long as they have the will they have the power. And it increases with every effort to keep it under check. Every power is not meant to be immediately used. Garnering it often makes it far more effective than if it is used the moment it is generated.

ABBOTTABAD, July 8, 1939

Harijan, 15-7-1939

424. TO THE PRINCES

Several persons interested in the States have asked me what in my opinion is the minimum that all States should guarantee in order to come in line with the enlightened opinion in what is called British India. I cannot vouch for what the Congress would say if it had to give any such opinion. Perhaps it would be wrong for the Congress to have or to give such opinion. A democratic body can only pronounce opinion on events as they happen. Be that as it may, the opinion I am about to give is only my own and binds no one but me.

The minimum then that all States great and small can give is:

1. Full civil liberty, so long as it is not used to promote violence directly or indirectly. This includes freedom of the Press and freedom to receive newspapers which do not promote violence.

2. Freedom to the people of the States to form associations and educate public opinion in favour of establishing responsible government in their own States.

3. Freedom for Indians outside particular States to enter them without let or hindrance so long as their activities are not directed towards the destruction of the States in question.

4. The privy purse should be limited so as not to exceed one-tenth of the income where it ranges between Rs. 10 to 15 lakhs per year, and in no case should the purse exceed Rs. 3 lakhs per year, and should include all the private expenses of the Ruler (e. g., palace expenses, cars, stables, the Ruler's guests) except those which have reference to performance of public duty which should be clearly defined.

5. Judiciary to be independent and permanent and free of all interference. In order to ensure uniformity of practice and strict impartiality, there should be an appeal to the High Court of the Province within which the State in question is situated. This may not be possible without a change in the law governing the High Courts. It can, I imagine, be easily altered if the States agree.

I have purposely avoided reference to constitutional reform. This will depend upon the situation as it exists in every State. I should assume that where local public opinion demands it, the Ruler is bound to respond.

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The most contentious part of my minimum is perhaps the right of appeal to the High Courts. And yet unless some such arrangement is made, pure justice cannot be guaranteed in the States whatever may be said to the contrary. This is one institution which the British have built up with patient care. No doubt the High Court procedure is expensive and far from expeditious. The poor of the land cannot reach it. The processes are cumbersome. Often the unscrupulous win. With all their faults, however, and except where high politics have come in, the decisions of High Courts have been just and fearless. I can think of no easy and ready-made check save that of the High Courts on the vagaries, and sometimes subservience to the executive, of the judiciary in the States. But I am not wedded to my solution. If something else equally effective can be devised, I should have no objection.

One thing seems to me to be clear. If the transfer of power from the Princes to the people is to take place without violence, and if the Princes are to live as such, they will have to adapt themselves to the changed circumstances. Very few people have faith in my plan, viz., the plan of Princes voluntarily parting with power and becoming real trustees. The critics say it is Utopian and against human nature. I must advocate it so long as I believe in its practical possibility. The world is inevitably moving to self-destruction or to a non-violent solution of all its ailments, moral, social, economic and political. The threatened world war will bring us nearer the desirable solution if a respectable part of it survives the impending catastrophe. Whoever recognizes that the only escape from the impending fate is a non-violent solution will, therefore, apply it to his own problems, whether they are domestic, communal or any other. Non-violence is a universal law acting under all circumstances. Disregard of it is the surest way to destruction. It is only a question of time.

The Princes would not solve the riddle by the proposed combination with Garasias, Muslims, Scheduled Classes, and their own subjects who are too cowed down to resist. It is a combination that is bound to break under its own weight. It is itself an inflammable mixture. And a combination against whom? The Congress which seeks to represent all these not excluding the Princes themselves? The Congress will die a natural death when it ceases to be national in every sense of the term. It has that unbroken tradition for the past fifty years. Whatever transformation it undergoes, it is the only institution[1] that will succeed British Imperialism

[1] The source, however, has "constitution".

whose days as imperialism are numbered. British politicians realize this. They would not resist, do not want to resist, its transformation or destruction. The imperialism is increasingly becoming a dead weight if only because it is based on highly organized violence. The Princes may ignore the Congress for a time. But they cannot for all time. Some are reported to have said that after all it was composed of Banias who would show the white feather on a few knock-out blows on the head by the strong combination pictured above. I would like respectfully to point out that the Congress is not composed of Banias who can be counted on one's finger-tips. The millions who took part in the civil disobedience fights were not Banias. I do not thereby mean to imply that they were desirous of giving blow for a blow. Many could. But they had forsworn violence. Many Congress heads were broken by something severer than knock-out blows. All I wish to imply is that the Congress is not composed of mere cowards. Non-violence and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true non-violence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness.

I beseech the Princes not to underrate the Congress as a force in the country. Its policy still remains non-violent. I admit it is fast tending towards violence. I and a few of my companions are putting forth every effort in favour of non-violence. I ask the Princes, for their own sakes and for the sake of the country that has given them birth, to throw in their weight in favour of non-violence. It seems to be touch-and-go with the Congress. It will either become growingly non-violent or will presently become a violent organization, not necessarily doing immediate deeds of violence but preparing itself for ultimate violence. It would not harbour cowards. If it does, it will cease to be the power it has become. Every Indian, high or low, (there is no high and no low for the Congress) has to make his choice.

ABBOTTABAD, July 8, 1939

Harijan, 15-7-1939

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425. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA WEST

ARRIVED LAST EVENING. ALL GOOD CONDITION. WEATHER MODERATE. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3924. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7233

426. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I sent you a wire today as letter would have taken long. I hope you had my letter[1] written on the way. I met Balvantsinha in Delhi. He will follow the instructions. Let us hope the experiment[2] will be a success. Lilavati's[3] may not be. She is not happy in the place where she is boarding. She is not able to put up with any inconvenience. However, I have spoken to her and implored her not to give in without an effort.

The weather here is ideal for us all. During the day a punka becomes necessary. I sit bare-bodied, nothing but a thin woollen blanket was needed during the night.

I had a long letter from Haksar[4] pressing me to go to Kashmir while he is there. I have not yet acknowledged it. I hope to, tomorrow. I shall send it[5] to you when I have done with it.

[1] *Vide* pp. 394-5.

[2] Balvantsinha was to join Datar Singh's dairy near Lahore; *vide* letter to the addressee, p. 347.

[3] She went to Bombay for her matriculation.

[4] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 340.

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", p. 410.

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I hope you have got rid of your flu and that the other patients are also doing well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3925. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7234

427. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. We arrived here yesterday. Mahadev, Bablo and Kanu are with me. Pyarelal has had to have an incision made under his tongue and has had to stay on in Bombay. And so Ba and Sushila also have stayed back. All the three of them will come over here when Pyarelal is discharged. Mirabehn must have reached Patna. She will work there for the present. You will of course see her. She is likely to attend the Congress meeting. We shall probably be here for a month. Sushila is all right now. Amtul Salaam will do khadi work in Ahmedabad. Jayaprakash had met me. He will probably come to see me here also. We had talked about you. He says you are to be the leader of women volunteers. But in that case your study will suffer. But that will not matter. Do the duty that comes to you unsought. The other things discussed were about our reunion. But he will not accept khadi. And I am not likely to give it up. That makes our working together difficult. Ba is keeping well. I am of course all right. There is no change in the diet. I keep fairly good strength. The weather here is not so cold. It is not too hot either. Give the enclosure to Mirabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3533

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428. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 8, 1939

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have only a few minutes today. You must have received the letter[1] which I wrote on the way. We are all well. There is no cold here. It is quite warm. But no hot breeze.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 423

429. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

I observe that political prisoners of Bengal in Dumdum and Alipore jails are determined upon hunger-strike for their unconditional release. I would urge them strongly not to take to hunger-strike. I am sure Sarat Babu, who is handling the case, thinks likewise. I would ask the prisoners to be guided by Sarat Babu.[3]

Harijan, 15-7-1939; also *The Hindu*, 9-7-1939

[1] *Vide* p. 397.

[2] In *Harijan*, this appeared under the title "Bengal Political Prisoners".

[3] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", pp. 345-6, and "Telegram to Secretary, Political Prisoners' Release Sub-Committee", p. 409.

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430. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 8, 1939

I have carefully read Sir Raza Ali's condemnation of my advice[2] to Indians in South Africa not to embark upon a non-European front. My advice may be bad on merits but does not become bad because I have been absent from South Africa for a quarter of a century. I have no doubt about the soundness of my advice. However much one may sympathize with the Bantus, Indians cannot make common cause with them. I doubt if the Bantus themselves will as a class countenance any such move. They can only damage and complicate their cause by mixing it up with the Indian, as Indians would damage theirs by such mixture. But neither the A. I. C. C. resolution nor my advice need deter the Indians from forming a non-European front if they are sure thereby of winning their freedom. Indeed, had they thought it beneficial or possible, they would have formed it long ago.

Harijan, 15-7-1939; also *The Hindu*, 9-7-1939

431. MESSAGE TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

[On or after *July 8, 1939*][3]

Congratulations on the opening of the Meenakshi Temple for Harijans.[4] Hope you are well.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindu, 11-7-1939

[1] This is extracted from "Notes" in *Harijan*. According to *The Hindu*, Gandhiji made this statement "on being shown Sir Raza Ali's statement on A. I. C. C. resolution regarding South Africa"; *vide* p. 367.

[2] *Vide* "South Africa Resolution", pp. 376-8.

[3] From the reference to Meenakshi Temple, which was thrown open to Harijans on July 8

[4] *Vide* also "Meenakshi Temple Open", pp. 421-3.

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432. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, POLITICAL PRISONERS' RELEASE SUB-COMMITTEE[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[On or before *July 9, 1939*][2]

BE GUIDED BY SARAT BABU. HUNGER-STRIKE, I CONSIDER, IS BAD AND INADVISABLE IN ANY CASE.[3]

The Hindu, 9-7-1939

433. LETTER TO SIKANDAR HYAT KHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

DEAR SIR SIKANDAR[4],

Parsi friends told me with glee that you had described the prohibition programme of the Bombay Ministry as a 'madcap scheme'. Can this be true ? If so, why do you consider it to be such ?

I have been receiving letters telling me that you contemplate introducing separate electorates for Harijans at Municipal elections! I wonder if there is truth in this information.

I observe that your scheme[5] is already before the public. I have not had a moment to give to its study. I hope early next week to take it up and the papers you were good enough to leave with me.

I hope your backache has subsided. I would strongly recommend nature cure as a permanent remedy. It consists in strict diet, vapour baths and cold hip-baths. Abdominal mud bandages help considerably. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has some experience of this treatment. She has tried it herself off and on. She is your neighbour. Do discuss it with her.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line "Calcutta, July 9".

[3] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", p. 408.

[4] Premier of the Punjab

[5] Alternative scheme for Federation, which was finally published on July 30; *vide* Vol. LXX, "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939.

434. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

MY DEAR DECEIVER,

I wrote yesterday. But the post has not gone yet. So this will be in the packet.

J. L.'s letter is good. I hope you will give him your opinion of *Hind Swaraj*. The deadness must go. Eczema, laryngitis are your two enemies. You must drive them out. You have to be in Segaon, the moment I reach there. Both the maladies can be brought under control in Segaon. Nothing is certain about Talcher. I am hoping that I won't have to go there. J. L.'s letter herewith. Haksar's also. I am telling him I would try to go to Kashmir.[1] His letter is good though difficult to understand.

Nothing can be done by you about the Viceregal letter. Things should be allowed to take their own course. I do not yet know when Ba will come. There is no reply to my wire. Mira has gone to Patna on Rajen Babu's wire. She will be happy there. She has made several friends among Englishmen and Indians. It is a pity she could not hit it off with Khan Saheb and could not stand any altitude. However she might come back in October. I leave these parts by 5th August.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3926. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7235

435. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I am glad that you are keeping good health.

We are likely to spend at the most one month in this district.

As a small incision was made under Pyarelal's tongue, he had to stay behind. Hence Ba and Sushila also stayed on. They are

[1] *Vide* also p. 405.

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likely to return in about three days. Ba is not going to Sabarmati. I am in excellent health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10013. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

436. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I read here today your letter of the 4th. Your complaint is justified. It is strange that there is no letter from Sushila. Shakaribehn is bound to feel hurt. If I were in your place I also would feel hurt. A calamity like this is an example of my mismanagement. I hold myself responsible for the mismanagement among those around me. Shankaran had a narrow escape. He is better. He will perhaps take a month to get well. If Sushila did not write about the old man's dressing, it was a serious lapse on her part. I think she would not commit a mistake like that. I hope you will continue to hear from her. Lilavati's address is: New Era High School, Bombay. She is staying in Vanita Vishram but she is not happy there. Let us see what happens. Amtul Salaam is at Sabarmati Harijan Ashram. She seems likely to prove a good worker.

As an incision has been made under Pyarelal's tongue, Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila are expected to come after about four or five days. The weather here is better than at Segaon. It is neither too cold nor too hot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8353. Also C.W. 7052. Courtesy: Chimanlal N. Shah

437. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 9, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I hope you reached the dairy farm today on time. About your expenses there, I have written to Sardar Saheb that I shall be responsible for whatever expenses are incurred.

It is hot here too; but no hot breeze. I sit bare-bodied.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1922

438. INTERVIEW TO L. W. JARDINE[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
[*July 9, 1939*][2]

GANDHIJI: That is the only correct position, and no other is possible. If you have followed my writings, you know that I have declared that no one is competent to offer satyagraha unless he has a living faith in God. I had formerly not the courage to say so bluntly to my co-workers. I knew it was difficult to get a heart-response to this thing. For there are many who say they have living faith and yet are not godfearing, and others who scoff at the idea of believing in God and yet are at heart godfearing. But I said it did not matter how difficult it was, I must put it forward as I know it.

[JARDINE:] You came only recently to the conclusion that you must insist on the condition?

[1] Revenue Commissioner, Frontier Province; President, Oxford Movement. The interview is extracted from "The Oxford Group and Moral Rearmament" by Mahadev Desai, who explains: "We have found them refreshingly frank . . . On some of the basic principles we found ourselves in complete agreement. . . . The friend who met Gandhiji described the object of the movement as the 'eradication of fear by bringing people under the guidance of God'."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

G. Yes. I felt I must make it an indispensable condition. I knew it, I practised it, but had not declared it for acceptance by all. I knew some resented this and even imputed to me motives of excluding them from the chosen circle. But I said I must take even the risk of being misunderstood, but must declare the truth at all cost. How to reduce the whole thing to practice I do not know.

J. That is simply terrific. To hear you say that it is difficult is tremendous, for it is an encouragement to me. There is a kind of hero-worship that attributes to you superhuman powers. It is something to hear that you have difficulties and are human, and thus to feel kinship with you.

Then there is another thing that has come home to me. You must not think of taking but always of giving something.

G. That is right in a sense, but you can't give without taking, and to go on saying that you will always give would be humbug.

Honesty, purity, unselfishness and love are their fourfold principles, and the friend said that whilst the first two would come under the heading 'truth', the other two would come under the heading 'non-violence or bravery'. . . . Gandhiji asked:

How is a civilian who is trained not to establish any human contact with the ruled to fare under this rule? Perhaps you will not admit that they are so trained?

J. No.

G. Well, you will by and by. I do not make a charge of it. It was worldly wisdom that dictated the course to those who organized the Service. How could they allow them to live on terms of familiarity with those over whom they had to rule, especially when the rulers were only a handful? And yet if you accept the creed of the Oxford Group, you have to establish human contact with me. And if you do it with me, you must do it with others. You will have to contact the whole of India through me, and I with all Englishmen through you. That at any rate is what the Oxford Group must stand for, otherwise it would be like many other similar movements.

J. You are right, and that is why I kept out of freemasonry. We have to meet under God, and we shall not make demands from another which are inconsistent with the guidance of God.

G. Anyway, I have expressed my difficulty.

J. A programme of moral rearmament for the world cannot fail to lessen the dangers of armed conflict. Such moral rearmament must receive support on a world-wide basis.

Gandhiji was invited to put his signature to a "response" to President Roosevelt's message.[1]

With all deference to those in India who had signed this "response" Gandhiji said he could not in all conscience sign this. He could not endorse a falsehood. How can India accept responsibility for the past?

All this has no application to me. The whole paragraph applies to exploiting nations, whereas India is an exploited nation. The second paragraph too applies to nations of the West and not to us. The whole appeal is so unreal. I can think of moral rearmament, but that would be in a different setting. I can think of communal unity through moral rearmament. As a member of an exploited nation I can have a different moral rearmament programme, and I may invite China to it, but how can I invite the West or Japan? And just as it would be unreal for me to invite the West, it would to that extent be unreal for the West to invite India. Let them shed their exploitation policy and their immoral gains first.[2]

Harijan, 12-8-1939

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "... President Roosevelt advocated, before four thousand persons assembled in Constitution Hall in America, moral rearmament as a means of maintaining world peace. . . . Two of the paragraphs in it read thus:

'MRA means first of all a change of heart. It means admission of our responsibility for the past, a frank acceptance by nations as by individuals of the standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love and daily listening and daily obedience to God's direction.

'At this fateful hour we pledge ourselves to give the last full measure of our devotion—the service of heart, mind, will—to the Moral and Spiritual Rearmament of our nation—to building the world of tomorrow, the world of new men, new nations, where every resource of human genius is liberated under God's leadership to enrich the heritage of all mankind.' "

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-7-1939, reported: "Jardine had a further interview with Gandhiji" on July 12.

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439. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have your second letter. I gave Jardine yesterday one hour. He was quite satisfied. He said he would come again if he felt the call. He spoke very nicely of you. Your host here whom Mahadev has met adores you. Kazi Saheb wanted to know why you had left and why you had not returned. I told him about the climate and the altitude.[1] I told him too that if you were needed you would return in October. Badshah Khan was present during the conversation. So far as I can fathom him, he does not want to lose you.

Kisenchand Bhatia came in today (Monday). The talks begin tomorrow. Badshah Khan is away keeping an appointment. He remains as lovable as before to me. But that is nothing. What you feel is the only right [thing] for you.

Mahadev Desai has gone to inspect Nathiagali. The hostess[2] here is anxious for me to go there. I am not anxious to change. This place is good enough and cool enough for me.

There is no news from Pyarelal as to when they are coming.

I am still keeping well. You can easily imagine from my having to use the left hand how much writing the right must have done. Jayaprakash came in today.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6445. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10040

440. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I got your letter when I was very busy. I could not, therefore, call for Ambashankar Vaidya. I do not know if he had come of his own accord.

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 347 and 410.
[2] Mrs. Parmanand

Ba was to have gone to Sabarmati, but the plan was changed at the last minute. She is not with me, either, but she will soon join me. I will not trouble you at present on her account.

I am very happy that Chandanbehn is improving, because it was I who had insisted on putting her under your treatment. You may now keep her as long as necessary and send her back after she is completely cured.

Vijaya doesn't seem to have completely recovered. That responsibility, therefore, still remains with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2906. Courtesy: Vallabhram Vaidya

441. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I hope Chandan is improving. I have had a letter from her. Shankar was improving rapidly. Aren't they both, Shankar and Chandan, fortunate? Shankar should be arriving there soon now.

You had asked for Kaka's opinion, but he has left the decision to me. If Chandan does not require your presence now and you also feel the same, please return to Wardha.

Ba has fully recovered. But, as a small incision was made under Pyarelal's tongue, Sushila and Ba had to stay back. They will be leaving in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10789

442. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am worried for there has been no news from you since Wednesday. If you have not written anything by the time you get this letter, send a telegram. I hope Balkrishna is well, and

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your worry has ended. At the moment your duty is to stay put. We shall see what can be done when I come down.

Sushila, Pyarelal, Ba are still in Bombay.

I hope you have found a good help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4322

443. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 10, 193[9][1]

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have been writing regularly. How about you? I hope your health is all right. We are all well.

Ba and others have not arrived yet. A telegram intimating their departure is expected today or tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 237

444. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN[2]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

MIRABEHN
C/O KHADI BHANDAR
MADHUBANI

YOU CAN REMAIN IF HEALTH CONTINUES GOOD.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6446. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10041

[1] The original, in Gandhiji's hand, reads "1930"; but Gandhiji was not at Abbottabad in that year.

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "The long delay in Bapu's coming to the Frontier had told severely on my health and at last I returned to Sevagram. Knowing that Bapu wanted me to work independently, I mustered up courage and went on to Bihar. In the mean time, Bapu's long-postponed visit to the Frontier materialized, and the sorrow in my heart became further accentuated."

445. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I kept your letter of 6th April till today. I was glad you were able to make up your mind. I hope the vow is being kept and that the keeping of it is doing you good.[1]

Yours,
BAPU

LALA SHAMLAL, M. L. A. (CENTRAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 1288

446. LETTER TO VIDYAVATI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 11, 1939

CHI. VIDYA,

I had your letter of June 13. I could not reply earlier.

My health is now all right. Do come over when I reach Segaon.

Tell me all about the conditions there. If you write to Rajendra Babu and others, they will all listen to you.

Where is Lakshmi these days? What does she do? Have you fully recovered? I shall be here till the end of this month, if not longer.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati File. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

[1] Acknowledging the addressee's reply dated July 13, Pyarelal wrote (G.N. 1289): "Bapu was very glad that you had taken to spinning regularly and were feeling attached to it. He would like you to learn spinning on the *takli*."

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447. *NOTES*

A Repudiation

Janab Yusuf Meherally, President, Cutch Prajakiya Parishad, writes:

> In a recent issue of the *Harijan*, under the caption "Leaders Must Lead"[1], you have made reference to Cutch which raises one or two points that need to be cleared up. The note has it that a Cutch worker informed you that "some leaders in Cutch are telling the people there that but for your stopping civil disobedience they would today be enjoying responsible government or something near it."
>
> We were not a little surprised to read this, for to the best of my knowledge none of our responsible workers in Cutch has said this. Since the suspension of the satyagraha by us under your advice on April 1, I alone must have addressed over 200 meetings all over Cutch. My other colleagues in Cutch have similarly done a great deal of touring. But nowhere have our leading workers given expression to such sentiments. In fact, at a public meeting in the capital town of Bhuj, which is our headquarters, I asked the large gathering present if any among them had heard these or similar words. The unanimous reply was in the negative. I asked again if there were any person in the audience who had recollection of hearing anything that even resembled this. Not one such person was there. I do not wish to labour the point any further. But we could not help feeling hurt that you should have lent the weight of your name to a statement which on further enquiry you would have found to be incorrect.

I gladly publish this repudiation. But I must say that there was no occasion for the President to feel hurt. Had I mentioned names, I would certainly have referred to him before writing the note. But when a responsible worker asked me if I had stopped civil disobedience in Cutch and wanted a public declaration from me, I could not wait for confirmation before giving my answer. Nor does the present repudiation take the matter any further than where it was left by my note except that Janab Meherally and those whom he asked did not make the statement alluded to. The proper procedure is to challenge my informant to produce the names of those whom he knew had made the statement imputed to them or unreservedly to withdraw his

[1] *Vide* p. 330.

allegation. I may inform the reader that I have adopted the procedure myself and asked my informant to produce the names or to withdraw his allegation. Meanwhile my note has served a very useful purpose in the other States if not in Cutch. The leaders have a greater sense of responsibility and realize that my opinion should have no weight with them except to the extent that it appeals to their heads and hearts. They are solely responsible for any action they take. And naturally. They alone know the situation at first hand within their own spheres of action.

THE WAY TO DO IT

Narandas Gandhi is khadi-mad. He is a good teacher after my style and an able accountant, but has been for years a staunch believer in the gospel of khadi. He devotes about four hours daily to spinning. His output gives him khadi enough for his household. Five years ago he conceived the idea of popularizing khadi and raising funds for public services by dedicating as many days as my years at the time of my birthday. He began with my 66th year. I attach the greatest importance to my service of the poor through khadi. I do not regard it as a mad man's mad idea. It cannot be so mad when it is remembered that it has put into the pockets of Hindu and Muslim spinners and weavers nearly five crores of rupees. Though, therefore, Narandas Gandhi's enterprise is connected with my name, I do not hesitate to advertise it year after year. His ambition rises as years roll by. And it has been always hitherto more than fulfilled. He began by asking co-workers to contribute in all 66,000 yards of yarn and collecting 66 coins from those who would care to give them. Collection of yarn was made from all over India. Collection of coin was naturally confined to Rajkot for it was a matter of door-to-door begging. This time Narandas Gandhi hopes to receive, instead of seventy thousand, 70 lakhs of yards of yarn. Is there anything which the determination of the good cannot achieve?[1] It should not be difficult of fulfilment if 100[2] volunteers spin 1,000 yards of yarn daily from 2nd August for seventy days. The programme commences on 2nd August and finishes on 10th October. A fast spinner would do 1,000 yards in three hours. But an average spinner would easily do it in four hours. If Narandas secures the co-operation of 1,000[3]

[1] This sentence is from the Gujarati leaflet, "Note on *Rentia Baras*", written by Narandas Gandhi (C. W. 8566).

[2] & [3] The source has "700" and "7,000", a misprint; *vide* also Vol. LXX, "Notes", 6-8-1939.

volunteers, the output need not be more than 100 yards per day. That means giving less than thirty minutes daily. And of course merit lies in an increasing number of volunteers responding every year. The virtue of khadi lies in bringing the distribution of the work of spinning as near the individual use of khadi as possible. The spinning provides the best and the easiest method of voluntary and useful co-operation. India has man-power in crores and that is why it does not require giant soul-less machines.[1] Given the co-operation of crores of people, it would be child's play for them to produce cloth for their own use. That would save the drain of crores of rupees to foreign countries and the wealth would automatically be distributed among crores of people. Let me hope Narandas Gandhi will secure the association of many volunteers in his enterprise. They should send their names and addresses to him as early as possible. The money contributions and the proceeds from the sale of yarn or khadi as the case may be, though they will be nominally presented to me, will be returned by me to be equally divided in three parts for Harijan and khadi work in Kathiawar and the Rajkot Rashtriyashala.

ABBOTTABAD, July 12, 1939

Harijan, 22-7-1939

448. MEENAKSHI TEMPLE OPEN

I have before me Rameshwari Devi's address to the Tamilnad Provincial Harijan Temple-entry Conference held at Madura on 13th June last. I had a letter from her describing how successful her tour seemed to have been from the numbers who attended her meetings and the enthusiasm they showed. She had also expressed the hope that the famous Meenakshi temple was likely soon to be opened to Harijans. Little did I then know that the temple was to be opened so soon. But the wonderful event happened on the 8th instant.

It is a great event in the campaign against untouchability and the movement for the opening of temples to Harijans. The Proclamation opening the State temples of Travancore was no doubt a very big step. But it was the prerogative of the Maharaja. He had in his Dewan a wise adviser. The Maharaja, the Maharani and the Dewan brought about the transformation. But the opening of the celebrated temple of Madura is a greater

[1] This and the following two sentences are from the Gujarati.

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event in that it is the popular will that has brought about the happy consummation. It reflects a decided conversion of the temple-goers of the Meenakshi temple. Shri Vaidyanatha Aiyar and his co-workers deserve all the praise for the ceaseless effort that they have put forth in educating public opinion.

Let us hope that this opening will be followed up by the opening of the other great temples of the South. There should be no hurry, no hustling of the public. The opinion of the temple-goers is of the greatest value. Theirs should be the deciding voice. The workers will consolidate every gain so as to prevent any set-back. Every opening of a temple to Harijans should mark greater purification inside and outside the temple opened. The sanctity of such temples should on no account be marred. No political capital should be made out of what is, and is intended to be, a purely religious act.

Harijans too should be taught to understand the religious significance of the opening of temples for them.

There were fifteen useful resolutions taken at the Conference. Of these the following three attract special attention:

1. This Conference notes with deep regret the recent action of the Mysore Government in having withdrawn their order permitting Harijans into the Sravana Belagola temple even up to the limits where non-Hindus are allowed.

2. This Conference resolves that the Provincial Boards of the Harijan Sevak Sangh should take up the organization of a Provincial Sevak Service with the following objects:

(a) There should be a whole-time worker in charge of every institution run by the Harijan Sevak Sangh, as schools, hostels, etc.

(b) The sevaks should undertake to serve for at least five years.

(c) They should be paid an allowance ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30 according to the needs of the individual and the circumstances of the locality.

(d) The sevak shall be attached to any one of the centres allotted to him by the Provincial Board.

(e) The qualifications of the sevak and the pledge to be given by him shall be the same as that of the Central Board sevaks, with this additional qualification that he should have passed at least the third form and must have been for at least three years in Harijan work, and should possess full faith and confidence in the ideals set forth by Mahatmaji and the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

(f) The Provincial Board, though solely responsible for the salary of the sevaks, the institution to which he is attached will also undertake to pay at least half his allowance.

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(g) The Provincial Board in consultation with the district or local committees shall select the sevaks under the scheme who will abide by the conditions laid down by the Provincial Board from time to time.

(h) The sevaks attached to each Provincial Board shall meet at least once a year.

3. Resolved that a short workers' training camp extending about a month be organized by the respective Provincial Boards in any of the following centres, viz., the Ramakrishna Vidyalaya of Coimbatore, the Vinayashram in Guntur and the Kengeri Gurukul in Mysore. Shri Avinasilingam, Ramachandran, Bapineedu and Gopalaswamy be requested to draft a scheme for their training and circulate the same to all the Provincial Boards.

The first is surprising and demands an answer from the Mysore authorities. I hope that there is some misunderstanding somewhere. A concession once given is not withdrawn lightly.

The second resolution is very important. The Conference has thereby taken a big step. The third is also a substantial resolution. Let us hope that whatever has been undertaken by the Conference will be duly carried out. Our resolutions often begin and end with being printed and advertised in the Press. They have value only if they are reduced to practice.

ABBOTTABAD, July 12, 1939

Harijan, 22-7-1939

449. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am much obliged to you for your letter[1] of 1st instant and the wires about Talcher.

I thank you, too, for your inquiry about my health. It continues to be good.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* Appendix XIII.

450. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

Your letter is very good. Everything is plain. This is what a letter ought to be. You will learn something but teach much more. In a few days, your way will become clear. Only today I have a letter from Sardar Saheb[1]. He wishes to send you to his bigger farm also. Keep cow's milk separate for removing butter. Conversion into curds hastens the process. With patience, everything will be all right.

I shall send your letter to Rajkumari who will send it to Ashram whence it will reach Surendra. I am not writing anything to Sardar Saheb. Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila will entrain from there on Friday. This letter will reach you after that.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

According to Sardar Saheb's estimate, you will need 2½ months there. Let us wait and see.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1923

451. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Strange to have no letter from you for three days on end. I hope you are keeping well.

Here is a letter from Balvantsinha. Read it at leisure. It shows that all is not gold that glitters. But of course he might have to revise his first impressions. It cannot be quite as bad as he paints it. Of course I don't want you to say anything to Sardar Saheb. He has sent a sweet letter. I have written in reply. After all

[1] Datar Singh

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they did not meet at the station. Balvantsinha did not go by the Frontier Mail as it had no third class.

Mira has already reached Patna. She contemplates staying till the Congress is over.

Ba and company are expected to reach here on Friday. Everything is in order here. Mahadev has found an able dentist here, probably better than the expert in Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Please forward Balvantsinha's letter after use to Segaon.

From the original: C.W. 3927. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7236

452. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

See that the place where we take our meals is paved. Shankaran is improving. There has been no news at all of Balkrishna. Ba, Pyarelal and Sushila will reach here the day after tomorrow. They will start today.

I got Munnalal's letter. I am not worrying. Tell Bhansalibhai not to eat more than one *tola* of garlic. The dose is only one ounce.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHIMANLALBHAI
SEGAON ASHRAM
SEGAON, WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10599

453. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. By and by everything will be all right. Win over the girls through love. Persuade them gently not to be boisterous. They will certainly listen to you. Show this

to them. Do not be impatient in your study. Take interest in it. The knowledge you gain will not go in vain. Passing the examination is only an excuse. The main aim is that you should acquire knowledge, though examinations also are necessary for progress. Keep calm and go on studying. Never mind whether or not you pass.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9591. Also C.W. 6563. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

454. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter. You never take care of your health. This is no good. If you wish to be treated by Vijaya's vaid[1], do so. You have to get well for the sake of your work.

Ba and others will arrive day after tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 424

455. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. Prison does not seem to agree with Jamnalal. But let things take their own course. He has to recover there and nowhere else. It would be all right if they release him on their own. You will see my article[2]. I have

[1] Vallabhram Vaidya
[2] *Vide* "Jaipur", pp. 400-1.

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nothing much to say about diet. He should take as much milk and fruits as he can easily digest and very little starch. He may add soda to as many things as he can. He can take as much as 60 grammes.

I have understood [what you say] about the Muslims.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9126

456. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

ABBOTTABAD,
July 12, 1939

BHAI SHAMLAL,

I have started action in respect of Lala Mohanlal's letter. If such a Bill is introduced we will be forced to oppose it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1180

457. A GOOD SAMARITAN

As will appear from the following letter received by me from Shri A. S. Wadia of Poona, he has been truly a good samaritan to the poor people who eke out a bare living by heaving up to the Mahabaleshwar Hill loads of wood from the plains below for the use of the summer visitors. Here is the extract from Shri Wadia's letter:[1]

> I went to Mahabaleshwar to get that isolation and quiet I wanted to write my new book on Southern Rhodesia. But while there my mind and energies were unexpectedly diverted to looking into a grievance of the village people who came up to Mahabaleshwar from the valleys below with heavy loads of hay and firewood and sold them for a mere pittance in our bazaar. . . . Whenever I happened to talk to them, they invariably complained of the awful condition of the tracks by which they came up, as the pointed stones cut their toes and blistered their feet. . . . On inquiry I found that the tracks came to be made by constant use and were never touched by the hand of man ever since Mahabaleshwar was discovered by General Lodnick a hundred years ago.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

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Realizing that the grievance of the village people was just and needed immediate attention, I put away the writing of my Rhodesia and engaged a gang of coolies and systematically took to the smoothening and broadening of the tracks, breaking up obstructive stones and lopping off branches which came in the way of their long loads of firewood. Off and on the work was continued for eight weeks, during the course of which I must have employed altogether about a thousand coolies. Counting small and big, a dozen tracks must have been made, re-made and in some cases re-aligned. . . .

Now I come to the main purpose of my writing you these notes. It is to ask you if Government is not bound to keep in good condition these tracks that I have made for the use of the villagers just as much as they are bound to maintain in good condition the roads for vehicular traffic. . . .

While conversing with the villagers I gathered a few more facts which might interest you:

1. They all complained that the soil of their cultivated fields was deteriorating year after year so that their crops came to about half of what they used to have ten years ago.

2. The Congress Government, they said, had again imposed on them a tax of four annas on each head of cattle after exempting them from the tax for the last two years.

3. The waste lands round the villages should be given them for cultivation and small areas of forest reserve should be opened for grazing their cattle.

I wish you, Mahatmaji, would do something to help the 'Adijans', as I call these poor villagers of the valleys round Mahabaleshwar, in whose welfare and well-being I am personally interested.

I forwarded the letter to the Bombay Ministers, and I am happy to be able to inform the reader that the matter has been taken up by them. The Bombay Government will keep in good repair the footpaths so considerably smoothed down and made safer than they were before by Shri Wadia. They will also attend to the other matters referred to by my correspondent. I wrote to him asking for further particulars of his enterprise. It appears that he laboured with the labourers himself and constituted himself their road engineer. He paid from his own pocket over Rs. 200 which were supplemented by two friends to the extent of Rs. 125. I am quite sure that Shri Wadia has lost nothing by suspending the writing of his book which it is highly probable will now bear the impress of his very practical philanthropy. It is fashionable to give something to charities out of

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one's superfluous cash. But not many give their labour as well as money. Those who do, ensure the best use possible of their donations. It is to be hoped that the other hill-goers will copy Shri Wadia's good example by studying and ameliorating the condition of the poor who uncomplainingly labour for them often on starvation wages.

ABBOTTABAD, July 13, 1939
Harijan, 22-7-1939

458. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

I have read Subhas Babu's statement[2] on the Bombay prohibition with pain and sorrow. He had discussed the question with me when I was in Bombay. I had told him to confer with the Bombay Ministers. I do not know whether he did so. But I was unprepared for his public statement. He has used the arguments of the opponents of prohibition. He was President of the Congress last year, and having been duly elected for the second year he chose to resign[3] owing to differences with his colleagues. He is still head of the Bengal Congress Executive. He is identified with the prohibition policy of the Congress. His responsibility has not ceased because he is no longer in the Working Committee. Had he been a member, he could not have spoken as he has done. His statement because of his position is calculated to discredit the Bombay Ministry in a manner the avowed opponents of prohibition could never hope to do. I can only hope that in this matter Subhas Babu does not reflect the opinion of any other responsible Congressman, and that the general public will continue to support the Bombay ministerial policy with as much enthusiasm as hitherto.

The Ministers' duty is plain. They have to pursue their programme undeterred by any opposition, if they have faith in it. Prohibition is the greatest moral reform in the Congress programme. Previous Governments too had given their lip assent to it, but having been irresponsible they had neither the courage nor the

[1] This appeared under the title "A Dangerous Game". The statement was also published in *The Hindu*, 13-7-1939, and *The Hindustan Times*, 14-7-1939.
[2] Of July 10; for extracts, *vide* Appendix XIV.
[3] On April 30, 1939

will to carry it out. They were not willing to forgo revenue which they could get without effort. They did not stay to examine its tainted source. The Congress Governments have the backing of public opinion. The Working Committee after very careful deliberation issued its mandate on prohibition. The Ministers have all over taken it up to the best of their ability. The manner of execution was naturally left to the respective Ministries. The Bombay Ministers have been courageously pursuing their programme with every prospect of success. Theirs is a difficult position. They were bound to tackle Bombay some day or other. They would be faced with the same opposition as today from the interests directly affected by the prohibition policy. It is not open to any Congressman to embarrass the Ministers as Subhas Babu has done.

The communal question does not arise at all. Subhas Babu has rendered a great disservice to the Congress by raising the communal cry and the cry of minorities. Independence of India is impossible if causes great or small are to be discredited and ruined on the altar of the minority cry. Subhas Babu has played a most dangerous game by mixing up the communal question with such a purely moral reform as prohibition. It is as much the concern of a Muslim or a Parsi or a Christian as of a Hindu to look after his less fortunate countryman who happens to be a labourer and falls a victim to drink. The Bombay property-owners will pay one crore rupees as additional tax not because they are Parsis or Muslims but because they are property-owners. It is altogether misleading to suggest that the tax-payer, himself a non-drinker, will pay the tax for saving the drunkard. He will pay the tax for the education of his children whereas hitherto the drinker has been made by him to pay for that education. The additional tax will be a tardy but very small reparation for the wrong done by monied men to the poor. And the poor have no class. They irrespective of their caste and creed make by themselves a down-trodden class. Their enforced creed is wretched poverty.

Parsis are philanthropists of the world. Why should they be behindhand in this the greatest philanthropy? And if theirs is the greatest contribution, it is but in accordance with their best tradition. And they will be thrice blessed. Many of them will be weaned from a trade which corrupts the morals of their countrymen less fortunately placed than they. They will themselves be weaned from the drink habit. However mild it may be for them, I know, from having lived in intimate contact with them, that the drink does leave an indelible mark on them. Thirdly,

monied men amongst them will have paid for the long-delayed reform. The cry of minorities is a calumny. It is a Parsi Minister to whose lot has fallen the privilege of introducing prohibition. Dr. Gilder's is a job which brings him no money and it brings him drudgery and loss of a princely medical practice. Another equally disinterested physician[1] is the Sheriff of Bombay. A third learned Parsi is Vice-Chancellor[2] of the University, and a fourth businessman is the Mayor[3] of Bombay. I do not know that there has been such a happy conjunction before in the history of Bombay. If the Congressmen and the Congress Ministry of Bombay were communally minded and were indifferent to the minorities, this unique event would not have taken place.

And I suggest that without the willing co-operation of the Muslim population of Bombay the movement in Bombay could not have been introduced. I am quite sure that the best Muslim mind in all India is with the Congress in this Bombay project.

The piecemeal solution flung by Subhas Babu would not work. For one thing it would lack the psychological background. I therefore invite Subhas Babu to retrace his steps and join me in making an appeal to the great Parsi community and those others who may oppose the reform to help it to become the success which it deserves to be. It is his duty as Rajen Babu's immediate predecessor to help the Bombay Ministry which is bravely pursuing the policy laid down for it by the Congress.

Harijan, 22-7-1939

459. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

DEAR TULPULE,

You have raised a very important question. My mind whirls when I try to find a solution. But it will come in its own time. Meanwhile let us hold ourselves in patience.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI C. A. TULPULE
TILAK ROAD, POONA

From a photostat: C.W. 2900. Courtesy: C. A. Tulpule

[1] Dr. Pheroze C. Bharucha
[2] R. P. Masani
[3] Behram Naorosji Karanjia

460. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

If your letter had not been received today, I would have wired. I was impatient to know the cause of the long silence—long for you. I am glad Dalip is on the mend. You will have to come to Segaon to get strong. I hope from here my way will be to Segaon without a break.

I do wish you will firmly cancel Sangli[1] no matter how insistent Tai is. You must tell her you are under treatment which must not be interrupted. You must give the doctor a chance.

Yes, you may go to Jaipur on your way to Segaon. That may be considered when my movement is fixed. Except Talcher there is nothing on the horizon to keep me from Segaon.

We wish systems to die, not their authors or victims. We must hope whilst there is life. If I suddenly lost my head, you won't wish for me to die but you will pray that I may regain my sanity and live. Does this answer your question? Recall what I said about Dyer.

The information you give me about the States and Travancore is interesting and instructive.

I sent you yesterday Balvantsinha's letter.[2] I have heard again from the Sardar Bahadur in reply to my own letter. He says the very fact of my sending Balvantsinha would [be] sufficient charge for his board and lodging. Is this Punjabi courtesy or Sikh courtesy or personal to him? This was in reply to my offer of payment.

Ba and company are due tomorrow. Ba was impatient to come. She was detained only because I would not bring out Sushila, leaving Pyarelal alone. And Ba could not be brought along without Sushila. I could not attend to her personally and she does need medical adjustment every now and then and she has taken to Sushila. Ba is not bringing Kanam this time. He will be left with his maternal uncle. Nirmala is likely to go to Wardha soon.

[1] Where the All-India Women's Conference was to be held on July 29
[2] *Vide* p. 424.

In that case of course Kanam will join here. Now comes an interruption.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3928. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7237

461. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I must write for the sake of writing to you. Sometimes I must give myself this relaxation.

For Ceylon I instinctively thought of sending a Congressman and my mind at once rested on Jawaharlal Nehru. But South Africa is not Ceylon. Sarojini can't do the thing. You are perhaps the only person to do the thing if you can draw Mott and others. It is the Boer mind that has to be touched. You can be spared just now. Perhaps the voyage will do you good. And you might be able to bring the warring[1] Indians together. But you must not go, if you do not feel the inner call or if your health won't stand the strain.[2]

All this has come when I took up the pen, it was to be only a love letter. Mahadev is with me. Pyarelal and Sushila and Ba come tomorrow.

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1298

[1] *Vide* pp. 292-3.

[2] A handwritten note by the addressee at the bottom of the letter reads: "This clearly means I must go as soon as the monsoon is over."

462. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

ABBOTTABAD,
July 13, 1939

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I am sorry your recovery is not so rapid as you had expected. Let this sickness teach you patience. I am here till the end of the month at least.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal, Ba and Sushila join me here tomorrow.

SHRI P. G. MATHEW
GRAM UDYOG LODGE
NATH MAHAL, NAGPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1541

463. NOTES

VANDEMATARAM

Some students in Hyderabad complain that my note[1] on *Vandemataram* has created confusion in their minds. They read an extract from it in some local papers from which the words "at a mixed gathering" were omitted so as to leave the impression that it was not to be sung even in gatherings of their own, though such an interpretation was absurd. I was being quoted in support of the contention that the students should not be allowed to sing *Vandemataram* in their own rooms or the prayer hall set apart for their section who had not only no objection but who regarded it as part of their prayer to sing it. My note is quite plain. If at any mixed gathering any person objected to the singing of *Vandemataram* even with the Congress expurgations, the singing should be dropped. But it was never intended to apply to gatherings in which there was no objection raised. Such an objection would

[1] *Vide* pp. 380-1.

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amount to interference, unlawful and intolerant. If objections could be carried to such lengths, even the performance of religious worship would become impossible. And I know that for many patriots the singing of *Vandemataram* amounts to a religious duty.

That Obstinate Disease

Thus writes Shri Tatachar who is an ardent lover of Harijans:

> Some time ago there was a riot at Nallathur Cheri. Caste men attacked the Adi-dravida *bhajanai* and inflicted injuries on several members of the party. In this riot caste men received a few injuries. Adi-dravidas complained of the riot to the police. The police took no notice of their complaint. Caste men filed private complaints in court against five Adi-dravidas. These five Adi-dravidas were convicted and fined Rs. 25 each and one month's rigorous imprisonment in default. Appeals were filed and heard on May 26, 1939. Judgment was reserved and was pronounced today in favour of the appellant accused. In accordance with the directions of the appellate court, the appellants asked the trying court on May 27, 1939, to postpone the recovery of the fines, until judgments were pronounced in the appeals. The lower court refused to grant them time and sent them to jail. . . . This grave act of injustice must satisfy you that the problem of the removal of untouchability is not going to solve itself.

He has sent me also copious notes which I have read with painful interest. The letter from which I have quoted bare facts is filled with biting strictures of the police and the first court which is reported to have refused to stay execution although appeal was admitted and the appellate court is said to have recommended stay of execution.

I have asked Shri Tatachar for further particulars. Allegations that the police refused to register the complaints of the Harijans while private complaints against them were readily entertained and that the trying magistrate refused to suspend execution of sentences, are serious enough to warrant a departmental enquiry. There is no doubt that if the virus of untouchability is to be eradicated, ceaseless vigilance by the central authority is necessary.

Abbottabad, July 14, 1939

Harijan, 22-7-1939

464. *PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY OR PROVINCIAL JEALOUSY*

Shri Jamshedji Mehta writes:

> After the introduction of provincial autonomy one is pained to observe the growth of provincial exclusiveness and jealousies in matters big or trivial. I often wonder if provincial autonomy has not come upon us as a curse rather than a blessing. Instead of the nationalistic spirit having increased, provincial exclusiveness seems to have flourished. Before autonomy 'my country' used to mean India. Now it means 'my province'. Will you not warn the country against the danger before it becomes too deep-rooted to be dealt with ?

The letter is naturally in Gujarati. I have given a very free rendering of the thought and the grief running through the original. Shri Jamshedji's complaint has justification for it. Provincialism of a healthy type there is, and always will be. There is no meaning in having separate provinces, if there were no differences, though healthy, between them. But our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts. They may be likened to tributaries of a mighty river. The tributaries promote its mightiness. Their strength and purity will be reflected in the majestic stream. It must be thus with the provinces. Everything that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole. If the great contribution of Rabindranath glorifies Bengal, it glorifies also India. Does not his influence pervade the whole of India ? Dadabhai lived not merely for the Parsis, not merely for Bombay, but for the whole of India. There is no room for exclusiveness or jealousy between province and province, unless India is to be dismembered into warring countries each living for itself and if possible at the expense of the rest. The Congress will have lived in vain if such a calamity descends upon the country. Every attempt at dividing India into watertight compartments must be resisted. India's destiny is to become a strong, independent nation making her unique contribution to the world's progress. Our patriotism is at no stage exclusive. We do not desire prosperity at the expense of the other nations of the

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earth. A time must come when we will be able to say, 'We are no less citizens of the world than we are citizens of India'. But the time will never come unless we know the art of being citizens of an independent India. We cannot learn the art if we develop poisonous provincialisms. The right national life has to begin with the individual. I wish to be strong and free so that not only I but my neighbour also may benefit by my strength and freedom. We as individuals or provinces must bring our best fruit to the altar of the motherland.

ABBOTTABAD, July 14, 1939

Harijan, 22-7-1939

465. TELEGRAM TO A. VAIDHYANATHA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

VAIDHYANATHA IYER
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
MADURA

RECEIVED HARROWING WIRE FROM NATESIER OF VARNASHRAMA SANGH. WIRE HOW MATTERS STAND.[1]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

466. TELEGRAM TO NATESA IYER

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

PRESIDENT, VARNASHRAMA SANGH
MADURA

YOUR WIRE UNBELIEVABLE. HAVE UNHAPPY EXPERIENCES OF VARNASHRAMA SANGH'S PREVIOUS EXAGGERATED UNPROVABLE CHARGES. HINDU PUBLIC OPINION SEEMS WHOLLY FAVOUR TEMPLE-ENTRY BY HARIJANS.[2] ASK YOU NOT IMPEDE LONG OVERDUE REFORM.[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also the following item.
[2] The reference is to the Meenakshi Temple in Madurai; *vide* pp. 421-3.
[3] In his telegraphic reply dated July 15, the addressee asserted that every word of his wire was true and that Gandhiji could make enquiries from Minister Ramanathan and others; *vide* p. 441.

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467. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I forgot to answer one question yesterday.[1] Yes, your Hindi is very good. The letters are perfectly formed. Why don't you continue ? If you don't care to write wholly in Hindi, do it half and half.

The reply from Sir Mirza is an utter disappointment. However we must continue to appeal to the best in him. There is no doubt that the State Congress people have not behaved well with the Dewan.

The other letter is characteristic. I have not yet studied Sir S[ikandar Hyat Khan]'s scheme.[2] No time left after dealing with the day's work. I shall have to make time.

Rest from Mahadev.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Sir Gokul Chand just waiting to come in. I go to the 'library' and then see him. Herewith Sardar Datar Singh's letter for you to read and keep for me.

From the original: C.W. 3929. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7238

468. LETTER TO UMA DEVI

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR UMA,

You can come here whenever you like. You won't be a burden on anybody. But it is fairly hot here. And my stay is uncertain. I am likely to come to Kashmir after 23rd if not earlier.[3] Now do as you like.

[1] *Vide* pp. 432-3.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXX, "Letter to Sikandar Hyat Khan", 17-7-1939.

[3] The visit was, however, cancelled; *vide* Vol. LXX, "Statement to the Press", 22-7-1939.

You need not go to Poland. Security can be given regarding your mother by transferring your cash to me. Other ways also may be devised. These will be thought out when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1202 and 8056. Also C.W. 5097. Courtesy: Uma Devi

469. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

MY DEAR GLADYS,

You have taken long to get rid of your disease. Of course you are welcome to Segaon whenever you wish to come. I am not sure, however, whether the life there will satisfy your ambition. But you have a vast field. You will stay where you find greatest self-expression.

You will send your letter to Wardha. I hope to leave this part of India in the beginning of August.

Love to you and all the others.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev is with me quite restored.

From a photostat: G.N. 6195

470. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

ABBOTTABAD,
July 14, 1939

DEAR GURJALE,

I was glad to hear from you. You must not give in. If the medical work progresses, well and good. Otherwise you must live on what the goodness of neighbours brings you. Have no hedge and no gardening. Let the people know that you do not resent their depredations.

Yours,
BAPU

SWAMI NIRMALANANDA BHIKSHU
GANDHIKUPPAM
TIRUVENANALLUR P.O., INDIA

From a photostat: G.N. 1387

471. NOTES ON NIRA

Shri I. S. Amin, Chief Chemist and Technical Superintendent of the Alembic Chemical Works of Baroda, has made important observations during the past two years and arrived at certain conclusions in the experiments on the collection and preservation of *nira*. He has now furnished me with the results which are too technical for the reader. He has appended useful notes to the results which are given below.[1]

Harijan, 15-7-1939

472. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

ABBOTTABAD,
July 15, 1939

Some women are inundating me with wires and letters about the hunger-striking prisoners in Bengal. One telegram peremptorily asks me to discharge my responsibility by myself joining the hunger-strike. Another lays the whole burden on my shoulders of leading the agitation on the ground that the prisoners had suspended their hunger-strike on my assurance. I have returned suitable replies where necessary, but the matter is too important to be disposed of by personal replies. I fear my fair correspondents are damaging the cause they represent by expecting me to do what I cannot do. They are damaging it also by encouraging hunger-strikers. I have no doubt that the hunger-strike is wrong. No person should free himself from prison by refusing to take food. The women who are corresponding with me, and others who are agitating for their release, should persuade the hunger-strikers to give up their fast. The exercise of pressure of public opinion is a legitimate method and if it is wisely applied, it will become quite effective. No government nowadays can afford to be indifferent to popular opinion. Therefore, I implore those who are organizing public opinion to persuade the hunger-strikers to give up the

[1] The notes are not reproduced here.

[2] This is extracted from "Notes". The statement also appeared in *The Hindu*, 16-7-1939.

hunger-strike, and not to mislead the public by expecting me to do the impossible.

At the same time I would urge the Bengal Government to put an end to this particular agitation by releasing the prisoners although, as I have admitted, the prisoners have put themselves in the wrong by resorting to hunger-strike. The release is long overdue. Rightly or wrongly, and I think rightly, the public had expected their release on the transfer of power to a responsible legislature. That expectation should have been fulfilled long ago. The Government will lose nothing and will certainly gain much by yielding to popular pressure in this matter of release of political prisoners.[1]

Harijan, 22-7-1939

473. TELEGRAM TO RAMANATHAN

ABBOTTABAD,
July 15, 1939

RAMANATHAN, MINISTER
SECRETARIAT
MADRAS

NATESIER MADURA SAYS[2] YOU WILL CONFIRM HIS CHARGE MEENAKSHI TEMPLE ENTERED STEALTHILY AND SAYS OPENING WAS IN DEFIANCE PUBLIC OPINION. WIRE CORRECT POSITION.[3]

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also p. 409.
[2] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 437.
[3] In his reply, the Minister denied the charge; *vide* Vol. LXX, "Telegram to Natesa Iyer", 17-7-1939.

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474. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

ABBOTTABAD,
July 15, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I got all the news about you. Without getting nervous try and overcome your difficulties. You should study only as much as you can digest. You should take proper rest. Take part in the girls' games. See that you don't get brain-fag. It is good that you go to school walking.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9592. Also C.W. 6564. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM DHARMENDRASINH[1]

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT STATE,
March 3, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMA GANDHIJI,

I received your letter yesterday and noted the contents with greatest regret. As you have already been assured that the Notification No. 50 which I published on 26th December will stand good, the suggestions you make regarding personnel of the Committee are not in accordance with the terms of that Notification, and I do not feel justified in accepting them or your other suggestions. The responsibility of ensuring that the Committee shall consist of suitable members truly representative of various interests of the State rests on me as Ruler of Rajkot, and it is a responsibility of which I cannot divest myself. In the best interests of my State and my people it is impossible for me to allow anyone else to have the final decision in a matter of such vital importance. As I have previously assured, it is my earnest hope that the Committee may be able to start work in a calm atmosphere at the earliest possible moment so that there may be no delay in introducing such reforms as may be found to be necessary.

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

Harijan, 11-3-1939

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON[2]

THE RESIDENCY, RAJKOT,
March 6, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I telegraphed what you wrote in your letter of March 4th to His Excellency the Viceroy and have now been instructed to convey the following message from His Excellency to you:

[1] *Vide* pp. 2, 10, 14, 15, 17 and 23.
[2] *Vide* p. 29.

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I was very glad to receive your message today and am sorry indeed that you did not communicate with me before taking your present decision. The two points which, from the papers you sent me, I thought you were principally interested in were

(a) alleged misconduct by police, etc.,

(b) alleged breach of undertaking by Thakore Saheb of Rajkot.

I trust that your own investigations satisfied you that there is nothing material under the first head. As regards the second, which is, I gather, now your chief difficulty, you will, I am sure, be glad to know that the Thakore Saheb has [to] preside over the Committee. That I will readily arrange, and it will, I take it, meet what I have no doubt is your chief anxiety, viz., to ensure fair play in the fulfilment of the Thakore Saheb's Notification of December 26th. But in any case I should like myself to talk things over with you as soon as possible and I hope, therefore, that you will come and see me as soon as may be convenient to yourself.

I expect to arrive in Delhi on the morning of Monday the 6th, and will be very glad to see you at any time after that if you will let me know. I hope myself that through personal discussion between us such misunderstanding as may exist will admit of being cleared; and on personal grounds, too, I should greatly deplore any decision on your part, as arising out of such misunderstanding, to continue a fast which cannot but be a great strain on you.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10138. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON[1]

THE RESIDENCY, RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I wired your reply to the Viceroy yesterday and am now instructed to convey the following message to you from His Excellency :

Thank you very much for your message which I have just received. I understand your position. It is clear from what you tell me that what counts with you essentially in this matter is your feeling that there has been a breach of faith. I realize that doubts may be entertained as to the meaning which should be attached to the Thakore Saheb's Notification, as amplified by his subsequent letter to Sardar Patel, and it seems to me

[1] *Vide* pp. 30, 32, 58 and 98.

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that the best way in which these doubts can be resolved is to refer their interpretation to the highest judicial authority in the land, that is to say, the Chief Justice of India. I would, therefore, propose with the consent of the Thakore Saheb, which I understand is forthcoming, to consult this high authority as to the manner in which the Committee should be composed in accordance with the terms of the Notification and the Thakore Saheb's letter referred to above. After this the Committee would be set up accordingly and it would further be provided that should any difference subsequently arise between the members of the Committee as to the meaning of any part of the Notification on which they were to make their recommendations, this question would also be referred to the same high authority whose decision would be final. I fully believe that this, combined with the Thakore Saheb's assurance that he will carry out the promise contained in his Notification, and with my own assurance that I will exert my influence to see that he does so, will be sufficient to allay any apprehensions which have assailed you and that you will join with me in feeling that every precaution has been taken to ensure fair dealing and that you will allay the anxiety of your friends by abandoning any further strain upon your health. As I have already told you I shall be very glad to see you here and discuss matters with you so that any misapprehensions may be removed.

Yours sincerely,
E. C. GIBSON

From a copy: C.W. 10140. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar. Also *Harijan*, 11-3-1939

APPENDIX IV

DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON[1]

March 5, 1939

I raised the question of "next steps" and asked what was being done to explore a way out of the impasse. Since the correspondence that was passed between the parties concerned, it would appear that nothing was being done officially—the general opinion being that any move now must come from Delhi.

In answering, Gandhiji took up the question of the Sardar. He said if there was definite proof given to him by an impartial enquiry that the Sardar had employed dishonourable means to obtain the Thakore Saheb's consent to the agreement he would repudiate the Sardar and drop his demands. He

[1] *Vide* p. 31. The talk has been extracted from the notes made by Agatha Harrison.

spoke of the character of the Sardar and said he was not a diplomat and was often misunderstood. We then dropped this matter and went on to the main question of the conditions that would enable him to break his fast.

I asked Gandhiji if Zetland's statement in England and the Viceroy's here changed the situation in any way. If in view of these statements the Paramount Power undertook responsibility for seeing the agreement was implemented, and appointed a Committee without reference to the present controversy on personnel, would this satisfy him?

Gandhiji said "Yes"; if the Paramount Power gave the assurance that they would see he got the constitution in terms of the December 26th Notification and selected a Committee he could accept, he would not insist on the personnel named in his letter to Thakore Saheb. But this assurance would have to be given publicly and in writing.

Alternatively, Gandhiji suggested that he would, with a nominee of the Thakore Saheb's choice, who was trusted and respected, undertake to draft a constitution. If any points of difference arose they could be referred to an umpire.

I asked Gandhiji if, in the event of some move being made as above, he would drop the point he made in his letter to Gibson yesterday for the removal of Virawala. He replied this was possible, if the Paramount Power made itself hostage, not only for the production of the constitution in terms of the December 26th agreement, but also that the recommendations of the Committee would be carried out in full.

From a copy: C.W. 10193. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM S. SATYAMURTI TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 20, 1939

MY DEAR MAHADEO,

I told Mahatmaji that I would send him a note on the amendments to the Congress constitution. I am sending that note herewith. I also want that, on the lines we discussed this matter when we last met at Birla House, you should place before Mahatmaji my views on the urgent and important need of the anti-Hindustani agitation in Madras being met by the Government of Madras. I recognize that the agitation is factitious, is unreal in the sense in which it is fighting for something which it need not fight for and is being exploited by unscrupulous persons against the Ministry. At the same time, I am of the opinion, which you expressed in the columns of the

[1] *Vide* p. 71.

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Harijan, that from the point of view of truth and non-violence compulsion in any matter of this kind might well be postponed for the present, and till public opinion is more universally in favour of it. If a conscience clause were granted, I am sure that not more than ten per cent will take advantage of it, and only in some districts, and that that ten per cent may be soon reduced to one per cent by continuous and vigorous propaganda. As a matter of fact, the Madras Government have made a concession in that students taking up Hindi are not compelled to sit for an examination. This, I think, practically takes away the value of compulsion; rather I would insist on an examination passing which will alone enable a student to be promoted to a higher class, and we may give this conscience clause.

Moreover, I do not like the use of the Criminal Law Amendment Act[1], in view of our definite election pledge that the Congress stands for the repeal of all repressive laws. This Act was placed on the Statute Book by the fiat of the Governor-General against the express wishes of the Indian Legislative Assembly. This matter is very urgent, and I should like you to place it before Mahatmaji before he leaves Delhi. If he wants to discuss it further with me, I shall be glad to discuss it with him.

There is just one other matter of extreme urgency which I am sure is already exercising Mahatmaji's mind. The present deadlock in the Congress ought not to be allowed to continue. The Working Committee must be formed and formed at once. There are several provinces in which the Congress work is at a standstill and the Working Committee starting functioning alone will solve all these provincial and other problems. I hope that Mahatmaji will be able to get Srijut Subhas Chandra Bose to nominate the members of the Working Committee according to his wishes. But if there be any difficulty in the matter, I suggest that a very early meeting of the All-India Congress Committee may be summoned, which according to the constitution is entitled to meet the new situation and will meet it by appointing a Working Committee recommended by Mahatmaji.

I am sending you this letter just now and I shall be at Birla House this evening (Monday, 20th) at 6.30 p. m. Any other hour between 5.30 and 8 p. m. will suit me. Please send a line in reply per bearer who will wait for the same, to meet you and have a few words with you. I trust you will find it possible to meet me at that time.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely,
S. SATYAMURTI

SJT. MAHADEO DESAI

From a photostat: C.W. 10888. Courtesy: C. R. Narasimhan

[1] Of 1908, under which certain associations were declared unlawful

APPENDIX VI

LETTERS FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

JEALGORA P. O.,
March 29, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I received your letter of the 24th instant from the train, along with the enclosures.

Firstly, my brother, Sarat, wrote to you on his own. You will see from his letter that he got your telegram on his return to Calcutta from here and then he wrote to you. If he had not got your telegram, I doubt if he would have written.

There are, of course, certain things in his letter which echo my feelings. But that is a different matter. The main problem appears to me as to whether both parties can forget the past and work together. That depends entirely on you. If you can command the confidence of both parties by taking up a truly non-partisan attitude, then you can save the Congress and restore national unity.

I am temperamentally not a vindictive person and I do not nurse grievances. In a way, I have the mentality of a boxer, that is, to shake hands smilingly when the boxing-bout is over and take the result in a sporting spirit.

Secondly, in spite of all the representations that I have been receiving, I take the Pant resolution as it has been passed by the Congress. We must give effect to it. I myself allowed the resolution to be moved and discussed, despite the *ultra vires* clause in it. How can I go back on it?

Thirdly, there are two alternatives before you: (1) Either to accommodate our views with regard to the composition of the new Working Committee, or (2) to insist on your views in their entirety. In the case of the latter, we may come to the parting of the ways.

Fourthly, I am prepared to do all that is humanly possible for me to expedite the formation of the new Working Committee and the summoning of the Working Committee and A. I. C. C. But I am so sorry that it is not possible for me to come to Delhi now. (Dr. Sunil has wired to you this morning on this point. I got your telegram only yesterday.)

Fifthly, I was surprised to learn from your letter that the A. I. C. C. office had not sent you a copy of Pant's resolution. (This has since been done.)

[1] *Vide* pp. 80 and 96.

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I was still more surprised that the resolution had not been brought to your notice till you came to Allahabad. At Tripuri, the air was thick with the rumour that the resolution had your fullest support. A statement to that effect also appeared in the daily Press while we were at Tripuri.

Sixthly, I have not the slightest desire to stick to office, but I do not see any reason for resigning because I am ill. No President resigned when he was in prison for instance; I may tell you that great pressure is being brought to bear on me to resign. I am resisting because my resignation will mean a new phase in Congress politics which I want to avoid till the last. I have been attending to urgent A. I. C. C. work during the last few days.

I shall write to you again tomorrow or the day after.

I am progressing. I hope your blood-pressure will soon be down again.

With *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,
SUBHAS

PS.

This letter is not exactly a reply to yours, I have just jotted down the points which were in my mind and which I wanted to convey to you.

MAHATMA GANDHI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

JEALGORA,
March 31

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I saw your telegram[1] to Sunil which you sent in reply to his long telegram regarding my health. When you wired suggesting my going to Delhi, I thought it best to let the doctors speak out their mind on the subject. So Sunil wired you.

I have been pondering over the various points in your letter of the 24th instant to me (from the train) and your letter to Sarat of the same date and over the situation in general. It is really unfortunate for me that I fell ill at such a critical time. But events have so moved in rapid succession that I have not had a chance of quick recovery. Besides, both before Tripuri and after, I have not been treated in certain influential quarters (there is no reference to you at all in this—let me make it clear) with the consideration that was due to me. But there is no reason for me to resign on account of my illness. As I stated in my letter[2] of yesterday (my second letter to you), no President, to my knowledge, resigned when he was in prison, even for a long time. It may be that I shall have to resign after all, but, if that takes place, it will be due to quite different reasons.

[1] *Vide* p. 81.
[2] Dated March 29 above

I think I said in my second letter that though pressure was being brought to bear on me to resign, I was resisting. My resignation would mean the beginning of a new phase in Congress politics which I want to avoid till the last. If we come to the parting of the ways, a bitter civil war will commence and—whatever be the upshot of it—the Congress will be weakened for some time to come and the benefit will be reaped by the British Government. It is in your hands to save the Congress and the country from the calamity. People who are bitterly opposed for various reasons to Sardar Patel and his group, still have confidence in you and believe that you can take a dispassionate and non-partisan view of things. To them you are a national figure—above parties and groups—and you can, therefore, restore unity between the warring elements. If for any reason that confidence is shaken—which God forbid—and you are regarded as a partisan, then God help us and the Congress.

There is no doubt that there is today a wide gulf between the two parties (or blocs) in the Congress. But the gulf can yet be bridged—and that by you. I cannot say anything about the mentality of our political opponents. Tripuri has given us a very bad experience of them, but I can speak for our side. We are not vindictive and we do not nurse grievances. We are prepared to "forgive and forget"—as they say—and join hands once again for the sake of the common cause, viz., the political and economic emancipation of India. When I talk of 'our side', I exclude the official Congress Socialist Party. We discovered for the first time at Tripuri what a small following the official Congress Socialist Party had. The Congress Socialist Party has now split—the rank and file and several provincial branches having revolted against the official leaders, because of what is called their vacillating policy. A large section of the Congress Socialist Party will move with us in future, in spite of what the top leadership may do. If you have any doubts on this score, you have only to wait and see.

The letter of my brother Sarat to you shows that he is feeling very bitter. This, I presume, is due largely to his experiences at Tripuri, because he had no such feeling when he left Calcutta for Tripuri. Naturally, he knows more about the happenings at Tripuri than I do, because he could move about freely, meet people and obtain information. But though I was confined to bed, I got enough information from several independent sources regarding the attitude of responsible circles politically opposed to us, to make me feel thoroughly sick of the whole affair. I may say further that when I left Tripuri, I felt such a loathing and disgust for Congress politics as I have not done for the last nineteen years. Thank God, I have got over that feeling now and have recovered my composure.

Jawahar in one of his letters (and possibly Press statements) remarked that the A. I. C. C. office had deteriorated under my presidentship. I resent that remark as unfair and unjust. He did not perhaps realize that in trying to damn me, he has damned Kripalaniji and the entire staff. The office is in

the hands of the Secretary and his staff and if it deteriorates, it is they who are responsible for it. I am writing to Jawahar at length on this point. I am mentioning this to you because you have said something about the interim administration in your letter to Sarat. The only way in which we can help the office is to appoint a permanent Secretary at once, even if there is delay in appointing the rest of the Working Committee. But if the Working Committee is going to be appointed soon, we need not appoint the General Secretary in advance.

I shall be grateful if you could let me know your reaction to Pant's resolution. You are in this advantageous position, that you can take a dispassionate view of things provided, of course, you get to know the whole story of Tripuri. Judging from the papers, most of the people who have seen you so far seem to belong to one school—namely, those who supported Pant's resolution. But that does not matter. You can easily assess things at their proper value, regardless of the persons who visit you. You can easily imagine my own view of Pant's resolution. But my personal feelings do not matter to public considerations. As I have said in a previous letter, whatever one may think of Pant's resolution from the purely constitutional point of view, since it has been passed by the Congress I feel bound by it. Now, do you regard that resolution as one of no-confidence in me and do you feel that I should resign in consequence thereof? Your view in this matter will influence me considerably.

Perhaps, you are aware that at Tripuri it was given out by those who were canvassing in support of Pant's resolution that telephonic conversation had taken place with Rajkot and that that resolution had your full support. A report to that effect appeared in the daily Press also. It was further given out in private conversation that nothing short of that resolution in its entirety would satisfy either you or your orthodox followers. Personally, I did not and do not believe in such reports, but they undoubtedly had their vote-catching value. When Pant's resolution was shown to me for the first time by Sardar Patel, I suggested to him (Rajen Babu and Maulana Azad were also there at the time) that if certain changes were made, the resolution in the amended form would be passed by the Congress unanimously. The amended form of the resolution was also sent to Sardar Patel, but there was no response from his side. Their attitude seemed to be not a word, not a comma, should be changed. I suppose Rajkumari Amrit Kaur has handed over to you the amended form of the resolution. If the object of Pant's resolution was to reiterate faith in your principles and your leadership and guidance, that was provided in the amended resolution, but if the object was to avenge the result of the presidential election, then of course the amended resolution did not suffice. Personally, I do not see how Pant's resolution has enhanced your prestige, influence and authority. One hundred and thirty-five votes were cast against you in the Subjects Committee, and in the Open Session,

whatever interested parties may say, my information from various independent sources is to the effect that, in spite of the neutrality of the Congress Socialist Party, at least 800 votes, if not more, out of about 2,300[1] were (would have been?) cast against you. And if the Congress Socialist Party had voted as they did in the Subjects Committee, then the resolution would have been defeated. In any case, the result of the voting would have been problematical. With slight changes in the resolution not one vote would have been cast against the resolution and your leadership would have had the unanimous support of all Congressmen. Your prestige before the British Government and before the whole world would have gone up like a shot. Instead, your name and prestige were exploited by those who wanted to wreak vengeance on us. Consequently, instead of enhancing your prestige and influence, they have dragged it down to an unimaginable depth—for the whole world now knows that though you or your followers managed to get a majority at Tripuri, there is in existence a powerful opposition. If matters are allowed to drift, this opposition is bound to gain in strength and in volume. What is the future of a party that is deprived of radical, youthful and progressive elements? The future is similar to that of the Liberal Party of Great Britain.

I have said enough to acquaint you with my reaction to Pant's resolution. I shall now be grateful if you kindly let me know what your reaction is. Do you approve of Pant's resolution, or should you rather have seen it passed unanimously in an amended form on the lines that we had suggested?

There is one other matter to which I shall refer in this letter—that is the question of our programme. I submitted my views to you on February 15, at Wardha. What has happened since then has served to confirm my views, to justify my prediction. For months I have been telling friends that there would be a crisis in Europe in spring which would continue till summer. The international situation as well as our own position at home, convinced me, nearly eight months ago, that the time had come for us to force the issue of *purna* swaraj. Unfortunately for us and for the country, you do not share our optimism. You are obsessed with the idea of corruption within the Congress. Moreover, the bogey of violence alarms you. Though I am at one with you in your determination to root out corruption within the Congress, I do not think that, taking India as a whole, there is more corruption today than before and, so far as violence is concerned I feel sure there is far less of it today than before. Previously, Bengal, the Punjab and the United Provinces could have been regarded as the hope of organized revolutionary violence. Today there is much more of the spirit of non-violence there. And, speaking for Bengal, I can say with full authority that the province was never more non-violent during the last 30 years than today. For these and other reasons we should lose no time in placing our National

[1] The *Crossroads* version has "2200".

Demand before the British Government in the form of an ultimatum. The idea of ultimatum does not appeal to you or to Pandit Jawaharlal. But in all your political life, you have given any number of ultimatums to the authorities and have advanced the public cause thereby. The other day at Rajkot you did the same thing. What objection can there be, therefore, to submitting our National Demand in the form of an ultimatum? If you do so and prepare for the coming struggle simultaneously, I am sure that we shall be able to win *purna* swaraj very soon. The British Government will either respond to our demand without a fight—or, if the struggle does take place, in our present circumstances it cannot be a long-drawn one. I am so confident, and so optimistic on this point, that I feel that if we take courage in both hands and go ahead, we shall have swaraj inside of 18 months at the most.

I feel so strongly on this point that I am prepared to make any sacrifice in this connection. If you take up the struggle, I shall most gladly help you to the best of my ability. If you feel that the Congress would be able to fight better with another President, I shall gladly step aside. If you feel that the Congress will be able to fight more effectively with a Working Committee of your choice, I shall gladly fall in line with your wishes. All that I want is that you and the Congress should, in this critical hour, stand up and resume the struggle for swaraj. If self-effacement will further the national cause, I assure you most solemnly that I am prepared to efface myself completely. I think I love my country sufficiently to be able to do this.

Pardon me for saying that the way you have been recently conducting the States' people's struggle does not appeal to me. You risked your precious and valuable life for Rajkot and, while fighting for the Rajkot people, you suspended the struggle in all other States. Why should you do so? There are six hundred and odd States in India and, among them, Rajkot is a tiny one. It would not be an exaggeration to call the Rajkot struggle a flea-bite. Why should we not fight simultaneously all over the country and have a comprehensive plan for the purpose? This is what millions of your countrymen think, though out of personal reverence for you, they may not say so openly.

In conclusion, I may say that many people like myself cannot enthuse over the terms of the Rajkot settlement. We, as well as the Nationalist Press, have called it a great victory but how much have we gained? Sir Maurice Gwyer is neither our man nor is he an independent agent. He is a Government man. What point is there in making him the umpire? We are hoping that his verdict will be in our favour. But supposing he declares against us, what will be our position? Moreover, Sir Maurice Gwyer is a part and parcel of the Federal Scheme we have resolved to reject. In the case of a conflict with the British Government, if we decide to have a High Court Judge or a Sessions Judge as umpire, we can always have a settlement

with the British Government. But what shall we gain from such a settlement? Further there are many people who fail to understand why after the interview with the Viceroy, you should be waiting in Delhi. Perhaps, in view of your weak health a rest was necessary before undertaking another long journey. But to the British Government and its supporters it may appear as if you are attaching too much importance to the Federal Chief Justice and thereby enhancing his prestige.

My letter has become too long, so I must stop here. If I have said anything which appears to you to be erroneous, I hope you will pardon me. I know you always like people to speak frankly and openly. That is what has emboldened me in writing this frank and long letter.

I have been progressing steadily, though slowly. I do hope this will find you better and your blood-pressure much lower.

With respectful *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,
SUBHAS

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939; also *Crossroads*, pp. 134-40

APPENDIX VII

LETTER FROM DHARMENDRASINH[1]

PALACE RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR MAHATMA GANDHIJI,

I am in receipt of your letter of 9th instant. You are right in supposing that I should wish for the inclusion in the Committee of the four gentlemen who were appointed by me to represent the Mahomedan community, the Bhayats and the Depressed Classes. I consider it to be of the utmost importance that these communities should be effectively represented and these particular representatives were selected after the most careful consideration. At the same time the expedient suggested by you, viz., the enlargement of the Committee merely to give Mr. Patel's nominees a majority, is hardly now practicable. What now has to be done is to take action in fulfilment of the terms of my Notification No. 50 dated 26th December 1938, in the light of the Award of the Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India who has observed that the Notification restricts the members of the Committee to ten. As stated above it is certainly most essential that the important Mahomedan and Bhayat communities should, like other communities, have proper

[1] *Vide* pp. 124 and 134. These letters are extracted from "Rajkot Events".

representation. It was with this object in view that I included in the list published in my Notification No. 61 dated 21-1-1939 the names of two suitable representatives of Mahomedan community and one of Bhayats. That you shared this view is clearly evident from the assurances which you gave to the deputations of Mahomedans and Bhayats which came to see you on February 28th and the letter you wrote to the President of the Garasias' Association on March 11th. These assurances were, as you will remember, to the effect that the representatives already nominated on their behalf would certainly be included in the Committee. In view of these assurances I have no doubt that you will advise Mr. Patel to include these names in the list of seven non-official members who, in accordance with the Chief Justice of India's decision, are now to be recommended by him.

I also earnestly hope that the name of Mr. Mohan Madan will be included in his list as this gentleman, besides being a representative of the Depressed Classes, has for seven years been the elected chairman of the Rajkot Municipal Corporation and is obviously a person who should be on the Committee.

I am sure you will agree that the matter of primary importance is not to secure a majority for any particular party but to ensure that a really representative Committee, effectively representing the various interests in the State, may now be set up consisting of persons fully qualified to undertake the very responsible duties which will devolve on them.

I am awaiting Mr. Patel's recommendations and when I have received them, I shall appoint the three official members, who will of course have the right to vote, and decide who shall be the President of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

Harijan, 22-4-1939

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

JEALGORA,
April 6, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

In one of your letters to Majdada, my brother Sarat, you suggested a heart-to-heart talk between the leaders of both parties with a view to clearing the ground for united action in future. I think it is a magnificent idea, and I am fully prepared to do my best in this matter, regardless of what has happened in the past. Will you kindly let me know if you would like me to do anything in this behalf and if so, what? Personally, I feel that

[1] *Vide* p. 125.

your influence and personality could achieve much in this endeavour to bring about unity. Will you not make one last supreme effort to bring everybody together before we give up all hope of unity? I would beg of you once again to remember in what light the country still regards you. You are not a partisan and people, therefore, still look up to you to bring together all the warring elements.

I have been pondering deeply over the advice you have given me regarding the formation of the Working Committee. I feel that your advice is a counsel of despair. It destroys all hope of unity. It will not save the Congress from a split—on the contrary, it will make the path safe for such a contingency. To advise a homogeneous Cabinet in the present circumstances will mean advising the parties to part company now. Is that not a terrible responsibility? Do you feel quite sure that joint work is impossible? On our side we do not think so. We are prepared to do our best to "forgive and forget" and join hands for the sake of the common cause and we can look up to you to bring about an honourable compromise. I have already written and spoken to you that the composition of the Congress being what it is—and there being no possibility in the immediate future of any remarkable change—the best course would be to have a composite Cabinet in which all the groups would be represented, as far as possible.

I understand that you are against this idea of a composite Cabinet. Is your opposition due to grounds of principle (viz., joint work is impossible in your view), or is it because you feel that the "Gandhi-ites" (I am using this expression in the absence of anything better, and you will please pardon me for doing so) should have a larger representation on the Cabinet? In the latter case, please let me know, so that I may have an opportunity of reconsidering the matter. In the former case, please reconsider the advice you have already tendered in the light of what I am submitting in this letter. At Haripura, when I suggested inviting the socialists to serve on the Cabinet, you told me distinctly that you were in favour of my doing so. Has the situation changed so materially since then as to induce you to insist on a homogeneous Cabinet?

You have referred in your letters to the two parties being so "diametrically opposed". You have not amplified the point and it is not clear if the position you refer to is based on programme or on personal relations. Personal relations are in my view a passing phenomenon. We may quarrel and fight, but we can also shake hands and make up our differences. Take, for instance, the Swarajist episode in recent Congress history. As far as I am aware, after a period of opposition the relations between Deshbandhu and Pandit Motilalji with yourself became as sweet as humanly possible. In Great Britain, the major parties can always join hands and work on the same Cabinet when an emergency arises. In Continental countries like France every Cabinet is normally a composite Cabinet. Are we less patriotic than Britishers

and Frenchmen? If we are not, then why cannot we have composite Cabinets functioning effectively?

If you think that your opposition is based on programme, etc., rather than on personal considerations, I should like very much to have your view in this matter. Wherein do you think that our programmes differ, and that too so fundamentally, that joint action is not possible? I know that we have certain differences—but, as I wrote to my ex-colleagues of the Working Committee in reply to their letter of resignation, our points of agreement are, in my view, more numerous than our points of difference. I still adhere to this view—Tripuri notwithstanding.

You have said in one of your letters in connection with my idea of an ultimatum on the issue of swaraj that there is no atmosphere for non-violent mass action. But did you not have non-violent mass action in Rajkot? Are you not having it in some other States also? These States' peoples are comparatively untrained in the practice of satyagraha. We in British India can claim more experience and training—comparatively speaking at least. If the States' peoples can be permitted to resort to satyagraha in their struggle for civil liberty and responsible Government, why not we of British India?

Now take the National Demand resolution passed at the Tripuri Congress with the support of the Gandhi-ites. Though it has beautifully vague phrases and several pious platitudes, it has, in a certain sense, much in common with my idea of an ultimatum and preparing for the coming struggle. Now, do you approve of this resolution? If you do, then why cannot you go a step further and accept my plan?

I shall now come to Pandit Pant's resolution. The important part of it (last portion, I mean) contains two points: Firstly, the Working Committee must command your confidence—implicit confidence. Secondly, it must be formed in accordance with your wishes. If you advise a homogeneous Cabinet, and such a Cabinet is formed, one could perhaps say that it has been formed "in accordance with your wishes". But could it be claimed that it commands your confidence? Will it be open to me to get up at the meeting of the A. I. C. C. and tell the members that you have advised the formation of a homogeneous Cabinet and that the new Cabinet commands your confidence? On the other hand, if you advised the formation of a Cabinet which does not command your confidence, will you be giving effect to the Pant resolution—will you be *doing* the right thing, from your point of view? I would beg of you to consider this aspect of the question. If you take cognizance of the Pant resolution, you will not only have to communicate your wishes regarding the new Working Committee, but you will, at the same time, have to advise the formation of such a Committee as will command your confidence.

You have not yet said anything as to the merits of the Pant resolution. Do you approve of it? Or would you rather have had a unanimously

passed resolution, more or less on the lines suggested by us which would reiterate faith in your principles and confidence in your guidance, without the controversial clauses? Then, again, what is the President's position regarding appointing the Working Committee after this resolution was passed? I am again asking this question because the present constitution is practically your handiwork and your opinion in the matter will carry great weight with me. There is another question, in this connection, which I have been asking you. Do you regard this resolution as one of no-confidence in me? If so, I shall resign at once and that too unconditionally. Some papers have criticized this question of mine in my Press statement on the ground that I should decide for myself what the significance of the resolution is. I have sense enough to give my own interpretation, but there are occasions when personal interpretations would not be one's sole guide. Speaking quite frankly, I feel that my stand has been justified by the result of the Presidential election. I have now no desire whatsoever to stick to office for one day, unless I can thereby advance the public cause, as I understand it. The hesitation or the delay that has arisen on my side is because it is not so easy to decide. Among my supporters there are two schools of thought: one holding that I should strive to the last to maintain unity; the other holding that I should break off negotiations at once, as being a hopeless effort, and tender my resignation. The latter have been bringing great pressure to bear on me, but I am resisting. I want to be clear before my own conscience that I have striven till the last to preserve unity within our ranks. Moreover, I know what my resignation will mean in the present circumstances and what its consequences will be. I should add here that the first school—viz., those who want me to exhaust all possibility of a compromise—believe that you will be able to take a thoroughly non-partisan view of things and thereby bring the two parties together.

I must explain further why I say that I shall resign automatically if you feel that Pant's resolution signifies no-confidence. You know very well that I do not follow you blindly in all that you say or believe, as so many of my countrymen do. Why then should I resign if your opinion is that the resolution signifies no-confidence? The reason is plain and simple. I feel it as galling to my conscience to hold on to office if the greatest personality in India today feels—though he may not say so openly—that the passing of the resolution should automatically have brought in my resignation. This attitude is perhaps dictated more by personal regard for you and your opinion in this matter.

Perhaps, as some papers suggest, you have an idea that the Old Guard should be put back into office. In that event I would beg of you to come back to active politics, become a four-anna Congress member and assume direct charge of the Working Committee. Pardon me for saying so, and I say this without meaning offence to anybody—there is a world of difference

between yourself and your lieutenants, even your chosen lieutenants. There are people who will do anything for you—but not for them. Will you believe me when I say that at the Presidential election even some Gandhi-ites in several provinces voted for me against the direction of the Old Guard? If your personality is not dragged into the picture, I shall continue to have their support—the Old Guard notwithstanding.

At Tripuri, the Old Guard cleverly dropped out of the picture and more cleverly pitted me against you. (But there was no quarrel between yourself and myself.) Afterwards they said that Tripuri was a great victory for them and a defeat for me. The fact of the matter is that it was neither a victory for them nor a defeat for me. It was a victory for you (without any cause of a fight with you at all) but a Pyrrhic victory—a victory purchased by a certain loss of prestige.

But I am digressing. I wanted to appeal to you to come forward and directly and openly conduct the affairs of the Congress. This will simplify matters. Much of the opposition against the Old Guard—and opposition there certainly is—will automatically vanish.

If you cannot do this, then I have an alternative suggestion to make. Please resume the national struggle for independence, as we have been demanding, and begin by delivering the ultimatum to the British Government. In that event, we shall all gladly retire from our official positions, if you so desire. We shall gladly hand over these positions to whomsoever you like or trust. But only on one condition—the fight for independence must be resumed. People like myself feel that today we have an opportunity which is rare in the lifetime of a nation. For that reason we are prepared to make any sacrifice that will help the resumption of the fight.

If till the last you insist that a composite Cabinet is unworkable and a homogeneous Cabinet is the only alternative before us and if you want me to form a Cabinet of my choice, I would earnestly request you to give me your vote of confidence till the next Congress. If, in the mean time, we fail to justify ourselves by our service and suffering, we shall stand condemned before the Congress and we shall naturally and quite properly be kicked out of office. Your vote of confidence will mean the vote of confidence of the A. I. C. C. in the present circumstances. If you do not give us your vote of confidence—but at the same time ask us to form a homogeneous Cabinet—you will not be giving effect to Pant's resolution.

Once again I would beg of you to let me know if your opposition to a composite Cabinet is due to considerations of principle or to the fact that you should like the Old Guard to have a larger representation on the Cabinet than I suggested in my first letter to you, dated the 25th March.

Before I close this letter, I shall refer to one or two personal things. You have remarked in one letter that you hope that, whatever happens, "our private relations will not suffer". I cherish this hope with all my heart.

May I say in this connection that if there is anything in life on which I pride myself, it is this that I am the son of a gentleman and as such am a gentleman? Deshbandhu Das often used to tell us, "Life is larger than Politics." That lesson I have learnt from him. I shall not remain in the political field one single day if by doing so I shall fall from the standards of gentlemanliness, which are so deeply ingrained in my mind from infancy and which I feel are in my very blood. I have no means of knowing how you view me as a man — in a way, you have seen so little of me. And my political opponents have carried so many tales against me to you. In recent months I have come to know that for the last few months I have been the victim of a subtle but sinister propaganda carried on against me from mouth to mouth. I would have brought this matter to your notice long ago, but I could not get sufficiently tangible evidence of what was being said and by whom. Latterly, I have come to know much as to what has been said, though I am still in the dark as to who exactly the propagandists are.

Once again I have digressed. In a letter you expressed the hope that in whatever I did, I would "be guided by God". Believe me, Mahatmaji, all these days I have been praying for only one thing, viz., for light as to the path which would be best for my country and my country's freedom. I have asked for strength and inspiration to completely efface myself—should the need and occasion arise. It is my firm conviction that a nation can live only if the individuals composing it be ready to die for its sake whenever it is necessary. This moral (or spiritual) *hara-kiri* is not an easy thing. But may God grant me the strength to face it whenever the country's interests demand it.

I hope you will maintain your improvement. I am progressing steadily. With respectful *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,
SUBHAS

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

APPENDIX IX

THE WAY OF SATYAGRAHA[1]

At the end of five days' heart-to-heart talks with the Muslim friends, often continuing till midnight, and shorter talks with the Bhayats and having failed with them, Gandhiji put his signature to the letter[2] to the Thakore Saheb submitting seven names of the Sardar's representatives. His hand shook as he did so. He never dreamt at that time that within thirty-six hours of the

[1] *Vide* p. 142.
[2] *Vide* p. 134.

despatch of his letter, his faith in God and ahimsa would be put to test. Ever since his arrival here on his mission of peace, Gandhiji had made it a point to hold daily the congregational evening prayer on the Rashtriyashala grounds. The practice was kept up during the fast.

On the evening of the 16th instant a report was brought to Gandhiji that the Bhayats and Mussalmans of Rajkot were going to hold a black-flag demonstration at the evening prayer. There was also a report that a garland of shoes had been got ready for the occasion. He made light of the fears of those who brought the report. He had full faith in the Mussalman and the Bhayat leaders who had friendly discussions with him during the last five days. But in case the worst came to the worst he would welcome it. Accordingly, he gave peremptory instructions that anybody approaching him, no matter with what intent, should be given free access and not obstructed in any way.

He motored as usual to the Rashtriyashala prayer ground. Almost simultaneously with it the demonstrators, too, numbering about 600, arrived on the scene with black flags and placards bearing inscriptions some of which were highly offensive. They lined the fence enclosing the prayer ground from the main road. The Sardar happened to be away at Amreli that day and so missed the show.

Gandhiji bowed to the demonstrators, as is his wont, before he sat down to prayer, which was conducted as usual. All the time the prayer was going on, the processionists kept on an unseemly demonstration of shouting and yelling. The creation of disturbance at the prayer time under the very eyes of the Bhayats and Mussalman representatives who had sat with him in conference only the other day was for him the "unkindest cut of all". The prayer over, he rose to go. The demonstrators had by now begun to pour in through the entrance of the narrow passage leading to the prayer ground. Gandhiji, instead of going by car as usual, decided to walk through the crowd so as to give the demonstrators full chance to say or do to him whatever they pleased. At the entrance the crush was too great to allow further progress. The pushing and jostling by the demonstrators at the rear on either side of the gangway was growing apace. The dust and the din added to the confusion. Friends tried to form a protective cordon. But Gandhiji waved them off. "I shall sit here or go alone in their midst," he told them. All of a sudden he was seized by an attack of indescribable pain in the region of the waist, and felt as if he would faint. This is an old symptom in his case that seizes him whenever he receives an acute mental shock. For a time he stood in the midst of that jostling crowd motionless and silent, his eyes shut, supporting himself on his staff, and tried to seek relief through silent prayer, a remedy that has never failed him on such occasions. As soon as he had sufficiently recovered, he reiterated his resolve to go through the demonstrators all alone. He addressed a Bhayat,

who stood confronting him and who, he subsequently learned, was besides a police officer in plain clothes, "I wish to go under your sole protection, not co-workers'." Some Bhayats had already noticed his condition. They now bade the rest to make way for him, and leaning on the shoulder of the Bhayat friend in question, Gandhiji walked to the waiting car. "This is the way of satyagraha," he remarked as the car drove off, "to put your head unresistingly into the lap of your 'enemy', for him to keep or make short work of just as he pleases. It is the sovereign way, and throughout my half a century of varied experience it has never once failed me."

Two Mussalman representatives from the Civil Station came to see him soon after, according to previous appointment. "You were less than fair to yourself and to us in exposing yourself to such a risk. Anything may happen in a motley crowd," they remarked to him with reference to the happenings of the evening.

Gandhiji in reply described to them how such risk-taking had become a part and parcel of his life. There were at least half a dozen occasions in South Africa and in India when he had risked his life like that, and he had never regretted doing so. In all cases the assailant or the would-be assailants had ended by becoming his friends. "But should the worst happen after all," he concluded, "what privilege can be greater for a satyagrahi than to fall with a prayer in your heart for those whom you wanted to serve but who under a delusion took you for an 'enemy'?"

PYARELAL

RAJKOT, April 18, 1939

Harijan, 22-4-1939

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM RANJITSINH[1]

April 17, 1939

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have received your letter written on the morning of the 17th instant. I have understood from your letter that you have seen the handbill issued by the Rajkot Bhayats' and Garasias' Samiti and you have felt the allegations about breach of promise as serious.

The remedy that you have suggested is that all such cases should be referred to an arbitrator for his decision. May I suggest to you, in this

[1] *Vide* p. 147. This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

connection, that your letter dated the 11th March be referred to Sir Maurice Gwyer for interpretation? If you agree to arbitration in this matter, I venture to submit that we can hardly find a person better fitted to act as an arbitrator than Sir Maurice Gwyer. If you accept my proposal I shall make all arrangements in this behalf, and let you know at the earliest opportunity.

If you had explained beforehand your object in going on foot instead of proceeding by car to the leaders of the procession, they would have certainly listened to you. You need not have the least cause for suspicion in this respect. On the contrary, all our activities are and shall ever be non-violent and peaceful. If anybody has implanted in your mind any suspicion that we contemplate any physical injury to you, I assure you that it is absolutely out of place. I go further and say that if you or anybody else are under any such impression, 50 or 25 volunteers from among our Bhayats and Garasias will remain with you during the whole of your stay in Rajkot.

The reference made in the Rajkot Bhayats' handbill to the Congress instead of to the Praja Parishad is only a slip of the pen. Wherever the word "Congress" is, it is used for the Praja Parishad. We have received the printed appeal sent by you.

Yours,
RANJITSINH

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1939

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

VICEREGAL LODGE, SIMLA,
May 15, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Many thanks for your friendly letter of 9th May which I appreciate all the more because I realize the pressure under which you have been working and the fact that you were writing on the train. Let me thank you, too, for leaving me free from business so far as you are concerned during my holiday.

2. I have read with interest what you say about the three problems you mention, and I think it is only courteous that I should say a word or two to you about the position as I see it at the moment, though I do so merely to put you in possession of my point of view, and not for a moment because I want to trouble you to comment on what I say, or because I think we could usefully enter upon prolonged correspondence about these cases.

[1] *Vide* pp. 249 and 297.

3. I have been watching events in Talcher very closely. I am satisfied myself that the Assistant Political Agent, when he interviewed the refugees in Angul, made it clear that he was not in a position to give them any promises or come to any agreement. That, however, is now past history, and as you will have heard, the Raja recently made an announcement which appeared to me satisfactorily to meet the remaining grievances of any importance of which the refugees complained. I am no less disappointed than you are that this should have failed to produce the desired result, but further enquiries have been set on foot and I hope that the trouble will soon be at an end.

4. As regards Jaipur, you will no doubt have heard that conversations have recently taken place between the Jaipur authorities and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, and here again I hope that a suitable solution of the difficulties will soon be forthcoming.

5. As regards Rajkot, I have been very sorry to learn of the difficulties with which you have to contend. Owing to the various conflicting interests involved, the matter appears to have become highly complicated, but I hope that in the absence of any other solution, the Committee will be set up without any further considerable delay. I understand that the question whether certain of the Sardar's nominees are State subjects has now been decided by the Judicial Commissioner, and that the only other preliminary point to be settled is whether the assurances which you gave to the Muslims and the Bhayats were conditional or unconditional. I understand that it has been agreed that this should be referred to an independent judicial authority, and that it now remains only to decide who the judicial authority is to be and what should be the precise terms of reference. I will, I need not assure you, continue to watch developments in Rajkot with close attention.

6. I do not in the least misunderstand your sympathetic reference, and we both of us have our troubles! But it is only fair to say I have no misgivings as to the loyalty of the Political Department in carrying out my instructions.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
LINLITHGOW

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM SARAT CHANDRA BOSE[1]

May 31, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

You have probably learnt from the papers that I and Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das, M. L. C., my colleague on the Prisoners' Release Advisory Committee, felt compelled to resign from this Committee. The reason we gave the Home Minister for doing so was that our approach to the question of release of the convicted prisoners differed fundamentally from that of most of the other members of the Committee. This became clear to us during the last few weeks, more particularly in course of the discussions following the interviews with a number of prisoners which took place on May 6, 7, 8 and 9. Those discussions showed that the attitude of the majority of the members of the Committee was very stiff in the case of prisoners convicted in the more serious cases, and that they were not prepared to release them either on the assurance contained in your letter of the 13th April 1938 or on the reiteration by the prisoners of what they had told you when you met them. It became apparent to us that the majority of those prisoners stood no chance of being released until they had served or practically served out their term. As regards the rest it became apparent that the most that the majority of the members of the Committee were prepared to do was to recommend reduction of sentences in some cases and conditional release or release on giving specific undertakings in some other cases.

To the Home Minister we gave our reasons for our resignation in general terms only. But I feel I ought to give you more details as well as a resume of what we did during the time we served on the Committee.

You probably remember that when the proposal for an Advisory Committee for the release of political prisoners was put forward and I was requested by Sir Nazimuddin to suggest names from the Congress Party, I was not quite sure in my mind as to what we should do. I asked Subhas to seek your advice and he discussed the matter with you when he met you at Delhi towards the end of September or beginning of October last. You were of opinion that I should accept membership of the Committee. Accordingly, I made the position of the Congress Party in regard to the question of releasing political prisoners perfectly clear to Sir Nazimuddin, and communicated to him our decision to serve on the Committee in the hope that the

[1] *Vide* pp. 345-6.

Government would release the prisoners within a short time. Copy of my letter to Sir Nazimuddin (dated October 23, 1938) is set forth below:

> Kindly refer to D.O. No. 3810 dated the 26th September from Mr. R. H. Hutchings to me, in which he asked me on your behalf to suggest the name of a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and also that of a member of the Bengal Legislative Council from the Congress Party who might be invited by Government to serve on the Advisory Committee regarding release of political prisoners.
>
> You are well aware as a result of the conversations you had with Mahatma Gandhi and with the President of the Congress that the Congress Party cannot identify itself or agree with the Government policy in respect to political prisoners. Mahatma Gandhi's letter[1] of the 13th September to you has also made that clear.
>
> At the same time, I feel that we should not obstruct any endeavour to bring about the release of these prisoners. It is out of this feeling that I am responding to your request for assistance. I earnestly hope that Government will see their way to set at liberty all the political prisoners at a very early date.
>
> I would suggest the name of Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das, M. L. C., from the Congress Council Party. As regards the Congress Assembly Party, I am prepared to represent it on the Committee. You may issue invitations to Sjt. Lalit Chandra Das and myself.

After this the work of the Committee began and we made some progress. Naturally, the less difficult cases came up for consideration first, and we were able to bring round our objecting or hesitating colleagues to our point of view, so that recommendations for unconditional release were sent to Government, resulting in the release of 112 prisoners, including all the women prisoners. But as we proceeded with our work, a cleavage of opinion made itself distinctly felt. It became obvious that the Government were not prepared to follow the recommendations of the Committee in all cases. The unanimous recommendation of the Committee, in which the initiative was taken by the Chairman himself (who, I may tell you, had always been over-cautious rather than under-cautious) was referred back to the Committee. It also came to my ears that in some cases the Government were imposing conditions (not recommended by the Committee) when it was perfectly well known that prisoners were not prepared to submit to any conditions or give any assurance except the one they had given to you.

This attitude of the Government had its reaction on the members of the Committee. In the first place, they shrank from making recommendations even when they were satisfied about the attitude of the prisoners. Of this, the case of Sjt. Purnananda Das Gupta, who was convicted in connection with

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXVII, pp. 330-1.

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the Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, is a good example. There was a consensus of opinion among the members of the Committee that he had made a perfectly frank statement disavowing faith in terrorism. Yet the majority of the Committee did not venture to make the necessary recommendation for his release but accepted the suggestion of the official member on the Committee that a further report be called for from Government about him. Secondly, there was insistence on individual declarations which amounted to a specific undertaking for good behaviour. While most of the prisoners were prepared to reiterate their declaration to you, and actually did so, they resented fresh individual undertakings and were not prepared to give them. I and Lalit Babu considered that the prisoners had said enough in their statements to you and, by reiterating their adherence to those statements, had given convincing indication of a change of heart. After the interview I told the Committee that I was perfectly satisfied that the prisoners had abjured violence for good and all of them should be released. But my views did not find favour with the majority of the Committee. They were not prepared to accept that kind of declaration as satisfactory.

I also noticed an increasing restiveness among the prisoners in respect of the interviews as well as the assurances required. This restiveness and impatience had been present in greater or lesser degree from the very first. But we had been able by tactful management to keep it from becoming obtrusive. It was, however, impossible to overcome the reluctance of the prisoners when they found that guarantees of a more hard and fast character were required of them. In such circumstances, their hostility to the procedure of the Committee came to the surface, and we became convinced that sooner or later its work was bound to come to something like a deadlock.

This is in short what we saw and thought as members of the Committee. Besides this, the general attitude of the Government in regard to the remaining convicted prisoners had also to be taken into account. It was clear to us that the Government were not prepared to release all the prisoners, no matter how favourable the atmosphere was. In these circumstances I did not think it advisable for us to remain on the Committee any longer.

After our resignation, the Government issued a communique, copy of which is set out below:

> The Committee appointed by Government to advise on the release of terrorist convicts has considered 183 cases. Government have passed orders on the recommendations of the Committee in 112 cases and in 68 the recommendations of the Committee are about to be submitted to Government. Three cases are under consideration by Government, and 56 cases remain to be examined by the Committee. The Committee have recently interviewed a large number of prisoners individually before disposing of their cases in particular. All the female prisoners appeared before the Committee and were recommended for

release after giving satisfactory assurance as to their future conduct. They have since been released. Government regret to have to announce that two members of the Committee, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and Mr. Lalit Chandra Das, have tendered their resignations which have been accepted. The two members gave as the reason for their resignation that their approach to the question of release of the convicted prisoners differed fundamentally from that of most of the other members of the Committee.

The question now is, what should be done to procure the release of the remaining prisoners. I would very much like to have your advice as to how we should proceed. What I am apprehensive of is that the prisoners may commence a hunger-strike. If they do so, the situation will become extremely complicated. At the same time, I do not know what hopes I can hold out to them.

I hope you are better now. My health is still below par.

With *pranams*,

Yours affectionately,
SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

Harijan, 24-6-1939

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW[1]

VICEREGAL LODGE, SIMLA,
July 1, 1939

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thank you very much for your letter of 22nd June. It raises one or two points on which I should like to touch in my reply.

2. As regards Jaipur, the Durbar have, I am quite sure, no desire to detain Seth Jamnalal Bajaj any longer than is necessary. Indeed, as you will remember, they were at considerable pains to avoid detaining him in the first instance. Seth Jamnalal has been made fully aware of the conditions on which the Durbar are ready to take the desired action now in regard to him and the other prisoners, and to the best of my knowledge the position has not altered since the departure of H.H. the Maharaja.

3. I have read with close attention what you say in the last paragraph of your letter, and I am very grateful to you for letting me know your views. I think it is fair to say that the Political Department have given no more

[1] *Vide* pp. 364, 395 and 423.

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encouragement to "anti-Congress personalities", to use, if I may, your own phrase, than to pro-Congress personalities to establish contacts with Rulers and their subjects.

I hope you keep well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

BOMBAY

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a copy: C.W. 7828. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

APPENDIX XIV

STATEMENT BY SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE[1]

Prohibition by stages is a feasible scheme. It will make both the public as well as the Excise Department experienced in the task of handling problems out of the enforcement of prohibition. Moreover, it will be financially a success and it will release for the nation-building activities that portion of the revenue derived from extra taxes like property tax, sales tax, etc.

Speaking generally, I may say that the motives actuating the Bombay Government are quite laudable, but the methods they have been hitherto following or intend following in future in connection with the problems of the property tax and the sales tax are neither scientific nor conducive to the end they have in view. . . .

The defects in the Prohibition Scheme are more than one. . . . Illicit distillation will increase and there will be a rush of men to the wet zone every evening and particularly during every week-end.

Prohibition is a measure of social reform and no social reform can be successfully brought about without winning. . . the goodwill of the people. . . . The fact that consistent opposition is being offered by some influential sections of the community shows that the Government have not yet been able to carry with them the approval and goodwill of the people in general.

Mahatma Gandhi did the right thing when he opined that prohibition should not be forced on Europeans in India because they did not believe in it and it would amount to coercion to force it on them. The same principle of non-violence should be applied to Asiatics and Indian people as well both in theory and in practice. Why should we force prohibition on non-Indian Asiatics who do not believe in it, if we do not force it on Europeans? It would be wrong to make a distinction between Europeans and Asiatics in this respect either in law or in actual administration.

Now turning to the economic side of the question, I may say that it is difficult to approve of a method which involves the sudden imposition of an

[1] *Vide* pp. 429-31. Only extracts are reproduced here.

additional tax over a crore of rupees on Bombay alone in order to make good the loss of excise revenue. With millions of half-filled stomachs, with hundreds of thousands dying every year of preventible diseases and with 92 per cent of our people still unable to read or write, I consider it no part of statesmanship to raise additional money by heavy taxation, not one rupee of which would go towards the better fulfilment of stomachs or saving human lives or making our people more literate. I am, therefore, inclined to think that the introduction of prohibition by stages is the more appropriate and scientific method. This would not involve heavy taxation for financing prohibition, would save a portion of the taxable capacity of the people for future requirements and would not involve a sudden change in our national economy.

Nobody who has eyes to see in Bombay can fail to be impressed with one important aspect of the Government policy. It unfortunately happens that one small community in Bombay which for many years past has been extensively engaged in the liquor trade is being directly affected by this policy. The Parsis are a small but influential community. Who does not know of the many beneficial institutions and activities which have been brought into existence and conducted by them? The overwhelming majority of the community have been opposing this policy and as a minority community the Parsis are entitled to be heard. I understand that the Parsis are apprehensive that the sudden launching of immediate and total prohibition in Bombay will throw into the streets a large number of families and would prejudicially affect the income of the charity trusts many of which are for the benefit not of Parsis alone but of the Indian community in general.

Besides the Parsis, the Muslims of Bombay are also affected by the programme. While they are not opposed to prohibition on principle, they have objection to the 10 per cent property tax, which is required for financing prohibition. It is urged on their behalf that the 10 per cent property tax subjects them to exorbitant taxation as compared with their population and they resent being taxed in order to force non-Muslims to abstain from drink.

The effect of prohibition on our general economy is of greater consequence than even its effect on the Parsis or Muslim community. To give a small instance, a large number of hotels and restaurants will be badly hit and may have to close down. Not only will their owners suffer loss but the employees will also be thrown out of employment. It is not impossible that migration from the prohibited area to outside places may take place and the importance of the port of Bombay may also be affected. The fact is that while piecemeal introduction of partial prohibition is possible, piecemeal introduction of total prohibition is next to impossible. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-7-1939

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CHRONOLOGY

(*March 1—July 15, 1939*)

March 1: Gandhiji was in Rajkot; interview to Associated Press of India.

March 2: In statement to the Press, Gandhiji announced decision to go on fast if his request to Thakore Saheb was not complied with.

March 3: Commenced fast; issued statement to the Press and released letter to Thakore Saheb; had discussion with Fateh Mohammed Khan.

March 4: In statement to the Press, appealed to Congressmen "to make supreme efforts to clean the Congress house of proved corruption and impurities".

March 6: Had discussion with Agatha Harrison.

March 7: Broke fast; issued statement to the Press.

March 8: Had talk with Agatha Harrison.

March 9: In telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, emphasized need for resolution "to rid Congress of internal corruption". Appealed to people of Rajkot to become worthy of "responsible government".

March 11: In statement to the Press, declined "to give a decisive opinion" on question of revival of civil resistance in Travancore.

March 14: Had discussion with Haribhau Upadhyaya and others on Jaipur Satyagraha.

March 15: In Delhi had two-hour meeting with Viceroy; in Delhi Jail persuaded prisoners to give up hunger-strike.

March 16: Had another meeting with Viceroy; interview to Gobind Bihari Lal; Gandhiji had discussion with Hyderabad Aryasamaj leaders on Hyderabad Satyagraha.

March 18: Spoke at opening ceremony of Lakshmi Narayan Temple and Buddha Vihara.

March 19: Asked Jaipur Satyagraha Council to postpone despatch of satyagrahis to Jaipur.

March 20: In statement to the Press, condemned action of Travancore Dewan in arresting Pattom Thanu Pillai and other Congress leaders. Had separate discussions with Travancore satyagrahis and Jaipur satyagrahis.

Before *March 23:* Interview to *The New York Times.*

March 23: Gandhiji issued statement advising suspension of Travancore Satyagraha.

March 24: In Allahabad, called on Abul Kalam Azad; left for Delhi.

March 25: In telegram to R. K. Jha, confirmed that statement suspending Travancore Satyagraha contemplated similar action in Nandgaon State.

March 26: In *Harijan*, commended Bombay Government's decision to introduce prohibition from August 1, 1939.

March 29/30: Had discussion with Agatha Harrison.

March 30: In letter to Subhas Chandra Bose gave permission to publish their correspondence.

March 31: Had discussion with inmates of Birla House on communal situation in Allahabad.

April 3: Sir Maurice Gwyer gave verdict in favour of Vallabhbhai Patel.

April 4: Gandhiji issued statement to the Press on Bombay prohibition programme; in another statement condemned repression in Travancore.

April 6: Had meeting with Viceroy.

April 7: Left for Rajkot.

April 9: Reached Rajkot.

April 11: Met E. C. Gibson.

April 12: Bhayats and Muslims met Gandhiji.

April 14: On behalf of Vallabhbhai Patel, Gandhiji wrote to Dharmendrasinh suggesting seven names for Reforms Committee.

April 15: Issued statement to the Press regarding nomination of seven names for Reforms Committee.

April 16: Muslims and Garasias staged a demonstration at prayer; Gandhiji issued statement.

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April 17: In telegram to Satyamurti disapproved observing of 'Kenya Day' on May 14.

April 18: In telegram to Lord Linlithgow, reminded him of 20,000 Talcher refugees.

April 19: Suffered from gastric flu.

April 20: Met Gibson with "the sporting offer" namely, "Parishad should withdraw from the proposed Committee altogether and that the Thakore Saheb should nominate his own Committee" in terms of December 26 Settlement.

April 22: Met Virawala; gave statement to Associated Press of India.

April 23: In letter informed Gibson of Virawala's rejection of "sporting offer"; addressed meeting of Praja Parishad workers.

April 24: Left for Bombay; issued statement to the Press on his defeat in Rajkot.

April 25: Reached Bombay; left for Calcutta.

April 27: On train, between Kharagpur and Calcutta, interview to *The Statesman.*

April 29: In letter to Subhas Bose Gandhiji said: ". . . knowing how you and most of the members differ on fundamentals . . . you are free to choose your own Committee."
Subhas Bose resigned from Congress Presidentship after reading out Gandhiji's letter at A.I.C.C. meeting.

May 1: Gandhiji left for Brindaban (Bihar).

May 3: Spoke at opening of Village Industries Exhibition.

May 4: Spoke at Teachers' Training Camp.

May 5: Answered questions at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting.

May 6: Answered questions at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting.

May 7: Answered questions at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting; addressed All-India Village Industries Board; also addressed public meeting.

May 8: Left for Benares to see Madan Mohan Malaviya.

May 11: In Bombay, interview to the Press.

May 12: Gandhiji reached Rajkot; spoke at meeting of Praja Parishad workers.
In interview to A.P.I., regretted anti-Asiatic policy of South Africa Union Government.

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In a personal letter to Virawala mentioned "the double game" he was playing.

On or after *May 12:* In talk to Praja Parishad workers confessed his "impatience" in attitude to problem of Bhayats and Mussalmans.

May 13/14: Interview to Travancore National Congress delegation.

May 15: In talk to Praja Parishad workers Gandhiji expressed desire to renounce Gwyer Award.

May 17: In statement to the Press, renounced Gwyer Award. Had discussion with Mahadev Desai.

After *May 17:* Had talks with co-workers on his decision to give up the Award; interview to Steel of *The New York Times.*

May 18: Gandhiji had discussion with Kasturba Gandhi.

May 20: Attended Durbar at Rajkot Palace.

On or after *May 20:* Had talk with co-workers who remonstrated with Gandhiji for attending the Rajkot Durbar.

May 23: In message, advised South Africa Indians to fight unitedly the Union Government's "policy of progressive stringency in their anti-Asiatic drive"; addressed public meeting.

May 31: Spoke at Executive Committee Meeting of Kathiawar Political Conference.

June 1: Accompanied by Kasturba Gandhi, Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal and Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Gandhiji left Rajkot for Bombay by Kathiawar Mail. On train, had discussion with Travancore State Congress deputation.

June 2: Reached Bombay. Interview to Bombay Victuallers' Association representatives, which was followed by Parsi deputation led by Cowasji Jehangir.

June 4: Gandhiji issued statement explaining his new technique of action in Travancore.

June 6: Interview to deputation of Kolhapur Praja Parishad.

June 7: Left Bombay for Segaon.

June 11: In *Harijan* article "Meaning of Prohibition", replied to letter from Archbishop of Bombay.

June 13: Interview to Mysore Congress representatives.

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June 20: Accompanied by Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal and Dr. Sushila Nayyar, Gandhiji left Segaon for Bombay.

June 23: In Bombay, drafted resolutions for the All-India Congress Committee.

June 27: In *Harijan*, wrote on "The National Flag".

July 4: Visited Chemical Industrial and Pharmaceutical Laboratories.

July 5: At Bombay Central, before leaving for Frontier Province, received *Aim of Japan's Expansion in China* from Chinese monks.

Before boarding Frontier Mail, received from S. K. Bole, who had led group of forty Bhandaris, petition to Premier of Bombay and assured him that they "will not be allowed to starve".

Left for Peshawar. Mahadev Desai accompanied him. Kasturba Gandhi, Pyarelal and Dr. Sushila Nayyar stayed back.

July 7: Gandhiji reached Abbottabad in the evening.

July 8: In statement to the Press urged Bengal political prisoners "not to take to hunger-strike".

Meenakshi Temple in Madurai was thrown open to Harijans.

July 9: Interview to L. W. Jardine of M.R.A.

July 10: Gandhiji had discussion with Jayaprakash Narayan, who spoke about Kisan Sabha and Congress in Bihar and also about Socialist Party's attitude towards Forward Bloc.

July 13: In statement, Gandhiji expressed regret over Subhas Chandra Bose's opposition to Bombay prohibition scheme.

July 14: Kasturba Gandhi, Pyarelal and Dr. Sushila Nayyar reached Abbottabad.

July 15: In statement to the Press, Gandhiji urged Bengal Government to release the political prisoners.

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ERRATA

PAGE		FOR	READ
221	* Lines 3, 13 and 19	Thakkar	Thakar
234	* Line 9	1913	1931
257	* Paragraph 3, line 4	not worked on	not worked out
332	* Footnote 2 to be deleted		
342	* Footnote 1	C. C. Dasappa	H. C. Dasappa
343	* Footnote, line 1	voilence	violence
381	* Item 399, line 6	Ask for.	Ask for it.
400	* Line 3	tradle	treadle
422	* Paragraph (e), line 3	and his	and
428	Last paragraph, line 4	considerably	considerately
455	* Appendix VIII, line 1	your letter	your letters

* Due correction made.

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