

1. RAJKOT

The struggle in Rajkot has a personal touch about it for me. It was the place where I received all my education up to the matriculation examination and where my father was Dewan for many years. My wife feels so much about the sufferings of the people that though she is as old as I am and much less able than myself to brave such hardships as may be attendant upon jail life, she feels she must go to Rajkot. And before this is in print she might have gone there.¹

But I want to take a detached view of the struggle. Sardar's statement², reproduced elsewhere, is a legal document in the sense that it has not a superfluous word in it and contains nothing that cannot be supported by unimpeachable evidence most of which is based on written records which are attached to it as appendices.

It furnishes evidence of a cold-blooded breach of a solemn covenant entered into between the Rajkot Ruler and his people.³ And the breach has been committed at the instance and bidding of the British Resident⁴ who is directly linked with the Viceroy.

To the covenant a British Dewan⁵ was party. His boast was that he represented British authority. He had expected to rule the Ruler. He was therefore no fool to fall into the Sardar's trap. Therefore, the covenant was not an extortion from an imbecile ruler. The British Resident detested the Congress and the Sardar for the crime of saving the Thakore Saheb from bankruptcy and, probably, loss of his *gadi*. The Congress influence he could not brook. And so before the Thakore Saheb could possibly redeem his promise to his people, he made him break it. If the news the Sardar is receiving from Rajkot is to be believed, the Resident is showing the red claws of the British lion and says in effect to the people: 'Your ruler is my creature. I have put him on the *gadi* and I can depose him. He knew well enough that he

¹ Kasturba Gandhi was arrested at Rajkot on February 3 on entering the State to offer satyagraha.

² *Vide* Cold-Blooded Breach of A Solemn Covenant

³ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 26-1-1939, and also "The States",

⁴ E. C. Gibson

⁵ Sir Patrick R. Cadell

had acted against my wishes. I have therefore undone his action in coming to terms with his people. For your dealings with the Congress and the Sardar I shall teach you a lesson that you will not forget for a generation.'

Having made the Ruler a virtual prisoner, he has begun a reign of terrorism in Rajkot. Here is what the latest telegram received by the Sardar says:

Becharbhai Jasani and other volunteers arrested. Twenty-six volunteers taken at night to a distant place in the Agency limits and brutally beaten. Volunteers in villages are similarly treated. Agency police controlling State agency and searching private houses in civil limits.

The British Resident is repeating the performances of the British officials in 'British India' during the civil disobedience days.

I know that if the people of Rajkot can stand all this madness without themselves becoming mad, and meekly but resolutely and bravely suffer the inhumanities heaped upon them, they will come out victorious and, what is more, they will set free the Thakore Saheb. They will prove that they are the real rulers of Rajkot under the paramountcy of the Congress. If, however, they go mad and think of impotent retaliation and resort to acts of violence, their state will be worse than before and the paramountcy of the Congress will be of no effect. The Congress paramountcy avails only those who accept the banner of non-violence, even as the paramountcy of Britain avails only those who subscribe to the doctrine of 'might is right.'

What then is the duty of the Congress when the people of Rajkot have to face not the Ruler and his tiny police but the disciplined hordes of the British Empire?

The first and natural step is for the Congress ministry to make themselves responsible for the safety and honour of the people of Rajkot. It is true that the Government of India Act gives the ministers no power over the States. But they are governors of a mighty province in which Rajkot is but a speck. As such they have rights and duties outside the Government of India Act. And these are much the most important. Supposing that Rajkot became the place of refuge for all the *goondas* that India could produce, supposing further that from there they carried on operations throughout India, the ministers would clearly have the right and it would be their duty to ask the Paramount Power through the British Representative in Bombay to set

things right in Rajkot. And it will be the duty of the Paramount Power to do so or to lose the ministers. Every minister in his province is affected by everything that happens in territories within his geographical limit though outside his legal jurisdiction, especially if that thing hurts his sense of decency. Responsible government in those parts may not be the ministers' concern, but if there is plague in those parts or butchery going on, it is very much their concern; or else their rule is a sham and a delusion. Thus the ministers in Orissa may not sit comfortably in their chairs, if they do not succeed in sending 26,000 refugees of Talcher to their home with an absolute assurance of safety and freedom of speech and social and political intercourse. It is insufferable that the Congress, which is today in alliance with the British Government, should be treated as an enemy and an outsider in the States which are vassals of the British.

This wanton breach, instigated by the British Resident in Rajkot, of the charter of the liberty of its people is a wrong which must be set right at the earliest possible moment. It is like a poison corroding the whole body. Will H. E. the Viceroy realize the significance of Rajkot and remove the poison?

BARDOLI, January 30, 1939

Harijan, 4-2-1939

2. THE MODERN GIRL

I have received a letter written on behalf of eleven girls whose names and addresses have been sent to me. I give it below with changes that make it more readable without in any way altering the meaning:

Your comments on the letter of a lady student captioned 'Students' Shame' and published in *Harijan* on the 31st December, 1938¹ deserve special attention. The modern girl, it seems, has provoked you to the extent that you have disposed of her finally as one playing Juliet to half a dozen Romeos. This remark which betrays your idea about women in general is not very inspiring.

In these days when women are coming out of closed doors to help men and take an equal share of the burden of life, it is indeed strange that they are still blamed even when they are maltreated by men. It cannot be denied that

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 26-12-1938

instances can be cited where the fault is equally divided. There may be a few girls playing Juliets to half a dozen Romeos. But such cases presuppose the existence of half a dozen Romeos, moving about the streets in quest of a Juliet. And it cannot or should never be taken that modern girls are categorically all Juliets or modern youths all Romeos. You yourself have come in contact with quite a number of modern girls and may have been struck by their resolution, sacrifice and other sterling womanly virtues.

As for forming public opinion against such misdemeanours as pointed out by your correspondent, it is not for girls to do it, not so much out of false shame as from its ineffectiveness.

But a statement like this from one revered all over the world seems to hold a brief once more for that worn out and unbecoming saying 'woman is the gate of Hell.'

From the foregoing remarks, however, please do not conclude that modern girls have no respect for you. They hold you in as much respect as every young man does. To be hated or pitied is what they resent much. They are ready to mend their ways if they are really guilty. Their guilt, if any, must be conclusively proved before they are anathematized. In this respect they would neither desire to take shelter under the covering of 'ladies, please', nor would they silently stand and allow the judge to condemn them in his own way. Truth must be faced; the modern girl or 'Juliet', as you have called her, has courage enough to face it.

My correspondents do not perhaps know that I began service of India's women in South Africa more than forty years ago when perhaps none of them was born. I hold myself to be incapable of writing anything derogatory to womanhood. My regard for the fair sex is too great to permit me to think ill of them. She is, what she has been described to be in English, the better half of mankind. And my article was written to expose students' shame, not to advertise the frailties of girls. But in giving the diagnosis of the disease, I was bound, if I was to prescribe the right remedy, to mention all the factors which induced the disease.

The 'modern girl' has a special meaning. Therefore there was no question of my restricting the scope of my remark to some. But all the girls who receive English education are not modern girls. I know many who are not at all touched by the 'modern girl' spirit. But there are some who have become modern girls. My remark was meant to warn India's girl students against copying the 'modern girl' and complicating a problem that has become a serious menace. For, at the

time I received the letter referred to, I received also a letter from an Andhra girl student bitterly complaining of the behaviour of Andhra students which from the description given is worse than what was described by the Lahore girl. This daughter of Andhra tells me the simple dress of her girl friends gives them no protection, but they lack the courage to expose the barbarism of the boys who are a disgrace to the institution they belong to. I commend this complaint to the authorities of the Andhra University.

The eleven girls I invite to initiate a crusade against the rude behaviour of students. God helps only those who help themselves. The girls must learn the art of protecting themselves against the ruffianly behaviour of man.

BARDOLI, January 30, 1939

Harijan, 4-2-1939

3. JAIPUR

The reader should know the distinction between the Jaipur struggle and the Rajkot one.

The Rajkot struggle is frankly for responsible government within the State and is now for redeeming the Ruler's promise to his people. Every man and woman of Rajkot, if they have any stuff in them, will be reduced to dust in resisting the dishonourable conduct of the British Resident.

The Jaipur struggle is on a very small and narrow issue. The one political association of Jaipur has been virtually declared illegal for the offence of pleading for responsible government, and its President, himself a resident of Jaipur, has been put under a ban. The civil disobedience struggle will cease the moment the bans are lifted and the right of free association, holding public meetings, etc., is conceded. But here again the British lion has opened out his big claws. The British Prime Minister of Jaipur had a chat with Barrister Chudgar, legal adviser of the Rao Rana of Sikar. He reported to Seth Jamnalalji the following purport of the talk:

I understand it my duty to inform you that during my interview with Sir Beauchamp St. John, Prime Minister of Jaipur, in connection with Sikar affairs on the 9th inst. (January), at about 11 a. m. at his bungalow Natanika Bagh, I had some discussion with him regarding the Jaipur situation. The

following is the substance of the discussion:

I told Sir Beauchamp that the ban against your entry into Jaipur State territories came as a painful surprise to millions of people all over India, particularly because you are well-known to be a man of peace and your mission was to supervise and direct famine relief activities in the famine-stricken parts of Jaipur State. To this Sir Beauchamp replied that he agreed that you are a man of peace, but you and your men's visit, he thought, would bring you and your men in contact with the masses in the famine-stricken areas, and this he did not like for obvious political reasons. I told him that you cannot be expected to submit to the order for an indefinite period, and that it would be better in the interests of the State and the people, in view of the statement you have published in the Press after you had been served with the order, if the order were recalled so that unnecessary trouble may be avoided. He was adamant, and he said that he was prepared to meet any situation that might arise if you disobeyed the order. He said that the Congressmen are out for a revolution by means of a non-violent struggle. But non-violence, he said, was a force as powerful or perhaps more powerful than violence. He further said Indians were playing upon the humane instincts in the English race, but if there was Japan or Herr Hitler instead of the English in India we could not have succeeded so well with our non-violence.

He then said that it was his considered opinion that non-violence, however strict, must be met by violence, and his reply to the non-violent movement in Jaipur would be the 'machine-gun'. I pointed out to him that all Englishmen were not of his way of thinking and even the English race as such would not agree with him. He said, "That may or may not be so," but personally he was of the opinion that there was no difference between non-violence and violence, and that there would be nothing wrong in using violence against non-violence.

If you or Mahatmaji desire to make use of this statement, I have no objection.

I considered this to be so startling that I referred it to the Prime Minister in the following letter (18-1-1939):¹ The Prime Minister replied as follows (20-1-1939):

I write to acknowledge your kind letter of the 18th instant, enclosing a copy of a letter from Mr. Chudgar to Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. Your hesitation in publishing it before you had ascertained the correctness of its contents was a wise step, which I personally much appreciate, as I am now able to inform

¹ For the text of the letter, *vide* "Note to Amritlal V. Thakkar St. John"

you that its description of my views is completely erroneous. I am unable to understand how Mr. Chudgar so misunderstood me, as I may say that this incident confirms me in my hesitation to grant any such interviews in future.

Now that you are aware of the facts, I am sure your reluctance to publish such a letter will be confirmed. Should, however, you decide otherwise, I shall be glad if you can inform me as soon as practicable so that I can take suitable action.

With renewed thanks for your consideration.

I replied as under (22-1-1939):¹

To this there came the following reply (25-1-1939):

Many thanks for your letter of the 22nd instant.

I am sure you will sympathize with me in my natural hesitation to make a record of an interview which was understood to be private and personal when the other party to the interview has already threatened to publish an erroneous version. Such a procedure can, as I am sure you will agree, only lead to acrimony, and so far as I can see, serve no useful purpose.

Should, however, Mr. Chudgar see fit to publish his erroneous version, I am sure you will give me due warning so that, as I have already said, I may take suitable action.

To this I replied again as follows (27-1-1939):²

I referred the correspondence to Shri Chudgar and he has sent me the copy of the following letter he has addressed to Shri Jamnalal (28-1-1939):

I have read the correspondence between Mahatmaji and Sir W. Beauchamp St. John ending with Mahatmaji's letter to him dated the 27th inst. I have carefully read my letter to you dated the 15th inst. again, and I say that what I have stated in that letter is a substantially correct reproduction of the conversation between me and Sir Beauchamp.

The Prime Minister's letters have made strange reading. I had asked for bread, he has sent me a stone. He will pardon me if I believe Shri Chudgar's version, unless he can give his own. His mere denial accompanied by a threat carries no weight;

The Congress cannot wait and watch whilst it has the power, and allow the people of Jaipur to die of mental and moral starvation, especially when this denial of a natural right is backed by British

¹ For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Sir W. Beauchamp"

² For the text of the letter, *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 27-1-1939

might. If the Prime Minister has no authority to do what he is doing, let him at least be recalled.

BARDOLI, January 30, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939. Also C.W. 7809. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

4. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 30, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I had messages sent to you. Ba, I and others were worried because there was no letter from you. It was received today. I am all right. You should not miss sending at least one postcard every week.

I have had a long talk with Ramachandran. I have just received his letter. He is now convinced. I am of course still trying to persuade him to send Saraswati. S.'s help is essential in this matter.

It is time for prayer and so I stop now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving for Segaon on the 1st.

From Gujarati: G. W. 7357. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

5. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

January 30, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I do not make any suggestions of my own these days. P.'s name was mentioned to me and that was the only name. I had expressed my objection to re-election.

You must have received my letter of yesterday.

Saraswati writes to me occasionally.
Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7356. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

6. 'KICKS AND KISSES'

The reader will read with painful interest the following account, said to be authentic, of the meeting recently held in Bombay of the Chamber of Princes:

H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner opened the discussions by narrating the events at Rajkot where, he said, the trouble was due to the absence of influential jagirdars, the want of demarcation between the Privy Purse and the State Expenditure, and the smallness of the Kathiawar States. It was regarded as a test case by the Congress, and they had selected Rajkot for various reasons, the principal ones being that Rajkot, small and with limited resources, would not be able to withstand for long the onslaughts of the Congress, that the ground was ready for the delivery of such an attack, that the Congress was virile and active in Kathiawar and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was near at hand to direct operations and conduct the campaign. H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner then mooted the suggestion of a common Police force for a group of States, as the resources of individual States, particularly of small ones, are not extensive and, therefore, totally inadequate to face the common danger. Such also was the indication of the Paramount Power and of its representatives. No great reliance, he said, could now be placed on co-operation and help from adjoining British territories as Congress was supreme there and they naturally would not like to help Indian States. On the other hand their sympathies either tacitly or actively are on the side of Indian State subjects or foreign agitators. This was actually evidenced by the attitude of the Orissa Government when help was demanded by the States in Orissa which had to face this trouble.

Continuing, he stated that the Congress would devote increasingly greater attention to Indian States. Up to now its policy, as embodied in the resolution of the Haripura session and before, was of non-intervention and the Indian States people were directed to be self reliant. The reason is manifest. The Congress was actively busy with British Indian problems, and it wanted to generate strength in Indian States subjects and foster self-help in them. Now the Congress had practically established its sway in British India and would naturally mobilize its energy and influence towards Indian States.

There was another point. In order to distract attention from the differences that are creeping into Congress ranks, it is necessary to unfold the plans of a campaign. This is a subtle but short dictum of statecraft. This is one of the reasons of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia and the Austrian and Sudeten campaigns of Germany. It enables the powers to draw attention away from cleavages in the party and creates enthusiasm amongst its followers. We have also to bear in mind the attitude of the Paramount Power. In this connection reference must be made to the recent utterances of Mr. Gandhi on this subject. In my opinion greater reliance should be placed on our own strength than on any outside agency whose support is, at best, precarious and inadequate.

After a survey of Rajkot affairs, His Highness discussed the problems of the Rajputana States and outlined for the benefit of the Princes the policy he pursued with regard to his own State, Bikaner. He stated that he started the State Assembly in 1913, and it discussed the State expenditure. Bikaner had a *Raj-patra*—State Gazette. He discriminated between the agitators from outside and from amongst his own subjects. This, he said, was important and the distinction must ever be borne in mind. Foreign agitators, who have no stake in the State and who assume this role merely to be dubbed leaders and to be in the public eye, deserve short shrift. No consideration should be shown to them. Their continued activities are a menace to the State; their presence constitutes a danger. The remedy is deportation from the State and their entry should be banned. The agitators in the State, though equally obnoxious to the State and its ordered peace and progress, however, stand on a slightly different footing. They have an interest in the land; they probably sometimes advocate grievances which are to a certain extent legitimate, and such should be redressed as far as possible so that the wind may be taken away from the sails of their agitation which they advocate and foster. Legitimate grievances so far as possible should be redressed and agitation should be silenced. If the agitators are genuine and come from the ranks of the educated unemployed, an effort should be made to give them suitable State employment and to close their mouths, acting on the adage “it is better to sew the mouth with a morsel.”

The question of Praja Mandals was then discussed. In this connection H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner, Sir Kailashnarain Haksar, R. B. Pandit Amar Nath Atal of Jaipur, Pt. Dharmanarain of Udaipur and Major Harvey of Alwar made valuable contributions to the discussions. Mr. Robertson of Bundi and Mr. McGregor of Sirohi also asked a few questions. Mr. Atal narrated at great length the origin and growth of the Praja Mandal at Jaipur. It was evident that the founders and promoters of these Praja Mandals were disgruntled subjects

and dismissed petty officials of the State. A note of caution and warning was sounded. It was agreed that they should be watched very carefully and their activities, however slight or extensive, should be fully reported. It was stated that these Praja Mandals should be crushed immediately and that they should not be allowed to gather strength or to attain the status of an influential body. If they had gained any, an effort should be made to direct adroitly their activities into social channels such as the Sarda Act, etc. On the other hand it was urged that the formation of genuine and healthy advisory bodies of the States people should be encouraged. which should form the nucleus for the training of the people for so-called responsible government in the States. The Praja Mandals located outside the States should be ignored.

As regards responsible government in the States advocated by Congress leaders like Messrs Gandhi and Patel, it was felt that the States people are not at all ready for it, and to concede it, therefore, would be detrimental to the States and the people and fatal to ordered progress and peace. The position was summed up in the dictum, 'Be responsive, but no responsible government.' H. H. the Maharaja of Bikaner was emphatic in his policy towards the Congress, and his words can be crystallized in the following mottos: Be just, but be firm; follow the policy of repression and reconciliation as stated in the famous letter of Lord Minto in 1908, 'the policy of kicks and kisses'. It will require all the tact and discretion possible to adjust when to be gentle and when to be firm and how to mix the two. The decision must depend on the situation which confronts the State and the merits of the individual problem. It was, however, very clear in their discussions that the Praja Mandals, as such and as political bodies, should never be allowed to be formed in the States, and if in existence, should be crushed and banned and their activities very carefully and closely watched. No hard and fast rules could be laid down as to how they should be repressed. Individual States will devise and evolve their own plans and lay down the *modus operandi*.

The tentative conclusions arrived at were: 1. Group Police for States; 2. Praja Mandals to be crushed immediately; 3. Legitimate grievances to be redressed; 4. Foreign agitators to be severely dealt with and deported; 5. Encourage social activities but not political; 6. Encourage genuine States People's Advisory Bodies; 7. Policy of 'Reconciliation and Repression'; 'Be just, but be firm'.

If the report is an accurate summary of the speeches delivered at the Conference, it shows that there is a nefarious plot to crush the movement for liberty which at long last has commenced in some of the States. Kisses are to go hand in hand with kicks. This reminds me

of the Latin proverb which means: "I fear the Greeks especially when they bring gifts!" Henceforth Rulers' favours are to be suspected. Reforms when they are made are to be made not for the sake of making the people happy, but in order to sew the mouth with a morsel. But man's proposals are often confounded even though his may be a crowned head. God has been found often to have disposed of his proposals in a way contrary to his expectations. If the people have shed fear and learnt the art of self-sacrifice, they need no favours. Kicks can never cow them. They will take what they need and assimilate it.

BARDOLI, January 31, 1939

Harijan, 4-2-1939

7. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

January 31, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

Shri K. M. Munshi, Sir Purshottamdas and now Shri G. D. Birla tell me that my writings in *Harijan* about the States have been causing you embarrassment—more especially about Jaipur. I have, therefore, suspended publication of the accompanying article¹ which I had already sent to the Manager of *Harijan* at Poona.

I need hardly say that I have no desire whatsoever to do anything that would cause you embarrassment, if I could avoid it. My purpose is to secure justice for the people concerned.

How I wish it were possible for you to take effective action in the three cases mentioned by me in my previous letter²!

May I expect a line as to what you would have me do about the article under suspension?

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7806. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ *Vide* "Jaipur"

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 26-1-1939

8. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Here are a few words¹ about Panditji.
I hope you are keeping good health.
Do write sometimes about Kusum, Manju and others.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

9. IN MEMORY OF NARAYAN M. KHARE²

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

I like to write about Panditji. I have many sweet memories of him. But I do not have the time to record them. The essence of all those memories is that I have seen very few persons combining purity and music. It was found in a great measure in Panditji. It was Panditji who created a taste for good music in Gujarat. For this, Gujarat will remain ever indebted to him.

M. K. GANDHI

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

10. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

Shri Subhas Bose has achieved a decisive victory over his opponent, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. I must confess that from the very

¹ *Vide* the following item.

² He had died on February 6, 1938, at Haripura.

³ This appeared in the source under the title "I Rejoice in This Defeat" and was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-2-1939, *The Hindu*, 31-1-1939, *The Hindustan Times*, 1-2-1939, and various other papers.

beginning I was decidedly against his re-election for reasons into which I need not go. I do not subscribe to his facts or the arguments in his manifestos. I think that his references to his colleagues were unjustified and unworthy. Nevertheless, I am glad of his victory. And since I was instrumental in inducing Dr. Pattabhi not to withdraw his name as a candidate when Maulana Saheb withdrew, the defeat is more mine than his. I am nothing if I do not represent definite principles and policy. Therefore, it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policy for which I stand.

I rejoice in this defeat. It gives me an opportunity of putting into practice what I preached in my article¹ on the walk-out of the minority at the last A. I. C. C. meeting in Delhi. Subhas Babu, instead of being President on the sufferance of those whom he calls rightists, is now President elected in a contested election. This enables him to choose a homogeneous cabinet and enforce his programme without let or hindrance.

There is one thing common between majority and minority, viz., insistence on internal purity of the Congress organization. My writings in the *Harijan* have shown that the Congress is fast becoming a corrupt organization in the sense that its registers contain a very large number of bogus members.² I have been suggesting for the past many months the overhauling of these registers. I have no doubt that many of the delegates who have been elected on the strength of these bogus voters would be unseated on scrutiny. But I suggest no such drastic step. It will be enough if the registers are purged of all bogus voters and are made fool-proof for the future.

The minority has no cause for being disheartened. If they believe in the current programme of the Congress, they will find that it can be worked, whether they are in a minority or a majority and even whether they are in the Congress or outside it.

The only thing that may possibly be affected by the changes is the parliamentary programme. The ministers have been chosen and the programme shaped by the erstwhile majority. But parliamentary work is but a minor item of the Congress programme. Congress ministers have after all to live from day to day. It matters little to them whether they are recalled on an issue in which they are in agreement

¹ *Vide* "That Unfortunate Walk-Out"

² *Vide* "Internal Decay"

with the Congress policy or whether they resign because they are in disagreement with the Congress.

After all Subhas Babu is not an enemy of his country. He has suffered for it. In his opinion his is the most forward and boldest policy and programme. The minority can only wish it all success. If they cannot keep pace with it, they must come out of the Congress. If they can, they will add strength to the majority.

The minority may not obstruct on any account. They must abstain when they cannot co-operate. I must remind all Congressmen that those who, being Congress-minded, remain outside it by design, represent it most. Those, therefore, who feel uncomfortable in being in the Congress may come out, not in a spirit of ill will, but with the deliberate purpose of rendering more effective service.

Harijan, 4-2-1939

11. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

BARDOLI,
January 31, 1939

Appeals are being made to me not to precipitate matters in the States. These appeals are unnecessary. After three months of non-violent struggle by the people of Rajkot an honourable understanding was arrived at between the Thakore Saheb-in-Council and Sardar Vallabhbai Patel representing the people, and the struggle was closed amid general rejoicings. But the noble work done by the Thakore Saheb and the people has been undone by the British Resident.²

Honour demanded that the people should fight unto death for the restoration of the covenant between the Thakore Saheb and his people. The struggle now is not between the Ruler and his people, but in reality it is between the Congress and the British Government represented by the Resident, who is reported to be resorting to organized *goondaism*. He is trying thereby to break the spirit of innocent men and women, who rightly resent the breach of faith.

It is a misrepresentation to suggest that Rajkot has been made a

¹ This appeared under the title "Rajkot and Jaipur", and was also published in *The Hindu*, *The Hindustan Times* and *The Bombay Chronicle*.

² For the Government of India communique in reply to this, *vide* Government of India's Statement on Rajkot", 1-2-1939.

test case.¹ There is no planned action with reference to Kathiawar States. What is happening is that those who feel that they are ready for suffering come to the Sardar for advice and he guides them. Rajkot seemed ready and the fight commenced there.

Jaipur's case is incredibly simple and different from that of Rajkot. If my information is correct, the British Prime Minister there is determined to prevent even the movement for popularizing the ideal for responsible government.² Civil disobedience in Jaipur is being, therefore, offered not for responsible government but for the removal of the bans on the Praja Mandal and its president Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.³

In my opinion it is the duty of the Viceroy to ask the Resident in Rajkot to restore the pact and to ask the British Prime Minister of Jaipur to lift the bans. Such action by the Viceroy can in no sense be interpreted to mean unwarranted interference in the affairs of States.

Harijan, 4-2-1939

12. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
February 2, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
NEW DELHI

QUITE WELL. TAKING NEEDED REST. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 7802. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

13. LETTER TO J. C. KUAMARAPPA

SEGAON,
February 2, 1939

MY DEAR KU,

I came in today. I should not have taken such a long time to produce the accompanying.⁴ I wanted to go through the whole book but it was impossible. And now I am laid up. That is to say the doctors

¹ *Vide* "Kicks and Kisses"

² *Vide* "Jaipur"

³ *ibid*

⁴ *Vide* the following item.

say unless I want to commit suicide, I must be on bed and do as little work as possible. Complete silence is enjoined. I shall break it therefore only when I must. In these circumstances I thought I must give you a few lines at once. Here they are with a thousand apologies.

I hope your committee is flourishing and Sita¹ is proving her worth.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10148

14. FOREWORD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

It is a good sign that *Why the Village Movement* is required to go through the third edition. It supplies a felt want. Prof. J. C. Ku[marappa] answers almost all the doubts that have been expressed about the necessity and feasibility of the movement. No lover of villages can afford to be without the booklet. No doubter can fail to have his doubts dispelled. It is of no use to those who have made up their minds that the only movement worth the name is to destroy the villages and dot India with a number of big cities where highly centralized industries will be carried out and everyone will have plenty and to spare. Fortunately as yet there are not many who belong to that school of destruction. I wonder if the village movement has come just in time to prevent the spread of the movement of despair! This booklet is an attempt to answer the question.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 10149

15. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

I have neglected you for many days but Sushila has instructions

¹ Wife of Bharatan Kumarappa, younger brother of the addressee

to write to you daily. I have to take complete rest from physical toil but also as much as possible from mental. You won't worry. Bury yourself in your work.

Ba going to Rajkot. So she stayed behind¹.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6426. Courtesy: Mirabeht. Also G.N. 10021

16. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 2, 1939

BA,

Why are you uneasy? Do not worry about me. Improve your health. Recite Ramanama. Rest assured we shall win the battle by dint of the devotion of many. That includes yours too.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 31

17. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
February 2, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am writing this letter from Madalasa's place. I have come here directly from the station. I rested a lot during the journey. Lilavati cried constantly. All her frailties are now becoming apparent.

I have received your letter. You are definitely coming to Segaoon if you do not feel well there. You have gone there because of the letter that came. It is well that you have gone. But you are certainly coming when the occasion arises. Work has already piled up.

I shall look after the rest and write later.

¹ At Bardoli

You should not worry about me at all. Tell this to Ghanshy-
amdas also. I am definitely going to have rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

18. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 2, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your wire. How is it you have gone there? I take it to
mean that from there you will be going to Delhi. You will have
received my reply.

I spoke to him today. He says that there is some misund-
erstanding. I shall not discuss the matter further. We shall meet if there
is time.

I have initiated the changes. Nobody will sleep beside me. I shall
have enough distance for my hand not to reach anyone sleeping
there. I am giving up taking personal service involving touch.¹ Lilavati
decided this morning to go either to Nadiad or Wardha. This evening
she said that for about six months she would study only here. So that
is how it is.

You will be getting on well. My swelling has considerably
subsided. Walking is discontinued, I sleep a lot. Do not worry. I am
observing silence. It gets disturbed of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ *Vide* the following item; also "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 9-12-1938

19. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 2, 1939

CHI. SHARMA,

The work at Bardoli was so much that I fell ill and returned only today. Hence the delay in answering your letter. There is no cause for anxiety. I shall be all right.

February 3, 1939

But I could have asked someone to send you a line saying that the reply would be delayed. I did not do it, because I was hopeful of being able to write soon.

Destruction and construction are simultaneous processes. Your destruction seems to be of a kind which may become unbearable for you. It should not turn out that you do one thing today and another tomorrow.

I cannot write the pamphlet. You have rightly said that everything is useless until construction has commenced. The pamphlet probably has no place in what is going on.

An earlier letter from you mentioned a principle: namely, that society and family are distinct entities and should be so. However, if you think they are identical but cannot reach the ideal today, why talk about it? Once you show in practice that there is no difference between you and those living with me I shall consider my job done.

The comparison with the dog is harsh but quite apt. We are all in a way like dogs in that we lack tolerance, but living in society and being intolerant are incompatible things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 177 and 178

20. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

[After February 2, 1939]¹

BHAI SAMPURNANANDJI,

I received your letter but could not acknowledge it promptly. I hope you have also written to Dr. Zakir Husain what you wrote to me.

Your letter regarding the flag and *Bande Mataram* was received at a time when I was travelling. What you have said in it is correct. I am working on the same lines.

The problem of those who have entered Councils is becoming difficult day by day. But after all it is nothing but a symptom of the malaise. I see clearly that the Congress is going downward each day. Selfishness, infighting, untruth and violence have crept into the Congress and are on the increase. I fear we are destroying ourselves because of our inner failures. Let us see what God wills.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Sampurnanand Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

21. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS²

SEGAON,
February 3, 1939

The communiques³ issued by the Government of India and the Jaipur Government on my statements⁴ on Rajkot and Jaipur are remarkable for sins of omission and commission and suppression.

It was no part of the Sardar's duty to publish the Thakore Saheb's letter about the composition of the Committee. It was for the Thakore Saheb's convenience that a condition as to the composition

¹ This letter seems to be connected with that written to the addressee on 1-1-1939. Gandhiji returned to Segaoon on this date.

² This appeared under the title "Not a War of Words", and was also published in *The Hindu*, *The Bombay Chronicle*, and *The Hindustan Times*, all of 4-2-1939.

³ For the Government of India communique, *vide* Government of India's Statement on Rajkot", 1-2-1939.

⁴ *Vide* "Rajkot", 2-1-1939 and 30-1-1939, "Jaipur", 16-1-1939 & 30-1-1939.

of the Committee was embodied in a separate letter. This is a well-known procedure adopted in delicate negotiations. Surely the Thakore Saheb's understanding of his note, which admits of no double interpretation, is wholly irrelevant.

I aver that this understanding is an afterthought, discovered to placate the Resident, who was angered that the Thakore Saheb should have dared to deal with a Congressman and give him a note of which he had no advice. Those who know anything of these Residents and States know in what dread the Princes stand of even their secretaries and peons. I write from personal knowledge.

There is sufficient in the appendices to the Sardar's statement¹ on the recrudescence of the struggle to show how the whole trouble is due to the Resident's displeasure. It is wrong to suggest that the Sardar did not give reasons for his refusal to alter the names of the Committee. A translation of his letter is one of the appendices.

When the Thakore Saheb agreed to nominate those whom the Sardar recommended, Mussalmans and Bhayats were before his mind's eye. But it was common cause that all rights would be guaranteed under the reforms. The proper procedure would have been to lead evidence before the Committee. I suggest that, as happens everywhere in India, the Mussalman and Bhayat objection to the personnel of the Committee was engineered after the event.

I have not asked that the Thakore Saheb should be asked to do this or that. He has no will. His will is pledged to the Resident. The Thakore Saheb once dared to act against his suspected wishes. He was on the brink of losing his *gadi*. What I have asked is that the Resident should restore the pact and help to honour it. If it is a matter purely of names to placate interests, I undertake to persuade the Sardar to make the accommodation provided that its other parts are carried out to the full.

But the communique adroitly omits the most relevant fact that the terms of reference too have been altered out of shape. These were agreed to by the Thakore Saheb-in-Council, of which the British Dewan was a member. I have never known such a dishonourable breach of a pact signed on behalf of a Chief. I do suggest that the Resident, who should be the custodian of the honour of the Chiefs within his jurisdiction, has, in this case, dragged the Thakore Saheb's

¹ *Vide* "Cold-Blooded Breach of a Soleman Covenant", 15-1-1939

name in the dust.

I repeat the charge of organized *goondaism*. The Agency police are operating in Rajkot. Wires received by the Sardar show that civil resisters are taken to distant places, there stripped naked, beaten and left to their own resources. They show further that Red Cross doctors and ambulance parties have been prevented from rendering help to those who were injured by lathi-charges in Halenda. I call this organized *goondaism*. If the charges are denied, there should be an impartial enquiry.

Let me state the issue clearly. I seek no interference in the affairs of the State. I seek non-interference by the Resident in Rajkot. The Resident is directly responsible for the strained relations between the State and the people. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to see that the solemn pact is fulfilled to the letter and in spirit.

If the objection about Muslim and Bhayat representation has any honesty about it, it can be removed. I once more appeal to His Excellency the Viceroy to study the question more deeply than he has done. Let not a grave tragedy be enacted while whitewashing communiques are being forged in the Delhi Secretariat. This is not a war of words. It is a war in which the people who have hitherto never been to jail nor suffered lathi blows are exposing themselves to all risk.

As for Jaipur, I have only one word. I do know that the British Prime Minister¹ is one member of the Jaipur State Council. My submission is that he is all in all. He has vowed vengeance against the Praja Mandal and Seth Jamnalaji. And in spite of the forest of words about action in respect of the Praja Mandal, I claim that virtually it is declared illegal. If not, let the authorities leave Seth Jamnalaji free to enter Jaipur and let him and his Mandal educate unmolested the people in the art of responsible government. Let them be punished if they inculcate violence, directly or indirectly.

Harijan, 11-2-1939

¹ Sir W. Beauchamp St. John

22. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or before *February 3, 1939*]²

STICK TO YOUR PLANS. MY BLESSING IS WITH YOU
AND SUCCESS IS YOURS.

The Hindu, 5-2-1939

23. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS
BIRLA HOUSE
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

SWELLING MUCH REDUCED. TAKING PRACTICALLY FULL
REST. BLOODPRESSURE 156/98 LAST NIGHT. JAMNALALJI
MUST NOT WAIT WITHOUT WRITTEN REQUEST FROM
AUTHORITIES.³ HAVE MADE STATEMENT ABOUT JAIPUR
GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE WHOLLY UNSATISFACTORY.⁴

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7803. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

24. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter from Peshawar is crowded with news. You are in the thick of it now. You must keep your health at any cost. Cover your

¹ This was evidently in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 3, saying: "Ghanshyamdas pressing delay re-entry" into Jaipur State, which Bajaj intended to effect in defiance of the ban imposed by the State.

² In his diary Bajaj mentions under the date February 3, having received a telegram from Gandhiji. Presumably this was the telegram.

³ This was in answer to the addressee's telegram suggesting that Jamnalal Bajaj might wait another fortnight before returning to Jaipur.

⁴ *Vide* the preceding item.

feet well. Insist on the food you need. Do not overdo it. And do not go beyond your depth. Then all will be well.

Have no worry on my account. God will keep me on earth so long as He needs me. It is well whether I am here or elsewhere. His will, not ours, be done.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6427. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10022

25. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

After the election and the manner in which it was fought, I feel that I shall serve the country by absenting myself from the Congress at the forthcoming session. Moreover, my health is none too good. I would like you to help me. Please do not press me to attend.

I hope the rest at Khali has done you and Indu good. Indu ought to write to me.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1939. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 307

26. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 3, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

The necessary arrangements have been made for the poet Khabardar¹. Ambalalbai will pay or collect for him Rs. 200 every month.

Booke asks for more information about him. He needs an

¹ Ardeshar F. Khabardar

X-Ray of his chest. There is little hope of his being able to help much. Have you written to Parvati?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10919

27. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 3, 1939

CHI. KAKA,

I am feeling thoroughly washed out at present. You may come. But I do not know what I shall be able to do. The trainees are here up to the 3rd or 4th. I hope to write about the Roman script.¹ Do the needful about Hindi *pracharak*. I do not see my way clearly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10920

28. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 3, 1939

MY DEAR VALLABHBHAI,

Whatever changes I am making are dictated by your abundant love. I am doing it against my own inclination. This is to tell you that as from today I have been compelled to stop taking service from girls. Lilavati, A. S., etc., have certainly not liked it. Sharada and Vijaya have not liked it either. The last two are sensible and so they are not feeling sad. Prabhavati came yesterday. She may be doing something or the other but even she is looking on in silence. Sushila is continuing to serve me. She has not the heart to stop doing it while I am ill. But I feel that I should stop it when I get well. As from yesterday I have stopped sleeping close to them. That is, the girls sleep far enough to be out of reach of my arms. Sushila hardly slept near me. Now no girl or man sleeps close to me. Sushila spreads her bed

¹ *Vide* "Roman Script v. Devanagari"

perpendicularly at my head. So does Rajkumari near my feet. I am not at all sorry about these changes. Maybe I am unhappy on account of the girls. I say 'maybe' because that is not the impression I get. It is my way to abandon things for the sake of my colleagues. I like to make such sacrifices, because thereby I can know myself better. I know that you have made your suggestion in order to protect me. You have of course considered the interests of the girls. It remains to be seen if their interest will be served by this sacrifice. Lilavati is lying utterly exhausted right now. She is planning to study. I am encouraging her.

If you send this letter to Mahadev, Devdas will also see it.

I have replied to the Viceroy's statement.¹ It is a harsh reply but there was no other alternative. It seems it is going to be a terrible battle. It cannot be predicted how far it will take us. It has to be seen how long my body can take the strain. The swelling is of course reduced. There is silence most of the time. Ba will have left.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

29. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,

[After February 3, 1939]²

BA,

I have your letter. You have now become a State guest. Take care of your health. I am not worried since Mani³ is with you. I must have letters. I shall bear your point in mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

¹ For Gandhiji's statement regarding the struggle in Rajkot and the breach by the ruler of the covenant entered into with his people; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-2-1939

² Kasturba Gandhi was arrested on entering Rajkot on February 3, 1939.

³ Manibehn Patel

30. DISCUSSION WITH TEACHER TRAINEES¹

February 3/4, 1939

It is the fashion these days to talk of the rights of minorities. Therefore, although those who understand English only are here in a hopeless minority, I shall speak today in English.² But I warn you that I shall not do so at the next meeting. You must go back with a firm resolve to learn Hindustani. It is impossible to put into practice the idea of basic education—an idea which is calculated to answer the educational requirements of our millions—if the mind works only through the English medium.

A number of questions were put to him by the delegates. The first question expressed a doubt as to whether the Wardha scheme was likely to stand the test of time, or if it merely was a measure of temporary expediency. Many prominent educationists were of opinion that sooner or later the handicrafts would have to give place to whole-hog industrialization. Would a society educated on the lines of the Wardha scheme and based on justice, truth and non-violence, be able to survive the severe strain of the process of industrialization?

GANDHIJI: This is not a practical question. It does not affect our immediate programme. The issue before us is not as to what is going to happen generations hence, but whether this basic scheme of education answers the real need of the millions that live in our villages. I do not think that India is ever going to be industrialized to the extent that there will be no villages left. The bulk of India will always consist of villages.

“What will happen to the scheme of basic education if the Congress policy changes as a result of the recent presidential election ?” he was asked next.

Gandhiji replied that it was misplaced fear. A change in the Congress policy was not going to touch the Wardha scheme.

It will affect, if it at all does, higher politics only. You have come here to undergo three weeks’ training course, so that you may be able to teach your students along the Wardha method on your return. You

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal’s “Wardha Scheme under Fire”. About seventy-five delegates from all over India had attended a three weeks’ course at the Teacher Training Centre at Wardha. Before leaving for their respective provinces they met Gandhiji.

² Gandhiji, at the suggestion of Asha Devi, had started to speak in Hindi and some of the delegates had not been able to follow.

should have faith that the method will answer the purpose intended.

Although schemes for industrialization of the country might be put forth, the goal that the Congress has set before it today is not industrialization of the country. Its goal is, according to a resolution¹ passed by the National Congress at Bombay, revival of village industries. You cannot have mass awakening through any elaborate scheme of industrialization that you may put before the *kisans*. It would not add a farthing to their income. But the A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. will put lakhs into their pockets within the course of a year. Whatever happens to the Working Committee or the ministries, personally I do not sense any danger to the constructive activities of the Congress. Although started by the Congress, they have been having an autonomous existence for a long time, and have fully proved their worth. Basic education is an offshoot of these. Education Ministers may change but this will remain. Therefore, those interested in basic education should not worry themselves about Congress politics. The new scheme of education will live or die by its own merits or want of them.

But these questions do not satisfy me. They are not directly connected with the scheme of basic education. They do not take us any further. I would like you to ask me questions directly pertaining to the scheme, so that I may give you my expert advice.

Before going to the meeting, a friend had asked him if the central idea behind the scheme was that teachers should not speak a word to the pupils that could not be correlated to the *takli*. Gandhiji, answering this question in the general meeting, remarked:

This is a libel on me. It is true I have said that all instruction must be linked with some basic craft. When you are imparting knowledge to a child of 7 or 10 through the medium of an industry, you should, to begin with, exclude all those subjects which cannot be linked with the craft. By doing so from day to day you will discover ways and means of linking with the craft many things which you had excluded in the beginning. You will save your own energy and the pupils' if you follow this process of exclusion to begin with. We have today no books to go by, no precedents to guide us. Therefore we have to go slow. The main thing is that the teacher should retain his

¹ *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Hindustani Only"

freshness of mind. If you come across something that you cannot correlate with the craft, do not fret over it and get disheartened. Leave it and go ahead with the subjects that you can correlate. Maybe another teacher will hit upon the right way and show how it can be correlated. And when you have pooled the experience of many, you will have books to guide you, so that the work of those who follow you will become easier.

How long, you will ask, are we to go on with this process of exclusion? My reply is, for the whole lifetime. At the end you will find that you have included many things that you had excluded at first, that practically all that was worth including has been included, and whatever you have been obliged to exclude till the end was something very superficial that deserved exclusion. This has been my experience of life. I would not have been able to do many things that I have done if I had not excluded an equal number.

Our education has got to be revolutionized. The brain must be educated through the hand. If I were a poet, I could write poetry on the possibilities of the five fingers. Why should you think that the mind is everything and the hands and feet nothing? Those who do not train their hands, who go through the ordinary rut of education, lack 'music' in their life. All their faculties are not trained. Mere book knowledge does not interest the child so as to hold his attention fully. The brain gets weary of mere words, and the child's mind begins to wander. The hand does the things it ought not to do, the eye sees the things it ought not to see, the ear hears the things it ought not to hear, and they do not do, see, or hear, respectively, what they ought to. They are not taught to make the right choice and so their education often proves their ruin. An education which does not teach us to discriminate between good and bad, to assimilate the one and eschew the other is a misnomer.

Shrimati Asha Devi asked Gandhiji to explain to them how the mind could be trained through the hands.

G. The old idea was to add a handicraft to the ordinary curriculum of education followed in the schools. That is to say, the craft was to be taken in hand wholly separately from education. To me that seems a fatal mistake. The teacher must learn the craft and correlate his knowledge to the craft, so that he will impart all that knowledge to his pupils through the medium of the particular craft that he chooses.

Take the instance of spinning. Unless I know arithmetic I cannot report how many yards of yarn I have produced on the *takli*, or how many standard rounds it will make, or what is the count of the yarn that I have spun. I must learn figures to be able to do so, and I also must learn addition and subtraction and multiplication and division. In dealing with complicated sums I shall have to use symbols and so I get my algebra. Even here, I would insist on the use of Hindustani letters instead of Roman.

Take geometry next. What can be a better demonstration of a circle than the disc of the *takli*? I can teach all about circles in this way, without even mentioning the name of Euclid.

Again, you may ask how I can teach my child geography and history through spinning. Some time ago I came across a book called *Cotton—The Story of Mankind*. It thrilled me. It read like a romance. It began with the history of ancient times, how and when cotton was first grown, the stages of its development, the cotton trade between the different countries, and so on. As I mention the different countries to the child, I shall naturally tell him something about the history and geography of these countries. Under whose reign the different commercial treaties were signed during the different periods? Why has cotton to be imported by some countries and cloth by others? Why can every country not grow the cotton it requires? That will lead me into economics and elements of agriculture. I shall teach him to know the different varieties of cotton, in what kind of soil they grow, how to grow them, from where to get them, and so on. Thus *takli*-spinning leads me into the whole history of the East India Company, what brought them here, how they destroyed our spinning industry, how the economic motive that brought them to India led them later to entertain political aspirations, how it became a causative factor in the downfall of the Moguls and the Marathas, in the establishment of the English Raj, and then again in the awakening of the masses in our times. There is thus no end to the educative possibilities of this new scheme. And how much quicker the child will learn all that, without putting an unnecessary tax on his mind and memory.

Let me further elaborate the idea. Just as a biologist, in order to become a good biologist, must learn many other sciences besides biology, the basic education, if it is treated as a science, takes us into interminable channels of learning. To extend the example of the *takli*, a pupil teacher, who rivets his attention not merely on the mechanical

process of spinning, which of course he must master, but on the spirit of the thing, will concentrate on the *takli* and its various aspects. He will ask himself why the *takli* is made out of a brass disc and has a steel spindle. The original *takli* had its disc made anyhow. The still more primitive *takli* consisted of a wooden spindle with a disc of slate or clay. The *takli* has been developed scientifically, and there is a reason for making the disc out of brass and the spindle out of steel. He must find out that reason. Then, the teacher must ask himself why the disc has that particular diameter, no more and no less. When he has solved these questions satisfactorily and has gone into the mathematics of the thing, your pupil becomes a good engineer. The *takli* becomes his *Kamadhenu*—the ‘Cow of plenty’. There is no limit to the possibilities of knowledge that can be imparted through this medium. It will be limited only by the energy and conviction with which you work. You have been here for three weeks. You will have spent them usefully if it has enabled you to take to this scheme seriously, so that you will say to yourself, ‘I shall either do or die.’

I am elaborating the instance of spinning because I know it. If I were a carpenter, I would teach my child all these things through carpentry, or through cardboard work if I were a worker in cardboard.

What we need is educationists with originality, fired with true zeal, who will think out from day to day what they are going to teach their pupils. The teacher cannot get this knowledge through musty volumes. He has to use his own faculties of observation and thinking and impart his knowledge to the children through his lips, with the help of a craft. This means a revolution in the method of teaching, a revolution in the teacher’s outlook. Up till now you have been guided by inspectors’ reports. You wanted to do what the inspector might like, so that you might get more money yet for your institutions or higher salaries for yourselves. But the new teacher will not care for all that. He will say, ‘I have done my duty by my pupil if I have made him a better man and in doing so I have used all my resources. That is enough for me.

Q. In training pupil teachers, would it not be better if they are first taught a craft separately and then given a sound exposition of the method of teaching through the medium of that craft? As it is, they are advised to imagine themselves to be of the age of 7 and relearn everything through a craft. In this way it will take them years before they can master the new technique and become competent teachers.

G. No, it would not take them years. Let us imagine that the

teacher when he comes to me has a working knowledge of mathematics and history and other subjects. I teach him to make cardboard boxes or to spin. While he is at it I show him how he could have derived his knowledge of mathematics, history and geography through the particular craft. He thus learns how to link his knowledge to the craft. It should not take him long to do so. Take another instance. Suppose I go with my boy of 7 to a basic school. We both learn spinning and I get all my previous knowledge linked with spinning. To the boy it is all new. For the 70-year-old father it is all repetition but he will have his old knowledge in a new setting. He should not take more than a few weeks for the process. Thus, unless the teacher develops the receptivity and eagerness of the child of 7, he will end up by becoming a mere mechanical spinner, which would not fit him for the new method.

Q. A boy who has passed his matriculation can go to college if he wishes to. Will a child who has gone through the basic education syllabus too be able to do so?

G. Between the boy who has passed his matriculation and the boy who has gone through basic education, the latter will give a better account of himself because his faculties have been developed. He would not feel helpless when he goes to college as matriculates often do.

Q. Seven has been put down as the minimum age for admission of children to a basic education school. Is it to be a chronological or mental age?

G. Seven should be the average minimum age, but there will be some children of a higher and some of a lower age as well. There is physical as well as mental age to be considered. One child at the age of 7 may have attained sufficient physical development to handle a craft. Another one may not be able to do so even at 7. One cannot therefore lay down any hard and fast rules. All the factors have to be taken into consideration.

Many questions show that many of you are filled with doubts. This is the wrong way of going about the work. You should have robust faith. If you have the conviction that I have, that Wardha education is the thing required to give training for life to millions of our children, your work will flourish. If you have not that faith, there is something wrong with those in charge of your training. They should be able to imbue you with this faith, whatever else they may or may not give you.

Q. The basic education scheme is supposed to be for the villages. Is there no way out for the city-dwellers? Are they to go along the old rut?

G. This is a pertinent question and a good one, but I have answered it already in the columns of *Herijan*. Sufficient for the day is the good thereof. As it is, we have a big enough morsel to bite. If we can solve the educational problem of seven lakhs of villages, it will be enough for the present. No doubt educationists are thinking of the cities too. But if we take up the question of the cities along with that of the villages, we will fritter away our energies.

Q. Supposing in a village there were three schools with a different craft in each, the scope for learning may be wider in one than in the other. To which school out of these should the child go?

G. Such overlapping should not occur. For the majority of our villages are too small to have more than one school. But a big village may have more. Here the craft taught in both should be the same. But I should lay down no hard and fast rule. Experience in such matters would be the best guide. The capacity of various crafts to become popular, their ability to draw out the faculties of the student, should be studied. The idea is that whatever craft you choose, it should draw out the faculties of the child fully and equally. It should be a village craft and it should be useful.

Q. Why should a child waste 7 years on learning a craft when his real profession is going to be something else, e.g., why should a banker's son, who is expected to take to banking later on, learn spinning for 7 years?

G. The question betrays gross ignorance of the new scheme of education. The boy under the scheme of basic education does not go to school merely to learn a craft. He goes there to receive his primary education, to train his mind through the craft. I claim that the boy who has gone through the new course of primary education for seven years, will make a better banker than the one who has gone through the seven years of ordinary schooling. The latter when he goes to a banking school will be ill at ease because all his faculties will not have been trained. Prejudices die hard. I will have done a good day's work if I have made you realize this one central fact that the new education scheme is not a little of literary education and a little of craft. It is full education up to the primary stage through the medium of a craft.

Q. Would it not be better to teach more than one craft in every school? The children might begin to feel bored of doing the same thing from month to month and year to year.

G. If I find a teacher who becomes dull to his students after a month's spinning, I should dismiss him. There will be newness in every lesson such as there can be new music on the same instrument. By changing over from one craft to another a child tends to become like a monkey jumping from branch to branch with abode nowhere. But I have shown already in the course of our discussion that teaching spinning in a scientific spirit involves learning many things besides spinning. The child will be taught to make his own *takli* and his own winder soon. Therefore, to go back to what I began with, if the teacher takes up the craft in a scientific spirit, he will speak to his pupils through many channels, all of which will contribute to the development of all his faculties.

SEGAON, February 9, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939 and 4-3-1939

31. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI¹

WARDHA,
[February 4, 1939]²

MAHADEV DESAI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

THOUGH DO NOT LIKE YOUR SUGGESTION NOT KNOWING
FULLY AM ADVISING JAMNALAL FOLLOW YOUR INSTRUC-
TIONS. HEALTH GOOD.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 212

¹ The addressee in his telegram of February 4 from New Delhi had said "Inasmuch as police officer in charge Jamnalalji verbally requested him give authorities time reconsider may I ask Jamnalalji address letter to authorities mentioning police officer's request absurdity of communique and giving them time until eighth? Am sending him draft suitable letter. If you agree advise him send letter."

² *Vide* the following item.

32. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[February 4, 1939]¹

JAMNALAL

CARE LAKINSURE

AGRA

YOUR WIRE. MAHADEV HAS WIRED YOU CERTAIN
SUGGESTIONS. CARRY THEM OUT. HEALTH GOOD. BA
MANIBEHN DETAINED STATE GUESTS.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 404

33. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 4, 1939

CHI. INDU,

How can you think of me now? I was happy to learn that Almora had benefited you. I pray to God that you may soon be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9801. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

34. LETTER TO GENERAL SHINDE

SEGAON,
February 4, 1939

DEAR GENERAL SHINDE,

Many thanks for your letter and enclosures.²

I see nothing objectionable in the excerpts you have sent me.

¹ As given in the source

² *Vide* "Letter to General Shinde", 29-1-1939

As to the printed circular, if what is stated therein is true it is evidence of a tragic situation. It is up to the wise heads in Baroda to find out the truth.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

35. *LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH*

February 4, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

If you cannot stay away, you can stay here even after your marriage. I made haste because you wished it. There is nothing certain about me. I am moreover weak of health. Therefore, I thought it better to pay off this debt with my own hands. You can return after staying for only a few days at your husband's place. You may, of course, come if you are in bad health. You can do as you like. I do wish you to join the work at Bardoli.

Where is the cloth? But would it not be better if you took a new piece out of what I keep for my wear for a petticoat or upper garment where white will pass? What about the charkha? All the books will be available. I have already prepared the maxims. Staying away, you will serve me by doing my work.

Reply to yesterday's letter could not be covered in the letter to Sardar. I advise you to convey your views in this matter to Sardar.

Ask me again about religious reading.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10003. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

36. *ROMAN SCRIPT v. DEVANAGARI*¹

I understand that some of the tribes in Assam are being taught to read and write through the Roman script instead of Devanagari. I have already expressed my opinion that the only script that is ever likely to be universal in India is Devanagari, either reformed or as it is.

¹ This appeared under "Notes".

Urdu or Persian will go hand in hand unless Muslims, of their own free will, acknowledge the superiority of Devanagari from a purely scientific and national standpoint. But this is irrelevant to the present problem. The Roman cannot go hand in hand with the other two scripts. Protagonists of the Roman script would displace both. But sentiment and science alike are against the Roman script. Its sole merit is its convenience for printing and typing purposes. But that is nothing compared to the strain its learning would put upon millions. It can be of no help to the millions who have to read their own literature either in their own provincial scripts or in Devanagari. Devanagari is easier for the millions of Hindus and even Muslims to learn, because the provincial scripts are mostly derived from Devanagari. I have included Muslims advisedly. The mother tongue of Bengali Muslims, for instance, is Bengali as is Tamil of Tamil Muslims. The present movement for the propagation of Urdu will, as it should, result in Muslims all over India learning Urdu in addition to their mother tongue. They must, in any case, know Arabic for the purpose of learning the Holy Koran. But the millions whether Hindus or Muslims will never need the Roman script except when they wish to learn English. Similarly, Hindus who want to read their scriptures in the original have to and do learn the Devanagari script. The movement for universalizing the Devanagari script has thus a sound basis. The introduction of the Roman script is a superimposition which can never become popular. And all superimpositions will be swept out of existence when the true mass awakening comes, as it is coming, much sooner than anyone of us can expect from known causes. Yet the awakening of millions does take time. It cannot be manufactured. It comes or seems to come mysteriously. National workers can merely hasten the process by anticipating the mass mind.

SEGAON, February 5, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

37. NO APOLOGY

I have two letters from Jewish friends protesting against a remark of mine in a dialogue reported in *Harijan* over the Jewish question. Here is one of the letters:

My attention has been called to a paragraph¹ in *Harijan* of December 24th, 1938, in which you are reported to have said that "The Jews called down upon the Germans the curses of mankind, and they wanted America and England to fight Germany on their behalf." I can hardly doubt that you have been misreported, for there is nothing that could possibly justify such a statement. But as the paragraph much distressed me, I should be glad to receive from you a word of reassurance

I am sorry to say that I cannot give the reassurance required. For I did make the remark put into my mouth by Shri Pyarelal. Hardly a paper comes to me from the West which does not describe the agony of the Jews who demand retribution by the democratic Powers for German atrocities. Nor do I see anything wrong in the attitude. The Jews are not angels. My point was they were not non-violent in the sense meant by me. Their non-violence had and has no love in it. It is passive. They do not resist because they know that they cannot resist with any degree of success. In their place, unless there were active non-violence in me, I should certainly call down upon my persecutors the curses of Heaven. It is not contended by my correspondents that the German Jews do not want the big Powers like England, America and France to prevent the atrocities, if need be, even by war against Germany. I happen to have a Jewish friend living with me. He has an intellectual belief in non-violence. But he says he cannot pray for Hitler. He is so full of anger over the German atrocities that he cannot speak of them with restraint. I do not quarrel with him over his anger. He wants to be non-violent, but the sufferings of fellow Jews are too much for him to bear. What is true of him is true of thousands of Jews who have no thought even of 'loving the enemy'. With them as with millions 'revenge is sweet, to forgive is divine.'

SEGAON, February 5, 1939
Harijan, 18-2-1939

38. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

I got your letter. You need not worry about Ba. Since Ba went²

¹ *Vide* "Discussion With Christian Missionaries", 12-12-1938

² To Rajkot, to take part in the satyagraha there against the Thakore who had broken the agreement he had made with Vallabhbai to appoint a committee to draft a constitution for a form of responsible Government for the State.

of her own accord, I felt no hesitation in letting her go in spite of her indifferent health. You should be pleased. You too, will do the same when you are faced with a similar duty. Just now, your duty lies in improving your health and earning something. When you achieve satisfaction in that field, you will certainly plunge into the field of public service, I am quite sure of that.

Kanam is enjoying himself. He has gone to visit uncle Nanavati. Teaching work is looked after by Lilavati, Kanchan, etc. He does sometimes think of Ba during the night. I have him sit before me at meals. A.S.¹ bathes him and washes his clothes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

39. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SEGAON,

February 5, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I hope you had my personal letter as also yesterday's.²

I had a wire from Maulana Saheb suggesting his and others' withdrawal from Working Committee.³ I replied saying it might be embarrassing to you. Now comes a letter from Rajen Babu making the same suggestion supporting it by the argument that you would be helped if you had the resignations in your hands now so that you could choose a temporary cabinet to help you to frame your future programme. Rajen Babu's argument commends itself to me. So far as I can judge the old colleagues whom you consider as rightists will not serve on your cabinet. You can have their resignations now, if that would be more convenient for you. Their presence would be unfair to you and to them. You should be left free to frame your own programme and expect the rightists (I wish you would choose better and indigenous terms to designate the parties of your imagination) to support where they can and abstain without obstructing where they

¹ Amtussalaam

² These letters are not available.

³ For the resignation letter of members of the Working Committee, *vide*

cannot see eye to eye with you.

I have just read your statement¹ in answer to mine². Though it demands a reply, I must refrain. I do not want to enter into a public controversy with you so long as I can avoid it.

This letter you may show to friends, if you find it necessary. I am sending copies to Maulana Saheb, etc.

Love.

BAPU

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

40. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 5, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This copy³ for your information.

Love.

BAPU

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

41. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 5, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

There is no letter from you today. Acting on your telegram, I have sent a telegram to J.⁴ that he should follow your advice. But he does not seem to like the advice. Let him enter the field then. I consider the Viceroy's statement pretty bad. You will have seen my reply. Things will take their own course. Do not worry. You must regain your health.

Both Vijaya and Sharada will be married here at 3 o'clock

¹ *Vide* "Statement of Subhas Chandra Bose"

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-1-1939

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

⁴ Jammalal Bajaj

(by my watch) on the 7th.¹ Nanabhai² will conduct the ceremony. Nanabhai will be coming here tomorrow with Manubhai. Gordhandas will arrive on the 7th morning. No guests have been invited. We do not want to invite any. The poor people of Segaoon will witness the wedding. The altar will be built under a mango tree.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

42. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

[February 5, 1939]³

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

Nanabhai and Manubhai will be arriving tomorrow. It would be better to let them come to Segaoon. We are not so crowded here these days. And why should I trouble you unnecessarily when Munnalal will be going to receive them? Probably five more persons will be coming on Tuesday and I want them too to come to Segaoon. If changes are to be made, I shall see. It is good that Jamnalalji has been arrested.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The marriage rites will be performed by Nanabhai but Vyasji may certainly come.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3002

¹ Vijaya Patel had been betrothed to Manubhai Pancholi and Sharada Shah to Gordhandas Chokhawala.

² Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

³ From the reference to Jamnalalji's arrest and the weddings of Vijaya Patel and Sharda Shah which took place on Tuesday, February 7, 1939

43. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[On or after *February 5, 1939*]¹

Contradictory is wholly inapplicable. I mean that there is nothing wrong in an ordinary man wanting God to punish the wrongdoer. Non-violence is a new thing. It would be wrong for a non-violent man to call down the wrath of God or man. But a non-violent man must not see anything wrong in a persecuted man retaliating and seeking the assistance of others. You should try to understand the argument.

From the original: C.W. 4209. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7845

44. INTERVIEW TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN STUDENTS²

BARDOLI,

[Before *February 6, 1939*]³

“What should we, South Africa-borns, do to preserve our Indian culture in our country of adoption?” they asked Gandhiji. “What other languages would you ask us to learn besides English ?”

Gandhiji answered by first twitting them for giving the first place to English. He advised them instead to learn Hindustani, which should contain all words of Sanskrit as well as Persian or Arabic origin, that are used by the man in the street. The Hindus dared not neglect the study of Sanskrit, nor the Muslims of Arabic, not only because the study of these languages was necessary to give them access to their scriptures in the original, but also because these two tongues contained the grandest poetry that the world has ever produced. He concluded:

But above all you should jealously retain the essential simplicity and spirituality which is the hallmark of Indian culture.

Their other question was whether they should carry on the struggle for their rights in South Africa through satyagraha or through constitutional agitation.

¹ The note is written on the back of a telegram from Damodar to Bachhraj, Wardha, dated 5-2-1939.

² Extracted from Pyarelal’s “A World in Agony-II”, 6-2-1939. The students were in India to pursue medical studies and wanted Gandhiji to help them gain admission in medical college.

³ *Ibid*

GANDHIJI: If the South African Indian community had guts in them, I would say satyagraha, and they are bound to win. I am hoping that some day from among Indian youths born in South Africa a person will arise who will stand up for the rights of his countrymen domiciled there, and make the vindication of those rights his life's mission. He will be so pure, so cultured, so truthful and so dignified in his bearing that he will disarm all opposition. The whites will then say, 'If all Indians were like him, we should have no objection to giving them an equal status with us.' But he will answer, 'It is not enough that there is one representative of the Indian community whom you are ready to recognize as your equal. What I am, other countrymen of mine too can be, if instead of calling them names and putting them under all sorts of disabilities you give them a sporting chance in the matter of educational and other facilities which are today denied them.' Such a one, when he appears, will not need to be coached by me. He will assert himself by his sheer genius.

Harijan, 18-2-1939

45. MAHATMA'S STATUE¹

Correspondence has been pouring in upon me protesting against the Mahatma's statue said to be in course of construction on the Congress ground at a cost of Rs. 25,000. I know nothing of this statue. I have enquired about it. But I must not wait for confirmation. Assuming that such a statue is in course of construction, I reinforce the protest of my correspondents and I agree with them that it will be waste of good money to spend Rs. 25,000 on erecting a clay or metallic statue of the figure of a man who is himself made of clay and is more fragile than a bangle which can keep by preservation for a thousand years, whereas the human body disintegrates daily and undergoes final disintegration after the usual span of life. I have learnt from my Muslim friends, among whom I have passed the best part of my life, my dislike of statues and photographs of my figure. And I should like the Reception Committee, if the report is true, to desist from the unfortunate enterprise. Let them save what money they can. If it is a mere rumour, let these lines serve as a warning to those who want to honour me by erecting statues and having portraits of my figure, that I heartily dislike these exhibitions. I shall deem it ample

¹ This was published under the heading "Notes".

honour if those who believe in me will be good enough to promote the activities I stand for and at least divert the money they would use for statues and portraits to the work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., or Hindustani Talimi Sangh.

SEGAON, February 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

46. WHY KASTURBA GANDHI?¹

I had not intended to say anything about my wife having joined the Rajkot struggle. But some cruel criticism I have seen about her intervention prompts an explanation. It had never occurred to me that she should join it. For one thing she is too old for such hardships as are involved in being in civil disobedience struggles. But strange as it may appear to critics, they must believe me when I say that though she is illiterate, she is and has been for years absolutely free to do what she likes. When she joined the struggle in South Africa or in India, it was of her own inner prompting. And so it was this time. When she heard of Manibehn's arrest, she could not restrain herself and asked me to let her go. I said she was too weak. She had just then fainted in her bathroom in Delhi and might have died but for Devdas's presence of mind. She said she did not mind. I then referred her to Sardar. He would not hear of it either.

But this time he melted. He had seen my grief over the breach of faith by the Thakore Saheb induced by the Resident. The reader must realize my ancestral connection with Rajkot and the intimate personal relations I had with the present Ruler's father. Kasturba is a daughter of Rajkot. She felt a personal call. She could not sit still whilst the other daughters of Rajkot were suffering for the freedom of the men and women of the State. Rajkot is no doubt an insignificant place on the map of India. But it is not insignificant for me and my wife. As a child she was brought up in Rajkot though born in Porbandar. And, after all, neither she nor I can be unconcerned in a struggle which is based on non-violence and in which so many reliable co-workers are involved.

The success of the struggle in Rajkot will be a stage forward in the fight for freedom. And when it ends in success, as it must sooner

¹ This was published under the heading "Notes".

or later, I hope that Kasturba's share will count as a humble contribution towards it. Satyagraha is a struggle in which the oldest and the weakest in body may take part, if they have stout hearts.

SEGAON, February 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

47. WORKING OF NON-VIOLENCE

I have been very much interested in reading the recent numbers of *Harijan* and your observations on the European crisis and the N. W. F. Province. But there is one aspect of the non-violence problem, which I should have discussed with you at Segaoon¹ if there had been time, to which you seldom or never refer. You say that non-violent non-co-operation, as you have developed it, is the answer to the violence which is now threatening the whole world with ruin. There is no doubt as to the immense effect such spirit and action could produce. But must not the non-violent spirit of selfless love for all, enemies and friends alike, express itself, if it is to succeed, in a liberal, democratic and constitutional form of government? Society cannot exist without law and government. International peace cannot exist unless the nations accept a system of constitutional government which will give them unity and law and end anarchy among them. No doubt some day the law of God will be so "written on the hearts and minds" of men that they become individually the expression of it, and will need no human law or government, But that is the end. The beginning of progress towards that heavenly goal must take the form at first of a willingness among races, religions and nations to unite under a single constitution, through which their unity and membership one of another is established, the laws under which they live are promulgated after public discussion and by some form of majority decision and are enforced, where it is not voluntarily obeyed, not by war but by police force, where persuasion and example have not sufficed. As between sovereign nations the operation of a constructive non-violence spirit must lead to some form of federation. It cannot succeed until it has done so. The proof that it exists effectively will be the appearance of a federal system. Thus the only real solution for the European problem is the federation of its 25 peoples and nations under a single democratic constitution which will create a government which can look at and legislate for the problems of Europe, not as a set of rival and conflicting nations but as a single whole with autonomous parts. In the

¹ Lord Lothian was at Segaoon from January 18 to 20, 1938; *vide* "Discussion with Lord Lothain", 20-1-1938

same way the only solution to the Indian problem is the substitution of a democratic constitution for the control of Great Britain. And what is true for Europe and India is true, in the long run, for the whole world and is the only final method of ending war.

Non-violent non-co-operation may be the best, perhaps the only, method of bringing about the change of mind and heart which will make acceptance of a federal democratic constitution by the nation possible. But attainment to democratic federation is the necessary attainment whereby its success is assured and without which it cannot succeed. It is always a matter of interest and indeed of surprise to me that you appear to think that non-violent non-co-operation is enough in itself, and that you never proclaim that a democratic system of government unifying men, races, religions and nations is the goal to which it must lead, though that attainment is only possible as the result of a spiritual change of heart and cannot be reached by force or violence or chicanery.

I do not write this as a kind of indirect argument for the Indian constitution, though it obviously has a bearing on that problem also. The Government of India Act is clearly a very imperfect application of the principle of democratic federation and must necessarily evolve rapidly if it is to work. The main argument I have always urged for it is that in present conditions it represents the only constitutional compromise uniting Provinces, States, Muslims and Hindus which can be made to work and that it has far more seeds of evolution within it than is generally recognized. If your spiritual gospel informed the people, it would rapidly and easily evolve. My object is not to elicit any opinion from you about the constitutional problem but an answer to the larger question set forth in the early part of the letter.

Thus writes Lord Lothian. The letter was received early in January, but urgent matters prevented my dealing earlier with the important question raised in it.

I have purposely refrained from dealing with the nature of government in a society based deliberately on non-violence. All society is held together by non-violence, even as the earth is held in her position by gravitation. But when the law of gravitation was discovered the discovery yielded results of which our ancestors had no knowledge. Even so when society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of non-violence, its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today. But I cannot say in advance what the government based wholly on non-violence will be like.

What is happening today is disregard of the law of non-violence

and enthronement of violence as if it were an eternal law. The democracies, therefore, that we see at work in England, America and France are only so called, because they are no less based on violence than Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy or even Soviet Russia. The only difference is that the violence of the last three is much better organized than that of the three democratic powers. Nevertheless we see today a mad race for outdoing one another in the matter of armaments. And if when the clash comes, as it is bound to come one day, the democracies win, they will do so only because they will have the backing of their peoples who imagine that they have a voice in their own government whereas in the other three cases the peoples might rebel against their own dictatorships.

Holding the view that without the recognition of non-violence on a national scale there is no such thing as a constitutional or democratic government, I devote my energy to the propagation of non-violence as the law of our life—individual, social, political, national and international. I fancy that I have seen the light, though dimly. I write cautiously, for I do not profess to know the whole of the Law. If I know the successes of my experiments, I know also my failures. But the successes are enough to fill me with undying hope.

I have often said that if one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself. Non-violence is the means, the end for every nation is complete independence. There will be an international League only when all the nations, big or small, composing it are fully independent. The nature of that independence will correspond to the extent of non-violence assimilated by the nations concerned. One thing is certain. In a society based on non-violence, the smallest nation will feel as tall as the tallest. The idea of superiority and inferiority will be wholly obliterated.

It follows from this that the Government of India Act is merely a makeshift and has to give way to an Act coined by the nation itself. So far as Provincial Autonomy is concerned, it has been found possible to handle it somewhat. My own experience of its working is by no means happy. The Congress Governments have not that non-violent hold over the people that I had expected they would have.

But the Federal structure is inconceivable to me because it contemplates a partnership, however loose, among dissimilars. How dissimilar the States are is being demonstrated in an ugliness for which I was unprepared. Therefore the Federal structure, as conceived by the

Government of India Act, I hold to be an utter impossibility.

Thus the conclusion is irresistible that for one like me, wedded to non-violence, constitutional or democratic government is a distant dream so long as non-violence is not recognized as a living force, an inviolable creed, not a mere policy. While I prate about universal non-violence, my experiment is confined to India. If it succeeds the world will accept it without effort. There is, however, a big BUT. The pause does not worry me. My faith is brightest in the midst of impenetrable darkness.

SEGAON, February 6, 1939

Harijan, 11-2-1939

48. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 6, 1939

BA,

Herewith are letters from Akola. I hope you are well. The marriages of both the girls¹ will take place tomorrow. We all feel your absence. I have to do the giving away and that too in your absence.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 31

49. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

February 7, 1939

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

You must not worry. Those who worry are not warriors. There is no point in going to Jaipur. Therefore, you have to stay here and do your duty. Let it be as God wills.

I am keeping the telephonic message with me.² I wish to make some statement. I am not detaining the car.

¹ On February 7, Vijaya Patel was married to Manubhai Pancholi and Sharda Shah to Gordhandas Chokhawala.

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-2-1939

Why do you want to come here in your present condition?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3000

50. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 7, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. What is happening in Limdi is terrible, but it does not surprise us. More, and worse, will happen. That will test the people. Our path is straight. I intend to write about this. Since I arrange my work with due care for my health, I am not able to attend to everything as I would wish to. I very much like what Subhas Babu is doing. We have had a narrow escape. See about Rajendra Babu.

I am ready for a meeting whenever you desire it.

I have received a letter from Mani, which is enclosed. I am writing this after performing the marriages of both the girls. The simplicity was absolute. Nobody was invited. The village Harijans and others were present. I was very much pleased.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 232-3

51. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 7, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter as also the wire. If you are not allowed to have the needed rest there, rush down here. You will definitely get rest here. There is at least some peace of mind. The changes I introduced have not been received well. But the student of the *Gita* must find peace of mind wherever he goes.

I am getting along. I am trying to reduce as much as possible the burden on Vallabhbhai. But he has a worrying temperament. Let us see what happens. *The Statesman* cannot write anything else.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now it is almost time to go to the marriage *mandap*.

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

52. TELEGRAM TO CHANDRABHAL JOHRI¹

[On or after *February 7, 1939*]

JAMNALALJI IS SAFE WHEREVER HE IS.² TRYING ISSUE STATEMENT. KEEP ME INFORMED.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 213

53. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

[On or after *February 7, 1939*]³

R[AJENDRA PRASAD]
SADAQAT ASHRAM
PATNA

HAVE NOT CONVENED CONFERENCE. NO SUCH SUGGESTION BEFORE ME. DO YOU WANT CONFERENCE ?

From a copy: Jammalal .Bajaj Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 6, 1939, received on February 7, expressing his anxiety about Jammalal's whereabouts after the latter's arrest on February 5, 1939.

² Jammalal had been taken to Bharatpur State and released there on February 7.

³ This along with the preceding item was drafted on the reverse of the telegram from Chandrabhal Johri; *vide* the preceding item.

54. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

[After February 7, 1939]¹

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your two letters. If you write 'Private', etc., at the top, no one will read your letters. I will tear them up after reading.

Do not get frightened. Obtain permission and come away to me immediately. We shall talk about everything at length. Your experience is no unusual story.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You may use the accompanying letter² if you wish.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10021. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

55. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

[After February 7, 1939]³

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

If Sharda feels ill at ease there, send her away here to me for some days. She has never been away from home and so it is likely that she may feel a stranger there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10084. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

¹ This was obviously written some time after the addressee's marriage, which took place on February 7.

² *Vide* the following item.

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

56. TELEGRAM TO THE LIMDI PRAJA MANDAL

[Before February 8, 1939]¹

IN THE HAPPENINGS IF THE PEOPLE REMAIN NON-
VIOLENT AND BRAVE SUFFERING TORTURES LOSS OF
PROPERTY LIMBS AND LIFE, VICTORY IS THEIRS. KEEP ME
INFORMED .

The Hindustan Times, 10-2-1939

57. TELEGRAM TO JETHANAND

WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

RAIBAHADUR JETHANAND
DERAISMAILKHAN

DEEPLY REGRET RIOTS. AM HELPLESS THOUGH WIRING²
PREMIER. HAVE MAHOMEDANS BEEN KILLED AS REPORTED
PAPERS.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

58. TELEGRAM TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

DR. KHANSAHEB
PESHAWAR

ARE YOU DOING ANYTHING EFFECTIVE ABOUT DERA RIOTS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The news report carrying this item is dated February 8.

² *Vide* the following item.

59. *LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

DEAR MOTI BABU,

Better to send instalment directly to A. I. S. A.
The convocation address not yet received.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 11053

60. *LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI*

SEGAON,
February 8, 1939

BA,

You are being put to a severe test. You must let me know about the difficulties you face. You are born to suffer and hence your discomforts cause me no surprise. I have sent a telegram to the Government. I do not wish to publish anything about your difficulties in the Press. God is certainly even there by your side. He will do as He wills.

Kanam is well. He remembers you at night. Do not worry in the least. Amtul Salaam is here. She takes care of Kanam.

Chi. Mani, how nice that you are there!

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 31

61. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 8, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Let me compliment you on keeping good health.

Your dialogue is good. Your suggestion is correct. I am sending

the telegram. I may issue my statement tomorrow. I shall not write anything more because there is a lot to do.

I have got the point about Hameed Ali. Subhas wants to meet me. I am not keen. He is getting good publicity.

Lilavati seems to be at ease today.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

62. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You should not expect a long letter from me. Only he is a *brahmachari* who can remain unmoved even while conducting a wedding. One who feels disturbed watching a wedding need not do so. I did not invite anyone.

You should salute A. B. from a distance and forget the rest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4310; also S.G. 73

63. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

WARDHA,

February 8, 1939

The following telephone report² has been received about Seth

¹ The statement was also published in *The Hindu* and *The Bombay Chronicle* of February 9 and in a slightly modified form in *Harijan* of February 11 under the heading "Barbarous Behaviour". It turned out, however, that the report used by Gandhiji in the statement was not wholly accurate; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-2-1939

² The report was in Hindi, which Gandhiji translated; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-2-1939

Jamnalalji who, when he was arrested a second time, was accompanied by his son, his secretary and a servant:

Seth Jamnalalji was detained at Ajmer Road station, 50 miles from Jaipur, and kept in the dak bungalow there. Mr. Young went to Sethji in person and asked him to enter his car. Sethji declined saying, "You wish to put me out side the border of Jaipur State. I wish to enter Jaipur. I will not accompany you." Mr. Young thereupon said, "We are taking you to Jaipur. Come with us." Sethji replied, "I cannot rely on your word." Mr. Young then said, "I have orders. You will have to come with me." Sethji asked to be shown the order, but it appears that there was no order in Mr. Young's possession. At length, Mr. Young again told Sethji that he would be taken to Jaipur. "If we do not take you there, you can have it printed in the newspapers that after promising to take you to Jaipur, we took you elsewhere." Sethji was not inclined to believe anything that was said to him. He said, "I will not accompany you willingly. You can take me by force, if you so desire."

This conversation took nearly an hour. In the end, five men forcibly put Sethji in a car and took him away. In this process of using force, Sethji was injured on his left cheek below the eye. He was taken to Alwar State. Sethji here said, "You cannot act like this. You are not at liberty to deposit me in another State. If you do so I will run a case against you." On this Mr. Young brought Sethji back again into Jaipur State. But we do not know his present whereabouts.

The only remark I have to offer is that this is barbarous behaviour. The sacredness of person, legal procedure and liberty are thrown to the winds. That a British Inspector-General of Police should resort to deception and then to personal injury to one who was his prisoner is what I call organized *goondaism*. But I know that nothing will break Jamnalalji's spirit. He will enter Jaipur either as a free man or prisoner.

The Hindustan Times, 9-2-1939

64. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
February 9, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

I THINK BEST LEAVE JAMNALALJI DO ACCORDING HIS
INSTINCT. I DO NOT APPRECIATE SENDING NOTICE. LET
HIM SUFFER IF HE MUST.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7804. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

65. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHAGANJ,
February 9, 1939

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED I THINK IT WOULD BE WISE
POSTPONE LUDHIANA CONFERENCE TILL AFTER CONGRESS.
PRINCIPAL WORK[ER]S ENGAGED IN STRUGGLE GOING ON
VARIOUS STATES.

BAPU

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

66. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I understand your letter.¹ It satisfies me. I shall send you

¹ *Vide* also letters to the addressee, "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 20-1-1939 and "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 22-1-1939

Rs. 200 as soon as Kishorelal returns. You will operate on Rs. 300 cheque.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N, 932

67. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I understand your analysis. Subhas wired saying he wants to come to Wardha. Let us see what happens. Of course I shall take no hasty decision. I am glad Sarup¹ is coming soon. I am hoping that the quiet of Segaoon will suit her.

Love.

BAPU

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

68. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

MY DEAR MAHTAB,

Your letter. You can come on 16th inst.²

Yours,
BAPU

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

69. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

Marriage is a sacrament. It should, therefore, lead not to indulgence but to restraint. We have four stages of life.

¹ Vijayalakshmi Pandit

² The addressee had wanted to meet Gandhiji to discuss the affairs of the Princely States in Orissa.

*Grihasthashrama*¹ is the second stage. In family life enjoyment has no place but service has an important place. Service and begetting of progeny cannot go hand in hand. Progeny, however, has a place in married life. If there is an intense desire for progeny sexual union is permitted. This union should result from deliberation, not passion. If this principle is accepted, husband and wife should not share the same bed. There should be no love play. Nothing should be done which would turn their minds to the sexual act. In these days it is a difficult dharma. May God grant you both the strength to perform it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10004. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

70. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,

February 9, 1939

BA,

I have your letter. I do not like your being constantly ill. But be brave now. You will get the facilities. But what does it matter even if you don't? Mani should read aloud the *Ramayana*, even if she cannot sing well. What are our troubles as compared to those of Rama and Sita? For the time being I have given up taking help from the girls. Do not feel uneasy. Do not worry. I shall see what to do. Sushila of course continues to look after me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, pp. 31-2

71. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 9, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you have the wire I sent yesterday. It was meant

¹ Householder's state

especially to be shown to Laithwaite¹. Of course, it could be interpreted as you suggest. So it may be as well if you have not shown it to him. Besides, since Devdas has brought out the facts in the Press, there is no need for that.

I do not think it right to send for Jamnalal. It is better to let him do as he wishes. If there is coercion then Jamnalalji should certainly protest. I am not very clear about the matter but I approve of Jamnalalji's opposition. What else could he do? When there is one against many he can only protest in this way. I have done it. I remember how, when the driver of the coach had tried to put me down. I had held on to the perch. I had received many blows. Had not the other passengers felt ashamed and checked the driver I would have lost my grip and my life too. I still do not consider this act of mine as having been violent. Jamnalalji has acted similarly. I have sent him a wire that he should act as he thinks right.

You will have seen my statement.² Agatha is sitting beside me. She brings news from Orissa. Nothing unusual. She is indeed working hard.

Jawahar's letter has come, he is neutral.

I understand what you write about Maulana. I do not think it proper to say anything at the moment, even if falsehood goes round. Subhas wants to come here. If he does, we shall see.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

72. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

WARDHA,
February 9, 1939

Critics of my recent writings on Rajkot and Jaipur have accused me of being guilty of untruth and violence. I owe them an answer. Such accusations have been made against me before now, indeed since

¹ Sir J. G. Laithwaite, Private Secretary to the Viceroy

² *Vide* "Letter to the Press", 9-2-1939

³ This was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu* of February 10 and in *Harijan* of February 18 under the heading "Not Guilty".

my entry into public life. I am happy to be able to say that most of my critics have later been obliged to acknowledge that I had not been guilty of either untruthful or violent language and that my statements were based on my belief in them and made without malice.

Even so is the case in the present instance. I am fully aware of my responsibility. I know that many of my countrymen put implicit faith in my statements. I have been asked for proofs in support of my statements I have given them.

Sardar Patel has reproduced in his statement¹ on Rajkot the remarks of the Resident reported to have been made by him about the Congress and himself. The memorandum of the conversation between the Resident, the Thakore Saheb and councillors, including Sir Patrick Cadell, is in my possession. It is too long to be published, but it will be, if occasion requires it.

As for organized *goondaism*, the facts have been published.² I connect the Resident with it, because he has sent the Agency police to the State and must be held responsible for the acts of his agents.

Similarly, the British Prime Minister is responsible for everything that is happening in Jaipur. The making of Seth Jamnalalji a football to be kicked out of Jaipur every time he dares to exercise the right of entering his birth-place is surely worse than unseemly.

I am not guilty of violence of language when I correctly characterize action. I would be guilty of violence if I harboured any ill-feeling against the Kathiawar Resident or the Jaipur Prime Minister. For ought I know, they may be most estimable men to meet, but their being estimable does not help the people of Rajkot or Jaipur. As a votary of truth and ahimsa, my business is to state the naked truth without fear but without ill will against the wrongdoers. My non-violence does not require any gilding of a bitter pill. I must, therefore, plead not guilty to the charge of racial animosity.

I cannot succeed in weaning people from the path of violence by hiding or dressing the naked truth; I hope to wean them by telling them and, what is more, showing by my conduct that it is not only right but profitable to wish well to the wrongdoer in spite of his wrongs, however grievous these may be.

Protection of the Princes is a duty the Paramount Power owes to

¹ *Vide* "Cold-Blooded Breach of a Solemn Covenant"

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-2-1939

them, but surely it is equally its duty to protect the people living in their jurisdiction. It seems to me that it is also their duty to withhold support from Princes when it is proved that a ruler is guilty of breach of faith with his people as in Rajkot or when it is proved that his people are denied ordinary civil liberty and one of his citizens is driven from pillar to post and practically denied access to courts of justice as in the case of Jaipur.

The more I think of what is happening in the States in India, I see nothing but a dark future for this unhappy land, if the Paramount Power remains a helpless witness to the tragedy that is being enacted in the Princes' India. For what is happening in Rajkot and Jaipur is but a sample of what is going to happen presently in the other States. The Maharaja of Bikaner was right when he advised concerted action among the Princes.¹ Only His Highness gave the wrong lead.

The doctrine of kicks and kisses will lead the Princes nowhere. It has sown bitterness and strife. The people of States may not be able to take concerted action as the Princes can, but the latter will not be able to treat the people from States other than their own or those from British India as foreigners. There is sufficient awakening among the people of the States to withstand the pressure even from a concert among the Princes.

The Hindustan Times, 10-2-1939

73. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[On or after *February 9, 1939*]²

JAMNALALJI
SAINIK, AGRA

YOUR	TELEGRAM.	SEND	DEFINITE	CORRECTIONS	MY
VERSION.	WILL	THEN	PUBLISH	REVISION.	QUITE
YOU	SHOULD	CROSS	BORDER	IF POSSIBLE	ON FOOT
WITH	SMALL	PARTY	WITHOUT	GIVING	NOTICE.
MUST	NOT	LEAVE	WARDHA.	SHE IS	UNFIT
AND	KAMALA'S	APPROACHING	DELIVERY	MAKES	IT
DANGEROUS	FOR	HER	LEAVE	WARDHA.	IF SHE WENT

¹ *Vide* "Kicks and Kisses's

² This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 9, for the text of which, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 12-2-1939

SHE MUST THROW HERSELF INTO STRUGGLE AND CAN NEVER COME BACK BEFORE STRUGGLE OVER. AM CONVINCED TIME HAS NOT ARRIVED FOR HER TO DO SO. EVEN IF SHE WAS WELL AND OTHERWISE FREE TO LEAVE WARDHA I SHOULD DISCOURTEGE HER LEAVING BUT WOULD RESERVE HER FUTURE WHEN STRUGGLE IN FULL SWING.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 214

74. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 10, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

You will be keeping good health. Today's letter from Mirabehn will greatly delight you. I am enclosing it. Send it back to me. I keep receiving Ba's letters.

I am getting on quite well. There is still a little swelling.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

75. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

SEGAON,
February 11, 1939

CHI. MARY,

You are considerate always. But if you had come you would have caused me no worry. Yes, you will stay with me if I go to the Congress.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6075. Also C.W. 3405. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

76. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

I have your wire and letter. I understand your position about the conference and the W. C. I cannot think of causes without the persons who handle them. I wrote about postponement on the strength of what I had heard from Balwantraji Mehta. He is engrossed in the Kathiawar struggle. Achintraji could not do without him. So I wired to you. I know nothing about the situation in Ludhiana.

I am sorry about Sarup. I was looking forward to her passing a few days with me.

Love.

BAPU

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

77. LETTER TO L. M. PATIL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

DEAR PATIL,

I have your letter. Where the Directors are Indians having an effective voice in the management of the concern and the concern itself is wholly in the interests of India I would call it swadeshi even though the whole of the capital may be foreign. Thus if I had full control of, say, a hand-spinning concern but I employed skilled white men under me and employed also European capital with or without interest I would claim that concern to be wholly swadeshi.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

78. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

MY DEAR C. R.,

I would have you to continue what you are doing about employment in spite of adverse comment. We do not need to copy

anybody.

Who is this lady at the back of the anti-Hindi propaganda?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2073

79. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

CHI. KANTI,

I may be said to be quite ill. Prabha will write. If I cannot show Saraswati's letter to Ramachandran it will be difficult to send for her here. How can we help one who hides her misery? I have, however, written to Ramachandran to send Saraswati here. But to send for her is one thing and to do so in order to save her from abuses and beatings is another. So you should give me full freedom. You should not lose your peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7358. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

80. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 11, 1939

BA,

I read about your transfer in the newspapers. Stay free of care wherever you are placed. Do not worry. God is certainly with you wherever you go. The doctors have come to examine me. They advise rest. I do take rest. A letter has gone to you from here every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

81. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got the papers sent by you.

I cannot believe the report about Mani having been separated from Ba.

If the meeting of the Working Committee on the 22nd is arranged here, what about Bardoli? Jamnalal writes to say that the meeting on the 22nd will be held here. Why not stay here for the present?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Forward the enclosed.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 233

82. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 11, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. Quite a few of us have gathered in the room: Gilsler¹, Jivaraj², Agatha³, . . .⁴, Pattabhi⁵, Kishorelal⁶, Frydman⁷, etc. Others are sitting outside. The doctors have warned me that I should take care of my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ Dr. M. D. D. Gilder

² Dr. Jivaraj Mehta

³ Agatha Harrison

⁴ The name is not decipherable

⁵ Pattabhi Sitaramayya

⁶ Kishorelal Mashruwala

⁷ Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, who had become Gandhiji's follower and come to be known as Bharatanand

83. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

February 11, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

So long as you have not acquired equimindedness it is best to observe the restraint I have suggested. But it does not at all mean that you are not to render even the necessary services to her or speak to her when the occasion demands it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4311; also S.G. 74

84. HYDERABAD

Hyderabad State Congress people are getting restive. As they have been acting under my advice some of them came to me and said, "We have suspended civil disobedience at your and other leaders' instance. You had held out the hope that, if we suspended civil disobedience, most probably the prisoners would be released and the State Congress recognized. Neither the one nor the other has happened. How long are we to remain out and vegetate while our co-workers are rotting in the State jails where life is none too easy? What will you have us do?"

As these friends have to deal with a large number of colleagues I had better give a summary of my answer to them. I said:

I sympathize with you. In your place I should feel like you. But satyagraha is not a simple affair. It is a way of life. It requires discipline. It demands infinite patience and capacity for uttermost suffering. Civil disobedience, which is but a phase of satyagraha, has to be suspended even though colleagues may have to suffer imprisonment, hardships attendant upon jail life, and even worse. And they have to do all this with good grace, joyfully and without malice towards those who are responsible for subjecting them to such suffering. Remember, too, that a true satyagrahi, being outside, goes through greater mental suffering than the one who has gone behind prison bars. The latter has done his task for the time being. His mind is free. He fulfils his immediate mission if he behaves like a model

prisoner and cheerfully submits to the sufferings he might have to go through. Whereas the former has to bear the brunt of managing the struggle, thinking out plans, and responding to the programme as it may be given from day to day.

I have to ask you to prolong your suspension if only for the simple and decisive reason that two bodies are offering civil disobedience for purposes wholly different from yours, however worthy their purpose may be. The Arya Samaj civil disobedience is purely religious in the sense that it is being offered for the vindication of the exercise of their religion. The Hindu Mahasabha is, I suppose, supporting the Arya Samaj. And, therefore, the struggle has assumed a communal colour. If you resume civil disobedience, it will be very difficult for you to retain your nationalistic character. You will expose yourselves to needless suspicion. Your methods too may not be identical with theirs. You will create an embarrassing situation without advancing your cause.

Thus the situation demands delicate handling. It is my conviction that your restraint will largely disarm suspicion, and to that extent you will be making a definite advance towards your goal. Meanwhile I can give you the assurance that whatever friendly offices can do is being and will continue to be done. Having heard my argument, you will act as may seem best to you. You must reject my advice if it does not appeal to your head and heart. If you accept it, remember that every member will be expected to devote himself whole-heartedly to the constructive programme as I have explained it to you.

SEGAON, February 12, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

85. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,
February 12, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I duly received your letter of the 5th inst. redirected from Bardoli.

I am grateful for the pains you have taken to explain your position so fully, frankly and fairly. After much consideration I felt

that it was a duty to publish the article returned by you. Even if Shri Chudgar has been guilty, consciously or unconsciously, of having misreported¹ Sir Beauchamp St. John, the truth could only be ascertained by publication of the correspondence. As I have the moral conviction about the accuracy of Shri Chudgar's report I felt that it would be wrong to withhold it from the public. I note in passing that although I asked the Prime Minister of Jaipur, if he denied Shri Chudgar's version, to give me his own, he would not do so.² But the question of wisdom or otherwise of publishing the correspondence pales into insignificance in the presence of the tragedy that is going on in Jaipur, Rajkot and Orissa.

In spite of your letter suggesting the possibility of it being erroneous, what is happening in these places has deepened the belief expressed by me in my letter to you of the 26th ult.

If you think that by a meeting you could clear my mind of the disquiet and show me that my belief is erroneous, I would be glad to run up to Delhi even though medical friends have enjoined complete rest for some time if I am not to collapse altogether. But I would gladly risk my health if I can be shown my error or if I could convince you that delay in action on your part is dangerous.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 10388. Courtesy: Pyarelal

86. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 12, 1939

BA,

I have your letter. You are kept informed of all the news. Stop worrying. I learn that you have duly received the enema can. What medicine would you want sent from here? The doctor now visits you there. If you feel the need you may take the medicine he prescribes. I will of course continue to write to you every day. Be brave.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

¹ *Vide* "Jaipur"

² *Vide* "Letter to Sir W. Beauchamp St. John", 22-1-1939 and "Letter to Sir W. Beauchamp St. John", 27-1-1939

87. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 12, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

What happened about the article that Chudgar was to write for me? I want it soon. I have received a long letter from the Viceroy. I will send you a copy of the reply¹ I have sent.

Send me a copy of the Princes Protection Act referred to in the accompanying notification.

Mani was first removed and then again brought back to Ba. What is all this? I don't understand at all. Who is the doctor, and the nurse?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 234

88. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 12, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

There should be no mistakes of proportion in such experiments. You will have been on the right track by now. There is no cause for worry if you have to cut down on walking. Why worry if you are able to sleep well and work?

I shall see about sending the money to Anand. I am enclosing a copy of my letter to the Viceroy.²

Subhas will come on the 15th. You will have seen the newspaper reports about Ba.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 12-1-1939

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 12-2-1939

89. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

WARDHA,
February 12, 1939

On reading my Press statement regarding his second expulsion from Jaipur State, Seth Jammalalji telegraphed to me as follows:

On the 9th instant I saw that your statement on my version regarding Mr. Young was incorrect owing to confusion in the telephonic message. The correct version appeared in *The Hindustan Times* of the 8th and 9th.² I hope you will do the needful.

I had not then seen *The Hindustan Times* referred to by Sethji. I have now seen both issues and I find that I have unconsciously done injustice to Mr. Young, whom, in my Press statement, I accused of having practised deception upon Sethji. I made the accusation on the strength of the telephone message received by his son in Wardha, of which I gave a literal translation in my statement. Sethji's son had no doubt whatsoever as to what he received through the telephone. But neither his accuracy nor my faithful translation can excuse the error into which I was betrayed. I, therefore, tender my unqualified apology to Mr. Young and I shall be extra careful henceforth in making use of telephone messages.

I see that not only was Mr. Young not guilty of any deception, but that he was careful to say that he was performing a painful duty in obedience to the orders of a superior authority. And in the execution thereof he was as courteous and as careful as it was possible for him to be in the circumstances.

Having made these amends, I must say that *The Hindustan Times* report, confirmed by Sethji, shows that his ill-treatment was much worse than was conveyed in the telephone message. All that night journey in the cold of Rajputana winter was a cruel and unnecessary torture. Even if expulsion was necessary for the preservation of peace in Jaipur, the night journey could surely have been avoided, as also the use of force.

The Hindu, 12-2-1939

¹ Published in *Harijan*, 18-2-1939, under the title "My Apology"; this also appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-2-1939, and other newspapers.

² It also appeared in *The Tribune*, 8-2-1939, in the form of a statement by Damodar Das and showed that Young had never given any assurance to Jammalal Bajaj that he would not be taken outside Jaipur State.

90. UNTRUTH IN NEWSPAPERS

A State official writes:

I have read your several articles in the *Harijan* about Congress activities in general and those in the States in particular. One¹ of these deals with corruption in the Congress ranks and at least, by implication, with other undesirable activities quite inconsistent with the spirit which you have tried to infuse into the mass of Congress workers.

It has occurred to me to draw your attention to the fact that much violence to truth and, therefore, harm to the cause you have at heart is being done by certain newspapers which live by abuse and which depend upon so-called 'Congress workers' for the unmitigated falsehoods they publish.

So far as the States are the targets of attack, legitimate criticism which rests on incontrovertible facts must be wholesome and should be helpful. You would, however, agree that nothing but the truth should be published.

What is happening, in fact, is that some people who nurse a sense of injury against the State to which they belonged or where they lived in the past, finding themselves driven away as a result of their activities to which the Government of the State took objection, are trying to pay off old scores and for such a purpose they imagine their position greatly fortified by their having joined the Congress fold. The papers they feed, in their turn, live by their diatribes, while for them those papers are the needed medium for the discharge of stored-up venom. The unfortunate result is that however these vernacular papers may succeed in inflaming the uninformed public, responsible people remain unaffected by their denunciations.

It is a pity that things that may be usefully brought to light in the honest spirit of awakening the administrations of the States to their responsibilities are, for want of knowledge, never published. What is published is either in the nature of a gross exaggeration of facts of no vital importance or, as is more often the case, some pure inventions and, therefore, an utter lie.

Your present policy seems to me to be that where the people desire to manage their own affairs, it is the duty of the Congress to help them in the attainment of that aim. I venture to think that it is not your policy to replace the contentment of the people with discontent, in pursuit of the ideal of responsible government throughout India.

Above all, I take your policy to be to disseminate and propagate the

¹ *Vide* "Internal Decay"

truth, and to wage a ceaseless war against untruth. In that belief, I venture to suggest that an article or two in the *Harijan* on the responsibility of newspapers that depend for what they publish upon 'Congress workers' and that of those workers might help to purge the Congress movement of some destructive germs and thereby make it more effective alike for the uplift of the downtrodden masses and for serving the highest cause of the country.

I have no difficulty in agreeing with the correspondent that newspapers which indulge in untruth or exaggeration harm the cause they profess to espouse. I admit, too, that there is enough untruth in enough newspapers to warrant action. But my experience is that no amount of public criticism will affect the policy of newspapers which make their livelihood by such policy.

I would like, however, to point out to my correspondent and others like him who are connected with States that the public must not be blamed for believing untruths if the State officials, under a false sense of security, will not deign to correct untruths or render explanations. And sometimes when they condescend to give explanations they are more untruthful than the untruths of the newspapers. The latest instance is that of Talcher. The Chief denied even the truth of a telling photograph in *The Statesman* of the refugees and has received a well-deserved snub from its Editor. I have a Talcher bulletin sent to me by Thakkar Bapa for me to laugh or weep over. Its denial is a shameful perversion of truth. I am publishing in this issue startling news about Mewar.¹

I would like an authentic contradiction of the news or strong action against the police if they acted in disregard of instructions. But I write this in no way to condone untruths in newspapers. I am quite clear that if newspapers weighed every word that is printed therein, we should have a speedier removal of abuses whether in the States or elsewhere.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

¹ *Vide* "Mewar"

91. TARVANCORE

Though I have been apparently silent about Travancore, the workers may rest assured that I have not been neglectful. Sometimes silence is more telling than speech. All I am free to say is that I have been usefully silent. I am sorry that all has not gone well. I had hoped that when the State Congress withdrew the allegations against the Dewan things would run smoothly and the movement for responsible government would be allowed full play.¹ But the bulletin² reproduced elsewhere shows that there is no such luck for the Travancoreans. The unseating of 19 prominent members of the Travancore Assembly seems to be vindictive.³ Have they done anything dishonourable? Not that I know of.

I have before me a letter describing the ill-treatment of Shrimati Akkamma Cherian, a political prisoner. If what she declared in court is true, her treatment was surely disgraceful. She is a cultured woman. She gave up the headmistress-ship of a school in order to join the struggle for liberty. It hurts one to think that in an advanced State like Travancore, which boasts of an enlightened Prince, an equally enlightened Maharani, his mother, and an experienced Dewan, liberty is being choked by rude repression.

But another letter tells me that this repression is taking place in the name of Hinduism and for the sake of saving a Hindu State ! It has been suggested that the idea is to repress the Christians who are playing a prominent part in the struggle for freedom.

It is surely late in the day to talk of Hindu States and Muslim States. And what is the test? Is Kashmir a Hindu State because a Hindu Prince happens to rule a territory which has an overwhelming majority of Muslims as its inhabitants? Or is Hyderabad with its overwhelming Hindu population a Muslim State because a Muslim Prince rules their destiny? I regard this kind of talk as a libel on nationalism. Is India a Christian State because a Christian king rules over her destiny? But if India is Indian no matter who rules, the States are also Indian no matter who happens to be the ruler. And the present Rulers and their

¹ *Vide* "Talk to Travancore State Congress Deputation", 15-11-1938, and "Travancore"

² "Travancore Bulletin" by G. Ramachandran

³ These members, all belonging to the State Congress, had been disqualified on the ground of their having been convicted under the Criminal Law Amendment Regulation.

successors will rule only by the grace of an awakened people. The awakening that has taken place has come to stay. Every day quickens the pace. The Rulers and their advisers may succeed for the time being in suppressing the spirit of the people. They will never succeed in killing it. To succeed would be to kill the spirit of the people of India. Is anyone in India so shortsighted as to feel that independence is not coming soon? And is it possible to conceive that an independent India will for one moment tolerate repression in any single spot, be it ever so big or ever so small? There is room, in my conception of an independent India, for States with Princes as constitutional trustees, as in Aundh.¹ There is room for Englishmen as fellow-servants of the people, never as masters. Therefore, the only way in which the Princes can live in a free India is for them now to recognize the time spirit, bow to it and act accordingly. Let it be the boast of the Hindu Prince, his Hindu mother and their Hindu Dewan that they were not afraid of their Christian citizens. Supposing there was responsible government in Travancore, what could the Christians or the Hindus or the Muslims do? Whoever the legislators, they will be responsible to the voters. There is no room for fear, there is no hitch in the process. But in the present repression, there is much to fear and there are many hitches.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

92. THE ETHICS OF IT

A friend suggests that I have perhaps departed from correct conduct in publishing the confidential correspondence² between Thakore Saheb and Sir Patrick Cadell and extracts from the interview between Thakore Saheb-in-Council and the Resident. I have no such feeling at all. I claim to be very sensitive to points of honour. My worst critics have credited me with the capacity to respect confidence and bury secrets entrusted to me. But I have never regarded it any part of my duty to protect breaches of promises against disclosure or to cover crimes of which I have notice in due course. I do protect confessions made to me in confidence as I did when I was asked, on pain of being punished by a court of law, to disclose the names of criminals during the unfortunate riots in Ahmedabad at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation. In the case in question there is no such point

¹ *Vide* "Notes", sub-title "Aundh Reforms"

² *Vide* "Cold-Blooded Breach of A Solemn Covenant"

of honour. Regard for truth and the popular cause demanded publication of the correspondence and the extracts. The documents were received by the Sardar in ordinary course. They were handed by those who were in legal possession. There was, therefore, so far as I can see nothing dishonourable about getting possession of the documents and, as I have said, nothing incorrect, much less dishonourable, about their publication. Without such publication the popular case could not be proved.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

93. MEWAR

A correspondent sends the following business-like note¹:

First incident: Date of happening: 14th December, 1938. Place of happening: A wayside bridge in the British territory of town Deoli. Mewar territory: At a distance of about 12 yards.

. . . Shri Mathura Prasad Vaidya, a worker of the Mewar Praja Mandal, . . . while distributing Praja Mandal literature . . . was all of a sudden attacked by two constables of Uncha Police in Mewar. One of them snatched away the literature . . . The other knocked him down on the ground and then both of them forcibly dragged him in a semi-conscious state to the nearby territory of Mewar only at a distance of about 12 yards . . . Vaidya Mathura Prasad was severely beaten by those policemen on the way to Uncha police station. He has now been sentenced for nine months.

Second incident: Date of happening: 2nd February, 1939. Place of happening: On the outskirts of Deoli, British territory.

. . . Shri Maniklal Varma, secretary of the Mewar Praja Mandal, had gone to Deoli . . . In the evening at about 6.30 p.m., he with four other colleagues of his was all of a sudden attacked on the outskirts of the town by 15 men of Mewar police with lathis. All the five persons were badly wounded, and Maniklalji was then forcibly dragged through bushes and thorns in a most inhuman way to the Mewar territory which was at a distance of at least a few hundred yards. The Deoli police was informed during the mishap but no notice was taken, and the Dewan of the police station could not be found even after a good search, as if the whole thing was prearranged. Maniklalji was arrested

¹ Of which only extracts are reproduced here

and taken to the Uncha police station in Mewar.

The correspondent adds:

Shri Maniklalji belongs to Bijolia. He has been devoting himself to the service of the peasantry for the past 20 years. He founded the Praja Mandal a year ago. But it was declared illegal within a few days. Therefore he started civil disobedience some months ago. I send you these incidents as you have begun to write publicly about States' affairs. Will you kindly guide us workers also what should be done in such circumstances?

This news is strange, if it is true. It is difficult to understand why the police did not arrest these workers within the Mewar border. Or was it that the workers' friends were avoiding the Mewar territory? In any event the arrests seem to me to have been illegal. The dragging amounted to an assault. The only advice I can give is that this is essentially a case for legal proceedings. The Praja Mandal should take it up.

But civil resisters of the States should remember that the real battle has yet to come. The States, big or small, seem to be taking concerted action. They are copying the methods adopted by the British in British India during the satyagraha struggle and are likely to improve upon them in frightfulness. They fancy that they have no fear of public opinion, for there is none in the States except in rare cases. But civil resisters who are worth their salt will not be deterred by any frightfulness.

SEGAON, February 13, 1939

Harijan, 18-2-1939

94. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
February 13, 1939

GHANSHYAMDASJI

LUCEKY

CALCUTTA

GILDER JIVARAJ EXAMINED YESTERDAY BUT DR. ROY¹
HAS RIGHT COME WHEN HE LIKES.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7805. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy

95. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[February 13, 1939]¹

CHI. MIRA,

All your letters are good and works of art. Your report of the interview is graphic. Let us hope it will bear fruit.

The money I hope you received in good time.

I shall try to come as soon as I can.

The rest from Sushila.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6428. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10023

96. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

February 13, 1939

BA,

You have now had good experience of Staying alone also. But I forget. When were you alone? Rama has always been with you. And when He is there, it does not matter whether others are or not. But now there are two, Mridu and Mani. Be cheerful. They may also write.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 32

97. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 13, 1939

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letters. The Garasias are not likely to forgo readily what they regard as their *garas*². If we go on suffering silently everything will end well.

The problem about Ba was quickly solved. Mani is a resourceful

¹ From the postmark

² Share in State lands

girl. She has mastered the art of doing the right thing at the right time.¹ She is living up to her name.²

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 234

98. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 13, 1939

CHI. SHARMA,

Did you get the wire I sent? The reply received here was:

“Many Sharmas, wire undelivered.”

There is only one point you want answered. We need not give such a deep meaning to nature cure. Only he is entitled to it who has put it into practice in its popular meaning. We cannot all say: “I am the Brahman.” When it is time for you to go to jail God will open a way. Anyway, what I am envisaging for you is not jail-going. So keep yourself immersed in your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapaki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 278 and 279

99. DISCUSSION WITH DR. CHESTERMAN³

SEGAON,

February 13, 1939

. . . He said he had been overwhelmed with the perplexity of Indian problems and naturally the medical ones had taken first place in his mind. When he heard that 2

¹ On being separated from Kasturba, Manibehn had refused to take food till she was taken back to her.

² ‘Mani’ means a jewel.

³ Extracted from Amrit Kaur’s “A Good Samaritan”. Dr. Chesterman was the medical secretary of the English Baptist Mission and had come to India to attend the International Missionary Conference at Tambaram and to visit various mission hospitals.

lakhs of women die yearly from child-birth, 1 lakh from smallpox, 36 lakhs from indiscriminate fevers, that there are 10 lakhs of lepers and 6 lakhs of blind persons, he confessed he was appalled with the immensity of the task of both preventive and curative medicine. He was not sure whether Gandhiji was aware of the fact that there were 266 mission hospitals and 500 dispensaries in India, 254 European and 350 Indian doctors, 300 European and 800 Indian nurses, 2 million patients seen and 5 million treated per annum in these hospitals, that half of the T. B. work and almost the entire work of lepers was in the hands of missions. While, of course, the work of conversion was there, and he knew Gandhiji's opinion on this subject, he wanted to draw attention to the fact that three quarters of their medical work lay in areas where there was no response to religious teaching . . . He would, therefore, much like to have Gandhiji's opinion on how the work could be most fruitfully developed and how far they could count on support and co-operation.

In reply Gandhiji said that the answer was difficult and yet simple at the same time.

I hold peculiar views on the function of medicine. I expressed these very forcibly years ago, and nothing in all the course of my long experience since has made me change them in essence. But there is no need for me to expound these to you now. I have visited many mission hospitals, seen the wonderful work of the missionaries among lepers. This work may be called their monopoly and speciality, for practically no one else has come in to take it up. I know the Leper Home in Cuttack. I have spent quite a long time in the Purulia Leper Asylum and been very struck with the work there. Then I have seen Mrs. Higginbotham's work in Allahabad and several other places, too, for I love to visit leper homes. But in spite of all this admiration of mine for the work of medical missionaries there has always been mental reservation and criticism within me. I have felt that these good and well-intentioned missionaries have not touched the fringe of the question. Certainly good work has been done for lepers, for the blind, for sufferers from T. B. and other ailments, but the help has not really touched the suffering millions of this great land. Medical aid has been made available in the main to those who live in or near the cities—whereas the bulk of India's population in our villages has been untouched. Provincial Governments, even Congress Governments, are appalled at the need of the villager. They do not know what to do and nothing great has yet been done in spite of various experiments. Therefore, if I were asked to advise missionaries or Mission Boards, I would ask them not to try to transplant the entire system of Western

medicine into India. We cannot afford it. There is ever so much to be gleaned and had from the study of indigenous drugs and medicines, but practically very little work has been done in this department. No one has made it his business to go out into our fields and search and much of the indigenous talent, simply because it is not considered original or scientific, is running to waste. I will give you an incident which happened only today. As you may know, I have had a little swelling on one foot for some days now which has alarmed the doctors because they feel that it is a sign denotative of commencing disintegration of the heart and kidneys. One of my co-workers here—you may call him almost an illiterate man—was very troubled, as all are, about me and tells me he could not sleep last night. This morning he brought me a green leaf and told me that it had cured his father of the same trouble and begged of me to try it also. I had no hesitation in acceding to his proposal—whereas if I had had a bewildering prescription given me by a highly qualified doctor my reaction would not have been the same. I feel, therefore, that in these simple ways lies relief for the villager. I do not say that the leaf will answer the purpose. But there should be an agency that can say with certainty what these herbs are and what is their quality.

Gandhiji then went on to explain that he had no prejudice against Western medicine or doctors. He had today sent for glucose for Mr. Kallenbach, a South African friend of his who was lying ill with malaria and who was refusing to take quinine, a drug in which Gandhiji himself had implicit faith.

Here, Dr. Chesterman interposed and said that quinine was an indigenous drug to which Gandhiji replied that though that was so it was a monopoly and therefore very expensive and utterly beyond the reach of the villager.

I should, therefore, like to see missionaries as medicine vendors for the villages, confining themselves, as far as they can, to indigenous medicines. There will certainly not be gold medals or knighthoods from Government forthcoming for them for this valuable research work. But, in my opinion, they will obtain what is of far greater value, a knighthood from Jesus Christ.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he had felt for a long time that the medical faculty in India should manufacture a short course of training for village workers, and had told Surgeon General Hooten of Bombay so, many years ago. Village school-teachers should be utilized for this purpose. They should look upon the entire village as under their jurisdiction from the point of view of health and teach the simple laws of hygiene and prevention of disease to the inhabitants. Their schools

could be used as dispensaries for the distribution of ordinary medicines for simple ailments. He gave the analogy of the useful six weeks first-aid training which he himself had had to undergo before he could form and lead the ambulance corps which he did during the Boer War.

. . . Dr. Chesterman then asked Gandhiji his opinion on expenditure on buildings and elaborate equipment for hospitals. Gandhiji replied saying that he had always been opposed to this and was invariably trying to wean people from spending on what was unnecessary when for so much that was urgently needed money was lacking. Big hospitals did not help the poor man in the long run for they did not educate him to understand how he ought to look after his health once he left the hospital.

DR. CHESTERMAN: What contribution can medical missionaries make towards the raising of ethical standards in professional life?

GANDHIJI: They can help, but I do not feel they can do much according to my measurement. You may think me uncharitable, but so long as the mental reservation is there that medical missionaries would like all their patients and co-workers to become converts to Christianity, so long will there remain a bar to real brotherhood. Then there is the additional handicap that they belong to the ruling race and that is responsible for their aloofness. Missionaries have not learnt the maxim 'When you go to Rome do as Rome does'. They retain everything of the West in their daily lives forgetting that clothes and food and modes of life are in response to climate and to surroundings and adjustment, therefore, becomes necessary. They have not stooped to conquer. The gulf of mutual distrust exists and there is, therefore, no easy passage between the medical missionary and the medical profession in India.

Dr. Chesterman disputed this statement. He maintained that there was any amount of goodwill also. He had met a Hindu friend in Bombay who had definitely assured him that there was need for mission hospitals because Indians got greater consideration and greater compassion there than in Government institutions.

Asked whether mission hospitals were justified in taking fees from those able to afford them, unlike Government institutions where money was generally extracted by the subordinate staff in undesirable ways, Gandhiji said he saw no reason against it.

The last question Dr. Chesterman asked was whether Gandhiji's objection to conversion applied to areas like the Kond Hills where the aboriginal races were animists. The unhesitating reply was:

Yes. It does apply, because I know that in spite of being

described as animists these tribes have from time immemorial been absorbed in Hinduism. They are, like the indigenous medicine, of the soil, and their roots lie deep there. But you can only endorse this if you feel that Hinduism is as true as Christianity. I hold that all religions are true but imperfect inasmuch as they are presented through human agency and bear the impress of the imperfections and frailties of the human being. My quarrel with missionaries is that they think no religion other than Christianity is true.

In parting from Gandhiji, while thanking him for the time he had given and hoping the conversation had not unduly tired him, Dr. Chesterman implored Gandhiji to continue to appeal to the best that was in them. The feeling answer that greatly touched Dr. Chesterman was:

I am making that appeal incessantly from the innermost recesses of my heart. That is of far more value than the written word although I have indulged in that also.

Harijan, 25-2-1939

100. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 14, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

Is your work going on well? How did you manage to fall ill ?

A letter for Shaikh Chandbhai is enclosed.

If there is anything which you think might interest me, write to me.

I am not quite well, but there is no cause for worry just now.

Can you or Gokibehn get permission to see Ba?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8555. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

101. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 14, 1939

CHI. QURESHI,

Amtul Salaam had a talk with me but I completely forgot to write to you. There is no need to feel hesitant about accepting money for social service. I have already talked about it. You can start drawing money the moment you are relieved from the perfumery business. You have to bear in mind that you are not to incur debts.

I have already explained to you about the children, haven't I? You can give them religious education at home and general education along with other children. Sultana might perhaps study in the Harijan Ashram as the other girls do. I could not ask Narahari whether you could get a place in the Ashram and later forgot about it. I am now having him consulted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 10765. Courtesy: Gulam Rasool Qureshi

102. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 14, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. The President is coming today. On the 16th Swarup¹ and Appa² (Aundh) are also coming. Kallenbach is on death-bed. I am just watching God's greatness. Chesterman³ arrived yesterday. He is an efficient doctor. Now he has started on his routine.

¹ Vijayalakshmi Pandit

² Appasaheb Pant

³ Dr. Chesterman was the medical secretary of the English Baptist Mission and had come to India to attend the International Missionary Conference at Tambaram and to visit various mission hospitals.

For the sake of Kallenbach he has postponed his departure. Otherwise we had decided to call a specialist from Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

103. LETTER TO SURESH SINGH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 14, 1939

BHAI SURESH,

I have not so far considered civil disobedience nor do I find an atmosphere for it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8691. Also C.W. 2893. Courtesy: Suresh Singh

104. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 15, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I had your second letter. Time will put everything right. Have patience. Everything, since it is new to you, must appear strange. Ultimately you will get used to things. Have courage. You must have received my letter.

Mr. Kallenbach was seriously ill but is better now. Your absence is often felt here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10009. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

105. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 15, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

We have already begun feeling lonely without you. One misses your voice at the prayer. But that is the way of the world. Meeting, parting, again meeting, and again parting will go on and we should remain unaffected by them.

You should now understand your dharma. Conjugal dharma is easy as well as difficult. It is easy for one who understands it. You should become one with Manubhai and Manubhai should become one with you. But there is no scope for bargaining. There can be no bargaining in dharma. Dharma has to be performed by oneself. So it is certain that you have to become one with Manubhai who may or may not become one with you. This means that your entire spiritual riches should be surrendered to him. And so you both should lift each other higher and higher but never bring each other down. Brighten up the atmosphere there as you filled the house with joy here. If you have understood the *Gita* you will be cheerful in whatever condition you may be placed.

Absorb yourself in the school work. There can hardly be any news to give, seeing that it is not quite two hours since you left. But Prabha will come tomorrow. This will also be despatched tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4599. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

106. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

[Before *February 16, 1939*]¹

BA,

I have your letter and Mani's. You must go through all the tests.

¹Vide "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", 16-2-1939, in which Gandhiji says, "Kallenbach is better."

Letters have already gone from here. Enquire from the officer there. Mr. Kallenbach has fallen ill. It is a severe illness. Lilavati observes fast on Mondays. I am not writing separately to Mani.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 33

107. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 16, 1939

MY DEAR C.R.,

If you can, you should give him notice about the passages marked by me and ask him to apologize and promise not to repeat the performance. But you will be right in prosecuting him straightway.

Do read the enclosed from Tatachar. You can't govern by mere cold reason. But you are the man on the spot. You must act according to your lights not mine.

Pray don't ask me to cover the spinning prices. Do listen to those who ask you to take care of your health.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2174

108. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

February 16, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

Is it my fault that you do not receive the letters I write you? I hope you have become calm now. Vijaya left yesterday, crying. Many others have come. Among them are Yashoda and Sarup.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10005. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

109. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

February 16, 1939

BA,

I write to you every day. What can I do if you do not get my letters? Just as there is now no cause for worry about you, there was never any cause for worry about me. Subhas Babu has already arrived. Others keep coming and going. Mr. Kallenbach is better. Kanam is well. He not only eats with me but also sleeps with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 33

110. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 16, 1939

CHI. MANI,

I have received your long letter and other letters. I have been impressed by all your actions. I can find no fault. I see that you have understood the principle of satyagraha very well. I am therefore completely at ease.

I don't get a telegram from Government every day. I have had two or three. From here letters have gone every day. In the beginning I wrote at the address you gave. Then I wrote to the Government as to why my letters were not reaching you. They sent me a telegram advising me to route my letters through the First Member. I now act accordingly.

I do receive a letter from your end every day. I am therefore content.

I do not write separately to Mridu. She should not worry. Is the burden of work there so little that she should take up that of the Congress, too?

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
STATE PRISONER
C/O FIRST MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL
RAJKOT (KATHIAWAR)

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 124

111. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 17, 1939

CHI. BABUDI

If you do not receive my letters Sent to you at the Bombay address given by you, is it my fault or yours? I have even the dates with me. It will be better if you come here now. It is not good to fall ill. My going to Bardoli has been cancelled.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I myself open your letters.

From Gujarati: C.W. 10006. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

112. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
February 18, 1939

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
LUCKY
CALCUTTA

TELL BIDHAN BARDOLI CANCELLED. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7808. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

113. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON,
February 18, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letters. I have written or asked somebody to write to you almost every day. It is difficult to forget you. My eye always turns towards where you used to sleep, but to what good? It won't do your having a chronic fever. If it persists, you had better come to me in good time. If you do not use a mosquito-net, start

using one now. I am quite well. But do not keep me worried about you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati. C.W. 10007. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

114. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,

February 18, 1939

BA,

Letters have been sent to you every day. But if you do not get them what can one do? You need not worry about me. Even if I am in a really bad way I shall expect you to say: 'If it is willed that he should die during separation, he will. I on my part will stay where my children are being tortured. I shall be even more happy if I am sent to jail. All of you should help me in making Thakore Saheb fulfil his promise. I would prefer to die in Rajkot, if you do not make use of my services.' Since you have gone there of your own accord, you may voice these sentiments if they arise in your heart. You should think on these lines.

You are always telling me to take service from the girls. But I have altogether given that up now. Sushila does the massage. That also will have to be abandoned, won't it? I have not been able to give it up because of my present bad health. Do not worry about me even in this respect. Is not God my ultimate support?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 33

115. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 18, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

I hope you are completely at ease and happy there. I would not like your being the least bit unhappy; it will be a blot on my training. There should not be the slightest resistance to mutual adjustment.

Write to me a detailed letter. How are you settled ? How do you find the climate and the surroundings?

Amritlal had a little fever today. Even a slight change has its effect. There is nothing to worry about. Mr. Kallenbach is fairly improved although the fever is still there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write a letter to Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7108. Also C.W. 4600. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

116. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL AND MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEGAON,
February 18, 1939

CHI. . MANI AND MRIDULA,

It is God's grace that you both are there. I would be happy if all three of you were here together. But we have to live as God wills.

You do not have to worry about Subhas Babu and others. As far as that is concerned you are in jail. I shall act as God directs me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 125

117. NOTES

JAIPUR

After all the Jaipur Durbar has been obliged to arrest Seth Jamnalalji. It is reported that he is decently housed though kept in an out-of-the-way place under a strong guard. There seems to be secrecy about everything. I suggest that the authorities make a public statement as to his whereabouts, the facilities given to him and the conditions as to correspondence and interviews. Is medical assistance

easily available?

But if what one hears about Shekhavati is true, the detention and treatment under detention of Sethji is of minor account. In the absence of detailed news on behalf of the State the public are bound to give credence to the statements appearing in the Press.

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

TRUE SWADESHI

If I have to use the adjective 'true' before swadeshi, a critic may well ask, 'Is there also false swadeshi?' Unfortunately I have to answer 'yes'. As, since the days of khadi, I am supposed to be an authority on swadeshi, numerous conundrums are presented to me by correspondents. And I have been obliged to distinguish between the two kinds of swadeshi. If foreign capital is mixed with indigenous, or if foreign talent is mixed with indigenous, is the enterprise swadeshi? There are other questions too. But I had better reproduce the definition I gave to a Minister the other day. "Any article is swadeshi if it subserves the interest of the millions, even though the capital and talent are foreign but under effective Indian control." Thus khadi of the definition of the A. I. S. A. would be true swadeshi even though the capital may be all foreign and there may be Western specialists employed by the Indian Board. Conversely, Bata's rubber or other shoes would be foreign though the labour employed may be all Indian and the capital also found by India. The manufacture will be doubly foreign because the control will be in foreign hands and the article, no matter how cheap it is, will oust the village tanner mostly and the village *mochi*¹ always. Already the *mochis* of Bihar have begun to feel the unhealthy competition. The Bata shoe may be the saving of Europe; it will mean the death of our village shoemaker and tanner. I have given two telling illustrations, both partly imaginary. For in the A. I. S. A. the capital is all indigenous and the whole of the talent also. But I would love to secure the engineering talent of the West to give me a village wheel which will beat the existing wheels, though deep down in me I have the belief that the improvements that indigenous talent has made are by no means to be despised. But this is a digression. I do hope that those Ministers and others who guide or

¹ Cobbler

serve the public will cultivate the habit of distinguishing between true and false swadeshi.

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-2-1939

118. TRAVANCORE AGAIN

I take the following from Shri Ramachandran's letter to the Rajkumari:

I know there is nothing we can expect unless we burn ourselves out peacefully and truthfully for the cause for which we stand. You must have seen how at the last meeting of the Working Committee of the State Congress we laid down a time limit of six weeks before commencing a programme of civil resistance. God is witness that we are anxious for peace. But there has been no enquiry into shootings which took place in nine places. Many lawyers convicted during the last campaign have been debarred from practising for two years. 19 members of the State Congress Party in the Legislature have been disqualified just on the eve of the present session now sitting. Government had ample time to notify disqualification earlier and order has been made to destroy the State Congress volunteer organization under another iniquitous regulation brought into force for that specific purpose. Just now there are over 200 political prisoners. Many respectable people have been arrested under section 90 meant for security proceedings against *goondas*. Fresh accommodation has been added in the central jail. Over 1,000 special police have been recruited from among bad elements at the astounding monthly salary of Rs. 5. Can anything beat that? And as though the Travancore police trusted cannot beto do the dirty work, numerous police constables have been recruited from outside Travancore. The Government's policy of repression has gone on unabated, without fuss and without precipitating a frontal battle. That is why we feel compelled to lay down a time limit of six weeks. I wish you to study carefully the papers I have sent to Bapu—specially the two resolutions we passed at the last meeting of the Working Committee. I am oppressed with the idea that Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer's policy will create a gulf between the Ruler and the people.

I have refrained from giving in these columns the resolutions and the preface referred to in the letters. It is well for the reader to have these before him to enable him to judge what the State Congress is doing. They will be found elsewhere in this issue.

The documents make painful reading. What has happened since

the amnesty has robbed it of the grace that should accompany generous amnesties as this one on the birthday of the Maharaja was claimed to be. It was a spontaneous gesture. After events seem to suggest that it was no gesture of generosity, but that it was a part of the tactics adopted by the authorities to allay the agitation that was rising against the Travancore Durbar and to divide the people in Travancore. If the information given by Shri Ramachandran is correct, the second object has not been gained and the first was partly- achieved. For the Indian Press was inclined to believe, after the release of prisoners, that the fight was over.

I would love to think that there was no sinister motive behind the partial amnesty. If so, it seems to me to be quite easy to conciliate the State Congress, unless crushing, not conciliation, is the aim of the authorities. Let the amnesty be completed and Reforms Committee be appointed in consultation with the State Congress, and peace between the Prince and the people is assured.

But there may be no such good fortune either for the people or the Prince. In that case the State Congressmen should remember that satyagraha, if it is the greatest force in the world, requires also the capacity for the greatest suffering with a heart without anger or malice. Whilst it is right to publish the news about the doings of the oppressor, there must be infinite patience for endless suffering and yet a burning faith in the ultimate success of truth.

It is well that the Congress has fixed upon a six weeks' limit. But if it is found that six weeks are not enough for ensuring non-violence as far as it is humanly possible and for also ensuring continuity of constructive work, there would be no shame but additional credit in taking further postponement. If thoughtless persons and unkind critics regard such postponement as a sign of weakness, the fighters need not mind such imputations. After all the soldier knows when to stay his hand and when to move on. He knows that often there is action in so-called inaction and imprudent action is worse than real inaction. And weak is not he who is so called but he who feels that he is weak. Let the members of the Working Committee realize that the technique of non-violent action requires general and effective control over forces of violence, no matter how or by whom instigated. If and when the struggle is resumed, I hope that in answer to my wires I will not be told that the State Congress is not responsible for violence if it breaks out. Does not responsible government mean that the people,

instead of a dictator appointed by a Paramount Power, are responsible for all the acts of the people? Let them realize that if violence breaks out on any appreciable scale, it might, very probably will, be a call for another suspension, even as there was suspension in Bardoli, though violence broke out in far-off Chauri Chaura.¹

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-2-1939

119. LAWLESS LIMBDI

Limbdia is a Kathiawar State. It had the reputation of being progressive. I have the good fortune to know many of its workers. They are wise, self-sacrificing and capable of doing hard work. In common with many States, Limbdia also had a great awakening among the people. The workers used to boast of their progressive Yuvraj. But they have now discovered that he has imbibed some curious notions of the dictatorships of the West. He would let the reformers have a free run of little Limbdia. But they must not go to the villages. In the villages he was to make his own experiments unhindered by anybody. The Limbdia reformers thought that they had as much right as the Yuvraj to work among the villagers, especially as they had already established connection with them. They therefore dared to go to the villages, with the result mentioned in the following telegram:

At least eighty persons, armed with lathis, *dharias*, native guns, swords, axes, attacked village Pansina midnight fifth. Entrances of village were guarded by batches of three to five persons. Two batches of twenty persons went round village and selected houses of Prajamandal workers and sympathizers for dacoity. First of all they went to the Prajamandal office and chained it from outside so that volunteers could not go out. Then one batch went to house of Chhotalal, prominent merchant and Prajamandal worker, and brutally assaulted him and his wife. She received serious injuries including on her sex organs. President of local branch attacked with sword and received punctured wound in lungs. About thirty persons are seriously injured. Ornaments, cash and goods worth about sixty thousand rupees taken away from ten to twelve houses of active members of Prajamandal. Dacoits continuously carried on firing in air and at houses for about two hours. After

¹ *Vide* "The Crime of Chauri Chaura"

this they went to another village, Ralol, two miles away from Pansina and repeated process there. Three goldsmiths and one bania sympathizing with popular movement have been seriously wounded and property worth ten thousand rupees taken away. One bania Jeychand Valji was attacked today with knife, stabbed at four places and plundered in Siani; his sister also beaten. People have strong grounds to suspect State Officers' hand in dacoity. Some dacoits were identified as Pagis and Pasayatas of State. Prajamandal workers and sympathizers were actually being threatened since last week by State Pagis, Pasayatas that they will be robbed and beaten. Stolen property removed in about eight motor-cars and two buses which could not have been supplied by private individuals. Dacoits continued firing in air for two hours using number of cartridges which could not have been supplied by private individual. State police has not started any investigation as yet. Even *panchanamas* have not been made. No medical aid sent by State from capital. Thakore Saheb even though approached has not taken any strong action. Threats of similar dacoity are being given by State Pasayatas in other villages. Previous incidents of *goondaism* strengthen this suspicion. Attacking Bhaktiba's car with lathis in Jambu by Mukhi's men, smashing Prajamandal car and beating its driver and worker in Siani, beating members of Prajamandal in village Raska, threatening head of volunteers in Siani by village Pasayatas with death, free movement of about thirty *goondas* with lathis, *dharias*, knives in Siani and number of such incidents have left no doubt here that organized *goondaism* is started by State to suppress recently started popular movement. Attention of Thakore Saheb has been drawn to these incidents times without number but in vain. As protest against last act of dacoity about 400 to 500 persons including Nagarsheth Lalchandbhai and prominent citizens like Durlabhji Umedchand, Amulakh Amichand have started hunger strike and are sitting day and night before Palace. About three thousand other persons have joined this morning. Great indignation prevails against State. People observing remarkably non-violent attitude and are prepared for any contingency.

They also dared to announce a meeting of their Parishad with the result embodied in the following message received by me:

Sitting Praja Parishad arranged tomorrow. To break Praja Parishad many *goondas* imported Limbdi. People suspect hand of State officials in this. Strong grounds for this suspicion. Procession of *goondas* armed with lathis, naked swords, guns, *dharias*, marching through town for whole day. Some of these tried to assault certain women. Seth Amulakh Amichand, prominent merchant of Bombay, intervened and asked them to beat him rather than women. Seth Durlabhji Umedchand and Bhagwanlal Harakhchand rushed to

scene with six male volunteers. Male volunteers were brutally assaulted with sticks and beaten. At another place *goondas* caught hold of Prahladrai Mody, pleader of Bhavnagar, and released him only when they knew that he was not Prajamandal worker. Bhogilal Gandhi was threatened with death by *goonda* armed with naked sword. Manubhai Thakar was given one lathi blow. *Goondas* are shouting before Prajamandal office. Batch of *goondas*, headed by Tapubha of Siani who is State servant and who beat Prajamandal volunteers in Siani two days before, have stationed themselves outside Sthanakvasi Bhojanshala where peasants from villages are sleeping. They threaten anybody who comes out with death. Different batches of *goondas* are marching streets. Practically state of siege amounting to virtual martial law by State prevails. People feel that State is responsible for this. Narubha, superintendent of police, was seen talking with some of these by respectable people. Many peasants are forcibly brought from villages and made to parade streets in procession headed by these *goondas*. People have adopted remarkably non-violent attitude and have decided to suffer anything for asserting their right to meet in Parishad.

I have since learnt that Durbar Gopaldas Desai and his wife Bhaktiba were surrounded by the same gentlemen described in the message. Both suffered minor injuries. The *goondas* had the satisfaction for a time of preventing the meeting of the Parishad. I have no reason whatsoever for disbelieving the messages which describe the events with a wealth of detail that carries conviction. What is more, they are sent by parties whom I hold to be incapable of conscious exaggeration or of invention.

In spite of this lawlessness, the reformers will win if they have grit enough to be ground to the dust and if they really represent the wishes of the people. The public outside will help them. The Paramount Power is also bound by treaty obligations to help them as has been amply proved by Pyarelal in the extracts produced from Lee Warner. But let the satyagrahis know that salvation comes from within. They will have to lose all, if they will save their souls and gain the freedom which is their birthright.

SEGAON, February 20, 1939

Harijan, 25-2-1939

120. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN G. CHOKHAWALA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 20, 1939

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I see that you are getting wiser. With patience all will be well. You have done well in getting rid of the fever. Engage yourself in work now. Take the diet which suits you.

My tour of the Frontier Province is likely to be after the 12th. I am well. It does not seem probable that I shall be going for the Congress session.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 10008. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

121. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,
February 20, 1939

BA,

Be alert. Take care of your health. Everybody has come so I shall not write much. Nanavati has gone to stay with Kaka today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

122. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 20, 1939

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have received my letters. How bad you are! Why should you feel giddy? Why should you feel so unhappy going to your own house? Be wise and do your duty cheerfully. Your constantly falling ill won't do. Write to Ba. Address the letter care of

the First Member. Write to others also.

Amritlal has gone to live with Kakasaheb today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7110. Also C.W. 4602. Courtesy:
Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

123. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 20, 1939

BHAI BALKRISHNA SHARMA,

What have they been doing in Kanpur? Why all this rioting?¹
Did not another Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi² offer himself as a
sacrifice ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7516. Also C.W. 4993. Courtesy:
Parasuram Mehrotra

124. TELEGRAM TO AKBAR HYDARI³

WARDHA,

February 21, 1939

SIR AKBAR HYDARI

HYDERABAD DN

IN REPLY YOUR TELEGRAM HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM
SHOLAPUR. NARAYANSWAMI INTERVIEWED AFTER PERMISSION
BY OUR REPRESENTATIVE SUNDERPERSHAD ON SEVEN-

¹ There had been communal riots in Kanpur from 11th to 13th February, 1939.

² Editor of *Pratap*; he had been killed during the Hindu-Muslim riots in Kanpur
in March 1931.

³ Photostats of these items were displayed at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition
held in New Delhi in 1969-70. Illegible in the source *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari"

TEENTH GULBARGA JAIL . . .¹ WITH CONVICT DRESS
AND IRON RING IN HIS FOOT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10097. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

125. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 21, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

Here is a letter on the Arya Samaj satyagraha. Their demand seems to me to be reasonable. But I do not want to say anything in public till I hear from you.

I still await your reply to my letter⁴ about State Congress.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10096. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

126. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 21, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I am much obliged to you for your cordial and frank letter.¹ In the circumstances I shall await the time that you may consider appropriate for our meeting.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: Lord Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also C.W. 7810

¹ In his letter of February 19, the Viceroy had referred to Gandhiji's letter to him of February 12 and said he did not "in the least misunderstand your decision to publish the article which you were kind enough to let me see." (This was the one entitled "Jaipur", 30-1-1939, which Gandhiji in his letter of 31-1-1939, had said he was not publishing and which evidently he decided later to publish.) He had also referred to Gandhiji's suggestion that they might meet and said he did not see the time was appropriate but nevertheless if Gandhiji still felt they might meet it would be a great pleasure to him to see Gandhiji again but would prefer that it should be after his Rajputana tour.

127. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 21, 1939

MY DEAR PLAYMATE,

I hope you are making substantial progress. Await me in Delhi. I have to be there for the Hindu Temple on 18th March.¹

Love.

SLAVE-DRIVER

SHRI PADMAJA NAIDU
20 CURZON ROAD
NEW DELHI

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

128. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON ,
February 21, 1939

BA,

I get your letters regularly. My letters are despatched regularly from here. I shall find out why they are not delivered to you in time. Take proper care of your health. I must get a detailed report. Prabha will write the rest. I have not been able to look after Sushila's diet. You did well in cautioning me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

¹ Gandhiji had been invited to perform the opening ceremony of the Lakshmi Narayan Temple and the Buddha Vihar; *vide* also "Statement to the Press", 18-3-1939

129. TALK TO HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS DELEGATION¹

SEGAON,
February 21, 1939

A satyagrahi will, like a general, always choose his own time and ground for fight. Satyagraha should be kept in reserve until all other means of advancing the cause are exhausted. Even in armed warfare, suspensions and withdrawals are the recognized tactics.

Suspension does not exclude facing imprisonment if in the course of legitimate, peaceful and constructive activities people are arrested. These will not constitute civil disobedience. Your decision to continue the suspension is a wise one. You have lost nothing by suspension. There is nothing to prevent you from resuming the satyagraha when the situation again demands it and there is ample cause to compel you to revive satyagraha.

The Hindu, 22-2-1939

130. A MISCHIEVOUS SUGGESTION

A correspondent sends the following cutting from *The Bombay Chronicle*:

Mr. Rushbrook Williams in a letter to *The Manchester Guardian* declares that during the last few months of last year there was a definite progress by the Right Wing elements of the Congress High Command towards a position in which Mahatma Gandhi would have found it possible to approach the authorities with suggestions in relation to the Central Government, roughly corresponding to those which he so successfully carried through in connection with the Provincial Governments. What was then regarded as the approach of Federation compelled the Congress to reckon up its forces. It had little Muslim support and without such support, thanks to the Muslim League, and unless it found new allies, it will be unable to form a Government in the Centre. Therefore it was necessary to concentrate on Indian States in order to secure that the representations of States should be drawn from elements sympathizing with the Congress programme.

¹ The Delegation had informed Gandhiji of the State Congress decision to continue suspension of the satyagraha for some time more. The satyagraha was suspended on or about 26-12-1938. *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", Before 26-12-1938, and "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 26-12-1938

He adds: "It is not without significance that Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya is intimately associated with the States Subjects' Conference, but the election of Mr. Bose has been a blow to the Right Wing and apparently has postponed any *rapprochement* with the authorities as the High Command had in mind. Mr. Bose does not like the States, but he also does not like Federation. He can, therefore, have little sympathy with an endeavour to convert States into allies of the Congress in preparation for a Congress domination over the new Central institutions. In fact he desires to keep them at arm's length to secure a settlement of British Indian destinies by British India and eventually no doubt to expel the Princes and absorb the States into the new self-governing India he projects."

Mr. Williams is an old 'enemy'. During the non-co-operation days he edited an official Year Book, in which he drew upon his imagination and gave his own colour to facts which he could not avoid. He has played the same role again in his letter to *The Manchester Guardian*, assuming that he is correctly quoted. It is wrong to say that there was a definite or any progress by the Right Wing elements of the Congress High Command towards the position pictured by Mr. Williams's imagination. The suggestion about Muslim support is malicious. I know my own mind and so far as I know the Congress mind, neither it nor I ever dreamt that there could be any federation without Muslim support. Indeed so long as there is opposition to federation by the Muslims, the Congress has no need to worry about federation coming. Therefore, unless there is perfect communal unity, no Congressman can think or talk of federation whether of the Government mint or cent per cent swadeshi mint.

About Dr. Pattabhi, the whole of India knows that his candidature was thought of at the last moment when Maulana Saheb withdrew and as Dr. Pattabhi was the only candidate left besides Subhas Babu. His connection with the States People's Conference has been a convenient fact for building up Mr. Williams's case.

As for the innuendos about Subhas Babu, he is well able to look after himself. But throughout one year's intimate connection with him I never once heard him say of the States what Mr. Williams attributes to him. I am quite certain that if the States come to terms with the Congress about the treatment of the people in their jurisdiction, Subhas Babu will be quite as keen as any Congressman to close the bargain but not in anticipation of federation.

I have come into the States agitation by accident. Responsible

government in the States is a goal by itself and independent of federation which may never come. It won't come till the Congress and Muslims are ready for it. But liberty of the States people has to Come in any and every case. They cannot be in chains and what is called British India become free.

SEGAON, February 23, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

131. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI¹

[*February 23, 1939*]²

RT. HONOURABLE SASTRI

MADRAS

NEVER KNEW ANYTHING WAS SERIOUS IN YOUR UNIVER-
SITY. FULL LETTER RECEIVED YESTERDAY GAVE ME
SHOCK. MY HEART WENT OUT TO YOU. I PITY
STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN SO UNWORTHY OF YOUR
GREAT STEWARDSHIP.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,

February 23, 1939

BA,

You always complain about my not writing, but today there is no letter from you. What about that? All is well here. Nothing to worry about.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

¹ At this time Vice-Cancellor of Annamalai University

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press? 23-2-1939

133. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

February 23, 1939

I continue to receive daily wires about hunger-strikes in Rajkot over the treatment, said to be inhuman, of prisoners and others in villages. The Rajkot matter is becoming daily graver because of the breach of faith on the ruler's part with which the second struggle started. Agitated inquirers should know that I am in telegraphic correspondence with the State authorities. I hope to take them into confidence in the near future. In the mean time let the satyagrahis understand that the first thing they have to show is an infinite capacity for suffering with inward joy and without malice or anger.

The Hindustan Times, 24-2-1939

134. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

February 23, 1939

The news of Lord Brabourne's death has grieved me deeply.² I had the privilege of close friendship with him.

The Hindu, 24-2-1939

135. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

February 23, 1939

I saw yesterday a letter⁴ from Annamalai University, addressed to a colleague, giving a detailed description of the students' strike. According to the letter, the strikers prostrate themselves in front of the entrances to prevent non-strikers from attending classes and when the classes are held, they enter the class-rooms, shout, and otherwise make holding of classes impossible. The letter ends by saying that the strikers are likely to give up the strike if they know that, in my

¹ This was also published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1939, under the title "Gandhiji's Statement on Rajkot".

² Lord Brabourne had served as Governor in Bombay and Bengal. He died in Calcutta on February 23.

³ This was also published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1939, under the heading "Students' Strike at Annamalai".

⁴ *Vide* "Is It Non-violent?"

opinion, the methods adopted by them are contrary to non-violence.

If the description reproduced by me is correct, I have no hesitation in saying that the methods adopted by the strikers are not only not non-violent but positively violent. I would implore the strikers to desist from the methods they have adopted and allow those who want to attend classes to do so without any obstruction.

The Hindu, 23-2-1939

*136. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE VICEROY*

February 24, 1939

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO HIS EXCELLENCY VICEROY

NEW DELHI

HAVE WIRED TO FIRST MEMBER RAJKOT AS FOLLOWS:¹
PLEASE PLACE THIS BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7811. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

137. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SEGAON,

February 24, 1939

BA,

You should be receiving letters regularly now. I take as much service as necessary from the girls. Keep up patience and courage. All will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 34

¹ For the text of this telegram, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

138. TALK WITH AN ASHRAM INMATE¹

SEGAON,
February 24, 1939

Who knows. But somehow I think it would not happen that way. I expect this visit to be brief. My relations with the Rajkot ruling family are such as to warrant a frank talk. Either the Thakore Saheb will restore the pact or he will refer me to the Resident and I shall settle it up with him in no time. The case is so clear that I do not expect any serious resistance. It will be a test of my ahimsa too. People may think that I am gone crazy in my old age to give so much importance to a small State like Rajkot. But I am made that way. When the moral fibre in me is touched to the quick I simply cannot sit still.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

139. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN M. PANCHOLI

[Before February 25, 1939]²

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am now coming nearer you. It does not mean that you both have to come over to Rajkot. Take care of your health. Do not fall ill. I hope you are cheerful now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7105

140. WORK INSTEAD OF ALMS³

To those who are hungry and unemployed God can dare reveal Himself only as work and wages as the assurance of food.

I do not want to humiliate the naked by giving them clothes of

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Rajkot Fast". On hearing about Gandhiji's decision to go to Rajkot an Ashram inmate had asked him when he expected to return and whether there was not a chance of his being made a 'State guest' at Rajkot like Kasturba.

² Gandhiji left for Rajkot on February 25.

³ This was originally published in *Sarvodaya*, a monthly organ of Gandhi Seva Sangh.

which they have no need. Instead I will give them work which they need very badly. I will never commit the sin of becoming their benefactor. But having realized that I had a hand in their ruination, I will give them a respectable place in society. I will never give them left-overs and discarded things. I will share with them my best food and clothes and help them in their work. My ahimsa will not tolerate giving free food to a healthy person who does not put in honest labour. If I had my say I would close down all charitable institutions and alms-houses. It is because of them the country has fallen and such vices as laziness, hypocrisy and crime have got encouragement.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 25-2-1939

141. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 25, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

My telegram to the Rajkot State of yesterday was wired to you last night.¹ Nevertheless I attach a copy of it as also of the Rajkot answer and my reply thereto.

For me Rajkot has become a moral issue of tremendous importance. I am sure you recognize it and will give me all the help you can.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

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

¹Vide "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Viceroy", 24-2-1939 and "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

142. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI¹

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 25, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I am obliged to you for your two letters of the 16th and one of the 21st inst.

About the State Congress, for the time being, we must agree to differ. You will have seen my advice² to the State Congress. In order to make assurance double sure I enclose herewith the relevant cutting. You will have also seen the manifesto of the State Congress accepting my advice. I suppose you will say even that is not enough. I am hoping, however, that some day you will see eye to eye with me and release the State Congress prisoners and let the organization function normally.

As to Mahatma Narayanswami I realize what you say and I am glad that I referred the matter to you.³ I am now trying to persuade my informants to correct the mistake they have made, I hope, quite unconsciously.

With reference to your letters about the prisoners I am unable to agree with you that ghee is a luxury. But I am going to bear your suggestion in mind and must think out the name of someone whom I can ask to visit your jails.

I am glad you are restored to health and that you are Working at the proposed reforms which I hope will answer the time spirit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10098. Courtesy: Government of Andhra Pradesh

¹ A photostat of the letter was displayed at the Andhra Pradesh Pavilion at Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in New Delhi in 1969-70.

² *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Hyderabad State Congress", 26-12-1938

³ *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 21-2-1939

143. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

February 25, 1939

The following wires have been exchanged between the First Member² of the Rajkot State Council and myself:³

Hear satyagraha prisoners Rajkot jail fasting. For Sardhar prisoners said to be inhumanly treated. Could you enlighten me?—Gandhi (dated 20-2-'39).

Your telegram. Personally visited Sardhar yesterday. No truth absolutely whatsoever regarding ill-treatment to prisoners. First Member of Council (dated 21-2-'39).

Thanks wire. You are silent about hunger-strike. Have again long wire about atrocities which difficult to disbelieve. Every day urge growing that I should myself plunge. Agony of Ruler's breach of faith, coupled with growing tales of terrorism, becoming unbearable. Have no desire embarrass Thakore Saheb or Council. Would like you listen to voice of old man claiming to be Rajkot's friend.—Gandhi (dated 22-2-'39).

Absolutely no truth in allegations of ill-treatment to Sardhar prisoners. Whole thing nothing but fabrication. Regular programme of daily diet, bedding, etc., nearly on same lines as Rajkot arranged. Written information to above effect given to prisoners on hunger-strike in local jail by me. In spite of these they unreasonably insist continue fasting. Assure you everything humanly possible being done give fair treatment. Please have no anxiety.—First Member (dated 23-2-'39).

If all reports are fabrication, it is serious for me and co-workers. If there is substance in them, it is serious reflection on the State authorities. Meanwhile, the hunger-strike continues. My anxiety is unbearable. Therefore, propose start for Rajkot tomorrow night taking with me medical attendant, secretary and typist. I come in search of truth and as peacemaker.

Have no desire to court arrest. I want to see things for myself and shall make ample amends if my co-workers have been guilty of fabrication. I shall also plead with Thakore Saheb to repair breach of faith with his people. I shall ask people to

¹ This was also published in *Harijan*, 4-3-1939, under the heading "Gandhiji's Statement on Rajkot".

² Khan Bahadur Fateh Mohammed Khan

³ None of the telegrams quoted here are available from any other source.

avoid demonstrations and am asking Sardar, pending my effort in Rajkot, to suspend satyagraha by persons in Rajkot or from outside.¹ If by any chance Thakore Saheb and Council can restore pact intact, subject to adjustment of members, and prisoners are immediately set free and fines restored, I naturally cancel my proposed departure. You can send official with full authority to negotiate adjustment as to personnel. Majority of Sardar's nominees will be a condition. May God guide Thakore Saheb and his Councillors. May I expect express wire?—Gandhi (dated 24-2-'39).

Since your telegram you must have received information that hunger-strike has been discontinued since last night having no justification, as telegram sent to you by Nanalal Jasani and Mohanlal Gadhadawala must have convinced you. His Highness does not consider there has been any breach of faith on his part and is only anxious that representative Committee appointed by him should be able to start working in calm atmosphere, so that he may be in a position to introduce as soon as possible such reforms as may be found by him to be required after fully considering the Committee's recommendations. His Highness feels sure that in the circumstances explained, you will appreciate that no useful purpose could be served by your coming here now. He wishes once again to assure you that no atrocities or terrorism have been or will be allowed. —First Member (dated 24-2-'39).

Your wire is no answer to my heart-felt entreaty. I leave for Rajkot today on my mission of peace.—Gandhi (dated 25-2-'39) .

These wires tell their own tale. I am glad the fast is broken. That certainly removes one cause of anxiety. But the charge of fabrication abides. I know personally many of the workers in Rajkot. They and I must make full reparation if they have resorted to falsehood in order to make out a case of atrocities against the authorities. The struggle in Rajkot, as in other States, is part of the struggle for the liberation of India. Mutual mud-flinging cannot advance the cause. Truth must be ascertained.

The telegram of the First Member denies the charge of breach of faith. It baffles me. I do not know what is meant by the denial. The notification announcing the pact and the notification announcing the

¹ On February 25, Vallabhbhai Patel issued a statement suspending the satyagraha.

breach with Sardar Patel are clearly contradictory as one reads the plain language of the two.

I have suggested that the Resident at Rajkot is responsible for the breach.¹ I have been told that I have been hasty in bringing this charge and that there is another side. If there is, it is my duty to know it. I shall make it a point to seek an interview with him and if I find that I have done an injustice to him, I shall tender a public apology. I feel that it is wrong on my part to allow the sufferings to continue in the midst of mutual recriminations. The least I can do is to go to Rajkot and find out the truth and invite the Thakore to repair what is a palpable breach of faith, unless I discover that the repudiation of this charge is somehow justified.

If the statements made by the workers about atrocities are true, there must be found a way of avoiding such exhibitions of man's worst passions. He must be helped against himself, if it is at all possible. It is part of the struggle for liberty, if it is non-violent, to reclaim even the *goondas*, whether they are to be found among the people or those in authority. By going to Rajkot, I want to exert myself to the utmost of my capacity and find out the way of dealing with the *goonda* element in society. In this respect Rajkot is a test case. I go to Rajkot because I am the same friend of the States that I have always claimed to be.

It hurts me that by force of circumstances, all of which perhaps I do not know, the Ruler of Rajkot has been made to break his word given to his people. I hold that it is the duty of the Princes of Kathiawar, if not of all India, and their advisers to help to rectify the wrong, if it is done. An honourable mutual understanding is impossible if faith becomes a valueless article. Life to me becomes a burden when I find myself witness to a breach of faith, as I happen to be in this case. Let it be recalled that I was the author of the draft² that the Ruler of Rajkot signed with but a slight modification. I know that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel left no stone unturned to ensure that it was signed with the fullest understanding.

As I go to Rajkot purely as a messenger of peace, I have asked Sardar Patel to suspend the Rajkot civil resistance whilst, under God's guidance, I make the humble effort to end the agony. The public will

¹ *Vide* "Rajkot" and "Statement to the Press", 3-2-1939

² *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

please remember that I am an invalid so far as the body is concerned. They will avoid demonstrations at the stations. In Rajkot the citizens will carry out the instructions of the State authorities during the suspension period. I shall need freedom from turmoil during my negotiations. I want the silent prayers of all who believe in them. Though Rajkot is a tiny place on the map of India, the principle for the vindication of which I go to Rajkot is one without which society must disintegrate.

The Hindu, 25-2-1939

144. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 25/26, 1939

CHI. MANILAL,

I received your letter yesterday. How good you are at deciphering! And Schlesin! Why did you not read 'M.A.' instead of 'ma'? Where was there any talk of sending a woman? I have acted on the advice of Schlesin. The person who was to be sent is the brother-in-law of Nirmala, Mahadev's sister. You should have sent a cable to ask.

February 26, 1939

However, I hope that Mahadev has written to you all the details. Even if he has not, you now know them. If you cannot pay his salary there, there is provision for payment from here. He can take up the work in Gujarati, English, etc. Your burden will be reduced. Cable to me about what you wish to do now. If you do get the permission to call him, wire accordingly.

Mr. Kallenbach has recovered now. He has to be careful, however. I am leaving for Rajkot. Don't worry about it. I hope to return only after solving the problem. I am going at God's command. I shall act according to His directions. Ba is fine. Don't worry about the Congress. It is enough if you can remain absorbed in your work.

Pyarelal, Sushila and Kanaiyo are accompanying me. Rami, Manu, etc., had come to see me. Rajkumari is at Segaoon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4895

145. QUESTION OF HONOUR

On my way to Rajkot, going *via* Bombay, I have to wait a whole day for the Kathiawar mail. I am passing the time in writing for *Harijan*. And I read the following note:

Ramdurg—a small State in the Bombay-Karnatak, area 169 sq. miles, population 33,997, revenue Rs. 2,69,000—was hard hit by famine and scarcity conditions, and also depression due to fall in prices for some years past. On 20th March 1938 some agriculturists from villages gathered together in front of the palace and requested the Rajasaheb to grant some concessions in respect of land revenue. It was alleged on behalf of those assembled at the Palace that they were dispersed by lathi charge by the Ramdurg police. On the other hand these allegations were denied by the State authorities. It seems that no definite demands were made on behalf of the people, nor was there any organization to speak for them. Some time later some of the people of the State approached Shri Yalgi, a Congressman and one of the Secretaries of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee, and requested him to visit Ramdurg and see the situation for himself. Accordingly, Shri Yalgi visited Ramdurg in April and advised the people there to organize a committee to place their demands before the authorities. In accordance with his advice, a body named Ramdurg Sansthan Praja Sangh was established and on its behalf demands were formulated and submitted to the Rajasaheb.

A Conference of Deccan States' People took place at Sangli on 22nd May 1938, presided over by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He left Sangli on the 22nd. But the Conference continued under the presidentship of Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande.

On the 23rd, the question of Ramdurg was taken up and it was decided that a committee, consisting of (1) Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande, President, K. P. C. C., (2) Shri Shankarrao Deo, Member of the Congress Working Committee, (3) Shri Munoli, President, Ramdurg Praja Sangh, (4) Shri Kanabur, Secretary of Deccan States People's Conference, (5) Shri Andanepa Doddameti, M. L. A., (6) Shri K. S. Patil, M. L. A., (7) Shri Ari, Pleader, Hubli, a subject of the State, was appointed to investigate and report on the Ramdurg affair. In the mean time the Ramdurg Durbar, on their own initiative, had issued a proclamation and announced certain concessions. But the people were not satisfied with these concessions and the agitation was assuming a serious turn. . . .

Then on the 5th June 1938 the Committee appointed at Sangli visited Ramdurg and instituted an enquiry. It was felt by the Committee and also by the prominent representatives of the Ramdurg Praja Sangh that a mere enquiry

and report would not serve the purpose. Therefore the latter requested the Committee to bring about a settlement in respect of the demands which were submitted to the Ramdurg Durbar.

The matter was discussed for two hours and on the 6th of June Shri Deo was entrusted with the sole authority of settling the differences. Shri Deo, in accepting the responsibility, made clear to the people all the implications of what they were doing. Shri Deo, on behalf of the Committee, formulated the demands and submitted them to the Rajasaheb. After some discussions the matter was postponed at the desire of the Rajasaheb. However, most of the suggestions, with slight modifications, were conceded by the Rajasaheb. Shri Deshpande wrote to the Sardar as to what had happened. He also informed him of the demands of the Praja Sangh and the offer of Rajasaheb. In reply, Sardar wrote to Shri Deshpande on the 11th June 1938 to say that the terms offered by Rajasaheb could not be improved upon, that they were quite good and that the people should be advised to accept them.

Though Shri Deo was entrusted with full powers to negotiate and settle the terms, he on the 21st June 1938 took Shri Munoli and all the members of the Managing Committee of the Praja Sangh into confidence, and after long discussion secured their assent to the terms settled between himself and Rajasaheb. The members of the Committee appointed by the Sangli Conference with the exception of Shri Shastri, who was absent, also agreed. The acceptance of the terms was communicated to Rajasaheb. The same evening durbar was held in the palace to which the President and representatives of the Praja Sangh and leading men of Ramdurg were invited. The Rajasaheb in his opening speech surveyed the history of his rule and gave the outlines of the terms of settlement. The Dewan, Rao Bahadur Pradhan, then read out the proclamation embodying the terms of the settlement. Thereupon the President of the Praja Sangh, on behalf of the Sangh, thanked the Rajasaheb in suitable terms. After the durbar was over, Shri Deo and others went to the public meeting. The meeting was attended by more than 12,000 persons. The President of the Praja Sangh presided. When Shri Gangadharrao Deshpande was explaining the terms of the settlement, a slight disturbance was noticed in one corner of the meeting. It was ascertained that they belonged to Sureban and were weavers. Shri Andanappa Doddameti went to that corner and successfully tried to restore peace. After Shri Deshpande, Shri Andanappa spoke for more than one hour and fully explained all the details of the terms and defended them very vigorously. He carried conviction to the audience and concluded his speech amongst enthusiastic cheers. Shri Deo also made a short speech asking people to organize and strengthen their position by working

the reforms granted. Shri Munavalli, the President in his concluding speech, which was very touching, defended all the terms settled and asked the audience whether they had confidence in him. The audience with one voice replied in the affirmative. He then asked them to accept the terms and they assented. At the conclusion of the meeting a paper, containing the terms of the settlement, was brought to the President for his signature by an officer of the State. Shri Munavalli, the President, again asked the audience whether he should sign it and with concurrence of not only the large audience but of the representatives of the Praja Sangh, signed the document.

The Council of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee passed the following resolution:

“The Council congratulates the people of Ramdurg, Jamkhandi, Miraj Sr. and Jr. and Mudhol for the success they have achieved in their struggle for redress of their grievances and trusts that they will strengthen their organizations by non-violent and peaceful means for the attainment of full responsible government in the near future.

“This Council expresses its sense of appreciation of the Rulers of the above States for readily responding to the demands of their subjects and trusts that the terms of the settlement will be implemented by both the portions without delay. It also requests the Rulers of all the States in Karnatak to follow the liberal policy followed by the above-mentioned States.

“This Council, however, notes with extreme pain that anti-propaganda is being carried on by some people and especially by some Congressmen on the plea that the settlement was arrived at by the efforts of prominent Congress leaders between the people and the Prince of Ramdurg. This Council while requesting them not to carry on anti-propaganda is definitely of opinion that the good of the people will advance only by standing by the settlement.”

I have omitted some part irrelevant for my purpose. It appears that an attempt is now being made on behalf of the Ramdurg Praja Sangh to terrorize the Ruler into making further concessions¹. He refrains from taking action against the mischief-mongers for fear of losing Congress sympathy. The question I am asked is, “What are Congressmen involved in the settlement to do?” Assuming the correctness of my information, my unequivocal answer is that they have to keep at any cost the plighted word of the Provincial Committee. I am going to Rajkot to entreat H. H. the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot to keep his word. The breach, as I interpret his action, has

¹ *Vide* also “Popular Violence in Ramdurg”, 24-4-1939.

shaken me to my depths. I can think of no other answer with regard to the Congress. Rajkot represents the Princely order. Its shame or credit would be the shame or credit of the whole order. If a representative Congressman breaks his word, the reputation of the whole Congress is at stake. How much more so, if a Provincial Congress Committee cannot redeem its word? The Congress claims to represent the whole nation. Its transactions must be above reproach.

In these days of awakening, all kinds of forces must rise up. Demands, even extravagant, will be made by new additions to the Congress. If they are in excess of Congress commitments and if the Congress credit is to go up day after day, they must be checked. I do not know what the Ramdurg Praja Sangh claims. It may be that the claim is intrinsically sound. But they cannot enforce it by rowdiness and threats even before the ink is dry on the settlement paper. The representative Congressmen in Karnatak have to stand by the Ramdurg Chief and see that the settlement is honoured by the people even though in battling with them they should lose their lives.

BOMBAY, February 26, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

146. KHADI AS FAMINE RELIEF

This letter¹ shows conclusively what a relief khadi is to famine areas. Those, therefore, who buy relief khadi help the famine-stricken and themselves. In addition they give not doles but wages and these at khadi market rates for spinning which are higher than for any other relief work. I hope, therefore, that this appeal will receive a generous response from the public.

BOMBAY, February 26, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

¹ Not reproduced here. The correspondent had said that because of drought and failure of crops in certain taluks of Coimbatore district, the farmers there had taken up spinning and so there was a surplus stock of khadi in Tamil Nadu. He had requested Gandhiji to appeal to the readers of *Harijan* to buy the khadi produced in the drought-hit areas.

147. IS NON-VIOLENT?

Below is an extract from a letter from a teacher in the Annamalai University:¹

Some time in November last, a group of five or six students organizedly assaulted the secretary of University Union, a fellow student. Shri Srinivasa Sastri, the Vice-Chancellor, took a serious view of it and punished the leader of the group with expulsion from the University and the rest with suspension till the end of this academic year.

Some sympathizers and friends of these punished students wanted to abstain from attending classes and strike work. . . .

The next day, about 20 per cent of the students stayed away from the classes; the remaining 80 per cent attended the classes as usual. I may add, the strength of this University is about 800.

The student who was expelled next day came inside the hostel to direct the strike. Finding the strike unsuccessful he adopted other methods in the evening, as for example, bodily Iying across the four main outlets from the hostel, locking some gates of the hostel, locking up some of the young boys inside their own rooms. . . . In this way in the afternoon, the rest of the students were prevented from coming outside the hostel gates by fifty or sixty people.

The authorities thus finding the gates closed wanted to make an opening in the fencing. But when they started pulling down the fence with the help of servants of the University, the strikers prevented the other students from passing through the breaches to attend college. . . . The authorities finding the situation unmanageable requested the police to remove the expelled student from the hostel premises . . . which the police did. This naturally irritated some more of the students who began to show sympathy with the strikers. . . . Shri Srinivasa Sastri then closed down the University for a long vacation of 1_ months from November 29th to January 16th. He gave a statement to the Press appealing to the students to come back from home in a chastened and happier mood for study.

But the college reopened with renewed activities on the part of the strikers who had extra advice during the vacation from . . .² They went to Rajaji, it appears, but he asked them to obey the Vice-Chancellor, and declined to interfere. . . .

The picketing is still going on. . . . The strikers are about 35 to 45 in

¹ Only extracts from the quotation are reproduced here.

² Omission as in the source

number. They have got about 50 sympathizers who dare not come into the open and strike with them, but from within they create trouble. Every day they come in a body and lie down in front of entrances to classes, and on the stairs leading to classes on the first floor and thus prevent the students from entering the classes. But the teachers shift from place to place and hold classes before the picketers can reach there. . . .

Yesterday there was a new development. The strikers came into the classes, rolled on the floor and uttered shouts. Some strikers, I heard, began writing on blackboards before the teacher could come. If any teachers are known to be meek, some of the strikers try to intimidate them also. In fact they threatened the Vice-Chancellor with 'violence and bloodshed', if he did not accede to their demands.

One other important point I ought to tell you is that the strikers get help from some outsiders, employ *goondas* to enter the University premises and disturb the work there. . . .

Now the point I am driving at is this: We have all been feeling, i. e., several teachers and a large number of students, that these activities are not truthful and non-violent and so are against the spirit of satyagraha.

I learn reliably that some of the striker students persist in calling this non-violent. They say that if Mahatmaji declares this to be violent they will stop these activities.

The letter is dated 17th February and addressed to Kakasaheb Kalelkar whom the teacher knows intimately. The portion not printed by me seeks Kakasaheb's opinion whether the conduct of the students can be called non-violent and deplores the attitude of unruliness which has become rampant among so many students in India.

The letter gives the names of those who are inciting the strikers to persist in their behaviour. On the publication of my opinion¹ on the strike, someone, presumably a student, sent me an angry telegram saying that the behaviour of the strikers is perfectly non-violent. Assuming the correctness of the version reproduced by me, I have no hesitation in saying that the attitude of the students is essentially violent. Surely, if someone blocks the passage to my house, his action is violence just as much as if he pushed me bodily from the doorstep.

If students have a real grievance against their teachers, they may have the right to strike and even picket their school or college but only to the extent of politely warning the unwary from attending their

¹ Vide "Statement to the Press", 23-2-1939

classes. They could do so by speaking or by distributing leaflets. But they may not obstruct the passage or use any coercion against those who do not want to strike. And the students have struck against whom? Shri Srinivasa Sastriar is one of India's best scholars. He had become renowned as a teacher before many of the students were born or were in their teens. Any university in the world will be proud to have him as Vice-Chancellor as well for the greatness of his learning as for the nobility of his character.

If the writer of the letter to Kakasaheb has given an accurate account of the happenings in the Annamalai University, Sastriar's handling of the situation seems to me to have been quite correct. In my opinion the strikers are harming themselves by their conduct. I belong to the old school which believed in reverence for teachers. I can understand not going to a school for whose teachers I have no regard. But I cannot understand disrespect towards or vilification of my teachers. Such conduct is ungentlemanly, and all ungentlemanliness is violence.

BOMBAY, February 26, 1939

Harijan, 4-3-1939

148. TELEGRAM TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

RAJKOT,
February 26, 1939

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

JAIPRAJA

AGRA

NO HARTAL JAIPUR CITY.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 214

149. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI¹

February 26, 1939

You must not be anxious. I miss you on this journey. I am going there as God is taking me there. Within me is joy, hope. Who knows if the prospect is no more than a mirage? I know that I will not return from Rajkot with hope blasted.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

150. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR²

February 26, 1939

CHI. SHANKER³,

I had no-time to reply to your letter. I liked it. Chandan is quiet and happy. It should be sufficient that she has been proved innocent, that is, truthful. We should not be interested in proving a person guilty. So long as H.⁴ does not admit his guilt, it does not seem fair to give a final verdict about him. Ninety-nine per cent he is no longer innocent. I think now he will not indulge in backbiting against you. Doing anything more will be like killing a man who is already down. It will be good if you can forget this incident. I should like it even better if you can see that my viewpoint is correct.

Take care of your health.

Poor Chandan came here to go to Rajkot. I feel as if I was going there on her behalf. I am writing this in the train. Chandan is accompanying me. She will go to Bhavnagar from Viramgam. There she will wait and watch.

What Chandan has written above was really my test. I wanted to see whether she would respond to my advice or not. She may be said to have scored 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent marks in the test.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 949. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A God-given Fast". The letter, which was presumably in Gujarati, is not available from any other source.

² This was written below a letter Chandanbehn wrote to the addressee, whom she later married.

³ Son of D. B. Kalelkar, who later changed his name to 'Satish'.

⁴ The name has been omitted.

151. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

February 27, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

The journey up to now has been quite pleasant and uneventful. This is being written at Viramgam. You bore yourself bravely on parting. The same bravery must continue. It is strange that responsibility for the secretariat work should rest solely upon you so suddenly. You had not bargained for it. You will expect a wire from Rajkot either today or tomorrow.

You will keep well both in body and mind.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3903. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7212

152. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

VIRAMGAM,

February 27, 1939

CHI. MIRA,

We reach Rajkot about 2.50 p. m. Train going, so good-bye.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6429. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10024

153. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI¹

February 27, 1939

How mysterious are the ways of God! This journey to Rajkot is a wonder even to me. Why am I going, whither am I going? What for? I have thought nothing about these things. And if God guides me, what

¹ Extracted from, Mahadev Desai's "A God-given Fast". The letter, which was presumably in Gujarati, is not available from any other source.

should I think, why should I think? Even thought may be an obstacle in the way of His guidance.¹

The fact is it takes no effort to stop thinking. The thoughts do not come. Indeed there is no vacuum—but I mean to say that there is no thought about the mission.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

154. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 27, 1939

A few minutes prior to his arrival at Rajkot, Mahatma Gandhi told the Associated Press special correspondent travelling with him that he had no specific plans with regard to his “mission of peace in Rajkot”.

Asked how long he would be at Rajkot, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I really don't know how long I will be here. I have to be here till I finish my work.

QUESTION: Does that mean that you will not be able to go to Tripuri Congress ?

ANSWER: Well, if my work in Rajkot detains me, I am afraid I will not be able to go to Tripuri.

On being told that despite the suspension of satyagraha in Rajkot State the authorities have continued the arrests and the auctioning of houses for the purpose of recovering fines, Mahatma Gandhi said:

I myself heard of an instance just now in the train. If this is true, it is most unfortunate.

The Hindustan Times, 28-2-1939

155. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
February 27, 1939

RAJKUMARI
MAGANWADI
WARDHAGANJ

BORE JOURNEY WELL. TALKS BEGUN. LOVE. LASTSENT TELEGRAM FIRST MEMBER NOT RECEIVED HERE. INQUIRE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3902. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7211

¹ For Shri Ramana Maharshi's comments on this, *vide* “Sri Ramana Maharshi's Comments on Gandhiji's Description of his State of Mind”

156. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
February 27, 1939

MIRABEHN

CARE BADSHAHKHAN

CHARSADDA

BORE JOURNEY WELL. TALKS BEGUN. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6430. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10025

157. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

February 27, 1939

I am a born optimist. I hope that as a result of my visit to Rajkot there will be an honourable settlement.

I had a friendly exchange of views with Khan Saheb Fateh Mahomed and Durbar Virawala. They have offered me full facilities to visit the jails and see prisoners and also to visit the villages. I am seeing the prisoners tomorrow afternoon, The Muslims and Garasias (landholders) have asked for an appointment and I expect to meet them tomorrow.

The negotiations are likely to take a few days. Although I am most anxious to attend the Tripuri Congress, I am afraid work in Rajkot will take me some time.

The Hindustan Times, 28-2-1939

158. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

February 27, 1939

. . . I do not know how long I may stay here. I have no ready plan. I desire to study the situation and interview the Ruler and Mr. Gibson and do my best to restore the Pact between the Administration and the Praja Parishad, I am doubtful of my visit to Tripuri. If I finish my mission in time, I shall go to Tripuri. Otherwise I may have to miss it.

The Hindu, 27-2-1939

159. TELEGRAM TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ¹

[On or after *February 27, 1939*]

HARTAL SHOULD BE ABANDONED WHEN VICEROY ENTERS.
BUT YOU MUST BE FINAL JUDGES.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapake Ashirvad, p. 215

160. TALKS TO REPRESENTATIVES OF MUSLIM
COUNCIL OF ACTION²

February 28, 1939

But surely, you do not mean to ask for separate electorate without reservation of seats ? The former without the latter would be meaningless. You must, therefore, have that too. Having made that unilateral offer, may I take the liberty of telling you that if you chose to represent your interests through the Parishad, the latter would be bound to safeguard your religion and culture and protect every legitimate Muslim interest? But I agree that so long as the atmosphere is vitiated with mutual distrust and suspicion you are entitled to ask for and have separate representation.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of February 27, 1939, which read: "Received. Jaipur hartal spontaneous and continues in connection Viceroy visit. We favour hartal. Wire if you disapprove."

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Rajkot Fast". Pyarelal says: "The representatives of the Muslim Council of Action met him at 7 a. m. They told him that during the last civil disobedience struggle in Rajkot the Muslim community had given its passive support to the movement. Gandhiji at the very outset of the conversation set them at their ease by telling them that he would gladly agree to have their two nominees on the committee. They also insisted on separate electorate. He conceded that too."

*161. DISCUSSION WITH DEPUTATION
OF GARASIA MANDAL¹*

February 28, 1939

As in the case of the Muslim Deputation, Gandhiji set them completely at their ease by telling them at the very start that they would have their one nominee on the Committee. In reply to further questions on their part, he told them that if they expected to be confirmed for all time in all the privileges that they had up till now enjoyed, they were doomed to disappointment. That was neither right nor feasible. If the condition of India's countless destitute masses was to be ameliorated, the privileged class shall have to divest itself of some of its privileges in favour of *Daridranarayana*. If the Garasias would only understand the spirit of the times, become one with the toiling masses and make the latter's interests their own, their legitimate interests would be safeguarded. He would therefore give them the advice he had given to the Princes, viz., to make themselves true servants of the people and not want to ride on their backs. They should hold their wealth as a trust to be used wisely in the interest of the people. They were entitled to a reasonable emolument for themselves but only in return for service rendered.

“We are bitterly attacked by a certain section of Congressmen, we are even called names. Would not you protect us?”

You should know that there is today in the Congress a considerable and growing section that wants to do away with all vested interests altogether, because they have no faith in the possibility of their conversion. My capacity to protect you will, therefore, entirely depend on your willingness to adopt and live up to the ideal of trusteeship that I have placed before you. I would not be able to help you unless you co-operate with me.

Harijan, 25-3-1939

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Rajkot Fast"

162. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

RAJKOT,

February 28, 1939

Gandhiji in an interview stated that the day began with a cordial exchange of views with representatives of Muslims.¹

After the meeting with the Muslim representatives, I went to the Resident's bungalow, and there was a very friendly conversation between us two. At 2 p.m. I met representatives of the Garasia Association with whom also I had a cordial talk.² Later I visited the jails of the State in the company of Col. Daly, Lt. Col. Aspinal and Khan Saheb Fateh Mahomed Ahmed, who were all present at the interviews with the prisoners. At Rajkot Jail, I met men and women satyagrahi prisoners for an hour and then drove to Sardhar Jail where I spent an hour and a half.

Asked about his impressions of his talks with prisoners in the two jails, Gandhiji refused to commit himself to any definite opinion until he had had a discussion with Khan Saheb Fateh Mahomed. Continuing, Gandhiji said:

From the Sardhar Jail, I went to Tromba where I met Kasturba, Mridulabehn and Manibehn. I had my meal there. On returning to the capital, I went to the Thakore Saheb and spent nearly an hour and a half with him.

Replying to a question about the chances of his going to Tripuri, Gandhiji said:

I still entertain the hope that there will be an honourable settlement, and I am making desperate efforts to go to Tripuri as early as possible. It is, however, difficult for me to say whether I will be able to leave before the week-end.

The Hindu, 1-3-1939

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Radhakrishna Bajaj", 27-2-1939

² *Vide* the preceding item.

163. A TELEGRAM¹

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

164. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA³

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 Saheb⁴. 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.

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.

After the talk with the peasants, 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 implication 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 Virawala¹ were inconclusive and that he was waiting to hear from him tomorrow to resume the talks.

The Hindu, 2-3-1939

165. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH²

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
March 2, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB³,

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.

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. 61², 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.

¹ This was drafted by Gandhiji, *vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

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.

6. My advice is that the advisers whom you may appoint in terms of Clause 4 should form the Executive Council and 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. Gibson¹ 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 suggestion I have gone outside the four corners of the

¹ E. C. Gibson, Resident of Rajkot State

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 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 this¹ 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

166. 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

¹ The source, however, has "your"; *vide* also "Letter to E.C. Gibson", 2-3-1939

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* "Letter from Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

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 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 letter¹ 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.

167. 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 letter² 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 *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 2-3-1939

² *ibid*

168. TALK TO SATYAGRAHI VOLUNTEERS¹

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 braves 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 not hesitate when ordered by his father to be tied to a red-hot iron post. On the contrary

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

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

169. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

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 note³ 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.

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

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* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 2-3-1939

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

should most willingly give it in order to secure due performance of a sacred and solemn promise.

Harijan, 11-3-1939

170. MESSAGE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL¹

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

171. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

March 3, 1939

I release my letter⁴ 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 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

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* 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 Pressman . . ."

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 fast¹ for an erring son of mine. This was soon after followed by a still more prolonged fast² for an erring daughter of a very dear friend. In both these cases the results justified the fast. The first public fast³ 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 Saheb's action, to bring home to him the pressure of enlightened public opinion.

¹ Presumably, the references are to the week-long fast in 1913 for the moral lapse of two inmates at Phoenix Settlement, and the 14-day fast in 1914; *vide* "An Autobiography", Fasting As Penance.

² *ibid*

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.

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 fast² 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 letter³ in which I have criticized Durbar Virawala. I can truthfully say that I am slow to see the blemishes of fellowbeings, 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 impression that the complaints against him had produced upon me, so much so that I

¹ Sacrifice

² In 1932; the "fast unto death", commenced on September 16, was broken on September 26.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh"

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

172. TALK WITH FIRST MEMBER, RAJKOT

STATE COUNCIL¹

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

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* "Letter from Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

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

173. NOTE TO KASTURBA GANDHI¹

March 3, 1939

I hope you are all calm and collected. But if you cannot remain at peace there², you can come to me.

Harijan, 1-4-1939

174. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

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 note⁴ to the Sardar :

¹ Pyarelal explains that the note was sent “with the First member” after his talk with Gandhiji; *vide* the preceding item.

² The addressee was under detention at Tramba.

³ 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.

⁴ Dated December 26, 1939; *vide* “Letter From Dharmendrasinh”, 3-3-1939

[It is] agreed seven members of the Committee mentioned in Clause 2 of the State announcement of today's date¹ 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 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

¹ The source, however, has "said announcement of this date". For the "State announcement", *vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

175. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

MIRABAI

CARE BADSHAHKHAN¹

CHARSADDA

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

BAPU

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

176. 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

177. 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 HOUSE² CONTINUES WELL LOVE..

BAPU

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

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

² Hermann Kallenbach; Gandhiji used to address Kallenbach as 'Lower House' and called himself 'Upper House'. *Vide* "Letter to H. Kallenbach", 18-9-1932

178. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS

[March 3, 1939]¹

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

GANDHI

The Hindu, 4-3-1939

179. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH²

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,
March 3, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB,

Your letter³ 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 your Notification⁴ of 26th December? Donations are but one of the attributes of princship 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 surrendered⁵ 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

¹ From the reference to the fast; *vide* also the three preceding items.

² 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".

³ *Vide* "Letter from dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

⁴ *Vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

⁵ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939

suspended it seems to me to be your obvious duty to discharge the civil-disobedience prisoners.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

Harijan, 11-3-1939

180. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

March 3, 1939

There is a misunderstanding about a certain telegram received by me at Segaoon, of which I made use in the first Press Note² 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 Gadhawala 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.

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

¹ 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".

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 25-2-1939

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

181. 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 letter¹ reached me here today, having been forwarded from Bardoli.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

182. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS²

[On or after *March 3, 1939*]³

ALL WELL. ANXIETY COMPLEX NOT ALLOWED.
LOVE.

MOHAN

Harijan, 11-3-1939

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

² 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".

³ 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.

183. TELEGRAM TO C. F. ANDREWS¹

[On or after *March 4, 1939*]

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

MOHAN

Harijan, 11-3-1939

184. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[On or before *March 4, 1939*]²

GURUDEVA

YOUR LOVING MESSAGE. KEEPING WELL. HOPE YOU
WILLNOT THINK OF RUNNING TO ME AS BEFORE. I
KNOW I HAVE YOUR BLESSING AND LOVE.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 5-3-1939

185. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

RAJKOT,³
March 4, 1939

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

KEEPING WELL FIT. STEP WAS INEVITABLE.

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

186. TELEGRAM TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

RAJKOT,
March 4, 1939

HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB⁴, M. L. A.

CUTTACK

ONLY ADVICE I GIVE IS GO ON WITH WORK

¹ *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.”

² *ibid*

³ The telegram was reported under the date-line “Santiniketan, March 4”.

⁴ Chief Ministr of Orissa, 1946-50 and 1957-61; Minister of Commerce and Ind-ustry, Government of India, 1950-52; Governor of Bombay, 1955-56

WITHINCREASING DEVOTION AND WE SHALL SOON
COME THROUGH.

BAPU

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

187. 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

188. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON¹

RASHTRİYASHALA, 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 Viceroy². 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 letter³ 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

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* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 2-3-1939

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 Notification¹. 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.

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 letter² 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 letter³ and copy of translation of my reply thereto.

Yours sincerely,

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

189. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS⁴

March 4, 1939⁵

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

¹ Dated December 26, 1938

² *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

³ *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939

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 *ibid*

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,¹ 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 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

¹ 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".

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

190. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

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

¹ 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.

² *ibid*

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 organisation]¹. 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 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

191. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI²

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

¹ From *The Hindu*. The *Harijan* version has : "The Congress may even be affected by corruption that has crept into the organization."

² 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."

obey? Will there be any stopping to consult you or anybody when the final peremptory summons comes as some day it must come?¹

Harijan, 8-4-1939

192. *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 one² 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

¹ 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 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'."

² *Vide* the preceding item. It was, however, written on March 4.

193. TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI¹

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 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

¹ 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* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 4-3-1939

194. TELEGRAM TO GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

[March 6, 1939]¹

THANKS FOR YOUR WIRE². IF MY FAST IS DIVINELY
INSPIRED AS I HAVE CLAIMED IT CANNOT BE TER-
RORISM. 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
DONE. NEVERTHELESS I THANK YOU AND YOUR AS-
SOCIATES 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

195. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRIYASHALA, RAJKOT,

March 6, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

In reply to your letter³ of even date, will you please wire to H. E. as follows?

“I am grateful for your wire. My actions especially my fasts are

¹ From “The Rajkot Fast-IV” by Pyarelal.

² Dated March 4, According to Pyarelal the addressee had asked Gandhiji, “Whe-ther 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’.”

³ Vide “Letter from E. C. Gibson”, 6-3-1939

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 statement¹ 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 letter² 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 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."³

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

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939

² *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 3-3-1939. The letter was released to the Press on March 3.

³ For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939

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

196. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 6, 1939

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please examine Kanaiyo's¹ 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

197. DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON²

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.

¹ Also called Kanu; son of the addressee

² This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast-IV". Pyarelal explains that this followed Gandhiji's 20-minute interview to Gibson.

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.¹

Harijan, 15-4-1939

198. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[On or after *March 6, 1939*]²

SHANKERLAL BANKER

EXHIBITION

TRIPURI

SEND POONA DIRECTLY JAWAHAR'S EXHIBITION OPENING
ADDRESS³ WITH COPY DELHI.⁴

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Agatha Harrison had a long talk with Gandhiji the previous morning also. For her report, *vide* "Discussion with Agatha Harrison", 5-3-1939

² From the reference of Jawaharlal Nehru's inaugural address at Khadi Exhibition, Tripuri, on March 6, 1939

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

⁴ Gandhiji wanted to proceed to Delhi after the fast; he however reached there on March 15.

199. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RASHTRİYASHALA, 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 reply¹ 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 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.”²

Yours sincerely,

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

¹ Vide “Letter from E. C. Gibson”, 7-3-1939. 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.

² 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).

200. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

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.

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 write¹ 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

¹ 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."

¹ Vide "Fasting"

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 rivetted 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 percent 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.

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 Bhayats¹ and Garasias². 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.

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

¹ Kinsmen; brothers, etc., of the ruling chief

² Holders of gifted land; a caste of Rajputs

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

201. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I broke the fast, gave a message¹ to the Press and now send you my thanks for your warm letter². Let me hope this contact is a foundation for lasting friendship.

Yours sincerely,

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

202. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE³

[March 7, 1939]⁴

BROKE FAST. THANK GOD.⁵

BAPU

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

203. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

RAJKOT,
March 7, 1939

MRS. BRIJLAL NEHRU

LAHORE

FAST BROKEN. THANK GOD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 7988

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² *Vide* footnote 1, "Statement to the Press", 7-3-1939

³ The addressee was the Congress President.

⁴ Inferred from the contents. The telegram was reported under the date-line "Tri-puri, March 8". *Vide* also the two following items.

⁵ The addressee's reply read : "Your telegram. Whole country is happy and relieved."

204. TELEGRAM TO WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
MADRAS¹

[March 7, 1939]²

FAST BROKEN. THANK GOD.

BAPU

The Hindu, 8-3-1939

205. TELEGRAM TO GOVINDDAS³

[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

206. 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,

¹ 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.

² *ibid*

³ 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".

⁴ *ibid*

though I would have been obliged to accept them. What I have deliberately put in doubt is the meaning of the famous letter¹ 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

207. 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

208. 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.

Blessing from

BAPU

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

¹ The reference is to the draft of statement for Dharmendrasinh; *vide* "Draft of Statement for Thakore Saheb of Rajkot", 19-11-1938

209. TALK WITH AGATHA HARRISON¹

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 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

¹ This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast-V" by Pyarelal.

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.

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

210. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE¹

[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

211. TELEGRAM TO K. M. MUNSHI³

[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

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.

212. 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 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

213. 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.

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".

8. Increase in student's fees and water charges.
9. Deprivation of freships.

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

214. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF RAJKOT¹

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 gave 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

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

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.

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

5. Young men and women in thier 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

215. TALK WITH RAJKOT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS¹

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

¹ This is extracted from “The Rajkot Fast-VI” by Pyarelal.

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

216. *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

217. *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 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.

² *ibid*

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.

218. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[March 11, 1939]¹

THANKS FOR WIRE². DO CONSERVE HEALTH AND ENERGY.
MAY GOD BE WITH YOU ALL. AM PROG-RESSING.

BAPU

The Hindu, 12-3-1939

219. 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

220. 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 Kano³.

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"] . . . 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.

221. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

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 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 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

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*.

222. 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

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

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).

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", 13-3-1939

223. FASTING

Fasting in 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 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 6th¹ and 13th² 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

¹ 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.

² *ibid*

come from the depth of one's soul. It is 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

224. 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

¹ This appeared under the title "To the People of Rajkot" as "the translation" of Gandhiji's second appeal. For the first appeal, *vide* "Appeal to People of Rajkot", 9-3-1939

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.

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 village 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 revived 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 Girasias 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. Garasars 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, 18-3-1939

225. 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

226. *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 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

227. *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 individual or groups that fully observe truth and ahimsa in the pursuance of their aim are ever victorious.²

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 76

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.

² *Vide* also the preceding item.

228. *LETTER TO SIR REGINALD M. MAXWELL*

NEW DELHI
March [15]¹, 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 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. Puckle² 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

¹ Inferred from the reference to this letter in the following item. The sources, however, has “16”.

² F. H. Puckle, Home Secretary

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

229. 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 House¹ 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 writing² to Sir Reginald Maxwell about their discharge.

2. I now reduce to writing what I tried to explain in the course of our conversation. As I read your telegram³, the Chief Justice⁴ is to interpret the letter⁵ 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 other⁶ as to the meaning of the

¹ In "The Rajkot Fast—VII", Pyarelal explains that Gandhiji had a two hour mee-ting with the Viceroy.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ Conveyed through E. C. Gibson, Resident; *Vide* "Letter from E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939

⁴ Sir Maurice Gwyer

⁵ 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".

⁶ 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."

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.

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 committed¹ 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 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 announce-ments² 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 us³. 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

¹ Viceroy's note reads: "We are back on the Notification of December 26th and Thakore's letter to Sardar Patel."

² Viceroy's note reads: "What 'announcement'? I contemplate none."

³ The rest of the paragraph is from the C.W. source.

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?¹

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

230. *DISCUSSION WITH PHILIPOSE*²

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 expectation, refuse to have any firework displays or put ourselves at his disposal for brutal 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

¹ According to Pyarelal, on March 16, "Gandhiji had. . . another interview. . . from 5 to 7.30 p. m. The interview was conclusive..."

² 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."

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

231. 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

232. 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 letter¹ 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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sir Reginald M. Maxwell", 15-3-1939

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

233. *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.¹ 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 your weight? You should take fruit, etc. It is *moha*² 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 from
BAPU

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

¹ The Praja Mandal suspended civil disobedience on March 23.

² Ignorant attachment

234. *INTERVIEW TO GOBIND BIHARI LAL*¹

[*March 16, 1939*]²

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 :

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.

QUESTIONS : What will Nationalist India do if war comes?

GANDHIJI : I cannot answer in advance. But this is certain that a

¹ 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.

² 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.

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

235. *DISCUSSION WITH HYDERABAD ARYASAMAJ LEADERS¹*

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.

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

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.”

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

236. 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.¹

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'."

¹ Aknowledging 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."

237. *LETTER TO YESHWANTRAO HOLKAR*

DELHI,
March 17, 1939

MAHARAJA SAHEB¹,

I have not forgotten the sweet memories of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan². 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

238. *A HARIJAN TOUR*

The following account by shri Rameshwari Nahru 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

239. *TELEGRAM TO U. N. DHEBAR* ⁴

NEW DELHI,
March 18, 1939

UCHHRANGRAI DHEBAR, VAKIL
RAJKOT

EXPEDITING THINGS HERE.⁵ 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

¹ Of Indore.

² From April 20 to 23, 1935

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.

⁴ This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VIII".

⁵ The C. W. source has: "Expedite everything." *Vide* also the following item.

240. 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 telegram¹ 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.

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

¹ 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."

241. MESSAGE TO EGYPT¹

March 18, 1939

I have nothing new. I would repeat what I said in my telegram² 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

242. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS⁴

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

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", 9-3-1939

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."

⁴ 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."

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

243. 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

244. 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 1921¹ 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

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad"-I

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 not to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoers. He should avoid artificiality in all his doings. He acts naturally and from inward convictions.

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 teetotalter 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

245. *DRAFT TELEGRAM TO R. SANKAR*¹

March 20, 1939

R. SANKAR²

TRAVELLERS' BUNGALOW

MADURA

WAS NOT UNPREPARED FOR ARRESTS. THEY WILL
BENEFIT CAUSE. ISSUING STATEMENT³.

GANDHI

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

246. *LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*

NEW DELHI,

March 20, 1939

MY DEAR C.R.

Read this⁴ 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

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* "Statement to the Press", 20-3-1939

⁴ *Vide* "Letter from S. Satyamurti to Mahadev Desai", 20-3-1939

247. *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?¹ I am inquiring.

I hope Maulana Saheb² 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.

248. *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

¹ 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."

² Abul Kalam Azad

249. 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

250. DISCUSSION WITH TRAVANCORE SATYAGRAHIS¹

March 20, 1939

Suspension should never bring despondency and weakness in a satyagraha struggle. Even though people may be ready and non-

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".

violence ensued, 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.¹

Harijan, 3-6-1939

251. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

NEW DELHI,

March 20, 1939

I observe that Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar³ 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 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

¹ *Vide* also "Discussion with Philipose", 15-3-1939

² The statement appeared under the title "Read the signs".

³ Dewan of Travancore State

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 State. 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 opinion¹ 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

252. *DICUSSION WITH JAIPUR SATYAGRAHIS* ¹

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 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

¹ *Vide* "Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha", 23-3-1939

¹ This is extracted from "The Rajkot Fast—VIII".

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, 3-6-1936

253. 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.

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

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

² 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”.

³ *Ibid*

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 some-times 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

254. 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.

255. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

MY DEAR SARAT,

Your letter¹ makes me sad. I have shown it to the Sardar and Kripalani and asked them to give me their reaction. I am on the train taking me to the Maulana who wants me and who is too disabled to come to Delhi. I am going to show it to him and Jawaharlal also and ask them to let me have their reaction.²You shall have their statements.

With so much that you have to say against your erstwhile colleagues and they against you both, how can I act, what can I do? Do you know that I have no official notice of the resolution? I have not even seen the full text. But even if I had official notice, what could I do so long as the terrible mutual distrust lasted?

I therefore suggest either a meeting of all of you so that you can pour out your hearts to one another and come to an understanding or, if the poison has gone too deep to be eradicated, I suggest Subhas's (when he is restored to health) telling the A. I. C. C. that he cannot work with the old Working Committee and that he should be relieved of the command or be left a free hand to choose his own cabinet.

In any event I think an early meeting of the A. I. C. C. should be called to consider the situation. I feel too that something should be done for the interim administration. What that something should be, I do not know.

You say I had said to Subhas that I would advise the Sardar and others not to obstruct Subhas. I did say so to Sardar. The Sardar when he read your letter flatly denied that there was any obstruction on the part of old colleagues. On the contrary, he says there was every attempt made to smooth Subhas's way. I am sorry you are also ailing. I hope you will rest and be soon your old self again.

I have assumed that your letter represents Subhas's sentiments also.³

Love.

BAPU

Status, June 30, 1985

¹ Presumably of March 21, 1939, complaining against "some of the ex-members of the Working Committee" who, he alleged had carried "malicious" propaganda against Subhas Chandra Bose at the Tripuri Congress; *vide Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*.

² For Jawaharlal Nehru's reactions, *op. cit.*,

³ *Vide* also "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 24-3-1939

256. STATEMENT SUSPENDING TRAVANCORE

SATYAGRAHA ¹

NEW DELHI,
March 23, 1939

I have had long Chats² 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 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

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* "Discussion with Philipose", 15-3-1939

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 advised¹ 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

257. *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

¹ *Vide* "Discussion With Jaipur Satyagrahis", 20-3-1939

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 resolution¹ 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

258. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 25, 1939

RASHTRAPATI BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE³. WAS YESTERDAY IN ALLAHABAD SEE
MAULANA AS HE WAS ANXIOUS FOR TALK. POSTED

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 items.

³ 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."

LETTER¹ FROM TRAIN. AWAITING YOUR COMMUNICATION.
HOPE PROGRESS STEADY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

259. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNIL BOSE

[*March 25, 1939*]²

YOUR WIRE³. GOD SAVE ME FROM NEWSPAPER⁴
INVENTIONS AND THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THEM.

The Sunday Statesman, 26-3-1939

260. TELEGRAM TO R. K. JHA

March 25, 1939

JHA
DRUG CONGRESS

IT DOES.⁵

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

261. 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

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai’s Diary.

³ 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.”

⁴ The manuscript of Mahadev Desai’s Diary has “Press”.

⁵ 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 Chattisgarh division was suspended on April 10. *Vide* also “Letter to Mulkraj”, 5-4-1939

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,¹ 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 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

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

262. '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 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

263. 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?

¹ *Vide* “Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha”, 23-3-1939

Provincial Autonomy¹ 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 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 voluntry 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

¹ Granted under the Government of India Act of 1935.

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

264. *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

265. *LETTER TO SIR MAURICE GWYER*

March 27, 1939

I had kept my reply ready¹. In the mean time, I got your letter.

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

Even then, it does not warrant any change. Let me add that I repudiate¹ the story regarding fraud². in fact, the question does not arise at all.

[From Gujarati]

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

266. INSCRIPTION IN A BOOK³

Ramanavami, March 29, 1939

Life is only for *yajna*.

[From Hindi]

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

267. DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON⁴

March 29/30, 1939

The thing⁵ 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

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)

¹ In the source, these two words are transliterated.

² *Ibid*

³ 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.

⁴ 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".

⁵ *Ibid*

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.¹

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

268. TELEGRAM TO DR. SUNIL BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

DR. SUNIL BOSE
JEALGORA

VIEW YOUR WIRE² I UNRESERVEDLY WITHDRAW MY
SUGGESTION.³ ON NO ACCOUNT WILL I ENDANGER

¹ According to Pyarelal, what follows was said on March 30.

² 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."

³ *Vide* "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", 27-3-1939

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

269. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I have delayed my reply to your letter of 25th¹ instant for the sake of having your reply to my wire². 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 resolution³ 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 had 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.

¹ The source, however, has "26th".

² *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 27-3-1939

³ *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 24-3-1939

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.

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

270. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR¹,

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

¹ Dewan of Hyderabad State.

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 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

271. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
March 30, 1939

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I had your two letters¹. 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.

272. A DISCUSSION¹

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

273. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
March 31, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR LETTER². REPLY³ FIRST LETTER POSTED YESTER-
DAY. 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* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 30-3-1939

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

274. *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

275. *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 Saroj¹.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9674

276. *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.

¹ Saroj Nanavati

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

277. *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 DEVI²
MEWAR

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

278. *LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR*

March 31, 1939

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter after a long wait. I expect your letter every day, but I am thankful for it whenever it comes. It is to your good that you have not come. Study a lot. Continue spinning. It seems you are pestered by scorpions. What remedy have you tried? My plans are all in suspense. It does not appear that I shall be going to the Frontier

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

² Secretary, Mewar Praja Parishad

right now. Come for the Gandhi Seva Sangh.¹ We shall at least meet there.

It will be good if your brother can be convinced. I am closing now as I have some visitors.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

279. *TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE*

NEW DELHI,
April 1, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JHARIA

YOUR WIRE². FIX DATE THAT SUITS YOU BEST. I
SHALL ACCOMMODATE MYSELF TO YOUR DATE.
LOVE.³

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

280. *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.⁴ 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

¹ The fifth session of the Sangh was to be held at Brindaban (Bihar) from May 3 to 7, 1939.

² *Vide* footnote 4, "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", 31-3-1939

³ 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.

⁴ For the addressee's letters of March 29 and 31, *Vide* "Letter From Subhas Chandra Bose", 29-3-1939

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 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 question. When Pandit Pant's resolution¹ 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

¹ *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 24-3-1939

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 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 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 a 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.

¹ *Vide* "Letter from E. C. Gibson", 7-3-1939

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

281. *TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE*

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

JEALGORA

POSTED FULL REPLY¹ YOUR LETTERS. MY ADVICE
THEREIN IS IRRESPECTIVE OF PANDIT PANT'S RESOLUTION AND
IN VIEW DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE VIEWS HELD BY
TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT YOU SHOULD FORTHWITH
FORM YOUR OWN CABINET FULLY RE-PRESENTING 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

282. *LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE*

NEW DELHI,
April 2, 1939

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have your letter full of tenderness.² The problem you set before me is difficult. I have made certain suggestions³ to Subhas. I

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² 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."

³ *Vide* the two preceding items.

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

283. *LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI*

NEW DELHI,

April 2, 1939

DEAR SIR AKBAR,

I hope you had my letter¹. I have been conferring² 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

284. *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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Akbar Hydari", 30-3-1939

² *Vide* "Discussion with Hyderabad Aryasamaj Leaders"

285. NOTE TO LADY RAZA ALI¹

April 2, 1939

There is no God but Truth.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 7750

286. 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

287. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM K. JERAJANI

NEW DELHI,

April 2, 1939

BHAI KAKUBHAI,

You are asking for a message for the Matunga [Khadi] Exhibition.² 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 As given in the G.N. Register. Raza Ali was Agent of the Government of India in South Africa, 1935-38.

² *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."

288. *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 illtreated, 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 the repression, if properly understood, evokes natural and spontaneous resistance in a satyagrahi, perhaps this knowledge will rob¹ 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

289. 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, Sir Maurice Gwyer delivered his judgement 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

290. *LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW*

BIRLA HOUSE,
April 3, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I learn that the belated Award¹ 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.

291. *LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI*

NEW DELHI,
April 3, 1939

DEAR BARDOLOI³,

You are embarking on a great experiment⁴, 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

¹ 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 judgement 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."

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 timetable 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."

³ Premier of Assam

⁴ The opium prohibition movement to be launched by the Assam Government in Sibsagar and Dibrugarh on April 15.

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

292. 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

293. 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

294. 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

295. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

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 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

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

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

296. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

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.

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

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 opinion¹ as to the necessity of suspension. Indeed this thoughtless repression proves the wisdom of suspension.

Harijan, 8-4-1939

297. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI
April 5, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR	WIRE ² .	NO	DATE	GIVEN	OUT	FROM
HERE.	MISSED	CONFIRMING	YOUR	WIRE ³ .	FORGIVE.	LEARN
TODAY	GANDHI	SEVA	SANGH	POSTPONED ⁴	OWING	
PLAGUE.	FIX ANY	DATE	CONVENIENT	TO YOU.	AS	
TO	PUBLICATION	LEAVE	ENTIRELY	TO YOU.	LOVE.	

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

298. 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

¹ *Vide* Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha”, 23-3-1939

² 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.”

³ *Vide* footnote 3, “Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose”, 2-4-1939

⁴ The Sangh held its meeting at Brindavan (Bihar) from May 3 to 7.

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.¹ TELL ME WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE ME
DO. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times 14-5-1939

299. 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 Chuikhadan, to be suspended for the time being. I am writing² in *Harijan*. It should be carefully read and people should be educated.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 12-4-1939

300. 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,³ I am of opinion that it should be deposited half and half in the Central Bank of India and the Bank of India

¹ 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 "Statement to the Press", 4-4-1939

² *Vide* "The States"

³ The addressee, Secretary of Jallianwala Bagh Memorial Fund, informed Gandhiji that money was lying with The Punjab National Bank, without fetching any interest.

respectively. The deposit in¹ 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

301. *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

302. *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

¹ The source has "from".

303. *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

304. *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

305. *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 Award² is but one step towards the objective. I have

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."Telegram to U. N. Dhebar", 3-4-1939

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 Rajkot in connection with the committee.

My love to Indu. I take it that Krishna¹ is also going. This means that you will be in Bombay on 15th?

Love.

BAPU

[P.S.]

I note what you say about the tension there.²

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

306. 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 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.³

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

¹ Krishna Hutheesing addressee's sister.

² The reference is to the communal tension in Allahabad.

³ *Vide* also the following item.

307. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

NEW DELHI,
[April 7, 1939]¹

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR WIRE². AM HELPLESS. MUST PROCEED RAJKOT.
SUGGEST YOUR SENDING SARAT OR OTHER
REPRESENTATIVE RAJ-KOT. HE CAN FLY. DO NOT
EXPECT RELEASE FROM RAJKOT FOR TEN DAYS. LOVE.
BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

308. TELEGRAM TO MR. PATHER³

April 7, 1939

PATHER CHAIRMAN
CARE RUSTOMJEE
DURBAN PIETERMARTZBURG

SIR RADHAKRISHNAN'S MESSAGE MUST IMPROVE RELATIONS EUROPEANS
INDIANS SOUTH AFRICA.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers . Courtesy : National Archives of India

309. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

NEW DELHI
April 7, 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I must thank you for your letter⁴ received and the full and

¹ From *The Hindu*, 13-5-1939

² Of even date, in which the addressee requested Gandhiji to arrange for their meeting before leaving for Rajkot. *Vide* also the preceding item.

³ This was in reply to a request by Mr. Pather, Chairman of the newly-instituted Gandhi-Tagore lectureship, for a message for the inaugural lecture under its auspices by Sir S. Radhakrishnan on April 10, 1939.

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 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 judgement all arrangements should be made in Rajkot and not here."

unequivocal assurance contained therein. Armed with it, I leave tonight in the confidence that there will be no hitch in the due fulfilment of 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 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

310. A LETTER¹

NEW DELHI,
April 7, 1939

I hope that you will have a successful meeting. There is no doubt that the proposed measure², 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 the proposed measure is not an attempt to commit a flagrant breach of the Cape Town Settlement of 1914 and subsequent declarations of the Union Government?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

311. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 7, 1939

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours. I am off to Rajkot. Mahadev will tell you all about it. Of

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."

course there is no Brindavan¹ 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

312. 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

313. 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

[P.S.]

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

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

¹ The reference is to the Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting; *vide* "Letter to Balvantsinha", 5-4-1939

314. *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 judgement cannot fail to notice the pains he bestowed upon it.

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

Harijan, 15-4-1939

315. TELEGRAM TO DHARMENDRASINH¹

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

316. 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 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.

¹ This is extracted from "Rajkot Events".

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

317. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*¹

[April 8, 1939]²

CHI. AMRITLAL,

How is your health? I hear from Krishnachandra that Rajbhusan 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

318. *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

[PS.]

How much did you spend on having the watch repaired?

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

¹ This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.

² *Ibid*

³ The date has been inferred from information supplied by the addressee.

319. *WHAT TO DO?*

Here is an important letter¹ 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.

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 latter's 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 assume, 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 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 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

320. *LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH¹*

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

MAHERBAN THAKORE SAHEB,

You must have received my wire² sent from Ajmer yesterday.

It is necessary now for you to appoint the Committee in terms of Sir Maurice's Award³.

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

321. *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* "Telegram to Dharmendrasinh", 8-4-1939

³ *Vide* footnote 2, "Telegram to U. N. Dhebar", 3-4-1939

⁴ For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter to dharmendrasinh", 10-4-1939

I have sent a letter¹ 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

322. *LETTER TO BHOLANATH*

RAJKOT,
April 9, 1939

BHAI BHOLANATH³,

I have your letter of March 23. I have fully discussed the matter⁴ with Haribhau Upadhyaya. Kindly consult him.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

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

323. *LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE*

RAJKOT
April 10, 1939

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

Your letter⁵ 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

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* "Letter From Subhas Chandra Bose", 6-4-1939

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.

Pandit Pant's resolution I cannot interpret. The more I study it the more I dislike it. The farmers 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 Ramdurg¹ 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 wires² 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.

¹ Ramdurg Praja Sangh had resorted to violent means to compel the Ruler to give them more concessions. *Vide* "Lawless Limbdi"

² *Vide* "Khudi Khidmatgars and Badshah Khan"

I forget one thing. Nobody put me up against you.¹ What I told you in Segaoon was based on my own personal observations. 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

324. 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 with-held for the time being at my instance:

About the last week of February, the Divisional Commissioner and the

¹ The addressee had said: "At Tripuri the Old Guard cleverly dropped out of the picture and more cleverly pitted me against you."

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 Aryasamajs 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 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 Internatinal 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

325. *LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON*

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
April 10, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I thank you for your kind note¹. 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

326. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

RAJKOT
April 10, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Fasting can do you no good. It appears that

¹*Vide* footnote 2, "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose",

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

327. *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 judgement.

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 'liberary'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

¹ Gandhiji used this expression for lavatory.

328. TELEGRAM TO JIVANSINH D. JADEJA

Express

RAJKOT,
April 12, 1939

JADEJA JIVANSINHJI DHIRUBHA¹
PRIVATE SECRETARY
SANAND

HAD EXPECTED SEE YOU HERE. IN SPITE OF
CHIEF JUSTICE AWARD HAVING GONE AGAINST
THAKORESAHEB'S 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.²

GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 10175. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

329. LETTER TO GARASIAS

[On or before *April 13, 1939*]³

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 majority for the Parishad, according to the

¹ He was nominated by the President, Rajkot Bhayats and Garasdas Samaj, to represent the Bhayats and zamindars of Rajkot on the Reforms Committee which the Thakore Saheb had agreed to appoint.

² *Vide* also the following Item.

³ The letter was reported under the date-line "Rajkot, April 13".

Gwyer Award, would be reduced to a minority. He is also stated to have pointed out that his assurance¹ 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*.²

The Hindu, 13-4-1939

330 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

331. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

MINE³ CROSSED YOUR LETTER.⁴ CAN ADD NOTHING
HELPFUL. CONVINCED BEST COURSE NATIONAL INTEREST

¹ 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", 15-4-1939

² *Vide* also the preceding item and "Letter to Ranjitsinh", 15-4-1939

³ Of April 10; *vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 10-4-1939

⁴ Of April 10, recapitulating principal points of previous letters

FOR YOU IS TO FORM CABINET OF YOUR
UNFETTERED CHOICE AND FORMULATE PROGRAMME. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

332. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 14, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JHARIA

YOUR WIRE¹. GANDHI SEVA SANGH THIRD MAY TO
TENTH. BETTER IF WORKING COMMITTEE TWENTY-EIGHTH
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

333. LETTER TO DHARMENDRASINH²

ANANDKUNJ, RAJKOT,
*April 14, 1939*³

NAMDAR THAKORE SAHEB,

I am able to answer your letter⁴ 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

¹ 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 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?"

² These 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".

³ According to *The Hindu*, 17-4-1939, the letter is dated April 15.

⁴ *Vide* "Letter from Dharmendrasinh", 10-4-1939

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.

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 on 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 Anada¹ B.A., L.L.B.,
2. " Popatlal Dhanji Malaviya²
3. " Jamnadas Khushalchand Gandhi,³

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. " Becharbhai Walabhai [Wadher]¹
5. " Jethalal [Harikrishna] Joshi,²
6. " Vrajlal Mayashanker Shukla,³
7. " Gajanan Bhawanishanker Joshi⁴ , M.A., L.L.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 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 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.⁵

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

Harijan, 22-4-1939

¹ A constructive worker; had taken interest in Harijan service

² Teacher, Rashtriya Shala; Secretary of the local Social Service League

³ Teacher in Rashtriya Shala

⁴ Secretary, local Ramakrishna Mission

⁵ 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."

334. *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 Shankar¹.

Blesings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 950. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

335. *LETTER TO KHWAJA HASAN NIZAMI*

BIRLA HOUSE, NEW DELHI,²
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

¹ Satish D. Kalelkar, who later married the addressee

² As in the letter-paper

336. LETTER TO RANJITSINH

April 15, 1939

I have received your letter¹ 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 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?²

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

¹ 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. Vallabhbai 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".

² *Vide* also "Letter to Garasias" 13-4-1939

Committee, you should request the Thakore Saheb to do so, and I have already written to him a letter¹. As a friend I tell you that your threat about agitaion and satyagraha, etc., is out of place.²

The Hindu, 18-4-1939

337. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

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 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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

² 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."

³ This is extracted from "Rajkot Events". The statement appeared in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 16.

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 letter¹ 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

¹ *Vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Garasias", 13-4-1939

statement¹ 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 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 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

¹ *Vide* "Letters From Subhas Chandra Bose", 29-3-1939

338. TELEGRAM TO A. I. KAJEE¹

April 16, 1939

KAJEE

DURBANSUB

SUGGESTION DIFFICULT. WHOLE THING DEPENDS YOUR EFFORT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers . Courtesy : National Archives of India

339. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,

April 16, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

As I know that you were in possession of my letter² 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

340. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RANJITSINH³

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 the least prevented by the

¹ This was in reply to a telegram of May 11, 1939, from Mr. Kajee, Secretary of the South African Indian Congress and Natal Indian Congress, requesting Gandhiji to appeal to General Herzog and General Smuts to postpone the Asiatics (Transvaal Land and Trading) Bill and agree to a Round Table Conference.

² presumably, a reference to the letter dated April 14; *vide* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 14-4-1939

³ According to the source, this was in reply to the addressee's letter dated April 15; *vide* footnote 3, "Statement to the Press", 15-4-1939

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 illusion¹. 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

341. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

April 16, 1939

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. I learnt a great deal from my talk with Laithwaite. It is a difficult matter. I do not remember ever having gone through anything like what I am now experiencing. I am in the midst of a forest fire. I am being tested. It is good that Sardar is with me. I cannot say where I stand now and where I shall end up. The article in the *Statesman* has had a tremendous effect. You are going to join me in Calcutta. Why don't Durga and Bablo go to Simla? Will they come to Brindaban?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ The source explains that the addressee had referred to "threats which Sardar Val-labhbhai 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?'"

342. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

April 16, 1939

What has hurt me most about this evening's demonstration² 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 inter-ference? 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 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 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

¹ This is extracted from "Rajkot Events". The statement appeared in *The Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* on April 17.

² For Pyarelal's account of the incident, *Vide* "The Way of Satyagraha"

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

343. *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 month¹:

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 advice² of Mahatma Gandhi. The working Committee desires to emphasize the need at this juncture for local and 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. Bhoot-halingam 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 scheme for the same.

Official goondaism: The Working Committee view 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

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

² *Vide* "Statement Suspending Travancore Satyagraha", 23-3-1939

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 Parurtaluks. 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 satya-graha, 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 hold 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, 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-trying 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 white-washing 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

344. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

YOUR LETTER WIRE¹. 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

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."

345. 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

346. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO S. SATYAMURTI¹

April 17, 1939

SATYAMURTI, M..L.A.
NEW DELHI

AM AGAINST PROCLAIMING DAYS FOR GRIEVANCES.

GANDHI

From the original ; Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

347. LETTER TO RANJITSINH²

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

KUMAR SHRI RANJITSINHJI,

I have seen the handbill issued by the Rajkot Bhayats and Garasdars's 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

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*.

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 appeal¹ which is sent herewith².

Yours,

The Hindu, 19-4-1939; also *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1939

348. 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?³

The Hindu, 19-4-1939

¹ The reference is to Gandhiji's statement to the Press on the demonstration; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-4-1939

² For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter from Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939

³ 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."

349. LETTER TO RANJITSINH¹

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 write² 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 request³, 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

350. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYA

RAJKOT,
April 17, 1939

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYA⁴

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

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.

⁴ Dewan of Mysore State, 1912-18

351. 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 vairs succeed. Consult Dinshaw also. Don't be negligent about regaining your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9117

352. TELEGRAM TO RANJITSINH

[After April 17, 1939]¹

IF SIR MAURICE GWYER CONSENTS TO ARBITRATE I
AM WILLING.

The Hindu, 2-5-1939

353. THE TRAGEDY OF TALCHER

The reader will recall the twenty to twenty-five thousand refugees of Talcher State in Orissa². 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.

¹ Inferred from the reference to Maurice Gwyer; *vide* letters to the addressee, The telegram appeared under the date-line "Rajkot, May I".

² *Vide* "Interview to Deputation of Victualers Association", 2-6-1939

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.

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”.

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

354. 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

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.

355. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

RASHTRAPATI SUBHAS BOSE
JEALGORA

CERTAINLY PUBLISH CORRESPONDENCE¹ WHICH WOULD RENDER
STATEMENT UNNECESSARY. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 14-5-1939

356. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

MULKRAJ
JALLIANWALABAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

INVEST AT ONCE BANKS RECOMMEDED² AT THEIR RATE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

357. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

RAJKOT,
April 18, 1939

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I get your letter; 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

¹Vide footnote 2, "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 17-4-1939

²Vide "Letter to Mulkraj", 5-4-1939

358. 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

359. 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

360. 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 view 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 straight forwardness.

I send you herewith copy of the latest letter¹ 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 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

¹Vide footnote 1, "Letter to Chandan Parekh", 14-4-1939

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 wrote¹ 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 judgement. 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 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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939

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 letter¹.

From a copy: C.W. 7820. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

361. 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).

362. TELEGRAM TO VIRCHAND PANACHAND SHAH¹

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

363. 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. As I said in my

¹ This was in reply to a telegram of even date from the addressee, who had informed Gandhiji of the situation in Jamnagar.

letter¹ 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

From a copy: C. W. 10182. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

364. *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* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 19-4-1939

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.

365. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1939

SECRETARY
JALLIANWALABAGH MEMORIAL FUND
AMRITSAR

ONE LAC FIFTY THOUSAND CENTRAL REST PUNJAB
NATIONAL SIX MONTHS¹.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

366. TELEGRAM TO MULKRAJ ²

RAJKOT,
April 22, 1939

SECRETARY
JALLIANWALABAGH [MEMORIAL FUND]
AMRITSAR

I APPROVE.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

367. 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 "Letter to Mulkraj", 5-4-1939 and "Telegram to Mulkraj", 18-4-1939

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.

368. 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

369. 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.

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

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.

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

*370. SPEECH AT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS' MEETING,
RAJKOT²*

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 yesterday³, 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 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.

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 "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 19-4-1939; also "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 20-4-1939

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 *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 thousand fold.

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 suggestion 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

371. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

GOING TODAY CALCUTTA¹ 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".

372. 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

373. LETTER TO E. C. GIBSON

RAJKOT,
April 24, 1939

DEAR MR. GIBSON,

A thousand apologies for the enclosure referred to in my yesterday's letter¹ 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

374. 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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 23-4-1939

happy and be an ideal couple.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

375. *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

376. *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 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.

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.

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 presented¹ this new line of approach to my co-workers. 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 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.

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Praja Parishad Workers' Meeting, Rajkot", 25-4-1939

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

377. *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 Ganga-dharrao 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 turth 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 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 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

378. *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 MEETING¹

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 7822. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ Of the A. I. C. C. *Vide* also "Interview to "The Statesman", 27-4-1939

379. 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 statement². 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, Navin³ and Dhiru⁴ 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

380. 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 note⁵ on Rajkot will give you 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 am keeping my strength remarkably well. Have no anxiety. The cough does not interfere with my sleep.

¹ *Vide* footnote on "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 24-4-1939

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

³ Sons of Vrajlal Gandhi

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

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 Sonapur for Bettiah.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3912. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7221

381. INTERVIEW TO "THE STATESMAN"

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.

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.

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. 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 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.

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 retirement¹ 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. 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.

¹ In October 1934

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 tith 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

382. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
April 27, 1939

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have read your letter. You should go away from Segaoon 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.

383. 'AN INSULT TO INTELLIGENCE'

The following¹ from a correspondent will be read with interest and profit by those who oppose prohibition.

Harijan, 29-4-1939

384. 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

385. 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 view, 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

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".

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 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

386. *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 telegram² 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

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.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 29-4-1939

387. A LETTER¹

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.

May God grant you peace.

Your brother,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4313; also S.G. 130

388. 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 place² 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.

¹ This was presumably addressed to Krishnachandra's mother; *vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 8-5-1939

² Moransagar

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 out-side the State. Thus Sheth Jamnalalji himself could not remain President of the Sangh because he is connected with the National Congress. Satyagraha has been suspended at my instance¹ 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

389. TELEGRAM TO DHARMENDRASINH²

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1939

H. H. THAKORESAHEB
RAJKOT

GRATEFUL YOUR WIRE³. NOTHING WILL PLEASE ME

¹ *Vide* "Discussion with Jaipur Satyagrahis", 20-3-1939

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. ..."

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

390. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA¹

CALCUTTA,
April 30, 1939

DURBAR VIRAWALA
RAJKOT

I SHALL NOT MISUNDERSTAND YOU AND SHALL HOLD
YOU TO YOUR PROMISE TO COME HONOURABLE SET-
TLEMENT. 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 MEAN-
WHILE YOU SEND ME GOOD NEWS.

GANDHI

Harijan, 6-5-1939

391. INTERVIEW TO SANTI ROY AND OTHERS²

SODEPUR,
April 30, 1939

They pointed out to Gandhiji that the political prisoners were asked not to start any agitaion 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.

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of April 29, which read ; "Am grateful for letter 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 Niranjana Sen and Anukul Chatterjee had met Gandhiji".

In reply, Gandhiji said that he quite remembered that the date had expired but as Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose 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

392. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[April 1939]¹

Do not worry about it. That letter is there of course; but that does not mean that we need not consider all the attendant circumstances. What was the fate of Thakore Saheb's² letter? Virawala³ presented a voluminous case. We can present one even more voluminous if we want. Is there any doubt about it?

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

393. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

1.20 a. m., May 1, 1939

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Such hard *tapascharya*⁴ 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*⁵. 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 Segaoon? 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*⁶, *dama*⁷, etc., mentioned in the verse cited by you.

¹ The note is placed in the source among items of April 1939.

² Thakore Saheb Dharmendrasinh of Rajkot

³ Durbar Virawala, Dewan of Rajkot State

⁴ Self-suffering as moral discipline

⁵ Rules of moral discipline and religious observances

⁶ Overcoming

⁷ Suppressing

We are shortly leaving for Brindaban.

Blessings from

BAPU

from a photostat of the Gujarati; G. N. 8563. Also C. W. 7049., Chimanlal N. Shah

394. 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

395. 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
RETURN¹.

BAPU

From a copy: C. W. 10187. Courtesy: D.B. Kalelkar

¹ Gandhiji was going to Brindaban; *vide* the two preceding items.

396. 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

397. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 3, 1939

DURBAR SHRI VIRAWALA
RAJKOT

YOUR WIRE¹. 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 PUR-POSE. I ASK

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..."

YOU TRUST HIM. HE HAS ONE 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

398. *SPEECH AT OPENING OF VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION, BRINDABAN*¹

May 3, 1939

BROTHER 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 Babu² 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

¹ The exhibition held at Kumar Bagh was organized by the Gandhi Seva Sangh. Present on the occasion were Kasturba Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbai Patel and Kishorelal Mashruwala, President of Gandhi Seva Sangh. The meeting was held in the morning.

² Prajapati Misra, Organizer, Gandhi Seva Sangh

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 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. Chhotelal¹, 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

¹ Chhotelal Jain, who committed suicide on August 31, 1937; For an obituary, vide "A Slient Co-Workers Gone", 1-9-1937

² Landless

mills of Japan, England and Ahmedabad. You buy that cloth thinking it is cheap, while you find the khadi prepared 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

399. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN¹

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

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

realization that I had not been able to reach the point I had intended came to me with added force in Rajkot.

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 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 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 a 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. 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 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 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 said¹ 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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 25-1-1931

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. 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 1909². 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

¹ A mythical cow that was supposed to give whatever was asked of her

² The source has "1908"

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 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 circular¹. 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

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* "Its Implications") 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.

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 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 of 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 grater. 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 untied, we become unconquerable. The mind acquires the powers to solve all question.

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 Jayprakash 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 where *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. 7-5

¹ They nodded their heads in agreement.

400. CABLE TO Y. M. DADOO¹

May 4, 1939

DOCTOR DADOO
47 ENDSTREET
JOHANNESBURG

YOU HAVE TO SUFFER NOT I. THEREFORE LET GOD ALONE BE
YOUR GUIDE²

GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 11353. Courtesy : E. S. Reddy; also *South Africa's
Freedom Struggle*, p. 296

401. 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

¹ Leader of the Passive Resistance Committee in South Africa. "Who is Dadoo?", Gandhiji enquired later of Manilal, writing to him on June 25; *vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Gandhi", 25-6-1939. For his acknowledgement of the identity of the addressee, *vide* "Statement to the Press", 4-4-1939

² This was in reply to the addressee's wire of May 2, 1939, which read : "Union Government introducing interim bill tomorrow. Community resolved offer satyag-raha. Expecting your blessings and guidance."

402. 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 Federation¹, 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. Moore² 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.

The letter³ 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

403. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH⁴

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

¹ The reference is to "Federation of India" embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935.

² Arthur Moore, Editor, *The Statesman* .

³ *Vide* "Letter to Adolf Hitler", 23-7-1939.

⁴ The letter is damaged at several places.

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

404. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

May 4, 1939

MY DEAR MATHEW,

You have become a problem. I have ask [ed]¹ 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

405. SPEECH AT TEACHERS' TRAINING CAMP, BRINDABAN²

May 4, 1939

I should like to tell you what I saw today. First I visited the exhibition.³ 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 time 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

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² The camp was organized by the All-India Talimi Sangh to prepare teachers under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

³ This was organized by Ashadevi Aryanayakam to demonstrate the various aspects of basic education.

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 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.

406. TELEGRAM TO K. P. PILLAI

May 5, 1939

KAINIKKARA PADMANABHA PILLAI
KRISHNAVILAS, KUNNUMKUZHI
TRIVANDRUM

REACHING RAJKOT TWELFTH. CAN MEET RAJKOT AFTER
TWELFTH.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

407. 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 statement¹ 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

¹Vide "Statement to the Press", 31-1-1939

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.

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 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. 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 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 circular¹. 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

¹ *Vide* footnote 1, "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting, Brindaban", 3-5-1939

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 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 to 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

¹ *St. Matthew,*

² *Ephesians,*

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 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 any-one 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 mal-aria 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 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 hartal¹ 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

408. 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

409. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ON THE TRAIN,
May 6, 1939

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your two letters. Who told you about the cabinet? I have not even heard the mention of Pu. 's¹ name in that connection. When the thing itself is not there, why talk about it? I have not understood the purport of the second letter. I do not even know what Pu. has done. Can you not have such things cleared up with V.²? He will be knowing everything. You should understand that in public life and in democratic functioning everyone has the experiences that you have had. We must be made of sterner stuff.

I gather from Mahadev that you are not keeping good health. It seems you are also having blood-pressure. In that case, you must take rest. What has happened to Taramati?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

410. 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?³

°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

¹ Presumably Purushottamdas Tandon

² Vallabhbhai Patel

³ According to the source Gandhiji misunderstood the question and interpreted "living wage" as work for a living.

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 professor¹. 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 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.

¹ Gandhiji has used the English term.

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 view 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 fide*. 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 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

¹ Marathi weekly published from Bombay.

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 every- where 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, *pardah* 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.

RADJALROSJIMA NAKA: 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

411. TALK TO RURAL RECONSTRUCTION WORKERS²

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 necessities 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

¹ Vide "Answers to Questions at Gandhi Seva Sangh", Meeting, Brindaban-III", 7-5-1939

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*.

millions who need your assis-tance.

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

412. IS NIRA OBJECTIONABLE ?

Among the fourteen points that Parsi friends have raised against the prohibition campaign, there occurs this strange passage :

Mahatamaji 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

413. *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

414. *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 telegram² 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* "Letter to Mirabehn", 8-5--1939

415. 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

416. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING, BRINDABAN—III

May 7, 1939

Let me begin with Radhakrishna's question which I took up yesterday¹ but could not finish. The question about God had 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 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.

¹Vide "Answeres to

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 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-

¹ This was asked by A. Vedaratnam.

² This was asked by Moolchand Agrawal.

³ *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal"

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 covention. 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

417. 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 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 Sangh¹. 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 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.

¹ All-India Spinners' Association.

² Oil mill.

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.

418. *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

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.

the same weapon at your disposal. The need for it 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 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

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?"

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 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

419. DISCUSSION WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND OTHERS¹

BRINDABAN,

[On or before *May 8, 1939*]²

GANDHIJI : You won't count nearness to Patna an advantage. We want to go to the village. 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.

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.

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 proposed."

² Gandhiji left Brindaban on May 8, 1939.

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 fireworks 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.

420. TELEGRAM TO VIRAWALA

[May 8, 1939]¹

YOUR WIRE². 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 .

421. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BRINDABAN, CHAMPARAN,
May 8, 1939

AMTULSALAAM
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI
AHMEDABAD

WROTE SEVERAL LETTERS.³ WELL. PASSING THROUGH AHMEDABAD TWELFTH MORNING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 419

¹ From *the Indian Annual Register*, 1939

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."

³ *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 7-5-1939

422. 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

423. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL¹

AS ATRAJKOT,

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

¹ Dewan of Mysore State.

424. *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

425. *A LETTER*

[May 8, 1939]¹

I am merely going on a pilgrimage. If his² 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

426. *LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA*

May 8, 1939

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You will have got my letters. I had sent a letter³ 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?

¹ From the reference to "Kashi", where Gandhiji arrived on May 9.

² Madan Mohan Malaviya's; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 4-5-1939

³ *Vide* "A Letter", 29-4-1939

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to Lilavati Asar", 11-5-1939

I have written¹ 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

427. *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

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Munnalal G. Shah”, 4-5-1939

428. *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 reply¹ 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.

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 Jamnalaji 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.²

Lastly, Rajkot. The Award has been a halter round my neck. This 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

¹ *Vide* footnote 1, "Telegram to Lord Linlithgow", 18-4-1939

² *Vide* also "Jaipur Prisoners"

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.¹

I am.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

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

429. A MESSAGE

[On or After *May 9, 1939*]²

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

¹ For the Viceroy's reply, *vide* "Letter from Lord Linlithgow", 15-5-1939

² Gandhiji had scribbled the message on the back of a telegram dated May 9, 1939, which was addressed to him.

430. *TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR*

KANTI,
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

431. *LETTER TO HABIB KESHAVJI*

May 10, 1939

BHAI KESHAVJI¹,

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. 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

¹ A South African Indian. He had in his childhood met Gandhiji in South Africa.

432. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

BOMBAY
May 11, 1939

MIRABEHN
C/O PREMIER
PESHAWAR

ACT ACCORDING MY LETTER¹ POSTED FROM BRINDABAN.
GOING RAJKOT TONIGHT.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6441. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 10036

433. 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.² 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

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Amtussalaam", 8-5-1939

² *Vide* also "Letter to Krishnachandra", 8-5-1939

434. 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

435. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS¹

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.

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."

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?

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.

436. 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 grammer. The text to be taught would be a prescribed one, so you should have no difficulty.

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."

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

437. *SPEECH AT PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS' MEETING, RAJKOT*¹

May 12, 1939

I wonder why my statement of 24th² April should have perturbed some of you. I said nothing new in it. It was a summary of what I had told³ you in detail just before I left Rajkot.

So far as Vajubhai⁴ 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

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* "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

³ *Vide* "Speech at Praja Parishad Workers Meetng, Rajkot", 23-4-1939

⁴ Vajubhai Shukla.

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 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 discussed¹ 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. Gibson² about the interminable delays and to the Bhayats³ 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

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Praja Parishad Workers Meeting, Rajkot", 23-4-1939

² *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 19-4-1939

³ *Vide* "Letters to Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939

it become 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 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 little child, there used to be two blind master performers in Rajkot. One of them was 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 in 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.

438. 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 policy¹ in respect of Asiatics. Their past declarations were being disregarded and some of the recommendations made by their own Commission 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.

439. TALK WITH PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS³

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 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.

¹ *Vide* footnote 2, "A Letter", 7-4-1939

² *Vide* also "Message to Indians in south Africa", 23-5-1939

³ 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."

⁴ *ibid*

440. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

DEAR DR.. GOPICHAND,

Please fix up with T. Bapa about the donation referred to by you.

Yours,
BAPU

DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA, M.L.A.
LAHORE

From the original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

441. 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

442. 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

443. *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

¹ In the source, the superscription is in Urdu.

444. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL¹

RAJKOT,
May 13, 1939

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
BHAVNAGAR

DUMB-FOUNDED. GOD WILL GUIDE US. HOPE NANABHAI²
OTHERS WELL. AWAITING FURTHER PARTICULARS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

445. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

RAJKOT
May 14, 1939

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your letter. I have known Juthabhai for many years. He is industrious. He is honest. If you want him to handle large amounts, I would suggest that you start entrusting him with responsibility little by little. I have no idea about his ability to handle large amounts.

I fully endorse Juthabhai's charitable activities. But I do not personally collect money for all my colleagues. In many cases, I give them the responsibility of collecting money. This has brought good results. They get the training. They gain respect independently, and my burden of raising funds becomes lighter.

Saralabehn met me in Bombay.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11127. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

¹ This was sent on hearing about an unsuccessful attempt on Vallabhbhai Patel's life in Bhavnagar.

² Nrisinh Prasad Kalidas Bhatt.

446. *INTERVIEW TO TRAVANCORE NATIONAL
CONGRESS DEPUTATION¹*

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.

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

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.

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 arrangement 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 Hindu 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.

447. 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 premission 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 possibly make the suggested gesture. The Aryasamajist civil disobedience will then stop at once.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 8016

448. *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

449. *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 Manubhai² 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

450. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

RAJKOT,
May 15, 1939

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,³

I sent you a letter⁴ from here. You saw what happened in Bhavnagar⁵ The lesson it has for you is that you must stay in

¹ *Alias* Balasaheb Pant Pratinidhi.

² Addressee's husband.

³ In the source Gandhiji had added here: "Harijan Ashram".

⁴ *Vide* "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 14-5-1939

⁵ *Vide* "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 14-5-1939

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

451. A NOTE

May 15, 1939

This is a foolish letter. You will rid yourself of this foolishness if you do some work. It is improper to stay on here. It is uncivilized to hang around at other people's homes. Please go away.

M. K. GANDHI

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

452. TALK WITH PRAJA PARISHAD WORKERS¹

[May 15, 1939]²

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 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

¹ 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* "Talk with Praja Parishad Workers", 12-5-1939. 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.

² *ibid*

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

453. 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 reproduced¹ in these columns. The representative of the Paramount Power can even require the smaller

¹ *Vide* "The Tragedy of Talcher"

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.

454. 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

455. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

RAJKOT,

May 17, 1939

I said² 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 as to induce fulfilment of the promise made by the Thakore Saheb. This was not

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* "Popular Violence in Ramdurg". Gandhiji was on his way to Calcutta.

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 friend. 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.

456. DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI

[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 1918³ when you fasted during the Ahmedabad labour strike you did not insist on the 35 percent 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 1918⁴ 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 moments' 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 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. Vallabhbbhai Patel was also present.

² *ibid*

³ The source, however, has "1917"

⁴ *ibid*

457. *TALKS WITH CO-WORKERS, RAJKOT*¹

[*Afrer 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 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

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; "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

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 closely-guarded secrets 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 instructions¹ 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:

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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to M. R. Jayakar", 10-3-1922 and "Interview to Indulal Yagnik", 11-3-1922

² *Vide* "Appeal to Bombay Citizens", 19-11-1939

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 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 Bradlaugh² may have the capacity to sacrifice all.

¹ "Long live the revolution."

² Charles Bradlaugh (1833-1891), English free-thinker and radical who became known as a free-thought lecturer under the name of "Iconoclast".

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.

458. INTERVIEW TO STEEL¹

RAJKOT,
[After *May 17, 1939*]²

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.

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

¹ Of *The New York Times*. The interview appeared under the title "No Quarrel about Words" by Pyarelal.

² 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.

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.

459. 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

¹ Underwear.

460. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 18, 1939

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter only today. I have only a few minutes to spare and I give them to you. As for Kanam, he is here and is flourishing. Ba came the day before yesterday and brought him. They could not manage him in Bombay. For one thing, he is full of pranks, then he has also got the bad habit of extracting money from people. Ramdas therefore decided to send him away with Ba. He will not be a burden here. Kanu will look after his education.

I have discussed the matter with Ramdas. He is unable to decide. For the present, he will remain where he is. He is thinking of going to Bhavnagar after some time. All that I want is that you should complete your studies. Sumi must have fully recovered now.

I might now be able to leave Rajkot in a few days. You must have seen my statement¹. The nights here are quite fine. The heat during the day is also not unbearable.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

461. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

May 18, 1939

CHI. SUMI,

I got your letter. You have deformed your handwriting. Write to Kanam. Will the sores caused by small-pox remain? Write to me regularly. Segaoon is almost deserted these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹Vide "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

462. *DISCUSSION WITH KASTURBA GANDHI'*

[May 18, 1939]²

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.

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

¹ 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."

² According to Mahadev Desai, the discussion was on "the next day" after the one he had with Gandhiji on May 17; *vide* "Discussion with Mahadev Desai", 17-5-1939

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.

463. TALK WITH A CHILD¹

[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. 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

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 talks 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."

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.

464. 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 Naranji². I am glad his memory is being honoured.

The Hindu, 20-5-1939.

465. 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."

466. TELEGRAM TO TANZEEM-UL-MOMININ¹

[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

467. 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 statement³ 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", 23-5-1939

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

⁴ *Vide* also "Talcher"

468. *LETTER TO KISHANSINH CHAWDA*

RAJKOT,
May 20, 1939

BHAI KISHANSINH¹,

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

469. *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 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

¹ A Gujarati writer.

² The talk is extracted from "The decision and After—I". Mahadev Desai explain^s 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.

³ *ibid*

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.

470. LETTER TO PRITHVI SINGH

RAJKOT,
May 21, 1939

MY DEAR PRITHVI SINGH¹,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I did receive the previous letter, and I have been in correspondence with Shantilal about your

¹ A revolutionary, who surrendered to Gandhiji after absconding arrest for 16 years; was sent to jail but later got discharged; *vide* "The Old Revolutionary", 25-9-1939.

book¹. 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 statement² on Rajkot. Now you have before you the second³. 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

471. ABSTRACT OF LETTER TO KHENGARJI SAVAI⁴

[Before May 22, 1939]⁵

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.

¹ The addressee's autobiography, *Kranti Pathka Pathik*, written in jail

² Vide "Statement to the Press", 24-4-1939

³ Vide "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

⁴ The addressee was the ruling chief (Maharao) of Cutch.

⁵ The letter was reported under the date-line "Cutch-Bhuj, May 22".

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 article¹ 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 reproduced² 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 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

¹ *Vide* "The Jews"

² 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. . . ."

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 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 concerned².

RAJKOT, May 22, 1939.

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

473. WITHDRAWN

In *Harijan* of December 24 there is a long report of my talk³ 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.

¹ For Gandhiji’s view on the Khilafat.

² *Vide* also the following item.

³ *Vide* “Discussion with Christian Missionaries”, 12-12-1938

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 friend 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 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.

474. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA¹

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 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 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 discount-enanced 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.²

Harijan, 27-5-1939.

¹ This appeared under the title "The Latest Menace". The message was also published in *The Hindu*, 24-5-1939.

² *Vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India", 12-5-1939

475. A LETTER¹

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.²

From a copy: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK³

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

¹ This was presumably addressed to the office-bearers of the Tanzeem; *vide* "Telegram to Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", 19-5-1939

² For Gandhiji's opinion, *vide* "Letter to President, Tanzeem-ul-Mominin", Before 4-8-1939.

³ 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.

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

477. *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

¹ The meeting was held in the evening at Arya Chowk.

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 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

¹ This paragraph is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Decision and After— I" in *Harijan*.

² Goal of human life

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 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

478. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

ANAND BHUWAN, RAJKOT

May [23]¹ /24 , 1939

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I thank you for your letter² 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 statement³, 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. Gibson⁴ to send you the

¹ From the last sentence of the letter

² *Vide* "Letter From Lord Linlithgow", 15-5-1939

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 17-5-1939

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 4-3-1939

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 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 me 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

479. 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

480. 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.

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

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.

481. *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

482. *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

483. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 26, 1939

CHI. SHAMALDAS¹,

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

484. 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.

¹ A nephew of Gandhiji and editor of *Janmabhoomi*, a Gujarati daily published from Bombay

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

485. 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

486. 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 given 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

487. 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

488. 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

¹ An economist

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

489. 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 chapter¹ has become complicated. Let me see.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1183

490. 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 principle 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 require 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

¹*Vide* "Talcher"

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

[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

491. 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"

PHOENIX

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4896

492. 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. 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 to 280

493. 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

494. 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

495. *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

496. *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.

The rest if someone writes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4897

¹ The reference is to the South Africa Union's policy of segregating Indians; *vide* "Message to Indians in South Africa", 23-5-1939

497. LETTER TO VINODINI AND SAMYUKTA GANDHI

RAJKOT,
May 29, 1939

CHI. VINODINI AND SAMYUKTA¹,

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

498. 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 in fair sample of 'civil' liberty. I call these writings terrorism of minorities. One writer has given the prohibition campaign of communal turn and has not hesitated to say that Congress Hindus have plotted to ruin the Parsis !

Surely abuse is no argument. Let the Parsis who are interested 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

¹ Daughters of Jaisukhlal Gandhi, a nephew of Gandhiji

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

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I¹

COLD-BLOODED BREACH OF A SOLEMN COVENANT

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel issued the following statement on January 25th:

It is with the deepest regret that I have to announce resumption of the struggle in Rajkot which seemed to have ended so happily. Resumption has become a duty in order to vindicate the honour of the State and the self-respect of the people of Rajkot.

The public will recall that the settlement announced in the Rajkot State *Gazette* of 26th December was a result of discussions between the Thakore Saheb and his Council consisting of Sir Patrick Cadell, Rao Saheb Maneklal Patel and Shri J. Jobanputra. The discussions which took place on the evening of December 25th lasted for nearly eight hours ending at 1.42 a.m. On the day of the settlement the Thakore Saheb gave me the following note:

AMARSINHI SECRETARIAT, RAJKOT STATE,
December 26, 1938

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

(Sd.) DHARMENDRASINH
THAKORE SAHEB, RAJKOT

It should be remembered that I had gone to Rajkot at the Thakore Saheb's invitation.

Soon after the settlement Sir Patrick Cadell retired....

I must state with the greatest reluctance that the Thakore Saheb has been ill served by those who have eaten his salt. Among the worst of these advisers has been Durbar Virawala who has ruined the State and drained it empty by his hopeless mismanagement. He has cast a spell over the Thakore Saheb which the latter cannot resist even if he would. It was he who brought Sir Patrick Cadell. When the latter realized that Durbar Virawala was the evil genius of the State, almost his first act was to have him banished from Rajkot with the help of the Agency. Sir Patrick Cadell might not have been obliged to leave if he had not traded upon his prestige as a member of the ruling race. Durbar Virawala would not brook the presence of a Dewan who had brought about his banishment.

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Peasants", 29-1-1939

Though he was banished he pulled the wires from Bagasra. His son Bhojvala and his nephew Valeravala are still with the Thakore Saheb. Realizing that he could not successfully resist the contemplated settlement, he played the role of a friend and seemed to assist the settlement. Soon after the settlement, when Sir Patrick Cadell was about to go, Durbar Virawala found himself in Rajkot and began his operations which have never ceased. The Resident's note and the Political Agent's note will be read with interest.

I needed a few days to enable me to select, in consultation with those who were in charge of the movement, seven names of the committee that had to be given in terms of the settlement. I sent the following seven names on the 4th January:

1. Shri Popatlal Dhanjibhai Malaviya
2. Shri Popatlal Purushottam Anada
3. Shri Mullan Valiji Abdulalli
4. Dr. D. J. Gajjar
5. Shri Jamnadas Khushalchand Gandhi
6. Shri Vrajlal Mayashanker Shukla
7. Shri Uchharangray Navalshanker Dhebar

Notification of the appointment of the committee should have followed at once. But nothing happened for some days.

On the 28th December there was a consultation between the Resident and the Thakore Saheb-in-Council. I have authentic notes of that interview taken by one of those present. The remarks made by the Resident about the Congress and me will be read with interest. He could not conceal his dislike of the settlement, the Congress or me.

It seems that the Resident and Durbar Virawala are responsible for the breach of the solemn undertaking the Thakore Saheb gave to his people. As evidence of Durbar Virawala's influence over the Thakore Saheb, the letter of thanks received by me from him makes interesting reading.

It is necessary to compare the present one-sided arbitrary notification with the one which was issued in terms of the settlement. The second notification cancels four of my nominees. It also cancels the terms of reference and is vague, whereas the first was precise. The former contemplates publication of the report before the 31st instant and effect being given to it by the Thakore Saheb. The latter fixes no time-limit for the report.

Before the last announcement I received a letter from Rao Saheb Maneklal Patel. It is noteworthy that whereas that letter had accepted four of my nominees the notification has only three. To this I sent a reply in Gujarati of which the translation will be found.

I had heard so much of Durbar Virawala's influence on the Thakore Saheb and his interference that I had to say in my said letter that Durbar Virawala could not in any event be accepted on the committee. I wanted no loophole left.

This flagrant breach of a solemn settlement leaves but one course open before the people of Rajkot. It now remains for me to invite the people of Rajkot to resume the self-chosen course of suffering for vindicating their liberty and saving Rajkot and the Thakore Saheb from utter ruin. It is best to anticipate and provide for the worst. The worst that can happen is frightfulness of the extreme type, including torture not unknown in Kathiawar and setting up of internal quarrels. Of the latter we have evidence in inspired agitation from some Muslim brethren. We have to show them by our conduct that they have at least as much to gain as the rest of us by settled government under their own control. Rajkot has been made bankrupt through hopeless mismanagement and corruption. These dissensions, if they persist, can prolong the struggle, never defeat the end in view, if the people at large cohere, show capacity for enduring suffering, no matter how great or protracted, and also show capacity, in spite of pecuniary losses, for going through the items of non-violent non-co-operation. On no account must students take part in civil disobedience or strikes. They can and should do constructive work if they believe in it. They can by house-to-house visits alleviate suffering which is bound to be inevitable as the struggle proceeds.

Non-violence has to be observed in thought, word and deed. It has to be observed as well among co-workers as with opponents and neutrals, as well in the jail as outside it. The measure of our non-violence will be the measure of our success. We must have faith in the possibility of our non-violence turning the Thakore Saheb's face in the direction of his people. Today he is a Ruler in name only; it must hurt every one of his people to find the young Prince committing a deliberate breach of the solemn covenant he made with his people.

I have said seemingly bitter things about Durbar Virawala. But truth has to be sometimes bitter and harsh. I have said nothing that I do not believe about him. We must love him in spite of his glaring blemishes and expect our love to convert him and those who are working under his influence and direction.

I am sorry the Resident resents my intervention and the influence of the Congress in shaping the policy and programme of the people of Rajkot. The people of the States have always been guided by the Congress. They owe allegiance to it. Indeed in the early stages the Princes also looked to the Congress for its support. The Congress adopted the policy of non-intervention in the sense of direct participation in the matters affecting questions arising between the people and the Princes. This was nothing but recognition of the limitations of the Congress. But when the people became conscious of their strength and were prepared to suffer, the Congress would be

untrue to its mission if it failed to help them to the best of its ability. As for poor me I happen to have been a President of the Kathiawar Rajkiya Parishad and as such owe a duty to the people of Kathiawar as also to the Princes and dare not refuse help when they need it. In Rajkot the people in the first instance and then the Ruler sought my assistance which I claim has been unstintingly given. I fail to see anything wrong in this or to be resented by the Resident or the Imperial Power. This is a question which it would incidentally be Rajkot's proud privilege to be the cause of having decided.

For the time being the civil resistance will be confined to Kathiawaris only. The people of Kathiawar are so inter-related that for practical purposes it would be difficult to exclude any Kathiawari from participation on moral grounds.

THAKORE SAHEB'S LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT STATE,
December, 1938

MY DEAR SARDAR VALLABHBHAI,

Thanks for your note received just now.

I shall be-delighted if you come and have tea with me at 5 p. m. today.

We shall then discuss the present question in presence of my Council Members.

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM SIR PATRICK CADELL TO THAKORE SAHEB

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT,
October 1, 1938

YOUR HIGHNESS,

I yesterday asked you to allow me to see you not later than 8 o'clock. I had affairs of great importance to talk about. I suggested this late hour though inconvenient to myself, in order to suit you. You sent your Private Secretary to tell me that you would see me at 8.30. I was present at that time and was told that you were in your bath. I waited till 9 o'clock, and was told that you might be another quarter or half an hour late. I then left.

I now write to inform Your Highness that I have no intention of allowing

myself to be treated in this grossly discourteous manner. I had no idea when I left England to help you that you would be capable of such behaviour. I cannot allow it to be continued.

I had intended to tell you last night that in any case the present situation cannot go on. The condition of affairs in the State is very serious. Many of the complaints against the State are based on your behaviour. It is believed that you spend too large a share of the State's revenue, that most of your expenditure is on unworthy objects, and that you take no part in the administration of the State. I do not wish to make any reference at present either to the amount of money you spend, or the way you spend it. But it is certainly true that you take no part in the administration and show no interest in the welfare of your people. This is all the more noticed because it is so different from the system which your father followed. It is not fair to your officers to expect them to bear the burden of repressive methods while you do nothing. You must take some share. I therefore propose to you the following action.

(1) I understand that you are to take part in the *yajna* ceremony at one, and perhaps two, of the temples this evening at 7.30. If there is time for you to agree to this, I request that after you have done this, you will drive through the city and that you will allow me to accompany you.

(2) The Huzur Office is closed today as it is a holiday, but it is open on Monday. I suggest that you should promise *on your word of honour* to come to the office on Monday, not later than 6 p.m. to hear petitioners for about an hour.

I am sure that these two actions will have a good effect in the city.

I must also make a third request.

(3) Whenever I have to see you on any day, you will promise to see me on that day not later than 7.30 p.m. and you will promise *on your word of honour* not to be more than a quarter of an hour late.

If you are unable to accede to these suggestions, I shall be obliged to inform the Hon. the Resident that I cannot carry on and that I propose to return to England as soon as possible.

If I have to do so, I fear that this may have unfortunate consequences both for your State and for yourself. I can assure you that the Government of India are not likely to look with favour on your conduct. I should be sorry if you were to suffer, but I cannot continue if Your Highness behaves like this.

I should be obliged if you would let me know before 5.30 this evening whether

Your Highness agrees to drive through the city this evening and to allow me to accompany you.

Yours sincerely,
PATRICK CADELL

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO SIR PATRICK CADELL

Confidential

RANJIT VILAS PALACE,
RAJKOT,
October 2, 1938

DEAR SIR PATRICK,

I am exceedingly sorry to receive your letter of yesterday, and I must say that I do not like the tone of it. I cannot accept that the complaints against me are based on facts. The present agitation is only a wave spread by the Congress for the initiation of responsible government in the States, and I believe that to be the reason why they have selected Rajkot in Kathiawar, as they have done with Mysore, Travancore, etc., as States in which people already enjoy greater share of public liberties.

It was with a view to put down the situation that I had requisitioned your services I have still a wish to smoothen your task as much as possible and will come to the office any day at my convenience after Dasera.

I strongly object to your remarks that if you have to go it may have unfortunate consequences both for my State and myself, and that the Government of India are not likely to look with favour on my conduct. In this connection I must definitely let you understand that it is I who has appointed you as my Dewan, and that if as a result of any disagreement with you I have to ask you to be relieved, neither the Hon. the Resident nor H. E. the Viceroy will have any cause to look upon me with disfavour. Whatever information you may be able to gather with regard to my State and myself is made available to you because you enjoy my confidence, and I need hardly say that you cannot utilize any of my State records without my permission, and much less against myself. Any information which the Hon. the Resident has thought it necessary to receive about anything relating to my State has been sought for through my Dewan, only if I am agreeable to give it. I might also tell you that I have done nothing to lose any share of the confidence which I enjoy both with the Hon. the Resident and H. E. the Viceroy to its fullest extent. I would therefore wish you to reconsider your decision and express your agreement to act in a manner consonant with my dignity and policy.

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO SIR PATRICK CADELL

RAJKOT,

October 16, 1938

DEAR SIR PATRICK,

You are, I am sure, fully aware of the present situation. It has not been improved in any way and so far as I can see it is getting worse every day and has reached a climax by now. The other day when we called a meeting we agreed to give the people certain concessions, but it failed to ease the situation and bring about any desired result. I am myself getting convinced that we failed to take proper steps at the proper time, which should have removed my anxiety. The situation, in short, is decidedly getting out of control and adding immensely to my troubles. The agitation is getting more and more intense with little hope of its being brought under control in the near future. My people feel and are led to believe that you have been sent by the Government and that I have lost the position which I had hitherto enjoyed. They now refuse to extend to me the same love and loyalty which they used to extend before your arrival. Nay they even seem to think and carry the impression that not I but you are the Ruler.

I should say that though this feeling is not created by you but I must say that anyway it is there which they are not in a mood to shake off obviously. Diwali holidays are drawing nearer and Ijaras must as usual be given but the people have boycotted them. They are further determined to boycott sales of grain also, and it is possible that no sale of grain could be made this year due to their non-co-operation. This would mean a financial ruination of the State and a crisis which had better be imagined than stated. This state of things, I feel, I, as the Ruler, am bound to prevent at any cost or sacrifice in the interests of the State and its subjects.

The people, as you know, have now adopted a defiant attitude and are suffering. I must, therefore, see that this unfortunate situation must be thoroughly eased and some sort of definite settlement should be arrived at between them and me at the earliest possible opportunity. I feel I am unable to do anything in this matter so long as my people do not recognize me as their *de facto* Ruler. As a well-wisher of the State you would also wish and agree that such state of things should not be permitted to continue any more. It is therefore my bounden duty to see that I must have my position as the real and benevolent Ruler re-established in the eyes of my people, in order that I may be able to carry conviction and settle with them and win their love and confidence.

I had asked D. S. Virawala to know your views in this matter. He tells me that he saw you on the 13th instant and you told him that in your view the fight should be

continued as long as the State's finances would permit and we should see whether they or we would ultimately win.

Besides, your letter dated 1st October 1938 gives me to understand that in so far as you are concerned you are definitely of the view that I am myself, more or less, the cause of these troubles. I have denied the charges by my reply. Considering the allegations made in your letter and your attitude, I have little doubt in my mind that we would not be able to pull on together in the interests of my State and its subjects and also my rights, dignity and position of the Ruler, as nobody realizes the extremely disastrous situation more than I do.

It is my definite desire to myself settle the domestic dispute between my State and its subjects as early as possible and before the Diwali holidays. This would not, in my view, be possible unless we part at the earliest. This is a very unfortunate position and no one would be more sorry than myself, but it could not be helped as the interests of myself and my State are at stake. I need hardly assure you that it is not my desire to make your position awkward in any way, and hence I leave it to you to decide how you should arrange to leave and retire, as I am anxious to see that just as you came as a friend you should also part as a friend. I had engaged your services for six months certain and hence I am instructing the State Treasury to pay your salary accordingly. I am also instructing Mr. Bhat, the Revenue Secretary, to relieve you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON TO THAKORE SAHEB

Confidential

THE RESIDENCY,

RAJKOT,

October 26, 1938

D. O. No. C/134-38

MY DEAR THAKORE SAHEB,

You will remember that on the evening of October 16th you wrote to inform me that you desired to dispense with Sir Patrick Cadell's services and you enclosed a copy of the letter which you already sent to him. On the following morning we had a discussion. I then strongly advised you to reconsider the matter and to refrain from taking a step which from every point of view must inevitably be very prejudicial to the interests of your State and yourself. I also pointed out that when, on August 25th, you wrote to me asking me to obtain the necessary sanction to Sir Patrick Cadell's appointment, you stated very definitely that the appointment was to be for a minimum period of six months in the first instance. On this understanding I referred

your request to the Political Secretary to His Excellency the Crown Representative's approval of the proposal.

I need not repeat here the views which I explained fully when we discussed the matter on October 17th and again on October 22nd. After our discussion on October 17th, as you are unwilling to accept the advice which I offered, I forwarded to the Political Secretary a copy of your letter of October 1 6th.

When we met on October 22nd I told that I had been instructed to inform you that His Excellency the Crown Representative trusts that in the interests of your State and yourself you will lose no time in reversing the action taken by you. Since then I have been hoping to hear that you have accepted and acted upon this advice. As however I have received no intimation from you to this effect, I write to ask you kindly to let me know as soon as possible the action you have taken in the matter since I saw you on October 22nd.

Yours sincerely,

E. C. GIBSON

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO E. C. GIBSON

Confidential

October 2, 1938

MY DEAR MR. GIBSON,

I am very thankful for your confidential D. O. C/134-38 dated 26th instant.

In view of the desire of His Excellency the Crown Representative and your earnest advice and recommendation, I have decided to continue Sir Patrick Cadell in my service, although I maintain that the constitutional aspect of this question is in my favour.

I am very anxious that proper steps should be taken as soon as possible and have decided to form a strong council consisting of Sir Patrick Cadell and two of my officers to carry on the State, so that peace and tranquillity and respect for law is properly maintained.

At the time of my interview with you on the 17th instant you approved of my suggestion of forming a council. Accordingly I have decided to have one of the following members in charge of the departments shown against their names:

Ist member and Vice-president: Sir Patrick Cadell: 1. Law and Justice, 2. Political, 3. Finance, 4. Police and 5. Praja Pratinidhi Sabha and Municipality.

2nd member: Rao Saheb Maneklal C. Patel: 1. Finance, 2. Industries, 3. Revenue, 4. P. W. D. and 5. Bardashi.

3rd Member: Mr. Jayantilal L. Jobanputra: 1. Medical, 2. Jail, 3. Education and 4. Stables and other unspecified departments.

As regards the future steps to be taken to control the present situation, they will be decided by the council with my approval and in all other important questions the above procedure is to be adopted.

I will issue detailed instruction hereafter. I think the formation of such a strong council will remove my anxiety about the present situation, which is increasing day by day.

On hearing from you, I shall inform Sir Patrick Cadell accordingly.

I am so sorry for the trouble I gave you in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
DHARMENDRASINH

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON TO DURBAR VIRAWALA

THE RESIDENCY, RAJKOT,
November 25, 1938

MY DEAR VIRAWALA,

Thanks for your letter. I did hear when I returned to Rajkot this morning that you were here, and I must say that I was very much surprised to hear it. I should have thought that if Mr. Anantrai Pattani wanted to see you he could have asked you to go to Bhavnagar or could himself have gone to Natwarnagar which is, I believe, much nearer to Bhavnagar than Rajkot is. I cannot understand why he felt it incumbent on him to make this extraordinary request, and I certainly think that it is a pity that you complied with it after the advice I gave you. I can understand that you were reluctant to come here. These long journeys must be very bad for your health at a time when you require rest and quiet for recuperation after your long illness. I am glad that you are feeling better today, and I strongly advise you to take more care of your health in future.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
E. C. GIBSON

VALA SHRI VIRA MULU,
TALUKDAR OF NATWARNAGAR, RAJKOT

LETTER FROM POLITICAL AGENT TO DURBAR VIRAWALA

Personal

RAJKOT,
November 29, 1938

DEAR VALA SHRI,

Your personal letter of yesterday. I am sorry Col. Aspinall thought the journey had been trying to you, particularly as you told me you were feeling so unwell after it.

I was naturally extremely surprised, after your assurances that you would see nobody in Rajkot pending a reply to my reference to the Hon. the Resident, to learn that you had been to the Palace.

I can only assume that you will realize that, in your own interests, this was hardly wise, and that you will, pending your return to Natwarnagar, not again depart from the attitude you had offered to adopt, i. e., complete aloofness from local affairs and not to meet anybody.

I trust that you have now completely rested and will not suffer from your return journey to Natwarnagar tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,
C. K. DALY

LETTER FROM THAKORE SAHEB TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT STATE,
December 27, 1938

MY DEAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL.

I am very thankful to you for coming to Rajkot.

I appreciate very much the way in which you helped me in ending the impasse.

I think you are fully aware by now that Dewan Saheb Virabhai has been most loyal to me and my State. All along his career he has done his best for the good of my people.

In safeguarding the interests of myself and my State he had to suffer also.

Now I request you to do your best to remove any misunderstanding existing in the minds of my people against him.

I shall feel very thankful for the same.

Yours sincerely,
Dharmendrasinh
THAKORE SAHEB, RAJKOT

EXTRACTS FROM NOTES OF TALKS AT THE RESIDENCY

December 28, 1938

Present: The Hon. Mr. Gibson,
The Thakore Saheb,
Sir Patrick R. Cadell, Members of the
Rao Saheb M. C. Patel, State Council
Mr. Jayantilal L. Jobanputra

The Hon. Mr. Gibson started by saying to the Thakore Saheb to the effect that the agreement made by him had stirred up all the Princes. He would like to know how Vallabhbhai Patel had come to Rajkot and whether he was invited by him.

THAKORE SAHEB: He had come of his own accord and asked for meeting me, and I had invited him to tea.

MR. GIBSON: Well, he is a very unreliable man. You know that the Government of India's wishes were that no outside interference should be allowed. By settling with him, you have lost sympathies of your brother Princes and the Government. Although the Government of India do not mind what you do, you have erred in settling through Patel. Even amongst the Congress workers, Mr. Patel is the most untrustworthy. However, as it appears from the Notification, the wordings of the settlement are not so bad but for the words "widest possible powers" which are capable of any interpretation. It may mean that you will be reduced to a figurhead. On the strength of these words, they would demand full responsible government at the very start and you will find yourself in a very awkward situation.

THAKORE SAHEB: No, I have only appointed a committee.

MR. GIBSON: Yes, but who will appoint the members of the committee? And the report as received has to be given effect to.

THAKORE SAHEB: Well, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel will suggest names.

MR. GIBSON: That is it. That means Congress workers, who will demand full responsible government in view of the words "widest possible powers".

SIR PATRICK: How is Mr. Patel to suggest names? Are we to write to him?

THAKORE SAHEB: No, he will send names.

MR. GIBSON: In one of the clauses, you have agreed to give full effect to the

report. That is very bad. You have given up your cards.

As regards the appointment of the President of the Reforms Committee, Mr. Gibson asked the Thakore Saheb as to who will be the President of the Committee.

THAKORE SAHEB: Durbar Virawala.

MR. GIBSON: No, he cannot come.

THAKORE SAHEB: Why ? He will come after his leave period is over.

MR. GIBSON: No. He is a talukdar. He cannot come. I would not let him come now.

THAKORE SAHEB: No. He can come after Sir Patrick has gone.

MR. GIBSON: That will be seen after Sir Patrick is gone.

RAJKOT GAZETTE NOTIFICATION

RAJKOT DARBARI GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY,

Saturday, January 21, 1939

NOTIFICATION

No. 61 OF 1938-39

As observed in the Notification No. 50, dated the 26th December '38, we are hereby pleased to appoint the following seven gentlemen, representing all important interests in the State, to work along with the three officers of the State, whose names will be announced hereafter, to work on a committee to draw up, after proper investigation, a report recommending to us a scheme of reforms with a view to associating the people more closely with the administration of the State:

1. Mr. Papatlal Purushottam Anada, President, P.P. Sabha,
2. Jadeja Jivansinhji Dhirubha,
3. Sheth Dada Haji Valimohmed,
4. Mr. Papatlal Dhanjibhai Malaviya,
5. Mr. Mohanlal M. Tank, President, Municipal Corporation,
6. Dr. D. J. Gajjar, and
7. Sheth Haptubhai Abdulali.

The Committee is expected to submit its report after full and thorough inquiry.

DHARMENDRASINH

THAKORE SAHEB, RAJKOT STATE

*LETTER FROM MANEKLAL PATEL TO
VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

Confidential

RANJIT VILAS,

RAJKOT,

January 12, 1939

DEAR SARDAR SAHEB,

I am desired by H. H. Thakore Saheb to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, recommending the seven names to be nominated by him to the proposed Reforms Committee.

You must have learnt from the newspapers that the names suggested by you were already out by the time your letter was received by His Highness. He regrets that it should have been so, because such an exposure places you and His Highness in somewhat awkward position.

While H. H. would very much wish to select all the names suggested by you, you would also appreciate that he cannot ignore the requests made by important classes of his subjects, and should see that the committee consists of such persons as would command the confidence of all important groups of his subjects. In fact, His Highness has received representations from the Bhayats and Muslim Council and a petition from the Depressed Class, and has therefore desired me to write to you as under.

While here, you very rightly said to H. H. that you did not know who the real leaders were and therefore postponed suggesting names until after you had consulted others.

His Highness approves of the gentlemen numbered 1, 2, 4 and 5.

While number three owns immovable property and resides here since about 40 years and is a respectable citizen, he could hardly be expected to be useful with independent opinion to work on a committee of this nature.

You would agree that the Mahomedans form a very important unit and are now too well organized to be ignored so lightly. In their representation submitted as a result of the unanimous resolution of the Muslim Council, they have requested that three out of seven should be Mahomedans. This demand of theirs is of course unreasonable, but including the Bohras they should be given two seats and the President of their Council should be one of them. In view of your vast experience in British India, you will appreciate that if their legitimate request were not met, they may make a row and may create unhealthy atmosphere, which we all wish to avoid. There is no doubt that we all want a committee which would represent all sections of

the people, be impartial and work harmoniously and with sagacity.

As regards numbers six and seven, it appears that they would not come strictly within the scope of the definition of the "subject" as referred to in the notification.

Mr. V. M. Shukla was neither born in the State nor has he been staying within the jurisdiction of the State since his birth for as many as about forty years. Possession by his ancestors of some property in Sardhar Pati does not entitle him, according to the definition, to be considered as a Rajkot State subject. He is neither born, nor domiciled, nor naturalized in the State.

As regards Mr. U. N. Dhebar, His Highness feels that the same objection would come in the way. As is understood, he originally belongs to the Jamnagar State and his father spent the major portion of his life in Bombay. He himself is said to have received his schooling in Rajkot and was residing in the Civil Station when he started practice as a pleader. He has been living within the State limits since about two years. He has also purchased land in the State last year. His Highness feels that he should restrict his nomination to the definition, so as not to create any ill-feeling amongst other leading gentlemen, who have always been recognized by the State, since the time of the late Thakore Saheb, as leaders of the public.

It may also be brought to your notice that the Bhayats have also approached His Highness, and very rightly, with a request that at least one of them should be on the committee, as they represent a very important and considerable unit in the State. His Highness therefore considers it essential that one of them should be on the committee.

It is His Highness's wish, as you will readily understand, that the committee should consist of the best brains who would also be representative of all important classes of his subjects.

If any suggestions are to be made in the light of what has been said above, His Highness will then declare the personnel of the committee, inclusive of three officials besides the President of the committee.

Yours sincerely,

M. C. PATEL

*LETTER FROM VALLABHBHAI PATEL TO
MANEKLAL PATEL*

CAMP, BARDOLI,
January 15, 1939

DEAR SHRI MANEKLAL PATEL,

I have your letter of the 12th instant. It has pained me. It is indeed regrettable that the names I proposed were published, but it is not always possible to keep

anything private in which a number of persons are concerned. And then in spite of publication, alteration can certainly be made therein if there are valid reasons.

I am afraid I cannot accept your recommendation regarding the names of Bhayats and Mussalmans on the committee. There was a definite intelligible object behind the settlement entitling me to suggest the names. That object would be frustrated if I were to accept your recommendation. The names have been suggested to achieve the object which can be fulfilled only by having on the committee men of integrity holding particular views. The seven members whose names I have suggested will surely bear in mind the interests of Bhayats and others. More than this may not be expected.

I regret you have seen fit to object to certain names on the ground of their not being State subjects. But you have a right to do so; If on further consideration you should adhere to the view that Shri Dhebazbhai does not come within the definition, rather than argue with you I am prepared to withdraw his name and to suggest instead the name of Shri Gajanan Joshi Vakil. I maintain that Shri Vajubhai Shukla comes within the definition.

H. H. the Thakore Saheb's notification can only mean that the chairman of the committee had to be from the committee of ten, and I must say that Darbar Virawala may not be appointed chairman. He has sent me word that he does not intend to hold any office, but in order to avoid any possible accident I have thought it proper to mention this.

I cannot help saying that the appointment of the committee has been greatly delayed. Their report has got to be published by the 31st January. I therefore hope that the committee will be appointed immediately on receipt of this letter. If unfortunately the appointment continues to be delayed, there is every fear of the struggle being resumed by the people. I must also add that I have in my possession copies of correspondence that has taken place between H. H. the Thakore Saheb and Sir Patrick Cadell, and of the summary of an interview with the Resident. If the settlement breaks down, I am afraid it will be my duty to publish, in public interest, these and other documents in my possession. But I hope I may have to do nothing of the kind, and the committee will be appointed and begin work immediately.

May I expect a wire from you in reply?

Yours sincerely,
VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Harijan, 4-2-1939

APPENDIX II
*GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S STATEMENT ON RAJKOT*¹

NEW DELHI,
February 1, 1939

1. Attention has been drawn to Mr. Gandhi's statement to the Press in regard to the recent events in the Rajkot and Jaipur States.

2. In the case of Rajkot, Mr. Gandhi states that "an honourable understanding arrived at between the Thakore Saheb-in-Council and Sardar Patel, representing the people, has been undone by the Resident", and he expresses the opinion that "it is the duty of the Viceroy to ask the Resident in Rajkot to restore the pact."

3. The facts are that the Thakore Saheb-in-Council reached an agreement with Sardar Patel that a committee should be appointed to investigate and make recommendations for constitutional reform. The terms of this agreement were published on December 26, in the State *Gazette*. The number of official and non-official members who were to serve on the committee were stated in this announcement. No further indication was given as to the committee's composition or the basis of its selection. It appears that simultaneously a private exchange of letters took place between the Thakore Saheb personally and Sardar Patel, to which no publicity was given. In this correspondence, the Thakore Saheb wrote to Sardar Patel as follows:

AMARSINHJI SECRETARIAT,
RAJKOT STATE,
26-12-'38

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

(Sd.) DHARMENDRASINH,
Thakore Saheb, Rajkot

The Thakore Saheb claims that this letter was intended to leave him at liberty to accept or not the names put forward by Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel contends that its intention was to bind the Thakore Saheb to accept whatever names he put forward.

REFORMS COMMITTEE PERSONNEL

Of the names put forward by Sardar Patel, the Thakore Saheb accepted three. In

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 31-1-1939

the interests of securing adequate representation for the Mohammedans and the Bhaiyats in the State, both of which parties submitted their claims to be represented, he found himself unable to accept the remaining four names. On his instructions, his Minister so informed Sardar Patel. Sardar Patel, however, in his reply, did not address himself to the merits and refused to acquiesce in the Thakore Saheb's proposals for the representation of the interests mentioned above, and merely intimated that he would be content with nothing less than the names which he had put forward irrespective of the considerations advanced by the Thakore Saheb, in acting as he has acted of his own free will. The Resident has no knowledge of the correspondence which had passed and was not a party to it.

Mr. Gandhi's suggestion is that the Thakore Saheb should now be required to accept a different construction which Sardar Patel has placed on his letter. It would clearly be most improper to bring pressure on the Thakore Saheb to accept a construction which he evidently did not intend and is not now prepared to accept.

Mr. Gandhi states that the Resident is reported to be resorting to "organized *goondaism*". Mr. Gandhi has not indicated the source of this report, which has no foundation whatever in fact.

In the case of Jaipur, the Jaipur Government will no doubt issue whatever statement they see fit in answer to Mr. Gandhi's observations.

The Hindu, 2-2-1940

APPENDIX III

RESIGNATION LETTER OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEMBERS¹

[February 22, 1939]²

DEAR SUBHAS,

We were all deeply pained to hear of your illness. It was not to be thought that you should come to Wardha at the risk of your health. We hope that you will be soon restored to complete health.

We have thought over the recent events carefully and have also read your various statements in connection with the Presidential election. Your unfortunate illness and the consequent cancellation of our meeting deter us from expressing our views on your statements.

It should be sufficient at this stage for us to say that we, the undersigned, feel it our duty to tender our resignations as members of the Working Committee, and we

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 5-2-1939

² From Brijkrishna Chandiwala's *Delhi Diary*

hereby tender the same. We feel [*sic*] to choose your Cabinet that represents your views.

We feel that the time has come when the country should have a clearcut policy, not based on compromise between different and incompatible groups of the Congress.

It is but right, therefore, that you should select a homogeneous Cabinet representing the views of the majority. You may trust us to give you all possible co-operation in matters where we see eye to eye with you in the policies that you may put before the country. In order to allay public suspense, we are sending this letter to the Press.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- ABUL KALAM AZAD
SAROJINI NAIDU
VALLABHBHAI PATEL
RAJENDRA PRASAD
BHULABHAI DESAI
PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA
SHANKARRAO DEO
HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
KRIPALANI
ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
JAMNALAL BAJAJ
JAIRAM DOULATRAM

The Hindustan Times, 23-2-1939

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE¹

I have read the statement of Mahatma Gandhi on the recent presidential election with all the attention that it deserves. It grieves me to find that Mahatma Gandhi has taken it as a personal defeat. I would respectfully differ from him on this point. The voters, that is the delegates, were not called upon to vote for or against Mahatma Gandhi. Consequently the result of the contest does not in my view and in the view of most people affect him personally.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 5-2-1939

Much has been said in the Press during the last few days about the Right and Left wings in the Congress. Several persons have interpreted the result of the election as a victory for the Leftists. The fact is that I placed before the public two main issues, namely, the fight against Federation and free and unfettered choice for the delegates in the matter of choosing their president. These issues must have greatly influenced the voting, and over and above these, the personality of the candidates might have had some effect. In the circumstances, I feel that while analysing the significance of the election we should not draw on our imagination nor should we read into it more than it contains.

Assuming for argument's sake that the result of the election implies a victory of the Left, we should stop to consider what the Leftists' programme is. For the immediate future the Leftists stand for national unity and unremitting opposition to the Federal scheme. In addition to this, they stand for democratic principles. Leftists will not take the responsibility of creating a split within the Congress. If a split does come, it will come not because of them, but in spite of them.

Personally I am definitely of the opinion that there is neither reason nor justification for a split within the ranks of the Congress. I, therefore, earnestly hope that there will be no occasion now or in the near future for the so-called minority party to non-co-operate with the so-called majority party. I need hardly add that I shall try till the last to avert a split whenever any such likelihood appears before us.

A certain amount of apprehension has been caused in the minds of many as to the policy which people like myself will follow in future. Let me make it quite clear that there will be no violent break with the past in the parliamentary or in the extra-parliamentary sphere. So far as the parliamentary programme is concerned, we shall only try to implement our election pledges and our parliamentary programme with greater speed than in the past. In the extra-parliamentary sphere, we shall endeavour to rally all our strength and resources for combating Federation and for pushing on towards *purna swaraj*. And we shall, of course, act in accordance with the principles and policy of the Indian National Congress.

In this connection I should also like to say that I have on some occasions felt constrained to differ from Mahatma Gandhi on public questions, but I yield to none in my respect for his personality. If I have understood him correctly, he too would like to see people think for themselves, even though they may not always agree with him. I do not know what sort of opinion Mahatmaji has of myself. But, whatever his view may be, it will always be my aim and object to try and win his confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic thing for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man.

The Hindustan Times, 5-2-1939

APPENDIX V

SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI'S COMMENTS ON GANDHIJI'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS STATE OF MIND¹

The Maharshi referred to the following passage of Gandhiji's in the *Harijan* of the 11th instant:

“How mysterious are the ways of God ! This journey to Rajkot is a wonder even to me. Why am I going, whither am I going? What for? I have thought nothing about these things. And if God guides me, what should I think, why should I think? Even thought may be an obstacle in the way of His guidance.

“The fact is, it takes no effort to stop thinking. The thoughts do *not* come. Indeed there is no vacuum—but I mean to say that there is no thought about the mission.”

He remarked how true the words were and emphasized each statement in the extract. Then He cited Thayumanavar in support of the state which is free from thoughts:

“Bliss will reveal itself if one is still. Why then is this illusory *yoga* practice ? Can it (i. e., bliss) be revealed by directing the intellect in a particular way?”

D. Is not what Gandhiji describes the state in which thoughts themselves become foreign?

M. Yes. It is only after the rise of the ‘I’ thought that all other thoughts arise. The world is seen after you have felt “I am”. The ‘I’ thought and all other thoughts had vanished for him.

D. Then the body-sense must be absent in that state.

M. The body-sense also is a thought whereas he describes the state in which “thoughts do not come”.

D. He also says, “It takes no effort to stop thinking”.

M. Of course no effort is necessary to stop thought whereas one is necessary for bringing about thoughts....

D. Gandhiji adhered to *Satya* (Truth) so long and won realization of the Self.

M. What is *Satya* except the Self ? *Satya* is that which is made up of *sat*. Again *sat* is nothing but the Self. So Gandhiji's *Satya* is only the Self....

The Upanishadic Text is the eternal Truth to which everyone who has realized owes his experience. After hearing the Self to be the Brahman the person finds the true import of the Self and reverts to it whenever he is diverted from it. Here is the whole process of Realization.

Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, pp. 734-9

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Mahadev Desai”, 27-2-1939

APPENDIX VI
LETTER FROM DHARMENDRASINH¹

AMARSINHI SECRETARIAT
RAJKOT STATE
March 3, 1939

MY DEAR MAHATMA GANDHI,

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 VII

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON²

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* "Letter to Dharmendrasinh", 2-3-1939, "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939, "Talk with First Member, Rajkot State Council", 3-3-1939, "Statement to the Press", 3-3-1939, "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 3-3-1939 and "Statement to the Press", 4-3-1939

²*Vide* "Letter to E. C. Gibson", 6-3-1939

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

APPENDICES VIII

LETTER FROM E. C. GIBSON¹

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 that the best way in which

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 6-3-1939, "Telegram to Shankerlal Banker", 6-3-1939, "Letter to Lord Linlithgow", 15-3-1939 and "Telegram to Subhas Chandra Bose", 2-4-1939

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

APPENDICES IX

DISCUSSION WITH AGATHA HARRISON¹

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 spoke of the character of the

¹*Vide* "discussion with Agatha Harrison". The talk has been extracted from the notes made by Agatha Harrison.

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

APPENDICES X

LETTER FROM S. SATYAMURTI TO MAHADEV DESAI¹

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 *Harijan*, that from the point of view of truth and non-violence compulsion in

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 20-3-193

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 percent will take advantage of it, and only in some districts, and that ten percent may be soon reduced to one percent 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 Act¹ 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

APPENDICES XI

LETTERS FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE¹

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.) 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.

¹Vide "Letter to Subhas chandra Bose", 24-3-1939 and "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 2-4-1939

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 telegram¹ 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 letter² 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.

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

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. Sunil Bose", 25-3-1939

² Dated March 29 above

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 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 2,300¹ 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 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

¹ The *Crossroads* version has “2200”.

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 XII

LETTER FROM DHARMENDRASINH¹

PALACE RAJKOT,

April 10, 1939

DEAR MAHATMA GANDHI,

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 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

¹*Vide* These letters are extracted from "Rajkot Events".

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 XIII

LETTER FROM SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE¹

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 your influence and personality could achieve much in this endeavour to bring about unity. Will you not make one last supreme effort to bring

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Subhas Chandra Bose", 10-4-1939

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 thoughts: 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 XIV

*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 letter² 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 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

¹ *Vide* “Statement to the Press”, 16-4-1939

² *Vide* “Letter to Dharmendrasinh”, 14-4-1939

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 XV

LETTER FROM RANJITSINH¹

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 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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Ranjitsinh", 17-4-1939. This appeared as "a correct rendering in English of the correspondence". The superscription and the subscription are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*.

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 XVI

LETTER FROM LORD LINLITHGOW¹

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.

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

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Linithgow", 9-5-1939 and "Letter to Lord Limithow" 23-24-1939

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