

# BAPU

A  
UNIQUE  
ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 1

GHANSHYAM DAS BIRLA

**BAPU**  
**A Unique Association**



# BAPU

## A UNIQUE ASSOCIATION

Volume I

GHANSHYAM DAS BIRIA



**RETROCONVERTED**  
B. C. S. C. L.

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Author with Bapu

# समर्पण

वायु की गरम प्रकाशी वायुको समर्पण

वायुने समय २५ मुझे जो पत्र लिखे  
जो मैंने जो उन्हें लिखा उन सब का यद् संग्रह  
है। महारथेव भाई इत्यादिने भी जो मुझे लिखा  
या मैंने उन्हें लिखा, उन सब का भी समावेश इसमें  
इतलिये है कि वे सब पत्र-व्यवहार वायुकी उभर  
पत्रिका या समाजिक सुखी हुआ है। मैंने भी जो  
उन लोगों को लिखा वरु सब वायुके लिखे ही था।  
उन सबको वायुके ही पत्र व्यवहार मानकर  
इस प्रकारान में इतलिये समाप्त दे दिया गया  
कि यदि मेरे पत्रों को निकाल दिया जाय  
तो कौरी सुखमा टट जाती है।

वायुके उचिततः पत्र दिदी में ली है।  
५ यदि कभी पत्रोंने मुझे संग्रही नं लिखा, याली



उनकी ओर के महादेव भाई इत्यादिने उंगोनी में  
 प्रेममिलता, तो उन सब पत्रों का हिंदी में उगवा दे  
 दारे इन्हें समावेश हुआ है। अब उंगोनी का  
 प्रकाशन होगा तो उकी तरह सब हिंदी पत्रों का भी  
 उंगोनी में उगवा दे दे समावेश होगा।

इस प्रकाशन में वायु के मानस की उच्च-  
 यन करने का मन समाज की एक उगुयन उव-  
 तलमिल जात है। शिक्षा में मिलती है, क्यों कि  
 वायु के पत्रों में सब तरह का समावेश है। सब  
 ते मरुत की बात मरुत समाज की है। कि इन सब  
 में व्यक्तिगत आदेश, सामाजिक, धार्मिक  
 आदेश जो भी हैं सब एक महा चाहे कुरी प-  
 (एक सामु प्रयुक्त है) उगुयन मरुत के उगुयन है,  
 जो समाज समाज के जीवन में उपयोगी है। शिक्षा-  
 पर है। (अने जीवन में उगुयन मरुत के योग)

इसके उपाने का अर्थ न ही मेरा कोई विकल्प नहीं था।

यदि मेरी पुत्र वधु करमा का उपाय था। यह प्राण  
पुत्र उच्छामा ॥ ३॥ (मैंने उसको जान लिया।

इसी का फल यह प्रकाश है। उपाने का उपाय  
३॥ उच्छामे दुःख प्रकाश में उलिया करे। प्रेम्  
विद्या। रसिमतैमी कई उपायों प्रकाश है।

पुत्रीनकारिके मूलपूर्व प्रत्येन्याया पीशा  
की प्रकीर्तनन दल मेरे प्राचीन निगड़े। उच्छामे  
इस तारे पर व्यवहार प्रेम् प्रकाश (वृद्धयता व्यकि-  
या मे रसिमतैमी देते का पराशर दिशा। उच्छामे  
उच्छामे वृद्धयता इस प्रकाश नके कतिवामदिशा प्रेम्  
दल तारे की मेरी मैत्री प्रेम् तामे प्रेम् प्रेम्  
पत्नी प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम्  
मैत्री प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम्  
मिन्दी।

नके अर्थ प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम्  
प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम् प्रेम्

जासिदा है उगमें दादा का लमव (का एवविशो म  
ब्याग है। दादा एव हायु युजु है। उरोने  
हसंगरी प्रमिवा लि (वध) पुने उच्यं न वृता भ  
विमा ।

उपातदा ऐततो: पर है कि लोको को वायु  
के मजु एवमदी - मराच (दानरी) - समभने मे  
हरामलमि। पर मरमी ऐतु है कि हो दो  
हो वयो के वाद पर नवलन उग्रम नगए  
वनममो॥, को कि वायु का उहमी गमती  
हो दो ही सामवे वादरी अमरो॥। ए  
मेरी समभरे। हसलिये भी पर हंगरी उव-  
शमव है।

मेरे जीवन मे ईश्वर की पर दया एरी है  
कि मैं वायु का प्रेम पा गतो रारी - पर सपर्व उर  
सामनवरा - उगे सपर्वते मे वृत्त कृष्णी (यां उ।  
उनके द्वारा हरदा (परे लमेते कि म भी मेने  
पाये। मगवात का पर मम (उच्यं उग्र एवरी है

सह कार्य की लिखित रूप में उद्योग संशोधन है.

कॉन्सि -

"यम-तन्नामी विनम्य युज्य  
उपजरा दृष्टि में उनी है

दरनी हुई उद्य रोजी ले  
देखनी गानी है"

दरनी गानी है



## Dedication

This Gift of Love from Babuji (Bapu ki *Prem Prasadi*) is dedicated to Bapu.

This is a collection of letters which Bapu wrote to me from time to time and also those which I wrote to him. The letters which Mahadevbhai and others wrote to me as well as those I wrote to them have also been included in this collection for the reason that they were written under Gandhiji's instructions, inspiration or with his consent. In fact, even the letters which I wrote to them were all meant for Bapu only. Therefore, considering all these as correspondence between Bapu and myself, I have included them in this publication since, if I were to exclude those letters, the entire connecting link would be broken.

Most of Bapu's letters are in Hindi. Whatever letters he wrote to me in English or on his behalf Mahadevbhai and others wrote in English, have been translated into Hindi and included in the Hindi edition of this collection. Similarly, now in English edition of this collection, the letters in Hindi have been rendered into English and included in this collection.

This bunch of letters provides an incomparable opportunity to the people to study the mind of Bapu. They get education as well, for Bapu's correspondence covers an assortment of many absorbing topics. What is of supreme importance is to understand this fact that whatever exhortations or directions that one finds here, be they individual, political or ethico-religious, are not just those of a great man or Mahatma but of a saintly man and the outpourings of a friendly soul. As such they are useful in the life of the common man, edifying and worthy of emulation by all in their daily life.

At first, I had no intention of bringing out these in print; but

my daughter-in-law Sarala was very insistent. Her insistence appealed to me and so I acceded to it. This publication is the outcome of that. It is Durga Prasad Mandelia's enthusiasm and labour that saw the book through the press. Pandit Viyogi Hari also gave several useful suggestions.

The late Shri Sudhir Ranjan Das, retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, was a very old friend of mine. He read the entire correspondence and suggested that some letters which were of a personal nature might be excluded. Accordingly, certain letters have not been included in this publication. My friendship with Justice Das extended over an unbroken period of 55 years : Such longstanding friendship is not something which comes by easily in life, even if one assiduously seeks it.

Above all, I am extremely indebted to Kaka Saheb Kalelkar. He occupies a special place among the few surviving chosen co-workers of Gandhiji. He has laid me in a deep debt of gratitude by writing the Foreword to this collection.

The purpose of printing this collection is to help people in understanding Bapu's heart — not the heart of a Mahatma but that of a human being. There is an added reason. Maybe, some hundred or two hundred years from now, this collection may become an invaluable treasure because the unfoldment of Bapu's real life will begin only after a century or two. This is my view.

It is indeed God's infinite mercy on me that I could become the recipient of Bapu's love in an abundant measure, that this relationship lasted 32 years, that I could learn a great deal from my association with him and that through him I could gain the friendship of great souls like Sardar Patel. Such is the bountiful grace of the Lord on me. I derive great contentment from the successful culmination of this venture because—

The spotless standard of Yama's troops  
Comes before my eyes be-dimmed by age  
And fighting a losing battle with diseases  
This mortal frame doth droop day by day.

## Preface

Gandhiji was very regular in his correspondence. It was by this means alone that he was able to maintain a hearty relation with innumerable people and was able to influence them to maintain high ideals in their lives. To enter with his heart into the individual life of the person with whom a relation was established and to help him in his development, having understood the individual's ability, his special nature and its depth, were the peculiar features of his correspondence. Hence Gandhiji's correspondence is as important as his writings and speeches. To understand the personality of Gandhiji, his correspondence is very useful. I have observed that his style of writing letters is also a typical one. Few world leaders have left behind them such a volume of correspondence as has Gandhiji.

I have always had the feeling while reading Gandhiji's correspondence that I was taking a dip in the sacred Ganges and sipping its waters. Always it was a purifying and pleasant experience for me to read his letters. The surrounding climate of its contents is purifying, life-sustaining and soothing.

Because of this I was very happy when Shri Ghanshyamdasji sent to me the entire bunch of his correspondence with Gandhiji. I began reading it with immense enthusiasm. As I went on reading, it became clear to me that this correspondence is not merely confined to the letters exchanged between Ghanshyamdasji and Gandhiji but also includes those exchanged between the late Mahadevbhai Desai, who was a close friend of Gandhiji, and Ghanshyamdasji. Apart from these, there is the correspondence with other friends of Gandhiji, many leaders and workers of the nation, Viceroys and politicians. There is also a description of their interviews. In short, a valuable history of the present times is to be found here.



Seeing this, I exclaimed, "Ah, if only this material had come into my hands five years ago!"

Today, I am 91. I am becoming increasingly forgetful. I go on forgetting so easily many a valuable fact. I have to record with sorrow today I am not able to dive so deep into this correspondence as I would have been able to, had this material reached my hands five years earlier. Yet I feel that the basic structure of my thinking on fundamental ideals has not changed in me. It is with its aid that I dare plunge into this ocean.

Before the year 1915, our people had experimented with several solutions for the attainment of Independence. We adopted the use of extremist methods. We also tried the path of petitions and prayers. We made efforts to make industrial progress. We started social reform movements for reforming society. We also fervently increased our faith in religion. We trod the path of swadeshi and boycott. Also we used bombs and pistols. We, Indians, tried with devotion, all those solutions that occurred to us or were suggested to us for the gaining of swaraj. Yet there was neither swaraj near at hand nor there was to be found a ray of hope. Some of our efforts, instead of removing the British Empire, only helped in strengthening it much more. The whole country was in utter despair when in 1915, Gandhiji returned to India from South Africa.

In South Africa where there was no Indian Government, nor Indian environment, Gandhiji with the help of uneducated, almost uncultured and hapless Indians, started a powerful satyagraha campaign and reaped success in it. We had heard and read about the activities of this leader of action, Gandhiji, and his new experiment. As soon as he returned to India, Gandhiji toured from the Himalayas to Rameshwaram, explaining to the people his vision of satyagraha. Those to whom swaraj was a cause were attracted towards him. Soon the heart beats of Gandhiji had their echo in the pulse of the people and both were tuned to the same wave length. The entire country, without the least hesitation, was ready to follow him. Gandhiji became a great representative of Indian culture and India's aspirations. He spoke the language of sacrifice, restraint and magnanimity which was also the confident language of the

Indian masses. The nation, seeing his uncommon humility and extra-ordinary self-confidence, became confident that he would surely achieve something.

Even as all rivers empty themselves into the ocean, becoming one with it, so too, all of us who dreamed of swaraj despite our different mental make-up, different backgrounds and different ways of life, went, and joined him. We gladly accepted his leadership and fully played our role in the activities directed by him.

Among the chosen few close workers who came in contact with Gandhiji at that time, the place of Shri Ghanshyamdasji is a special one.

This everybody knows that Shri Ghanshyamdasji is one of the few wealthy men of India. His primary field of work has always been in the industry. This too people know that he earned well and spent his wealth for good causes with open arms. Whenever there was need for money, Gandhiji without hesitation conveyed his desire to Shri Ghanshyamdasji who responded forthwith. Of the many savings of Gandhiji, the following is very important: "The wealthy should not consider themselves to be masters of their wealth, but consider themselves as trustees and use it for the welfare of the society. Having the feeling that the wealth of the society is with him and that he is its trustee, the wealthy person should spend his wealth." Though, in principle, J. R. Birlaji did not accept this teaching of Gandhiji he had taken this to his heart. The educational institutions, charitable guest houses and hospitals that are to be found all over India in the name of the Birlas are standing testimony to this. Apart from his own institutions, there are many others in the country that are run mainly from the charities of the Birlas. Almost all the institutions of Gandhiji have been benefited from the wealth of Shri Ghanshyamdasji. Perhaps none, apart from late Jaganlalji Bajaj, had contributed so much to the Institutions of Gandhiji as Shri Ghanshyamdasji. There is a famous story.

Gandhiji had come to Delhi. During the same period, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore also had reached Delhi to make collections for his Visva Bharati. Gurudev organised a programme of dance and music at different places and at the end of the programme asked for donations from the people. Gandhiji

felt unhappy on hearing this. That such a famous person as Tagore, in his old age, just to seek donations and that too a mere Rs. 60,000 was forced to go about organising programmes of dance and music was something which Gandhiji could not bear. He suddenly remembered Ghanshyamdasji. Gandhiji sent a message to him through Shri Mahadevbhai Desai that six of the rich men should each contribute Rs. 10,000 to Gurudev and save India from a sense of shame. It is needless to say that Shri Birlaji contributed the whole amount as a secret donation to Gurudev and made him carefree.

Not only did Gandhiji receive donations from Birlaji for his institutions but he made Birlaji contribute to others' causes as well. Who these persons were to whom Gandhiji made Birlaji give donations and to what extent Birlaji offered his wealth at the feet of Gandhiji will be known from this collection of his letters.

In a way, really this was a unique revelation of the relation between Gandhiji and Birla.

But one should not think that giving donations liberally was the only relation of Birlaji with the activities of Gandhiji.

There were two streams of work—both important—which Gandhiji had placed before the people, for getting swaraj. One was the constructive stream and the other political.

Gandhiji found that the high-low strata of society which was fundamental and the feeling of 'myself and himself' which was favoured by the cultural group were the two important factors on which the entire superstructure of Indian society rested. The result was that though peace, health and the principle of co-existence were to be found in our social life, yet we have been incapable of preserving national unity and independence. The entire history of India is a proof of this weakness of ours.

It was the chief aim of the constructive activities of Gandhiji to remove this our national weakness of the present and to create a new society full of life and all-round development in the future. Gandhiji placed before the nation 18 to 20 programmes such as Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability, development of khadi and village industries and the propagation of the national language, for the achievement of the above two ideals. He used to say that the fulfilment of the above pro-

gramme would be indeed complete independence.

The programme chalked out was not one depending on servitude having its basis in charity and religion. It was a prophetic effort to unite India of the vast landscape consisting of many races, many faiths and many languages. Mental revolution leading to revolution of the life and from that to the total revolution in society was the programme chalked out. In this revolution Gandhiji gave a new meaning to old values.

Shri Ghanshyamdasji recognising the revolutionary possibilities of this programme accepted it with all his heart. Many letters in this collection reveal to us the deep faith of Birlaji in Hindu-Muslim unity and in the eradication of untouchability, and the efforts he made to bring them to success. If he had any difference of opinion with Gandhiji, it was perhaps to some extent about the economics of khaddar. In this he maintains his own individual opinion. Yet it attracts our attention that though having an independent opinion, he like a dedicated soldier, was spinning with the wheel. Not only this, he took the vow of khadi. Gandhiji was impressed with this nature of Birlaji, which loved discipline. To show his joy, Gandhiji presented Birlaji with a special type of spinning-wheel. He praised the thread spun by Birlaji and asked him not to abandon the sacred work which he had started.

Gandhiji had a speciality or distinction. He quickly recognised the good of men and made full use of them for the welfare of the nation. Gandhiji had more confidence in us than we had in ourselves. While moulding us, he made our weak faith strong. In the end he was able to extract from us more work than was possible otherwise.

Though a rich man, Ghanshyamdasji was not affected by the illusion of wealth. Gandhiji had recognised this. He also had observed the skill of Birlaji in managing worldly affairs. To help him in the development of his personality, Gandhiji had shown him a path and in this we see the light thrown by a prophetic educationalist on many big and small aspects of the all-round human personality. This is a special characteristic of Gandhiji's letters.

More important than this is the fact that a picture of the modest, spotless life of Ghanshyamdasji can be seen in this collection.

It was no wonder that Ghanshyamdasji was attracted towards Gandhiji. Observing Gandhiji's dedication to religion, his forthright straight path and also the intensity of his search for truth, he became Gandhiji's best devotee. Birlaji considered it his duty to take on his shoulders the burden of any responsibility which Gandhiji had laid. And he fulfilled it with a full heart.

But he had dedicated himself enthusiastically and with a full heart to the political work of Gandhiji. In this collection of letters we are able to see the inside story of those events that happened behind the curtain between Gandhiji and the government at that time. The days of those times were such that something or the other was always happening in the camp of Gandhiji which created history. Ghanshyamdasji had a special and deep interest in this aspect of Gandhiji's activities. Having given his close attention to every small or big thing that occurred, by degrees he was considered to be one among the chosen few who knew well the political mind of Gandhiji. Soon he projected himself with confidence before the English statesmen as a reliable interpreter of the political mind of Gandhiji. He considered it his responsibility to convey to the English statesmen the way Gandhiji's mind worked and also he conveyed to Gandhiji the mind of the English statesmen. It was a self-imposed task which he accomplished with uncommon dexterity and success.

In this book the picture that presents itself to our mind of Ghanshyamdasji in a special way is that of a skilled statesman. This reminds us of Lord Krishna who went to the darbar hall of the Kauravas for a peaceful solution (of the demand of the Pandavas).

Having gone through this correspondence that went on for nearly 32 years, my first impulse was to advise Birlaji to divide it into three separate books. In the first one, only the correspondence between him and Gandhiji was to be included. How Gandhiji dived deeply into the many problems of his day, how he understood the subtle nature of each problem, how he showed the path to his personal followers and lastly how he showered his love on them, all these could be clearly seen by us from this part.

In the second book, only the correspondence of Birlaji with late Mahadevbhai Desai was to be included. This would have

enabled us to enjoy the fragrance of the personal and intimate conversation between two close friends.

In the third book, all the rest of the material could be included which may be important for history.

On reconsideration, I felt that this should not be done. Whatever material is here should be published together in the order in which it is found. Well, the size of the book may increase. If so, it may be bound in two volumes. This is not a book written for whiling away our leisure hour. This is an ocean which has a great historical value. When the future generations want to understand our times, then this source book would become very useful and interesting. Much material would be found packed in this book that would interest the students of history. This is a bunch of very valuable historical documents, whose full worth only the future generations will know.

To me, a Gandhi fan, this book has given transcendental joy.

The credit goes to my young friend, Shri Raviñdra Kalelkar, due to whose labour I am able to write this preface at this age and in this state of health.

*Affectionately yours,*  
*Respectful Vande Mataram of*  
KAKA KALELKHAR



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**1924**





1

7th February, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter after several days.

I do not trust anybody blindly. But it is our duty to have faith in mankind, since we ourselves aspire to other people's confidence. When both parties are in the wrong, it is rather difficult to decide which one deserves greater blame. I have therefore, worked out a simple plan—do good even to the evil-doer.

I shall have to prolong my stay in Delhi for another two or three days. From a practical point of view I am not satisfied with what is being accomplished. As for the spiritual side of it, I am content enough to do my duty.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

As Begum Ansari is ill, I am staying at Sultan Singh's.

2

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
17th March, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am writing this just after the morning prayers. I am greatly heartened to read your letters both to Revered Bapuji as well as to Mahadevbhai, Haribhauji and other friends. I pray to God to give you strength and make you a model for our society. I have all along been feeling convinced that you are going to serve the society (i.e., the nation) in a big way. Just as Bapu has been instrumental in raising the prestige of India sky-high, your

#### 4 BAPU—A Unique Association

own contribution will bring similar prestige to the Marwari community at least. May God give you long life and bless your efforts to effect without delay whatever modification is called for in your method of work as well as in your family life.

Yesterday I wrote to Rameshwardasji. I wish you to stay in my Ashram for some time.

Kamla's nuptials will be celebrated without any pomp and show and will be confined to the bare religious essentials. Why not you and Rameshwardasji, both, come and give your blessings to the children?

I am sure this will be a source of pleasure to you and will also gladden my heart, not mentioning the pleasure and satisfaction your visit will give to Bapu.

If you could come the occasion would be profitably utilised for a discussion as to the future of Sasta Sahitya Mandal. This in addition to your meeting with Bapuji and other friends.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Jamnalal

### 3

21st April, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letters are pouring in. If I do not always reply to them you should attribute it to lack of time. Often insolence and determination are found walking hand-in-hand. If we have the determination to augment the forces of the nobler instincts insolence is bound to get weakened in the process. The most effective way to deal with insolence is to decline to take notice of it.

I hold the Hindus alone responsible for these continuing attacks on Hindu women. The Hindus have grown so unmanly that they are not able to defend the honour of our sisters. I am going to write a lot on this subject. I have no ready-made solution for this problem. I have been hearing different stories, and

exaggeration is quite possible. But after deducting the exaggeration part of such episodes, what does remain is enough to make us hang our heads in shame.

I have asked the manager to place you on the mailing list of *Young India* and *Hindī Navajīvan*. I do hope these have begun to arrive?

Did you get my letter written last week?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

PS. Even if your brothers apologize, the best course for you would be not to follow suit, provided you have the requisite resolution. We should not, however, hold them in contempt for tendering an apology. Man can live up to his moral resolve only to a limited extent.

Mohandas

4

JUHU, BOMBAY,  
13th May, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. I am quite sure an attitude of forbearance on your part will prove fruitful ultimately. We all have within us the forces of light and darkness working side by side. Therefore, some mental agony is inevitable. But this need not frighten us. Sustained resistance will defeat the forces of darkness in the end. But we must remain confident in our hearts that it is our sacred duty to strengthen the forces of light. I am anxious for your father and brother. If they feel like mustering the forces ranged on your side and giving battle in spite of your own efforts to persuade them to take to the path of peace, then your own family will split into two mutually hostile camps. This would give a delicate turn to the situation. I would rather ask them not to do anything that is likely to create two factions in the community.

## 6 BAPU—A Unique Association

I would certainly not advise your apologizing for something you did after mature deliberation and about the propriety of which you entertain no misgivings in your own mind.

I am in due receipt of Rs. 5000. You can send any amount you think proper for *Young India*, *Navajivan*, etc. About fifty copies are to be given free.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

## 5

BIRLA HOUSE,  
PILANI.  
23rd May, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter.

Even if we fail to realise the objective, we must not abandon the path of non-violence. This is the only practical way to act up to a principle. What is certain is that the end-result is wholesome. This is my firmly held belief; therefore, we should not concern ourselves about how much time it would take for the result to be available to us—today or years after. Those who were converted to Islam 200 years ago can never prove to be an asset to Islam in as much as violence was used in effecting the conversion. Similarly if we have recourse to force or duplicity in bringing them back to the Hindu fold, that would only spell disaster for the Hindu faith. If we are guided by immediate results we are in for a course of disillusion. In a huge society 200 years signify nothing at all.

If we take the help of law to ensure an end to an evil practice, that would certainly not be resorting to brute force. It is not indulging in violence to use law to outlaw the selling of liquor and thereby to make the alcoholics give up the habit; but if we subject them to caning that would amount to using

brute force. We are not obliged to practise the trade of spirituous drinks.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

About *Young India* Anand Swami informs me that he has sent you a bill at the address . Birla House, Pilani.

6

PILANI,  
June 11, 1924

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I am in receipt of your last letter. Your letters always contribute to my mental peace. Though there are two factions, not much thoughtlessness is in evidence in their activities. It is true we have some small sacrifice in putting up with discomfort but we have not been able to attain to the sort of inner purity, which should have marked our own attitude. This may have been due both to religious scruples as well as to a certain amount of our own weakness. Your occasional comments in *Navajivan* dealing with social problems will do a world of good to people. Your definition of co'ibacy and your article on satyagrahi abuse of language must have made a powerful impact on its readers.

You might have gathered from this letter that I have come to my native place in Rajputana. I am sure you already know that this area excels in the production of quality khadi. This is not due to the non-co-operator movement; this has been the case from years earlier.

The Arya Samajists and the Swarajists are greatly annoyed with you. There was a time when revered Malaviyaji was the object of the non-co-operators' vituperation; I felt pained on such occasions. Now I find that your own following is dwindling in number and I feel happy. I know that the torments Malaviyaji was subjected to during those days came from those

who used your name as their shield. It is high time these roughs were deprived of this shield which had emboldened them to oppress good people. Now there will be room only for nice people in your camp and to me this is something good to happen. At the Sirajganj Conference the Swarajists have openly declared themselves in favour of violence and have thereby torn the mask of non-violence off their faces. Thus ended the drama of non-violence. It is quite probable you are reduced to a minority, but the work will from now on be marked by purity of conduct which will release an amount of strength to the cause, the mere contemplation of which is an impossible task for me.

You have lectured me on non-violence and I listened to it without harbouring any doubts as to its validity. But now that I am again away from you doubts have to assail me off and on. I have no doubt, whatever, in my mind that non-violence is something worth attaining. But, supposing somebody kills another for the good of society, will that be an act of violence? We are told through dramatized allegory that an act done without passion falls in the category of inaction. But an act of violence committed by an ordinary man who cannot act passionlessly is certainly violence. Is there no law governing such acts? You yourself have said that it is better to turn round and repulse the attack instead of running away from the assailant. What escapes my comprehension is how far it is fruitful to ask a man facing some such situation to remain non-violent which, in fact, is the last word in a training for non-violent conduct? You also enjoin upon people to remain peaceful under the blows showered by a Muslim. I have grave doubts if people will ever reach that stage of perfection. What I fail to grasp is why people are not exhorted to use the sword under such circumstances. What I fear is that, while failing to act under the stimulus of such extreme education, people might become incapable of wielding the sword in defence of the honour of their sisters and daughters. Ever since the Hindu Māna Sabha and the Arya Samajists have exhorted the people to use the sword the saner elements have begun to have second thoughts about launching an attack. I know this only tends to make an ugly situation still uglier, but it cannot be maintained that in future such situations would not be few and far between.

We also see that those who were converted to Islam by resort to force 200 years ago may have been full of hatred for their tormentors then, but they are now as good Muslims as those hailing from Arabia and Iran. This only goes to prove that it is possible to proselytize forcibly. Why not try for unity and love after increasing the strength of the Hindus? You told me reforms enforced through brute force are never lasting. But look at the much-hated *suttee* practice which was put to an end through recourse to law by the British. When this has been possible, why not other reforms? You tell me that Islam did not spread with the help of the sword, but old articles on this subject are there to tell us that quite a large number of Hindus were forced to embrace Islam. In 1829 Lord Bentick penned an epistle addressed to a director of East India Company in which he said the Muslims used force in increasing their fold.

It is also possible to spread khadi and to boycott foreign cloth with the help of brute force which is but another name for protective tariff. If the Government so wished it could put an end to many an evil custom. Looking at things in this perspective, I fall a victim to my own doubts whether it is after all not feasible to add to the strength of the Hindus through *shuddhi* as enjoined by the Arya Samajists.

There is no doubt whatever in my mind that once we convert a number of Muslims to Hinduism they would begin to love the rest of the Hindus in the same way that a Hindu does another.

I wish to make it perfectly clear, however, that I do not at all like the cult of violence. On the other hand I like the creed of non-violence. But at the same time I begin to wonder if this love for non-violence is not, after all, due to laziness on my part. Please enlighten me on these points which have raised a forest of misgivings in my mind.

In case you maintain that purity of conduct is a must thing whether we succeed or fail in achieving the objects, I will have nothing left to say. But those who are not pursuing the path of *nirvana* and who are in the middle state are incapable of achieving anything worth-while without weighing the pros and cons of their actions. They are only concerned with the object, not with the method. Will you, therefore, kindly write to me why we should not strive to realise an object if it is possible to



## 10 BAPU—A Unique Association

do so with the help of violence.

I wish to make it clear once again that I have begun to regard the cult of violence with growing distaste. This I am writing only in order to resolve my own doubts.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

20th July, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

God has given me mentors, and I regard you as one of them. Among them are some of my own children, some sisters and some others like yourself and Jamnalalji who are grown-ups. All of them want me to become perfect. Understanding this, how can I feel annoyed at your letter? I want you to always caution me like this.

Your complaint is about three things:

First, my absolving of the Swarajya Party from the charge of aspiring to office; secondly, my granting a testimonial to Suhrawardy and thirdly, my endeavouring to secure Congress presidentship for Sarojini.

In the first place, after completing the *sadhana* it becomes a man's duty to say only what he holds to be the truth, even when the world views it to be the reverse of it. Nothing else can make a man fearless. I regard my salvation as the most prized object of my life, but if even that salvation were to be attainable at the cost of truth and violence, I would forsake the former for the sake of the latter. Among these three, Truth has received my undivided devotion. While saying this, I am reminded of what you told me at Juhu. In the absence of any tangible proof to the contrary, I am bound to absolve the Swarajya Party of the charge. Furnish me with proof, and you have my word, I will give it the fullest consideration. If you provide me with proof, I shall certainly look into the matter. And if you permit me to make use of it I shall not hesitate to

माई श्री पद्मनाभदास,

ई धरने मुझको नीति र हाकरीये है उ हीमें  
रों में आप को समझता हूँ मेरे कंठ वालेक  
भी ऐ से ईं कई पहिन भी है और आप, जगना  
को लो जो जैसे प्रौढ भी है जो मुझको स्वपूजी प्रकृष  
बनाना चाहते है ऐसा समझने दुल उा पके पत्रों  
मुझे दु व को रो ही सकना है! मैं चाहता हूँ कि  
हर वषत आप ऐ से ही मुझे आवदान बनाने  
रहे

आपकी लीन फरीयाद ह एक में रा स्वर्णज  
दल को कश्चन के आरी भी रा मुक्त हलना हूँ ल ए  
सो हरा वधि को प्रमाण मन्त्र हना और लो स रा  
सराजिनी देवी को सभापतित्व दिनामकी काशी का  
करना

प्रथम बालनो यह है कि मनुष्य का धर्म है कि साधना  
के पद्यान जो अपने का सत्य का उती वीरुतको  
कहना अने ग्यानु का वृद्धि लेसा प्रलीन हो-इसके  
सिवा मनुष्य निर्भय नहि बन सकला है अपना मोहि  
क सिना और किसी साधका में पक्षपात नहि बन  
राकना हूँ पानु यदि मोहीमा सत्य और महिराका  
प्राप्तु लो मुझे मोहीमा लो है उ क नी नोवाला  
म में सत्य कहि का वन कीयां है आपने मा उध

उसी जड़ में कहा था कुसी स्मरण में रखते हुए मैंने जो कुछ  
 भी कहा है वह कहा। जब मेरे नहीं क कुछ भी प्रमाण।  
 न हो तो मेरा धर्म है कि मैं स्वयं गुरु को आलोचने मुक्त  
 समझू यदि आप मुझको प्रमाण देते हो तो मैं उनका  
 निराकरण करूँगा। और आप उनका उपयोग करने हों  
 तो मैं जाहिर में भी कहूँगा वरन् मेरे ही नाम से राक्षस  
 कर भी खानो वा बंदूगा।

सोइरावर्धा को मैंने प्रमाण पता उरकी  
 दुश्मिनी की कहि माहे' मैं अब भी उनका दुश्मिनी का  
 अनुभव कर रहा हूँ।

रावो जिना देवी का लीये उगाप खाना खा धमराने  
 है मेरा हृदय विचार है कि उन्होंने भारत का धर्म की अच्छी  
 सेवा की है और कर नहीं है। उनके समाप्त होने  
 कीये मैंने कुछ प्रयत्न इस समय नहीं कीये है  
 परन्तु मेरा विचार है की यह इस पक्ष की भीये  
 योग्य है यदि इससे जो आज तक हो गये वे योग्य  
 तो, उसका उत्साह पर सब कोई मुग्ध है। उसकी  
 पीरता का मैं सा हूँ। मैंने उनका चारित्र्य हो प  
 नहीं देखा है।

इन सब बातों का आप यह अर्थ न करे कि उनके  
 पाकिस्तान के सब कार्यों को मैं पसंद कर रहा हूँ।

जडचेतन गुजराती, जवल् वि सिंकी रुक्तिरत्न ।  
 समरेस गुण गहृष्ट प्रय परिहरी वारे विकार ॥

श्री कृ. न

1924

आपका  
मा. इ. र. रा. गंधी

make it public also otherwise understanding the thing for myself I shall keep silence.

I have testified Suhrawary's intelligence which I am still experiencing.

Your fears regarding Sarojini Devi are without foundation. I make bold to say that she has definitely delivered good to the country and is still serving it. So far I have not made any efforts towards making her the president but I do believe that she deserves the office. If others who have enjoyed that office were all able men, they are all praise for her enthusiasm. I stand witness to her courage. Moreover I have never noticed any weakness in her conduct.

But this does not imply that, if I like her or others for their certain good qualities, I blindly commend all what they do.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

8

BIRLA HOUSE, HARDWAR,  
7th August, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of both your letters. When I leave for Delhi I shall send you a telegram.

I do not think I was exaggerating when praising Sarojini Naidu. I do not regard her as an ideal specimen of Indian womanhood, but she certainly proved to be an ideal unofficial ambassador for goodwill work in foreign countries. While saying this I freely admit that I only care for good qualities in people; I prefer to ignore their shortcomings. By doing this I neither harm myself, nor the people, nor those either who have earned my admiration.

In case Maulana Mohamad Ali does not invite me, I would not reach Delhi earlier than in September.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

10th August, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have been getting all of your letters. These have proved to be of great help to me.

It is rather difficult not to write what I think of Sarojini. The public alone should decide what kind of work it could take from whom. If I praise somebody for a specific performance, why should it be inferred that I regard him as perfect? Even while writing this I do wish you to continue writing just as you feel.

I know my views on the Hindu-Muslim question do not accord with Malaviyaji's; still there seems no alternative. Even if we succeed in effecting a patched-up unity it will not last long and will certainly not contribute to our progress.

I find myself unable to advise you about Sunderlalji. The only thing I know about him is that Jamnalalji did not find it possible to come to his aid on his terms. Compared to me, Jamnalalji knows him far more thoroughly. Therefore, before taking action in this matter you should consult Jamnalalji.

You have written to Jamnalalji about two months' donation. For this I am beholden to you. Feeling encouraged by it, I have held talks with Jamnalalji for making arrangement about a Hindi campaign in South India as also about two other institutions. As you know, the disbursing of this money is handled by him alone.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

15th Sept., 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letters have been arriving here regularly. The happenings at Jubbalpore, etc. do not frighten me. I have already done

what lay in my power to do; did penance. This has left me at peace with myself. It is not given to us to aspire for reward which lies in the hands of God.

After my health becomes normal I plan to tour the country in company with other front-rank leaders. First of all I wish to visit Kohat. I hope to be ready for it in about eight days.

I will ordainly utilise you in many ways; let the appropriate time come.

You people have been of great help to me.

Please send the money to either Jamnalalji or to the Sabar-mati Ashram.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

## 11

Sept. 21, 1924

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Pandit Sunderlalji has been to me here. He was enquiring about your letter I told him I got your letter and a reply was duly sent. He says you had not received your reply till the time you left for Hardwar. So he wants another reply. I do not want to write to you on the subject of help for him. If you wish to consult anybody about whether or not he should be given help, the fittest person would be Jamnalalji. Sunderlalji says he wants your help independently and that I should only write to you about his work. All I can say about Sunderlalji is that he is a patriot, has been a non-co-operator, is full of enthusiasm as also the requisite energy for work. He exerts influence on the younger people. He is blessed with a markedly independent nature.

When I left Ahmedabad I had sent you a telegram. Today I am leaving for the Ashram. Nothing has been accomplished so far. Both sides are busy cogitating over.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

DELHI,  
26th Sept., 1924

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
137 CANNING STREET  
CALCUTTA

KNEW YOU WOULD APPROVE RELIGIOUS NECESSITY FAST. HOPE YOU  
WILI GET WELL SOON. NEED NOT COME JUST NOW. AFTER YOU ARE  
RESTORED HFALTH WOULD LIKE YOU COME

GANDHI

## Letter without date

### 13

Keep good health. I will get a lot of work from you and will also give some. Take milk for at least fifteen days if you like. Take fruit, but no bread. Make it your habit to take butter-milk.

The pronunciation is defective, no doubt, but this need not worry you. English is not our tongue. French pronunciations are far more atrocious, but no Englishman complains on that score.

M. K. G.





**1925**



## 1

January 5, 1925

CHI. LAKSHMINIVAS<sup>1</sup>,

I was very happy, indeed, to have received your letter. What you say is quite correct; all of us should ply the charkha. Just as the cycle of this universe is always in motion and is never idle, similarly the charkha should remain in motion in every home in India. I particularly enjoin upon the rich to take to this exercise. I hope everybody will ply the charkha and send me the yarn spun by him.

*Blessings from*  
Mohandas Gandhi

<sup>1</sup> My eldest son—G.D.B.

## 2

BANKANLR,  
January 22, 1925

MY DLAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had made a mention of the Muslims. At Aligath they have been running the National Muslim University and are at present in a tight corner financially. I have told these brethren that I would try to get help for them. They themselves have been collecting funds. I have assured them I would ask for Rs. 50,000 as a contribution to their fund. Please consider the matter and if you feel you should donate the entire amount or a part of it, inform me. I have been going deep into the Hindu-Muslim question and have been placing increasing reliance on my own conclusions even though the path is bestrewn with difficulties.

At present I am touring Kathiawar, today being the last day of my sojourn.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

After staying at the Ashram from 12 to 26, I shall reach Delhi on the 28th.

3

DELHI,  
February 1, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. I am trying to send you a nice charkha. Ram-Nam can go well with plying of the charkha. I am personally acquainted with a couple of learned individuals who saved themselves from falling into a state of insanity by chanting Ram-Nam while keeping the charkha in motion. After all one gets what one conceives

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

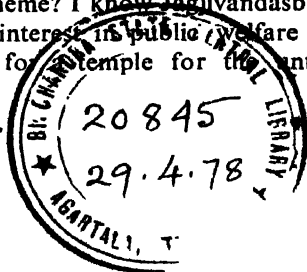
4

WARDHA,  
February 3, 1925

MY DEAR RAMESHWARDASJI<sup>1</sup>,

Brother Jagjivandas Mehta says that if I approve of his enthusiasm for building a temple for the untouchables you are prepared to finance his scheme? I know Jagjivandasbhai. He is a gentleman and takes interest in public welfare activities. I have examined his scheme for a temple for the untouchables.

<sup>1</sup>My late elder brother—G.D.B.



I also asked him to ascertain the wishes of other workers who have been working in this field. This he has done. He says it would cost Rs. 2,500 to build a temple of his design. I also believe that the money spent on such a building and needed in meeting subsequent expenses would be well-invested. The scheme deserves your consideration.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

5

SABARMATI,  
February 11, 1925

MY DEAR RAMESHWARDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. Jamnalalji is here at present. He informs me that Rs. 10,000 have arrived at his office. I will spend this amount in the untouchability-removal work.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

I am glad to learn that you are keeping fit.

SJT. R. BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
RANCHI

6

February, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter written from Ranchi. A portable charkha has been despatched to you from the Ashram to Calcutta, and a new make from Delhi. As both of these had been

despatched before your letter reached here, they were sent to Calcutta.

I am sorry to note that your wife has not been keeping well. It is difficult to suggest anything without knowing all facts about her health. But, generally speaking, it would be advisable not to eat too much when there is pain; her diet should be confined mostly to fruit and milk. We are in the habit of going to sleep with closed doors. When the pain is on, clean air is the first requisite. But all this advice is of no value; you should go by the advice of the doctors and vaid.

I am leaving for Vaikom today. Probably I shall have to prolong my stay in Madras area till the end of this month. I expect to reach the Ashram between the 26th and 27th of March.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

7

February 28, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

The special charkha I had ordered for you is now ready. Its general appearance is also quite good. I and Mahadevbhai both, tried a hand on it to see how it works. It works quite well. I do not know whether there is anybody at your end who can set it up satisfactorily. Please write to me how it works. I had also asked Maganlal to send another charkha to you from the Ashram. I do not know if it has arrived. I had written a letter to you earlier than this one. I do not know if it reached you at all.

I am leaving for Vaikom.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

SHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
CANNING STREET  
CALCUTTA

March 8, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASII,

Your two letters are to hand.

You have taken a load of worry off my mind in regard to Muslim University. I certainly would not like this donation to be the cause of dissensions in your family. I will not disclose your name.

As regards the landed property acquired by you in Chota Nagpur, I am opposed to the idea of giving it up just on account of some deaths among your employees there. There is not much difference between landed property and property in the shape of money, and property is often the cause of quarrels leading even to murder. The only course left for you to adopt in order to escape the dilemma is to give it up altogether. But, this you are not inclined to do for the present. But, as I have said, property occasions quarrels and is a standing temptation for so many misdeeds. Therefore, it is advisable to give it up and to act as its trustee until such time when you relinquish your claim to it and till then to spend the income derived from your share of it mostly on public work and little on personal account. There is another way out. Has any attempt been made to get in touch with the gentleman who has been creating trouble? What is it exactly that is exercising his mind so much? This may be due to his stupidity, but his land was not acquired for a song. Even an evil-minded person does not want to throw away his property. But here I have digressed to another fundamental issue.

Has your wife been feeling better?

I shall be leaving Madras on the 24th.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi



Monday, March 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. The possibility of others excelling me was certainly not dismissed by me as something to be taken in a lighter vein. It is but fit and proper that others excel me. We must, of course, try to surpass our friends in moral strength. It is my sacred duty to augment the moral wealth handed down to me by my elders. In fact it is my earnest prayer to God to bless my friends with greater strength than He has vouchsafed me, implying thereby that He should save them from my blemishes. I certainly wish you to excel me in soul-force inasmuch as that alone will make our mutual company worth having. However your wish that I should excel you in moral qualities is an object of emulation and not of rancour.

My hint about fresh engagement was meant to serve as a safeguard for you in the future.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

April 9, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Enclosed please find a receipt sent here from Jamnalalji's office. This amount, being your contribution to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, was included in the cheque sent by you. That receipts are issued after deducting draft charges, is something I am learning for the first time.

What more can I write on the subject of Hindu-Muslim riots? I know perfectly well that that would be the proper thing





for us to do, but I also know that it would be a waste of breath to tell it at this juncture. Who can chase away the fly perched on a sore? Who can arrest the circling of the moth around a lighted candle?

I have profited a great deal from not going to Mussoorie. Why did you send a telegram from Delhi suggesting a visit to Mussoorie after our meeting here? But who can destroy him whom God protects?

About Finland I do not know what to do. There are many reasons both for and against my visit to Finland, and because I am undecided I have spelt out my condition to those who have invited me. If they accept it, I suppose I shall have to go.

Let us see how things take shape at the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

I would like to have Jugalkishoreji's opinion about that Chinese student because he is particularly fond of such things, and when writing to him I had his remarks in my mind. When anything outside my normal sphere of activity crops up I act only when help from worthy friends is forthcoming. I have no desire to add to the burden you have placed on your shoulders about my own many-faceted work. Since you and your brothers maintain separate accounts of your expenditure, I consider it proper to deal with each matter separately. Therefore, kindly let me know Jugalkishoreji's wishes in this particular matter.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

11

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
April 11, 1925

BHAI SHRI RAMESHWARDASJI,

Received your letter. On receipt of Rs. 25,000, I shall spend the amount in the service of untouchables according to your

wish. As yet no letter has been received from Jamnalalji. Jamnalalji is touring Rajputana nowadays for khadi propaganda.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

SJT. RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
RANCHI

12

April 13, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your two letters. You have discarded the practice of mentioning dates or *tithis*; please resume the old practice because in the absence of any such indication it is not possible for me to know during my tours which letter was written when.

Hakimji has sailed for Europe. I made enquiries from Khwaja Saheb if the money had arrived. Please let me know if you have had any indication. On making an enquiry at Jamnalalji's office I learned that so far Rs. 30,000 had been received from you. They say that Munim had duly acknowledged the receipt. Rs. 30,000 were received on 1-11-24 and Rs. 20,000 on 5-1-25.

If the doctors are hopeful, why apprehend death? I can say from my own experience how difficult it is to curb unhealthy tendencies, but our duty is to keep them on the least. In this dark Age I give considerable weightage to Ram-Nam. In my own experience I have come across friends who have derived great peace of mind from Ram-Nam. Ram-Nam means God's name and yields the same result if used as a charm. Remember the Almighty by any name familiar to you. The world is sunk deep in indulgence of base passions. Now, how to keep them under restraint is the big question. I feel so unhappy when I go through the papers dealing with the dignity of motherhood. I find quite a number of writers who advocate nursing of animal passions. There are certainly means to win over passions. And

the supreme means is Ram-Nam. To utter Ram-Nam early in the morning and pray to God to grant one strength to be free from passions makes one a person above passions. If one prays truly, attainment of this state is certain, no matter today or tomorrow. What is important is that we should never lose sight of the disembodied image of God. It is all simple but it requires constant practice.

I shall be reaching Bengal on the 1st leaving for Faridpur the same night.

*Bandemataram from*  
Mohandas Gandhi

13 -

April 26, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Herewith Hakimji's (Hakim Ajmal Khan's) letter. Could you let me have those Rs. 25,000 now? And if so, are you going to send the amount to Hakimji's place, or to Bombay, at Jamnalalji's. If I could have the credit note in Delhi, that would probably save me the commission charges. I will be at the Ashram on the 1st of April; after that I intend leaving for Kathiawar for the second time. I have got to reach Faridpur on the 2nd of May.

I hope your wife is now doing better.

If I take up the cow-protection work in my own way, where should I make a start? I am looking forward for help from all of you brothers. I have consented to take this work in hand after a great deal of hesitation.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

April 30, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter.

Your yarn is quite good. Having started this sacred work, never think of giving it up.

As for your wife, I would suggest your taking a vow that after her passing away you would not marry again. If you have the inner strength to take this vow, I would suggest your doing so in front of your wife.

About the matter of Rs. 20,000 I shall enquire at Jamnalalji's office.

I had maintained an intimate relationship with Shri Raichandji. While not conceding that he excelled me in the matter of truth and non-violence. I am convinced that in the field of knowledge of the scriptures he was far better equipped than myself, while his memory was much sharper than mine is. Even in his boyhood he had a remarkable capacity for self-realisation and self-confidence. While admitting that he had not completely broken away from attachment to things earthy, I nevertheless maintain that he has taken rapid strides towards that goal. I was familiar with his views on Lord Buddha. We shall have talks on this subject more fully when we meet.

My tour in Bengal begins from the month of May.

I had sought a gift of Rs. 25,000 for Aligarh, and had also forwarded Hakimji's letter to you.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

Don't you feel difficulty in reading my handwriting?

May 14, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

The Mahars who live here tell me that you had promised

them a donation of Rs. 30,000 for a temple and dwelling huts, provided I was agreeable. Did you tell them anything like that? Their leader's name is Mr. Bhonsle.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

Please send your reply on the Sabarmati address. I am reaching there on Thursday.

16

↳ SABARMATI,  
May 23, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have written to the leader of the depressed classes to say that you gave no such undertaking.

That the community has split into two rival factions is bad news. Still, if your own faction maintains an attitude of humility, the poison will not spread further, though I quite realise that peace and tension cannot live together. Pursuance of one of these courses alone can yield results. The result of disunity finds its expression in the countries of Europe nursing tensions. There is no true love anywhere. The societies all over the world have so far failed to experiment with the truth.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

July 16, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. I do hope your father is now



better. I have already written all I can about Pandit Sunderlalji.

Work in connection with the Hindu-Muslim tension is getting increasingly more difficult. If my suggestion is going to be used as a basis for a sifting inquiry as to its causes, the findings should lead to more substantial work. I am fully convinced that ultimately quite a number of leaders will have to sacrifice their lives in their efforts to tackle this problem.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

SHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI BIRIA  
137 CANNING STREET  
CALCUTTA

## 18

July 18, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter dealing with the subject of fruit diet. I have lived on dry and fresh fruits alone for a number of years and have been none the worse for it. At the same time I also gave up salt. I cannot recommend this regimen for you; but if for some time you could manage without ghee and salt, that would help you in keeping concupiscence under control. Spices, pan and betel-nuts must be given up as a matter of course. By regulating the diet alone one cannot keep the sexual urge under control. But anyone aspiring for such a control cannot afford neglecting any one of the methods prescribed for achieving the objective. Only by seeing God one can emancipate oneself from all passions completely. This is what the *Gita* says, and this is the truth. Do read my book *Arogya Digdarshan* (The Way to Perfect Health). Have you already read it? If not, its Hindi translation is available in market.

I am sure you are now enjoying good health. I pray for peace for your wife.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

19

ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
July 20, 1925

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Received your two letters.

Regarding Bardoli nothing has been sent. There is no harm in it; we are getting sufficient finance. I shall certainly bother you in case of difficulty. There is little chance of rapprochement. If it happens—all right, if not—does not matter. The reins of satyagraha are in the hands of God alone. Vallabhbhai is here today.

Shall write again about boycott in *Navajivan*.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

20

July 28, 1925

MY DLAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. I know well that without Malaviyaji and Shradhanandji Hindu-Muslim unity will remain a sheer impossibility. I just want to function as a path-finder, and to do anything that lies in my power to prevent minor quarrels. My job is that of a sweeper—to clean the site, and try to keep it clean. When the time for reconciliation arrives, consultation with Malaviyaji and others will become necessary.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

21

July 31, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Mr. Iyer's letter has completely failed to impress me inasmuch as I hold totally divergent view on how to save the Hindu faith. I do not accept that bringing out a periodical will be much fruitful. In the Punjab we have so far offered no opening to the Muslims. Mr. Das could not have acted otherwise. After formulating the Pact how could he have broken it himself.

There is nothing to prevent me from coming to Delhi, and even as it is, I have planned to reach there during September.

Please continue to write and to send everything worth reading.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

N.B. I am returning Mr. Iyer's letter. Today I have received Rs. 10,000. Yesterday's letter was despatched to you on your Hardwar address

22

August 7, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I hope my reply sent through Jamnalalji has reached you. When I got your lengthy letter I dealt with it in detail and sent my reply to your Solan address by registered post. I cannot understand how it could get mislaid.

Here are the details of the points treated by me in that letter.

I paid a tribute to you for promising a donation of one lac and prayed that the money be sent as speedily as you can manage.

Elaborated the reasons why I cannot join forces with Pujya Malaviyaji and Pujya Lalaji, but gave my word that my thoughts for them would ever remain pure.

Explained why I prefer to help and support Pandit Motilalji and the Swarajya Party, saying that they are at least nearer to my line of thinking, but adding that it precludes my personal involvement with them.

I had said many other things in that letter; I cannot recall them now.

I hope both of you are maintaining good health.

You might have heard about my fast. The very fact of my writing this letter is sufficient to show that I am already feeling stronger. I hope to do some physical exercise after a few more days.

I shall be reaching Wardha on the 10th. There I propose to stay for quite some time.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

23

September 1, 1925

BHAI SHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Must have received your letter. I have gone through the reply of your Secretary also. Not much is left there that you can do now. Are you in good health?

Jamnalalji is here nowadays.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

SHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI BIRLA  
PILANI, RAJPUTANA

BIRLA HOUSE,  
HARDWAR,  
September 10, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter has arrived.

That it is possible to commit an act of violence while remaining non-violent is something that has escaped my comprehension. I have given much thought to it since, and it is my firmly-held conviction that unless we ourselves are virtuous we remain incapable of grasping the full significance of this matter.

Anand Swami has already sent you a bill for *Young India*, etc.

I do wish to go to Delhi, but it will take some time, though I would like to start immediately. I feel disinclined to subject my body to the discomforts of a journey.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

PATNA,  
September 27, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. I do not propose to trouble you much about Lohani just now.

Jamnalalji was telling me that the amount of Rs. 25,000 for Muslim University was to be taken from the Rs. 60,000 promised by you at Juhu. And I was planning to spend these Rs. 60,000 on other items. But obviously what you meant was not what I thought you meant. I wanted you to take up the work of managing it and I would have loved the idea. If you are not agreeable, I will find someone else to manage it.

The tannery owns a few bighas of land of its own. I have inspected the site. Shri Madhusudandas has spent quite a neat

sum of his own on it.

So what remains to be settled is the matter regarding the Spinners Association? Do you feel like extending your co-operation in this direction? I would like you to contribute a handsome amount to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. In case the amount of the University is not to be treated separately, I will have nothing to say.

One other thing. You are familiar with my views on cow-protection. Shri Madhusudandas's tannery is situated at Cuttack. He has converted it into a Company. I feel tempted to get hold of it by buying a majority of its shares in order to promote the cow-protection cause. The company is in the red to the tune of Rs. 1,20,000. It must be rescued from this burden of debts. They use only dead animals' skins in the tannery, but *patlagho* (species of iguana) are killed for their skins. The acquiring of the tannery should carry three conditions with it, viz.,

1. only dead animals' skins will be employed;
2. the *patlagho* will not be killed for their skins; and
3. the scheme of purchasing yarn will be given up; if the tannery yields dividends the money is to be employed in the expansion of its own field of activity.

If the tannery could be made available on these conditions, the matter may be discussed with Jamnalalji in greater detail, provided you happen to meet him in Delhi.

Has there been any improvement in your wife's condition?  
I will be in Bihar till the 15th.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

November 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter.

As for my article, I am sure I have saved Ba from a wrong.

Ba seems to take things in this light, otherwise she could not have moved about with me with such a light heart. I have rescued Chhaganlal and Ba from several baseless accusations. I do not think anybody else in our society has tasted the sweet fruit of admission of guilt to the extent I have. I am surprised you failed to take cognizance of this aspect of the matter.

You should certainly try to secure money from the mill-owners, but with no strings attached. Khadi may or may not have yielded profits, but the mills are minting money. Wadia has admitted as much. If the mill-owners were a bit more prudent, they would have still better. Time will teach them the necessary lesson.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

27

WARDHA,  
December 12, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. Before this, and after my fast, I had sent you a letter from Delhi. You have fully grasped the significance of my fast.

I reached Wardha yesterday. I get much peace here. We are having a very good climate here these days.

I am happy to learn your wife is now in a state of mental peace. Why should we not await the visitation of Death joyfully?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
MAHESH VILLA  
SOLAN  
SIMLA HILLS

## Letters without Date

28

BOMBAY,  
Sunday, 1925

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter by sheer chance. I had already headed for the steamer but it did not sail after all. Good it did not.

You should not have felt piqued by some such expression as "the Marwari rate of interest". Or you should have told me at once. I had made use of it jocularly. Take my own case. The word 'Kathiawari' is used in a derogatory sense, but I swallow it. The description 'Kathiawari' generally stands for someone considered an idler. But that does not mean that I am one. I would not dream of using the word in a derogatory sense even in a lighter vein. But I would like you not to get scared by its use. "Greek meets Greek" is a common saying, but nobody would take every Greek to be a cheat.

I would like to add for your information that in Gujarat also there is no dearth of incompetent and heartless Shylocks. Whether the Marwaris are good or bad, your only concern should be to be good in body as you already are at heart and to consign the description 'Marwari' to the sacred flames of India's sacrificial fire.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas



BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have received your letter. You have felt hurt but it is all because of the newspapers. They do not follow what I say. Even then they have to write something or the other. Whatever I spoke was in praise of something. But when it was reported in the newspapers it meant otherwise. I was appreciating the civilized persons on the issue of cow-protection saying that unless I get the full co-operation of the Marwaris, I would not be able to make much headway. What I require from them is not only their wealth but their mind also. In this context I told in praise of a Marwari friend whom I had requested to serve me as a treasurer not for the treasurer's job alone but for his other services. However I have not minded your opposing this, nor I spoke in that meeting overpowered by any reactions. I never have any expectation from friends that they should agree to my proposals every time. I could fully appreciate your resentment.

In the same way I have understood your decision regarding Deshbandhu Memorial. I did not mind it.

Whatever you have written to Pt. Jawaharlal about the All-India Memorial I will try to understand the import of that too. I will do that when we see each other.

Jugalkishoreji<sup>1</sup> told me that you had not recovered fully. You may experiment in dietetical changes. He also told that your wife was not well. May God grant peace to her.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

Because of pain in my right hand I am using my left hand.

<sup>1</sup>My elder brother-G.D.B.

**1926**



# 1

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
January 20, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am writing in English to save time. I have your letter with the enclosures. I shall put Lord Lytton's speech before Gandhiji as soon as he gets better. You must have heard that he has been on his bed and had high temperature for two or three days. He has no fever today but I dare not disturb him today.

\* The other cutting is nothing unusual from Mahomed Ali. He has said much more shocking things in the *Comrade* and I do not think I need worry Bapu with it.

I am grateful to you for your having accommodated that young friend of mine. I have heard from him that you have asked him to take up his work at Calcutta from the 1st of March next. I do hope he will serve you conscientiously and well.

Thanking you again,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev Desai

# 2

BIRLA HOUSE,  
SUBZI MANDI, DELHI,  
January 23, 1926

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I herewith send two cuttings which please give to Mahatmaji. One is about the speech of Mahomed Ali, which he delivered in December and about which I had promised Mahatmaji to send its report.

The second cutting is a speech of Lord Lytton, which I am sure, Mahatmaji will find very interesting. The subject-matter of

the speech is one on which there is no greater authority in India than Mahatmaji, and I think it will interest Lord Lytton if Mahatmaji points out his mistakes. Lord Lytton has not translated his words into action, but even if he follows strictly what he spoke he must release the prisoners arrested under the Ordinance. I know, Lord Lytton is a thorough gentleman and a good Christian and any comment made by Mahatmaji on his speech will create a good impression on his mind.

I beg to be excused for writing to you in English, but it saves time to dictate to Shorthand-typist as recently I have been keeping very busy.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

3

SABARMATI,  
Thursday, February 15, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Both your telegram and your letter are to hand. It gladdens my heart to find that you are at peace with yourself. Now I have begun to hope that you will not be tempted to marry again.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

4

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
March 28, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter.

I have just received Jajmalaji's telegram suggesting that it

would be better if I left after April 15. At present the climate here also is quite nice. The mornings are cool and during the day it is not unbearably hot.

You have my assurance that if I could bring about a rapprochement between the two factions, i.e., Motilalji's and Malaviyaji's, I would spare no pains. But just now this seems beyond my capacity. We shall continue to disagree on the question of Swarajya Party. In Maulana Mahomed Ali's language, when it comes to the question of comparing two creeds instead of two individuals, the Swarajya Party is decidedly more praiseworthy, though both may carry less weight than the non-cooperation does.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

5

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
Sunday, April 4, 1926

MY DEAR GIANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter makes many things clear. Till now I had confined myself to reading the newspaper accounts. It is my definite conclusion that at least I cannot prevent the two sides from fighting each other. That was why I was not perturbed by the Calcutta riots. I have already said that if the Hindus are bent upon fighting, then, instead of finding fault with it as a symptom of cruelty, we should treat it as a virtue and augment it. This is what seems to have happened in Calcutta. You maintained an attitude of neutrality, and the Marwari community saved the lives of nearly three hundred Muslims. This is something for the entire Hindu community to be proud of

Your pledge to wear khaddar deserves my thanks. I also thank those who prompted you to do it. You will, without doubt, derive benefit from this pledge, and the general public also will be benefited.

I am leaving for Mussoorie on the 22nd. I am in excellent health. This being the Satyagraha Week, I spin for two hours

#### 44 BAPU—A Unique Association

nowadays, while five charkhas remain in motion for 24 hours without respite.

You have declined to accept a title. This I liked very much, indeed. This refusal to accept a title does not mean that we treat the Government as our enemy, nor that titles are bad in themselves, though I for one consider them essentially bad in our present condition.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

### 6

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
Friday, April 16, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSIYAMDASJI.

I am in receipt of your letter and your cheque for Rs 26,000. You have asked some questions about the Hindu-Muslim problem. Here are my answers, but not for publication. I had told you that I had no influence with the Hindus, or that section of the Hindus, which steps in ruling in the riots, therefore, whatever I would say would be misconstrued, and so it was my duty to remain silent. Let me elaborate:

- (1) If the Government has banned the taking out of processions, and if some such procession forms part of some religious observance, I would regard the taking out of it a part of my sacred duty. But before taking such a step I would first have a talk with the Muslims in order to achieve unity. If they remain unyielding, I would take out the procession and if in the process I get a hammering I would put up with it. If I fall short of reaching that stage of non-violence, I would equip myself with material to deal with the likely development.
- (2) I would not dismiss my syce and other employees, etc., just because they happen to be Muslims. I would not keep any employee if I found him disloyal or who behaved imper-

tinently. I do not mean that the Muslims are more lacking in gratitude than those of other faiths; to me they appear to be a shade more unruly than the others. I hold it to be wholly unworthy conduct to get rid of somebody on the score of his faith alone.

- (3) If some Hindu disfavours the path of peace or is not equipped for it, he should acquire the strength necessary for an open clash.
- (4) If the Government favours the Muslims the Hindus should not feel exercised over it. They should cease the worry about the Government. They should never cringe; on the contrary, they should learn to stand on their own legs. Once the Hindus reach that stage of courage and self-reliance the Government will prefer to remain in neutral, and the Muslims also will stop leaning on it. Seeking the Government's help neither makes one manly, nor qualified to fulfil one's religious duty. My advice to you would be to watch the situation without involving yourself in it, while doing all that is necessary for the achievement of the objective set forth above. The good of the Hindu community lies in this, and this is the only way to serve the community. What I have said is based on the experience acquired in course of more than 35 years. The peaceful and brave manner in which you conducted yourself during the riots has earned my unstinted admiration. That was a hero's role; keeping up with it while doing everything that is fit and proper. If I have failed to make myself clear on any point, do not hesitate to ask again.

I have been thinking of using part of the loan you had promised to give to the Spinners Association on the stock lying in Bombay. The Spinners Association owns two godowns in Bombay. If you so desire, you can take over one of those, stocking it with goods sufficient to cover the amount of the loan. In order to reduce the burden of the rent, we would like to store another quantity of goods, roughly half of that covered by the loan, in the same godown. We should be at liberty to take out this additional quantity whenever we like. Goods, the Association will store beyond this security is bound to increase or



decrease in quantity; therefore, an unhampered access to it should be made possible.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

7

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
Wednesday, April 28, 1926

MY DEAR JUGALKISHOREJI,

I got your letter today. Now I will send money for the girl. This Chinese student is exhibiting extra-ordinary talents at present. It was at her request that an Indian name was given to her. We call her 'Shanti'.

There is much in the Hindu-Muslim tension to grieve us; but I can glimpse the rays of peace in this very situation. It is my constant prayer to God that we may never be forgetful of our sacred duty.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas

8

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
May 23, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. A copy of your letter dealing with the matter of the loan you had promised has now been sent to Jamnalalji.

I was simply stunned about the Sabarmati understanding. I have been able to understand nothing so far. I quite visualise the situation relating to the Hindu-Muslim problem, but I am

helpless, because I do not wish to let go of my hold on self-confidence. And that keeps me hopeful. What I am clear about in my mind is that the method adopted to defend the Hindu faith is quite unlikely to achieve the purpose. But to me the sole strength of the weak resides in Ram and this is sufficient to keep me free from anxiety.

*Yours sincerely,*

9

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
Tuesday, June 8, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. So far Khadi Pratishthan has received at least Rs. 70,000 through the Spinners Association. As far as I remember, you had advanced Rs. 35,000 to the Ashram and Rs. 6,000 to the Pravartak Sangh. Some other small amounts have also been given. Put together, the entire amount comes to about Rs. 1,25,000. More money will have to be given in Bengal. I am quite aware that the requirements of Khadi Pratishthan have increased much. Satis Babu wishes to expand the scope of his work enormously. I also like that. But the Spinners Association is lacking in funds. Therefore, whatever is possible to do through the Spinners Association will be done; but what you can spare for Satis Babu, spare.

What can I say about the question of council-entry? I have fundamental differences with Pujya Mahaviyaji on this count. The only thing I can usefully say in regard to this matter is that if you believe that some public good is achievable through council-entry, you should go there as a matter of course. Opposition to the Swarajya Party and getting political training are, both together, inconceivable. If you are harbouring the notion that you have given me a pledge not to enter the Council, you must get rid of it. No such ban was ever decided upon; You should

consider yourself free of any such inhibition and decide about entering the council purely from the operational, i.e., moral, point of view.

Yours sincerely,  
Mohandas

10

CALCUTTA,  
June 21, 1926

MY DEAR PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I visited the office and godown of the Khadi Pratishthan situated at Bowbazar Street and stayed there for nearly 45 minutes. I was generally impressed with the systematic method in which they conduct the business. Satis Babu and Praphulla Babu have succeeded in pushing up the sales, which have been increasing regularly from month to month. At present, monthly sale is stated to be worth Rs. 24,000. The total stock of khadi in the godown is worth Rs. 75,000.

My object in visiting the place was to find out whether a part of my promised loan could be utilised by them. But I found various difficulties which I wish to enunciate:

- First, the price of the cloth as sold in the market is very much higher than the price of similar mill-made cloth. Khadi of 10 warps and 12 wefts produced by mills is generally sold at Rs. 00-14-00 per lb, but *shuddha* khadi of much inferior quality is sold in the Pratishthan at Rs. 1-10-0 per lb. This is only about the plain khadi, but the difference in the prices of dyed and fancy goods is even greater. For instance, a plain saree made at Pratishthan with fancy border fetches about Rs. 6 per lb, while a similar saree made at mills can be purchased for Re. 1 per lb. Even ordinary saree with plain border fetches Rs. 3 per lb. while similar quality of mills' product can be had at Re. 1 per lb. Thus, in some cases the price is nearly 6 times higher than that of mill-made cloth, while in most cases it is nearly 2½ times dearer than the mill-manufactured goods. Taking a liberal

estimate, my valuation of the goods in their godown will not exceed Rs. 75,000. On the basis of my valuation, if I advance 70%, I can pay only Rs. 21,000.

But there is another difficulty. Satis Babu tells me that he cannot borrow money with the feeling of repayment, even if it has to be paid after 2 or 3 years. He wants money for expanding the business, and if money has to be repaid the business cannot be expanded permanently unless some money comes forward through donation, on which a businessman should not rely. Under the circumstances, it appears to me that there is little chance of a loan being utilised by the Calcutta people. I think the condition of other khadi bhandars must be similar. Neither myself nor the borrower should confuse business with philanthropy. In this case the borrowers will probably feel more embarrassed inasmuch as the responsibility of payment rested with them. This being so, they will have to make such estimates of the valuation of their goods as could definitely ensure the repayment of the borrowed money. Secondly, the loan can help them only if it be a permanent investment, while my condition is that while I may renew the loan after a year, I do not bind myself to do so. This being so they cannot utilise my money for permanent expansion of the business and so it cannot be of much help. Satis Babu told me however that specially for meeting extra demand of pooja they have to accumulate store for a few months and for that purpose he said he could utilise Rs. 30,000 to be repaid on 1st February. I have promised to accommodate him with the said sum. I have specially told him that he must keep in mind that the amount has to be repaid, and he seems to have understood his responsibility.

I was greatly interested to see a large staff working in their office. Their mission being a combination of social and economic work, they are forced to maintain such a big staff. Furthermore, there are a large number of varieties of khadi and this requires a very detailed work. I do not think they can, therefore, make any retrenchment. Their monthly expenses for office amount to nearly Rs. 4,000 while their monthly sale amounts to Rs. 24,000. If the same is compared to some of our mills, you may find monthly expenses for the maintenance of the staff not exceeding Rs. 4,000 while the monthly produc-

tion amounts to the value of Rs. 4,00,000. Thus in our case the overhead charge on production comes to about 1% while in the case of the Khadi Pratishtan it comes to about 16%. Their circumstances compel them to maintain such a staff. I must say to their credit that they are working very hard and systematically, with full faith in their programme.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

## 11

July 17, 1926

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I had addressed a long letter to Pujya Mahatmaji from Calcutta about my visit to the Khadi Pratishtan. There were various points in my letter which require replies from Pujya Mahatmaji. As I have not yet heard from him in this connection, I would be obliged if you would kindly let me know whether that letter has reached him and if so, may I expect a reply from him?

I will be staying here about a fortnight more.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

## 12

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
July 20, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter of the 17th. Your letter about the Khadi Pratishtan was received duly, but I see that it has not been replied to by Bapu as yet. He was under the impression that he

dictated a reply, but my record of outgoing letters shows that no reply has been posted to you. He expects to do so now by tomorrow.

I hope you are doing well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

13

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
July 21, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter of June in connection with the Khadi Pratishtan. I have been under the impression that I answered it. There was nothing for me to say about what you have done for them. You can only have my full agreement in whatever you do to help them out of their difficulties. I believe Bengal has taken to khadi with avidity, and those conducting the campaign are motivated by a spirit of service and purity of purpose; they are doing their job intelligently. Herewith an account of the monies sent to Bengal so far through the Spinners Association.

I gather from the newspapers that Hindu-Muslim riots are on the increase day by day. However, I do not feel hurt and am convinced that out of all this will emerge a sense of unity. And it will not take much time. Most of these disturbances take place in Bengal. Have you been able to discover the secret?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

14

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
July 25, 1926

DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose herewith a statement that should have been posted

with the letter sent to you the other day.

As regards your previous letter about Khadi Pratishtan Bapu said there was nothing in it which called for any particular opinion. He agrees with you that business should not be mixed up with philanthropy and that the only form in which you could help the Pratishtan was the loan of Rs. 30,000 repayable in January next.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev Desai

## 15

*Personal*  
*Confidential*

SEWASHRAM,  
BFNARES CANTT.,  
August 21, 1926

DEAR SHRI BIRLAJI,

Greetings. I hope you are in sound health and happy. Ever since you were kind enough to visit this place on June 1 last, I have not been able to write to you about the forth-coming election, a subject that came up for discussion on the occasion. For that I am sorry. Lest you entertain the notion that I ignored doing this, I want to tell you briefly of the misfortunes that visited upon my family. I do hope after learning all about it you will certainly forgive me.

Father wrote to Pandit Motilalji just two or three days after that. By the time his reply arrived my uncle, Babu Govind Dasji, suddenly returned from Waltair, a dangerously sick man. He arrived here on June 14. On the 16th I developed high fever resulting in measles. On the 23rd Babu Govind Dasji passed away. I however got well, but on the 3rd of July my wife fell victim to a malignant type of measles. After undergoing untold suffering for three weeks she breathed her last on the 23rd of July. This was a great calamity for me. Till the end of the 1st week of August I remained busy with her obsequies. After that I left the place with the children for a week so that they should have some peace from a motherless home. Even during those

dark days I kept writing to Pandit Motilalji. I could not write to you because no decisive reply came from him. He has just returned to Allahabad from Mussoorie. I saw him at once and emphasised the urgency of the matter. Now I am writing with his permission that if you stand from the Faizabad constituency, no Congress candidate will oppose you. You had said, with Pandit Malaviyaji's concurrence, that if I stood from the Benares-Gorakhpur constituency, there should be no Congress candidate to oppose you in any other constituency chosen for you. You were also kind enough to express the wish that there should be no contest between you and myself.

I know I am rather late in giving you this information, but from what I have stated above you can judge for yourself that, surrounded as I was by so many misfortunes, I cannot have acted with greater haste than I am doing now. Believe me when I say that I had no wish to enter the Council and had, in fact, prayed to Pandit Motilalji to spare me. Ever since your name had appeared I have been feeling sore at the prospect of opposing you and have also been in communication with Pandit Motilalji on this subject. Father is so distressed over our contesting the same seat that I dare not broach the subject to him. I am myself in such a predicament that I cannot decide what to say or do. It is a pity that once a man joins a political party he loses his freedom of action. Thanks to the current brand of politics, even those who regard it as an evil get involved in it. After those family misfortunes I feel so broken that I am disinclined to exert myself. All the 24 hours are barely sufficient just to look after three young children and to arrange for their education. I am sorry to say that people of my party are so inconsiderate and are not allowing me freedom even after so much wailing on my part.

Now, whatever decision you arrive at kindly let me know it within a week to enable me to write to Pandit Motilalji accordingly so that he may be free to make necessary adjustments. I am told much has been done from your side and much more is in the process. Pandit Motilalji will act in accordance with your decision I have already told him and my other friends that because of my personal misfortunes, my father's feelings, and my own disinclination to oppose you, I would not be able to do much spadework; it would be Pandit Motilalji and his



party alone who would have to exert themselves. In passing, I might mention that to you Faizabad and Benares-Gorakhpur are the same thing. But you have the right to take the final decision.

Apologizing for this lengthy letter which, however, must be treated as confidential.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Sri Prakasa

To  
SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

16

SABARMATI,  
August 29, 1926

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter dated the 23rd is to hand. I had sent you a wire from Ajmer; you might have received it. I reached here the day before yesterday.

Of the three names suggested by you for Sikar it would probably not be possible to choose either Shri Nanakram Jhanwar and Shri Ramakant Malaviya. In the first place, the salary expected by them would be quite high. Then there are several other reasons. Shri Harbilas Sarada has suggested the name of Dewan Raisaheb Pandit Shankarnath of Karoli State, while Shri Shyamsunder Lal has recommended Raisaheb Pandit Jagannath Bhargava and Shri Raghubar Dayal, B.A., LLB., who is at present functioning as the Judicial Member in Khetri State.

A settlement of the Sikar State's affairs appears rather remote at present. Mr. Rowland, president of the Jaipur Council, is going to visit that area. Let us hope something will emerge as a result of his visit.

Haribhauji is taken up with the strike in Indore. After his release from there he will come to Pilani to see you.

You have suggested that I should strive for a reconciliation among Motilalji, Lalaji and Malaviyaji. The suggestion is quite sound, but I do not consider myself qualified enough to undertake this task. My efforts will be of no avail.

You had asked me to keep the money intended for a loan to Khadi Pratishthan as a deposit in my Bombay office. I would rather wait till we have a firm assurance about its repayment in time. Both Pujya Bapuji and the council are of the same opinion. They have been thinking over the matter and their decision will be conveyed to you.

I am planning to leave for Bombay in a few days. From there I will go to Wardha.

I hope you are enjoying normal health.

*Bandemataxam from  
Jamnalal*

17

October 22, 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. You say that this is not the opportune time for setting up the ashram you have in view. The climate is very dirty. The workers available lack in character and personality both.

*Yours sincerely,  
Mohandas Gandhi*

Diwali, October 1926

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am very glad to receive a long letter from you. Words in criticism of you had reached my ears, but I did not lend credence to them. Now your letter has fully satisfied me. Your critic had also said that where a hundred repees would have sufficed, you spent five hundred. After your description nothing is left for me to say.

About Geneva my opinion is this. Hold your soul in patience. I fail to see any great advantage issuing from your visit. If you think it necessary to gain some experience of Europe, then go there independently. You will have plenty of opportunities for visiting Europe. My inner voice tells me the present is not the moment for it. However, you do what your own inner voice wants you to do.

I hope you are keeping fit.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

## Letters without Date

19

WARDHA,  
[Paush Shukla 1]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. We shall talk about the Swarajya Party when we meet. I certainly do not want any change in your views because in the process of supporting them I wish to support my own position. Placed as I am, I cannot act otherwise—for the good of the faith, which is the good of the nation as well.

Whatever amount you wish to send you can send to Jamnalalji's office or get credited in the Baroda Bank; in Calcutta or Delhi it will be rather irksome for me. In case, however, your preference is for some Bank in Calcutta or Delhi, the Bank's credit note can be sent to me. Do as you find more convenient.

Swami Anand writes to say that free copies of *Young India* and *Navajivan* are being regularly posted at your request, but that he has so far not received the subscription amount standing in that account. Rs. 299-15-0 have fallen due. Will you please send the amount? He wants to have it before the closing of the year.

Yours,  
Mohandas Gandhi

20

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
[Jaistha Shukla, 9]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

You know about the loss sustained by the Servants of India Society. Srinivasa Sastriji has asked me to extend my beggar's

bowl to collect funds. He has the right to do so. I have already written in *Young India*, but Sastriji wishes me to write to friends as well. The Society's brand of political activity is not to my liking, but I cannot be oblivious of the moral calibre, patriotism and spirit of sacrifice of its workers and consider its continued survival a bounden duty of every lover of the nation. If you share my views, please do send something by way of help and also ask your friends to act similarly in keeping with their capacity.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

21

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
[Sunday, Shrawan Krishna 14]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter alongwith the cuttings. I have forgotten this matter. The political climate prevailing at present is quite unhealthy

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
PILANI (RAJPUTANA)

22

THE ASHRAM SABARMATI,  
[Friday, Shrawan Shukla 12]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose herewith Motilalji's telegram. The reply I have sent him is written on its back. I have also wired you as under:

MOTILALJI WIRES HE APPROVES YOUR CANDIDATURE. HAVE REPLIED KNOW NOTHING ABOUT YOUR CANDIDATURE. THERE MUST BE SOML MISTAKE. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SAID REPRESENTATION ?

What can all this be? I await your reply.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

23

[Sunday, Agrahayan Krishna 12]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Whenever there is a difference of opinion between Pujya Malaviyaji and myself I find myself on the horns of a dilemma because I respect him so much. But I can say with confidence that it is not for you at least to enter the Council. But if you have confidence in yourself, and Pujya Malaviyaji counsels you, you may do so. Work once begun cannot be abandoned half finished. At this juncture I would suggest your restraining friends from saying anything. If you secure a majority of votes, go ahead. It does not look nice to leave the road halfway. Ultimately you will have to leave it. But if Pujya Malaviyaji frees you out of consideration for your health, that would be a blessing in disguise. I do not consider your entering the Council or the Assembly advisable for the sake of your health also.

I do not relish the contest you have entered into.  
Jamnalalji is still here.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

WARDHA.

[Kartik Krishna 14, 83]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. I do not experience any difficulty in reading letters. If your not going to Europe does not entail a violation of any pledge, I believe this is not the right time for you to go there.

I would not write anything about your victory. There are battles and battfes; in some of them to lose is to win. Whether what has taken place will be conducive to your well being is more than I can say. I would advise you to keep a watch on everything that takes place in the Assembly, without committing yourself in any way.

I do know for certain that I have served the country by keeping quiet. But I lack the self-confidence necessary for bringing about a rapprochement among these numerous parties. My heart does not allow me to go to Gauhati. I have written to both Srinivasa Iyengar and Motilalji to leave me alone. When I regain enough confidence in myself I shall myself come out in the open.

If I have to go to Calcutta I do not know where it would be proper for me to stay. If I am not obliged to put up at some particular place, I would prefer putting up somewhere arranged by you.

*Yours,*

Mohandas Gandhi

[Kartik Shukla 14, 83]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. I have already sent, some days ago, my views about Geneva on your Benares address. It appears from Devi

Prasadji's letter that you have the commitment to 90. If that be the case, the question of going or not going does not arise at all, you have got to go.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

26

Monday

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your two letters to hand. I am returning Brother Sri Prakasa's original letter.

Your easy narration of the efforts made in your behalf makes joyful reading. That the elections have poisoned the atmosphere I have seen for myself. After so much exertion the nation will stand to lose, not gain. Still, I would certainly not advise you to leave the Assembly. By non-involvement I had meant that you should never vote under any kind of pressure, as it happens quite often.

Your reassurance was quite uncalled for. I have faith in your well-meaning efforts. All the same, it was endearing.

I shall be reaching Calcutta on the 23rd, and will leave for Gauhati the same day. Arrangements for my stay have been made at Brother Khandelwal's. When I was in Calcutta last he used to call. I had told him that when visiting Calcutta again I would put up with him, provided there were no compelling reasons to do otherwise. Now he insists on a fulfilment of that promise; so I have no option. Are you thinking of coming to Gauhati?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas





**1927**



# 1

ON TOUR,  
GULBURG,  
February 22, 1927

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

As it is more convenient for you to handle English letters I am sending you this in English.

Though I have myself yet written nothing about currency matters, perhaps you are aware that I have been closely following the agitation, that is, as closely as I can, in spite of incessant travelling. I have been studying the question carefully and carrying on an active correspondence with currency experts Messrs. Madan and Wadia. The latter has sent me a draft Bill which I understand he has circulated among the members of the Assembly. Will you please let me know whether that Bill has your approval?

If a pure gold standard is established, free mints opened, and a reserve bank established, does not the question of rate of currency exchange disappear altogether? Will not things take shape by themselves? If the ratio is fixed at 1 lb = Rs. 15 and all questions regarding gold currency, mints and reserve bank shelved or decided in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission, will it not be worse than the existing state of things?

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS  
BOMBAY

# 2

Monday, March 16, 1927

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter has arrived. Receipt of money will speed up the spinning activity. What has particularly made me happy is Pujya

Malaviyaji's growing interest in the charkha. I will need a lot of money for the charkha work. His help will enable me to collect quite a sizable amount for it.

Bhaiji (Shri Jugal Kishoreji) and Rameshwarji have decided to donate for digging wells for the untouchables. The amount will be spent in keeping with their directions.

I did not know Parasram was in the habit of collecting torn bits of papers. I made him realise his mistake. He will write to you. He had no ulterior motive behind his folly. He is half-crazy. I could use him. He is pining for Pujya Malaviyaji's and Rabindranath's company. I told him he should make his own efforts to get his proffered services accepted by them.

I consider the following rules necessary for maintaining good health while in foreign countries:

1. Not to take unfamiliar food.
2. There people eat six or seven times. We should not eat more than three times and abstain from contracting the bad habit of consuming chocolate in the intervals.
3. They eat even at 1 o'clock in the night. We must take nothing after 8 in the evening. When visiting somebody it is considered obligatory to take tea, etc. There is no such thing.
4. Make it a habit to take a six-mile walk every day, both morning and evening.
5. It is not necessary to load yourself with unnecessary covering. The secret lies in wearing just as much as would keep the cold out. Walking induces warmth in the body.
6. It is not necessary to wear the European dress.
7. In order to acquaint yourself with the living conditions of the poorer section of the people there, which should be treated as a must, walk on foot. While there is ample time at your disposal, a stroll on foot is preferable.
8. Do not entertain the notion that the very fact of your being in Europe must result in some tangible achievement. Do what you can with perfect ease and in a relaxed state of mind.
9. Your contemplated visit to Europe may yield a fruitful result; you may gain in bodily strength. This is quite feasible.

10. May God save you from mental debauch. Very few Indians escape this fate. The mode of living there comes natural to those who live there; for us it becomes a sort of addiction, like wine-bibbing.
11. If you have cultivated the habit of reading the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*, never give it up. If you have not, cultivate it now.

I do not think you had expected such a detailed information on this subject. I have done so because I have great faith in the goodness of yourself and all your brothers. Rich people like you can be easily counted on one's fingers—you are so gentle, so humble. I want these two virtues to multiply manifold in your case in order to use them for the good of the country. I have never had faith in the soundness of the adage of tit for tat; therefore, wherever I get even a fleeting glimpse of kindness, truth and non-violence, I set about collecting these virtues like a miser, and feel happy in my occupation.

Ask whatever more you want to know. Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter.

23-24	Bombay
25-26	Kolhapur
27- 4 April	Belgaum
5-12	Madras

Yours,  
Mohandas

### 3

Ram Navmi, March 1927

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. I have not yet been able to make up my mind about going to Europe; nor do I feel inclined. I do wish to meet Romain Rolland, but for that I am waiting for a letter from him. The letter I have received does not persuade me enough to take a decision. Even if I decide to go, that will only be possible in the month of May, and I shall be

back by October. I shall try to stay with you at Mussoorie, even if for a few days. I want to stay on here till April 13 at least.

About boycott of foreign cloth please let me have your views after considering what I have written to you about the mills' co-operation.

Please let me have full details of your health, whether you can eat anything now.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

4

April 5, 1927

GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE  
BELGAUM

PLEASE INFORM MAHATMAJI STRONGLY URGF TAKING ENTIRE RISK FOR WHOLE OF HOT SEASON. NATURE'S WARNING MUST BE OBEYED. NO RISK SHOULD BE TAKEN. WE ARE ALL EXTREMELY ANXIOUS. HE SHOULD ENTIRE REST IN INTEREST OF COUNTRY.

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

137 CANNING STREET  
CALCUTTA

5

NANDI DURG,  
April 21, 1927

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Jamnalalji has been here for the last two days. He has conveyed his message. I do not feel like writing more than what I have already written. As for my seeing the King, I would not wish you to try for it. If the Secretary of State for India or the Prime Minister wishes to arrange for an interview with the King

do not turn down the suggestion. So far as I am aware, or this may only be my impression that politics is not discussed with the King; interviews are strictly confined to exchanging greetings and enquiries about health, etc. But you must see the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister with whom you can discuss anything under the sky. You must make it a point to visit the jails there, and to acquaint yourself with the living conditions of the lower class people there. This, the latter, you can easily do by walking through their areas in company with someone familiar with the locality. Station yourself near the bars in poor as also prosperous localities on Saturday nights for making comparative study.

I am getting better progressively.

I had written a letter to Pujya Malaviyaji quite some time ago. I am not looking forward to a reply, inasmuch as he is not in the habit of answering letters; though he does reply to telegrams by telegrams, I even feel inclined to write to him again.

I hope you are enjoying good health.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

6

NANDI DURG,  
•May 5, 1927

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE, GIRGAUM  
BOMBAY

WISH YOU SU MY LAST LETTER. AM DAILY GETTING  
STRONG. BLOOD PRESSURE NORMAL SINCE SUNDAY. NO CAUSE  
ANXIETY. GOD BLESS YOU.

GANDHI



KUMAR PARK,  
BANGALORE,  
June 9, 1927

भाई वनश्यामदासजी,

This is the fourth letter I am writing to you after your departure from Bombay. Jamnalalji has sent me your cablegram. Hence this letter in English. I must not yet try to write letters myself. In order to conserve my energy, therefore, I am dictating most of my correspondence, whether in English, Hindi or Gujarati.

Malaviyaji is with me today. He is on his way to Ooty for recouping himself. He came this morning and was to have left this evening; but on my telling him that day after tomorrow is Mysore Maharaja's birthday and suggesting that he should go to Mysore to give his blessings before proceeding to Ooty, he has sent a telegram to the Dewan. He has suspended his journey forward and will probably leave for Mysore tomorrow. Of course, I have been in regular correspondence with him and he has been replying my wires. He is looking much pulled down but he is as hopeful as ever about everything. There is nothing wrong with his body. It is simply weakness caused by ceaseless wear and tear. He promises to take about a month's rest in Ooty. He has Dr. Mangal Singh with him, and of course, a cook. Govind was with him as far as Bombay but has been obliged to go to Allahabad as he could not get a postponement of his "crow case".

I wonder if I suggested to you that you should see Miss Muriel Lester who is working in the slums of London. She was in India for some time last year. She was at the Ashram for one month. She is a most enthusiastic and able worker. She is working in the cause of total prohibition and is trying to cultivate public opinion there. Her address is:

Miss Muriel Lester  
Kingsley Hall Powis Road  
Bow, E. 3.

I hope that your health has improved and likewise Lalaji's. I descended from Nandi last Sunday. I am making fair

progress. Doctors here are of opinion that I would be able to resume a moderate amount of touring next month.

आपका,  
मोहनदास

8

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
July 17, 1927

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose herewith Sjt. Krishnadas's letter in reply to Bapu's asking for his suggestions about work amongst the *Namashudras*. The letter speaks for itself. I personally know Dr. Indra Narayan and Bhupen mentioned in the letter and I should think the *Namashudras* to be fortunate if you could secure Indra Narayan's services for them.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev Desai

9

October 9, 1927

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter I gather from Jannalalji's letter that you have returned from Europe in a sorry state of health. Now you must take rest and improve your health. I can be of some help in the selection of the right kind of diet, but for this you will have to stay with me for some days.

You have done the right thing in sending me your views on various subjects.

It is not that the non-co-operation movement has given birth to two factions. There were already two factions; they have

now reappeared in different garbs. I firmly hold to my conviction that non-co-operation alone can generate the needed strength. The people have grasped its miraculous properties, but they have yet to acquire the strength necessary for its enforcement, while the Hindu-Muslim tensions are proving to be another impediment. I cannot help in the Council work, but if the members are so inclined, they could do something useful in such fields of activity as khadi and prohibition. But so long as they are guided by selfish motives, or remain ignorant, or are plain lazy, they can achieve nothing. The tempo of the khadi work is both slow as well as fast at the same time; slow because we cannot foresee the result; fast because whatever is being done is clean and this cleanliness of conduct is sure to yield healthy results.

I am ever hungry for money. For khadi work, removal of untouchability and spread of literacy alone, I need at least two lacs of rupees. The current experimentation with the milk supply plan we require Rs. 50,000. Then there is the Ashram needing recurring expenditure. Work is not impeded, but God gives money after reducing one to despair. I feel quite contended. You can give for any specific work that inspires you with confidence. Give as much as you can spare.

My tour will continue till the end of this year. I hope to return to the Ashram some time in January.

I have written a letter to Revered Malaviyaji on the Hindu-Muslim question. Some way has got to be found out of this impasse. I detect a lack of morality in what is happening.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

## 10

BIRLA HOUSE,  
BENARES,  
October 11, 1927

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

My respectful pranams.

Here I will take complete rest and do nothing else for full

20 days. I have placed myself in the hands of my old vaidya, Triyambak Shastriji. I have not yet been able to hunt up some naturopath capable of curing me of my ailments after the manner of the vaidyas whose treatment has always given me relief. If I could discover one, I would entrust myself to his care and get peace of mind.

Pujya Malaviyaji is not here. I shall be able to give between Rs. 50,000 and 1,00,000 for the next year.

About the khadi work what I have always been apprehensive of is its fate after you are gone. I wear khadi just for your satisfaction and, believing as I do in the soundness of the plan, I render it what aid I can, as a token of my faith in God. But I have a different kind of scheme for popularizing khadi. If I had your strength, I would, in addition to what you are doing impose a levy on Manchester goods, besides imposing a production tax of Rs. 20 on mill-made coarse cloth. This would ensure speedy popularization of khadi. But you lack faith in legislative work, and I lack your strength, therefore, my next instalment of money may be spent on any activity chosen by yourself that would bring us nearer to the goal of swarajya. All work you have taken in hand is uniformly good, and it is not given to me to make any distinction between one kind of activity and another.

If you ever find any work impeded for lack of funds, please do not hesitate to write to me. Even as it is, I will continue sending money off and on. I could give more, but, like you, I, too, am pursuing certain business schemes a fruition of which I consider necessary for the well being of the nation. That is why this comparative economy.

*Yours humbly,*  
Ghanshyamdas

BIRLA HOUSE,  
PILANI,  
December 8, 1927

MY DEAR PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I cannot write a long letter myself as I am still weak. I am getting now a better appetite, but unfortunately just after my arrival here, I got an attack of slow fever due to catarrh and it lasted for about a fortnight. That made me very weak. However, I am better now, but improving very slowly. I fear it will take three to four months before I can take up any active work. The forthcoming session of the Assembly is, however, weighing all the time on my mind. Friends write to me that I must be present at the session. I also feel I should not miss it, but then I cannot recover fully. Please let me know which should I ignore for the present? Health or the Assembly? If you think that I should take entire rest for a few months, please tell Malaviyaji when you happen to meet him at Madras not to press me for attending the Assembly session.

My sole intention in writing this letter to you is about the statutory commission. I dare say you are pleased to see the new atmosphere and a sense of unity amongst all classes of the people. Don't you think that it is the time for you to come out to take an active part in politics? If you work for the Hindu-Muslim unity in such an atmosphere now, it will not be difficult for you to achieve it. I personally like the Calcutta resolutions, but Pt. Malaviyaji does not agree with me. He says he is not prepared to go beyond the resolutions passed at the Unity Conference, Delhi. I personally think that Hindu-Muslim unity should be based on religious freedom and toleration. This may mean full freedom to Mohammedans to perform Kurbani anywhere within the four walls of a house, of course with due regard to the sense of decency and to the Hindus full freedom to play music before Mosques at any time. If we agreed to this, a Bill may be passed in the Legislature prohibiting proselytisation of any man or woman below the age of 18. For a conversion above that age, a man or woman should file a proper affidavit before a Magistrate before finally doing so. Communal representation should also go with necessary reservation of

seats for the different communities and a redistribution of the provinces on scientific basis should be considered. I think these are the points essential for an unity, which I submit for your consideration.

As regards the boycott, without effective demonstration a mere negative action will be of no use. Hartals should be observed at every place on the arrival of the Commission and subsequently every town at the time the Commission goes to visit it should observe hartal with a huge mass meeting.

I hope you have read Pt. Malaviyaji's articles. I dare say it should please you to see how strong view he has taken of the present situation. I am sure, you will have conversation with him when he comes to Madras. How I wish the old non-co-operation spirit ruled again; but I feel rather nervous as I fear that this monetary effervescence may subside if not properly led. I do not find any single person who can command confidence of all the people. Don't you think that the time for which you so far waited has come? I am sure, you are considering the question very seriously.

With my humblest pranams.

*Yours very affectionately,*  
Ghanshvamdass

## Letters without Date

12

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Both of your letters have arrived. I have complete faith in your word, so I do not fear your reconsidering the matter. I have similar confidence in you in regard to the Assembly. But the atmosphere there is so vitiated that it becomes rather difficult to maintain an attitude of complete independence.

About Sangathan my views, already known to you, remain unchanged. After going into the details of the case the facts regarding which you have sent to me I am confirmed in my opinion that the solution does not at all lie in Sangathan. Its solution lies either in self-discipline or in personal courage. So long as we continue to show a clean pair of heels in face of attack it should surprise nobody if lascivious individuals catch hold of our womenfolk. I have known a Hindu state in which no young woman was free from fear, while the husbands and fathers felt helpless. But this is raising a fundamental issue. If you wish to pay a visit to the Gurukul, do so; but I would like you to stay with me for a fortnight. We cannot finish such talks in one day. Meanwhile act according to the dictates of your inner voice, unmindful of what I say.

My blessings to your son and daughter-in-law.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

13

NANDI DURG,  
[Jaistha Krishna 2]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. When dictating this letter I am reminded by Mahadev of your message conveyed through Jamnalalji that I should write to you in English. But I am not going to write any-

thing that would require telling others. So, I will dictate this letter in Hindi.

I have received the letter you wrote while on the Steamer. Earlier, I had written a couple of letters on your Geneva address. My health continues to improve. I continue writing to Pujya Malaviyaji. During this week just when I had finished my letter to him, his long telegram arrived. He informs me that though he is in good health, he is still weak. At present he is in Bombay. I think it would not be proper for me to say that I do not bother about my health; I do take care of myself to the extent it is necessary to keep myself going. But Pujya Malaviyaji does no such thing; I wrote to him on several occasions on this subject and he promised to take rest, but he didn't. He has unshaken faith in the Ayurvedic system; he believes it is the vaidya's pills and powders that keep him in good health. That he has a right to do. And he has so much confidence in himself that in spite of his frail body and constant ill-health he is determined to live up to 75. May God crown his determination with fulfilment. Who can press him to do more than this? I have written to him all I could with due severity mingled with prayer, with a dash of good humour. The fact is that each man moulds his reasoning to his own mode of activity. In this matter his guts are of little avail. But a stage comes in everybody's life when all efforts prove fruitless, though such efforts should never be given up and should be treated as part of one's duty. Call it good fortune, call it anything you like; in defence of these guts, man's last hour has ever remained a secret. Therefore, why worry about what is inevitable? The Nation's destiny does not rest on Malaviyaji or Lalaji or myself. We are only the instruments. Besides, I also believe that a man's good work, the very beginning of it in fact, starts after he has left the stage. I do not subscribe to Shakespeare's view that a man's good deeds go with him, leaving his bad deeds behind. Evil is not vouchsafed such a long life. Ram is alive and his name purifies us. Ravana has been dead all these ages, taking his evil deeds with himself. Even a vicious man never cares to remember Ravana. How was Ram like during his lifetime? The poets tell us that even Ram could not escape criticism. But for us now, Ram's imperfections were reduced to ashes along with his mortal coils, and he emerges as an incarnation of God whom we all worship. Ram's domain



now extends far and wide, much more than it did during his life. I am not dabbling in profound philosophy. I want to tell with the utmost emphasis that we should not grieve over the passing away of those we regard as saints. We must also believe that a saint's real work, or say, the result of his good work, begins to take shape after his death. What we consider to be a great achievement now may in future appear puny when juxtaposed to events till in the womb of time. Still, it is our bounden duty to follow in the footprints of those whom we regard as saints in our own lifetime.

What I have to say about your health is this, if you have lost faith in Allopathy, and rightly, too, then you should visit the Louis Kuhne and Joureu's clinic in Germany where they treat patients with open air and water; hundreds of them have derived benefit from this mode of treatment. Both in London and Manchester they have a Vegetarian Society, get acquainted with that also. In that Society you will come across a small number of good, serious-minded, middle-class people. You will also accost fools and eccentrics. You say you are not getting milk on the steamer. Next time you sail, keep a stock of Horlics milted milk which is pure milk condensed after the liquid part of it is evaporated. That is what the pharmacists say. Make an experiment with it and see if the result is wholesome.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

## 14

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Received your telegram. I request to say that my earlier letter to you had been despatched on Pujya Malaviyaji's address. That contained this much that I was not in favour of your going to Europe on this pretext. If you think it is necessary for you to go, go independently. I do not keep copies of such letters but the import of that letter was this much only. If you had

already given word, it becomes your duty to go there, for your not going there will prove your words false

Yours,  
Mohandas Gandhi

15

BFTIA,  
[Monday, Paush Krishna 6]

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Received your letter.

The Rs. 8,000 sent to Jamnalalji by you I will treat as meant for the Spinners Association.

I have been deeply thinking over the problems created by the *shuddhi* movement. The manner in which conversions are being effected does not at all appear religious to me. Those who had embraced the other faiths through compulsion or ignorance are already *shuddha*; proselytising them is a superfluous effort. It is only a question of broadmindedness on the part of the Hindus. Our movement should be directed against the Christian and Islamic brands of *shuddhi*. For this, conversion of the thought process is necessary. Once we admit that the methods employed in effecting *shuddhi* is wrong, why proceed forthwith to imitate such methods? When we are under attack we should devise effective measures to abort it. By persisting with the *shuddhi* movement we would only render the atmosphere more poisonous, while checkmating the reformist movement already on in the Hindu fold itself. I find a lack of thoughtfulness in the movement that is being conducted at present. When you feel more at home, we both shall give this aspect of the matter our consideration in a peaceful manner. I would certainly not like the progress of the movement arrested simply because I say so, as that would be of no benefit. Only when what I think appears to be cogent, independently of the fact that I am doing

the thinking, necessary and commensurate changes should be made in the strategy. That explains why I have been maintaining silence patiently. I suggest that when you get some relief from the Legislative Assembly you should accompany me during my tours for a few days. I shall be reaching Calcutta *via* Gondia on the 1st of February.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

**1928.**



# 1

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
January 5, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had sent you a letter through Jamnalalji. You might have received that. I had also sent you a telegram requesting not to attend the Assembly session so long as you are not completely fit. I wanted to tell Pujya Malaviyaji about you, but we were so deeply engrossed in talks that I forgot all about it. I do not think it necessary to write to him about this now.

You might have sent the money to Jamnalalji's office. I have not heard from them so far.

Pujya Malaviyaji's speech had a magic effect: they have promised to exert themselves to the best of their capacity. Let us see what happens.

I plan to sap on in the Ashram till the end of March, except for five days from the 11th when I am to visit Kathiawar.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

# 2

THE SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
January 5, 1928

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Pujya Bapuji's health is satisfactory. It seems the doctors had unduly unnerved us because what they said here ran contrary to all the Madras Doctors' finding that there was no danger and no cause for worry. What he needs badly is complete rest, and rest is the one thing in his life he will never get. What is more, his own nature rebels against the very idea. What is to be done? Nowadays, just in order to have some peace, he observes silence from 9 in the morning to 3 in the afternoon. But during this period also he is engaged in writing and writing. For

the rest of the time he is surrounded by people who create an atmosphere in while they are there. But what is the use of writing all this to you? Have you not yourself joined Bapu's and Malaviyaji's class? Do you care for your own health?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

3

BIRLA HOUSE,  
PILANI,  
January 10, 1928

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

Jamnalalji has asked me as to how my recent donation of Rs. 75,000 is to be utilised. I leave the matter entirely at the discretion of Mahatmaji. If he is not very much pressed for money, I would suggest that preference should be given to such schemes which may accelerate the speed of attaining swaraj. Hindu-Muslim unity and up-lift of the untouchables are the two items which I think are at present very essential in the interest of the swaraj.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

4

January 14, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have received your telegram; also your letter. I am proceeding to Sind towards the end of the month in connection with the Lalaji Memorial. Have you made some collection in Calcutta?

Regarding the dairy, I had given you a Madrasi's name.

Have you written to him? In case you do not find him suitable I can suggest some other names.

About the Khadi Bhandar I would only ask you not to overlook its purpose. It has got to be conducted from the viewpoint of public good, and not from a purely commercial viewpoint.

My health is quite good. Nowadays my diet consists of 15 tolas of almond milk; 14 tolas of soaked bread, unboiled vegetable and tomatoes, 4 tolas of linseed oil and 2 tolas of wheat paste in the morning. Here I have given up taking fruit. I have gained 1½ lb. in weight in a week's time. I feel strength in body.

Yours,  
Mohandas

THE ASHRAM,  
February 7, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

It certainly causes anxiety, if there is no letter from you. Medicines have but to cause tiredness. I consider fasting as the preliminary cure. I never harbour any fears regarding this. Fasting can never do any harm. But the fast should be observed not for a day or two; it should rather last for 10 to 15 days. If you wish to fast you must come here to stay. You can invite one or two of those who have specialised in fasting and whom I know. There is plenty of accommodation here. The climate here is very good nowadays. In case you wish to send for the specialist from Pilani, that too, can be arranged.

I firmly believe that you should by no means go to Delhi. I am going to write to Pujya Malaviya and Lalaji both today. Regarding the Hakim Ajmal Khan Memorial I have issued an appeal in *Young India* and *Navajivan* and I would want your own contribution as well as your friends'. If you do not wish to give much then I would like to draw a substantial



amount from your gift of Rs. 75,000, of course with your consent. I will then leave the matter of publicizing your name entirely to you. In case you would not like me to touch that money for the purpose, please let me know without hesitation.

Please do not get frightened by what appears in the papers about my health. There is absolutely nothing to worry about. The doctors do try to terrify me, but I never worry.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

6

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
February 8, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

It is quite possible to make digestible preparation in oil. But it is just not practicable to make such experiments from a distance. For the time being fasting alone should be treated as a must and the best treatment. I have not the least doubt about it.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

7

SABARMATI ASHRAM,  
March 9, 1928

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am surprised that my long letter in reply to yours received some weeks ago from Pilani has not reached you. But I shall repeat the contents, though I trust the letter has by now reached you, being redirected from Pilani.

Well Bapu is making satisfactory progress. He himself saw that he should no longer refuse to take milk, he also saw the difficulty, almost insuperable, of building a dilapidated body on a no-milk experiment, and he had experience of some of the dangers of an exclusively nut and fruit diet. In fact at one stage he was convinced that in pursuing his experiment he would be confronted with the very same difficulties that he had tried to avoid by giving up milk. He, therefore, resumed milk about a week ago and is apparently feeling stronger. He does need tons and tons of rest however and I would thank any one in the world who would ensure that rest. But regarding your suggestion that he should spend the summer in one of the hill stations, he wanted me to tell you that he was averse to any proposal of more rest, that he would, if he could combine rest with work, and it was with that end in view that he had agreed to go to Singapur and Java where he expected to collect a couple of lakhs for khadi. Singapur visit is now out of the question, as the friend who was organising the visit now writes to say that the Indian merchants there are in a very bad plight because of the slump in the prices of rubber, and that the visit had better be postponed until a more favourable time arrived. He is now considering whether he could not pay a visit to Burma.

I am sounding some of the friends there and if they promise a good amount and want Bapu to go there, a brief Burma tour may be fixed up. If he goes to Burma he says he would go to Kalow—a Burmese hill station—and have a fortnight's rest there. He is also considering two invitations from Europe, one from the War Resist International Federation and another from the Youths Congress, the first to meet in Vienna and the second in Holland. Mr. Andrews favours the ideas and if it ultimately materializes, he may have a restful voyage both ways and have some wholesome change of occupation too—a thing that the doctors suggest for treatment of patients suffering from high blood pressure.

As regards your health he wanted me to say in the letter I wrote to you that you need not be anxious that you would put him to any extra worry. There were enough nurses here and he would simply supervise, but the invitation to come here was made on the assumption that you were ready to take up a fast-cure. Now that you are having long walks and taking sufficient nourish-

ment and fighting constipation successfully, there may be no need for fasting. His another suggestion was that you could stay in a place called Hajira, about 8 miles from Surat by boat—a place which had become famous for its digestive water. It is a little Hamlet on the mouth of the river Taptee and has one or two very fine wells with water which greatly helps digestion. Lots and lots of people have returned from that place, considerably improved and having shaken themselves quite free from constipation. It is a picturesque place and a most restful place besides and arrangements for your stay there could easily be made. Will you consider the suggestion?

As regards the Jamia Fund, Bapu was delighted that you liked the idea and that you would leave him free to decide how much to give. He would fall back on the amount in his possession and does not want anything more. He has not yet decided how much to give, nor whether it is to be given in your name. He would let you know as soon as he has made up his mind. It is most comforting to him to feel that he may always draw on you, and he will always try to deserve the trust you have reposed in him.

This is all that I wrote to you in Hindi in my last.

He was amused to read what you wrote about the English friends' criticism of his article. It will be long before he is fully understood even by his own countrymen, to say nothing of English and European friends.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev Desai

## 8

BIRLA HOUSE,  
DELHI,  
March 17, 1928

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I have not even now got the original letter which you sent to Pilani. I wonder how it was misled.

I still get distressing news about Gandhiji's health. I hope they are all exaggerated. I had a talk with Malaviyaji three days back and we both agreed that Mahatmaji should not go to the foreign countries. In the first place he will not get any benefit from any rest combined with business. Besides, we do not think he will get any rest if he went to the foreign countries partly on a business mission. His visit to those countries is bound to create a great interest among the people of those countries and the continuous stream of visitors can only cause a great strain on his health. He will have to deliver lectures and grant interviews to important persons. He may also decide to go to England and all this will do no good to his health. And heaven forbid if anything happens to him in the foreign countries people here will feel very much distressed. Therefore, I would strongly urge not to undertake a journey for any long distance, Burma of course is quite a different thing. But personally I would strongly advise him to give up all work and to take entire rest for two or three months. I do not know if my advice will have any effect on him particularly on the question of his health, but I want to put it before him for what it is worth.

I had a talk with Jamnalalji about the Jamia Millia Islamia. I had also paid a short visit to the institution. I have given my impression to Jamnalalji and I hope he will put them before Mahatmaji. The Institution as it exists at present could hardly be called a National Institution. There could be only two intentions in helping the institution. The first may be whether the institution is a national or communal, we ought to help it in order to gain sympathies of Mohammedans. The second may be to help it in order to convert it into a National Institution. If we are to help it with the first idea, we should not worry about its future constitution, but if we want to make it a National Institution then much has yet to be performed. At present it is much more a communal institution than a national one. I was disappointed not to find a single portrait of any of the Hindu leaders in it while the portraits of Anwar Pasha, Kamal Pasha were to be found on the walls of its Boarding House. The library was full of Arabic books. The name itself is an Arabic. Everywhere you smell nothing but Muslim culture. I would not mind if the education was imparted through the vernacular, but then this should not mean that 'Arabic and Persian

should find a greater encouragement than Sanskrit or Hindi. In the present atmosphere no Hindu student will like to receive education there. Of course, all these points should be considered if Gandhiji wants to convert it into a National Institution. But if he too wants help the institution in spite of its Muslim outlook, I think there may be some wisdom in that idea too. I am not writing these things to influence Mahatmaji in any way but I thought that he might like to have my impression about it. He may pay any sum which he decides as a suitable amount from all points of view.

Please write to me from time to time about Mahatmaji's health.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

• 9

BIRLA HOUSE,  
BENARES,  
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I had discussed the question of the boycott of the foreign cloth also with Pujya Malaviyaji and Nehruji (Motilalji Nehru). Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas and Sir Manmohandas Ramji also to some extent participated in the discussion. There may be difference of opinion between us over the degree of success expected to be achieved, but I have not the least doubt that this is the only weapon which we could under the present circumstances use with a hope of reasonable success. The boycott of the Commission will have no meaning if it was not followed by some action. Many schemes to make the boycott a success could be proposed but they are—most of them—fraught with danger. This is the only scheme which seems to me to be the most innocent and efficacious to some extent. We must, therefore, take it up even if only a partial success was expected. What does it

matter if we achieved only 4 or 8 annas success instead of 16 annas? But I would not base my programme on the scheme of co-operation from the mills. There is no doubt that a scheme involving an effective co-operation of the mill could be formulated, but under the present circumstances it would not be practicable. The leaders have not got sufficient power at their disposal. They are not in a position to guarantee that if the mill-owners agreed to spin and weave cloth only above a certain count the leaders would see that all the stocks of the mills would be sold at a reasonable profit. As a mill-owner, if I was guaranteed 5% depreciation and 8% dividend on my capital investment I would be quite satisfied I would not bother whether I had to spin 10<sup>s</sup> or 50<sup>s</sup>. But in the absence of any such guarantee from the leaders—and even if a guarantee was forthcoming it cannot be effective—it would be futile to talk seriously of the mills regulating their profit or production. Even if the mill-owners were patriots—and I know a section of them is so—they could not seriously enter into any agreement with a party which is not in a position to fulfil its own part of the contract. And besides this, even if they so desired, all the mills are not Indian-owned. I, therefore, think that for the time being we should leave aside the question of the mills' co-operation. We should, of course, accept financial help from them but that should be unconditional. Patriot mill-owner may readily subscribe towards the Swaraj Fund, but he will never honestly enter into any agreement when he very well knows the difficulties of the second party in fulfilling its own part of the contract. If the mill-owners suggest that they could enter into an agreement involving the regulation of price and profit, I would not believe them. If you had Swaraj Government then it would be a different position. But today they know your weakness and therefore, honestly they could not enter into any contract with you.

Now how to make the boycott of foreign cloth a success is too much for me to suggest. But in my opinion it is impossible to expect success by mere preaching if it was not combined with picketing. Picketing in past has created a bad blood and therefore, there would be persons who would hesitate to approve of such methods. But personally I do not see any wrong in picketing. It has got its good points inasmuch as it educates the masses. In picketing I include picketting against handling foreign

cloth by the labour in all its movements.

If you can strike any good plan involving co-operation of the mills, please send me a copy of it and I will send you my criticism thereon. I need hardly add that if you take up the matter under your direct leadership I will be prepared to put my financial quota at your disposal—of course not as a mill-owner.

There is another point on which I wish to say something. In your leading article in the *Young India* of the 5th April, you say that “they have bought mill khadi largely under the mistaken belief that it was genuine and that it had the imprimatur of the Congress.” You have not said this for the first time nor you are the first to say this. But do you not think that you are unnecessarily exaggerating the results of the khadi propaganda? There is no doubt that under your propaganda the taste of the people both of masses and classes has undergone a tremendous change and the people now do not feel ashamed to cover themselves with even the coarsest of the cloth. Yet I feel that it is not correct to say that the masses purchase mill-made khadi under the impression that it was *shuddha* khadi. You could find this out for yourself if you send your hawkers with mill-made as well as *shuddha* khadi who may ask some villagers to select their choice after explaining the latter properly about the quality as well as the price of the cloth. I have not the least doubt that if you made the experiment you will find that 90% of the consumer will pick up the cheaper and more lasting of the two stuffs. Mill khadi is popular because people find it cheap, durable besides it being swadeshi make.

I do not wish to minimise the effect of the swadeshi movement and its effect on the prosperity of the mills, but I would request you not to unduly magnify its results. It cannot be gain-said that the mill-owners have played no mean part in making their industry a successful one. Had they not been able to produce cloth at competitive cheap rates all the preaching in favour of swadeshi would have been in vain. Nobody would be prepared permanently to pay higher price for a commodity simply because it was made in India. Those who pay higher prices for *shuddha* khadi in comparison to the mill-produced khadi constitute only a very small portion of the population. A few educated and patriots alone can take such a penerous view, but the masses can only patronise swadeshi if it is found to be

cheaper. The price of a 40-yard piece of Indian lattha at present is much cheaper than the imported stuff and besides the swadeshi lattha is much more lasting. This is the main reason of the mills' success and I think it not unreasonable if they claimed that they have played a very important part in achieving their present position. The mill-owners have been criticised for charging exorbitant prices during the Non-co-operation days for their production. I think this charge too is not based on a correct reading of the situation. It was not due to the swadeshi feeling alone but much more due to the post-war boom which we had had in every country that the mills could exact extremely high prices for their production. Even the foreign cloth could fetch very high price in boom days. Supposing the mills would have charged very low price and would not have built up any reserve, who would support them today when they are passing through a severe depression? Besides we cannot ignore that it is due to the boom period that the mill industry has been able to make a very large extension resulting in a cut-throat competition of today which is helping the consumer in getting his requirements at a rock-bottom cheap price. I write this simply because I feel that we are a bit prejudiced against the mills. But this is only by the way. Please do not feel that I am prejudiced in favour of the mills. I will be ready to throw them in the sacrificial fire if ever I feel that by doing so I could help the cause of the country. I thought I must bring the points before you and my duty ends here.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshvamdas

## 10

April 27, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got both your letters. But even today there is not time enough for a full reply.

About Maganlal, what shall I write? I find it harder to beat



this loss than to drink the cup of poison, but God has most compassionate to me for I am calm.

What can we do about the until boycott the educated class is ready for it? One sees clearly enough now that it is useless to expect any thing from the mills.

I am happy to hear that your health is improving; the happiness is of course tinged with self-interest. How could I help it?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

## 11

May 12, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter. Jamnalalji is here I shall speak to him about exercise. He needs it.

Which of the Yogic *asanas* are you practising? My health may be said to be fair.

If it be possible to help Satis Babu, it is good to help him. He is so self-sacrificing and pure.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

## 12

May 18, 1928

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I enclose herewith three cuttings for your perusal. I wonder whether you have heard about the Bamangachi shooting affair. The Police fired on the strikers and killed, probably two or three men. The Union Secretary filed a suit against some of the Police Officers, and although they were all acquitted by Mr.

G.S. Dutt, the District Magistrate of Howrah, the latter in his judgment made a very strong comment on the behaviour of some of the European Officers concerned. This has very much enraged the Anglo-Indian papers, and these three cuttings are samples of the mentality of these people. The Police in order to create an impression must terrorise the people and if the Police is criticised by some of the Indian officers he must be bullied by the Anglo-Indian papers. The comment of Mr. Dutt against some of the European Police officers has created a great sensation. Lord Birkenhead has asked for the full report, and there is a strong feeling among the Europeans that Mr. Dutt must be sacked for performing this audacious act. I know Mr. Dutt personally. Being an Indian Magistrate probably he was being bullied by his subordinate officers, and when he found them taking unnecessarily drastic actions such as shooting of the people he probably could not tolerate their conduct and passed on these strictures. I do not know what will eventually happen to Mr. Dutt, but I think that at this stage he deserves support of all Nationalists. I wonder Gandhiji would like to put in a few words about him in *Young India*. In any case you will find these cuttings to be of great interest. They will give you the inner picture of the mentality of the non-official Englishmen here. I hope you are carrying on your battle with good hopes.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

Encl. *Englishman*, 15th May  
*Statesman*, 15th & 16th May

May 23, 1928

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

After the incident of Govind Bhawan, one finds the local vernacular papers and magazines full of dirty literature. It has become difficult for one to allow young boys and girls to read

such Hindi papers. Taking advantage of the present situation, some magazines have started even blackmailing people. For instance they would send word to some respectable family that they were going to write in the papers that their leaders used to attend *kirtan* in Govind Bhawan, and if the man threatened, did not care for such threats, false story about him would be circulated and published in some of the magazines. This is the situation. I send herewith a magazine by the name of *Hindu Punch*, and if you read the story on pages 13 to 16 you will see how the paper has tried to villify a girls school which is being conducted by some of us here. Of course, every word written in it is false. The sole object of the editor of the paper is to harm the institution. I have personally appealed through the press requesting the public to discourage such dirty literature, and I wonder whether it would not be advisable if Gandhiji put in a word or two in the *Navajivan*. I think this mentality of our young men requires more checking from all quarters.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

## 14

June 6, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter. I too hold that *asanas* are beneficial. But my experience is that specific knowledge is needed to choose the *asanas*.

It now seems that I shall remain in Ashram during August. Do come.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA PARK  
BALLYGUNGE  
CALCUTTA

15

BAREILLY,  
June 13, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Harbhai is a colleague of Nanabhai in Dakshinamurthy Bhawan. Nanabhai has fallen sick. We had had talk about this Vidyalaya at Wardha. I am sending him to you on the basis of that talk. You yourself were to decide about the matter of help to this institution. I have given Nanabhai word of good cheer on the strength of your talk with me. Now you will hear everything from Harbhai, glance over the account of the institution, and do what you think best.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

16

SABARMATI ASHRAM.  
June 18, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose with this two letters from friends in Austria. Both are most deserving. I consider it proper to invite them to India and make them acquainted with the country. For such purposes I do not like to make use of your donation. Bhai Jugalkishoreji takes interest in such matters. Please write to him if you think proper. They would need £ 200. In case you feel inclined to donate this amount, the amount will have to be sent promptly.

Your health, I believe, is good. Please go through the Ashram rules carefully and do send whatever suggestions you deem proper.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

GRAG,  
May 20, 1928

MOST VENERABLE MAHATMA,

Many many thanks for your kind letter of 26th April and for according permission to come to the beloved India.

Unfortunately it is impossible for us to come during the cold season because of my position as University Teacher and Assistant. My Chief Professor M. Pfciffer is suffering from some disease in the lungs and I must be always ready to stand in the place of him as to lectures and managing the laboratory-works.

Therefore, I must take leave during the long vacations and for one month or six weeks of the school-year's time. Also, while travelling entirely during the school-year. I shall have to provide for a substitute and to pay him whole the time, whilst using the long vacations for the greatest part of travelling. I need pay the substitute for the laboratory work for a month only and that comes to about 5£, i.e., half of my monthly salary. A substitute for the lectures is not at all available because the department of Universal and Experimental Pathology is only established on the three universities of Austria. But for the one month, say, November, my chief who is a great admirer of you, dearest Mahatma, will do without my lecturing although he may not be well and the lectures must be stopped for this short time. The second Assistant of our institute has not yet the qualifications or the "Venia legendi" being only in the beginning of his scientific works.

And the passage fare in the summer will be cheaper. Thus we will spend less in our travel to India. We are feeling always cold in our country also during summer's. We rather crave for the heat and are sure to endure the temperature during the months, September to November.

As we are permitted to make use of your great kindness, dearest Mahatma, to come to see India for some weeks, we could depart from Trieste on 31st August 1928 and arrive at Bombay on the 17th September (Navigation-Society 'Lloyd Triestino') or depart from Genoa on 17th August, 1928 and arrive at Bombay on 3rd September (Navigation-Society

‘Marittima Haliana’).

At the beginning of December I must be back at Graz because at this time my ailing chief will take leave for convalescing.

Regarding passports there should be no difficulty.

The passage fare (return-tickets) for two persons is 174£ second class. (Voyage to India during the ‘season’ beginning on 31st August, return from India during the ‘dead’ season).

We are told by the Navigation-Agency that the shortest way to send money is to pay the amount in the ‘Lloyds Bank Ltd.’, Bombay or in the Comptoir National d’Escompte de Paris, Bombay in the account of ‘Wiener Bankverein, Filiale Graz’, Austria.

For the smaller expenses as to preparations of travelling (prepaying the rent of our dwelling for three months, passport Visa-Fee, fare of crossing the Suez-Canal, etc.) my salaries which I will take in advance for two months and our little savings of the last months will be sufficient.

With the best wishes of a lasting good health. With the heartiest thanks once more.

*I remain,  
In deepest veneration and gratitude,  
for ever your obedient servant,  
Fred. Standenath*

## 18

SYRIA IN AUSTRIA,  
GRAZ,  
May 21, 1928

DEAREST MOST VENERABLE MAHATMA,

With greatest joy and heartiest thanks we have read your letter of the 28th April. We are very glad to know that you are in a good state of health. We are again happy to know about your intention to visit Europe next year. What a

good fortune will it be for Europe? Because the power of your word alone could bring Europe on the right track and protect it from the dark path on which it is treading now. We shall read attentively the article you have written in *Young India* which has a reference to your European travel as soon as we receive the magazine.

Once again our heartiest thanks for your kind permission to come to see India for some weeks with our own eyes. I cannot express with poor words how great is our joy to be able to see you, our beloved Mahatmaji, and your beautiful country and its people of submissive nature. As Fred. Standenath has already fully explained in his enclosed letter of yesterday we can depart, alas, only during the long University-vacations with addition of one month (November) of the study times. We only are sorry that the expenditure of our return tickets are so great, because it is not permitted to travel as steerage passengers.

Many thanks for your assurance to arrange for us the Visa of passports demanded by the English Vice-Consulate at Vienna. We are hoping that our arrival at Bombay on the 17th September is not more inopportune than in any later month. But as it would not be possible for us to come during the winter because of illness of Frederic's Chief Professor, we shall endure the hot season if only we can see you, most venerable Mahatma, and the dear India. We in fact want to enjoy heat in our cold country till the middle of May the morning temperature remains as high as the freezing point.

While writing this letter we just received the four issues of *Young India* (the May Issues). We have read with great mourning the report of the death of your good comrade and true co-worker (Maganlal). I pray with all my heart to God to give you the strength to endure this heavy loss. With great attention and interest we have read your article "To European Friends". But believe me, revered Mahatmaji, it is too modest of you to say to go to Europe only to see Mr. Romain Rolland and your other European friends. Though I highly esteem this extremely able European writer, I cannot help say the primary cause of your journey to Europe is your great message of love and truth you have to give to the West. Though in my rare moments of God's grace I can realise and imagine a smallest bit of your great modesty, though I regard you as the greatest man on the

earth being also the most oldest one, nevertheless I think the primary cause of your journey to Europe is to deliver your great message to the World. These are not mere empty words, but express my deepest conviction.

If God permits us to travel to India I shall tell you in brief, revered Mahatmaji, how I am being put to sufferings for the last few months by these strange people in lieu of my being an ardent worshipper of truth.

May God grant you a better health, this is the only prayer of mine for you and your nice co-workers. Once more, my dearest most revered Mahatma, I thank you many times and send message of heartiest feelings.

In deepest veneration I remain for ever,

*Yours very sincerely and gratefully,*

Francisia Standenath

19

ALMORA,  
June 22, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
ROYAL EXCHANGE  
CALCUTTA

CAN YOU SEND REPRESENTATIVE INVESTIGATE DAMAGED DONE BY  
FLOODS KARIMGUNJ ASSAM ?

GANDHI



July 2, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter and the *hundi* (bill of exchange) for Rs. 2700. I am in touch with China no doubt but I do not feel inclined to send them a cablegram. It would smack somewhat of arrogance. I certainly wish to visit China, if I live long enough. They want to invite me after the situation there is more normal.

I always shrink from asking for financial assistance from you and your brothers because I never return empty-handed. I understand what you say about Dakshinamurti. The fact is that there are plenty of worthy causes in the country but not so many donors. The progress of good work is, of course, not arrested, but new givers are not born every day. Meanwhile, fresh tasks are always mounting.

You are right in saying that the value of Ashram rules entirely depends on those who follow them.

I have sent the money to the Austrian friends.

Yours,  
Mohandas

July 16, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your loving letter. As a matter of fact, its language will restrain me from stretching my begging bowl. But a beggar is oblivious of such considerations. Therefore, when I have no alternative I shall be at your doorstep.

Some settlement in Bardoli appears to be in sight.

Yours,  
Mohandas

22

ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
July 20, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your two letters.

It does not matter if you have not sent anything for Bardoli. Much is pouring in. I shall certainly trouble you when I am hard up. A settlement<sup>o</sup> seems a remote possibility. It is all right if it comes about and none the worse if it does not. God himself is conducting the Civil Disobedience Movement. Vallabhbai is here at present.

I will write again on the boycott in *Navajivan*.

Yours,  
Mohandas

23

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE,  
CALCUTTA,  
July 25, 1928

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

My Pranams.

I am sending herewith a cutting from *The Statesman* dealing with the Bardoli struggle. The Statesman has, from the very beginning, leaned in favour of Bardoli, so its editorial acquires some significance. One would gather from the Governor's speech that the only issue at stake is whether the revenues are deposited before the Inquiry or after it. *The Statesman* is also of the view that the only stumbling block to a settlement is that the revenues would not reach the Treasury before an understanding. But in my view there are other, and major, issues involved leading up to the continuing differences. But if the only issue be the question of deposit of revenues, I for one would favour the idea of some independent individual making

the necessary deposits, This will help the Government save face and will also keep Vallabhbhai free from the tangle. But what I have gathered from your own articles dealing with this matter, is that there are other and major causes of the present dispute, such as restoration of the auctioned land, the cultivators, and payment of compensation to them, etc., etc.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the Government will assume an aggressive posture. Pujya Malaviyaji is also ready to respond to Vallabhbhai's invitation to visit Bardoli; this is what he said in his speech. The symptoms are wholly favourable.

It would seem you have come by this struggle quite effortlessly. This struggle is likely to be of great help in our work relating to the Simon Commission. Still, the struggle should be kept apart from the wider issue of the political struggle. Therefore, if a just settlement is a possibility and seems held up on account of secondary considerations, I would suggest some third party taking a hand in the matter.

I hope you are feeling quite well. If there is any service for me, please write.

*Humbly yours,*  
Ghanshyamdas

PUJYA MAHATMA GANDHIJI  
AHMEDABAD

24

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
August 29, 1928

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I enclose herewith an interesting letter. You must have already read Bapu's article in *Young India*—"Europe Goers Beware". The couple referred to in the article are the signatories of the enclosed letter and they are none other than those for whom Bapu requested Jugalkishoreji for a passage to and from India. Bapu first asked me to send a copy of their letter to

Jugalkishoreji but on second thoughts, he felt that you should also know the noble friends. Kindly pass on the enclosure to Jugalkishoreji.

Both Prof. Standenath and Mrs. Standenath shall arrive at Bombay on the 17th September.

*Yours,*  
Mahadev Desai

25

CALCUTTA,  
October 27, 1928

MY DEAR MAHADI BHAII,

I understand from the Education, Health and Lands Departments of the Government of India that the Right Honourable Mr. S. Sastri has suggested that we should invite to India this year a group of journalists from South Africa. The purpose of this invitation is to give them an idea of the cultural and other conditions of India and to impress them with our past civilisation so that they may help us in our cause in their own country. The estimated cost will be about Rs. 36,000 and if they are to be invited, it is proposed that it should be done during the forthcoming winter. I have been asked my views by the Government of India on the point. I do not know whether Gandhiji has already heard of the suggestion, but if not, kindly put it before him. The matter being very urgent I should like to have the reply, if possible by telegram.

I had written a letter to you from Simla and also one to Gandhiji from Calcutta. I hope both of them have reached their proper destination.

I hope to be at Wardha during Gandhiji's stay at that place. Meanwhile, I hope, Gandhiji and yourself are keeping quite good health.

With sincerest regards,

*Yours,*  
shyamdas

26

AHMEDABAD,  
October 30, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA PARK

MAHADEV BARDOLI. ON GENERAL GROUNDS INVITATION SOUTH  
AFRICAN JOURNALISTS ADVISABLE.

GANDHI

27

November 6, 1928

MAHATMA GANDHIJI  
SATYAGRAHASHRAM  
SABARMATI

PLEASE WRITE WHEN GOING WARDHA.

GHANSHYAMDAS

28

AHMEDABAD,  
November 22, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA PARK  
CALCUTTA

LEAVING FOR WARDHA TOMORROW MORNING. EXPECT YOUR AND  
MALAVIYAJI'S REPLY NOW WARDHA. IN VIEW THIS CALAMITY<sup>1</sup>  
WOULD LIKE YOU HASTEN YOUR COMING WARDHA IF AT ALL  
POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

<sup>1</sup>Death of Lala Lajpatrai

29

CALCUTTA,  
December 8, 1928

MY DEAR PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I have been for some time in communication with the Rev. Herbert Anderson whom you already know that he is the Hony. General Secretary of the Prohibition League of India. Mr. Anderson would soon be going out of India, and he wishes that his successor should be appointed even while he is here and should take over charge from him. It has been suggested that the person best fitted for the post is Shriyut C. Rajagopalachari, and it is felt that it would be a great service rendered to the cause of Prohibition if he could be induced to take up the work. The movement deserves all kind of support that can be lent to it. Should I hope that you would persuade Mr. Rajagopalachari to accept the Hony. Secretaryship of the League?

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

30

WARDHA,  
December 10, 1928

DEAR SIR,

The following is a copy of the telegram received from Pandit Malaviyaji addressed to Bapu:

WARDHA GANJ,  
December 12, 1928

I THINK EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO PERSUADE ALL PARTIS RAISING ONE MEMORIAL FUND FIVE LAKHS FOR LALAJI. IT WILL PROBABLY HELP SUCH UNITY IF WE DECLARE THAT AMOUNT COLLECTED WILL BE SPENT FIRST IN PUTTING SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE SOCIETY AND HOSPITAL WHICH LALAJI STARTED ON

SOUND FOOTING AND SECONDLY IN PROMOTING SWARAJ  
PROPAGANDA. IF YOU AGREE PLEASE TAKE NECESSARY STEPS.

MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

My feeling is that I sent you a copy of this telegram long ago. But as I began to doubt my memory, I am sending this copy now to be the safer side. Bapu wants to know your opinion on this telegram.

As already explained to you in person while you were talking with Bapu, I am awaiting list of names of donors for the Lalaji Memorial Fund. I have requested Sethji's office here as also our Ashram and the Young India office to send you the amounts with the list of donors received. Kindly arrange to get a consolidated list prepared in your office and arrange to send them here so that we may put the acknowledgement in *Young India*.

Bapu is taking fruits and almonds now for the last three days and he has put on 1 lb weight in two days.

I hope you are enjoying good health.

With kind regards.

*Yours sincerely,*

A. Subbiah

### 31

Tuesday, December 11, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter about Rajagopalachari. The suggestion is quite endearing, but it is difficult to say whether Rajaji's constitution will be able to stand the strain of this kind of work. Anyway I shall write to him.

How are you now?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

SJT GHANSHYAMDAS BIRJA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

32

Thursday, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter about Lalaji has arrived. I am happy to learn that the khadi work is progressing. In this connection I am enclosing a letter from Satis Babu for your perusal. It came only yesterday. You need not return it.

Yours,  
Mohandas

33

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,  
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),  
December 10, 1928

BAPU,

I have your letter of the 6th. The exhibition authorities have not communicated with me and I am not in the committee having resigned before I met you last in August. The committee was arranging to run a four square khaddar show and had finally decided that neither you nor the A.I.S.A would participate in it. Agents the of committee went about the country and secured non-Association khaddar from Bengal, Bihar, Andhra, etc. They arranged to run spinning shows also in the same way. That the A.I.S.A. is coming now is something additional and, therefore, the old arrangement continues.

I met Mahabirprasadji yesterday before I received your letter and learnt from him about the shop. I place before you my thoughts on pooling.

1. POOLING FOR REDUCING PRICE

If it is intended to reduce the price of the khaddar of any province then it may be done by mixing with local khadi the cheaper khadi of other provinces. But the pooler in this case



is to guarantee the sale of all the production of the Province in which the pooler operates. Unless this is done, if some of the local khadi only is sold cheaper at the particular shop of the pooler while other shops have to sell local products at a higher rate than the market will be disturbed and thus hamper development of khadi work of the Province. As however a small beginning is contemplated then this class of pooling for lowering the price of the Province in which the operator works is out of question.

## 2. POOLING FOR THE DISPOSAL OF THE SURPLUS OF LOCAL AND OUTSIDE KHADI

The pooler in this instance wants to dispose of as much as possible without disturbing the local market. Pooling can be applied here by keeping the local prices as the standard and buying some dearer and some cheaper khadi from outside and selling them at the local standard price along with the local khadi. For example if the pooler operates at Calcutta wanting to help the disposal of the local khaddar as also pool for disposal of khaddar of other provinces then he may buy some dearer Utkal khaddar and cheaper Bihar or Ajmer or Tamilnad khaddar and sell them along with Bengal khaddar at standard Bengal prices.

## 3. INJURIOUS POOLING THROUGH A CENTRAL SHOP

• Injurious pooling is pooling in a producing Province without taking the responsibility for the disposal of its whole output. For example, Mr. Jerajani may buy the best khaddar from all over India, pool the prices and sell at a standard price at Bombay. This is harmless in Bombay where there is no local khadi. But if such a store is opened at Calcutta, which at present is a market for local products only, then it will adversely affect the local producing organisations and instead of developing will hamper local work.

In my opinion the middle policy No. 11 is the only policy for a store to be opened at Calcutta which you and Birlaji may foster.

The task is a difficult one. It is difficult to resist the ten-

dency developing in such stores buying fine and fancy goods and also cheap goods from all over India. The demand for fine goods again is more than their production resulting in the production of spurious khaddar in Andhra and in Kotki in Bihar. A further demand on these articles at Calcutta would not be healthy. Birlaji may have a Committee to counteract such tendency in the management of the shop.

I am glad to learn that you will be arriving on the 23rd and putting up with Jamnalalji.

*My Pranams,*  
Satis



**1929.**



# 1

CALCUTTA,  
January 2, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Dr. Bhasker Patel, M.D. (Germany), is a great friend of mine whom I should have liked to introduce to you in person. But I was busy and he hesitated until the last moment. I now see that I have no time to take him to your place.

He wants to have a talk with you about the sanatorium you are proposing to start. As for myself I know nothing about it, but if you need the services of a capable and a highly qualified doctor for one thing or another, I venture to say that it may be difficult for you to hit upon a better choice.

He has had experience of work in several hospitals in Germany and was House Physician of the Tropical Medical Hospital, Hamburg, and assistant physician of the Sanatorium of St. Blasien on the boundary of Blank Forest.

We have been friends for the last ten years and I suppose as regards his character and suitable qualifications he need have no better recommendation.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

# 2

CALCUTTA,  
January 5, 1929

MAHATMA GANDHIJI  
SATYAGRAHASHRAM, SABARMATI  
AHMEDABAD

MALAVIYAJI APPROVES LALAJI MEMORIAL FUND DRAFT. ANSARI  
NOT HERF. I AGREE.

GHANSHYAMDAS

CALCUTTA,  
January 7, 1929

PUJYA GANDHIJI,

Jagannathji has sent me a statement which I return to you. Malaviyaji agrees with its contents except that he does not like the idea that purushottamdasji should be persuaded to join the Society. He was very anxious about his family and he did not like that he should make further sacrifice. However, that has got nothing to do with the Appeal and therefore, the statement could go in the press as drafted by you. Mr. Ansari was not here and therefore, he could not be consulted.

There is a big demand for khadi and we are selling every day khadi worth Rs. 300. The difficulty is about the supplies. Customers would not purchase any other kind of khadi when they want a particular kind of khadi which is difficult to get. Even then Mahabir Prasadji is doing utmost in this direction. He is keeping in close touch with me and I am supervising his work though not going into details.

I am very hopeful about the future of Khadi Bhandar. I shall not be surprised if in a year or two we sell in Calcutta khadi worth 2 to 3 lakhs of rupees.

As regards the Dairy Farm the work on it is not at all progressing. The difficulty so far experienced is about the purchase of a suitable site for it, but I hope that in a month or two I shall be able to get a good site and then we shall start the work on a regular footing. Both the works will progress rather with a slow pace for the next few months as I am going out of Calcutta to attend the Assembly Session. I hope, however this will not dampen the market.

I am anxiously awaiting the results of your experiment with almond milk. I hope you are keeping good health.

With sincerest *pranams*,

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

4

SITANAGARAM,  
May 8, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Could you please get a reputed certified auditor to audit the account books of the Bengal P.C.C?

I enclose herewith the letter received from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

Encl. 1

SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

5

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE,  
FIFTY-TWO HEWETT ROAD,  
ALLAHABAD,  
April 5, 1929\*

MAHATMA GANDHI  
C/O ANDHRA P.C.C.  
7 THAMBHU CHETTY STREET  
G.T., MADRAS

DEAR SIR,

May I remind you that you were good enough to promise to inspect the Utkal, Andhra and Tamilnad P.C.Cs.? I have already made arrangements with the A.I.S.A. auditor to audit accounts of Andhra and Tamilnad but no arrangements have been made so far for Utkal. I shall be glad if you will kindly arrange with someone to have their accounts also audited.

May I also remind you that the Bengal Congress Com-



mittee accounts have also to be audited? You were good enough to say that you would arrange this.

*Yours sincerely,*  
J. Nehru  
General Secretary

6

CALCUTTA,  
May 10, 1929

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I have got your letter. There are two reputed firms of Indian Auditors—M/s S.R. Batliboi & Co. and M/s Batliboi & Purohit. I can get either of them to the work, and though I can secure their honorary services also, it will be better in my opinion to engage them for a fee, even though a nominal one, for doing the work seriously enough. I await your instructions.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

7

May 11, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter regarding the Lalaji Memorial. Lala Jaswant Rai's contribution will, of course, be used for the Hall. I think I should send to the Society all the money received in this connection. There is nothing more to write on the matter.

At present I am making a dietetic experiment. Since the experiment is only two or three days old, I am not in a position to say anything about it as yet. But a gentleman who has been

here told me that this experiment is usually very successful. The secret lies in taking only uncooked food.

I got the letter from Sitaramji. I have replied to it.

Yours,  
Mohandas

8

May 28, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

What *Forward* wrote had nothing to do with my article. The punishment inflicted on *Forward* is cruel and satanic, there is no doubt about it. That *Forward* has shown a great deal of courage is a fact I cannot deny.

My experimentation with raw food-grains continues. I shall leave Sabarmati Ashram on the 11th of June.

Yours,  
Mohandas

9

UDOG MANDIR,  
SABARMATI,  
June 2, 1929

• BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I understand about *Forward*. There will always be attacks, on public figures but we have to weigh things in the scales of justice. Subhas's courage was exemplary.

Yours,  
Mohandas

10

June 3, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. It is true that I have grown weaker, but that has not caused any visible harm to the body. My experiments are being conducted with due caution; rest assured on that score. Such experiments form part of my life and I consider them necessary for my inner peace, for my self-enlightenment. I want to keep alive within the limits I have specified for myself. At the same time I believe that life and death are things beyond our control.

I am happy to know what you say about Keshu. His father took great pains over him and we all hope to get much service from him. I do not wish to arrest his freedom in any way. Since he is with you, I feel relieved.

Yours,  
Mohandas

11

*Unrevised*

THE ASHRAM,  
June 30, 1929

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your three letters are before me.

I would have no right to remain in the midst of this sublimely beautiful, secluded spot surrounded by snow-clad mountain-peaks, if I had no special work to do here. But this I have. The revision of the translation of the *Gita* had remained unfinished at Wardha. I could complete it in a secluded place like this. So I set down with the set purpose of completing the half finished work, postponing all other kind of activity as long as possible. This explains why I have not replied to you earlier.

Now the work on the *Gita* is over.

Now about Keshu. Both his father's hope as well as mine has been that Keshu will ultimately prefer life in the Ashram and dedicate himself to the khadi work. But I would not like to exert any pressure on him. For the present he has been entrusted to your care in order to ensure his well-being. Please acclimatize him to all kinds of work just to toughen him up. Please treat him as your ward and prepare him for future tasks.

You have so far trained many young men, and I have been told and I believe that many enterprises of the Birla family were started by you.

What should I say about khadi? When an occasion arose for the employment of your acumen the entire stock had been cleared. Still, it has got to accumulate again. Then I will put your energy to use. Let the shop trudge along for the present. I hope the khadi being "unasked for" does not mean I sent it without permission. As for production, it is true that here I cannot make much use of your assistance. Every effort is being made to achieve the end.

What happened about the dairy?

I have not fasted. Ever since I have begun to regard Death as my closest friend I have given up fasting on account of possible death. Even at the time of Magan's and Rasik's deaths I refrained from going on a fast. Now Death has ceased to hurt or, say, it hurts very little.

My experiment with uncooked food continues.

The meaning of 'faddist' (eccentric) can be understood as 'dhuni' in Gujarati. I am unfamiliar with the word 'sanaki'. 'Chakram' of course will not do.

At present I am trying to write for *Hindi Navajivan* every week. If you have not noticed, then look for my contributions and give me your suggestions about the subject-matter and language.

Yours,  
Mohandas

I am reaching Delhi on the 5th of July and the Ashram on the 6th.

12

August 17, 1929

SECRETARY TO GANDHIJI  
SABARMATI  
AHMEDABAD

MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT GANDHIJI'S HEALTH. WIRE FULL DETAILS. PLEASE PERSUADE HIM TO KEEP ENTIRELY ON MILK DIET FOR A FEW DAYS ENABLING HIM TO REGAIN HIS LOST WEIGHT.

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

13

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE,  
CALCUTTA,  
August 17, 1929

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I am very much distressed to learn the news of Gandhiji's health from this morning's papers. I feared the crisis long ago and even warned Gandhiji in the very beginning, but as you know, he is hopelessly obstinate at times and so impossible to deal with. I have got nothing to say against uncooked food, but I maintained that Gandhiji's constitution was the most unsuitable one for any wild experiment. However, I am glad that he has given it up. I would strongly recommend him now to remain on a purely milk and fruit diet for at least two or three months. I myself was consistently losing weight recently and so I kept for two months on milk according to Mcfadden's system. I used to drink in all about 5 to 6 seers a day with the result that I gained about 14 lb within 2 months. This method has been tried by a few other friends of mine with excellent results. I would, therefore, ask you to persuade Gandhiji to

live on milk for a few weeks. Please also write to me from time to time about his health. I hope he is improving now.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEV DESAI  
SABARMATI ASHRAM  
AHMEDABAD

14

AHMEDABAD,  
August 17, 1929

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE  
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIFE. SLIGHT ATTACK DYSENTERY. CERTAINLY VERY  
WEAK BUT BEST DOCTOR ADVISING, NO CAUSE ANXIETY. SHALL  
TAKE GOAT'S MILK WHEN BECOMES IMPERATIVE. UNCOOKED  
STOPPED SINCE THURSDAY.

GANDHI

15

SABARMATI,  
August 19, 1929

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE  
CALCUTTA

COMMENCED CURDS YESTERDAY. NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

16

August 23, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. You need not bother about me. People fall sick even when they take regular diet. If I fall sick while in search of truth, does it matter much? I am now taking plenty of curds, but I would like to tell you that milk and curds are efficacious only to a limited extent. They are not man's natural items of diet. I have heard the same set of arguments you advance in support of milk favouring the taking of beef-tea and wine, inasmuch as all of them do prove beneficial to bodily health for a limited period. The abatement of carnal desires experienced by so many people while taking raw cereals is not the result of starvation. During the four years when I was on fruit diet I used to walk forty miles daily and enjoyed the same mental peace. But I have no wish to dilate on this subject. My experiments leave only a limited scope for bodily considerations. Of course, I will not go back to my experimentation with uncooked food in haste, and will not give up milk diet in a hurry, too, but quite a few doctors are now taking an interest in it, and many of them have sent me literature dealing with this subject. If I do repeat my experiment I shall now do so under Dr. Haribhai's supervision.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

17

August 26, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

What have you done about the auditing of the Bengal Congress Committee accounts?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA COTTON SPINNING &  
WEAVING MILLS LTD.  
SABZIMANDI, DELHI

18

“SNOWVIEW”,  
SIMLA,  
September 2, 1929

MY DEAR PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

Your Postcard of the 26th ultimo was directed to me from Calcutta. I arrived at Simla yestermorning to attend the Assembly Session. There seems to be some misunderstanding about the audit of the Bengal Congress Committee which you refer to in your postcard. I do not think you ever gave me definite instructions about the audit. I remember having a discussion with you and I think I told you that I could get the audit done by one of my auditors, if necessary, without any fees, but I do not remember you having instructed me definitely to get the work done. I am generally very careful about the instructions which I receive and I should be very much surprised to find if in this case I neglected the work. In any case please let me know if I have to take up this work now so that I can write to the auditor immediately. Please also write to me whom the auditor should approach for the purpose.

*Yours,*  
Ghanshyamasdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHI  
SABARMATI

19

AGRA,  
September 12, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I was in receipt of your letter of September 2. I am under the impression that during my Andhra tour I had written to you about getting the Bengal Congress Committee accounts audited. I hope the inspection work by your auditors will be undertaken. Please write to the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee. I am writing to him myself today.



I could snatch sufficient respite here. The health is good. Living on goat's milk, curds and fruit; can take bread, but have not yet tried it. If we two could manage to find time to sit together for some time, as we did during the last rainy season. We could discuss in peace what to eat and what to drink, and I should be able to acquaint myself with your own views on the subject. It is one thing to abstain from ideal food and drink due to physical weakness or just plain incapacity; to grasp its significance is quite another. Our sages have successfully laboured on the question of ideal food and drinks" theoretically, but I am not aware of their having laid down definite rule in the course of these three ages; nor is my intelligence ready to accept that any such indisputable conclusions were ever arrived at. All the same, I admit defeat in my experimentation this time, and so for the time being this matter ceases to be of any use for immediate application.

I hope you are enjoying normal health. Mahadevlalji had written a letter to me in July last, and, on finding that certain charges had been levelled against you, I had pointed out its unworthiness to him and sought his permission to forward the same to you. Its unworthiness consisted in its writer's failure to broach the subject to you before penning it. He responded by giving me permission to forward the letter to you. Then I went out on tour and the letter remained unattended. In the mean time Mahadevlal visited the Ashram. At present he is making a tour in the company of Jamnalalji. He appears to be selfless. I am sending his letter to you. Read it if you find time, and send an answer only when you are free of other preoccupations. When sending your reply, please return Mahadevlal's letter.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

20

AZAMGARH,  
October 3, 1929

DEAR BASANT KUMAR,

I was very happy to have your letter and the yarn. For you the yarn should be considered a good enough. Now that you have started spinning, my message is that you should continue with it while keeping *Daridranarayana*, i.e., our poverty stricken brethren in mind.

*Blessings from*  
Mohandas

21

October 1929

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

My Pranams. Mahadevlal's letter sent by you has arrived. I knew what was passing in his mind. I called him childish because he not only did not mention these things to me, he even gave expression to his feeling of respect for me while in my presence. He got me to write a letter of recommendation for a distinguished person in Madras, telling me that he wanted employment. I gave him the letter of recommendation even though I knew that he had been speaking ill of me to others, while pretending to respect me in front of me. But I have invariably helped him. It is not a fact that he left the mill out of disgust. He wrote to me and also told me verbally that, being essentially a chemist, he would like me to create an opening for him in the mills as a chemist, i.e., set up a laboratory there. I told him that that was not possible, so he left the mill. At least that was what he told me himself. I called him irresponsible because out of pure motives he wrote an article in a paper criticising some widower for marrying again. The articles contained many untruths. I do not understand why he should apologize to me. He has done me no harm. I regard him as

childish even now, and I have found him to be lacking in a sense of responsibility. I feel disappointed in him.

What he has said about the mills contains an element of truth in certain respects, but his conclusions are wrong. It is not true that I have spread a net or that I beguile people. I have not cultivated that habit. According to my own judgment of myself, you may decide for yourself about me. I have 4 mills. In two of them I have the sort of managers who do their work in keeping with their understanding of my preferences, as in Gwalior and Delhi. The Gwalior Mill Jámnalalji also has visited himself and I have heard people say that he appreciated the adequacy of arrangements for providing living quarters for the workers. Hari Bhauji is equally familiar with the condition obtaining in the Gwalior and Delhi mills. The Marwari manager of the Jute mills is liberal in outlook and wears khaddar. He is, however, a shade eccentric. Just a matter of difference in our respective outlooks. The matter of obtaining greater production was broached before you when I was at Wardha. I discontinued the practice a number of times, but because of the manager's non-co-operation, more work continued both with and without my knowledge. One of the compelling reasons for this was the workers' insistence on more work whenever we decided to reduce the tempo which in turn, tended to a lay-off of the workers. The present position is that only last month I called a workers' meeting when it was decided to fix the hours of work to 60 hours a week. Their wages have been increased by 8%, i.e., more than in any other mill in Calcutta.

As for providing the workers with living quarters, I was opposed to the idea from the very beginning on the ground that life in the villages was preferable to barrack life. This was the right approach at the initial stages when the mill was rather small. Now that it has expanded my own thinking, too, has undergone a change, with the result that at present we are soon to have 700 quarters measuring 12' x 9' each, with a verandah and a kitchen for each. The construction work is well-nigh complete. A large septic tank is now ready for use. Arrangements are being made for fitting every living room with a separate latrine in a course of three months. We sank 5 tube wells, but all of these yielded alkaline water, so for the time being a pond is serving the purpose. The water is clean, but my scheme

aims at some more satisfactory arrangement. A large-size filter may be fitted up soon. I would suggest your calling a meeting of the workers and officers to ascertain if they like me, and, if so, how much. It is not true that children are employed in violation of the Factory Act. All this is by way of placing the correct situation before you. I do not think I have so far striven to prove myself a generous mill-owner in respect of any of my mills, though I would like to do so. This year the jute mills will spend Rs. 5 lacks in the construction of providing the workers with living quarters alone. But I write this just for your knowledge, not in self-defence. What purpose will I achieve by entering into self-defence? Why should I defend myself at all? Even if my plea for self-defence leaves Mahadevlal satisfied, what will be my gain in concrete terms? But I must tell you one thing; it may be that I should fail to act in the best interests of the workers through stupidity or error of judgment, or under bluff, but I don't think I have ever wronged the workers through sheer cussedness. I do not think it necessary to reassure you on this point. When you again visit Calcutta, I intend to take you round my mills. It was natural for Mahadevlal to write all this, because he never cared to know me. Please ask any other question that occurs to you in this regard.

I have given necessary instructions about auditing the Congress Working Committee accounts. I do not know Mahadevlal's address. Kindly send this letter to him. I am reaching Bombay on October the 4th, returning here in December. In case you are at Ashram, I would like to stay with you for a few days.

Last year when Mahadevbhai had written to you praising me so much my own comment was that he was taken in. This time another Mahadevlal hurled abuses at me. He is equally deceived. But I know myself quite well. What can I do except laugh at people's estimation of me. Still, Mahadevlal's letter is more beneficial than Mahadevbhai's in that it makes me aware of myself.

*Humbly yours,*  
Ghanshyamdas

PILANI,  
November 11, 1929

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

My Pranams. I am on a short visit here. After a stay of a week or so, I will come.

You might have seen the debate in Parliament as also in the House of Lords. In my view, the speech of Wedgewood Benn was not bad, taking into consideration the prevailing circumstances. Unless their honesty is suspect in our eyes, they could not have said more than this, in view of their own difficulties. Benn himself said in so many words that there has been a change of spirit. In my opinion it was a good omen that no voice of protest was raised against the Leader's statement. Repeated attempts on the part of Lloyd George failed to persuade Benn to add to what he had already said. Working on the adage of silence meaning half consent, we should draw the inference that all this was served to strengthen our own position. The viceroy as well as Mr. Benn want to help us honestly enough, but I for one am not prepared to assume that we are going to have full Dominion Status. I believe that if we want there, we should be deriving the maximum amount of benefit. The Government there would not let you return home in a disgruntled mood. It is quite possible we would get everything, except, of course, the army. On the other hand, if we failed to go there the situation would deteriorate, as I can see things. It was this concern that led me to write to you. It is my unsolicited opinion, placed before you in all humility, that you should take the helm in order to give the right direction to the situation. I have never taken the liberty of making any suggestion in political matters, but the circumstances left me with no option. You know better than I do about the country's weakness along with its strength, but at times all this makes me feel despondent and it seems to me that if we are going to reap the fruits of your Herculean labour—not our strength—we should get ready to do so. If we get full Dominion Status you would readily accept it, though I do not hope we would get it. The most we can honourably hope for at this juncture, and that only through your co-operation, is the thing itself minus the

army. I am sanguine about that much. But they will leave that to the Conference. They will neither say that the stage for full Dominion Status has not yet been reached, nor that we would be having it soon enough. But my understanding is that we are not going to get full Dominion Status now. But even then we could do many things with what we would get securing the rest in 5-10 years. This will also make an impact on our left-wingers. Thus we stand to gain from both sides. The sum and substance of my submission is that your meeting with the British Cabinet will be highly beneficial to us. We should, therefore, not allow this opportunity to slip through our fingers, even if the Conference fails ultimately. I have only aired my opinion. You will, of course, do what you deem to be the best. I was only haunted by the apprehension that you might decline to participate in the Conference and refuse to accept so little. After you left I met the Viceroy at the dinner and while talking with him the following points emerged:

1. He will hesitate to release the prisoners, but order their release in the end;
2. the Conference will be organised in consultation with the leaders, yourself included;
3. the Conference will take place by July 1930;
4. it would be difficult to concede full Dominion Status.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

AMARU,  
November 12, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I feel regret to write to you since I have failed to write to you for such a long time, though your letters reached me regularly.

Since we are going to meet at Wardha, I do not feel inclined to write much.

I had sent a wire in connection with an invitation to the South African Journalists.

The calf-and-monkey episode has caused me pain, but it has given me an opportunity to understand man's nature and to keep anger under control.

Mahadev told me many things about you. I felt happy. I already knew much of what he told me.

I intend to reach Wardha on the 25th.

More when we meet.

Jamnalalji is leaving for Bombay today. Mahadev is staying at Bardoli nowadays. He has come here for three days.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

CALCUTTA,  
December 11, 1929

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

Satisbabu has sent to me a copy of the letter which he has addressed to you about the opening of the Khadi Bhandar here. I remember I told you at Wardha what attitude I thought Satisbabu would take about the pooling of production of the different centres. I shall have further discussion with you about the matter when you come here. But the plan as visualised by you as regards pooling does not seem to be very scientific. I entirely agree with you that we should standardise the price of khadi at all centres, but pooling does not seem to me to be the best method. What I would suggest is that we should have a small committee on the model of the Tariff Board. The function of the committee should be to recommend protection in the shape of bounty to those khadi producers where the cost is comparatively higher. The committee on receiving application for protection from a particular centre could go into its manu-

facturing cost and after examining every detail may recommend to the Charkha Sangh protection for a period as necessary. On the recommendation of the Board, Charkha Sangh may grant bounty on different qualities on the basis of the yardage or weight. It can thus enable the recipients of bounty to sell their production at a standard price. At present this seems to me to be the only scientific method by which we could standardise the khadi, but if I strike on any other alternate, I shall submit the same to you when you come to Calcutta.

I quite appreciate the feelings of Satisbabu. Any opening of new Bhandar here should benefit rather than injure the interests of the local centres.

But neither the pooling system nor any other system at present can meet their requirements. The question may arise about the finance if we accepted the principle of bounty. But that must be arranged. In any case, I am proceeding with my plans of opening a new Bhandar. I do not want that the activities of any selling centre should be crippled by it being ordained that they shall sell this and not that. This can only retard the growth of a business concern.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

25

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE,  
CALCUTTA,  
December 18, 1929

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

I am enclosing herewith the audited accounts of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee as desired by you. The comments made by the Auditors in the covering letter do not reflect any credit on the authorities responsible for the management. The amount involved, however, is not very large and the negligence may be attributed to the ignorance of the manage-



ment about the correct method of book-keeping. Please let me know, however, if you want me to take any further action in this direction.

I wrote two letters, one to Mr. Shah and the other to Mr. Subedar about the foreign debt. Mr. Shah has promised to send me a note but, has asked me to read his book *Sixty Years of Indian Finance*, which he says deals at length with the question. I have just glanced through the chapters dealing with this subject but I do not find them to be of much use. Mr. Subedar has written to me adding nothing to my knowledge, but I am enclosing his original letter for your information. I am quite convinced in my mind that my reasoning is quite correct but that I should elaborate the points as desired by you.

It is not altogether possible to produce convincing proof of the fact that there has been no increase in the national wealth since 1900. All I can do is to produce figures of real national wealth and real income per capita, which does not show any increase because of a big rise in the general level of prices.

How far, however, this can be attributed to the foreign borrowing is a very doubtful problem. It could decidedly be attributed to the system of our government but that is quite a different question. I happened to read after I left you two articles in the *Young India* written by Kumarappa. I was not very much impressed by them because they are compilations of quotations from different books.

I am quite well now and hope you are keeping fit.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHI

**1930**



# 1

THE ASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
January 9, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Both Devdas and Radhabehn write that Keshu is receiving loving attention from you all. Need I say more? The treatment is also in keeping with my own wishes. To say more about this matter would be simply discourteous. I am relieved of all anxiety.

The Lahore resolutions are very much to my liking. What is happening just now has further served to confirm my opinion. Please read what I have said in *Young India* and let me have your comments on it. You have every right to express your views and offer advice.

Yours,  
Mohandas

# 2

January 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of both of your letters. The pressure of work just now is so great that I am not finding time to answer letters. I shall let you have my reaction after going through your speech. I also had a talk with Malaviyaji Maharaj. Much would be achieved if he persuaded those belonging to the other parties to practise restraint. Make every effort to bring this about.

We shall discuss your inclination when we meet.

I am completely free from anxiety about Keshu.

Yours,  
Mohandas

3

February 28, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have reproduced your speech at length. What is done is for the good. By now I have practised my "gift" well. I quite see now that they have got nothing by way of response. They are only taking advantage of our ignorance and cowardice.

The sooner the Assembly dissolves the better. I have little hope of remaining out of prison by the end of March.

May I ask you a question? During Keshu's illness his mother was at his bed-side; so were Radhabehn and Devdas. Please tell me what you think of them. And how did Keshu himself behave during his illness?

Yours,  
Mohandas

4

April 10, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I was filled with joy on learning of the news of your resignation.<sup>1</sup> I am dictating this at 2 in the night. My colleagues have brought the news that they are going to take me away today.

Jamnalalji is already in jail. I am sure you will do all you can to promote the cause of salt struggle, prohibition, and boycott of foreign cloth.

If Pujya Malaviyaji remains determined about this issue that would be of much help.

Words cannot give you an idea of the extent or the intensity of the awakening witnessed in Gujarat just now. Only God knows what is in the womb of the future.

<sup>1</sup>This refers to my resignation from my seat in the Central Assembly.  
—G.D.B.

I can quite visualise the result of these whole-sale arrests. Everything is happening according to our expectations.

What more is there to write?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

JABALPUR,  
April 28, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDASJI,

I have your letter. I know your love for khadi. Therefore I feel shy of commenting on your scheme. But this much I must tell you that the scheme is not workable because the mill-owners will not give up their interests.

Government help is needed in many things. It will not be available for boycott of foreign cloth.\*

If the boycott can be successfully implemented by the efforts of the mill-owners only, khadi need have no place in it.

But I am convinced that the boycott will be successful only through khadi.

This, however, does not mean that the mills have no place in the scheme at all. The mills can have their deserved place by recognizing the worth of khadi. The conception of God envelops all Gods. According to the doctrine that various individual duties are included in God, we destroy them by worshipping them separately because they have no independent existence, and we do not reach God either.

This being so, the well-being of the mills as well as the success of foreign-cloth boycott depend upon developing the people's taste for khadi and increasing its production. *Verb Sap.*

I hope you will not find it difficult to decipher my handwriting.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

Time will heal Jamnalalji. His distress will not last long.

CALCUTTA,  
April 28, 1930

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,  
My Pranams.

I want to convey many things to you through this letter. It seems I am not destined to see you for quite some time. But in case you do remain out of prison I will see you towards the end of May as a matter of course. Haribhauji will apprise you of the situation prevailing in Calcutta. The police is subjecting the people to barbarous attacks. Innocent passers-by are belaboured in lanes and by-lanes. It seems this beating up of people has been adopted as a matter of settled policy, to be pursued throughout the country, as similar news is pouring in from different parts of the country. But I learn that these bodily assaults have failed to dampen public enthusiasm. This demonstration of public spirit is something to rejoice about.

Pujya Malaviyaji has arrived. He is quite frail and I have doubts if he will be able to work much. I feel amazed at the amount of work he is already putting in. Haribhauji might have told you about my views and also Malaviyaji's line of thinking in regard to the boycott of foreign cloth.

Though I do not accept many of your arguments, there is no difference of opinion in regard to the judgment. That is why I have counselled Panditji to lay special stress on the boycott of foreign cloth, and on khadi. Mill-cloth will find its own market. But if you are working on the assumption that by virtue of the present movement mill cloth will derive little help from boycott, your assumption is wrong. It is the mill-cloth that will sell more. People will take to khadi more and more, it is true, but mill cloth will have a brisker sale. I know mill-cloth is capable of replacing foreign cloth. But your assumption is different.

If we leave alone the appearance of handloom cloth on the stage, our mill-cloth has a consumption of 3600 million yards. Our mills can produce 2700 million yards. As quite a number of mills remain closed at present, we cannot turn out more than 2400 million yards. We can produce more by working double shift. Imports amount to 1900 million yards. If we are able to

reduce this by 1000 million yards with the help of cess and propaganda, we should consider it a success. But this leaves us with the 2700 million yards produced by our mills and 900 million yards available through imports; it comes to a total of 3600 million yards which is about all we can consume. If we so desire we can produce more through double shift.

What I mean to say is that there is sufficient cloth available in the country and we can produce even more. The difficulty is about the paucity of buyers for more cloth. The mills have enough cloth in stock. Therefore what I say is that the fear that because of the movement the price level would be raised artificially is wholly unfounded. The prices would be, and should be, raised inasmuch as the mills are running at a loss at present. But I do not hope that the mills will be able to earn more than 5% as depreciation and 8% on their capital investments in the future. All this, however, is just to spell out my difference from your line of argument. It is for you to arrive at a final judgment.

I would like the setting up of an independent board to deal with problems relating to mill-cloth, the mill-owners themselves directing its functioning. I will soon submit a scheme dealing with this matter. We will make provisions for the treatment of such questions as profits and control. We are also thinking of levying cess on the handlooms. But this will be possible only after talks with Ambalalbai and others. The rest of the work relating to mill-cloth, of course, be conducted through the mill-owners.

I have urged Malaviyaji to lay special stress on khadi. And for this I am thinking of opening a centre in order to educate myself about khadi from the commercial point of view. I have asked Haribhauji to give me some workers. I intend setting up the first of a series of such centres at Pilani. Therefore, the scope could be expanded in the light of knowledge thus gained.

• As regards picketing, I hold view similar to yours. But in this respect also I would like to make a distinction about such areas where picketing is not likely to succeed. In such areas I would come to terms with the cloth merchants. What is being accomplished just now is only newspaper propaganda. But if the merchants abide by their undertaking, results would be forthcoming within 3 months.



As regards the political aspect of the matter, I have got little to say. We all wish for your victory. I had written another letter to you earlier. If you have time, and if you think it proper, you may reply to it.

I am doing well physically and I hope you are doing well, too. I am rather worried these days. Your faith gives you an overpowering feeling of elation. A businessman like me, careful about counting his pennies, could be deeply upset by fear of a failure. Anyway, your Herculean labour is bound to yield fruit. This much faith I do have.

*Humbly yours,*  
Ghanshyamdas

7

KARADI,  
May 1, 1930

MY DFAR GHANSHYAMDASJI.

My affectionate greetings.

Yesterday I met Pujya Bapuji. He is enjoying good health and is full of good cheer. He has asked me to tell you to stop worrying. His good wishes for you are always there.

He had received your letter, sent earlier. He is of the view that a forceful letter by you to the Viceroy, even if bearing just a few signatures, would prove to be more effective. He is not in favour of a tame letter signed by many.

As for the price of co-operation, he says the Government should acknowledge the reasonableness of the 11 points. So long as the Government does not concede that the points are reasonable and worthy of acceptance the question of a settlement, which means the calling off of the Civil Disobedience movement, does not arise. Out of these points some of them require immediate acceptance since they have been discussed and the people have aired their views on them. These are (1) the salt tax, (2) the Coastal Reservation Bill, (3) Ration, (4) prohibition, (5) protective tariff, (6) the release of political prisoners

and the like. As for the consideration of such points as (1) land revenue, (2) reduction in the military budget, (3) suspension of the Criminal Intelligence Branch activities, etc., a committee may be set up to complete the process of discussion on these. This committee would suggest the ways and means of fulfilling these demands. Bapuji wishes you to acquaint yourself with his line of thinking, and just for your satisfaction, because he believes that unless the Government is convinced of our strength, proven through our suffering, it would not even concede its reasonableness. •

As regards your suggestion to Pujya Malaviyaji to concentrate on the boycott of foreign goods and on khadi work Pujya Bapuji says this was the right thing to do. Till Panditji is firmly convinced that genuine boycott of foreign goods can be ensured only through khadi work, even his support for the boycott and khadi work would lend sufficient strength to the movement. Considering Panditji's delicate health, Bapuji wants him to take rest.

The talks I have had with Pujya Bapuji on such matters as picketing and boycott, as also my own acquaintance with his line of thinking, when juxtaposed to Pujya Malaviyaji's own views on them, have left me rather confused, and this feeling is shared by the other workers all over the country. It is my firm belief that a mutual understanding leading to a final decision is urgently called for. If Mahatmaji says one thing, and Motilalji says something else, and Malaviyaji something again, the amount of confusion among the workers as also in the public mind this will create can be easily visualised. This state of confusion is already there for all to see. Mahatmaji has clearly enunciated his views on picketing in both *Young India* and *Navajivan*. He is of the view that picketing has come to form part of the propaganda work and without that it is not possible to generate the necessary climate for boycott of foreign cloth. If we do not resort to picketing that would mean postponing the boycott movement. But care should be taken to insure against any kind of bitterness or violence creeping into the picketing work, and with this end in view, organising pickets composed entirely of lady-volunteers has been thought of. In areas threatened with bad blood and blood-shed picketing should be discontinued, regarding the difference of approach between

Bapuji and Malaviyaji. Bapuji says you would set matters right.

Bapuji also believes that khadi work and the boycott of foreign cloth will automatically push sale of mill-made cloth. As for your view that boycott would be more effective through mill-made cloth than through khadi, Bapuji says that when you would organise and conduct khadi centres you would see for yourself which one is the easier course to ensure results.

Bapuji now awaits your own schemes for boycott. He has already sent his views on Ambalalbai's scheme to him. He is also in receipt of Rameshwardasji's scheme.

As regards the question of increasing the prices, Bapuji says the prices should be fixed, and if the mill-owners set up their own agencies, or agencies with their authorisation, the danger of hawkers charging higher prices could be minimised.

Regarding picketing Muslim-owned shops, Bapuji says unless Muslim women were available to do the picketing work, such shops should be left alone. The picketing of Hindu shops will boost sales at Muslim shops, and, even as it is, Muslim shops selling foreign cloth are not many in number. Bapuji does not apprehend any maltreatment of women volunteers, at least not much.

Bapuji has much liked the idea of your independent khadi centres. Shankerlalbai is also here. He will lend you one or two of his own men for a few days. These will train your men. In my opinion it would be better if you send Mahavirprasadji or some other khadi-lover to Shankerlalji to discuss things about proposed centres. If you yourself could come to this side in the near future, that would be still better. At present Bapuji is exchanging views with Ranchhodlalbai on how best to ensure the mills' co-operation in the boycott work. If you could come here at this juncture many things could be decided. The talks between Bapuji and Ranchhodlalbai are directed towards discovering the feasibility of the mill-owners functioning as trustees with readiness to fix the rates and to work in unison in regard of the quality of cloth, as also to get their accounts audited—all in the interest of the country. This would mean taking the first step towards nationalisation. I would wish you most ardently not to lag behind Ranchhodlalbai in this respect. If not for all the mills, let it be for only one mill, your consent

will carry great weight.

The other letter is for Pujya Malaviyaji. You can read it.

The climate here is surcharged with calm, quite and purposeful determination to invade the salt depot.

Regarding the opening of a salt factory, Bapuji's views are similar to your own.

I am now proceeding to Ajmer with the fond hope that I would return from prison to an independent India. When leaving Calcutta I found you in your own prison. So I bid you goodbye through this letter.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Haribhau

I have read out this letter to Bapuji.

H.U.

## 8

FROM POONA JAIL,  
July 29, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. For the present they have been delivering almost all the letters. Still, you did well in writing in English. It was good that you did not come to Poona. I cannot see anybody. The conditions placed on receiving visitors are unacceptable to me, and so far only one interview has taken place. There is little possibility of a second. It causes me no pain. In fact a prisoner has no rights at all. Incarceration is a kind of moral death, it can mean only that.

I had a good laugh over your account of the dream. That dream is a sign of love. We do not dream of strangers.

My health is good. The water here is costive, but otherwise it has done me no harm.

Since you have taken to the *takli*, why not ply it regularly? It has been my experience that things done by fit and starts increase their worth a hundredfold if done regularly. The entire

Universe functions under a fixed law. It is experiences of this type that have occasioned the Sanskrit saying: To disordered minds even blessing comes as a calamity.

Your description of the trend for khadi makes me happy. I am sure your son is now quite well. How are you yourself? What do you eat? My diet consists of milk, curds, raisins, dates, and lemons. I take the lime juice with soda or lukewarm water and salt.

Please tell Manmohan Gandhi that I have received his book as also his letter. I get little time to read book. The entire energy I am left with I am using in spinning and carding.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

9

FROM JAIL,  
October 15, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter has reached me. Mirabehn also had made some reference. No one is perfect in this world. Our duty is to shed our imperfections and that is what human effort is for. Despair has no place as long as we put in our own efforts. What we need is worldly matters. Self-confidence should never be belittled. Faith renders everything possible.

I also am confident that Pujya Malaviyaji will never fall sick. In fact, I believe that while in jail he will enjoy genuine rest and undisturbed peace. He has been needing both all these many years. God has thus granted him both.

Please give an account of your health in your next letter.

I hope you will not get frightened if khadi accumulates. Are you making an experiment in regard to dairy?

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

10

FROM JAIL,  
October 28, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

In a way I like your spiritual restlessness. True peace will emerge out of it. Let Mahavirprasadji do the khadi work, and do not worry about it. But I am sure you will gain some peace by putting not only money but your heart too in some noble work. I can quite understand that you have to devote a great deal of your time to your business, but being lost in it all the time will neither profit the business nor bring you peace of mind. Read carefully what I have written about *yajna* during this week. Your activity in that direction is rooted in self-determination and your inner-self seems transparently clean that you must achieve peace, while the true path will ultimately expose itself to you.

Yours,  
Mohandas

Where is that sister I met while in Mussoorie and how is she? My blessings to her.

11

FROM JAIL,  
December 2, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

This letter is about Jayaprakash Narayan. He hails from a distinguished family of Bihar and is the son-in-law of that province's great worker, Brijkishore Babu. Till now he has been with Pandit Jawaharlal in the Congress office. He studied in America for seven years. Now that his mother is dead, he feels the need to earn something. His requirements will be covered by Rs. 300 per month. Jaya Prakash is a qualified young man. I would like him to be employed somewhere under your auspices with a

monthly salary sufficient enough to meet his needs. The rest he will tell you himself. I know Babu Brijkishore's daughter very well indeed. She has lived in the Ashram for a number of years. I have come across few such dutiful and purposeful girls.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

## 12

FROM JAIL,  
December 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have received your letter. Even if I agree to see you, my fear is that I might not get the necessary permission. Therefore for the time being we should satisfy ourselves with an exchange of letters alone. By speculation I did not mean that no forward transactions should be entered into. Speculation means gambling. Now supposing that the market prices will shoot up, I buy 2,000 bales of cotton. I do not need any cotton, and have also not made any provision for storing it in my warehouse. It is just paper transaction. I just wait for a rise in the prices and when it does happen I dispose of much of this quantity. This I call speculation. This kind of business activity has done much harm not only to this country but also to the whole world. That was what I had meant in my letter. I do want more than this, but just now we lack the strength to achieve that. We should not depend on the future market, but content ourselves by selling what we have, of course adding something for our labour. This to my mind is pure business. It may not be possible to confine ourselves to this kind of business now, ultimately only this type of business can prove to be profitable. You might recall that for khaddar I would like this type of business activity. But I do realise that this would be aiming high. If you brothers—all of you—could find it possible to somehow cut yourselves loose







from this kind of business activity I should feel very happy and contented. However do only what is intelligently acceptable and within your power. I would not at all wish that you should act upon the suggestion simply because it is mine and that too sent from jail. Reasoning should replace faith wherever it is applicable.

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

I was a little worried to read of Malaviyaji's fever in the newspapers. I am relieved now. I hope he will come out of jail in good health. I am very happy about your health too. I am again experimenting with a milkless diet. This time constipation was responsible for it. Now I am taking chapatis prepared from millet for the prisoners, vegetables, three *tolās* of almonds and dates. I am trying to give up dates. Constipation has disappeared. I shall revert to milk if I loose strength. It is nearly a month since I gave up m<sup>ilk</sup>.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

## Letters without Date

13

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I did not answer your last telegram. What instructions can I give from this distance? It is just not possible to complain of any lack of precautions. The only thing called for is some kind of reassurance to Keshu. For this purpose I am sending Devdas. I do not have much faith in medicines. But I do not believe in interfering with others' arrangement, especially when I am not on the spot. This was why I did not think it necessary to guide you in response to your wire. You are already familiar with my mode of treatment: fasting or fruit juice and sunbath, the windows to be kept open during the night. Enema if the bowels fail to move. Many a case like Keshu's has yielded to this kind of treatment. But I have no desire to indulge in dissertations from a distance. Please do what you think best. But Keshu must not insist on medicines; nor should medicines be thrust upon him. I do hope that by the time this reaches you he will have already been out of danger.

*Yours,*  
Mohandas

14

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
SABARMATI,  
[Chaitra Shukla 6]

MY DEAR RAMESHWARDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter regarding Rs. 5,000. On receipt of the amount I will make use of it in the removal of untouchability. I have not received any intimation from Jamnalalji's

office. Jamnalalji is at present touring Rajputana in connection with the khadi propaganda work

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mohandas Gandhi

SRI RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
RANCHI



**1931**



FROM JAIL,  
BORSAD,  
April 29, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your two letters. I enclose a copy of the letter I have written to Vijayaraghavachariji.

What shall I say about the Hindu-Muslim problem? The Nawab of Bhopal is doing something. Whenever you come across any Muslim, render services to him. This service should not be confined to monetary help. Monetary help of course has to be rendered in the case of a deserving but poor Muslim. You should also treat it as part of your duty to curb the growing rowdyism among the Hindus. The atrocities committed by the Hindus in Kanpur and Benares do not help the Hindu religion; it has undoubtedly harmed it.

I have as yet no idea whether I would be able to go to London or not. The situation here is quite serious.

You should certainly go to America. It will certainly do good.

Do what you can to promote the cause of boycott of foreign cloth.

I am well.

Bapu

## 2

BORSAD,  
April 29, 1931

DEAR FRIEND,

Ghanshyamdas Birla asks me to write to you if it is only a few lines. I have failed because up to last week I had practically ceased to deal with the voluminous correspondence that comes daily. Pyarelal and Mahadev dealt with it as they liked and I knew that in that pressure you did not expect anything from me. And now that I have a few moments to dictate



some letters what shall I say to you? Why do you think that because you had no acknowledgements your wires and letters were not considered? They were. But the unfortunate fact is that your suggestion could not be accepted. The legality of the convictions was discussed threadbare by jurists like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru with the Viceroy and you know what the great influence he had with him. But it was of no avail. The Congress therefore had to take up the only attitude that was open to it. I would ask you please therefore not to be sensitive. Remember that we have a new generation of men and women dominating the Congress. They brush aside legal forms. They have found by experience how powerless these forms have proved for advancing freedom and they have by bitter experience realised how powerful they have been for curbing freedom. Why will you not therefore be satisfied with blessing these young men and women knowing that they are on the whole on the right track. This of course does not mean that you should not continue to give the Congress and especially me the benefit of your advice. But that you should do without expectation of its being always followed. I hope in spite of old age creeping on you, you are well and able to follow the vast changes that are taking place in the country.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

SYT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR  
THE ASHRAM  
SAI FM

BARDOLI,  
May 30, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. Your reply to Polak is quite correct. An almost similar reply to these friends' cable was sent by me. I still believe that without a solution to the Hindu-Muslim problem, my visit to London would be a futile undertaking, though meeting the Crown's Ministers is an altogether

different proposition.

Subhas Babu has been to me again and we had a long talk. But I failed to discover what it was all about. I saw Sen Gupta's letter in the newspapers yesterday. Let us see what happens on the 9th. I have also asked Subhas Babu to come over.

Yours,  
Mohandas

4

BARDOLI,  
June 4, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Here is a copy of the letter from Sir Darcy. I in my letter. Please send your reply quoting facts and figures. I have replied to his letter, but he needs a more informed reply.

I have received the wire regarding the dispute in Bengal. I have wired to Sen Gupta to accept arbitration unconditionally.  
Bapu

I shall be in Bombay from 9th to 11th.

5

June 5, 1931

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Please go through the enclosed letter. I have been under the impression that I have already written to you about this matter. Whatever the case, I think this institution deserves to be helped if something can be given from the Raghmal Trust.

I have sent a telegram suggesting settlement by arbitration in the Bengal dispute, if possible. The matter should not come up before the Working Committee.

I shall be in Bombay from 9th to 11th.

Mohandas

6

SHRADDHANAND BAZAR,  
DELHI,  
June 2, 1931

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

Maybe because of your busy schedules, you might have forgotten to write to Babus Ghanshyamdasji Birla and Deviprasad Khaitan in connection with assistance needed from Reghumal Trust. The meeting of the Trust is going to take place on the 16th or the 17th June. Kindly write to them now if not done so far, under intimation to me.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ramprasad Sanyasi

PUJYA MAHATMAJI  
BARDOLI, GUJARAT

7

*Unrevised*

BORSAD,  
July 1, 1931

DFAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. Don't expect any donation from Ahmedabad. What I would like you to do is to discuss the whole thing with Mr. Birla. You should also find out ways and means of interesting the middle class Bengalee and the zamindar class in the khadi work as also the amelioration of all the poor people. Why should there be no response from the Bengalese either for khadi or for famine relief? There is something wrong about the method of work here. You should do this work through *Rashtrabani*. The poison that you talked about will be naturalised only by the most correct conduct on our part. It needs utter self-effacement. I wanted to talk about all these things to you when we met but it was not good. Bombay is about the worst place for me to hope to have any quiet chat

with anybody. There is an endless stream of visiting friends whom I must not repel. But if you are in any way dejected or despondent you must come to me without fixing the time-limit and hang on till we have, in leisurely fashion, thrashed out every conceivable problem that we could think of.

It is good that the *Atma Katha* is in demand, Do you understand Gujarati so well as to be able to translate directly from it? If anybody else asks for permission to translate the *Atma Katha* I don't need refer him to you. I will flatly refuse permission. I have a vague recollection that Anil Babu of Santiniketan did get from me the permission years ago.

I am glad that your weight and strength are increasing. Remember the verse about fasting in the verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* that we sing every evening. Fasting is good enough up to a point. But if we are nervous about our perception of truth and ahimsa the moment we begin to satisfy real hunger, we have reached the danger point, and our ascribing a better perception of truth and ahimsa to fasting or semifasting may be pure hallucination. Hard work must be consistent with hard and clear thinking. Conversely hard and clear thinking I hold to be impossible if a person has become physically a perfect wreck. A healthy mind in a healthy body is a correct maxim.

Love.

Bapu

SYI. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA  
15 COLLEGE SQUARE  
CALCUTTA

8

SIMLA,  
July 20, 1931.

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have received many letters from you, but have no had time to reply to any of them. I had asked Mahadev and Devdas to write something in acknowledgement.

Nothing is happening here. Even if there is some settlement, it will leave me unsatisfied.

I have lost all faith in the Maha Sabha people. Everywhere they are being prosecuted, so how can they reassure me here?

Though it would be advisable to go to London, I do not feel like going. It is just as well I do not bother myself about such matters. Every day gifted to us is a religious journey towards the Ultimate. I consider my life well spent in doing my day-to-day duty.

Considering the atmosphere prevailing here I would not be surprised if you were not invited. Even if you are not, are you proceeding to America on August 15.

As regards the cable from Walchand, I hope you received the reply I had asked Mahadev to send.

How is your health these days? I have not yet been able to read your essay on Currency that you had sent.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

9

BARDOLI,  
July 26, 1931

भाई घनश्यामदास जी,

Please thank the Italian Consul<sup>1</sup> for the very kind offer made in connection with the probable visit by Malaviyaji and myself to Rome. Nothing is certain with reference to my visit to London and even if I succeed in going there I do not know that I shall be able to visit Italy on my return. On going to London there is no possibility of my visiting Rome. I believe the same thing applies to Malaviyaji.

*Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi*

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Scarfe

LONDON,  
October 31, 1931

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU,

Yourself and Mr. Jayakar must have thought it very stupid of me when in spite of your opinion to the contrary I was putting my own interpretation on Clauses 18, 19 and 20 of the Federal Structure Committee Report, but my main intention was to point out my fears which I entertained, and I was too much obsessed with such fears. I think it is pardonable because there is ample justification for these, if we look into the past. If my interpretation is wrong, well and good. But in my case I think this letter of mine can only help you to guard against any encroachment in a subtle manner by the vested interests on the financial control which you think we have been promised and which we all desire, we must have without any qualification.

Now according to my feeling the control of the Finance Department should be judged by our control of the actual amount of finance. Supposing we are given cent per cent control minus 99 per cent reservation, I, as a businessman, would simply say that our control was only 1 per cent. Whereas if we were given a control to the extent of cent per cent minus 50 per cent reservation, I would say that our control amounted to 50 per cent. Let us see on this basis what amount of control, we are getting in the Finance Department.

If you read the first portion of clause 19, it appears that we have been given cent per cent control, subject to certain limitations. Now let us see what these limitations are. In my opinion the following limitations have been laid down in Clauses 11, 19 and 20.

1. Establishment of Reserve Bank.
2. Previous sanction of the Governor General for amending Paper Currency or Coinage Acts.
3. Establishment of Statutory Railway Board.
4. Constitution of Consolidated Fund Charges for securing finance for

- (a) Debt Service;
  - (b) Sinking Fund for Debt Service;
  - (c) Salaries and Pensions;
  - (d) Military.
5. Power to the Governor General of intervening in regard to the budgetary arrangements and borrowings, when he thought that methods were being pursued which would in his opinion seriously prejudice the credit of India.

In my opinion these powers cover more or less cent per cent of the field of finance, and I contend therefore that under these clauses we get no responsibility. Let me give you a brief sketch of the Finance Department and you will be able to judge whether I am right or not. Including the Railway Budget, the total revenue and expenditure of the Finance Department amount to about 130 crores. The Finance Department, besides this, also manage Indian Currency and Exchange. Now I assume and if I act with distrust I must put the worst interpretation on these clauses—that the Reserve Bank will not be a thing of our creation and that the Assembly will have more or less no authority over it. I myself do not desire any political influence on the Reserve Bank in its day-to-day affairs, but the Legislature must be the final authority about deciding the policy of the Reserve Bank, and I think powers have been taken away from us by the provision of our having to take previous sanction from the Governor General for purpose of amending the Paper Currency Act. By constituting a Statutory Railway Board, which again I assume will not be of our own creation nor under our control, 40 crores is proposed to be taken away from us, so that we shall be left with 90 crores. The Army requires 45 crores, Debt Service 15 crores, Pensions and other charges 15 crores. Thus 75 crores are constituted into a Consolidated Fund which will have first charge on our revenue. This leaves only 15 crores for us out of 130 crores. Anyone who has got a first charge to the extent of 115 on a total of 130 crores would naturally like to interfere at every stop in our budgetary arrangements, and also our borrowing arrangements, and it is for this reason that the Governor General has been

given power to intervene. Fluctuation of 5 or 10 crores in the budget with a freaky Indian monsoon is inevitable, and therefore there will always be a danger of the Governor General pouncing on the Finance Member at every step. The Finance Member will therefore be compelled to be a mere tool in the hands of the Governor General. In my opinion, therefore, there is no control given under three clauses to the popular Minister. I maintain that they do not confine themselves to the Reserve Bank as you are interpreting but that they cover the entire field of Finance.

You may ask me, what then is the alternative. I said yesterday that these clauses were only the natural consequences of the constitution of the Consolidated Fund Charge. There are two alternatives. Either the Consolidated Fund Charge should be much smaller than what is proposed, or the Governor General should have no power to intervene unless we default. I think we should insist on both. The Consolidated Fund Charge could be made smaller only by reserving a much smaller sum for the Army, and asking for relief in regard to our Debt Service. Benthall told me that it may be possible to ask for such relief. He said that instead of insisting on cancellation of some debts as is being done by the Congress, we may ask for capitulation from Great Britain. In any case we ought to fight for substantial relief, if we are to find money for popular services in India. If Military charges were reduced to 35 crores and Debt services and other charges after receiving relief from Great Britain were reduced to 20 crores, then the total Consolidated Funds would not exceed 55 crores. If the Reserve Bank and the Statutory Railway Board were to be a creation entirely of our own with full control by the Legislature so far as the general policy is concerned, then I think it would leave a good latitude to the Finance Member. It may then be very properly suggested that after all the Governor General had a first charge only of 55 out on a total revenue of 130 crores, therefore he should have no power to intervene in budgetary and internal borrowing arrangements.

I think I have fully explained my points. I have not the least doubt in my mind that my fears are entirely well founded. The interpretation which I have put is in my opinion the only interpretation which could be put on these three clauses, English-



men, in my opinion, could not put any different interpretation but if you still believe that these clauses confine themselves to the establishment of a Reserve Bank, then I would suggest that you should get the points cleared up by having them differently worded. It is because I put a different interpretation that I said that the proposed Financial Council could not be a substitute of these three clauses. The proposed Financial Council is a very innocuous thing if it were of our own creation, whereas these three clauses give very wide power to the Governor General over the entire field of our Finance. In fact the so-called control of finance is reduced to nullity.

I hope you will give your careful consideration to my note.

*Yours sincerely,*

G.D. Birla

PS. I have written at some length in order to bring home to you my apprehension that if the formula is accepted as discussed by us yesterday, on the basis of paragraph 18 it is bound to involve continual interference from the Governor General, in the budgetary arrangements unless and until substantial reductions are assured in Military expenditure and in the Debt charges. If these two items are reduced as indicated above, the British Government and Commercial interests will not be justified in asking for the intervention of the Governor General in budgetary arrangements, and I put this PS. to indicate to you in a few words the net result of what I have said above.

G.D. Birla

## 11

LONDON,  
December 2, 1931

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR, :

During our discussion at King Street yesterday you expressed your disapproval of my speech at the Round Table Conference.

As I value your opinion I was extremely sorry that you should have disagreed with my views, but I may say that I did not spring any surprise upon you. I sent you a copy of my letter which I wrote to Sri Tej Bahadur Sapru on the 31st October, and since then neither you nor Sir Tej ever discussed the matter with me to convince me that I was wrong, and the only inference that I therefore drew was that you were probably satisfied with the interpretation which I had put on Clauses 14, 18 and 21. In fact you did not even acknowledge receipt of my letter. What disappointed me, however, was that in the Federal Structure Committee, Sir Tej, far from removing apprehension entertained by me, went further and after confirming the paragraphs 14, 18 and 21 as they originally stood, more or less supported Sri Samuel Hoare's statement on the safeguards. The last report of the Federal Structure Committee on Financial safeguards is in a way a paraphrase of the statement made by Sir Samuel Hoare. Sri Purshottamdas tried to point out the defects in the Federal Structure Committee, but unfortunately he failed to get any support from your side.

The latest position thus amounts to this that safeguards as formulated in paragraphs 14, 18 and 21 are confirmed, and it is further suggested that it is premature at this stage to define them in greater detail. In my opinion this should leave no doubt as to what is meant by safeguards. Their implications are now perfectly clear to me and they simply confirm my views which I put at length in my letter to Sir Tej on the 31st October.

I very much regret that when Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas raised the question of a Statutory Railway Board in the Federal Structure Committee, he had a similar experience. Even on the question of discrimination in administrative action Sri Tej Bahadur supported the idea of the question being decided by the Supreme Court. Here again Sir Purshottamdas fared no better. In my opinion, this is a very dangerous principle which it is proposed to establish. It is really unfortunate that we could not carry your and Sri Tej's support even on matter on which legitimately we can claim to be heard, that is beside the point.

I do not agree with you that the question of revising paragraphs 14, 18 and 21 is still left open for discussion. It pains

me however to see that they were not revised here when we had an opportunity to do so. I wonder however how you can interpret the Premier's speech as providing for the re-opening of the whole question, as you said to Mahatmaji yesterday. The future structure can only be built on the basis of the reports which you have presented and to which you are all committed and which, in my opinion, do not give even a vestige of control as far as the Finance Department is concerned, to say nothing of army and external affairs.

The Working Committee of the Round Table Conference certainly cannot undo what has already been done or settled. It can only pursue further matters already decided upon, but as yet neither its terms of reference nor the scope of its work has been defined.

I assure you that I am open to conviction, and I would be much relieved to feel that I am wrong, but I must submit that you have not helped the course by committing yourself to certain conclusions, at least without showing to us that our apprehensions are ill-founded. However, this is just to explain my personal views. Let me again hope that you are right.

As one of your colleagues in the old National Party in the Assembly, is it too much for me yet to suggest to you that you make your wishes clear that you are not committed to the financial safeguards which the majority of the conference has passed and that you will ask for the re-opening of this and the other points which I have mentioned above. I sincerely trust that you may still be able to do this.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G.D. Birla

## Letter without Date

### 12

There is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything. I feel this though I do not see it. It is this unseen power which makes itself felt and yet defies all proof, because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. Even in ordinary affairs we know that people do not know who rules or why and how he rules, and yet they know that there is power that certainly rules. In my tour last year in Mysore I met many poor villagers and I found upon enquiry that they did not know who ruled Mysore. They simply said that some God ruled Mysore. If the knowledge of these poor people was so limited about their ruler, I who am infinitely lesser in respect to God than they were to their rulers need not be surprised if I do not realise the presence of God, the king of kings. Nevertheless, I do feel as the poor villagers felt about Mysore that there is orderliness in the universe. There is an unalterable law governing everything and every being that exists. It is not a blind law, for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings, and thanks to the marvellous researches of Sir J.C. Bose it can now be proved that even matter is life. That law then which governs all life is God. Law and the law-giver are one. I am not denying the law or the law-givers because I know so little about it. Just as my denial or ignorance of the existence of an earthly power will avail me nothing, even so my denial of God and his law will not liberate me from its operation, whereas humble and mute acceptance of the divine authority makes life's journey easier, even as the acceptance of earthly rule makes life under it easier. I do dimly perceive that whilst everything round me is ever-changing, ever-dying, there is underlying all that change a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates.<sup>1</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi

<sup>1</sup>I can't recall the context, or from whom it was meant. But the speech was recorded at the request of Columbia Broadcasting Corporation—G.D.B.



**1932**



# 1

January 4, 1932

PUJYA BAPU,

The Hindi Paper will come out shortly. But it will take some time before we start the English edition.

I have been thinking about the name by which to call the English edition and so far I have not been able to strike on a happy word. I wonder what you think if we call it 'Penance'. As this word gives some indication of the object which we have at heart, I thought you might like it.

Please let me know, if possible, by wire if you approve of this name or if you can suggest some other.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHI  
YLRAVDA CLNTRAL PRISON  
POONA

# 2

INDIA OFFICE,  
WHITEHALL.

January 27, 1932

*Personal*

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

I promised to let you know what I thought of your suggestion that the question of financial safeguards might be referred to a special Committee<sup>1</sup> which would include members with financial qualifications who are not members of the Round Table Conference Consultative Committee. On the whole I have come to the conclusion that it would be a mistake now that we have set up the Consultative Committee which is to act on pursuance of the general policy indicated at the Round Table Conference, if we were to graft on to it a system of sub-

<sup>1</sup>I had neither requested nor argued for this.—G.D.B.



committees with members drawn from outside. I feel that such a system might lead to wide and embarrassing ramifications. I understand that Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas finds himself unable to join the Consultative Committee. It is open to you to ask for a seat on the Committee, and if you were to do so I have little doubt that you would be nominated as a member.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Samuel Hoare

G.D. BIRLA, ESQ.

3

BIRLA HOUSE,  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,  
NEW DELHI,  
February 14, 1932

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I am extremely thankful to you for your letter of the 27th ultimo. I regret that my suggestion as regards the Composition of a separate sub-committee to discuss all financial matters did not meet with your approval. I would still request you to reconsider the same, as any intelligent consideration of financial problems would not be possible without the presence of those who understand the subject.

It is very kind of you to suggest that in case I care to join the Committee I would be nominated. I, however, do not think that that would be a correct attitude on my part. In such a case I would prove my disloyalty to the Federation and my unworthiness to serve any good cause. The best service I can render to my own country as well as to the cause of co-operation is to persuade the Federation to officially offer its co-operation. I know Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas also holds the same opinion as myself with reference to our participation in the work of the working committee. Besides, as a representative of the Indian Mercantile Community, in many respects, he is better. He is more tactful, has greater experience, and more ability. If we

both can persuade the Federation to modify its attitude I have not the least doubt that he is the fittest man to represent the Indian Mercantile Community.

I hope to write to you again after the meeting of the Federation which is being invited to rediscuss the very question. I would also wish that His Excellency knew what passed between us so that in case of necessity we may discuss the matter with him without troubling you.

I come to Delhi to discuss this problem with important members of the Federation and am leaving tomorrow for Calcutta. I shall discuss there with Mr. Benthall and others the question of closer co-operation between the two communities interested in trade and commerce.

Yours sincerely,  
G.D. Birla

SIR SAMUEL HOARF

4

YERAVDA JAIL.  
February 22, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I was waiting your letter. Yes, my health is good, so is Sardar's. I take honey and half a lemon in hot water at 4.30 in the morning, followed by one and a half *tola* of roasted ground almonds and 30 dates in tomato juice at 7 o'clock. At 12 again lemon with honey and lukewarm water. At 4 in the afternoon 15 dates together with one *tola* of almonds. I have started on vegetable only these two days. Before that I used to take 30 dates. On certain days I used to take *papaya* at four; now I have discontinued it since vegetables constitute the fifth article of food. I do not also need *papaya*. This has been continuing for about 15 days. Before that I used to take half a pound of milk in the morning, and half a pound of curds in the evening. The milk, however, lay heavy on the stomach and I was waiting for some excuse for giving it up. Whenever I am able to give

up milk I feel happy. Now it has been discarded, for how long, I do not know. My weight is steady at 106 lb. Please send dates. I have got good dates. These have been sent by Jerajani and are fresh.

You shall have to apply to Delhi or Bombay in order to visit me. You can manage to secure permission to see me only as friend. Nothing can be done from here.

I have collected a good number of books on Currency. Yes, you may send anything you like. I do wish to make myself familiar with this branch of learning. If you send your own observations, I shall go through them too.

Now tell me all about America: how you fared there, how you felt from the health point of view, what places you visited while there, what you saw at Battle Creek?—all about everything. Did you meet Holmes ?

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

## 5

INDIA OFFICE,  
WHITI HALL,  
February 28, 1932

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

Many thanks for your letter of the 14th February. I am very glad indeed to hear that you and Sir Purshottamdas are trying to persuade the Federation to modify its attitude in regard to co-operation with the constitutional discussion, and I wish you well in this work. I shall be interested to hear from you again when the meeting of the Federation has been held. I am glad also to hear that you are having discussion with Mr. Benthall and others with a view to closer co-operation between the two communities in the matter of trade and commerce.

There is another very important question to which I would suggest that you and Sir Pursottamdas and your friends should turn your minds. That is the question of the Ottawa Conference,

which, as you know, is going to be held in the Summer. I am aware of course of the past history of the question of inter-Imperial tariff relations so far as India is concerned, but I hope you will realise that the new policy of His Majesty's Government puts this question on a new and different footing, a footing on which sentiment and politics ought to be of much less importance than considerations of economic interest. I shall be much disappointed if India is not represented at Ottawa in a spirit which will enable negotiations to take place with a view to the voluntary and mutual benefit of the trade and commerce of both countries.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Samuel Hoare

6

March 1, 1932

MY DEAR BAPU,

On the basis of your letter I have prepared a table of your diet showing the total intake of your daily ration converted into calories. You do not write how much honey you are taking and so I have put an ounce for each time. You will see from this your daily intake is deficient in protein and fat whereas it is quite rich in all vitamins and also in iron and lime. Alkali predominates which also is satisfactory. If you take a pint of milk besides the quantity you are taking it would be wonderfully balanced. You are so much starving yourself of protein at present that I do not understand why you should not be able to digest a pint of milk every day besides what you are taking. This has caused me a slight anxiety. The total number of articles in this table count six, so evidently I have made some mistake in correctly interpreting your letter. If you restart milk you can easily omit tomatoes. Green I should not omit. In any case I think you will find this table of some interest. It is since I have understood the science of a balanced diet that I have been able to put up weight and am maintaining very good

health. I was at Battle Creek for about a week and the only useful thing which I learnt was about the diet, and in my own case I found that I was taking too much of protein and too little of carbohydrates. Now I have balanced my diet by reducing milk and substituting it by dates, honey, raisin, etc. The total intake in my case at present is 150 calories of protein, 500 calories of fat and 1400 calories of carbohydrates. I get this from 24 ozs of milk, 10 ozs of dates (which in number count 45), 27 ozs of fruit juice, 3 ozs of wheat flour and plenty of vegetables.

I also take potatoes but take very little salt. I was told by the Doctor that I was suffering from Hyperacidity and that therefore I should take only simple diet, i.e., a diet which does not cause much gastric juice. So I have omitted all acid foods. I was examined very carefully by the Doctors for two days, and they found that I was suffering from no constitutional defect. The only defect they found was some rectal congestion due to piles for which they suggested that I should have an operation. They gave me a few injections for piles which gave me lot of relief. I was told that my low blood pressure was due to my starvation of carbohydrates and since I have changed my diet the blood pressure has gone up slightly but the weight is very satisfactory and the nerves seem to work better because I feel more cheerful.

By a separate parcel I have sent two tins of dates which I brought from California. I had sent three tins direct from California to Calcutta, but as my brother did not know that they were meant for you one was consumed before I arrived here. Now, these dates, although they are quite big in size, contain 40% cane sugar, whereas the ordinary dates which you eat contain only 10%, the rest being date sugar. Cane sugar is not so easy of digestion and therefore I would suggest that these dates should be taken along with other dates. I know you are accustomed even to taking gur, but I would avoid all cane sugar as far as possible. You are taking roasted almonds, which in my opinion should be taken raw, because the quantity of fat as well as vitamin is undoubtedly deteriorated by roasting.

In America the economic condition was simply worse than what it was in England. The only explanation is that there is a greater disparity between the rich and the poor in America than

in England. In England, doles though objectionable on moral grounds undoubtedly helped in the process of levelling down. In America, on the other hand, all the money has been converted into gold, while the crops are lying unsold for want of buyers. I am glad you did not go there. The whole country seem to be intoxicated with the "Dollar feeling". There is no spiritualism, and the people have no tradition behind them. In culture, they appeared to me to be far inferior to the average Englishman. I did not like the country at all. Their views about mortality and character are simply queer. I had no sight-seeing there. My mission was entirely commercial, but also beside with that I studied the people of the country. One thing that impressed me very much was the happy condition of the Negroes. They are undoubtedly lynched occasionally in the Southern States but otherwise economically their level is far superior to the middle class Indian and in education there is nothing to complain about. More or less they have got the same rights as the white man

I did not stay in New York too long. I went from New York State to Los Angeles, visiting Texas and other Southern States on my way and came back *via* Northern States. To put my impression in a nutshell I did not like America much. I was invited to broadcast at Los Angeles. People were very eager to know about you and did not take much interest in India.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA GANDHI  
YERAVDA JAIL.  
POONA

March 7, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What a great trouble you have taken? You need have no worry on the score of the change I make in my diet. I have little faith in calories. Their norm applies only to them. How can I compete with them? Let everybody sit down and work out his own calories. At present I am also taking four ounces of toasted bread. The dates have arrived. In my view dates coming from Arabia are better, The dates I have are also quite good. whenever there is need for milk I will revert to it. Please don't worry.

I am not surprised to read your account of America. But there are plenty of good peoples too.

Did the climate over there suit you? I was happy to note that you were able to discover the right diet for yourself. How is Malaviyaji Maharaj? Sardar tells me that Rameshwardas was in indifferent health. I didn't know How is he now?

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

BIRLA HOUSE,  
NEW DELHI,  
March 14, 1932

DEAR SIR SAMUHI,

Thank for your letter of February 25

We had a meeting of our Committee and I enclose here with a copy of the Resolution passed. As you will see from this, for immediate result the resolution does not carry us much further but it definitely commits us now to a policy of co-operation, and as such, is a great improvement on the previous Resolution. In the first part of it, we ask the Government to change its present policy of repression; in the second, we repu-

ciate the interpretation put on our previous Resolution by Sir George Rainy; and in the third part we definitely offer our co-operation to the Committee which we propose should be appointed to examine and come to an agreed solution on all financial matters. We had a full discussion on the matter and it was made clear at the meeting that if the Government decided to adopt our suggestion and appointed a committee as requested by us, the Federation would be prepared to participate not only in the new Committee but also in the Consultative Committee.

It was not possible to go beyond this. The opinions received from the member-bodies were overwhelmingly in favour of non-participation, but the committee took upon itself the responsibility of giving the lead and decided against the views of the various constituencies to offer its co-operation, though conditionally. The annual session will be held on March 26 when this Resolution will have to be confirmed. Confirmation of this is essential as we have stated against the general opinion of our constituencies. The Committee, however, unanimously decided to stake their existence on this resolution, and if it is not passed they have decided to resign in a body. In a way they have shown great courage and I hope that the Resolution in its present form will be passed. In that event I think I should press upon you my original suggestion which has now been adopted by the Federation in the form of the present resolution.

Since writing to you last I have had a talk with Lord Lothian and Sir George Schuster and I explained to them how it would mean a waste of time for us to discuss financial safeguards with those who did not understand the subject. I impressed upon them that the best method of arriving at a practical solution on these matters was that experienced businessmen of both sides should sit at a table and come to an agreed solution. Both Lord Lothian and Sir George Schuster very much liked my suggestion and promised to write to you. I hope they have done so. I will see Schuster in a day or two and am also seeing the Viceroy on the 17th, but I would earnestly ask you to reconsider your attitude, if you can appoint a committee—it may be under the auspices of the Consultative Committee—consisting of men like Lord Reading and Sir Basil Blackett and an equal number from our side to sit in London and discuss the whole financial field, I am sure much good can



come out of it.

It may not be possible at present to have an agreement between a radical India and a most conservative Parliament, but I submit that it is possible to have an agreement between the present Parliament and progressive Indian opinion not identified with the Congress. And it is in this direction that I seek your help and guidance. I wish you to realise that if a constitution is introduced with the consent even of progressive people, to say nothing of the Congress Party, its smooth working cannot be guaranteed. On the other hand, if you can give us a constitution to the liking of the progressive people it can have even Gandhiji's blessings. I always make a distinction between Gandhiji and the Congress, and I again submit that it is possible for you to give us a constitution, which though not acceptable to the Congress, may not be rejected by Gandhiji, and which can ensure a smooth working in future. If the next day of the introduction of a constitution a movement to wreck it is started, then peace becomes impossible and what I want is a permanent peace between the two countries. I will, therefore, ask you to seriously consider the resolution which we have passed and see whether it is not possible for you to utilise our services for bringing progressive opinion closer to you. I ask you to give us a chance to work for peace and I therefore implore you to reconsider our suggestion.

As regards closer co-operation between the two communities I regret to have to say that I have not been given much encouragement by Mr. Benthall. In London we acted in the friendliest spirit each trying to see and appreciate the point of view of the other, and expected that this spirit would continue in India. But he seems to be a changed man just now, and the report of a speech which he recently made in Calcutta (a copy of which I enclose herewith) has simply amazed me. That after our friendliest co-operation in London he should call us 'irreconcilables' and try to ridicule Gandhiji is a thing which is beyond my comprehension. The report, in my opinion, does not do credit even to himself. This has had a very bad effect on the minds of the Indian Mercantile Community, Yet, so far as we are concerned, we do not want to give a wrong lead to our constituencies and therefore my efforts in the right direction will continue.

But to do constructive work one requires an atmosphere of trust and friendship, and this at present is unfortunately lacking in India. Your letter to me, in fact is a relieving feature of the present unhappy situation. Evidently you are of a trustful nature and this increases my responsibility. I should, therefore, like you to know me as I really am. I need hardly say that I am a great admirer of Gandhiji. In fact, if I may say so, I am one of his pet children. I have literally financed his khaddar producing and untouchability activities. I am also a great believer of khaddar as a supplementary occupation for the Indian masses. I have never taken any part in or financed the Civil Disobedience Movement. But I have been a very severe critic of the financial policy of the Government and so have never been popular with them. Even today I do not see eye to eye with the policy of the Government. I wish I could convert the authorities to the view that Gandhiji and men of his type are not only friends of India but also friends of Great Britain, and that Gandhiji is the greatest force on the side of peace and order. He alone is responsible for keeping the left wing in India under check. To strengthen his hands is, in my opinion, therefore to strengthen the bond of friendship between the two countries. But I am afraid in the present atmosphere it is an uphill task to truly explain Gandhiji. Probably the best way to success in this mission is to give you our co-operation as far as possible. And with such 'disqualifications' as I possess, if you think I can be of any use in bringing about happy relations between the two countries you can always rely on my humble services.

With reference to Ottawa Conference, if it is your desire that the Indian trade and commerce should be represented at the Conference, as I interpret your letter to mean, Sir Purshottamdas would be delighted to accept the invitation when it is extended to him. I am writing this with his full consent. The committee of the Federation will not be averse to this proposition. We realise the importance of this Conference and you may rely on our support in the right direction.

May I, however, in this connection give you another suggestion? Whatever is decided to Ottawa should not be ratified by the Indian Assembly until the new constitution comes into operation, and in my humble opinion the agreement which may be arrived at should not be made effective without ratification

by the new Government. We are all in favour of reciprocal arrangement on economic grounds. Of course the arrangement will have to be such as should also find favour with public opinion, but it is not difficult to devise such a plan.

I very much appreciate that you don't ignore the past history and so far as we are concerned, you will find us always ready to work for the economic interest leaving aside sentiments and politics.

I will be here for a fortnight and then go back to Calcutta.

*Yours sincerely,*

G.D. Birla

9

BIRLA HOUSE,  
NEW DELHI,  
March 28, 1932

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

The annual session of the Federation concluded yesterday and after a very heated discussion we passed the resolution, a copy of which I am enclosing herewith. As you will see from this, there has been a change made in the language of the third paragraph of the original resolution, but in substance it is the same. In some respects this resolution is better than the one passed by the Committee because it is not vague and definitely offers co-operation under certain conditions.

I have nothing more to add to my letter. I feel satisfied that I have been able to persuade the Federation to adopt the view which I put forward during my conversation with you in London. In view of this, if at any time you think we could serve the cause of peace and progress in India we would be delighted to offer our help. I would ask you to take a longer view. I say this because the official group in India is working with a day-to-day policy and depending for light on factors uncertain and unknown. This is not a policy of Statesman. I do not want to make any further comments on this aspect of the Indian

situation, but I very much wish that the government tried to achieve permanent peace—not something patched up—between the two countries. To my mind that achievement is possible even with the present conservative Parliament.

Please excuse me for encroaching upon your time every now and then.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

SIR SAMUEL HOARE  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA  
LONDON

10

INDIA OFFICE,  
WHITEHALL,  
April 8, 1932

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

I am much obliged to you for another interesting letter. As it has only just reached me, you will not expect me to give detailed answer to the important points that you raise in it. I will only therefore say that I am carefully thinking them over and that I will write later about them.

*Yours truly,*  
Samuel Hoare

SIRI G. D. BIRLA, ESQ.

11

April 30, 1932

DEAR MR. CROFT,

When I read the Secretary of State's speech today I felt that I should point out to you some of the inaccuracies con-

tained therein. Evidently he has been misinformed or else he would not take such an optimistic view about the economic situation in India. I quote the following paragraphs from his speech:

Turning to the economic position, Sir Samuel remarked that if there had been a state of war between Britain and India we would surely have been faced with a most formidable economic crisis, whereas the financial and economic position of India was much better today than six months ago.

Prices were beginning to rise, taxation was coming in fairly well and rents were being paid. This showed that India was stronger economically than in last September.

Last Autumn an Indian loan would have been impossible except at prohibitive rates, whereas this week's loan had been heavily over-subscribed and stood at a considerable premium.

It will be more correct to say that the prices have just begun to fall again. On account of fall in sterling value there was a slight rise in prices of certain commodities between November and December, but today most of the commodities in spite of lower sterling and consequently a lower rupee value are standing at a lower level than that six months ago. This would mean that had the rupee and sterling stood at par the prices today would have been 33% lower than they are. Now let me give you quotations of a few commodities in which the Indian is interested as a producer.

#### END OF SEPTEMBER:

Shellac was Rs. 30; in November it was 33; now again it is Rs. 20.

Jute Hessians Rs. 8=8 -0 per 100 yds; in November Rs.10; now Rs. 7 =8=0,

Jute Raw Rs. 37; in November Rs. 45; now Rs. 30.

Tea Rs. 0 =7 0 per lb; now it is 0 -5 -0 per lb.

Rice Rs. 225; in March Rs. 280; now Rs. 225.

Mill-made cloth 0=11=0 per lb; in March 0=12=0; now Rs. 0=11=0.

Raw cotton Rs. 155; in March Rs. 240; now Rs. 180.

Wheat Rs. 1=12=0 per md.; in January 2=6=0; now 2=2=0.

Groundnut Rs. 31; now it is Rs. 40 (this rise is specially due to bad crop).

Linseed Rs. 4=3=0; now it is Rs. 3=12=0.

Castor seed £11=18=0 per ton; in February £15=6=0; now £11=18=0 again.

The index figure stood at 91 in September; it was 98 in December; it was 94 in March and still lower today. Whereas the fall of the rupee, if effective, should have put up the prices by 33%, in most of the cases they are lower than what they were six months ago. This follows that had the rupee been at par the prices would have been still lower. The fall in rupees has thus not only eaten up by the fall in commodity prices but it is sometimes worse. The producer is therefore, in a worse condition than he was in September 1931. In any case this is not a fact that the prices have begun to rise. Unfortunately they have begun to fall again. It is true that the last Indian loan in London was a great success. This is due in my opinion to three reasons. First, we exported a large quantity of gold. Secondly, things are more cheerful in London. Thirdly, there is a conservative government in power. But raising a loan in India would not be so easy.

In connection with my business, I have recently to travel in a number of villages and I found that although there was a great economic distress, the agriculturists so far had been able to maintain very nearly the same standard of living. The explanation is this. They have been paying rent as has been stated by the Secretary of State. The zamindars all over India know this fully well. I myself am a small zamindar in Chhota Nagpur and in my case I have not realised even 5 per cent. But I am not a correct index for the position of zamindars, because I have not been pressing for payment, but I know that in most of the cases zamindars are not getting more than 50 per cent. That is one of the explanations, why the agriculturist is still maintaining more or less his old standard of living. But besides

this, sale of gold and non-payment of interest to the money-lenders also have helped him. The question is how far he will be able to maintain this standard if the prices do not rise. I do not think he is now left with much surplus gold. The consequences next year would therefore be either a substantial reduction in the standard of living, which to my mind seems impossible because the standard is already very low or a total refusal to pay rent and interest. If the prices do not rise the latter seems to be very probable. I am afraid prices are not going to rise.

I have got no comments to make on the political part of the speech because that does not come in my sphere, but I am afraid that there are a number of statements which are going to be challenged in India. As I have a great regard for Sir Samuel Hoare I would hate to see his statements challenged. Unfortunately it appears that he is not always correctly informed. This is just a friendly criticism. I have not the least doubt that it would not be misunderstood.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G.D. Birla

## 12

YERAVDA MANDIR,  
April 1932

BITAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. The handwriting of this letter itself will tell you that Mahadev is here. I like your taking interest in everybody's diet. Our middle-class people do not care to balance their diet and so spoil their bodies by taking all sorts of useless things. This does them no good, while the doctors and vaidis in their preoccupation with making money pay no attention to this, the root cause of illness. Therefore, I appreciate the usefulness of your experiments; and it is my hope that Rameshwardasji and Lakshminivas, both have been benefited by them. As soon as you discover anything new, let me know about it.

I am fully aware that I am misunderstood. But I do not care. Experience has taught me that you have only to wait long enough to find that wrong notions about you vanish into thin air without your doing anything about them. Even the longest night ends in day-break.

My diet is as it was earlier. And I like it.

Do you meet Andrews? How is he keeping?

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

### 13

CALCUTTA,  
May 4, 1932

DIAR LORD LOTHIAN,

The newspapers report that your mission is completed and that you are flying back to England on the 11th. The report of your Committee will shortly be published and from what I hear I hope it will be satisfactory. You have been able to create a friendly impression on India and this is another gain. Let me pray that your association with India may be helpful in bringing about happy relation between the two countries.

I don't wish to write to you anything just now about the present situation. With your keen sense of observation and friendly appreciation you know the situation as much as any Indian. Why I am writing to you is that I feel that at this critical time when many important issues are to be decided I should again express my grave doubts about the success of the present dual policy as it is called. When we discussed the matter at the Calcutta Club you were convincing when you said that the best method to help India was to rush the reforms with the utmost speed. I raised the point as to what would be the use of reforms which may not be worked by the nationalists and the same question has been rising again and again in my mind. I am afraid I can say almost with certainty that no reforms could be successful unless these had a backing behind them of the pro-



gressive Indian opinion. I admit that it may not be at present possible to bring about a compromise between a radical India and a reactionary parliament, but on further thinking I feel that it is not impossible to introduce a constitution which may have the tacit consent of Gandhiji and men of his school. This at least would give some peace to India and I am not convinced that it is not possible to find out a method of achieving at least this object.

I think there are two methods of achieving this object; either by securing the direct co-operation of Gandhiji or his indirect co-operation. The correspondence at present passing on between Gandhiji and Sir Samuel Hoare encourages me to take a more cheerful view. The disadvantage of 1930 was that Gandhiji was not in touch with the rulers. That disadvantage fortunately this time does not exist. With goodwill on both sides therefore I think a way could be found out.

Now let us analyse both the alternatives. First of all is it possible to get his direct co-operation? I do not think it is so difficult. Supposing the Ordinances are not renewed, what would then be Gandhiji's position? The last resolution of the Working Committee decided on a policy of Civil Disobedience unless substantial relief was granted in the direction of Ordinances. If the Ordinances are not renewed the position is substantially changed. Then the only question which will require solution will be the situation in N.W.F. Provinces and Bengal. In U.P. so far as I understand mere remission has been granted than what was demanded by Jawaharlalji and therefore there should be no fresh difficulties. Supposing therefore that the Ordinances are not renewed and Gandhiji is released and granted an interview by the Viceroy and the Ordinances in Bengal and N.W.F. Provinces are discussed and solution found out of difficulties at both these places then co-operation in constitution-framing and release of all political prisoners follows automatically.

The only difficulty which I foresee in this direction is that opinion in India at present is much more better than it was in March last year. Gandhiji may find it difficult to carry with him the Congress to co-operate merely on the non-renewal of the Ordinances. The rank and file may ask: "What is it that India has gained that we again talk of peace with the

Governor?" Gandhiji can undoubtedly carry the Congress ultimately with him but he will have to work hard.

The second alternative may be easier of achievement. Supposing the Ordinances are not renewed, why should not someone working under friendly instructions of Gandhiji participate in framing the constitution. Any compromise which may thus be arrived at at least will have Gandhiji's indirect blessings. I wonder how far Gandhiji will like such a procedure, but I feel that it is worth while exploring the practicability of this proposal. After all Gandhiji's object is to get a good constitution and if a constitution could be secured which would not have his disapproval, there would be a substantial chance of such a constitution being worked smoothly.

I am writing this for your consideration because I very strongly feel that Government would be making the greatest blunder if relying on the Mussalmans, depressed classes and the Princes they introduced a constitution which would not meet with the approval of nationalist India. Under such circumstances the struggle would continue and India would have no peace for a very long time to come. The Government should ignore the Congress only if it is their intention that no substantial advance is to be made. And I am afraid the man in the street naturally suspects the Government's bona fides under this dual policy, as he reasonably asks what else could be the reason otherwise of ignoring the co-operation of the Congress. From the feeling prevalent in Calcutta I can see that even among non-official Europeans the question is being raised as to who is going to work the reforms. The leading article in the *Englishman* day before yesterday also expressed sentiment somewhat on these lines. I therefore wish that no mistake of this kind should be made by the Government and a venue of securing the co-operation of the Congress should still be explored.

I wish you bon voyage and hope that I will soon send you my congratulations when your report is published.

I am seeing Sir John Anderson on the 10th and I intend to tell him what I am writing to you.

Yours sincerely  
G.D. Birla

LORD LOTHIAN  
SIMLA

INDIAN FRANCHISE COMMITTEE

CAMP INDIA,  
May 8, 1933

DEAR MR. BIRIA:

Many thanks for your letter of the 4th of May. As you may imagine I have given a great deal of thought to the issues you raise in it, and I shall certainly discuss it, together with your suggestion, with the Secretary of State when I get back home. I am quite clear about one thing—that the new constitution must distribute power equitably among the main elements of the constitution, while minority rights must be fully safeguarded, so must majority rights also. Is there any chance of seeing you in London this summer?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Lothian

G.D. BIRIA, ESQUIRE

May 14, 1932

DEAR LORD LOTHIAN,

"Many thanks for your letter of 8th instant. I hope you had a very pleasant and comfortable journey. I wonder whether you liked it more than a voyage by sea. Personally I don't care much to fly.

Your remark<sup>1</sup> about the sacrifices of the Congress was simply magnificent. It is impossible to estimate correctly the good effect of such utterances.

I am indeed glad that you are going to discuss the points raised in my last letter with the Secretary of State. I feel as if there is going to be a change of outlook here, though I do not know whether it is not my own imagination. In support of what I said in my last letter I would add that without the leaders out of jail there is no chance of even the communal question being

settled. I am glad the Government so far has not intervened and I do not think it is possible for Hindu Sabhaites like Mr. Jayakar, Dr. Moonje or Pandit Malaviya to pave the way for meeting the Muslim demands. Gandhiji alone can do it and it is no use the Government blaming the Indians for their failure to settle the matter when Gandhiji and most of the leading men are in jail. You may pertinently ask why this question was not settled in India before Gandhiji left for London. I admit the charge partially but I submit that never before the Indians as a whole had realised the necessity of composing communal differences more than at present. To my mind the possibility of communal settlement would be greatly enhanced if the leaders were released and a favourable atmosphere created for a calm consideration of all the important matters. And after the settlement of the communal question if Sir Samuel could get Gandhiji again in London in September and deal with him in Irwin fashion I think we can make a great headway.

There is another problem which requires very serious attention. This is the economic depression. I am afraid it is not fully realised in England what a serious depression in India has been created. Unless the prices rise substantially I am afraid we are going to have a trouble of first rate in this country some time next year. I spoke to Sir John Anderson about the situation and I felt as if he realised the gravity of the situation.

The Ottawa Conference has more or less been given a burial from its very inception. The Government have a knack to do things in their own manner. In 1930 Rany wanted to impose preference in favour of Great Britain in the cotton tariffs against the wishes of the whole Indian mercantile community with the result which we all know. This time again it is proposed to do something at Ottawa without any regard to the feelings of the Indian mercantile community. The result so far is that public opinion in this country has been so much roused against the Ottawa Conference that there is no chance of a calm consideration of the issues involved on their own merits. How much could be achieved by a friendly deal should have been realised by Gandhiji's utterances at Manchester in favour of performance. But in India the Government care very little to do things in a proper spirit. They want to impose things. This is just to tell you how at times troubles are created in India for lack of

proper handling.

I am so delighted at your feeling that the new constitution must distribute power equitably among the main elements of the constitution.

You ask me whether there is any chance of your seeing me in London this summer. This is a question which I should like to put to you. You get Gandhiji there and we will all accompany.

I hope you are quite well.

*Yours sincerely*  
G.D. Birla

## 16

YIRAVDA MANDIR,  
May 15, 1932

BHAI GIANSHYAMDAS.

I am in receipt of your letter. I sent a prompt reply to yours written from Gwalior. I addressed it to Gwalior which might be the reason why it failed to reach you. Some of my letters are certainly missing.

Malaviyaji's enthusiasm as well as his optimism is worthy of emulation.

We are all doing well. There has been no change in my diet. I am maintaining approximately the same weight.

I hope Rameshwardas is doing well.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

INDIA OFFICE,  
WHITTHALL,  
May 17, 1932

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 30th April, which I have shown to Sir Samuel Hoare. Unfortunately it is true, as your figures show, that there has been a relapse in prices after the rise. Nevertheless, I think that the average is still higher than it was. As regards the general economic and financial position of India, I can only say that people here, comparing the present position with that of say twelve months ago, feel conscious of considerable improvement. If as I believe one could hardly say this of the great majority of other countries, there is, from the relative point of view at any rate, substantial ground for satisfaction. Economic condition in India may be bad but I am not sure that they are not worse elsewhere and I think one might reasonably hope that, when a general improvement sets in, India will be in a good position to take advantage of it.

We have been pretty busy here lately and expect to be busier still in the near future.

With kind regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
W D. Croft

YIRAVDA MANDIR,  
June 7, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. My body seems quite in shape. The weight also is satisfactory: today it was 106½ lb. The doctors tell me that I am suffering from tennis elbow as a result of spinning continuously for years; rest is the only cure for it. So I have to give

complete rest to my elbow for 3-4 weeks. I started playing the Magan Charkha for this reason. Before that I used to employ my left hand for plying the wheel instead of holding the sliver. The doctors were not satisfied with this, but they agreed to my turning the wheel with the foot. But now my elbow has been put in splints in order to prevent the least movement. Now we have to see if the doctors' diagnosis is correct or otherwise. There is no cause for worry because there is no pain now except when I move the arm.

Do send me the khadi woven out of the yarn spun by your sister. When writing to you I did not have your letter before me, so I could not write about khadi. I have made up my mind to study economics as much as I can before I leave this place. I do not hope to be released soon. I had started reading other books in the expectation of a long stay here. Anyway I will concentrate on economics very soon.

I understand what you say about running the mills all the 24 hours. I wanted to make a deep study of manner your mills are operated on several occasions, but did not succeed. I want to see with my own eyes how the workers fare there.

All of us are doing well.

Bapu

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June 8, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have received your letter as well as the letter addressed to Schuster. I will read that. The time is delicate enough and is likely to become more so. If we make the public good as our sole objective the result may be wholesome.

Sen Gupta has accepted the idea of arbitration. He has abandoned the idea of a referendum. In any case, I am reaching Bombay tomorrow. I hope both of them will turn up.

Bapu

BORSAD,  
June 20, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I am in receipt of your letter and your reply to Lindsay's letter. I shall go through the letter and, if I feel that something more should go into it, I shall write to you again.

If khadi is being sold through hawkers, that is just fine. Here is my message:

"If khadi stands for providing bread to the indigent, would any lover of freedom, man or woman, even think of using anything other than khadi? Ultimately khadi proves to be a cheaper clothing inasmuch as we do not use the same yardage of khadi as of any other kind of cloth."

When you say 'Khadi hawking and propaganda for swadeshi', what do you mean by 'propaganda for swadeshi'?

It would be very good thing, indeed, if reconciliation between Bose and Sen Gupta could be brought about.

Just because the Congress Working Committee has passed a resolution it does not mean I must go. In the first place, I have not yet received an invitation. And even if I do get one, the path is to be strewn with obstacles. The provincial Governments are singularly lukewarm in carrying out the provisions of the Delhi agreement. I have no enthusiasm left for a trip abroad. Please read my article in *Youth India* carefully; it is going to appear in *Navajivan* tomorrow. That is how I have given to think about such matters. Therein lies public welfare. There is no alternative. I myself entertain some misgivings about the validity of these last two words, but these are in the process of wearing thin.

Yours,  
Mohandas



YERAVDA MANDIR,  
June 26, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. The letter I had sent to Gwalior was rather lengthy, but that is all I remember about it. I have completely forgotten what it was all about. You have to ascertain how the workers view the idea of three shifts and how much they stand to gain from it financially, not ignoring the moral side of the thing. If they benefit financially and lose morally, I would not approve of the idea. I have no means of viewing things from the workers' angle, therefore I would rather be neutral in this instance. I do hope, however, that the scheme has been adopted with an eye to the workers' well-being.

The two books have arrived; I have received a pamphlet and proofs of your speech. Perhaps your mention of two books means this. I have not been able to find time to go through them because of my preoccupation with other matters. Because of pain in my left hand I have to put in extra exertion in operating the charkha with my feet. I am with interest learning Urdu nowadays. It now seems possible to spare some time for the books. I make a distinction between simple mindedness and optimism. Panditji has both. One who is confronted with the prospect of disappointment but is still hopeful on the strength of one's moral stance is an optimist. Panditji is endowed with this virtue in abundance. If somebody encourages him to be hopeful, in spite of contrary indications and he becomes hopeful, that would be pure simple-mindedness. This also Panditji has. I am not in favour of cultivating this virtue. Panditji is great, which is why he has not been harmed by his credulity, but we should better than follow him in this respect. Optimism springs from inner urging, while simple-mindedness has its moorings in external factors.

I have no right to give a mandate on foreign travel. Ordinarily, you already know my views in this respect.

I am holding same weight and having same food as before.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

YERAVDA MANDIR,  
July 5, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Only today I received your letter dated June 27. In my letter of June 29, I had acknowledged receipt of the khadi. I had also asked for some books that came to my mind on reading your booklets. The literature I am busy reading at present has given rise to all kinds of questions in my mind, but these I have kept in abeyance till I complete my study of the subject. It will be only after that that I will seek enlightenment on points which would still remain unresolved. At present I do not manage to make some reading and this has undoubtedly added to my knowledge of the subject. I am still reading Shah's book. After completing it I shall begin reading Iyer's book on Foreign Exchange which he has sent to me.

The mills will go along with khadi for quite some time just as they are doing now, but there is an inherent contradiction between two concepts inasmuch as our ideal is that every village should produce its own cloth, and when that is brought about there will be no need for the mills. But just now you can manage their functioning simultaneously. While presenting the state of things as they are, the ideal must also be placed before the public. Let those who criticise this continue their hobby. We can do nothing about it.

I do not have sufficient knowledge about jaggery but it has been my impression all along that mills will be needed for manufacturing sugar. Sugar cannot be manufactured with ease, nor can every village grow sugar-cane, which means that production of jaggery cannot be a universal occupation. Perhaps I am wrong in thinking so. In any case, if the mills and the khadi can get along together, so can the g and the sugar mills.

The more I familiarize myself with the science of currency, the more convinced I am that what is adumbrated in these books is not the way to solve the problem of the people's poverty. The only way is to devise some method whereby income and expenditure function in close co-operation. That is possible only through a resurrection of cottage industry.

On the Superintendent's insistence I have started taking

milk. Along with that I take chapati and vegetable also. Vegetable, I take once a day and chapati twice a day. But no longer do I notice the cleansing of the bowels that I experienced formerly on a diet of *roti*, almonds and a vegetable. But I am not in a hurry to give up milk, now that I have started it I await the result. In addition to this these days I am taking the grapes also which Kripalanji's brother-in-law from Karachi has been sending me.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

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*Private*

SLYMORE HOUSE,  
17 WATERLOO  
PLACE, S.W. I,  
July 19, 1932

DEAR MR. BIRIA,

I have taken a long time to answer your letter of the 9th June but I have been tremendously busy since I got back. You will, I know, have been glad to see that the Cabinet has decided to proceed on the basis of a single Bill. That, I think, is a great move forward, the importance of which has not perhaps been fully appreciated in India. As you can imagine, I am very sorry that what I hope is only a temporary suspension of co-operation on the part of the Liberal has come about. I think it is in considerable measure due to misunderstanding and that if some of the leaders had been here things could pretty easily have been straightened out. I am sure that the new procedure is far better calculated to produce quick results and that what matters now is that there should be a real conference between India and the representatives of Parliament as well as of the Government, for Parliament is the dominant authority, and that the conference should be held about specific proposal and not about general principles. It is the businesslike method of doing things. I hope

that the long misunderstanding will be straightened out.

I am sure that you are glad that Lord Irwin has joined the Cabinet. The next hurdle is the communal settlement. I hope that will be out next month. Meanwhile I should be very grateful if you would let me know your opinion about conditions in India from time to time, and especially about the economic situation.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Lothian

G. D. BIRLA, Esq.  
BIRLA BROTHERS LIMITED  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

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July 19, 1932

MY DEAR SIR TEJ,

I have seen accounts of your various interviews in the Press and I am very glad that you have been able to give the right lead to the Liberal Party. There is a lot of misunderstanding as why the representatives of the Federation did not put their signatures on the Sitalvad manifesto and by this time you must be fully aware of our attitude. I need not write on this point. The question of my signature cannot arise as I was never invited by Sir Chimanlal to attend the Conference of the Round Tablers. But as mere Conference method would not satisfy the Federation in view of their resolution passed in March last, it was not possible for any of us to put his signature on the manifesto which we thought to be based somewhat on narrower issues. I enclose herewith a copy of the resolution from which you will be able to see what our attitude is. I had explained this to you during my interview with you at Delhi and we still take our stand on the same. In fact, even if a Committee of the kind demanded by us was conceded it would require a lot of persuasion to assure the Federation that there was a "genuine desire" on the part of the Government to come to an agreement

with the advanced public opinion of India.

Evidently you seem to be under the impression that some businessmen are ready to co-operate in discussing the financial safeguards without the help of the politicians. So far as I know, no one has made any suggestion to the Secretary of State nor is such the attitude of the Federation which is the representative body of the Indian merchants. It is quite possible that there may be other merchants who may pose to represent the Indian mercantile community, but I have got no knowledge of such men.

This is just to keep you in touch as to how the Indian mercantile community is feeling and I hope that Sir Purshottamdas's and my interviews have made the position quite clear.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G.D. Birla

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU  
ALLAHABAD

## 25

### Interview with Sir John Anderson on 19th July 1932

He said he spoke twice to Viceroy. V. was not unfavourable—J. would write—Procedure would be that I would have to apply for an interview<sup>1</sup>. I said Gandhiji would not talk politics unless he had permission—J. replied I could show my letter to G. that I sought interview for my own guidance—this would be made clear. He remarked that I was making speech—I replied it was an interview—he appreciated my position—I made clear that our participation in talks depended on G. but we could not talk on political developments or programmes. I suggested that G. should be invited in spite of Ordinances. He referred to certain difficulties from the side of Tories—I asked how it would end—he agreed. Economics discussed—he remarked Excise Duty was being discussed.

<sup>1</sup>To be sought with Gandhiji in jail.—G.D.B.

July 22, 1932

MY DEAR BAPU,

I received your letter dated 6th instant on the 19th. It was only natural since the letter was posted at Poona on the 16th. I have not yet received your letter dated 29th ultimo in which you have asked me to send some literature. I hope you will write to me again about your requirements so that I may send the same.

Your diagnosis about the economic distress is quite correct. I agree that as far as possible production should take place in consumers' cottages, but if you do not find this view propounded in the books you have read please do not feel disappointed as they have not written their books from this point of view. Besides, "the view of production in cottage" cannot find much favour with most of the Economists all over the world as they may not think it practical in view of the clash it may cause with the interests of large factories. In their desire to alleviate distress the economists therefore are dealing with the symptoms which is the next best. The suggestion of raising prices and cancellation of debts which is so widely discussed now all over the world is more or less to lighten the burden eventually of the poor man. Beyond this the economists do not think it feasible to go.

In my pamphlet I have stressed the desirability of stabilising prices at a higher level. Stabilisation of prices at a higher level can undoubtedly reduce the burden of the agriculturist as he is a debtor and has to pay a fixed revenue for his land, but this alone cannot solve the problem. I have discussed only one aspect of the question and I am glad to inform you that world opinion since I wrote the pamphlet has swung towards the suggestion I made. Strakosch (Sir Henry Strakosch, an economist to India Office) approved my views at the India Office discussion and he is now definitely wedded to this view. But to tackle the wider problem we shall have to adopt such means as may divert production from factories to cottages. In other words, you will have to decentralise production and I do not think one could succeed in this direction without the help of the legislation.

My mind is running somewhat like this. Tariff, Power Plants, system of Limited Liability Companies and Currency Administration have been much abused and require some conditions to be imposed on them. For instance, tariff all over the world has been exploited in the name of patriotism but I feel it should not be applied indiscriminately. In the first place, tariff protection should be given only to articles which could naturally and not artificially be produced in the country and secondly, its ultimate object ought to be to divert production in cottages. For instance, if we are to apply a rational protective policy we cannot aspire to produce cars in India under the existing circumstances when the demand for automobiles in the country is so limited. Same thing may be said of Typewriters and Singer Sewing machines, etc. Then in order to divert production ultimately to cottages the factory production will have by some methods to be handicapped. Khaddar and gur, for instance, should get protection in preference to cotton and sugar mills which may have to bear a tax. Similarly buses in preference to Railways may have to be protected. This is only by way of illustration. The idea would be to decentralise those productions which could take place in cottages. Industries like steel which could not be established in cottages may have to be left alone. Similarly big Limited Liability Companies should not be allowed to strangle the growth of smaller concerns. Big Banks should supplement and not supplant the small banker and Sahukar. A huge amount of unproductive wealth is lying idle with Insurance Companies which could be more usefully utilised if the Currency was based not on gold but on commodities. Under a "commodity currency" lending money on agricultural products would be safer than investing the same in the present-day gilt-edged securities. I am just giving you these ideas in a very vague form. I hope you will see that there is no difference between us as regards the goal.

I believe the mill-owners would not object to bear tax in favour of cottage production provided they were fully protected from outside invasion and were given a sufficient notice about the ultimate goal of the Government. For instance, if you start with a prohibitive duty on import of cloth and sugar, with an exise duty on sugar and cloth factories, say to begin with at 20% gradually rising every year until it reaches 50% in 20 years'

time, it will not be opposed by the mills because this will give them a reasonable time to adjust their affairs according to the new policy of the Government. These are of course vague ideas but they can be put into practice provided there is sanction behind them. I may put them more clearly in writing.

As regards production of gur, I may tell you for your information that the question of sugar industry in India has lately assumed a very great importance and every province is trying to produce its own sugar-cane. Bengal, Bihar, U.P., Punjab, Madras and Southern India in fact, every province has potentiality to produce their requirement of sugar-canes. It would therefore be more helpful to be agriculturist if eventually protection was given to cottage produced gur and sugar rather than to big factories. I understand it is possible nowadays to produce even a fine sugar with plant costing Rs. 5,000/10,000.

I am interested to know what you say about your diet I am thinking of substituting almost for milk in my own case just for the sake of experiment. You do not write anything about your pain in hand. I hope you are now better.

This letter being a very lengthy one I have got it typed for your convenience.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

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BARDOLI,  
July 26, 1932

● MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I do know it would be better if I could go to London. But that requires matching favourable atmosphere here as well. Just now it is pronouncedly hostile. I have addressed a communication to the Government which is almost an ultimatum. I am now waiting for their response. I cannot write more for lack of time, but, if you happen to come to



Bombay, come. I shall be reaching there on August 4. In case it is finally decided that I should visit London, we shall discuss the matter of your stay there when the time for it comes.

Bapu

I shall be at Borsad on Tuesday.

28

YTRAVIDA MANDIR,  
July 30, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am in receipt of your letter of July 22. By now I have finished all the books on Currency I have with me, which, of course, does not mean that I have understood them very well. But the reading has, without doubt, added to my knowledge. I was hoping that by the time I finished the last book with me I would get some other books from you, but you did not get my letter at all. This is the second letter that has failed to reach you. I require the reports of Fowler Committee, Chamberlain Committee, Babington Smith and Hilton Young Committee Report along with the dissenting reports. I would also need Dadachanji's *Currency of Exchange* and the book Findlay Shirras has written recently.

I fear almonds will not suit you. I am able to digest almonds, ground-nuts and other oily seeds because I have grown accustomed to taking them through years' use. For you milk and curds are the main food, very little of starch and of the dal proteins none. Wheat, milk, curds, vegetable salad and starch-free fruits like grapes, pomegranate, orange, apple, pine-apple and *papaya*—these are the things that would suit people like you. What I have stated is based on my personal experience. Almonds can supplant milk only when a vegetable is found equivalent to milk. Chemical tests prove that almonds and milk have common properties excepting a certain specific property which is found in milk but not in almonds and which is present

in animal proteins only. I am convinced that out of the bewildering variety of vegetables there must be at least one containing that elusive property. But our vaids have been so indolent that they have not cared to pursue their research in this direction up to this time. So almonds have failed to serve the purpose reserved only for milk.

My hand is still the same, but this does not hinder my work. Therefore there is absolutely no cause for anxiety.

All three of us are doing well. You will be happy to know that Sardar has taken up the study of Sanskrit and has been making rapid progress in learning it.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

29

19 ALBERT ROAD,  
ALHAHABAD,  
July 31, 1932

MY DEAR MR. BIRIA,

A word of apology is due to you for the delay in acknowledging your letter of the 19th of July. It was redirected from here to Hyderabad Deccan where I had gone down on professional business. Before it reached Hyderabad I had left it for Bombay and it came back here only three days ago. I was taken ill on my return journey or else I should have replied to your letter immediately on my return.

- I have read the interview which you gave to the papers on the 18th of July past. It is quite obvious that you do not favour the Conference method. That impression has been further strengthened by your letter under reply.

I had nothing to do with the convening of the Conference at Bombay.—indeed I myself did not attend it as at that time I was indisposed. I quite realise that consistently with your position

you could not put your signature to the Bombay manifesto. At the same time I am bound to tell you that I do not agree with the views you have expressed. You say that evidently I seem to be under the impression that some businessmen are ready to co-operate in discussing the financial safeguards without the help of the politicians. I confess that that was my impression and I know that that was the impression of many others here and elsewhere. The statement of Sir Samuel Hoare only tended to strengthen that impression. I am, however, glad to know from you that no one has made any such suggestion of the Federation which is the representative body of the Indian merchants.

I have just been reading in the Bombay papers the proceeding of the recent meeting of the merchants at Bombay and I am glad that they have also made it clear that they do not want to exclude politicians from a discussion of the financial safeguards.

You refer to our personal conversation at Delhi. My recollection of that conversation is that you expressed your willingness to co-operate with the Consultative Committee if only I would support you in your proposal that questions relating to finance and commerce should be referred to a small committee consisting of Indian and British representatives of finance and commerce which should meet in London. I would have no objection to a discussion by financial experts of the technical matters relating to finance, but obviously mere politicians, howsoever objectionable they may be, cannot be deprived of their say on the constitutional aspect of any settlement between Indian and English representatives, of finance.

As regards your other reasons for attacking the Conference method, they are in the nature of party politics. I do not question your right to express such views but at the same time I hope you will recognise that there are unfortunately more parties than one in India at the present moment, though numerically some parties may be very much stronger than others. I have never asked for, or even suggested, the exclusion of any party from the right to express its views or take its proper share in the shaping of the constitution and I naturally cannot sympathise with the point of view that the task of constitution

making should be undertaken by any one single party to the exclusion of others

*Yours sincerely,*  
I B Sahu

G D BIRLA, Esq  
C/O MESSRS BIRLA BROTHERS LIMITED  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

30

Personal & Confidential  
CALCUTTA  
August 2 1932

MY DEAR SIR :

Thanks for your letter of 31st July

I am very sorry to hear that you were not well. I hope that now you are fully recovered.

I am afraid you have put a wrong interpretation on my interview and my letter to you in thinking that I am against the Conference method. I certainly yield to none in my desire for the Conference method, but I feel that until it is a real conference it will not lead us very far. Apart from the question of procedure, the main thing is that the constitution should be such as may not be rejected by the Nationalist India and in my humble opinion until we can get either direct or indirect co-operation of Gandhiji and get a constitution which even if it falls short of the Congress demand is not rejected by the Congress, there is no guarantee that mere inauguration of a constitution will bring peace. By this indirect co-operation I mean that even he cannot directly co-operate he should agree to guide with his views from time to time politicians like yourself who are to co-operate, indicating what is likely to be acceptable to him at least for the time being. Even this to some extent, can ensure a smooth working of the constitution after its introduction, and thus the object to restore peace in India could be achieved. This position was

more or less recognised by you after your return from the first R.T.C., as you were the first to work strenuously to get the co-operation of Gandhiji. The Calcutta Europeans also have begun to realise that without the co-operation of Congress the new constitution will not work, but with their diehard mentality they demand that a pledge that they would work the Reforms should be exacted from the Congress before the new constitution is inaugurated. What I maintain, however, is that the co-operation of Congress in some form should be sought for at this stage without which, in my humble opinion, no constitution will succeed.

I am glad that you feel assured that nothing has been done by the Indian merchants to indicate that they will give their independent co-operation, and I may assure you that so far as I know no one amongst the merchants has ever aspired to undertake independently the huge task of framing a constitution. They are unfit for the job and it would be ridiculous on their part if they labour under such illusion.

When I met you at Delhi with the resolution passed by the Federation I did not say that the Federation would co-operate with the Consultative Committee if only you would support our proposal that questions relating to finance and commerce should be referred to a small committee consisting of Indian and British representatives of finance and commerce which should meet in London, I think the impression which you gave me was that you were quite favourable to such a proposal. The question was thus not simply of your support but of the British Government appointing such a committee. The general feeling among the members of the Federation was that constitution of such a committee will indicate a genuine desire on the part of the Government to come to an agreement with the progressive Indian opinion and that under such circumstances co-operation will be desirable, as with such a gesture we all felt it would not be difficult to persuade the Government to allow the Federation to take up the question of financial safeguards in consultation with Gandhiji.

I write at length because I have great regard for you and I do not want you to feel that I am actuated by reasons of party politics. I do not belong to any political party and what I have said is purely from the viewpoint of a businessman who is fully

conscious of his limitations and is never likely to undertake a task for which he is unfit

Yours sincerely  
G D Birla

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU  
ALIAHABAD

31

19 ALBERT ROAD,  
ALIAHABAD  
August 4 1937

*Personal*

MY DEAR MR BIRLA

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 22nd of August

It is not my intention to carry on a controversy with you but in regard to one matter at least I am bound to say that my recollection is wholly different from yours. I am quite clear that when you saw me at Delhi you suggested the questions relating to finance and commerce should be referred to a small committee consisting of Indian and British representatives of finance and commerce and that this committee should meet in London. I have already said in my previous letter that I would have had no objection to a discussion by financial experts of the *technical matter* relating to finance but obviously mere politicians could not be deprived of their say on *the constitutional aspect* of any settlement between Indian and English representatives of finance. In substance with regard to the appointment of such a committee you do not contradict my recollection, but I see your objection is to my suggestion that you wanted my support, of course you are right in saying—as you say in your letter—that the question was not simply of my support but of the British Government appointing such a Committee.

My recollection is further clear that you said that you would be prepared to co-operate with the Consultative Committee.

your wish in the matter relating to finance and commerce could be met. I am placing this on record so that it may be clear that my recollection of the personal conversations at Delhi is different from yours to the extent indicated above.

As regards your statement in your letter of the 2nd of August that until the Conference is a real Conference it will not lead us very far. I do not know what you mean by a 'real Conference'. The expression 'Nationalist India' is not a word of definite meaning. I believe a person may be a good nationalist without being a Congressman.

You say there is no guarantee that mere inauguration of a Constitution will bring peace unless it is a constitution which, even if it falls short of the Congress demands, is not rejected by the Congress. I am not in a position to say what will be rejected or what will not be rejected by the Congress. That can only be said by the Congress itself.

As regards the association of Mahatma Gandhi no one will welcome it more than myself. I worked for it on my return from the first R. T. C. and I shall still be glad if his co-operation could be secured though I confess—and I have not concealed it from Mahatmaji himself—that on some of the questions involved, my point of view is not exactly identical with his and I have always reserved to myself the liberty of judging things of their own merits even though I may have the misfortune of differing from him on certain matters.

I am glad to know from your letter that "some Calcutta Europeans have begun to realise that without the co-operation of the Congress the new constitution will not work, but with their diehard mentality they demand that a pledge that they would work the reforms should be exacted from the Congress before the new Constitution is inaugurated."

I have just been reading Mr. Villier's article in the last issue of the London Spectator. Judging of the Calcutta Europeans by it and also by what appears in some of their organs, it is somewhat difficult for me to see that they realise that without the co-operation of the Congress the new constitution will not work, but probably you know better being on the spot. No one will be pleased than myself if you can secure the co-operation of the Congress in some form. Probably you are in a better position than many of us to achieve this end. At

the same time I am bound to tell you that I do not agree with you that the holding of a Conference, if the Congress hold out, will lead to no good. When therefore I spoke of the party politics in my first letter I referred to this very point of view which has been expressed by you in your letter of the 2nd which has also been expressed in so many other quarters.

With kind regards,

*Yours sincerely,*

T. B. Sapru

G. D. BIRIA, ESQ.  
CALCUTTA

32

CALCUTTA,  
August 4, 1932

DEAR LORD LOTHIAN,

Thanks for your letter of 19th July

Since I wrote to you last, things politically have further deteriorated. The contrast between the position created by Lord Irwin when everyone co-operates and the one as it is now when everyone non co-operates must be strikingly clear to Sir Samuel who, I hope, will realise the full depth of the Indian feeling even if he has been all throughout misinformed about the same.

I am gratified to hear from you that "what matters now is that there should be a real conference between India and the representatives of Parliament as well as of the Government". But I do not know how you are going to get "real India". Even if you again get the co-operation of the Liberals—which is most likely—after you make some modification in the procedure, it would by no means amount to getting "real India" to co-operate. I may harp again therefore on what I said in my previous letters, i.e., what matters is not mere procedure or even a new constitution but a constitution introduced with the direct or indirect co-operation and approval of the Congress, without which there is no chance of a smooth working of the



new constitution. I don't see why a settlement with the Congress should be impossible since it recognised "reservations and safeguards" during the transitional period. I have pressed this point also on the Governor of Bengal, who, I thought was much impressed with what I said, and I would implore you to work for it. Please do not be under a misapprehension, as you were when we talked at the Calcutta Club, that once a constitution comes into existence, Nationalist India will simply begin to work it, and there will be an end, at any rate, to a good deal of the present strife.

Yes, I am glad that Lord Irwin has joined the Cabinet. India has got a good opinion of him and as he is a great friend of Gandhiji I feel happy that he is there. Should I not canvass through you also his support for what I advocate? I would have written to him myself, but I thought he did not like me much and so I don't propose to write to him.

As regards the economic situation, since I wrote to you last the trend is better. This could be attributed substantially to cheap money. Encouraged by a large exodus of gold the Government have stopped borrowing on Treasury Bills and this may bring down the bank rate to 3%. Now it is 4%. Please do not misunderstand that gold export has thus been an unmixed blessing to us. Similar position would have been achieved had the Government made an addition to their gold holdings in the Paper Currency Reserve by purchasing all the gold offered by rural India. We all resent that while the Bank of England should be making addition to its gold stock we are depriving of it when it is available at our own doors. The sale of gold by the cultivators whether it were purchased by the Government or exported was bound to produce a favourable effect on the money market as it already has had, and this ultimately may raise the prices to some extent. So far the improvement, however, is confined to big towns, and there is no assurance that the present optimism will lead us to any real improvement. In fact, the condition of villages, if anything, is worsening and the Government finances—so far as private reports indicate are also feeling the pinch severely. There is going to be a substantial deficit in the Railway Budget—something like 10 crores. The general revenue too is suffering. The chief thing which can cause a permanent improvement could only be a substantial rise in the

prices of prime products. Any rise in the price of food-stuff alone will help the cultivator only partially, as the cultivator is both a producer as well as a substantial consumer. The cultivator can, therefore, largely gain only if there is a rise in the prices of those articles which are exported, and jute and cotton stand first in the list of such products. There has been a small rise in the prices of both these commodities, but here again the American cotton is seriously competing in the world market both with cotton and jute. The improvement, so far as India is concerned, will therefore depend on the rise of prices of jute, cotton and oilseeds primarily, which are largely available for export. They can rise either as a result of improvement in world conditions or due to a scientific inflation in India itself. The Indian Chamber of Commerce has written to the Government of India recently on the subject and I am enclosing herewith a copy of the representation, which will give you some idea of the real condition. Although since this representation was made on the 4th July, there has been a slight change in the level of prices, but is only negligible. I hope you will find it of some interest.

In the end may I again implore you to do all what is possible to work for a constitution framed with the co-operation of Gandhiji and which may not be such as may be altogether rejected by the Congress. If we can get a constitution of this kind, at any rate its smooth working is assured. The rest we can get by gradual evolution.

Hope you are lit. With kindest regards,

*I remain,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
G. D. Birla

LORD LOTHIAN  
LONDON

CALCUTTA,  
August 8, 1932

MY DEAR SIR-TIJ,

Thanks for your letter of the 4th August.

I would have certainly very much liked to remove from your mind the impression that I am actuated by any party politics in expressing the views which I have done publicly and also in my private letter to you, but I realise that just now I will not succeed. Meanwhile, I may point out to you that there is hardly any difference between your recollection and mine about our Delhi interview if when you say "you will be prepared to co-operate" you mean the Federation of Indian Chamber or its representatives. The question of my personal co-operation had never arisen.

I had to point out some correction in my last letter, as I interpreted your letter to mean that the co-operation depended mainly on your support to our proposal to which, I must acknowledge, you were most favourable. In the present letter I take it that by "you" you mean the Federation or its representatives. After this I hardly see any difference between our recollections.

The Federation had laid down a certain test and it was the prevailing view in the Federation that if the Government conformed to that test the Federation should co-operate.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G. D. Birla

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU  
ALLAHABAD

34

September 13, 1932

LORD LOTHIAN  
SEYMOUR HOUSE  
17 WATERLOO PLACE  
LONDON S. W. 1

EXTREMELY UPSET BUT FEEL SITUATION COULD BE SAVED IF GOVERNMENT SINCERELY COOPERATES. I THINK PACT WITH DEPRESSED CLASSES ON JOINT ELECTORATE POSSIBLE SUCH A PACT WHEN CONCLUDED SHOULD BE ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT. TO ENSURE SUCCESS GANDHIJI'S PRESENCE OUTSIDE PRISON MOST ESSENTIAL. I EARNESTLY BELIEVE THIS MAY ULTIMATELY LEAD TO OTHER IMPORTANT SOLUTIONS BUT NOTHING POSSIBLE WITHOUT HIS PERSONAL GUIDANCE AND INFLUENCE. THEREFORE PLEASE WORK TO GET GANDHIJI'S AND OTHER IMPORTANT LEADERS' RELEASE WITHOUT LEAST DELAY. I HOPE IT IS REALISED THAT GANDHIJI'S DEATH WILL BE A GREAT CALAMITY NOT ONLY TO INDIA BUT TO WHOLE EMPIRE. PLEASE SHOW THIS CABLE TO LORD IRWIN WHO I HOPE WILL GIVE EVERY HELP.

G. D. BIRLA

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE

35

*Express*  
SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU  
ALLAHABAD

September 13, 1932

MAY I REQUEST YOU SHOULD WORK TO GET GANDHIJI RELEASED. FEEL CRISIS COULD BE SAVED BY ENTERING INTO PACT WITH DEPRESSED BUT THIS ONLY POSSIBLE WITH GANDHIJI'S PERSONAL INFLUENCE. BESIDES HIS RELEASE MAY HELP ACHIEVEMENT OF OTHER IMPORTANT RESULTS. THEREFORE HOPE YOU WILL DO ALL NEEDFUL.

GIRANSHVAMDAS RIBA

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE

September 13, 1932

SIR SAMUEL HOARE  
INDIA OFFICE  
LONDON

CRISIS IS SO SERIOUS THAT I THINK IT IS MY DUTY TO SEND YOU THIS CABLE. IN MY HUMBLE OPINION SITUATION COULD BE SAVED IF GOVERNMENT WOULD REALLY BE HELPFUL. FIRST OF ALL GANDHIJI WITH IMPORTANT LEADERS SHOULD BE RELEASED WITHOUT LEAST DELAY. GANDHIJI'S PRESENCE OUTSIDE WILL BE VERY HELPFUL IN ARRIVING AT A PACT WITH DEPRESSED CLASSES. THIS LEAD TO OTHER IMPORTANT CONSTITUTIONAL SOLUTIONS. THEREFORE EARNESTLY IMPORE NO TIME SHOULD BE LOST IN RELEASING GANDHIJI. NEED HARDY EMPHASISE HIS DEATH WILL BE GREAT CALAMITY NOT ONLY TO INDIA BUT TO WHOLE EMPIRE. I KNOW FROM PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE WHICH BELIEF I HOPE YOU SHARE THAT HE IS AS MUCH A TRUE FRIEND OF BRITAIN AS OF INDIA.

G.D. BIRLA

8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE

INDIA OFFICE,  
WHITTHALL,  
September 14, 1932

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

I write to say that your telegram of the 12th September, to Sir Samuel Hoare has been received. Sir Samuel Hoare is at present up at Balmoral Castle, and I am sending your telegram on to him there.

*Yours sincerely,*  
W. D. Croft

G. D. BIRLA, ESQ.

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INDIA OFFICE,  
WHITEHALL,  
September 14, 1932

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

Lord Lothian wishes me to acknowledge your telegram of 13th September regarding Mr. Gandhiji's intention to fast. He has sent a copy of your telegram to Lord Irwin

*Yours truly,*  
H. A. F. Rumbolz

G. D. BIRLA, ESQ.

39

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
September 15, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN.

Your letter stuns me. I sent you a telegram immediately I read it. I had thought that we were so near each other that you could never misunderstand a friendly letter from me. But I see that I committed a grave blunder. I ought not to have written that letter. I have therefore unreservedly and unconditionally withdrawn it. That letter being withdrawn, you need not take any of the steps adumbrated in your letter. Do please, therefore, go on with the Board as if I had never written anything to you. The mental hurt that I have caused you you will generously forget. I shall not easily forgive myself for writing that letter to you. Someone had suggested, I cannot recall who, that you might misunderstand my letter and I foolishly said that you would never misunderstand anything I wrote to you. pride goeth before destruction, and vanity before a fall. After these amends, I hardly think you need to publish the correspondence between us. But, if, for the sake of the cause, you think it necessary to publish it, you have my permission, in so far as it may be necessary.

Please tell me how Kamala and Dr. Alam are doing and ask Kamala to write to me.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

DR. BIDHAN ROY  
26 WFLINGTON STREET  
CALCUTIA

40

September 16, 1932

DEAR LORD LOTHIAN,

I sent a cable to you about the release of Gandhiji and I dare say many others did the same. I also sent a similar cable to Sir Samuel Hoare and I find from this morning's paper that Gandhiji is to be released with certain restrictions imposed on him on the 20th after he begins his fast. This is good to some extent but I am afraid even here the action is lacking in grace. The Government would have lost nothing had they released him immediately and without any restrictions. It would have been better had the Government released some of his important colleagues also because in this critical time every hand will be required to help. One cannot understand the logic of the Premier when he wants an agreed solution and yet puts the old man in jail immediately he lands in Bombay and releases him when he is on the verge of death. How is he to get an agreed solution under such circumstances is beyond my comprehension of ordinary mortals. Please excuse this warmth but you will appreciate our feelings when we find that instead of showing grace at this critical time the Government are making matters more difficult.

Please give us all help you can and also your valuable advice. I will be with Gandhiji for the next few weeks and my address at Bombay will be "Birla House, Malabar Hill,

Bombay". Even though you are a minister I hope you will rise above officialdom and do all what you can to help us.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G. D. Birla

LORD LOTHIAN  
INDIA OFFICE  
LONDON

41

**Extract from Letter Dated October 12, 1932  
from Sjt. Rajagopalachari, Calcutta**

"I don't quite like the change of name you have agreed to for the league. 'Servants of Untouchables Society' is good in itself, but it means a continued recognition of untouchables as such. 'Servants of India' or 'Servants of Bhils', is a race name and not a name implying inferiority, and 'God' is always there. But 'Servants of Untouchables' or 'Servants of Slaves' would not be right if we intend to abolish untouchability or slavery. Suppose the American Abolitionists had a league called 'Servants of Helpers of Slaves', it would not have expressed the object. Of course the society may close down when the institution of slavery or of untouchability is abolished. But the argument is not right, for it is the abolition in the psychology of men that is wanted at once. You should have to say 'Servants of Untouchables so-called' which is cumbersome and in reality open to the same objection. I would have liked 'Untouchability Abolition League' or (Society). As a matter of fact, I did not like 'Anti-Untouchability' as a phrase. It is so barbarous. 'Untouchability Abolition Society' would be further a literal rendering of the names already in use in Hindi, Gujarati and other Indian languages without any objection. It is really abolition of a slave status and the phrase Abolition would be suggestive and emphatic, as Prohibition has come to stay in



connection with drink and drugs. *Service* to a group of men is not really the object and aim, if we think about it. It is really the *doing away* with the evil. There is a school of thought which would keep the segregation, and ask us to do all we can to make them live and eat more comfortably. This is not all we want to do."

42

BIRLA HOUSE,  
NEW DELHI,  
November 2, 1932

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

I received today a telegram from His Excellency the Governor of Bengal inviting me on your behalf to participate in the deliberations of the Special Sub-Committee to be appointed for discussing financial and commercial safeguards. While I am grateful to you for the invitation and while I myself would love to participate in these deliberations, I am afraid there are circumstances which make my participation rather difficult and I am sure you will not misunderstand me. I think it my duty to tell you my difficulties somewhat at length.

When in March last I used my influence to commit the Federation of Indian Chambers to a certain attitude I did so with a definite motive. Probably the motive was somewhat selfish, but there it was. I had thought that by offering you our co-operation, however qualified, I would convince you that we were true friends who were very eager to see permanent friendly relations restored between the two countries and I had expected that once we could get your trust and confidence it would not be difficult for us later on to convince you of the wisdom of our advice. I feel that in this object I entirely failed.

In your letter of the 8th April, 1932, in reply to mine of the 14th and 28th March, 1932 you had told me that you would write to me again, but I had no further communication from you. You were kind enough to consult me about the Ottawa

Conference and the co-operation of Indian merchants and I secured Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas's consent to go to Ottawa, but the abrupt end of the correspondence and the attitude of the Government in India made a clear impression on my mind that we had failed to be recognised as friends. The Federation of the Indian Chamber of Commerce was summarily ignored as regards Ottawa and even when you made your statement as regards the procedure of further discussion on the constitution and stated that financial safeguards would be discussed by a Committee of experts I had no notion of the exact procedure you were going to adopt. Even now I do not know anything about the composition of the terms of reference of the Special Sub-Committee. And now at the eleventh hour I am asked to proceed to London, completely ignorant of the position, with the Indian mercantile community completely ignored and thus in an irritated mood. Having myself sponsored a resolution in my constituency and having got it committed to the same it can hardly be honest on my part to act independently unless I am satisfied that by doing so I am not going against the spirit of the resolution passed. If I violate the spirit of the resolution I degrade myself in my own esteem. And I hope you would be the first to appreciate this.

Please let me assure you that I am not at all making any complaints. I cannot for a moment claim that the Secretary of State should take me in confidence. It may have been pointed out to you the Secretary of State should not carry on private correspondence with an ordinary man like myself and probably this ended the correspondence. I too would not have ventured to write to you direct but for the fact that you were kind enough to put me at ease in London by suggesting that I might write to you whenever I felt I could say something useful. I am therefore not making any complaints, but what I am pointing out is how difficult it becomes for a man to do useful work when there is no response from the other side, and I am afraid that my or Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas's going to London can be of little practical use until we were recognised as friends and some latitude given to do some useful work for the restoration of real peace.

Please let me explain what I mean by "latitude" being given to us. I will draw your attention to paragraph A of the resolu-

tion No. 3 of the Federation which begins with the words "there is a genuine desire". Now I have always put my own interpretation on these words. I have felt that we businessmen have got a limited influence; yet it is such an influence as can be of great help if it is correctly utilised. My own interpretation of the words "genuine desire" therefore has been that whenever the Government decides to make a correct use of influence this would amount to a genuine desire on its part to come to an agreement with progressive opinion in India. And I submit that mere participation in the financial discussion is not the correct use of our influence. After all what could I or Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas do in England if we had no backing? The Indian mercantile community will not back us—my friend Sir Purshottamdas is already censured—and we have no claim to the backing of the Nationalist section since we are not politicians. Therefore even if we decided in London to accept certain safeguards we cannot bind anyone so far as Indian public opinion is concerned. We therefore simply aggravate the position if we work without any such backing. While therefore with a proper backing we could be of great use, without it we are utterly useless. The only way for us to render effective service is that before we participate in the discussion of these safeguards we must be given a latitude to use our influence to get Gandhiji to associate himself with the new constitution provided of course that at least we are satisfied with it and I submit that our services could be fully utilised to create such a circumstance. I admit it may not be possible for the Cabinet to meet Gandhiji's demand in full but I maintain as I had also suggested in my last letter to you that it is possible even for this Conservative Parliament to give India a constitution which while not fully acceptable to the Congress may at least be such as may not be rejected by Gandhiji. I hope you will appreciate the difficulty of a constitution being introduced unaccompanied by any goodwill or co-operation on the part of the people who alone, in Mr. Churchill's words uttered very recently, "can allay or excite political sentiments". I am writing this with some confidence as I have known all along that Gandhiji is a man of compromise and as I believe that you are great friend of his you are in a position to appreciate him.

I tried to get permission to see him and discuss the situation

before he began his fast and His Excellency Sir John Anderson tried to help me. I did not succeed in getting permission from the Government. Then I got a chance to talk to him just before his fast but as the other matters then had assumed greater importance I decided to wait. During the period of the fast he became very weak and so I did not want to tax his energy. After the fast, all interviews were stopped but I was allowed to see him in connection with the Anti-Untouchability work. I had a four-hour talk with him but I could not interest him in any detailed political discussion, as he rightly pointed out to me that I was not supposed to discuss such matters. He, however, gave me a clear indication that he was himself very eager to see peace restored and also promised that if I came back with permission to talk these matters he would give me something in writing. I again sought the help of His Excellency Sir John Anderson who again promised to write to Simla, which I am sure he must have done, but without any tangible result. The position just now is that restriction is imposed even on correspondence and interviews in connection with the work for the removal of untouchability which I hope will be removed. A letter of mine on important questions bearing on untouchability is lying unreplyed at Yeravda for nearly a fortnight. I hope you know that I have been appointed President of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League and we are getting wonderful response from all parts of the country. But even in this purely constructive and social work we are treated by the Government as "untouchables". With such an atmosphere prevailing how can you as a practical man expect that the mere introduction of reforms will do any good. What is required is an atmosphere of trust on the eve of the constitutional change.

I have written somewhat at length and I am encouraged to do so on account of my belief that the obstacle is not Whitehall but Simla. I sincerely appreciate your own difficulties but I maintain that by mutual co-operation they could be surmounted. Evidently you mean business, otherwise you would not set up this Committee to discuss financial safeguards, but let me advise you as one who has got very great regard for you to please get Gandhiji's commitment before you introduce any reforms and in this field I am prepared to work heart and soul and later on even help in the question of financial safeguards.

If I am allowed I may discuss matters with Gandhiji without arousing the least speculation or causing any publicity. And I can even come to London to discuss the same with a view to finding ways and means to get his co-operation. But I do not want to pose as one to deliver the goods when I know I cannot.

I hope I have explained fully and also hope that you will take it in the spirit in which I have written.

I have kept your invitation private and so is this letter.

A resolution of the Federation is attached for ready reference.

Yours sincerely,  
G.D. Birla

SIR SAMUEL HOARI  
LONDON

43

YIRAVDA MANDIR,  
November 11, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. You too must have received the letter I wrote. Since we are going to meet fairly soon, I do not want to write more now. There is nothing special to inform you about. I am in receipt of the League's scheme. If there is anything worth telling in this regard I shall tell you when we meet. I have written to Bhai Ambalal asking him to join the League. We must take up simultaneously both constructive work and propaganda. Since I am doing the latter it does not mean the League should leave out it. What I am doing is something altogether different. But on this matter also we shall have talks when we meet. I am certain that the work for the promotion of inter-dining is beyond the capacity of the League. Kerala needs the services of a lady from the north. After consulting Rajaji I have sent a wire to Urmila Devi that she is to go. I feel that expenses should be borne by the League. I have some money here. I have sent something from that amount. I wanted

the entire amount to be passed on to the League. In case the League approves of the idea of sending Urmila Devi, the rest of the expenses will have to be borne by it. If it is decided that this kind of activity cannot be included in the League's own programme, we shall see about that.

I am maintaining fairly good health. The weight too is now satisfactory. No doubt I miss some of my former energy. I am sure I shall soon recover it. You must take care of your own health. I do not feel impressed by what you have written about soda bicarb. A doctor friend of mine once told me that a daily intake of soda can keep off rheumatism. Otherwise also it is quite good. I have not experienced any ill effects from its use. Besides, water itself contains soda

I have gone through the Pledge. I have not studied it minutely, but, as it is, it seems all right

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

44

YERAVDA MANDIR,  
November 15, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

About your criticism of the Yeravda Pact we shall talk when we meet. I do not want to waste my time over it just now. What Thakkar Bapa has written about the happening in Patna is taking place at many other places. We should write to local people about it. Why should not the municipality take up this kind of work? The League should bring out a weekly or fortnightly bulletin or paper—call it whatever you like—making all these horrible things public. Even if we are poor, our municipalities are certainly not too indigent to remedy such defects. I have written to Mathuradas; also to Ambalal.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

SJT GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD  
NEW DELHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,  
November 28, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Shindeji complains very bitterly that we have stolen their institution's name. The complaint seems justified. We are concerned with work; not with names. Therefore we should name ours 'Harijan Seva Sangh' both in English as well as in our languages. You are leaving Delhi; let us hope you will get this letter in time.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
AI BUQUERQUE ROAD  
NEW DELHI

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
December 7, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have had a long chat with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, as also with Satisbabu regarding the Anti-Untouchability Board for Bengal. I have several letters from Bengal complaining about the formation of the Board. Before it was formed Ghanshyamdas had told me that he was going to ask you to form the Board, and without giving any thought to the suggestion I at once endorsed it. But I see that the idea has not found favour in Bengal, especially so far as Satisbabu and Dr. Suresh are concerned. They think that the Board is bound to have a party colour about it. I do not know how far this fear is justified, but I do know this, that the work of anti-untouchability should not become a party affair in any way whatsoever. We want all who desire the reform to associate themselves

freely and wholeheartedly with any organisation that may be formed. I would therefore suggest that you should call at the workers representing different groups and parties and place yourself at their disposal and let them then choose whomsoever they like as President offering to give your whole-hearted co-operation to the President and Board of their choice. I know that this requires self-abnegation. If I know you well, I know that this is not beyond you. Of course if you feel that there is nothing in the complaints made and that you will be able to smooth down all the difficulties and that you will be able to bring all the parties together. I have of course nothing to say. In making the suggestions that I have made I assumed the impossibility of securing the association of all parties with the Board as it is constituted at present. I have now placed the whole thing before you. You will do whatever is best in the interest of the cause.

Sjt. Khaitan gave me your message about Basanti Devi. I told him that I wanted her to make her own choice, but wanted her to work effectively and ceaselessly in the cause of anti-untouchability. I am not enamoured of her accepting any office in any organisation. When I was there at the time of the Desh-bandhu collections, both she and I had come to the conclusion that there was not to run any organisation, but simply to work whenever she was free and had the mind for it.

You will please tell me all about Dr. Alam.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

DR. BIDHAN ROY  
WELLINGTON STREET  
CALCUTTA

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36 WELLINGTON STREET,  
CALCUTTA,  
December 12, 1932

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Your letter reached me yesterday. I heard from Mr.



Khaitan the details of the discussion he had with you regarding Bengal Anti-Untouchability Board. You told him that you were going to write to me. After hearing Mr. Khaitan, I was prepared for a letter from you such as you have sent me. Before I proceed further, you will allow me to mention that the position of the presidentship of the Bengal Board was not of seeking and I now know that Mr. Birla had, after consultation with you and with your approval, 'selected me as president. When the call came, I agreed, in spite of my imperfections and my other preoccupations. I do not forget also that the whole scheme originated with you and friends who met at Poona and therefore, when these friends wanted me to do so, I accepted the responsibility. You asked me to be the president, because you were then convinced that I could do the work. Now that you do not feel so sure and want me to withdraw, I gladly do so. I am writing to Mr. Birla today offering my resignation. It is no matter of self-abnegation for me, because I have never in my life occupied any place or position for a moment when those who have it in their gift, desire that I should not continue to do so.

You have in your letter suggested that I should "call all workers representing different groups and parties" and "let them choose whomsoever they like as president". May I point out to you that under the constitution of the League, the president of the Central Board nominates the presidents of the Provincial Boards, who, in their turn nominate the member of the Provincial Boards. I have no power to dissolve the Board already formed in Bengal. It is not, therefore, possible for me to follow your instructions even if I desired to, but I am referring the whole matter to Mr. Birla, the President of the All-India Boards. It is now for him to take such action as he chooses.

You say in your letter: "but I see that the idea has not found favour in Bengal." I feel it my duty to inform you that in Bengal, there are many parties and groups. Besides those led by Sjt. Satis Das Gupta and Dr. Suresh Benerji, who are interested in untouchability, work and who are doing very valuable work now. We framed the Bengal Board very carefully and as Sjt. Debi Prasad Khaitan must have told you, the Board was representative of the various groups. Many of the district bodies already in existence have written to us signifying their

desire to co-operate with the Board and in fact, we have had no refusal except as Sjt. Khaitan told you from Messrs Das Gupta and Benerji, though each had different reasons. As you however, seem to think that in Bengal a Board cannot function effectively unless with the co-operation of Sjt. Das Gupta and Dr. Banerji, which they have refused to give, there is no option left but to dissolve the Board.

As the work of the League has already begun in Bengal, it would be difficult for me and the members of my Board to explain the position unless I get your permission to send this letter and the first paragraph of your letter to the Press. I hope you have no objection.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bidhan Chandra Roy

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YIRAVDA CENTRAL  
PRISON,  
December 15, 1932

MY DLAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have sent you one telegram today about the name of the League, and another about the Bengal Provincial Organisation, will go tomorrow.

First, about the name, I enclose herewith Rajaji's letter. I think that this argument is conclusive, and if it is at all possible to adopt his suggestion, you will alter the name accordingly. I was so possessed with the idea of service that I missed the implication to which Rajaji draws pointed attention.

Now as to the Bengal Organisation; I fear that I have ommitted a grievous blunder. I overrated my influence with Dr. Bidhan. I am sorry because I have given him pain; and I am sorry because I have placed you in an awkward position. He will servive the pain; you will surmount an awkward difficulty; I shall not easily forget my folly.

I have sent Dr. Roy the following telegram

YOUR UNSIGNED LETTER RECEIVED TODAY. CORRESPONDENCE NOT MEANT FOR PUBLICATION. HAVE TOLD YOU DISTINCTLY IF YOU FEEL CONFIDENT YOU SHOULD CONTINUE WORK ALREADY BEGUN. ACCEPT MY APOLOGY FOR WHAT I NOW RECOGNISE WAS UNDUE INTERFERENCE AND WHAT I HAD MEANT TO BE A FRIENDLY SUGGESTION. PLEASE THEREFORE TREAT MY LETTER AS WITHDRAWN.

GANDHI

and I enclose herewith a copy of the letter I am sending him. I do not need to add anything more. I hope that the incident will close without much worry to you. I enclose also a copy of Dr. Bidhan's reply.

I have received your letter of the 12th December. The definition that Sjt. Thakkar has sent you has been further altered by me. I enclose copy of the altered definition. Pandit Kunzru had sent me the definition that Sjt Thakkar had sent you. I made alteration and sent him the altered copy. I see that Sjt. Thakkar had not received the altered copy when he wrote to you.

I had about 7 friends and followers of Dr. Ambedkar today. They complained or stated (because they said they did not want to complain but merely to make a statement) that Dr. Ambedkar's letter to Sjt. Thakkar written on board the steamer making certain suggestions was not mentioned during the meeting of the Board in Poona. I told them I did not know that it was not mentioned, but I told them also that the letter could not have been passed by and it must have been considered by the Board. You will now please write to them or me as to what was exactly done in connection with that letter.

These friends also stated that our organisations were keeping up the split amongst the Harijans and wherever possible favouring Rao Bahadur Rajah's party. I assured them such never could be your intention and that the endeavour of the Board would be to steer clear of the party divisions, and that the endeavour of the Board and its branches everywhere would be to cement the relations between the two parties for which now that the political part of the question was settled there was absolutely no need.

Although I have got additional assistance in the shape of

Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi having been sent to me, as also efficient shorthand assistance, I can have no leisure. This much needed assistance enables me to keep abreast with the growing work. Interviews take up a great deal of time, but they are all necessary. I do not therefore grudge them.

I hope you are keeping fit. You must do something that would induce sound sleep, not by way of drugs, but through natural means or dietetic changes. Have you tried the prunes in the manner I suggested? Some of the easy *asanas* and deep breathing, which is what *pranayam* for health means, might assist digestion and induce sleep.

Yours sincerely,  
Bapu

PS. since dictating the above letter, I have received the following telegram from Dr. Bidhan:

THANKS FOR TELEGRAM. RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MEAN FEELING CONFIDENT. AS EXPLAINED IN LETTER IN VIEW OF PRESENT ENTHUSIASM IN BENGAL ANY PRESIDENT AND BOARD CAN PERFORM ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY WORK. IF HOWEVER YOU MEAN CONFIDENCE IN OBTAINING CO-OPERATION FROM THOSE WHO REFUSE IT WHEN OFFERED NO ONE CAN ENSURE IT. MEASURE OF SUCCESS WILL DEPEND ON FUNDS AND PROPER UTILISATION THEREOF. PLEASE WIRE WHETHER I AND BOARD CAN RELY ON YOUR FULL SUPPORT IF WE CONTINUE.

BIDHANROY

To which I have sent the following reply:

THANKS YOUR WIRE. BY CONFIDENCE I MEAN SELF-CONFIDENCE. OF COURSE YOU CAN RELY SUCH ASSISTANCE AS IS WITHIN MY POWER.

GANDHI

YERAVDA CENTRAL  
PRISON,  
December 20, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of the 14th instant. I hope I have made ample amends for my presumption and that there is no wound left anywhere. If you think that there is still anything more left to be done by me, do please tell me. I hope not to repeat the folly.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD  
NEW DELHI

December 21, 1932

PUJYA BAPU,

I have your typed letter with its enclosures. Dr. Roy had already sent to me a copy of his letter to you, and now with your reply to the same I have got the full correspondence with me. I should not like to waste your time over this matter any more. Yet I cannot resist my inclination to write as I feel your mistake was somewhat of a different nature from the one as understood by you. There is no question of my being placed in an awkward position. If you put me even in a greater awkward position, you may do so with pleasure. But even now I don't agree with you that your mistake was confined to over-rating your influence with Dr. Bidhan. In fairness to Dr. Roy, I must say that he could not have helped feeling hurt. To my mind, the mistake lay in the fact that Sureshbabu and Satisbabu being more closely associated with you, you should have helped Dr. Roy in securing the former's co-operation instead of asking the

latter to resign simply because your nearest friends would not give their co-operation to Dr. Roy. I may admit that Sureshabu and Satisbabu had good reason to be without their co-operation, yet I think you could not have chosen Dr. Roy for sacrifice. This, in my opinion, was your mistake. And I felt surprised when I saw your first letter to Dr. Roy, as constitutionally you are almost incapable of making such mistakes. We are so much dazzled with your super-human personality that we have almost lost self-confidence in ourselves. The result is that whenever I feel doubtful about your actions I console myself with an explanation that the fault may be with my own capacity to understand the implication of your action. So was in this case. I still feel that in your last reply to Dr. Roy you should not have rebuked him, if I may use the word, for misunderstanding your letter. I hope I am not wasting your time. I am writing all this for my personal satisfaction and you may write to me if you think it as all necessary to do so.

As regards the definition, as you know in such matters I worry little. But your latest definition seems to be the best of all those discussed previously.

As regards the complaint of Dr. Ambedkar's friends that we did not give serious consideration to the Doctor's letter, I think it is made somewhat under misapprehension. Like Dr. Ambedkar's suggestions, there were many other suggestions before us which required being considered and embodied in the Blue Pamphlet. But we decided not to discuss the Blue Pamphlet at all in such a big meeting and therefore appointed a small committee of three to discuss and revise the Blue Pamphlet in the line of suggestion not only of Dr. Ambedkar but of many other criticisms which may be received from the Provincial Boards and other members. But I confess that our Secretariat is not so efficient as it ought to be. Poor old Thakar is wandering from place to place and in the absence of a capable secretary at the Head office the work is, undoubtedly suffering. Before we started this Society Devdas had promised to help me, but he seems to be occupied with other work. I, in fact, made grievances of it to him when I met yesterday. But he has promised to get for me a good man. As it is I told him the work must suffer if myself can get a good man but as you know, my getting a good man means payment of so much money. I

can get a man only on the market value. What is required in such Societies is a man who wants to make self-sacrifice. I wonder, therefore, whether you could help me. Devdas, if he can take charge of the work can do wonders, but unfortunately he is not coming.

We are issuing the Journal about the beginning of January and I am expecting a contribution from you. I have got it just now. Viyogi Hari has been appointed to edit the Hindi Journal. I don't have a good man just now to look after the English Journal and so I am utilising our office staff to do the work. But as you will realise this requires the service of a good Secretary and I must have one.

About the name of the Society, I am afraid, it would look ridiculous to change it for the third time. Rajaji's letter although impressed you so much did not make an impression on me. But probably it is due to the fact that I look upon all these things with somewhat indifference.

I hope you are quite fit.

Please do not worry about my health. I am just all right. I have not tried the prunes. I propose to do so.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

DELHI,  
December 24, 1932

PUJYA BAPU,

By the time this letter reaches you the result of the Referendum will be out and from all reports to hand it is going to be in our favour. Now the only thing which could avert your fast is the legal difficulties which, I am sure, could not be surmounted before the 2nd of January. I had hoped that the Viceroy's assent to the introduction of the Bill in Madras Council would be

obtained before the 2nd of January and thus we would be able to convince you that even if Zamorin were helpful legal difficulties could not be surmounted before the 2nd January, and that therefore your fast must be postponed. But I am afraid the Viceroy's assent is not forthcoming before the 2nd of January. Does it not mean that under your sacred condition you should postpone your fast at any rate until the Government makes its position clear. The attitude of the Government is that they would not give their decision until they had made full enquiries from the various provinces. I hope their decision would be announced by the 15th of January. Now if you embark on your fast before the Government's decision is out, don't you think that you will be embarrassing them when you can avoid it?

I will, therefore, ask you to consider carefully whether you should not postpone your fast until the Government gave their decision. You may, if you like, correspond directly with the Government on this matter. I personally feel that you cannot begin your fast until the Government had given their decision.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YLRAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

December 27, 1932

• PUJYA BAPU,

I have received both of your articles. Unfortunately there is likely to be a small hitch in the publication of the first issue as we have not yet been able to get permission from the Government. A number of minor formalities have to be gone through, and the authorities are making enquiries. I hope the delay will not be more than a week.

As regards your fast, I hope you will decide to postpone it



until we definitely hear from the Government. I have not the least doubt in my mind that the Government are not going to withhold their assent. As to whether they will announce their decision before the 2nd of January or after, it is difficult for me to say. But if you communicate direct with them, they will be able to tell you. Once Government give permission for the introduction of the Bill, the rest will be easier. I have not yet seen the copy of the Bill. But, I hope you have seen it and approve of the same. If the Bill is of a mere permissive nature it would not be sufficient, because then again the matter will have to rest on the sweet will of Zamorin. Something more, therefore, will be necessary.

I have asked Rajaji to come and see you with friends and probably they will be seeing you shortly.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAUDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

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YERAUDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
December 28, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

The Secretary of the Friends of India Society, London, writes to me saying that she has sent you a cheque or draft for £42-0-3 being the takings during the Fast Week. You will please tell me whether the amount has been received.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. Gandhi

YERAVIDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
December 27/29, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. The dazzle of my presence is really a greater embarrassment to me than to friends like you, and I wish that we can work and speak to one another on a par. I hate to have any special credit given to my word than would be claimed by any other person saying the same thing. With this preface I must say that I wholly dissent from your diagnosis. If I had written a similar letter, say for instance, to you, I do not think that you would have resented it. In other words, I would not have overrated my influence with you. How could I help Dr. Roy in securing the co-operation of Babus Suresh and Satis when I knew that such a thing was not possible, unless I simply coerced them into giving mechanical co-operation, but I would not think of such co-operation even between Sureshbabu and Satisbabu? Even in the Ashram, where I may be said to have equal influence with all, there are incompatible temperaments where I cannot look for co-operation, much less can I impose it; and inasmuch as I believe that Suresh and Satis Babus were more effective people as plodders, I naturally desired the work to be in their hands, and I thought that Dr. Roy would appreciate my suggestion. Why should anybody feel hurt if a burden is shifted from his shoulders and put on the other, thought to be more able to carry it? And I, as it now turns out, erroneously thought that Dr. Bidhan would not misconstrue my letter, take it in good light, and contest, if he liked, the underlying assumption, but never resent the letter. And why do you say that I have rebuked Dr. Roy in my second letter? I think I have fairly put the position, but if you have not followed it, you may read it over again. I would like you to understand the motive underlying the first letter. I shall see if I can think of a good secretary for you who will work for the love of work.

I would warn you against issuing the English edition unless it is properly got up and contains readable English and translations are all accurate. It would be much better to be satisfied with the Hindi edition only than to have an indifferently edited English weekly.

Of course, I know that there<sup>f</sup> is no question of partiality, but it is as well to bear in mind how Dr. Ambedkar's people feel about all we do.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

PS. Today on the 29th Dr. Bidhan's letter has arrived. Herewith its copy. His conclusions are inherent from yours. The fast stands postponed. Rajaji and company have arrived.

Bapu

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36 WILLINGTON STREET,  
CALCUTTA,  
Christmas Day, 1932

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Your letter made me feel very sad and distressed. I have succeeded in belying your high hopes regarding me and in showing how misplaced was the trust you placed in me. My vanity has not blinded me to faults and weaknesses and on this great day I pray to God to forgive me and bless me in spite of my trespasses. I ask your forgiveness also for my failings. Won't you forgive ?

I read and re-read your letter. I do not think it was any blunder on your part in having written me that letter. You wrote it because you were convinced that the cause required it. The cause is greater than the individual. I cannot bring myself to believe that I misunderstood the purport or the purpose of your letter. You say, "we were 'o near each' other, etc., etc." May I humbly correct you ? We are "near to each other" and I refuse to be separated.

I do not conceal from you the fact that I was hurt on reading your first letter because in that you asked me to take certain action on the basis of "complaints made", but you did not tell

me what they were, nor asked me to explain them. If the complaint be only this that I am not able to work with all parties, then I plead guilty to the charge. All I can say is that I have tried and will try again. If I fail, it will not be for any unwillingness on my part.

I am disciplinèd enough to obey the commands of the leader of the Untouchability Movement, of which I am a common worker. My concern was with regard to the members of the Board, most of whom were not even co-workers with me in public life, and whom I selected only for the love they bore for the cause. I have not told them about the letter and they need not know its contents. I only desired your permission to publish the relevant portion of your letter in case I have to ask them to withdraw so that a new Board could be formed.

Kamala is much better and is having short drives. I am glad to say that detailed examinations have not revealed any organic disease in the heart. I am keeping her here for a few weeks more. Baby Mukherjee (Deshbandhu's daughter) has very kindly allowed Kamala to remain in their flat, a true daughter of her father.

Dr. Alam is also, I am glad to report, better. He has put on nearly 8 lbs in weight and has improved so much that the surgeons think that he may not require operation. He is being treated with X-Ray and Diathermy. All my doctor friends are very kind and are glad to be of service to him. He is staying at my brother's house and it is a quiet place and Dr. Alam is not allowed to be disturbed. Basanti Devi is very worried with continued illness in the family.

My namaskars to you.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bidhan



**1933**



YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
POONA,  
January 1, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSWYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 27th ultimo. I had seen the Bill. It is not permissive in the sense you have evidently imagined. It is permissive in the sense that the Bill does not declare all temples automatically open. But individual temples can be opened by the vote of the majority of the temple goers, not at the will of the Trustees.

I hope that your confidence about the assent will be justified by the event. Rajaji was here for 3 days, and we had long discussion about the Bill and the situation in Guruvayur in general.

I hope the formalities about the publication of the Weekly have been completed.

Bapu

January 2, 1933

PUDYA BAPU,

I have your letter of the 27th and 28th coming in the same envelope. I have to confess that I did not quite follow your argument. But I see that there is some force in what you say. I have no desire, however, to waste your time. I will wait until we meet. In fact, there were a number of other points which I would have discussed merely for my own satisfaction during my last visit at Poona. But finding you so busy I deliberately refrained. You mention in your letter having enclosed a copy of Dr. Roy's letter which I do not find.

I note what you say about the English edition and I will be careful as regards the selection of the man who takes its charge.

As regards the postponement of your fast in a way I am



relieved. But that does not mean that we are going to slacken our efforts. The Viceroy's assent, I have not the least doubt, will be forthcoming at least before the 15th and I hope that you are satisfied with the nature of the Bill which is being introduced. As I had talked to you in Poona, do you think now we should take up the question of Vishwanath Temple in Kashi? There is no likelihood of the temple being thrown open in the near future. But we can at least start a propaganda, I hope you will approve of the same.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

3

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 3, 1933

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

This letter will speak for itself. You will see if there is anything to do in this connection.

I enclose another letter for your information and guidance. This is a letter which requires investigation. It is impossible for you to cope with all complaints personally, but there should be someone who would take the pains to see such writers when they are local people, and in every case find out what truth there is in their complaints, and then give the writers whatever satisfaction is possible.

To save you the trouble, if you will put me on to someone to whom I should write directly, I would do so, and then he will bring to your notice whatever is necessary.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

4

January 6, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I enclose herewith a letter which speaks for itself. I wonder whether you know much about the writer of this letter. I don't know how his services could be utilised. But probably you may be able to guide the writer of the letter himself.

Kasturbhai has sent Rs. 5,000 and I have written to Chinubhai asking him to pay a similar sum. So far there was no difficulty about finance. We have to remit to the provinces only when they raise all portion of their expenditure and as the provinces are slow in raising finance our contribution is automatically reduced. This does not mean that the work is suffering in any way. In fact, your spirit is wonderfully working in every nook and corner of the country and therefore the cause is advancing without much efforts on our part. I have, however, the consolation to feel that I am associated with it.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

5

DELHI,  
January 7, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have your letter of the 3rd with its two enclosures. I will write to you again after making full enquiries about the second letter. But in short I can tell you that Delhi is suffering very much from party politics and hence the trouble.

Take the case of one instance. It is correct that Raghunath Charity Trust has stopped monthly contribution to this man's

institution. This assistance had to be stopped even otherwise, because they had been paying for the last 18 months (if my memory serves me right) continuously. But even had they not stopped the contribution, I think the affairs of this institution now require a little more scrutiny.

There are two factions among the Arya Samajists in Delhi and both are fighting in a most scandalous manner. The man who has sent this letter, his institution has recently been captured by one faction and a lot of energy is being wasted in mud flinging. I, therefore, would be chary of financing these institutions under the present circumstance. When this gentleman comes out of jail, I will have a talk with him. There are a number of stories about him in the air which I should not mention in letter. But they are of very serious nature.

When I formed a board here, I consulted Lala Shrirani, Deshbandhu Gupta and Pandit Indra. There was such a rush on the part of the member of the depressed classes to get in the board that although we took a large number of members from both the parties of depressed classes nothing could satisfy one of the two parties. At one time we were threatened with resignation. But eventually, so far as I understand the resignations were withdrawn. There was a similar rush also from the Caste Hindus and the result is that the local Board consists of about 50 members. Like the Arya Samaj the depressed class is also suffering from party politics. There is no such thing as Raja Party or Ambedkar Party in Delhi. The choice of the leadership is made after a party has been created on account of local jealousies. It is, therefore, almost impossible to conclude a satisfactory arrangement. All the same I am asking Pandit Indra to explain to you matters more fully, he being more acquainted with the local conditions.

Recently a Co-operative society has been formed here to help the Shoe Industry. The Government officials are also taking interest in it. To me it seems to be a genuine effort to help and so I have promised a loan of Rs. 5,000 to the Co-operative Bank at a cheap interest. But I find that this Bank again is confirmed only to one party, the other party is not satisfied with it, and therefore another Co-operative Bank for the benefit of the other party is proposed to be established. So the work is carried on in such a dirty atmosphere.

However, as I have said above Pandit Indra will write to you more fully on these matters.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

6

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

In reply to your letter of the 4th, I sent you a telegram yesterday. I have revived my suggestion that the English edition at least should be published in Poona, and it can be published, not simultaneously with the Hindi, but on Fridays, if the Hindi is published on Mondays. The English edition may then be issued under my supervision, and would take in as much as may be necessary from the Hindi edition. All the facts and figures, reports and the like will be taken from the Hindi, and there will be original things also in it. In that case, you need not send anybody from there, if there is no one available. I fancy that I shall be able to get one or more local man to do the work.

I discussed this thing with Sjt. Thakkar yesterday and he approves of the idea. I then suggested that he should discuss it with you, but he said it would cause delay, and that therefore I should transmit my views to you by the post if you heartily approve of the idea, you may pursue it further, and may even come down here, if you think it necessary to discuss it. For this purpose you need not delay the Hindi edition. The English may come a week or two later.

I enclose herewith a telegram and a letter received from Lala Shamlal. I enclose also a copy of my reply.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

January 10, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

As you will see from this letter I have come to Gwalior on business and propose to stay here for about a fortnight. Before I left I had sent a message to Pandit Indra to write in detail to you about the said person. I am afraid, you will be getting complaints of this kind more and more in future. The reason is this that specially among the educated Harijans, hopes have been encouraged which could under no circumstances be fulfilled. Many educated Harijans seem to be under the impression that the society of ours is going to create a millennium. A man who is not employed expects employment from us. A trader in financial difficulty expects us to relieve him of his troubles. When I was at Poona a batch of Harijan students came to see me and I told them that they should not expect too much from us because even if we were fortunate to collect 6 lakhs and spend them in a year, it would mean only one anna per rupee for Harijans. The resources, therefore, are very meagre and they ought to appreciate this, and so much heart burnings and complaints are bound to pour in more and more during the course of time.

So far, however, as the question of a change of heart is concerned, we are making rapid progress and it is entirely due to your spirit with which the atmosphere is so much surcharged.

As regards the name of the English edition, if we were to publish it also in Delhi, we cannot keep same name of the both, as it is likely to cause administrative difficulties. If, however, it is issued from Poona this difficulty would not arise. So far I have not been able to get a good man to edit the English edition. But if you can manage it at Poona, I will be rather relieved of my responsibilities. Of course I would not like that you should undertake an extra burden on yourself. But if you think that Poona is a better place I personally have no objection. The decision rests entirely with you. But if I can be of

any help to you at Poona, kindly utilise my services to the full extent.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

8

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 11, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 6th instant. I am surprised that Kanhaiyalal should have written to you. I do know him well by correspondence. He has been in the Ashram sent by Soniramji. He frequently sends me questions for solution. He should not have written to you without reference to me or at least to Narayandas. You need not think of him any more.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

9

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 11, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your doleful letter of the 7th January, but you are not going to be disappointed or discouraged. What you describe is the common lot of most organisations. The best of a man, as also the worst, is drawn out when he is in charge of such orga-

nisations. The best is drawn out when he works with sufficient detachment.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

10

DELHI,  
January 14, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

As regards the English edition of the *Harijan* I have already written to you and I have nothing more to add. I hope you are already making arrangements to issue the same from Poona. We can send Shyamalal from Delhi if you want him there. Otherwise his services could be utilised in Delhi itself.

As regards the correspondence between you and Lala Shyamalal, before they wrote to you Thakurdas Bhargava had approached me for a donation from our Society. I told him that the work was not mainly for the benefit of the untouchables and therefore I could not pay anything from the Society. Of course I paid him Rs. 1,100 from my own pocket. But I told him at the same time that in case something was done specially for Harijans they could approach the Provincial Board and we may give some grant to the Provincial Board specially for this purpose. My own impression is that this work is not primarily for the benefit of the Harijans. The name of the Harijan is unnecessarily exploited, of course for a good cause. But even for a good cause, one should not exceed certain boundaries. Your reply, therefore, is very appropriate.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI

January 17, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

Recently an agitation has been set up in Bengal by a few interested persons against the Poona Pact. I personally am sure in my mind that they generally do not represent the true feelings of the Bengalee caste Hindus. Most of the Congressmen are out of it. I hope you remember that Dr. Moonje stated in an interview just before you began your fast that the Hindus would be prepared to give up voluntarily even cent per cent of their seats for the benefit of the depressed classes if it comes to that. The interview was granted under my persuasion. But it was done so after consulting Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee. It is not, therefore, altogether correct to say that no important Bengalee was consulted in this matter. Ramananda now, I understand, grumbles against the Poona Pact, Panditji had then issued an invitation to all the important men of Bengal, but they had no time to come.

I do not think it would be advisable for me to participate in this controversy. This is a very delicate matter and it is better for a non-Bengalee to keep himself aloof. But I wonder whether you would not like to write to Dr. Roy and Mr. J. C. Gupta. Do you also want me to say anything publicly? I have already written to Dr. Roy.

I have just now received your letter of the 11th January in which you have mentioned Jamnalalji's views about the Blue Pamphlet. Yes, the resolution is not complete and it was brought to my notice first of all by Devdas. In fact, this particular portion of the pamphlet was written out by me and I had asked Mr. Thakkar to put in the relevant resolution. The omission was although a mistake on his part. I myself am equally responsible. This again compels me to make a confession about the inefficiency of our Secretariat. To some extent this mistake was natural inasmuch as most of the papers omitted this particular portion of the resolution. I and Devdas discussed it at Poona and we both were puzzled how this particular portion of the resolution was omitted by the non-Bombay papers. This has been a mystery to me all along. But it was decided that at the time of the revision of the pamphlet this omission would



be rectified.

About the other points raised by Jamnalalji, they require a little more consideration and we will keep them before us when we revise the Blue Pamphlet. I agree with him that there is nothing creative in the resolution authorising the League to change its name, but I don't know why so much importance should be attached to these small technical matters. The resolution was not exhaustive enough and a lot of powers have been created by ourselves for which there was no sanction but which were necessary under the existing circumstances. Of course, we are going to register the body.

As regards the Treasurer I have appointed the secretary of my mills to act as Treasurer. The office being situated in my mills it is found more convenient to draw cheques from Banks during my absence.

As regards Jamnalalji's suggestion about Pun. Tambekar, I do not think he could come to work in the Society when he is getting a decent pay in the Hindu University. I myself began to feel a great necessity for a good Secretariat and I have already written to you about the same. If you cannot find a good man then I will have to appoint some one of my own choice. I hope you fully know that I am not giving my undivided attention to this work. This is natural under the present circumstances. I am still in business and am giving a good deal of my time to it. These days I have to give a little more of my time to my mills because they are simply glutted with stocks. When they were making money I did not devote so much time. But now that they are losing I have naturally to give a good portion of my time to them. I have written all this just to acquaint you with the fact. But in any case the services of a good Secretary is essential. I myself would like to give more time to the work of the Society, but circumstances just now do not allow me to give undivided attention. Subject to my own engagements, I am taking satisfactory interest in the work of the Society.

I won't say that we are receiving complete statistics from our Provincial Boards as regards the opening of temples and wells, etc. But we are receiving fortnightly reports from every

province and I believe they are giving us as much information as it is possible for them to give.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

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YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 17, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS.

I have your letter of the 10th instant from Gwalior. I am meeting Sjts. Deodhar and Vaze tomorrow (Wednesday) about the English edition of *Harijan Sevak*. I have already had a preliminary conversation with Vaze since the receipt of your letter. It seems there will be no difficulty about publishing the paper here. But I shall do nothing in a hurry. I will send you the fullest information before actually embarking on the enterprise.

What is this opposition in Bengal against the Yeravda Pact? I am writing also to Dr. Bidhan enquiring about it.

I note what you say about the effect of prunes. Have you tried them at all?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

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YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 19, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 14th instant. I had a prolonged conversation with Sjts. Deodhar and Vaze yesterday regarding the

English edition, and as a result I have telegraphed to Amritlal Thakkar to send Shastri at once if he could be spared. Vaze tells me that Shastri is the fittest man for doing the editorial work. He himself will help but could not be completely identified with the paper. I can appreciate his reason. But both told me that though Shastri has applied to the Society for admission as a probationer, the Society would have no objection to Shastri taking up the editorial responsibility. Of course so long as Mahadev and I have the time, the columns will be filled by us, and Shastri will carry out instructions, and in time to come write original articles himself.

I wonder when the Hindi edition will come out.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

## 14

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 20, 1933

I have seen your statement convening a Conference of Sanatanists. I had purposely refrained from worrying you over the question of temple-entry. Much as I stood in need of your invaluable assistance, I knew that you were pre-occupied with matters of the highest moment, and I felt, that the least I could do, as also the most that was possible, was deliberately to forego that assistance. Friends in Kerala pressed me to ask you to go to their rescue. I refused to do so, and I warned them against troubling you. But now I see that you yourself have taken the initiative and a tremendous responsibility. I hope and pray that great good will come out of the Conference.

I wish that it had been possible for us to meet before the Conference, or that we had exchanged ideas before you propounded your suggestion about temple-entry. I feel, however, that I should submit to you my own position.

If the Bombay meeting, during and immediately after the Fast Week that passed the resolution was representative of Hindu India, it is up to every Hindu to make good that resolu-

tion in its fullness. That resolution as you know, has definite reference to temple-entry. It prescribes no conditions. The whole trend of the resolution is that temple-entry and the use of public institutions by Harijans on the same terms as the other Hindus is a debt long overdue by caste Hindus. I feel that it would be wrong, if not a manifest breach of faith, to import any conditions specially applicable to Harijans. Naturally Harijan would be expected to conform to the conditions that are implied in Hinduism and have to be observed by everyone who enters temples. But it is a different thing from laying down special conditions to be observed by Harijans by way of penance. Most of the things that are included in your suggestions can be enunciated in a different and perfectly harmless manner, that is to say, by saying that it is the right of Harijans to enter all public temples under the same conditions that are applicable to all Hindus, irrespective of their caste or status, that is to say, (here may be described these general conditions, such as, daily bath, recitation of *Dwadās* or other *mantras*, abstention from carrion or beef, intoxicating drinks, if the latter abstention is enjoined in any of the current *Smritis* and *Puranas*)

From all the discussions that I had with the *Shastris* who favour the present movement and who are hostile to it, I have gathered that there is no warrant whatsoever for untouchability as we now know it. There is perfect confusion as to whom of all the people classified as untouchables in the census books the verses oft quoted apply. Untouchability by birth seems to be utterly nonexistent. There is no proof whatsoever to show that any single one of the untouchables so classed is the progeny of a Brahmin woman through a Shudra man or that he is a descendant of such a union. I would therefore beg of you not to surrender on the matter of principle. I would far rather that the reformers were left to plough the lonely furrow than that they should be called upon to lend themselves to an unworthy surrender. The surrender, in my opinion, of the highest type I have suggested is in my compromise proposal, where the most delicate susceptibilities of a minority, however small it may be, have been taken into consideration. Even that has cost me much criticism, but I am unaffected by it, because, in my opinion, it is perfectly honourable and satisfies all sincere and

religious-minded reformers and dissenters.

If I am obscure, you will, I know and hope, use the wire freely.

I am most anxious that God may make you the instrument of purifying Hinduism and keeping faith with the Harijans.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Copy of Gandhiji's personal letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya

## 15

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 21, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSIYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I do not want you to come out with any public statement on the Bengal question, as you have noticed I am not making any public statement, and I have anticipated you by copying you, that is, writing to Dr. Bidhan and Ramnand Baboo. I am not writing to Sjt. J. C. Gupta, nor is it necessary for me to do so. I might have met him, but I cannot say that I am even acquainted with him.

Please do not wait for the revision of the pamphlet till the present copies are exhausted. You can do one or the other thing, either issue a revised pamphlet supressing the old copies, or paste the full resolution on to the imperfect resolution in the existing copies, and send a public circular to the effect that by an oversight an incomplete resolution was printed in the pamphlet giving the corrected full text.

I quite understand that you have to look after your own business also, with more concentration today than before.

What is the hitch in getting *Harijan Sevak* out?

The news about your health is disturbing. Why not have the necessary operation, if a reliable doctor advises it? I have learnt by experience that even dietetics and casts have their limitations. They do not always answer. And whatever rest is necessary, you ought to impose on yourself. Dilatoriness in these matters should be regarded as sinful.

Yours sincerely,  
Bapu

PS. Yesterday, when Bapuji saw Malaviyaji's statement, he dictated a letter for him. Herewith its copy. He has declined to issue a public statement.

Mahadev

16

January 24, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

The Government's decision comes to me as a great surprise. But after having read the various intelligent forecasts by a number of News Agencies, I was fully prepared for it. I find neither logic nor fairness in the Government's decision. I am now waiting as to what view you are going to take of the whole situation.

The present Assembly, as it is composed, is capable of rejecting many good things and passing bad ones. In the first place, by the dilatory tactics of the Government, I am not sure when this legislation will at all come before the Assembly and if it comes at all I am also not sure whether it would be passed when it comes before the House. We should not, therefore, expect much for Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bill. It would be more appropriate to concentrate on private efforts. But in case of Guruvayur Temple, private efforts will be of no value. I therefore would like to know what you would want us to do.

In case you approve of Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bill, I think it will require redrafting. As it is drafted it is not likely to meet the situation. The language is very vague and probably from legal points it is not a good draft. In case you approve of its introduction, it will require redrafting in consultation with you. I have, therefore, sent you a wire. I hope to hear from you by tomorrow. In case you want me to come to Poona, I will leave this place immediately for Poona, otherwise I will go to Delhi day after tomorrow.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJ  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 25, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Here is the estimate for the proposed English edition of *Harijan Sevak*. As you can see, it is a very moderate sum. There will still be some overhead on clerical assistance and whatever remuneration that might have to be paid to Shastri who has agreed to edit the paper.

I propose to bring out, to start with 10,000 copies. Then if there is not that demand, we might slow down. My policy, as you know, is that I shall not handle the paper except to make it self-supporting. If it does not become self-supporting, I should conclude that there is inefficient management or editing, or that there is no public demand for such a paper. In any one of these cases, if the defect cannot be mended, the paper must be ended. I should give the paper a trial for 3 months, within which time it has got to become self-supporting.

I would therefore, like you, after consultation with Thakkar Bapa and such others you need to consult, to telegraph your sanction of the expenditure, such as it may be, up to the final limit to be fixed by you. I suggest an addition of Rs. 200 per month at the outside to the figures as per estimate, excluding the postal and telegraphic charges. I should be able to give you more definite figures after I have seen Shastri. If you can pass the budget, should I proceed with the paper whether you have brought out the Hindi edition or not? I understand that there is not likely to be any difficulty at this end about bringing out the paper.

I have your telegram from Gwalior about the Government's decision on the Untouchability Bills. I hope you received my reply. I hope too that you have read my very exhaustive statement to the Press. I do not need therefore to add anything to the Press statement, for I have nothing more to add.

I am sending you a copy of my letter to Hariji<sup>1</sup> about the Society receiving or seeking financial assistance from the Government. Here again I do not need to add to it. It speaks

<sup>1</sup>Pt. Hriday Nath Kunzru

for itself. I hope you are better.<sup>9</sup> I would like you to treat your health as much of a business concern as any other, and thus not a thing to be neglected or wasted.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

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YIRAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
January 25, 1933

MY DEAR HARIJI,

I thank you for your letter of 19th instant with enclosures. I do hope that you will succeed in your effort at raising funds.

Since you have mentioned the fact of your having sought financial assistance from the Government, I would like to say altogether apart from my views on non-co-operation, that if I could have prevailed with you or with your Board, I would have prevented you from seeking such assistance. I think in purely religious matters, Government aid should not be sought. Anti-untouchability work is essentially for Hindus to do. It is a huge religious reform, and I should be chary of seeking financial assistance even if we had a purely national Government, or if financial assistance is given, it will have to be under a scheme of just distribution to all the different religious denominations.

I hope you see my point, though you may not agree with it.

- I am glad that Sarup has offered her services to you.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi



19'

36 WELINGTON STREET,  
CALCUTTA,  
January 27, 1933

MY DEAR MR. BIRLA,

I have received both your letters. I could not answer you earlier, as I have been very busy to go on one thing and the other, kindly excuse.

I am enclosing a copy of the letter which I have written to Gandhiji regarding Poona Pact and the position of the so-called caste Hindus in Bengal. This will explain the position. I have not taken any active part in these discussions because I want to keep myself free to work in my own way at a later stage. The caste Hindus are anxious to come to a settlement with the depressed class and then ask for the revision of the Poona Pact if possible. It is difficult to find out whether the depressed classes are prepared to reconsider the Pact. If they do not, no question can arise of revision of the Pact, as far as I can see. I will let you know how the events progress. We are getting along with our work in Bengal.

*Yours sincerely,*  
B.C. Roy

G. D. BIRLA, ESQ.  
BIRLA MILLS  
DELHI  
Encl. 1

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YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
February 1, 1933

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY  
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY  
NEW DELHI

DEAR SIR,

On the 30th December I sent you a telegram for submission

to His Excellency on the question of what is known as Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill regarding temple-entry. I have had no acknowledgement of it, formal or otherwise. Nevertheless I deem it my duty to make my submission to His Excellency on the decision just announced regarding Sjt. Ranga Iyer's Bills.

Though I feel that it would have served the cause of humanity better, in point of time, if Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill had been allowed, I feel thankful that sanction has been granted for the introduction of Sjt. Ranga Iyer's Bills, one of which is drawn after Dr. Subbaroyan's disallowed Bill.

My purpose in addressing this submission is to invite His Excellency's attention to some considerations that warrant helpful action by the Government of India regarding the consideration of the Bill by the Assembly at as early a date as is consistent with the importance of the object of the Bills.

Not knowing the procedure of the Assembly, I sought Sjt. M. R. Jayakar's assistance and guidance which he very kindly gave me yesterday. He told me that the Government, if they wished, could make it possible to pass one at least of the Bills during the ensuing session of the Assembly.

If such is the case, I would urge that the Government are morally bound to give such assistance as may be necessary for the speedy consideration of the measures. By the acceptance of the Yeravda Pact relating to the representation of the 'depressed classes' now commonly described as 'Harijans', in the legislatures, they bound themselves morally to facilitate as far as it lay in their power the observance by caste Hindus of all other conditions of the Pact, which had reference to social and religious matters. Inasmuch as His Majesty's Government endorsed the legislative part of the Pact, they recognised the representative character of the Conference that passed the various resolutions. One of them is as follows :

"This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth, and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same rights as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads and all other public institutions. These rights shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the

earliest acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

“It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples.”

It is in due fulfilment of the pledge thus given to the Harijans that the Bills have been brought. They are necessary inasmuch as the English Law of Trusts bars the progress of reform in the shape of opening temples to the Harijans. I am advised that the decision of the British Courts hold it a breach of trust by a trustee who would open temples contrary to the usage prevailing at the time of his entering upon his trust. Therefore it is not open either to the trustees or the congregations of the numerous Hindu temples even if they so wished to admit Harijans if usage shows, as it would show, that the general body of Hindu temples are not open to them on the same terms as to the caste Hindus. But for decisions based on the English Law of Trusts it would be possible for Hindu pandits and the laity to vary the custom and introduce reforms.

The Bills are designed to remove this obstacle to progress and restore the condition that existed prior to the decisions referred to above. His Excellency may not know that cases have already occurred in which Harijans have been fined for entering temples in good faith and for the sole object of offering worship. Hindu religious usage warrants no such punishment. It enjoins purification of the idol and the temple prescribes purification of caste Hindus in the shape of a bath, but no punishment of the offending worshipper.

Until therefore the Bills are passed or an equivalent is found by the Government, the vital part of the Hindu pledge cannot be performed. For me, personally, holding my life as hostage for the due and timely fulfilment of the pledge, an indefinite prolongation of the impediment is an intolerable agony. And as a prisoner I have, I feel, a right to seek Government's active assistance.

I ask for no State interference in religious matters. I am personally opposed to it. In the present case what is sought is

to remove the existing State interference.

I hesitate to point out how the Government can help the introduction and consideration of the Bills. It would be presumption on my part to make any such attempt. I hope however that I have shown sufficiently clearly that this is a case for the Government of India to facilitate the progress and passage of the Bill in every way legitimately open to them.

Though I have shown this to some friends, I am not sending it to the Press.

M. K. Gandhi

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MALABAR HILL,  
BOMBAY,

February 2, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

As you might have seen Damodarlalji has paid Rs. 10,000 for the purpose of founding a Naik Girls' Boarding School. Would you have any objection if he pays anything towards the untouchability work? I personally see no objection in it as everyone has a right to pay to it. But, of course, I will have to approach him for the purpose. As I could not decide myself, I am asking you.

I am leaving this place tomorrow and hope to reach Delhi on the 6th evening after staying for two days at Gwalior.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

22

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
February 4, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. If Damodarlalji sends you any money, you will of course accept it as from anybody who sends it, but in my opinion there can be no approaching him. We would be well without his financial help unless it comes unsolicited and of his own free will.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD  
NEW DELHI

23

February 9, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

We have taken stock of the situation and the net result of my reading of the situation is that the Bill could be introduced with a Select Committee appointed in this session and can be passed in the Simla Session only if the Government help. If the Government obstruct, then of course, the Bill may not be introduced even in this session. But from what I see, I hope they will at least help the introduction of the Bill in this session, but would not be prepared to go beyond that. They will insist on the Bill being circulated, and although even if it is circulated it could be passed in the Simla session, but this could only happen if the Government give all the facilities. In the absence of their help the Bill has no chance of emerging out of the legislature.

Since I came here, we had several conferences and the most

important of them was held last evening and it was decided at the conference that prominent M.L.As, should ask the Government to grant special facilities for the discussion of the Bill. A letter was drafted last evening and was signed by many prominent members. More signatures were to be appended today and I hope it is already in the hand of the leader of the House. I am, however, not very hopeful about any special facilities being granted by the Government. The members themselves do not like that the Bill should be rushed through in the present session. Most of them agree that it is not necessary to circulate the Bill, but at the same time they do not desire that it should be rushed through. All they desire is that it should be introduced and put into the hands of the Select Committee during this session and get it passed at the Simla Session. I am not acquainting you with all the details of the procedure as I am sure you are already fairly well acquainted with the same. But I may just tell you that it is possible to do away with the formal introduction part of the Bill if the Government would simply publish it in the Gazette. One hurdle could be crossed if the Government would help. I am afraid, however, that they will not help to this extent

We are meeting again tonight with important members and we are trying to persuade some of them who have got in their names Bills standing for discussions to withdraw the same and clear the field for Mr. Ranga Iyer's Bills. I trust most of them would be helpful. One or two of them, I am afraid, would not take up a helpful attitude, but I do not think that will obstruct the formal introduction of the Bill which is likely to come on the 27th of February. If, however, the Government publishes the Bill in the Gazette and provides special facilities, it need not be formally introduced.

Just one thing more. there is a convention in the Assembly that the Bill could not be taken into consideration on the very day of its introduction. This means that even if the Bill is introduced on the 27th of February, it could not be taken into consideration on the same day, of course the convention could be waived with the consent of the House, the President and the Government. But I do not think all the three parties would agree. In some respect even the House itself is very conservative about their convention and I having been a member

of the Assembly for four years fully sympathise with them.

I propose to go to Calcutta after I feel that there is nothing more to be done here and will get my nose attended to as I understand there is no specialist in Delhi who could perform the operation.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

24

February 13, 1933

I have received your and Ghanshyamdas's appeal to the public. Why do you even so much as mention the fast and its possibility? You surely undermine its spiritual value; if the fast, if at all it comes, is to be a spiritual fast. I don't even know that the fast is a certainty if the Bills do not pass during this session or at all. I don't know when it will come. I think you should all dismiss it from your consideration altogether and let the public mind work unfettered by it. When it does come, it will produce its own effect, if it is a spiritual act. If it is the product of diseased or arrogant mind, it will merely torture the body and excite pity or contempt according to the temperament of the people who may hear of it. Do take this advice as from an expert and set up to it to the fullest extent.

Then you have seriously to consider Pandit Malaviyaji's attitude. He is thoroughly against the Bills especially if they are not to be circulated. Of course, I don't share the view. I shall be writing to him. But you should see him if you can at all spare yourself or, send Devdas alone. But on this I have no firm opinion. You will do what appeals to you most. You know the outside atmosphere first hand. All my knowledge is second hand and therefore worthless.

I had what must be described in one way, as a very unsatisfactory interview with Dr. A. (Ambedkar). He is irreconcilable. In another way, it was satisfactory. I know him better than I did.

Please share this with Ghanshyamdas and Thakkar Bapa.<sup>1</sup>

Bapu

<sup>1</sup>Copy of Gandhiji's letter to C. Rajagopalachari

25

February 14, 1933

PUIYA BAPU,

We have not been moving at all in spite of our best efforts. The Bill has been allotted for the 27th of February and if everything goes well, Mr. Ganga Prasad Singh or Mr. S. C. Mitra will introduce it on the same day. But I doubt very much whether it will at all be introduced. First of all, there are Bills in advanced stage and even if all of them are withdrawn at least Mr. Haji Wajuddin who has got in his name a Bill to repeal the Sarada Act will not withdraw and that alone will take the whole day. So after all, the Bill may not be introduced even on the 27th and as you know mere introduction will serve no good purpose. The Bill could be introduced even on the 27th in spite of other Bills being in the field only if the Government would grant special facilities to allow its introduction.

As I had written to you in my last letter if the Bill is published in the Gazette, it could be taken as formally introduced. Mr. Ranga Iyer has already written to the Government, but so far he has received no reply. All that I have heard is that we shall get no special facilities. The letter proposed to be sent by the M.L.As. to the Government asking for special facilities has now been sent. Only 12 signatures have been appended to it so far.

There is a party trouble in the Nationalist Party itself and then there is a rivalry between the Nationalist and the Independ-



dent Party. Efforts are being made to get a similar letter sent by the Independent Party.

Except the disappointment caused by the slow progress of the Bill, in other respects the situation is quite satisfactory and the country is moving with rapid progress. People are taking more and more interest in the problem of untouchability and I am quite satisfied with the result.

Panditji was going to issue a very bad statement strongly opposing the introduction of the Bill, but he has been persuaded to stop it for the time being.

The Hindi *Harijan* is still in the melting pot. C.I.D. people are making enquiries about Mr. Gupte whose name we have given as the Printer and Publisher. They have asked the Nagpur Police to send full reports about Mr. Gupte. In spite of our best efforts we have not been able to get the matter expedited. Mr. Thakkar saw the Deputy Commissioner twice but could not do anything to expedite the matter.

I hope you are keeping quite fit.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI  
YERAUDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

26

YERAUDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
February 18, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Lest you might have forgotten all about the contribution to the *Aj* through Baboo Bhagvandas, on account of his publication the learned opinion by way of Supplement to the *Aj*, if you have not already sent anything, please do so now.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

February 18, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

There is nothing important just now to mention. Canvassing is going on from both sides and the orthodoxy is no less busy than ourselves. When we approach some M.L.As to request the Government in order to grant special facilities, the other side asks some other M.L.As to object to this course. We have decided now that if we are to command a greater measure of support from the M.L.As we should not try to rush the measure through the House and so we have to reconcile ourselves with the circulation course. I know you do not agree with this, but personally I feel that for all practical purpose there is no difference between the circulation and the appointment of a Select Committee. Even if a Select Committee is appointed, nothing can be done before the Simla Session and even if the Bill is circulated with a special time limit the Select Committee could be appointed in the Simla Session and the Bill may then be taken into consideration. Thus in reconciling ourselves to the circulation course we are not wasting any more time than would be wasted in any case and so we have got the M.L.As to ask the Government to give all such facilities for the introduction of the Bill so that at least the Bill may be sent out for circulation in this session alone for eliciting public opinion with a definite proviso that it should be returned to the House before the Simla Session. I hope you won't find any serious objection to this step.

I have heard that a large fund has been collected by the orthodox group. Money is coming from the South and a portion thereof from some Marwaris in Calcutta and Bombay and also a good portion from the Maharaja of Khatwa. I do not know how far it is correct. But it seems substantially to be true.

I regret that you had to publicly rebuke both of us, that is, Rajaji and myself. We have been quarelling between ourselves as to who ought to be blamed for that particular portion. But I distinctly remember having told Rajaji not to say anything about the fast, of course on different grounds. The interview was drafted by Rajaji himself and in the original sentence referred to ourselves having promised to you to act with redou-

bled energy and assured you of getting the Bill passed during this session or something like this. I told that I could not sign that agreement because neither I had made any promise nor I thought I was big enough to make such a promise. Besides it would not be correct to say that I would work with redoubled energy. To this it was suggested that we should give at least some indication to the public as to how your mind was bent on this Bill and the portion referring to your fast was the outcome of this anxiety. I however see your point and agree that we should not have mentioned anything about it.

I hope you are keeping quite fit.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

28

February 23, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

We had a tea party yesterday at the Western Hostel and nearly 35 M.L.As attended. We received a better reception than what we had expected. Some of the M.L.As even though opposed to the Bills were quite favourable towards their being introduced and circulated for eliciting public opinion. Our demand being now very modest, we are receiving more support than before. It looks, therefore, that the first Bill of Mr. Ranga Iyer may be introduced on the 27th March. It was promised by a number of M.L.As that they would see that the other Bills obstructing the way do not take unnecessarily a long time and thus hinder the introduction of the Untouchability Bill. The second Bill, that is, the Temple Entry Bill is not due on the 27th February and I do not think it will be introduced on that date. I had a lengthy discussion yesterday with Sir Brajendra Mitter and although I reminded him that special facilities were given in the case of Sardar Bih, Sir Brajendra told me that the

Government would not even think of giving special facilities until they were convinced that without providing some accommodation the Bill was not likely to come up before the Assembly.

There is still a wrongly held notion in the official quarter that the untouchability work is only a political stunt. This is really deplorable, but I am afraid, it will take some time before the real truth dawns on them. Malaviyaji's attitude, however, has proved at least one thing that in taking up the untouchability work you have alienated the alliance of some of your best political friends.

Rajaji's speech last evening at the tea party was very impressive and it was the envy of many M.L.As. I too felt at home having met many old friends after a long time and thus the party was a great success.

*yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

29

BIRLA HOUSE,  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,  
NEW DELHI,  
February 25, 1933

DEAR MR. MEHTA,

Thanks for your letter. In a way I am disappointed that you are not coming to Calcutta. But I take it that it would be more convenient to Mrs. Mehta to have the operation performed at Srinagar. I hope there is nothing to cause anxiety.

I am very much interested in what you say about the Temple Entry Bill and I entirely agree with you that Panditji is wrong in this matter. It is impossible, under the existing circumstances, to get the untouchables into many of the temples without breaking the law and it is for this purpose alone that a

new law to make the old one ineffective is necessary.

May I without giving your name put the following portion of your letter in the next issue of the *Harijan* as it is of great interest? I am putting something as follows:

I do hope the Temple Entry Bill will succeed. Where as a Magistrate I find Gandhiji is right and our revered Malaviyaji is wrong in this. Suppose in Benares a temple Pujari put in an application that by custom certain Antyajias are not allowed to enter a particular part of the temple and that if the Antyajias assert their right there is likelihood of breach of peace. Then I as Magistrate would under sections 145/147 Cr. Pc. prevent the Antyajias from ascerting their supposed right. It is the assistance that law gives and the assistance that law gives to an iniquitous system that is sought to be removed. How can we refuse this to those who hanker after a place in the precincts and not right into the Garbhagar of a temple and yet they are Hindus?

This is so beautiful that I cannot resist the temptation of giving it to the *Harijan*. But I cannot do it without your permission although I do not want to put your name under it.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G.D. Birla

VINAYAK N. MALHOTRA, ESQ., I.C.S.  
SRINAGAR (KASHMIR)

Please send me a wire in case you don't want me to send this to *Harijan*.

G.D.B.

30

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
March 2, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have received from Mr. M. I. David Rs. 2,500. So far as I know, it is the first response to the appeal on behalf of his

Scheme. Mr. David wants to remain anonymous. I am sending the money to you by registered and insured packet. For the present you will please retain the money on account of the David Scheme. It would be better to put it so as to bear interest at once. We won't need to use it all at once and I expect to get his own letter which he has promised.

I think that we ought to be able to announce a few scholarships. You blessed the scheme, and Bombay Board blessed the scheme and if it ends with a solitary subscriber, and that also the creator himself it would be a miniature disaster. Do, therefore, induce Lala Shreeram and others at least to give these paltry sums and let me announce some names.

I hope Viyogi Hari and Amritlal Thakkar have shown you what I had to say about the Hindi *Harijan*. It needs very considerable improvement. You were to have given some personal attention to it. Do please give it.

I hope you are keeping good health. Is the nose causing trouble? Whether it is or not, it should receive early attention.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

*P.S.* The sooner now the Selection Board or Committee that I have suggested is formed the better it will be.

31

BEHARIS,  
March 5, 1933

PUNYA BAPU,

I have come here from Delhi and propose to stay here for 5 or 6 days more. Then I will go to Calcutta. I had originally intended that I would have my operation performed this time in Calcutta. But I find that I must return to Delhi by the 20th. The Bill is coming up on the 24th and I felt that I might be present at that time although I do not think much is required to be done now. I would, therefore, have hardly a week at my

disposal in Calcutta and so again this operation is to be postponed.

I had a lengthy discussion with Panditji. I found that Mathuradas had already seen him. As regards the ultimate ideal there may be no difference between you and Panditji, but in practice you are poles apart. Panditji's outlook is entirely different. He wants to go slowly and is not prepared to displease anyone. Therefore, he has to adopt methods which are not acceptable to you.

During the discussion Panditji admitted that there were legal difficulties, but would not admit that they could not be overcome except through legislation. He even went to the length of saying that if he was convinced that there were real legal difficulties, he would be prepared to take measures to correct the legal defects effectively either through legislation or through fighting another test case. When I suggested that we might have a test case started on the issue of Kashi Vishwanath Temple, he said that it would be impolitic. Panditji believes that your methods are likely to cause greater delay in getting the untouchables into the temples. In reality, what he wants to do is to avert a clash with the orthodoxy.

My interpretation about the Allahabad resolution is confirmed by what he says. According to that resolution an untouchable cannot enter the Vishwanath temple.

Before I left Delhi, I tried to ascertain from the official quarters, what were the chances of the Bill being introduced on the 24th. They assured me that they did not apprehend any hitch. We may, therefore, cross the first hurdle on the 24th of March. But I do not feel very enthusiastic about its future progress, I do not admit that we shall lose any special time by the circulation of the Bill, but there are so many other difficulties which you fully realize.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJ  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

BIRLA HOUSE,  
BENARES,  
March 8, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have seen your letter of the 2nd March. As regards Mr. David's scheme, the money will be put in the bank. So far we have received a promise for Rs. 1,000 per month purely for scholarships from the Raghmal Charity Trust. This sum is to be paid for a period of twelve months only I, however, hope that we shall be able to get this donation renewed after the end of this year. This money could easily be utilized for Mr. David's scheme.

As regards collecting more money for this purpose, I doubt whether we can get many promises just now. The reason is that, whoever wanted to pay, have done so already to the various Boards of our Society. Now we have not spent much so far and if you agree, I would suggest that we may get the Central Board to set aside some money for the time being. In fact, we have already been considering to spend some money on educational purposes and the Provincial Boards have even been told that the Central Board too would be prepared to incur a proportionate burden in case they came forward to share them. But I do not expect any satisfactory response from the Provinces. Therefore, the best course would be, in my opinion, for the time being to pay the money from the Central Board. Suppose if we paid Rs. 20,000 from the Central Board and a promise for Rs. 12,000 for 1933 from the Raghmal Charity Trust is already there, it makes a total of Rs. 32,000 and if you write a few personal letters, say, to Ambalal and to a few other friends asking them to pay Rs. 2,500 each, I am sure they would respond. I myself would pay a similar sum. Thus a decent start could be made. Please therefore write to me to my Calcutta address what you think of my proposal.

We have so far collected including in the Provinces a little over two lakhs of rupees for the Harijan work. The donors make no distinction whether we approached them for Mr. David's scheme or for the funds of the Central and Provincial Boards. They were approached to pay for the Harijan work and



so they have paid. I, therefore, do not think it would be desirable for us just to approach the donors again specially for Mr. David's scheme. I will, of course, approach Lala Shriram when I go to Delhi and if you like, you may also write to him personally.

As regards the Hindi *Harijan* I have been taking some personal interest in it. As you will notice, I have even been contributing articles to it. The defects pointed out by you were already noticed by me before your letter reached and were brought to the notice of Hariji. I take your criticisms are confined to the first issue alone. The second issue, in my opinion, was a decided improvement, yet, I think, it requires further brightening up and I hope that we will be able to give you more satisfaction in future. But please write to me from time to time if you have any criticism to offer.

As regards my health, just now there is nothing wrong with it. The nose is not giving me any special trouble yet I too want to attend to it as I find time. But I am afraid, I will have to postpone it a little longer. It requires fully a fortnight's rest to do it and I cannot undertake it before the 24th March.

In the postscript you mention about forming a Selection Board. I do not quite follow this. Probably it refers to Mr. David's scheme, but I do not remember your exact suggestion. In any case, until I go to Delhi I cannot take up the matter. So there it will remain. I will reach Delhi on the morning of the 19th and then I will have further talk with Mr. Thakkar. Meanwhile I will await your reply to my Calcutta address.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
March 9, 1933

DEAR FRIENDS,

I thank you for your letter of the 23rd ultimo enclosing a memorandum on the Poona Pact on behalf of the British Indian Association. I have been carrying on private correspondence with friends in this matter to ascertain Bengal opinion. My own position is quite clear, I was wholly uninterested in the number of seats reserved for untouchables or depressed classes. Once the principles of reservation was conceded, my own position was that the more they got the better it was for them and for Hinduism and, therefore, for the whole of India from every point of view. If untouchables are a part of ourselves, what can be grander than that we reserve seats for them without any reservation. That to my mind would be the very best method of killing the spirit of difference. I wholly dissent from the view that the principle of separation is left intact in the Yeravda Pact. On the contrary the principle of joint election has been the main feature of the Yeravda Pact so far as the political side is concerned. That the candidates for joint election have to be selected by Harijan electors in the first instance is surely no drawback, if we have faith in ourselves and in our regard for them, and if all the four candidates selected happen to be anti-Hindu reactionaries it would be to me proof positive that during the period of grace we had failed to come and their affection or esteem and we would have to thank our stars if we have to elect from among reactionary candidates. I do not in any way share your fear that depressed class members will not do justice to the Hindu or the national cause. Nor have I any fear that they will not be able to discharge their proper function as representatives of the people. Should it prove otherwise, it will mean that we are not fit for swaraj.

All things considered, therefore, I fear that I can be no party to the revision of the Pact, and in any case I am only one of the parties concerned, and my opinion will be valueless if all the other parties consent to or desire a revision of the Pact in the direction suggested by the British Indian Association.

As I do not wish to compromise your position in any way. I have not entered into public discussion of your position, nor will I do so now unless you wish me to. The very first person I wrote to was, I think, Dr. Bidhan Roy, and he told me that he was seeing all the interested parties and that he would write to me. I have not heard from him since. I am now in your hands.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

THE JOINT HON. SECRETARIES  
BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION  
18 BRITISH INDIAN STREET  
CALCUTTA

34

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
March 9, 1933

MY DIAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

The English *Harijan* has become self-supporting already. The subscriptions received to date from street sales and annual subscribers leave a balance without the aid of the Rs. 1044 from the Central Board. This money can therefore now be refunded. Will you kindly tell me how would you want this money to be sent to you? I understand that you have to pay something to the Maharashtra Board. My enquiry as to the method of refunding the money is merely with a view to saving commission on money order, draft or cheque.

Arrangements have been made to issue Gujarati *Harijan* also. It is being issued from Poona. The Bombay Board has guaranteed the cost for three months in the event of any loss being incurred, but I have no such fear.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

PS. Your letter written from Benares has arrived. You have been postponing the operation which I do not like.

CALCUTTA,  
March 16, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I am leaving this place tomorrow for Delhi. I see that you are annoyed for my delaying the operation of my nose. But I could not help it. There is no good doctor in Delhi and I could not afford to stay in Calcutta. But I took the opportunity of getting myself examined by Dr. Roy and also by a nose specialist who recommends an operation, not for the deviation of the septum but for a permanent drainage in the antrum. In fact both these operations have been recommended to me by a few specialists. Dr. Roy proposes to try some local application for a month or so. In any case I cannot have the operation performed until I return from Delhi.

The work in Calcutta proper is going on satisfactorily, so far as the constructive side is concerned. About 20 schools are being conducted, but all this is being done by some Marwari workers. But Satisbabu is working hard. I must confess that the Provincial Board, as such, had done little. Money is being collected; that also is being done by Khaitan and some of my other friends. I had a long talk with Dr. Roy about the Calcutta Bustees and I am taking him this afternoon to show some of the places. I hope he will give more help in future. It was suggested that the work could be more successfully done if Satisbabu joined the Board. I have given a hint to Dr. Roy and have left the discretion of taking the next step to him.

I have suggested to some of my friends to subscribe for Mr. David's scheme in yearly instalment of Rs. 400. The business is so bad that I have no heart to ask people for money. But I hope that some of them would pay. In any case as I have written to you before, we can make a decent beginning with the money at our disposal.

I am glad to hear from you that the English *Harijan* has become self-supporting. I am afraid the Hindi *Harijan* cannot compete with you unless you give your special blessings in some of the articles which you write in the English *Harijan*. The circulation, of course, is increasing, but I will write more in detail about it when I go to Delhi.

Yes, we have to pay the Maharashtra Board, but only when they themselves collect 1/3rd of their budget. I do not think they have been able to do much so far. The best way to remit money to the Central Board would be to send it to Bombay to my firm and they will redirect the same to Delhi. Thus you will save the commission.

I take it that you have seen in the Press the Bengal Council, having denounced the Poona Pact. It was not a severe defeat. But I did not like the attitude of the Council at all. Naturally, I did not like to express any views about this matter to the Press. But I feel that something has to be done to counteract the propaganda which is carried on against the Poona Pact. The Press is unanimous against the Poona Pact. I am enclosing herewith cuttings from today's *Advance* and *Liberty* which will give you an idea of their editorial attitude. Satisbabu, however, tells me that the general public is not at all against the Pact. It could be said without exaggerating the position that the opinion in Bengal is divided. Bidhan Babu himself is not in favour of the Pact and therefore no leader of importance has said a word so far in favour of the Pact. I had a talk this morning with Satisbabu and have asked him to approach Sir P.C. Roy and Dr. Tagore. If they agree, then a meeting could be held to pass resolutions in favour of the Pact. I am going to have a talk with Dr. Roy this afternoon, but I fear, he may not say anything helpful. This is just for your information.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

We were undergoing difficulty in collecting funds for the removal of untouchability work.

36

ALL-INDIA SHRADDHANAND DALITODDIAR SABHA,  
SHRADDHANAND BAZAR,  
March 16, 1933

PUJYA MAHATMAJI,

My respectful greetings.

I am in receipt of your kind letter. I have had talks with Amritlalji. Only when Seth Birla arrives in Delhi the future programme will take shape. I will extend full co-operation to Shri Thakkarji.

What can I say about the aspersions cast on my moral character? The truth will be out in course of time. I, too, will make my submission on a suitable occasion.

*With respectful regards,*

*Yours devotedly,*

Ramanand Sanyasi

Encl. Ghanshyamdass's letter

37

YLRAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
March 16, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am able only today to reach your letter of 8th March

What I meant about a Selection Board was this. You should appoint a man like Thadani and someone from St. Stephen's College and another person as Secretary with you and Thakkar Bapa as members ex-officio. This Committee would invite applications for the David Scheme scholarships. It will examine the applications and recommend them to the Board. The Board will, if it accepts the recommendations, grant the scholarships. This committee will also be invited to frame a scheme giving conditions under which scholarships should be given describing the qualifications of the candidates and it will be under these

conditions that applications would be invited. I would suggest the Committee keeping in touch with Mr. David in so far as he may be willing to assist the Committee with his informal guidance and advice. So much about the Selection Board.

With reference to the donations, I am not satisfied with what you say. I had the fear that there might not be an adequate response to an appeal for such donations. I had said as much to Mr. David when I told him why even though I liked his scheme I was reluctant to back it publicly. I advised him therefore to consult you and to consult the Bombay Board which he did, and both of you warmly took it up. You even advertised it in the draft constitution. I therefore felt encouraged having waited for a long time to bless the scheme in the *Harijan*. I do feel that there must be some ear-marked donations apart from the general collections. I do not like the idea of setting apart sums from the general collections already made. We must draw, if we at all can, some Sanatanists among the donors. Anyway, that's my idea, and that's also Jambhaji's, Sardar Vallabhbhai's and of all of us. I have already approached Janaki Devi to give the scheme Rs. 2,500 and I am presently going to write to others. I would like to include your name among the donors and publish it.

Before writing anything in the *Harijan* I shall await your considered reply to this.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

NEW DELHI,  
March 21, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have reached here the day before yesterday and I propose to stay here for a few days. The annual session of the Federation will be meeting here about the middle of April. By that time also I hope to be here.

While in Calcutta I took Dr. Bidhan to visit a number of Bustees inhabited by the untouchables. There are in all 660 Bustees out of which about 200 have been improved during the last few years. They are called improved Bustees. They have got light, water and sewer system. It is possible, therefore, to put up public latrines in some of these places. But there are about 400 Bustees, where the condition is simply terrible. Some of these Bustees are across the canal where there is no sewer system. The result is that the drainage system in these Bustees is terrible. Being below the level of the main road every drop of water used accumulates. In order that water may not accumulate, water taps are generally discouraged. Latrines are simply terrible as there is no drainage. People make nuisance in the small alleys which are the only thoroughfares for the huts and in the hot weather it is unbearable. During the rainy season the water accumulates knee-deep, as there is no outlet. Now, the solution for such Bustees is either the demolition of these Bustees altogether or making a proper drainage system. I was told that in order to have the sewer system in the whole area, about 50 lakhs of rupees would be required which was out of the question. The other alternative is to put small pumps in some of these Bustees to pump out the accumulated water. Anyhow the trouble is not easy of solution, and yet it must be solved. Dr. Roy told me that he himself felt helpless in the hands of his own bureaucracy on the one hand and the Counsellors on the other. Most of the Counsellors are interested either directly or indirectly in these Bustees, but when the question of reform comes up they put opposition. I found Dr. Roy genuinely anxious to do something. In fact those Bustees which are capable of improvement have already been done so, and he promised to take the others in hand. This is just for your information.

I saw your article today in the *Harijan* suggesting improvement in the methods of carrying night-soil. This question was discussed by me with Dr. Roy when I was in Calcutta. He told me how, when trying to introduce this system in the Corporation, they met with strong opposition from the Mehtars. The reason was that if the night-soil is carried on in carts, less number of Bhangis are required and they immediately put up opposition when they heard of this reform. Then there are



some Counsellors who pose to be the leaders of Mehtars and they instigated them to put up this opposition. Of course, you may say that the method of carrying night-soil by carts may be employed without reducing employment. But you will agree that it would not be fair to the Corporation if employment was created where it was possible to do without it.

As regards the Hindi *Harijan* I will write to you more after a day or two. I am taking keen interest in it. I myself wrote a few articles in it, but I am not writing any more because I am not sure whether you liked or disliked them. I was told in Calcutta that the articles were carefully read by the Marwaris and all the Hindi vernaculars responded them. I do not like some of the translations of your articles. One by Ramdas, was, in my opinion, worst. Please therefore, do not send your articles direct to him, unless you yourself like the translation. I should like to receive further criticism from you about the paper.

With reference to Mr. David's Scheme I am really sorry that you are not pleased with the results. I know that I took it up warmly. But I must confess that I was terribly disillusioned in my expectation as regards the finance I thought people would simply be delighted to pay, at least they who have got money. But in spite of my efforts in Calcutta I have not been able to go above Rs. 50,000. In Delhi I walked from door to door for two days and I got only Rs. 1,500 out of which Lala Shri Ram paid Rs. 1,000 after great difficulty. One big contractor, who is supposed to be a great reformer and a Congressman and who has got sufficient money promised to pay, but never paid. I am in daily communication with a number of my friends in Cawnpore and though they write nice letters, they don't pay. Ahmedabad is also hopeless. In Bombay, four Marwari firms after having promised subscriptions are withho'didg payment. I do not think this is because people do not like the work. But everybody wants to evade payment, if it is at all possible I would be very sorry to know if you feel that I would let you down by taking up the work warmly and not being able to produce money. I myself can pay anything that you want me to pay, but I confess that I cannot bring more money from others. After I wrote to you I have been able to collect Rs. 2,500 more from three sources which you may use for Mr. David's scheme. I suggested to a

number of friends in Calcutta that they may pay in instalments, but I had no satisfactory response. This is in short the position as regards fresh collection. But I do not agree with you that we should not pay from the Central Funds. After all, money is there and I do not see why it should not be used. If it is not used, probably gradually it will be eaten up by Provincial establishments and such unnecessary expenditure. Some of the Provincial Boards are maintained without spending a single pie in constructive work. Mr. Thakkar and myself have already pulled up Delhi Provincial Board for this and I have asked all the Boards to submit their accounts showing how much have been spent for establishment and how much for other constructive work. So I would repeat that you may use for Mr. David's scheme Rs. 20,000 from the Central Fund and Rs. 6,000 from the Raghunath Charity Trust Fund. The latter has promised Rs. 12,000, but half of it has to be spent in Bengal, of course, for scholarships. But as Dr. Roy wants to spend on smaller scholarships, the Bengal money is not available for Mr. David's scheme. You will have thus Rs. 20,000 from the Central Board, Rs. 6,000 from Raghunath Charity Trust, Rs. 2,500 from myself, Rs. 2,500 from Janaki Devi and Rs. 2,500 collected by me recently. Thus it amounts to Rs. 33,500. We may be able to collect a little more. But if we can begin with Rs. 40,000 it will be a decent sum. After you have made up your mind I will have a talk with Mr. Thakkar about the Selection Board. Please write to me again after you have carefully considered my suggestion.

I again approached Lala Shri Ram after I received your letter and he has refused to pay, of course, very politely. I also had approached some of my Sanatanist friends in Calcutta. But although they talk very politely, they do not pay.

I hope you are well. My namaskar to Sardar, Mahadevbhai and Jannalalji.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
March 23, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter and the cuttings. Unless you make time for the operation I know you will never have the time. This always happens with busy people, and therefore it is necessary to consider matters of health as real matters of business. I do not write this as a philosophic truth, but as a practical truth which I have enforced in my own life and in that of others. I hope therefore that you will set apart a month or so for the treatment and make an appointment with the doctors beforehand with the fixed resolution of keeping that appointment.

I note what you say about the work in Calcutta.

About Dr. David's scheme I hope to hear from you further

I shall certainly write something in the columns of the English *Harijan* about the Hindi edition as soon as I find the Hindi to be up to the mark. I have written fully about this to Thakkar Bapa, as also to Viyogi Hari. I need not therefore repeat what I have written to them. You will give it what time it is possible for you to give and make it brimful of instructions and information so that no worker would care to be without it.

You suggest that I should send the money due to the Central Board to your firm in Bombay. How should I save the commission thereby, unless you have meant that I should send notes through someone going to Bombay. If I do that, it would mean my having to run some risk of the money being lost. I have not that courage

As to the denunciation of the Yeravda Pact by the Bengal Council, I have not felt much disturbed and I am not quite certain that counter-propaganda is necessary at the present moment. In no case can the Pact be revised until all the parties to it agree. It will be time enough to apply our minds to the Bengal opposition when the parties are regularly consulted. I was consulted and I have sent my opinion, of which I send you a copy. But you and Satisbabu know much better than I can what to do in Bengal.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

Encl. 1

### Analysis of Position

Suggestion has been made by one of the Governors for the status quo on following lines :

1. Congress to call for civil disobedience including movement in U.P. and N.W.F.P.
2. Ordinances to be repealed.
3. Political prisoners to be released.
4. Congress to co-operate with Government for framing constitution.

I don't think such a pact will satisfy the Congress. They will complain that there was no gain after 6 months' ordeal. Besides, the difficulties following such pacts were very well experienced at the time of Gandhi-Irwin settlement. Ratifications, mutual complaints, fresh troubles and eventually the same civil disobedience and ordinances are the experience of the past and will have to go through the same ceremony in future. If however one escapes this phenomenon there may be split on constitutional problem. That may lead again to the place from where it started. Best thing is to tackle more important problem, that is, of the new constitution.

Let it be recognized that no constitution is available at present such as to satisfy the Congress. There is a wide gulf between the present Parliament and the Congress. Yet it is possible to get a constitution which may not be rejected by the Congress. To achieve such a position Gandhiji's co-operation is necessary. In my opinion co-operation should be achieved not to establish a temporary but a permanent peace, and this could be achieved by concluding not a truce but a pact on the constitution. And this pact could be concluded in spite of the civil disobedience movement and the ordinances.

This last suggestion which thus seems to be more appropriate is that civil disobedience and ordinances may prevail, yet why not concentrate on constitution which is after all the most important problem. The first question is : could it be done without establishing a truce? I do not see why it is impossible.

History teaches that war never ends before signatures are put on the final peace pact. Why is it not possible to discuss constitution even when the battle is being fought in India? The question is whether Gandhiji would agree to talk while his compatriots are in jail. He may, provided such conversations are confidential and informal; for instance if Hoare invited Gandhiji to come and discuss important matters I do not think he could refuse. Invitation to De Valera by the Premier is a good precedent. But if on the other hand he is invited to cooperate in any committee or commission *informally*, he would certainly refuse.

If no peace pact of constitutional issue is signed in London then Gandhiji can go back to jail and the movement will continue. The agony of release and re-arrest is thus eliminated.

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### *Confidential*

#### **After the First Government Note Circulated by Haigh to the Cabinet Members of Viceroy**

1. We have reached the point at which it is necessary to take stock of Mr. Gandhi's position as a prisoner and the restrictions which we intend to impose on his correspondence and interviews. It is obvious that every kind of effort is being made at the moment (a) to induce us to release Mr. Gandhi, or failing this (b) to induce us to give him facilities for taking part in public discussion which would in fact render it extremely difficult to keep him still as a prisoner.

2. There are three main heads under which facilities for interviews and correspondence will be sought:

- (A) **THE REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY.** It is sometimes said loosely that it is necessary for Mr. Gandhi to take steps to implement the Poona Pact. This has been suggested

in a telegram from the Secretary of State, but it is not really an accurate statement. The main provisions of the Poona Pact have already been accepted by His Majesty's Government and will, in due course, be included in the constitution. Mr. Gandhi professes to be engaged in a campaign for the removal of untouchability. We have already informed the Secretary of State that it is not possible to contemplate Mr. Gandhi being allowed to conduct an elaborate campaign from prison. At the same time we do not wish to interfere unreasonably with any interest that he may show in particular phases of this question, and we have already told the Bombay Government and we understand that reasonable latitude is being allowed to Mr. Gandhi in connection with interviews about the depressed classes. We have also agreed to despatching telegrams in connection with the fast or Kelappan—a matter in which he appears to have had a definite personal interest during the period while his correspondence was unrestricted.

- (B) HINDU-MUSLIM OR OTHER COMMUNAL ISSUE. Attention is now being concentrated on these as a means of bringing Mr. Gandhi into the forefront of Indian Politics, and in effect making it impossible to keep him as a prisoner, I interpret the Shaukat Ali move as directed to this end. Mr. Gandhi has also been in correspondence with Dr. Ansari and we have just told the Bombay Government that a brief telegram which he wishes to despatch to Dr. Ansari on the subject of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh overtures should not be passed. I suggest that our general line should be to refuse all facilities to Mr. Gandhi for discussing problems of this kind, certainly at the present stage when there is very little reality about them. But we have to be cautious not to lay ourselves open to attack as creating obstacles in the way of communal peace. The real answer to any such attacks is that if Mr. Gandhi wants to play a part in negotiations of this kind, he must take the necessary action, to get himself, in other words, he must abandon civil disobedience.

(C) NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOVERNMENT FOR DROPPING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. Here again we must be very careful. We are definitely not prepared to enter into any negotiations with Mr. Gandhi. On the other hand, as I read the situation, Mr. Gandhi is not prepared to call off civil disobedience unconditionally. If he were to do so, he would lose a great part of his influence. It would be an admission of defeat, and his influence is very largely based on the prestige of his success against Government; and he would further be accused of betraying his followers, for even if Mr. Gandhi himself abandoned civil disobedience it seems certain that the extreme wing of the Congress represented by Jawaharlal Nehru and Abdul Gaffar Khan would not be prepared to abandon civil disobedience. If that is a fair appreciation of the situation, interviews with Mr. Gandhi with a view to his abandoning civil disobedience would be infructuous. Nevertheless, there will be a great number of people most anxious to have such interviews. Some of them may be genuinely well-meaning; the majority will be working in the interests of the Congress and endeavouring to smooth the path for what they would describe as an honourable agreement between Congress and Government. The Secretary of State has suggested that we should give reasonable latitude for interviews of this kind, and has remarked that it might do good to allow Rabindranath Tagore to see Gandhi and convince him of the futility of civil disobedience. There are others, like Birla, who would be very glad to be allowed to discuss the situation with Mr. Gandhi with a view to some accommodation. I recognise the difficulties of going back to the precise position we were in before the fast. At that time we absolutely declined to allow intermediaries of this type to see Mr. Gandhi, and I am sure we were right. The present difficulty arises from the fact that many people honestly believe that the change in the situation may enable Mr. Gandhi to do what he could not have done before the fast and call off civil disobedience. I do not myself believe that that is a contingency that can

be contemplated, but undoubtedly many people do believe in it, and we do not want to seem to be making such a development quite impossible.

At the same time if conversations are allowed and make any progress, we shall undoubtedly be placed in a very difficult position; (a) Mr. Gandhi will make demands which may seem not unreasonable, for instance, that he should be allowed to consult with his colleagues. Are we to refuse these demands? If they are accepted, our whole position will be seriously weakened, and distrust in our resolution would spread once more throughout India. We have had experience in the Sapru-Jayakar negotiations of 1930, how such a situation develops. (b) Mr. Gandhi may put forward plausible terms of compromise. This will greatly increase the pressure on us, not only in India but also at home. Is it wise to subject ourselves gratuitously to this pressure if we have made up our minds not to give way to it?

It might lead to serious difficulties with His Majesty's Government. (c) All this talk will keep Mr. Gandhi in limelight which is exactly what he wishes; whereas we want to put him back into the comparative oblivion in which he was before the fast begun. (d) If we allow matters to develop like this, and at the same time stick to our principle of not releasing Mr. Gandhi unless he calls off civil disobedience unconditionally, we shall get no kind of credit for our action, but on the contrary will give occasion for persistent propaganda against us, as being determined not to make peace, but to humiliate Mr. Gandhi. It would seem, therefore, wiser to face such criticism as there may be now for not giving facilities for conversations, rather than to face increased criticism for not agreeing to such suggestions that will certainly come out of such conversations.



March 26, 1933

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I shall write a few things just now and the rest later. The only thing worth reading in the Hindi edition of *Harijan* is your own contributions. Your language is sweet and vigorous but I cannot be satisfied with this. So long as there is lack of proper arrangement at your end, a major portion of the material will have to be sent from here. Both Mahadev and myself will translate as well as write original articles. Viyogiji will do the necessary polishing. Moreover the Sangh should supply notices, suggestions, provincial news, and such things. All this should go towards raising the sale of Hindi *Harijan*. It ought to become the chief gazette of the Seva Sangh. I have refused to send items to Ramdasji or anyone else for translation. *Harijan Sewak* cannot be successful at all under such an arrangement. If no Translators can be found in Delhi and Viyogiji cannot undertake the translation or arrange for it I would consider it necessary to discontinue the *Harijan Sewak*.

More concerted efforts should be made to tackle the problem of Bustees of Calcutta.

I understand about the David Scheme. The suggestion should be considered. I shall write more. Appoint the Selection Board.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

March 28, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

There is one of two points on which I want your advice.

When at Berates, I heard that a number of 'Domes' who changed their religion some time back, now on account of the present movement want to come again to the fold of Hinduism.

The local Arya Samajists wanted financial help from the Society in order that they could be reclaimed. I personally saw no objection in it and so I have promised to help them from my personal pocket. The question is: should not the Society interest itself in such a matter? If not, why not? When we refuse to take interest in such matters, people legitimately criticise that at the expense of Hinduism we are too eager to placate others. I think, there is much in that charge. I am not in favour of performing *shuddhi* for the sake of *shuddhi* by inducing Mussalmans or Christians to change their religions, but if a Hindu who has changed his religion wants to come back to the fold of Hinduism, I see no reason why we should not encourage him.

I wrote a letter to Benthall asking him to give us paper free of charge for the Hindi *Harijan*. Probably you know that Benthall is the Managing Agent of the Titagarh Paper mills. Benthall said that he could consider the question of advertising in the *Harijan*, but cannot present to us paper as a gift. I said, we would mention in the issue of the *Harijan* that we had received paper gratis from the Titagarh Paper mills and that this in itself would be an advertisement. But he said, this will not serve his purpose. I told him that as we did not take advertisement it was not possible for us to advertise the Titagarh Paper mills. The matter is now before the Board of Directors. Do you think, it is possible for us to accommodate the advertisement of the Titagarh Paper mills?

I wonder, what do you think now of the Hindi *Harijan*. I personally think, on the whole the publication is quite satisfactory. Financially it will take some time before it could be independent. But I think, it is making steady progress and in three or four months time it would become absolutely self-supporting.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,  
March 28, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I hope you received my letter in Hindi which I wrote the day before yesterday, i.e., 26th. I do think that we ought to find out a means of dealing with the Bastee problem in Calcutta as a whole, and not piecemeal. When' therefore you next time go to Calcutta, I suggest your having an informal meeting of the principle councillors. No matter what vested interests have grown up, they should be attacked and the problem dealt with. From what you write to me, the cheapest method evidently seems to be to demolish these Bastees. The opposition to the introduction of a more humane method of carrying night-soil seems to me to be perfectly useless. Improved method must in the beginning stages mean more expensive but undoubtedly less in the end. The question behind all the difficulties that arise, as a rule, resolves itself into apathy on the part of those who profess their appreciation of the necessity for reform, but are not prepared to sacrifice anything for it. You must therefore turn this apathy into active sympathy, and a way out will be quickly found.

As to Hindi *Harijan* I wrote to you the day before yesterday telling you that the only articles that were found worth reading were yours, except the first, your style is pleasing, simple, idiomatic. Your method of dealing with the subject is plain, direct and easily understandable. Of course the translation of my articles was faulty, but that difficulty will now be got over by sending translations ready-made from here. The Hindi will have to be polished here. This ought to reduce expense and improve the paper.

Pray do not worry about the David Scheme. I just told you how I came to write about it. But I quite understand your difficulty. If it becomes necessary, naturally we must fall back upon the Central Fund. But let's for a while wait and see if we can get even half a dozen subscribers with the full amounts. I do not despair; only I never get time to frame nice letters. But I will do so one of these days. When I have one or two names I propose to announce your name with these. There was no

question of your letting me down by your enthusiastically taking up the scheme.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

*PS.* You might recall that we had had a talk about a gentleman. On the basis of that talk I had written to him that I had heard complaints about his character. His reply is enclosed. I have now received a further communication from him claiming that you had told him about bringing out an Urdu edition of *Harijan*.

Bapu

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March 31, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have your letter of the 23rd and also of the 26th March written in your own handwriting. On the 15th of April, we have our annual session of the Federation. It will take two or three days. After this, about the end of April, I would go to Calcutta and get the operation performed. I have more or less decided to do this.

As regards sending money to the Central Board, I can give you another practical suggestion. There is a Cotton Mill in Poona owned by Mr. Shival Motilal and if you pay the money to them they will pay it to my firm in Bombay, who will in turn pay the same to the Central Board at Delhi.

I am taking no further interest as regards the controversy in Bengal regarding the Yeravda Pact. But I understand from Satisbabu with whom I had a talk before I left Calcutta that when the Poet and Acharya Ray return from their tour, he would take action if it is considered necessary at that time.

As regards the Selection Board, as Mr. Thakkar is going to see you, you will have a full talk with him. After that we shall appoint a Board according to your desire.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

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March 31, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have already read your suggestion about the Hindi *Harijan*. I personally feel that it is making steady progress so far as the quality is concerned. Financially also, I hope that in course of time it will be self-supporting. The position just now financially is something like this:

We are selling only about 1,000 copies. But if we can sell 2,500 copies, we shall become self-supporting. The cost per issue for 12 pages and for 2,500 copies would be as follows

Printing charges	Rs. 45
Paper charges	„ 33
Folding	„ 5
Postage, Railway, etc	„ 28

Roughly it would come to Rs. 480 per month. The Salaries or staff, etc., would come to about Rs. 160 per month. Thus on 2,500 copies we incur an expenditure of Rs. 640 per month. If we can sell all the 2,500 copies, half of them to the subscribers and the other half to be sold through Agent, we shall get on an average Rs. 3 per copy which would mean Rs. 7,500 per year. I do not think, it should be difficult to get a sale of 2,500 copies. It is not sufficiently advertised and I have written a number of letters to some of my personal friends to push on the sales, but I am not sure, how far they are going to succeed.

We are sending a travelling Agent to secure subscribers and I hope that this may bring us a good number of them. I wonder whether you feel so satisfied with the quality of the Paper as to enable you to issue a public appeal in favour of the Paper. So far as I can compare it with the Gujarati issue, I would not say that it is much inferior to it. I wish you to look through the 6th issue, that is of the 31st March. You will see from this that except two articles from Mr. Thakkar, one from Mr. Kalelkar and notice from the editor, all the other articles are your own. Mr. Thakkar's articles, at least the one printed on page 10, is, I think, a good article. Mr. Kalelkar's article is not bad although we could have omitted it. Besides these, almost all the articles are yours. The weekly news are not very important but whatever we get, they must be published. My only complaint just now is about the translation. I do not like the literal translation made by Hariji from English and I have told him to use, as far as possible, pure Hindi idioms instead of literally translating English idioms. I hope you would approve of the same. The translations made by Mahadevbhai too, I must confess, are equally bad. Besides, I do not want that you should take unnecessary burden on yourself. Please leave the translation to Viyogiji and let us see how far we succeed. I would, however, wish if you desire to translate some of the articles yourself, not to translate literally but to write independent articles on the same line. That would give a better reading. For instance, your translation which is not a literal translation published on page 8 of the issue of the 31st March reads very much better than some of the translations made by Mahadevbhai. Similarly your translation from Gujarati printed on page 3 is also a beautiful translation. The other are not good. I would therefore submit that you should send us either the original articles or independent translations. If you so desire you may leave the literal translations either from Gujarati or from English to us. Leaving aside the defects in the translation, I personally feel that the issue of the 31st March has come up very nearly to the standard and I should like to hear from you whether you agree with me or differ. In case you differ, I should like to have definite criticisms from you.

For future my suggestion is, and this I have said also to viyogiji that we should have a 12-page Paper printed with the

smaller types. As regards the matter, almost all your articles either originals or translations should be there. A note or two not taking more than two columns should be by the editor. If we get your original articles, they should occupy the editorial page. Besides this, we should give weekly reports and if we can also get some good Puranic stories or stories from such books as *Bhakta Neel Kamal*, etc., we might employ a page or two for this purpose. I hope, you will like the suggestion; if not please write to me your suggestion. I hope, you also would approve of you issuing a 12-page Paper although we can even reduce the same to 8 page. But I think, there is enough material for a 12-page Paper and therefore we need not curtail the size. The reports appearing so far are not very important views and for this I am drawing the attention of the Provincial Boards.

I am enclosing herewith a cutting from *Patit Bandhu*. This will give you an idea as to what sort of stories we want to put in.

I wonder whether you would like to send a copy of the English issue of the *Harijan* to the Private Secretary to the Governor of Bengal. You know my views about him. He is a good man and genuinely wants to understand you. I will pay the cost and if you will agree with me, a copy may be sent to the Private Secretary every Friday. A letter may also be sent to the Private Secretary saying that the copy is meant for His Excellency the Governor.

I am going to Gwalior tomorrow and will return after ten or twelve days.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

April, 10 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have your letter of the 28th March. As regards the Calcutta work, I myself feel that we will have to do something and when I go back to Calcutta I certainly would take up the question. The difficulties are there, and it is not so easy to achieve success. But in any case we will have to do our real best and I certainly will take up the question in right earnest.

You have not yet written to me whether we can accept advertisement from the Titagarh Paper Mill. Benthall is prepared to give us advertisement, but not paper free of charge.

I received Rs. 3,000 from Lala Kamalapat of Cawnpore. He wants to spend the money for scholarships. I have written to Mr. Kunzru asking him how he would like to spend the money. In case he is prepared to spend it for Mr. David's Scheme, we can count on another Rs. 3,000. In any case the money will have to be spent in U.P.

I must confess that I have still got my suspicion about that man's character, otherwise he is undoubtedly an energetic worker. Though there are other institutions too which are working quietly, I happened to preside over the prize distribution ceremony of an untouchable school for girls. The workers made a good impression on me about their activities. I have asked them to prepare a list of all their activities and similarly I have asked that man to give me a list of all his work. If we are satisfied, I think the Board should give some sort of grants-in-aid to such institutions.

As regards the Urdu paper, I told that man that without incurring any financial responsibility we would encourage it. Of course the paper must be on the lines of the English or the Hindi *Harijans*. He wanted your original articles and I have promised to give him all facilities. Although I was disappointed about his character, you will agree that one cannot afford to non-co-operate with men even of doubtful characters when it is found that they are doing some useful work. I did not talk to that man frankly about his character, but I sent him a hint through a friend of mine that it would be better for him if he married the widow who had suffered on account of him.



He, of course, denies all his relations with her and yet my suspicion is not removed. This is just for your information.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

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April, 11 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have your letter of the 3rd/4th April. As regards sending a copy of the *Harijan* to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, I understand your reasoning. If I have understood it right then I as the President would be acting quite properly in sending the paper to any of my big acquaintances. I would, therefore, suggest that one copy each of the *Harijan* may be sent to the following persons at my expense:

1. Private Secretary to H. E. The Governor of Bengal.
2. Sir Edward Benthall, Calcutta.
3. Sir Walter Layton, C/o *Economist*, London.
4. Sir Henry Stracosh, India Office, London
5. Lord Reading, London.
6. Lord Lothian, London.

I will be going to Delhi tomorrow for three or four days and then I will come here and wait for my father who has asked me to stay here until he comes from Nasik where he is staying just now. My father will be coming here about the first week of May on his way to Haridwar. After seeing him off, I will proceed straight to Calcutta and there I propose to stay for at least two months.

My son and his wife would be going to Poona shortly. Both

of them are not keeping good health, specially so my daughter-in-law who is rather seriously ill. I have asked to put themselves under the treatment of Mr. Mehta, the Naturopath. My daughter-in law is not in a position to walk. But my son has got no particular trouble except that he is weak. He may come to see you off and on and I hope, you will permit him to do so.

Yours affectionately,  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

49

BIRLA HOUSE,  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,  
NEW DELHI,  
April 18, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have your letter of the 7/10th and the 14th April. I understand your view about *shuddhi*.

As regards the advertisement, I accept your views. Yes, you may publish about Lala Kamalapat having donated Rs. 3,000. I have been able to get Rs. 3,000 from Rameshwar Prasad Bagla of Cawnpore. He has not stipulated any consideration, but I would like that this money also may be spent for educational work in U.P. You may also take notice of it in the Paper.

As regards the Hindi *Harijan* we are getting more subscribers but in a very small number. I hope, your comment in the *Harijan* will help us. I have not the least doubt that it will become self-supporting, but it will take a little longer time than what was stipulated.

After receiving your letter, I have decided to have a frank

talk with that gentleman. I will write to you later on after having talked with him.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

50

April 29, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

As you will see from this letter. I am now at Gwalior waiting for my father. He is expected to be here on the 3rd of the next month and after that I will go with him to Delhi. From Delhi my father will go to Haridwar and after seeing him off, I propose to go to Calcutta where I expect to reach about the 7th or 8th of May.

After I wrote to you last, I had a frank talk with that gentleman. I must confess that my views about him instead of undergoing any change have simply confirmed my previous impression. He could not give me any satisfactory reply except that all this was due to party politics. I, of course, could not accept his explanation. My views about Pandit Indra and Dr. Sukhdeo are that they are very impartial men. They would not try to discredit him for party dislike. I also happened to see certain documentary evidence which is of a highly suspicious nature. After having the last talk with that gentleman, I have begun to feel that he is much more wicked than what I had thought of him to be. There are men who fall in spite of themselves, there are others who fall with deliberation. I think the gentleman belongs to the second category. Therefore, I would not recommend that he should be allowed to exploit your name by issuing the Urdu *Harijun*. I have not spoken to him about my

decision as I have promised him to have another talk with him. Yet my mind is made up. If you desire, I can tell him what I think of him. But this will simply create unnecessary bitterness. He is very keen to have a good certificate from me.

As regards the Hindi *Harijan* I would not agree with Viyogiji that it will be self-supporting within a short time. I hope, however, that it will certainly be self-supporting in course of time. Every day we are getting new subscribers.

As regards my writing articles in the *Harijan*, unfortunately I have got a habit that I cannot write unless I feel like writing; but I have been helping the translation. In the last issue of the *Harijan* the translation of your article about the letter of Andrews was substantially done by me or with my help. I will, however, try to write articles again from Calcutta. Probably I will use the Paper for Calcutta Bustee reform propaganda.

I am glad that my father paid a visit to you. I do not know how he impressed you with his limited education and way of expression. But he is very good at heart and has got great regard for you. He himself, although a staunch orthodox, appreciates your views and in his own ways carries propaganda in your favour.

Yes, immediately after I reach Calcutta, I will undergo the operation. As you will remember, in Poona and Bombay it was recommended by the doctors that I should have my septum removed which is now deviated. The Calcutta specialist has been telling me that it is not the septum correction which is urgently required but a permanent drainage in the antrum. In America, they had told me to get both done. I will therefore, have first of all, a permanent drainage performed and if it does not give me any relief, then I will have to undergo the second operation also.

My daughter-in-law tried Dr. Mehta's treatment, but she had not sufficient patience to continue it for more than 20 days. My son and my daughter-in-law both have now left for Mahabaleshwar.

Mahadevbhai enquires whether I should be charged for the copies of the English *Harijan* which are sent to Lord Lothian and Lord Irwin. I think this immaterial and does not matter in my opinion, one way or the other. If in order to help the

304 *BAPU—A Unique Association*

Paper, it is necessary that I should be charged, you may instruct Mr. Shastri to do so.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

51

May 2, 1933

MAHATMA M.K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

HAVE JUST RECEIVED NEWS. I FULLY BELIEVE WITH GOD'S BLESSINGS YOU SHALL SURVIVE THE ORDEAL SUCCESSFULLY. I ASSURE YOU SINCE YOUR SEPTEMBER FAST THERE HAS BEEN WONDERFUL AWAKENING ALL ROUND WHICH SHOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU NOTHING BUT IMMENSE SATISFACTION YET I FEEL NOTHING BUT UNDILUTED GOOD WILL COME OUT OF YOUR PRESENT FAST ALTHOUGH ON PERSONAL GROUNDS AM SOMEWHAT NERVOUS. HOPE YOU WILL WRITE ME SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS IF ANY. AM THINKING OF CANCELLING CALCUTTA PROGRAMME AND REACHING POONA ABOUT NIGHT. THAKKAR BAPA IS HERE.

GHANSHYAMPDAS

J. C. MILLS LTD.  
GWALIOR

52

May 3, 1933

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
GWALIOR

DELIGHTED YOUR TELEGRAM, STRONGLY ADVISE YOU PROCEED  
CALCUTTA FOR TREATMENT. LET THAKKAR COME TONIGHT IF  
NECESSARY.

BAPU

53

May 6, 1933

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

AM VLRY EAGER TO BE NEAR YOU BUT FOR TIME BEING DECIDED  
KEEP OFF LEST I MYSELF MAY SET BAD EXAMPLE WHEN I WOULD  
WISH LVERYONL TO LFAVE YOU UNDISTURBED TO CONSERVE EVERY  
BIT OF YOUR ENERGY BUT STRONGLY URGE PLEASE SEND FOR ME  
WITHOUT DELAY ON SLIGHTEST CAUSE FOR ANXIETY OR ALLOW ME  
COME JUST NOW. IN ANY CASE WILL NOT UNDERTAKE OPERATION  
UNTIL YOU COMPLETE YOUR FAST. ALSO SUGGEST YOUR TAKING  
VOW SILENCE TO BE OBSRVED TWENTY THREE HOURS DAILY  
DURING FAST. THIS WILL BE GOOD COMPLEMENT AND IN KEEPING  
WITH SPIRITUAL ATMOSPHERE BESIDES HELPING CONSERVATION  
VITALITY ALSO SUGGEST CUTTING DOWN INTERVIEWS DRASTICALLY  
AND FIXING MAXIMUM NUMBER PER DAY PRAY. CORRESPONDENCE  
IMMEDIATELY WIRE IF ANY INSTRUCTIONS.

GHANSHYAMDAS

54

PARNAKUTI,  
POONA,  
May 11, 1933

SHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Today, on the 4th day of his fast, Bapu is extremely weak. Compared to the fast in September, there is very little perceptible mental strain though a heart tending telegram from Ba wishing to come to his beside gives him a lot of pain today. He has asked her not to weaken or yield to nervousness. Such incidents, I dare say, have their own effect on his mind but otherwise there is comparative peace. Yesterday there was difficulty in passing sufficient urine and consequently he had a restless night, but there was relief this morning and he has since slept a good deal. But today's alarming news is that his urine analysis shows a lot of acetone. The local doctor is quite anxious about this. The only remedy open to us is to give him a little more soda bicarb.

Dr. Ansari is expected tomorrow. His arrival will be timely indeed. Considering that he has hardly finished even the 4th day of his fast, I am not inclined to be over optimistic.

*yours sincerely,*  
Devdas Gandhi

55

POONA,  
May 11, 1933

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
NEW DELHI

GENERAL CONDITION GOOD BUT TODAY'S URINE ANALYSIS CAUSES ANXIETIES. ADVICE COME SECOND WEEK. MUCH REGRET JIVRAJ'S ABSENCE JAIL.

DEVIDAS

May 15, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

I have been receiving your typed letters about the health of Bapu. In fact, they do not give me any fresh news as they are already published in *The Hindustan Times* and other papers. I am fully optimistic in my mind and with faith in God I trust that he will come out triumphantly and a bigger man of this ordeal. I am deliberately not coming to Poona and hope that there will be no occasion for my coming there. I am really sorry that I am not with Bapu just now. If you talk to him, give my pranams and also tell him that I am not in the least disturbed just now about his health because I feel over-confident about it.

Tell Rajaji that I received his letter from South India. I appreciate his anxiety about Bapu's health, but in such cases we must rely on the will of God and when Bapu says that it was the voice of God which prompted him to fast, why should the voice of man dissuade him from doing so? This is how my logic runs and I do not think Rajaji was right in trying to persuade Bapu to revoke his decision. Please give Rajaji my best pranams and also tell him that he has not replied to my letter about his son's appointment. What I want to know is whether he wants me to take his son in immediately or wait till September.

*yours sincerely,*

Ghanshyamdas Birla

SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI

PARNAKUTI

POONA

ALLAHABAD,  
May 18, 1933

*Copy*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Though the communique published by the Government on



the statement of Mahatma Gandhi has made it clear that the Government is not willing to respond to the great gesture made by him, it seems to me that an attempt should yet be made to induce the Government to adopt the correct attitude. Having considered the matter very carefully I have come to the conclusion that if a message like the one enclosed herewith is sent to the Prime Minister of England signed by you and fifty or a hundred other non-Congressmen the Government may yet feel the pressure of United Indian public opinion and may reconsider its policy. If it does so, the result is sure to benefit the country. If it should refuse to do so, the sending of the message will do the country no harm. If this view commends itself to you, I request you to take the lead in this matter. My very close connection with the Congress forbids my doing so.

I hope you will approve the draft of the message. But of course you are free to make any additions or alterations which you may think it fit to make. If you approve the draft I request you to send a telegram to that effect to me and also to write to Mr. Chintamani, Editor, *Leader*, Allahabad, to do the needful. He will then send a copy of the draft message to those whom we want to sign the cablegram and will ask them to wire their consent to you or to him so that their names may be included in the cablegram. A list of persons whom it is intended to ask to sign the cablegram is appended to this letter. When a sufficient number of messages have been received, Mr. Chintamani will inform you of the fact and you will then kindly despatch the cablegram to London. This will no doubt take a little time, but that is inevitable.

I was working up the proposal for sending a deputation to England when Mahatma Gandhi announced his fast. The question will now have to be decided in consultation with him after the fast is over. I intend to see Gandhiji at Poona after a few days. Kindly favour me with your reply at the Banaras Hindu University.

Trusting you are well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. M. Malaviya

*P.S.* If you make any alteration or additions in the draft or in the list kindly send it to Mr. Chintamani,

who will print the draft as amended by you and send it out to persons in the list corrected by you.  
This is for Tagore.

58

CALCUTTA,  
May 19, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

Panditji sent a letter to me to be posted to the Poet. I have done so and I am enclosing herewith a copy of Panditji's letter to Dr. Tagore to send to the Premier. I also enclose a copy of my own letter to Tagore. This will give you the full idea about Panditji's views as well as my own views. I do not think, Bapu should be bothered about this just now. But after he breaks his fast, you may read all these documents to him. Panditji, in my humble opinion, was taking a false step and so I have warned Tagore. I do not know what the Poet is going to do, but I hope, he will take my advice. It is quite possible that I may be wrong, but I do not put the same interpretation on Bapu's statement about the civil disobedience movement as Panditji has put. I do not like this explaining away nor do I like this hurry.

Please tell Bapu that I am more than over-confident about his health. Therefore, I will undergo the operation shortly after I reach Calcutta and will be ready to come to Poona whenever he wants me. If he wants me before he concludes his fast, please do not hesitate to send me a wire. I need not suggest that after he breaks his fast, he should make every effort to restore a peaceful atmosphere as I am sure that he himself is alive to the situation. I hope, he is well acquainted with the fact that the difficulty just now is not so much with the Cabinet as it is with Simla which is being backed up by Churchill and others. The only man whom I am finding very friendly towards Bapu is the Bengal Governor. He is taking very keen interest (he himself has written this to me) in what Bapu writes or says and with much sympathy. Of course, nobody knows more than Bapu which

doors are to be knocked at. But I hope, before going back to Yeravda (if it comes to that) he will make every effort to restore peace, by knocking at the doors of all, friends and foes. I know, he will not stand on prestige. I personally am taking an optimistic view. Whatever the Government may say, I think, everybody wants peace and Bapu's statesmanship may bring it about in spite of the Churchills and Simlas.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVIDAS GANDHI, ESQ.  
'PARNAKUTI'  
POONA

59

May 22, 1933

MY DEAR DEVIDAS,

This is a letter from the Poet. At the proper time, you may read it to Bapu.

I am so happy to receive every day the cheerful news through the Press. I propose to undergo the operation on the next Thursday. As it is a very minor operation, I hope, I will be all right by Monday next.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVIDAS GANDHI, ESQ.  
PARNAKUTI  
POONA

60

THE 'LEADER' OFFICE,  
ALLAHABAD,  
May 24, 1933

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

It is proposed to cable<sup>1</sup> the enclosure to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, and I am desired by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore to request you to be so good as to agree to be one of the signatories. He and I shall be grateful if you kindly wire your consent.

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
C. Y. Chintamani

<sup>1</sup>Given below

RIGHT HON'BLE RAMSAY MACDONALD  
PRIME MINISTER  
LONDON

MAHATMA GANDHI AND ACTING PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS HAVING SUSPENDED CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE WE BEG TO REPRESENT STRONG FEELING WIDELY PREVALENT IN COUNTRY AMONG ALL CLASSES THAT IT IS TIME THAT POLITICAL PRISONERS DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL OR CONVICTED OF OFFENCES NOT INVOLVING VIOLENCE MOSTLY UNDER ORDINANCES OR SPECIAL LAWS WERE RELEASED. IT WILL BE OF GREATEST VALUE THAT CONGRESS BE INVITED TO COLLABORATE IN SHAPING THE CONSTITUTION AND WE URGE THIS SHOULD BE DONE. GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE PRODUCED DISMAY AND RESENTMENT AMONG ALL WHO DESIRE ORDERED NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. WE APPEAL TO STATESMANSHIP OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND WITH ALACRITY TO GESTURE OF GOODWILL MADE BY CONGRESS AND THEREBY RESTORE ATMOSPHERE FAVOURABLE TO RECEPTION REFORMS UNDER CONSIDERATION. WE DREAD TO CONTEMPLATE UNHAPPY CONSEQUENCES OF NON-CO-OPERATION ON PART OF GOVERNMENT<sup>o</sup>

CALCUTTA,  
May 25, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

I have received your letter dated the 21st instant. I must confess that I am somewhat perturbed at this new scheme of chain of fasts. I do not agree with you that your opposition in the past or in the future is likely to have any effect on Bapu. Although you are his son, I will not agree that you know anything more about Bapu than myself. His mind is essentially a religious mind and whatever he is doing, he is doing for the good of his own soul as well as for the good of the world. Once he takes into his head that a certain thing is good for the cause of humanity, how you or anyone else could deter him from his programme. I will not express any opinion on the proposed chain of fasts until I have a talk with Bapu. Generally speaking I can say, I am not too humble a man to grasp the full implications of these big schemes. Or probably having been dazzled by his grand personality, I have lost self-confidence in my own reasonings; but I often come to the conclusion that whenever he does something ridiculous, there must be something in it. A man who can hear God's voice is not supposed to take his cue from the worldly men. So of what avail will our advice be? I will wait until I have a talk with him. Meanwhile I would ask you not to be nervous about anything. Whatever God wills is for good.

It is not a question of your submitting quietly or with protests. Whichever course you may have to adopt, Babu is going to do what he has decided to do. Of course, we all will argue in our own ways. Perhaps the feeblest protest would come from me. But that may be due to the fact that you are less dazzled by his personality than I am. Meanwhile I am so happy that he has very nearly passed through the ordeal and who knows, this may not lead us to some better things.

I have already written to you about the political situation. The Governor is not here or else I would have seen him. I do

not think, I can find out much of the mind of the Government situated just now as I am.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVDAAS GANDHI, ESQ.  
'PARNAKUTI'  
POONA

62

CALCUTTA,  
May 26, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

I am enclosing herewith a letter and some cuttings. Please show them to Rajaji. Tagore has accepted my suggestion for some alterations in the cable proposed to be sent to the Premier and so I have consented to be one of the signatories to the same.

Three days more and Bapu will break the fast. What a great rejoicing. Tell him after he breaks his fast that I have got one of the operations performed. A permanent hole has been bored in the antrum and the existing exit also has been widened. The doctor is not quite sure whether after this, it will also be necessary to correct the septum. In any case he wants to wait and see the result of the operation which has already been performed. As Bapu liked to know all these details, I am bothering about the same.

Please wire me to come whenever Bapu wants me there.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVDAAS GANDHI, ESQ.  
'PARNAKUTI'  
POONA

63.

CALCUTTA,  
May 29, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

So after all, we are relieved of the great anxiety. Please write to me about the health of Bapu. After my operation I have not been able to attend my office as there is some pain and also fever. It is all the after effect of the operation. Probably it will take a day or two more. Meanwhile in case Bapu needs me, please send me a wire and I will be ready to come.

I am dictating this from Birla Park.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVIDAS GANDHI, ESQ  
'PARNAKUTI'  
POONA

64

POONA,  
June 2, 1933

GHANSHYAMDASJI  
BIRLA PARK  
BALLYGANJ, CALCUTTA

BAPU PLEASED YOUR OPERATION. WANTS YOU REST ONE WEEK.  
COMF PREPARED STAY FEW DAYS.

DEVIDAS

CALCUTTA,  
June 6, 1933

MY DEAR DEVDAS,

I have got your letter. I am a bit upset about your remarks. I cannot conceive how they could march Bapu back to jail so soon. According to my own view, they would not take any move until Bapu himself invited them to do so. And as Bapu has already promised to give his best advice to the country as well as to the Government I do not think, how any crisis could come in the near future. He is not going to give his advice until he gets better. So I do not think, there is any immediate possibility of his being sent back to Yeravda soon. In any case I am leaving this place on the next Sunday and will go straight to Poona.

I too feel that his going back to Yeravda is inevitable. The Government is not in a mood to take any right step. But I would suggest that Bapu as far as possible should try his best to help the Government out of the present impasse. He would not lose anything; on the contrary he would gain much by making it clear to all concerned that he did his best to restore peace.

There is one thing on which there is a great misunderstanding. From what I know of Bapu the civil disobedience movement to him is not purely a political movement. The defiance of law under certain circumstances is a religion to him. And because this is his religious creed whether there is war or peace he will continue to pin his faith in the philosophy of the movement. The ordinary Englishman does not understand this philosophy. He feels that the defence of law is a criminal act, pure and simple. I think it is essential for him at some stage to explain the differences between the philosophy and the actual civil disobedience movement. What is necessary for him to explain is that even if the civil disobedience movement is stopped and peace restored, the philosophy under all circumstances will still be a living thing to him. Besides this I see no reason why before Bapu goes back to Yeravda, he should not knock at the doors of the Viceroys, the Secretary of State and also other friends.

Parasnathji just now is at his village. I do not think it is



necessary to bring him. We shall talk between ourselves.

You know I have become the chairman of the Company of Govindji. He approached me and after exacting a promise from him that he would devote his time whole-heartedly to the business and would eschew politics, I have accepted the post.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVIDAS GANDHI, ESQ.  
'PARNAKUTI'  
POONA

66

CAI CUTTA,  
June 9, 1933

MY DEAR DEVIDAS,

I understand from my Bombay Office that on behalf of Bapu a sum of Rs. 15, 084 (Rupees fifteen thousand and eighty-four only) has been deposited in the Harijan Fund. The money has been credited to the above mentioned fund.

This is just for the information of Bapu.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

DEVIDAS GANDHI, ESQ.  
'PARNAKUTI'  
POONA

67

DELHI,  
August 12, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I have not heard anything from you so far. But I hope there will be no difficulty in your getting this letter.

We have been sending materials from here for the English

*Harijan.* We are badly missing your articles, but somehow or other we are managing the things. I have got a leather expert to write something about tanning and curing which I hope would be of some interest to the readers. We shall be able to continue like this, but we can't make the paper very bright without receiving contributions from you.

Thakkar Bapa has gone on tour and he is expected here about the 18th of this month.

Since I have come here, I have taken up the question of starting Leather School and also a mixed boarding house, but especially for the Harijan boys. I am searching for a good plot of land and I hope that within a few weeks we shall be able to make a beginning. Please let me have your suggestions if you have any in this connection. According to my estimate the cost of land would be about Rs. 5,000 and I propose to spend another Rs. 5,000 on building. This I propose to do out of the fund of the Society. Of course we shall take the formal permission from the members. But I take it that we have your sanction to proceed on. As regards the Leather School, I propose to bear the recurring charges myself at least for one year.

Lakshmi<sup>1</sup> is quite happy and as comfortable as it is possible to be. I am keeping quite fit and I hope you and Mahadevbhai are keeping quite comfortable.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA GANDHI  
POONA

<sup>1</sup>Devdas Gandhi's wife

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
WARDHA,  
September 30, 1933

DEAR GHANSIIYAMDAS,

As you are aware, the 'Satyagraha Ashram' grounds with the buildings in Sabarmati were abandoned on the 1st of August.

last by the Ashram people. I had expected that the Government would, in view of my letter addressed to them, take charge of this abandoned property, but they did not do so. It then became a question with me as to what was my duty in the circumstances. I felt that it was wrong altogether to allow the valuable buildings and the equally valuable crops and trees to lie neglected and run to waste. I consulted friends and co-workers and came to the conclusion that the best use to make of the Ashram was to dedicate it once for all for the service of the Harijans. I placed my proposal before the trustees of the Ashram who are out, as also fellow members. They have, I am happy to say, whole heartedly approved of it. When the property was abandoned there certainly was the expectation that some day, whether through an honourable settlement or India coming to her own, the trustees would resume possession. Under the new proposal the trustees divest themselves entirely of the property. This procedure is permissible under the trust deed, service of the Harijans being one of the objects of the trust. Therefore, the new proposal is wholly in keeping with the letter and spirit of the constitution of the Ashram, as also the trust.

The question that the trustees and I had to consider was, to whom was the property to be transferred for the specific use I have mentioned, and we came unanimously to the conclusion that it should be transferred to the All-India Harijan Organisation for all-India use. The objects of the trust are: (i) to settle on the Ashram ground approved Harijan families subject to regulations to be framed; (ii) to open a hostel for Harijan boys and girls with liberty to take non-Harijans; (iii) to conduct technological department for teaching the art of skinning carcases, tanning the hide so obtained, curing it and manufacturing leather so prepared into shoes, mandals and other articles of daily use; and lastly, to use the premises as offices for the Central Board or the Gujarat provincial organisation or both, and such other allied uses that the Committee, referred to in the following paragraph, may think proper.

On behalf of the trustees, I suggest that the Servants of Untouchables Society should appoint a special committee with yourself and the Secretary as ex-officio members, and three Ahmedabad citizens, with power to this committee to add to

their number, to take over this trust and to give effect to its object.

Two friends who have been always associated with the Ashram, viz., Sjts. Budhabhai and Juthabhai, have offered to reside on the premises as honorary managers. They have their own means and have been devoted to the service of the Harijans for a long time. There is also an inmate of the Ashram, who has dedicated his life to Harijan service, and who will gladly stay on the premises. He has almost become a specialist as a teacher of Harijan boys and girls. The committee I have suggested, therefore, should have no difficulty in managing the trust; nor is it necessary that all the activities I have mentioned should be simultaneously and immediately undertaken. Some Harijan families, as you are aware, are already living there. It has long been a dream of the members of the Ashram to establish a colony of Harijans' families, but beyond having a few of them we were not able to make further progress. Experiments in tanning were also conducted there. Manufacture of sandals was going on up to the time of disbandment. The buildings contain a spacious hostel easily accommodating 100 boarders. It has a fairly big weaving shed and other buildings exceptionally fitted for the uses, I have named. The property contain 100 acres. I venture to say, therefore, that the site is none too large for the fulfilment of the objects mentioned, but it is large enough for the response that may be reasonably expected for some time to come. I hope that the Society will have no objection to accept the offer of the trustees and to take over the responsibility implied in the acceptance.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. Gandhi

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
PRESIDENT  
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY  
BIRLA MILLS  
DELHI

October 5, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

I had already wired to you my acceptance of your offer to transfer the Ashram to the Mandal. I had in the beginning some doubts in my mind about our capacity to manage the Ashram from a distance. But since I know that some of your trusted men are going to reside in the Ashram and who will give their whole time services to the cause I have no longer any uneasiness in my mind. I hope that we shall prove ourselves worthy of the trust that you have reposed in us. I have accepted the offer without waiting for the opinions of the members of the Central Board fully hoping that they will approve of my section. The four objects for which the property is to be used as mentioned in para 2 of your letter will be constantly kept in mind by the Society.

Out of your offer and acceptance of the same crops up a few points which require your careful consideration. So far we had no property except the cash lying with us in the Banks. We were thinking of purchasing some land in Delhi for building up a Harijan hostel. But by the acceptance of your offer we will shortly be in possession of a valuable landed property. The question thus will immediately arise as to who will be the owner of this property. Will it be the Harijan Mandal? If so, then the Harijan Mandal would for all practical purposes mean the persons at whose sufferance it exists and there is no such thing as sufferance in our Society so far. Therefore, we have to decide what sort of constitution we are to have in future. I do not like too much of a democratic constitution. In administrative work democracy creates a lot of difficulties and it tends towards party factions. But at the same time where an institution is holding property worth lakhs and lakhs and out and out autocratic constitution is not a desirable thing. Probably the lesser of the two evils would be a restrained autocracy or a qualified democracy if you would call it. I wonder whether you would like that a dozen persons devoted to the cause of the Society for life should become the founder members who alone should enjoy the right to vote. The wider powers now vested in the President may hereafter be transferred to the members. If

that is not desirable, then I think a separate Board of Trustees may be constituted to hold the property. It should have wider powers enabling it to withdraw the property from the possession of the Harijan Board at any time in case they found that good use of the same was not being made. The latter suggestion is to be adopted only in case we decide to have a democratic constitution of the Society. You have suggested the constitution of a Committee of five, three of them to be Ahmedabad citizens and the President and the Secretary to be ex-officio members. I am not quite sure whether you want this Committee to act as a sort of Trustees to hold and administer the property of the Ashram or just as an Advisory body. In case they are to act as Trustees then what will be the locus standi of the society and what will be the method for the election of 3 Ahmedabad citizens? And besides one cannot be quite sure what sort of Secretary and a President will represent the Harijan Mandal on the Trust Board in case it becomes a democratic body. I hope, I have expressed myself clearly as regards the difficulties likely to arise under the present constitution as also under a very democratic constitution. I want you to think over the matter carefully and let me have your suggestions. If we would not be holding any property then I feel that the present constitution is quite workable.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
WARDHA

October 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Gopi<sup>1</sup> is doing quite well. She is cheerful. I have written to Gajanan<sup>2</sup>.

*blessings from*  
Bapu

<sup>1</sup>Daughter-in-law of Shri Rameshwardas Birla; wife of Gajanan

<sup>2</sup>Eldest son of Shri Rameshwardas Birla

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,  
WARDHA,  
October 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter.

The difficulty you raise is there and it was in anticipation of it that I suggested the formation of a trust board. My idea is that the property should be held by these trustees permanently, under very defined conditions with the right even to sell. You and Thakkar Bapa should be permanent members, irrespective of what happens to the popular organisation. This proposal disposes of the complete question from which has arisen the larger one that I am not prepared to discuss in this letter for want of time. Meanwhile I would ask you to study the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association. We may postpone the discussion till we meet, and seeing that I am here up to the 7th of November, it might be possible for you to come even if it be for that one question.

You have referred to the proposed hostel in Delhi. In view of our possessing the Ashram ground and buildings, do you think there is any urgency for the Delhi proposal? Should we not wait and see how the Sabarmati plan progresses before

venturing upon another big scheme? I am inclined to think that we ought to concentrate our attention upon making the Sabarmati scheme a thorough success and it will take the energy of many of us to make it so.

I hope you are keeping well. What about the nose? Weather in Delhi ought to be very fine at this time of the year.

Bapu

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD  
NEW DELHI

72

No. 11499,  
CENTRAL JAIL,  
HINDALGE, BELGAUM DIST.,  
October 12, 1933

MY DEAREST SISTER,

The longed for day has arrived with the expected letter from you (this is your second) and with a fat one from Jivanji too. I am so deeply thankful. You, who have been in my plight, can understand how deeply and truly genuine this feeling of thankfulness is! I am writing to you exactly after a month as I wrote my second letter to Durga<sup>1</sup> who, poor thing, does not seem to have had a single letter I have sent. I had, therefore, decided that this fortnight I would write one letter each to her, to you and to Bapu. I would first of all ask you to tell Bapu not to take trouble of writing or dictating letters to me. A letter from you, or, in case you are busy, from Chandrasankar will do. The last letter of Bapu's was dictated in two shifts! I am not worth it, I assure you. The old year is gone and the new year will be upon us in a few days and I am not aware of having added a fraction of cubit to my stature. I

<sup>1</sup>Mahadev Desai's wife



think of the events of the past few months and often my heart sinks within me. The renunciation of the Ashram is, for Bapu, more sublime in its pathos, if possible, than the break-up of his household by him in South Africa over 25 years ago. But for one like me, it has a poignancy which crushes me down—I will tell you why. I hear in it an echo of Tolstoy's renunciation—Tolstoy who had to take that step because his life and ideals had failed to produce an echo in the surrounding about him. I know you will not, you cannot, misunderstand me. I am intensely happy that it has gone and now belongs to those who deserve it more than I even deserved. But there is the simultaneous feeling in me that if I had been *true*, if Bapu's life had produced an echo in me and others, the renunciation might have taken a different turn. I do not know if I have made myself clear, but there it is. Oh, if I could give you an idea of the hell that sometimes rages within me—the hell of grief and misery over the general futility of things about me! But why should I roast *you* in that hell? And then it soon passes off leaving me intensely thankful to God for what I have *not* been.

Lord, even so  
 I ask one prayer  
 The which if it be granted  
 It skills not where  
 Thou plantest me, only I would be planted.

That prayer is there in my heart every moment of this blissfully lonely life, but I know that I have not the purity to make that prayer heard. It was made by General Gordon, that intensely God-fearing man whose life, so outwardly different from Bapu's had one great thing common with his utter self-surrender which cried out in words that are remembered to this day: "I do nothing of this. I am a chisel which cuts the wood; the carpenter directs it. If I lose my edge He must sharpen; if He puts me aside and take another, it is His own goodwill. None are indispensable to Him; He will do His work with a straw equally well." I can almost hear Bapu saying these very words without the change of a single comma at every step in his life, and I am approaching the new year with that prayer reading 'Bapu' for 'He' wherever it occurs—for the simple

reason that I have no vision of Him whereas I have some vision of Bapu.

But, enough of this. I look forward to a greater future for this resurrected Ashram. I see from Bapu's letter to Birla (read it in the *Times*) that non-Harijan boys would be admitted. Why not non-Harijan families too who may be prepared to identify themselves completely with the Harijans? And why should not the Servants of Untouchables Society endeavour to make it into a Tuskegee? This has reference to the Tuskegee Institute founded by Broker Washington in a town of the same name in the State of Albania in the year 1881. To begin with, it was a co-educational College. At present it is a vast complex of varied educational-cum-vocational activities.

I got the books from Birlaji *only* last week, the notebook will arrive tomorrow and I sit down to it as soon as it comes! If jail does not teach one patience, it teaches nothing. Tilak Maharaj's gifts I wanted in Marathi, but Birlaji thinking that my knowledge of Marathi is on a par with his has sent the Gujarati! The one from Gita Press Gorakhpur with Shankaracharya's commentary has been overlong in coming! Would some of you drop a card to Hanumanprasad Poddar to send it on soon? The book on Buddhism Mathuradas sent me from Poona is the wrong book! I wanted Gour's book. But these mistakes will happen. Don't you now bother to send Gour's book? I have now enough books to burry me under.

You have given a very vivid picture of the men (including women of course) and the things there. One day of that work and anxiety would be enough to kill any other man, but Bapu's piety carries him through. So, it has been with him, so will it be with him whose days are 'linked each to each in daily piety.' You have hit your characters to the very life. I noticed a straw of madness in Neela when I saw her in Yeravda Jail—after the great confession. I told Bapu so. But I am afraid there is a strangely subtle hypocrisy mixed with that madness, which makes it most dangerous. Or perhaps the madness is the result of the previous feigned one. Amala's madness is genuine and therefore perfectly curable. She is as lovable as she is foolish and somehow I have never been able to resist liking her, though she has often poured the most violent abuse on me—as indeed she adored me for a while! But her adoration of you,

however galling it may be to you, is sure to be her making—if, of course, it endures! For, there is every chance of her violently disliking you. So beware.

All this does not mean much rest for Jamnalalji, and I should not be surprised if Bapu decides to break up the camp there if only to leave Jamnalalji in peace. As usual the life is not without its humour too as one can see from the papers. The Japanese priests' coming must have given you all capital fun. The letter that Bapu has written to them contains in a nutshell more than many books on Buddhism *cafi convey*.

Where is Kaka ? What is he doing ? You say nothing about Vinoba. Is he there or in the villages ? Where is Narandasbhai ? Do you have any letters from any of these members of the party ? Or am I the only one enjoying that privilege of having a chat with you once a month ? By the bye, remember that though I may write to you only once, I may have your letter *twice*—12th and 27th of the month being my galadays—the days on which I hear from and commune with the dearest ones. Any letter from Devdas? I should love to see one of his letters in his illegible hand—but perhaps he has now been educated into writing a better hand by Lakshmi. How is Ramdas ? Is he quite happy ?

Babla<sup>1</sup>, I fear, is proving a handful. I am not surprised. You must not forget that he is my son, Anything good to him is God-given, everything bad is Kaka-given, so whoever may be in charge of him—I do not know where he is now—must bear with *me*, not him. As usual I am enclosing a note for him. You will find his whereabouts and send it on. I think he had better be allowed to stay on in Bulsar. How can I impose my ideals on the poor boy. It is sheer violence.

Here is a paragraph from a letter from Grace Tann that will please you and Bapu. Bapu will remember the Edith Roberts who sent £25 to the Ashram some time ago and asked us to send a wheel to this Miss Tann. I saw the despatch of the wheel and wrote to her. She writes to acknowledge receipt of the wheel in perfect condition. "Perhaps", she adds, "you will be interested to hear that friends here have just had an international camp of young people for a fortnight (she writes

<sup>1</sup>Mahadev Desai's son, Narayan Desai

from Godalming) including some Indian students. I showed your letter to one of them and I was rewarded by seeing a beaming face ! He told me that when he had finished the most exacting part of his studies he meant to do his 1/2 hour's daily spinning."

That reminds me that I have to ask you for a fine spindle—exactly the type Bapu is using. The one I have is not behaving itself, and though Chhakaddas' slivers are not as good as they look, the frequent breakage is not entirely due to them, but I am afraid of the spindle. So will you spend a spindle ? And please ask Keshu to let me know how to clean the parts under the wheels when they cannot be taken out ? You know I have the special wheel that he made for Bapu. So let him tell me how to take out the wheels.

Well, this is already a heavy letter and I must close. If Amala or any one else in your company is in the dumps, here is something to amuse him or her and it is well that as I began in a serious vein I end in a lighter one. This is from the *Sunday Referee* (taken from the *Times of India*—illustrated) :

The Press, in spite of vast "Improvements"  
 Cannot keep pace with Gandhi's movements.  
 At least I always have my double  
 As to the martyr's whereabouts.  
 One day I am told he is in jail,  
 The next that he is out on bail.  
 And when I hear he is free at last  
 He's back again and fasting fast.  
 Then when I hear he is nearly dead  
 He's out and eating grapes instead.

But long before these are digested  
 The illusive man is rearrested,  
 And ten to one—poor wandering soul—  
 He will be released upon parole.  
 But whether he is free today  
 Or not, I simply cannot say.  
 I wish one of the morning Papers  
 Would feature the Mahatma's capers

As 'inset' called the 'Daily Gandhi'  
Would be, I am sure, extremely handy

—W. BURNET

If no one else, I am sure Bapu will enjoy it and surely Devdas. Cut it out and send it on to him. Will you? The enclosed for Babla. My love or pranams to every one of you according to his or her deserts.

*Ever yours,*  
Mahadev

73

October 18, 1933

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Despite all intentions of writing to you I have not been able to do till today. Jamnalal is quite good at shielding me from the interviewers, but who will save me from the load of correspondence? On occasion I find it impossible to clear the mail, because there is a rule in force about retiring for the night early. This letter I am penning at 3 o'clock in the morning. This does not, of course, mean that I have got up so early for the sake of writing this letter. Even during the time allowed in the evening I am prevented from doing anything substantial by the pesturing insects.

I read your article about Jawaharlal. It is well-written. No harm done. We need not suppress our feeling about one another. When truth alone is to be sought, suppression of one's opinion becomes a fault. You must have sent the article to Jawaharlal; if not, do so. He is blessed with a remarkably simple nature. He is ever ready to correct himself. I am convinced that ultimately he will take to the right path. And if his own line of thinking is proven to be the right one, nothing more remains to be said about it. Equality by no means implies uniformity. Equality only means equal justice for all. An atom and the Himalayas are equal in the eyes of God. He does not dis-

criminate between the atom and the Himalayas.

Gopi left yesterday. I could not spare much time for her, but she used to come and sit by my side, daily. A simple-minded girl. She was quite happy here. She used to tell everybody she would like to spend her Diwali in Bombay. If she could return here after Diwali, it would be a good thing, indeed. In fact she had longed to enjoy the festival of lights in Bombay. On a little bit of persuasion she will readily agree to come back here. I have no misgivings on that score. I had written to Gajanan. He has sent a reply. I also got Gopi to write to him. Please do write everything about your health.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

*PS.* I shall get someone to write in English about Harijan. It was very good that Gopi ultimately did stay.

74

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
WARDHA,  
October 19, 1933

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I am sure you will like to have a copy of Mahadev's latest letter—here it is. It is a bit of a testing to be *all* alone like that! But he is putting it to the best possible use.

Bapu is getting on very well now. He looks much better too. Weight 104 lbs and b.p. 155-100. By November 8 he ought to be strong enough to stand the tour. But even so he will have to be spared as much as possible. Will you not come here a little earlier to make general arrangements? Then onwards the entire responsibility will be ours.

Today we are having heavy rains and violent winds. It is all unexpected and very trying, but after this I suppose we shall settle to proper winter weather. It is good the tour does not begin just now.

In writing to friends abroad I have always kept in mind our

talk that was held last time in Bombay. But as you understand I mention the things in a general way.

*Yours,*  
Mira

75

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
WARDHA,  
October 26, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I must dictate in English in answer to your letter written in Hindi.

It was not necessary to write more about the constitution of the Harijan Seva Sangh. Whether we should immediately bring into being a semi-democratic organisation is a question for consideration. I do not know whether under the appointment there is the power, but the plan that I have suggested is feasible and can be enforced immediately, that is, to register the Ashram in the names of the trustees that I have suggested. You should discuss your idea with Thakkar Bapa and Hariji.

As to the Spinners' Association, I had an absolutely free hand, and I evolved a plan which enabled it to become an easily operating and sound organisation with immense possibility for democratization. I wanted to write to you, as soon as the decision for the transfer of the Ashram was taken, that, in view of the acquisition, the ambitious plan for Delhi should be abandoned. But the hostel scheme is quite sound. Of course, we shall want many such hostels; and I can see immense possibilities emerging from them, if they are properly managed. When I am in Delhi you may take any work you like from me.

So far as Biharilal is concerned, if he will serve in connection with the hostel scheme and so on, we can utilise his services. But I am very much against engaging paid preachers, Harijans or otherwise. And in this matter, we cannot be too firm.

As to my stay in Delhi, of course, it is to be regulated by

you. My own inclination would be to stay at Lakshminarayan's place. I believe in sticking to old places, except on sound reasons for departure. For my health Parmeshwari's place would be ideal. But I must not be made inaccessible. To do so would defeat the purpose of the tour. My stay should depend upon the work to be taken from me. You will come to wrong decisions, if you always think of my convenience. You can depend upon it that I shall make my own convenience, no matter where you put me. For my stay in Calcutta, you should consult Dr. Bidhan, Satisbabu, etc.

I understand what you say about Mrs. Lahiri. I did not give any opinion, because I had none. As she had mentioned your name and as you know almost everybody in Calcutta I thought I would forward that letter to you and have your opinion. I have written to Dr. Bidhan also who has issued the certificate. You may dismiss the matter from your mind for the time being at least. If I form any opinion in the execution of which I need your assistance, I shall immediately let you know.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Bapu

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA HOUSE  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD  
NEW DELHI

*PS.* Gopi is doing well and is quite cheerful. How is your health ?

October 26, 1933

PUJYA BAPU,

Thakkar Bapa was himself going to Brindaban to trace Nila and if possible send her to Wardha. But on the eleventh hour he felt hesitation and so dropped the idea. He has now, on receipt of your wire, left for Brindaban.



Mr. Andrews has come here and he has already written to you about his impression of Bengali opinion against the Poona Pact. I do not think, it is such an easy affair to revise the Pact just now. Most probably Ambedkar and other would themselves realise the difficulty of election through the panel system and after the first election may themselves ask for a revision. But just now it would be inadvisable to reopen the question. So far as the number of seats are concerned, I do not think they have got any undue weightage.

I am enclosing herewith a cutting from the *Patrika*. This is written by Sir N. N. Sarkar. He is much bitter, as you will see from it. I personally feel that he is exploiting the situation with a political motive.

Mira Ben has sent to me a copy of a letter from Mahadev-bhai. It was very interesting. I now realise that it was a stupidity on my part to have sent a Gujarati translation of *Gita* to Mahadevbhai. I thought he did not know sufficient Marathi. My pranams to Mira Ben.

I read in the Papers today that you now weigh 108 lbs. I think, Jamnalalji is to be congratulated. I feel so happy in any case that you have improved your health so marvellously.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
WARDHA

## Letters without Date

77

36 WELLINGTON STREET,  
CALCUTTA,

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

As regards the second paragraph of your letter, the position seems to be this : The caste Hindus in Bengal feel that if they had been asked (I understand that none were asked to be present at Bombay and the deputation from Bengal consisted of only 4 persons belonging to the so called depressed classes) to go to Bombay, they would have presented to the members of the Conference their point of view, which seems to be this: that in the Award of the Prime Minister no separate electorate in any shape or form for the depressed classes were prescribed and although the language used was vague the impression was that the ten members representing the depressed class would come into Legislature by joint election, that in Bengal there is no 'untouchable' problem as we find elsewhere and therefore there need be no reservation of seats for them in Bengal in any shape or form, except for the very few (say about a million) who happen to be the real 'untouchables' of Bengal. They feel, therefore, that by any reservation of seats for these classes, there is likely to be a breach in the Hindu society. Their second point is that the system of election that has been accepted in the Poona Pact, is merely a form of separate electorate, which again, they aver, is against nationalism. They further feel that if the Poona Pact remains, it would mean that the depressed class representation in Bengal (if for argument's sake the principle of reservation of seats be accepted) will soon exceed thirty, because they will not only get these seats reserved for them, but in certain areas they would successfully contest ten or more seats meant for general constituencies. It is apprehended that at the second election after the new constitution is established, the number of so called caste Hindus in the local Legislature will be reduced to less than forty, a contingency which caste Hindus maintain is neither in the interests of the caste Hindus themselves nor in the interests

of the province as a whole. While the caste Hindus do not say that they hold a monopoly for wisdom and talent they feel that on account of forces over which neither the caste Hindus nor the depressed classes had control, the latter have not made such marked progress in education, etc., as they should have done, the result is that if the caste Hindus get forty (i.e., less than one-sixth) of the total seats in the Legislature, the immediate efficiency of the Legislature would be lowered. I have met several of the prominent members who had met at the British Indian Association Hall the other day, and all they desire at the present moment is to come to some arrangement with the 'depressed classes' by discussion with them; and if possible alter the Pact so far as Bengal is concerned, either by taking away the reservation of seats for the depressed classes altogether or by giving them a lesser number of seats by mutual agreement. You will find enclosed a letter from Babu Rasik Lal Biswas to the Minister in which he has agreed to meet the caste Hindus and discuss these points. It seems to me that at the present moment their main object is towards coming to a settlement with the depressed classes. I shall let you know the progress of events from time to time.

Dr. Alam has gone back to Lahore and is coming back again to Calcutta after six weeks. Kamala is better and is taking drive every day.

I hope you are keeping well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
B.C. Roy

MAHATMA GANDHI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

78

MAHATMA GANDHIJI  
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON  
POONA

RANGA IYER'S BILL IN MY OPINION NOT PROPERLY DRAFTED MEET OBJECT. THEREFORE YOU APPROVE INTRODUCTION SECOND IN CENTRAL LEGISLATURE. SUGGEST REVISION OF DRAFT IN CONSULTATION WITH YOU. PLEASE WIRE YOUR VIEWS. REACHING DELHI-TWENTYSIXTH.

GHANSHYAMDAS

79

DEAR DR. TAGORE,

Panditji sent me the enclosed letter for you through his son and asked me to post it at Calcutta after having read the same. He also asked me to write to you in case I thought it necessary to make any suggestion.

I have now read his letter to you and also the draft of the cable which he wants you to send to the Premier.

I personally feel that the draft of the cable as proposed to be sent by you to the Premier does not represent, in my humble opinion, the correct position of Gandhiji. I feel, it will not be correct to say that "the statement of Mahatma Gandhi leads us to believe that disobedience movement will not be received. We think the announcement was of suspension only because the Acting President lacks authority to go farther and not because he or Mahatma Gandhi has any idea of its resumption." I sincerely believe, knowing as I do Gandhiji and I dare say that you will agree with me as probably you know his inner mind much more than I claim to know, that:

1. Gandhiji, by temperament is very moderate;
2. that he is always seeking nothing but peace and
3. that civil disobedience always is only the last resort.

Therefore, I have not the least doubt in my mind that after he concludes his fast, Gandhiji will spare no efforts to arrive at an honourable peace. But if an honourable peace is not achieved, then I am sure that he will not hesitate to recommend the revival of the civil disobedience movement. It may be that under the present circumstances he may think a mass movement beyond the pale of practicals. But that would not deter him from practising individual disobedience. In fact, he has already made it clear that he prefers quality to quantity. But if Gandhiji felt that the civil disobedience movement should be stopped altogether once for all, I have not the least doubt that without mincing matters, he would have said so in the statement which he issued immediately after his release. At least he would have promised to advise the Working Committee for an indefinite suspension. Instead of saying anything like this, he definitely stated that in case the atmosphere was as murky as it is just now, he would ask the Government to take him back to jail. I think therefore, any statement on the part of a distinguished man like yourself, to the effect that Gandhiji intends the civil disobedience movement indefinitely, in my opinion, would be somewhat uncalled for and will do justice neither to yourself nor to Gandhiji or to the Congress. Suppose the Government accepted your assurance and released all the prisoners and also suppose after this a satisfactory solution of the present political condition was not achieved, I have not the least doubt that the civil disobedience movement in one form or another is bound to be revived. Don't you think, then the Government will have good reasons to blame the signatories of the cable for having misled them. Whether peace is restored or not, I think nothing should be said which does not correctly and honestly depict the position. In fact, by making irresponsible statement, the non-official members in the assembly have unnecessarily humiliated themselves as well as the country.

I sincerely believe that ways and means should be found to restore peace and the suspension of the civil disobedience movement. But this is to be done only by facing the facts and not ignoring them. By explaining away Gandhiji's attitude, I do not think, one could help the situation.

Now that only a little more than week is left for Gandhiji to conclude his fast, I think, the country could afford to wait

until he is in a position to take up the threads himself. I do not think, by losing 10 days more, we lose much. On the other hand, by taking a false step, we may embarrass Gandhi, and we may also unintentionally mislead the Government.

Please excuse my writing at length, but I thought it was my duty to say what I humbly felt.

*Yours sincerely,*

G.D. Birla

DR. RABINDRA NATH TAGORE  
DARJELLING



**1934**





January 24, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Malkani has read out your letter to him. I have written to Biharilal quite plainly. Herewith a copy of my letter to him. We shall have to be plain and firm in dealing with him.

While I deem it necessary that the work begun initially be completed during the tour, what is being accomplished just now is satisfying enough. There has certainly been a change in the outlook of the people, though there has not been a corresponding revolution in their department. Let us wait and see what emerges ultimately. I only see the hand of God in this work. This I am not saying as a matter of form. This kind of work is beyond the capacity of not just one man, but even thousands of them. We can never manage to write or say too much on this topic. All this only means that my faith in God is increasing by leaps and bounds. At the same time my own efforts seem puny enough as time passes.

I hope you are doing well

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

2

January 31, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am in receipt of your letter. I liked your comparison of the earthquake and the Harijan problem very much because it is the truth. It is self-evident that the indigent have suffered the least. But is it not equally true that those in possession of even a little have turned destitute? Sitting here, I have been doing all I can in this connection.

The idea of a tour in Bengal has put me in a dilemma. It is good that you are there. Today I have written a pretty long letter to Dr. Bidhan. Please see it and take a decision there. To

me only one course suggests itself: to come there unless you dissuade me from doing so.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

3

AS AT WARDHA,  
(C.P.) INDIA,  
January 1934

DEAR SIR SAMUEL,

You will recollect that whilst I was returning to India in the December of 1931 you had a cable caused to be sent to me in regard to an interview alleged to have been given by me to a journalist in Rome and that I had sent a categorical denial. To this there was a counter-denial which I had not seen till recently, being in jail within less than one week of my landing in Bomday.

After my discharge from the last imprisonment in August last I was told by Mirabai Slade that an English friend, Prof. Maclean of Wilson College, Bombay, had thought that although the matter was stale, it was worthwhile my clearing it up, as the denial by the Rome journalist had created a profound impression at the time of its publication and had probably precipitated the Viceregal action against me in 1932. Agreeing with Prof. Maclean, I at once asked Mirabai to write to Miss Agatha Harrison to procure the relevant newspaper cuttings. After much search she was able to get them. The last and the most important I received from her last month in the midst of my hurricane tour in the cause of the anti-untouchability campaign. For ready reference, I send you copies of the three cuttings marked 'A', 'B' and 'C' respectively.

It should be noted that these cuttings were for the first time seen by me on their being received from Miss Harrison. I have now read and re-read them several times, and I have no hesitation in saying that 'A' and 'C' are a caricature of what took

place. 'A' professes to be a summary of a long statement said to have been made by me to an Italian journalist. In 'C' the *Times* correspondent, on seeing my denial regarding the alleged interview, makes a halting admission that I might be correct in so far as Signor Gayda did not "request any formal interview and no such interview was granted," but insists that the statements attributed to me were substantially correct. But truth will perhaps be better served by my simply stating what I do know than by analysing 'A' and 'C'.

1. I never made any statement, much less a long one to Signor Gayda as suggested in 'A'.
2. I was never invited to meet Signor Gayda at any place. But I was invited by an Indian friend to meet some Italian citizens at an informal drawing-room meeting at a private house. At this meeting I was introduced to several friends whose names I cannot now recall and could not have recalled even the day after the meeting. The introductions were merely formal.
3. At this meeting the conversation was general, and not addressed to any particular individual. Questions were put by several friends and there was a random conversation as at all drawing-room meetings.
4. It was therefore wrong for Signor Gayda or the *Times* correspondent to reproduce my remarks, as if they were one connected statements to one particular person.
5. Signor Gayda never showed to me for verification anything he might have taken down.
6. The conversation, among other things, referred to the Round Table Conference, my impressions of it and my possible future action. Many of the things that have been put into my mouth in 'A', I had never said. All my hopes, fears and future intentions were expressed in as precise a language as it was possible for me to command and due in my speech at the close of the Round Table Conference. Whatever I said in private conversations was but a paraphrase of the sentiments expressed in that speech. I am not given to saying one thing in public and another in private, or to saying one thing to one friend and something else to another. I could not have said that there was a definite

rupture between the Indian nation and the British Government, for, I had said to several friends about the same time that I was determined to strain every nerve to prevent a rupture and to continue the peaceful relations established by the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. Being an optimist, I do not believe in a final rupture between human beings.

7. I never said that I was returning to India in order to restart the struggle against England. Certain possibilities about which I was questioned at the informal meeting have been so described in 'A' as if I was actually going to India to bring them about, if I could.

I would add that the public had neither the original notes supposed to have been made by Signor Gayda nor the latter's own version wherever published. In 'A' and 'C' they had only the impressions of the *Times* correspondent about what Signor Gayda wrote or said.

I do not know how you were affected by 'C'. If your faith in my denial was shaken, perhaps in any case, I should have been acquainted with the rejoinder to my denial as you had kindly brought to my notice the first report. I do not know how you take this letter. If you have any doubt in my bona fides, I would like to clear it, if it is at all possible for me to do so.

Miss Slade was the 'follower' referred to in 'C'. I enclose herewith her collection of the conversation.

I am not publishing this letter. I am sending copies to several friends for their private use. But I would like you, if you could, to give it publicity, or to ask Prof. C.F. Andrews, Woodbrooke, Selly Oak, Birmingham, to make such public use of the letter as he might wish.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

Encl. A, B & C

**Enclosure A**

**A New Trade Boycott**  
(From our own correspondent)

ROME,  
December 14, 1934

Mr. Gandhi, who had refused to make any statement to the many journalists, both Italian and Foreign, who had been invited to meet him, has now made a long statement to Signor Gayda of the *Giornale d'Italia*.

Mr. Gandhi said that the Round Table Conference, which "marked the definite rupture of relations between the Indian nation and the British Government" had been for Indians a long and slow agony. It had, however, served to make quite clear to the British authorities the spirit of the Indian nation and its leaders and to ask the true intentions of England. He was returning to India in order to restart at once his struggle and the boycott of British goods. He considered that the boycott would now prove a powerful means of rendering more acute the British crises, already difficult through the devaluation of the currency and unemployment. The closing of the Indian market to all British products would signify substantially a reduction of English industrial activity, an increase of unemployment, and a new depreciation of the pound.

Mr. Gandhi concluded his remarks by lamenting that few European countries had hitherto shown interest in the Indian problem. That was a pity, since an independent and prosperous India would mean a richer market for the products of other nations, and Indian freedom would be manifested through commercial and intellectual exchanges with all countries.

**Enclosure B**

December, 1931

Mr. Gandhi has authorised a complete denial of the authenticity of an interview which he was alleged to have given to the

*Giornale d'Italia* during his brief stay in Rome, and which was summarised in the *Times* of December 15. The statement attributed to him went so much farther in respect of the prospect of restarting civil disobedience in India than any previous utterance that it was felt necessary to ascertain precisely what he said. Accordingly, a telegram was sent from an authoritative quarter to M. Gandhi on board the Italian Liner *Pilana* in the Mediterranean in the following terms:

Press reports state that, on embarkation, you issue to *Giornale d'Italia* statement which contained expressions such as following:

- (1) Round Table Conference marked definite rupture of relations between Indian Nation and British Government.
- (2) You are returning to India in order to restart at once struggle against England.
- (3) Boycott would now prove powerful means of rendering more acute British crises.
- (4) We will not pay taxes, we will not work for England in any way, we will completely isolate British authorities, their politics, and their institutions, and we will totally boycott all British goods.

Some of your friends here think you must have been misreported and, if so, denial desirable.

The following telegraphic reply was received from M. Gandhi yesterday:

GIORNALE D'ITALIA STATEMENT IS WHOLLY FALSE. I NEVER GAVE ANY INTERVIEW TO PRESSMEN AT ROME. LAST INTERVIEW I GAVE WAS TO REUTER AT VILLENUEVE IN SWITZERLAND, WHERE I ASKED THE PEOPLE OF INDIA NOT TO COME TO A HASTY DECISION BUT TO AWAIT MY STATEMENT. I SHALL TAKE NO PRECIPITATE ACTION BUT SHALL MAKE AMPLE PREVIOUS EN-TRETY TO THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD DIRECT ACTION BECOME UNFORTUNATELY NECESSARY. PLEASE GIVE THIS STATEMENT THE WIDEST PUBLICITY POSSIBLE.

Signor Gayda has resolutely refused to accept Mr. Gandhi's denial of the statements attributed to him in the *Giornale d'Italia*. In a laconic note Signor Gayda has declared that the words attributed by him to the Mahatma were written in his presence as he spoke them and in the presence of other witnesses. So far as I understand the facts of the case, the *dementi* of Mr. Gandhi may be correct in so far as Signor Gayda did not request a formal "interview" and so no such "interview" was granted.

According to information given to me, Signor Gayda was introduced to the Mahatma in a private house, and it was made perfectly clear to Mr. Gandhi who Signor Gayda was. When Mr. Gandhi began to make the remarkable statements attributed to him Signor Gayda, realising their interest and anxious to make no mistake, asked for a pencil and paper, which were given to him. Signor Gayda then wrote down statements of Mr. Gandhi there and then in his presence and in that of a follower, without any word being spoken by either of them that the remarks were not for publication.

It would appear, therefore, from the version I have received, that so far as the substance of the remarks is concerned Signor Gayda, who, as I personally can testify, understands English quite well, took down the utterances of the Mahatma with particular care.

*Times*, 21-12-1931

### Enclosure C

My recollection of the occasion, which occurred now 2 years and 3 months ago, is as follows:

Gandhiji with his companions was invited to an informal gathering at the house of an Italian Countess in Rome. Italian Consul, Bombay, who was then in Rome was also present. It was a long visit, consisting of a drawing-room talk followed by light refreshments and further general conversation. During the beginning of the visit I was the only member of our party with Gandhiji; the others dropping in later one after another. I was



with Gandhiji during the whole visit except for 15 or 20 minutes near the end of the time when I went into the drawing room to prepare some fruit, etc., for Gandhiji and to take some refreshment myself.

During the talk as far as I can now remember, the conversation was to begin with somewhat social and varied. The countess was busy introducing people to Gandhiji and leading off conversations on various topics. As the talk warmed up two or three gentlemen from amongst the group became conspicuous by their persistent questioning on the political and economic situation, and I remember one of them asking for a pencil and paper and beginning to make notes. After a little the rest of our company began to turn up and we soon moved into a bigger room next the dining room. Here the conversation again became general except for a little serious talk of Gandhiji with someone, the particulars of which I cannot now remember.

I heard every word that Gandhiji uttered except for the few minutes that I had gone out. He was giving his usual replies to political and economic questions with rather extra force of plainness of language. The Italian gentleman felt difficulty in understanding English and which because more by the persistence of the questioners. If Gandhiji had said some of the things attributed to him by the *Times* correspondent, I should have been dumbfounded. It would have meant that he had thrown his ideals and beliefs to the winds, and I could no longer have looked to him as my guide and father.

Mira

#### 4

February 12, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I told Miss Lester about the conditions prevailing in Midnapore and suggested her seeing the Governor. So she wrote to him and got his consent by wire. Now she is on her way to interview the Governor. Please read the letter I wrote to her.

I have asked her to meet you and acquaint herself with the situation fully. Tell her everything. In case you deem it desirable, arrange for her meeting with Dr. Bidhan and Satisbabu. She will leave that place on Friday in order to meet me. I have given her money to cover her travelling expenses. Her railway ticket has also been bought. Should I draw upon you for the amount? Jamnalal is, of course, always there. I myself do not know what would be the proper thing to do.

I have written this in great haste. I have received your letters and shall send my reply. I do not get the time.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

5

BOARD OF EDUCATION,  
WHITEHALL,  
LONDON, S.W.1.,  
February 13, 1934

DEAR MR. BIRLA,

Thank you so much for your kind letter. It was good of you to have us in your thoughts at a time which, for all who knew my father, is one of great sadness at the close of so long a chapter of happiness. But for him I can have nothing but thankfulness.

I was deeply distressed to hear of the heavy loss of life and damage caused by the earthquake, the magnitude of which we did not at first fully appreciate owing to the breakdown of communications in the locality. The sufferers have my deepest sympathy, and I am glad to see that, as you say, everyone is co-operating to mitigate the severity of the distress.

*Yours sincerely,  
Halifax*

G.D. BIRLA, ESQ.  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA, INDIA

*Not Revised*

February 19, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. Whether I am considering whether I should write to the Governor or not. The compulsory saluting in Midnapore has been discontinued but there has been no admission of the error. Miss Lester has now sought an interview with the Viceroy. But these things can bring about no result at the moment. Still we do not want to miss any opportunity of compromise.

Bidhan Roy must try his utmost to have an interview, irrespective of what the Congress people say.

I have postponed the idea of coming to Bengal till I have done with Bihar. We shall see about it later

Will you, or will you not, try to see Jawaharlal ?

Miss Harrison will leave England for here on March 2. Her visit is all to the good. I had already written to her about this, did I not ?

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

DISTRICT MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE,  
DHARWAR,  
March 4, 1934

DEAR MR. THAKKAR,

The police inform me that after the meeting this morning at Dharwar, some followers of Mr. Gandhi have put up a red, white and green flag on the bonnet of his car.

This is a political emblem usually associated with the Congress. Mr. Gandhi has consistently kept his present tour aloof from politics and it can scarcely be with his consent that this flag is flown.

Can you therefore please arrange that this flag is not flown ?

*Yours sincerely,*  
L. N. Brown

A. V. THAKKAR, ESQUIRE  
C/O NARAYANRAO KIPPIKAR, ESQ

8

CAMP, DHARWAR.  
March 4, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,

Sjt. A. V. Thakkar has shown me your letter of even date in connection with the flying of the National flag on the bonnet of the car that drove me from Hubli to Dharwar. You are right in surmising that the flag could not have been put up with my consent. It was put up only in Dharwar at the instance of Sjt. A. V. Thakkar, who noticing the absence of it on our car said to the responsible workers that if it was omitted by design, there was no occasion for the omission, as to his knowledge the flying of the flag was not declared illegal. I overheard the conversation, but I took no part in it. But I expressed no disapproval of the attitude taken by Sjt. Thakkar. My position has been one of absolute neutrality. I have not asked for the flying of the flag, nor have I discouraged it anywhere. Indeed at least at one place I recollect having been called upon publicly to unfurl the flag in the Central Provinces and I did so without any hesitation. I have scrupulously abstained from taking part in any political agitation directly or indirectly ever since my premature discharge last year, and I propose in the prosecution of the self-imposed vow to do so up to the end of 3rd August next, so far as it is humanly possible. But this abstention does not in any way mean that I have ceased to be a Congressman, or that I should hide me in closure. My abstention means that I would not offer civil resistance

myself nor incite others to do so during the period named. I take it that Sjt. Thakkar is 'right in his interpretation of the law as it stands, viz., that the flying of the National Flag is not an offence. I may add that throughout the tour in the C.P. and the whole of Madras Presidency, I have often driven in cars flying the National Flag.

I am due to leave for Belgaum at 3 p.m.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. Gandhi

L.N. BROWN, ESQ.

## 9

PATNA,  
March 13, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am enclosing a copy of my letter to Sir Samuel (Hoare) and a copy of another I have written to the Magistrate of Dharwar. The latter is for your information only. As for Sir Samuel, I would like you to exert yourself on my behalf. If Scarpa is still there, please ask him to furnish you with the details of that meeting (in Rome in December, 1931). Inasmuch as he himself was present on that occasion. Even if he were not there physically, the meeting itself was the outcome of his initiative. If he is able to give the names of those who were at the gathering, so much the better. I am keen on collecting as many bits and pieces of information as I can. So far this affair has been discussed only in English. The whole thing is a fabrication. It is like "Ajmer" being twisted into "Aaj mara" (died today).

I find that you wish to come down here to see me. I will send for you about the Harijan work a little later. I have allowed Thakkar Bapa to leave for Delhi as there was little here to keep him occupied. Though he, with his single-minded devotion to work will prove invaluable in field of public activity, there is no special occasion for you to be here, but in case you would like to talk things over about Bihar or matters con-

nected with the exchange of correspondence with Sir Samuel, you are welcome any time you feel like coming. I expect to remain in the Motihar area from Wednesday till Friday, returning in the evening of Friday.

Agatha Harrison will be reaching Bombay on the 16th. Muriel has had an interview with the Viceroy. She is arriving here tomorrow.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

10

March 20, 1934

DEAR DR. SCARPA,

Recently I have transferred my Head Quarters to Delhi and it was on my return to Calcutta that I heard that you were permanently transferred to the Foreign Office and that you are no longer likely to come to India. I hope, this is not true. You had made so many Indian friends during your few years' stay here that you are bound to be missed. In any case, I hope that you will come to India even on a visit and if you do so please do not forget to drop a line beforehand.

By the way, I wanted your help on a certain very important matter. You remember, you had arranged a drawing room talk with Gandhiji at the house of an Italian Countess in Rome. I think, the lady was your friend and I hope, you also remember that after that meeting Signor Gayda sent a cable to the *London Times* saying that Gandhiji had decided to renew the civil disobedience movement. On bringing the matter to Gandhiji's notice, he sent a contradiction to which again Signor Gayda replied. That controversy has now become stale, but all the same it has not lost its importance because it was a question of attacking Gandhiji's sincerity and bona fides. So far as I remember the meeting was arranged by you and I also remember your telling me in Delhi that it was a sheer misunderstanding on the part of Signor Gayda who sent such a cable to

the Press. I wonder whether you were present in that meeting. But even if you were not present, could you kindly let me have a general impression of the talk at that meeting of other friends who were present. Probably you may be able to give a list of the names of those who were present at that time and also their impression about the conversation with Gandhiji. Gandhiji himself and also Mira Ben both are emphatic that it was either a sheer misunderstanding on the part of Signor Gayda or a concoction for the Press. As I was in London when Gandhiji left for Rome, I remember definitely that he was coming to India with a view to giving his co-operation for further discussion of the constitutional problem and he had absolutely no idea to break the law. The Press Report, therefore, came to me also as a surprise. In any case, I shall be extremely obliged if you will kindly get me the names of those present and their impression about Gandhiji's attitude and also any other information which might be possible to be given about Signor Gayda's cable.

*Yours sincerely,*

G. D. Birla

DR. SCARPA

C/O MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

ROME (ITALY)

## 11

SARIASA,

April 2, 1934

The statement owes its inspiration to a personal chat with the inmates and associates of the Satyagraha Ashram who had just come out of prison and whom at Rajendrababu's instance I had sent to Bihar. More especially is it due to a revealing information I got in the course of a conversation about a valued companion of long standing who was found reluctant to perform the full prison task and preferring his private to the allotted task. This was undoubtedly contrary to the rules of satyagraha. More than the imperfection of the friend, whom I

love more than ever, it brought home to me my own imperfection. The friend said he had thought that I was aware of his weakness. I was blind. Blindness in a leader is unpardonable. I saw at once that I must for the time being remain the sole representative of civil resistance in action.

During the informal conference week at Poona in July last, I had stated that while many individual civil resisters would be welcome, even one was sufficient to keep alive the message of satyagraha. Now after much searching of the heart I have arrived at the conclusion that in the present circumstances only one and that myself and no other should for the time being bear the responsibility of civil resistance, if it is to succeed as a means of achieving Purna Swaraj.

I feel that the masses have not received the full message of satyagraha owing to its adulteration in the process of transmission. It has become clear to me that spiritual instruments suffer in their potency when their use is taught through non-spiritual media. Spiritual messages are self-propagating. The reaction of the masses throughout the Harijan tour has been the latest forcible illustration of what I mean. The splendid response of the masses has been spontaneous. The workers themselves were amazed at the attendance and the fervour of vast masses whom they had never reached.

Satyagraha is a purely spiritual weapon. It may be used for what may appear to be mundane ends and through men and women who do not understand its spirituality provided the director knows that the weapon is spiritual. Everyone cannot use surgical instruments. Many may use them if there is an expert behind them directing their use. I claim to be a satyagraha expert in the making. I have need to be far more careful than the expert surgeon who is complete Master of his science. I am still a humble searcher. The very nature of this science of satyagraha precludes the student from seeing more than the step immediately in front of him.

The introspection prompted by the conversation with the Ashram inmates has led me to the conclusion that I must advise all Congressmen to suspend civil resistance for Swaraj as distinguished from specific grievances. They should leave it to me alone. It should be resumed by others in my lifetime only under my direction unless one arises claiming to know the



science better than I do and inspires confidence. I give this opinion as the author and initiator of satyagraha. Henceforth therefore all who have been impelled to civil resistance for swaraj under my advice directly given or indirectly inferred will please desist from civil resistance. I am quite convinced that this is the best course in the interest of India's fight for freedom.

I am in dead earnest about this greatest of weapons at the disposal of mankind. It is claimed for satyagraha that it is a complete substitute for violence or war. It is designed therefore to reach the hearts both of the so called "terrorists" and the rulers who seek to root out the "terrorists" by emasculating a whole nation. But the indifferent civil resistance of many, grand as it has been in its results, has not touched the hearts either of the "terrorists" or the rulers as a class. Unadulterated satyagraha must touch the hearts of both. To test the truth of the proposition satyagraha needs to be confined to one qualified person at a time. The trial has never been made. It must be made now.

Let me caution the reader against mistaking satyagraha for mere civil resistance. It covers much more than civil resistance. It means relentless search for Truth and the power that such a search gives to the searcher. The search can only be pursued by strictly non-violent means.

What are the civil resisters thus freed to do? If they are to be today for the call whenever it comes they must learn the art and the beauty of self-denial and voluntary poverty. They must engage themselves in nation-building activities, the spread of khaddar through personal hand-spinning and hand-weaving, the spread of communal unity of hearts by irreproachable personal conduct towards one another in every walk of life, the banishing of untouchability in every shape or form in one's own person, the spread of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs by personal contact with individual addicts and generally by cultivating personal purity. These are the services which provide maintenance on a poor man's scale. Those for whom the poor man's scale is not feasible should find a place in small unorganised industries of national importance which give a better wage. Let it be understood that civil resistance is for those who know and perform the duty of voluntary obedience to law and authority.

It is hardly necessary to say that in issuing this statement I am in no way usurping the function of Congress. Mine is mere advice to those who look to me for guidance in matters of satyagraha.

M.K. Gandhi

## 12

### Notes of Agatha Harrison

The incident recounted in this article took place when I was with Mr. Gandhi on his walking Harijan tour in South Orissa early in June. There and then I wrote to the editor of the *Christian Century*, Mr. Paul Hutchinson, whom I know, enclosing the original slip of paper on which Mr. Gandhi had written his comment. Mr. Hutchinson replied by return that they were preparing a photographic reproduction of this note to print along with my article. This will appear in the *Christian Century* early in August about the time Mr. Gandhi begins his fast. This paper has a wide circulation in the States and other countries. It is published in Chicago.

1. It would be an interesting pastime to speculate under what different settings the *Christian Century* is read each week. I would tell one of such setting.

For the past four months I have been in India, for the purpose of 'seeing and listening'. This is a very necessary thing to do, when one is working as I am, on the mutual understanding between the two countries. Particularly did I want to talk with Mr. Gandhi during his year of truce, which ends in the first week in August.

My experiences during these weeks would fill a book. A book that can never be written. They include talks with men and women—British and Indian; Government officials of high rank; also representatives of orthodox Indian opinion, moderate

Indian opinion and the sharply pointed national opinion. To say nothing of the Indian women—a force to be reckoned with Mr. Gandhi has often referred to their movement as “the miraculous awakening of women”.

I was with Mr. Gandhi when he wrote his famous statement calling off civil disobedience; I toured with him in the devastated area of Bihar, together with Babu Rajendra Prasad—the Chairman of the Central Relief Committee; I was at the Ranchi Conference when the decision of the Congress to enter the Councils after these years of boycott, was discussed; at the important meeting of the All-India Congress Committee when Mr. Gandhi's statement was endorsed and the final decision taken that a wing of the Congress would form a Parliamentary Board for Council-entry.

Finally I was with the Mahatma during his walking Harijan tour in South Orissa.

\* \* \*

2. Just before going to Orissa I stayed in Calcutta at the Y.W.C.A. My friends there provided me with literature for the long train journey which included some issues of *Christian Century*.

The day after I arrived was Monday—Mr. Gandhi's day of silence. The heat was intense and all of us were sitting under the shade of a tree, occupied in various ways. The Mahatma, surrounded with piles of letters, cables and documents—I with my issues of *Christian Century*.

Suddenly, in the issue of March 14th, my eye caught—“We Nominate Gandhi for the Noble Peace Prize” Probably readers of this article will have forgotten what was then said. I quote it in full.

“Why not award the Nobel Peace Prize to Gandhi?” It would be no personal favour to him and he probably does not want it. The honour would not greatly impress him and he would not know what to do with the money except to give it away. These are all high qualifications for such a prize. The Nobel Committee could find no worthy recipient for 1935. This is the seventh time in thirty-two years that the Peace Prize has been reserved. Of the twenty-five

awards that have been made to eminent promoters of peace, too many have gone, as the Stockholm Peace Society protests, to 'Presidents, Ministers and other high officials; and too few to people working for peace or to really radical proponents of peace and disarmament'. It is asserted that the founders' intention was to encourage *bold dreamers* and prophetic spirits whose ideas are too far ahead of their time to win attention without some adventitious aid, rather than to reward practical politicians who merely negotiated another mile of treaty or took another mile of trench in the long campaign of humanity against bloodshed. Both are worthy types of service, but if the prize is to have any real influence on the course of history, it may better be awarded in recognition of the heroic virtues of creative idealists than of the meritorious work of diplomats and statesmen. Even if Gandhi were all kinds of an impractical fanatic that his harshest critics think he is, it would be still true that he is the world's foremost representative of the principle of non-violence. If he is not the most logical candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize, then the popular idea of the function and purpose of that prize needs to be revised."

*Christian Century*, 14-3-1934

I glanced across at the Mahatma sitting imperturbable amongst his papers, with which this merciful weekly day of respite gives him the chance to deal. A few feet away was a circle of villagers, some of whom had been there since the night before, just sitting or standing, watching this man who symbolises so much to them in a hard world. A man who comes to them shorn of all worldly possessions—preaching a way of life that he follows himself.

I took this editorial to him with the passage marked. He read it through twice—then picked up a slip of paper and wrote: "Do you know of a Dreamer who won attention by 'Adventitious Aid'?"

That was all, except to look up with an amused smile as he handed me the slip and my *Christian Century*. I asked him if he had further comment. He shook his head.

Later after his silence was broken and our party was walking to the next village, I again referred to this editorial, and

told him I should send his slip of paper to the man who had written or had the vision to write this at a time when the efforts of what might be called “the statesman of peace” are no disappointing.

Hence this article.

\* \* \*

3. And now I am back in England. Daily I am being asked—“Did you not find Mr. Gandhi’s power on the wane. Is not the person to watch Jawaharlal Nehru ?”

Across my mind crowd the memories of these weeks. In the Earthquake area for example—where for nine days on and I was in the Mahatma’s car, seeing the incredible havoc wrought in terms of human life and suffering—attending all the meetings at which he spoke. I thought I knew something about crowds. But I have never seen anything to compare with these surging masses. And it was not as though he commiserated with them in their misery. The challenge he presented to them was : “what has this calamity taught you? This is no time for difference between Government and Congress, Hindu and Muslim, Touchable and Untouchable. If you take money from the Relief Funds, see that you earn it, etc. etc.”

To the women, many of whom in Bihar are still in *purdah*, he would say : “Has this calamity taught you nothing ? Why this foolishness (*purdah*) ? There is only one place for *purdah*, and that is of the heart.”

The Mahatma was severely practical too. For even in this area, he took up a collection at every meeting; the women giving their jewellery.

With the exception of a few miles of the route in certain districts, we seemed to drive between the walls of people. As we neared a village these ‘walls’ would press in almost to the point of suffocation, in an effort to catch a glimpse of this loved man. Sometimes through sheer fatigue the Mahatma would curl up on the seat and sleep, and I would sit on the floor or the car. As we neared a village and the motor slowed down, Rajendra Prasad on one side, the chauffeur on the other, would lean out of the car and call out softly in ‘Hindustani’ : ‘He sleeps.’ These words would be echoed by the people. But even this did not deter them from pressing around the car, though

quite quietly, in an effort to see him, asleep. From my vantage point on the floor I saw the expressions on their faces, and was dumb. For it was as though they had seen a God.

Another memory—this time on the Harijan tour. Here, miles away from railways or towns, we walked from village to village—spending the night often in a field by the road, or in some ashram—accompanied by men, women and children, who would leave their work in the fields to walk with us. Later Mr. Gandhi forbade this, asking “What has happened to your work and your cattle?” Crowded meetings, visits to the Harijan quarters, talks with local committees or seeing how this man dealt with the orthodox opposition—the Sanatanists—as they are called. These days were full to the brim with vital happenings.

Mr. Gandhi has always been the sworn enemy of untouchability, but this year has been devoted to an intensive campaign against it. The world knows so little of what has been achieved in this year—of the enormous crowds of people who listen to his challenging message; of the work of local committees; of the weekly paper called *Harijan* edited by the Mahatma, the chronicles, the doings of this amazing year. It only costs one cent. Why don't people read it?

His campaign is against untouchability, but it has also a message for the whole world. He is striking at religious intolerance, oppression and misery and trying to lessen the grave inequalities between the “Haves” and “Have Nots” of this world. Yet if you ask at random what the ordinary person knows of all this—you will find that uppermost in his mind are the untoward incidents—such as the eggs that were thrown at Nagpur the Black Flag incidents that have punctuated the tour, or more recently—the bombs thrown at Poona. All these things have happened and they are headlined.

I seem to remember that history records another Man was persecuted when he dared to preach an unpopular ‘Way of Life’

I witnessed some of these demonstrations, and saw how the Mahatma felt with them. In South Bihar, for an ugly incident occurred, and some heads of the Sanatanists as well as Mr. Gandhi's volunteers suffered in the process. To the apostle of non-violence what happened was repugnant. “This shakes me to the very foundations”, he said.

Hearing that another demonstration was planned for that afternoon, he decided to face this in a novel way, by going alone and on foot along the mile route to the meeting. His followers begged to be allowed to accompany him, and to have a car in readiness in the rear. Mr. Gandhi was adamant, and set off alone, save for Mr. Thakkar, the Secretary of the Servants of Untouchables Society. Many thought he would never come back alive. I had no such fear. As this frail figure started out he seemed to me to have the answer to all disarmament questions — he was demonstrating a way of life seldom followed — of going alone unarmed and unafraid in a spirit of love— into the midst of conflict.

There are many pictures of Mr. Gandhi — often grotesque, for he lends himself so easily to caricature. But there is one beautiful picture by Kanu Desai, an Indian artist, depicting the Mahatma going alone into a dark wood with a staff in his hand, whilst all round him is a circle of light. On this occasion Mr. Desai's picture came to my mind. I saw that circle of light around him, and knew he would come back unharmed. And he did. Nothing untoward happened, and he had an excellent meeting, and a very big collection.

When I was on board ship the wireless one day laconically issued the news that a bomb had been thrown at the Mahatma in Poona. Mr. Gandhi's comment is just to hand in an editorial in *Harijan*:

“I have nothing but deep pity for the unknown thrower of the bomb. If I had my way and if the bomb-thrower were known — I should certainly ask for his discharge, even as I did in South Africa in the case of those who successfully assaulted me.”

\*                     \*                     \*

4. “Mr Gandhi's Power is Waning.” I smile when I hear this. For in addition to the above incidents, I call to mind the recent conferences at Ranchi and Patna, when no decision was arrived at nor any resolution submitted, that had not first had his consideration. Behind the scenes in connection with the coming parliamentary move of Congress — is the quiet power and unifying influence of the Mahatma. He is a common denominator

between the varying factions.

That his followers on the left wing or right wing may strain at his decisions is true, but his moral power and discipline is such that I say with conviction, *he is still the greatest force in India today.*

“The Man to Watch is Jawaharlal Nehru.” Of course this is true. A generation younger than Mr Gandhi—clever, brilliant and beloved by the youth of India — Jawaharlal Nehru is a person to reckon with. But what is forgotten is a most important fact—the bond that exists between these two men. While Mr. G andhi lives, there will be no break —each will certainly have to give and take. But these two links are *forged.*

“We Nominate Gandhi for the Nobel Peace Prize” “Ridiculous”—the world will answer. “All this enthusiasm is common in India, where they accord hero worship to great religious leaders.”

With the memory of these crowded weeks in mind, I would say: “Take if you will 75% and call it hero worship, and leave me 25% and what is left is something possessed by no leader in the world today — for it is based on spiritual values.”

What a breath of fresh air would be infused into a jaded atmosphere if the editor’s suggestion were taken seriously by the Nobel Committee, and this coveted Prize awarded to a man who believes in, and practises non-violence in the face of a deaf and blind world.

### 13

PATNA,  
April 6, 1934

MY DEAR GHIANSHYAMDASJI,

I am enclosing herewith a copy of the final draft of Bapu’s statement about civil disobedience. He has wired today to Devdas to share with you the draft sent to him yesterday. It has been considerably abridged. This reference to Council work Bapu found to be unnecessary in this statement after the letter he wrote to Dr. Ansari.



Bapu got your latest wire and has communicated it to Mathuradasbhai.

With kindest regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Chandrashankar

14

AS AT PATNA,  
April 9, 1934

DEAR DR. AMBEDKAR,

Pray excuse me for the delay in replying to your letter of 29-3-1934. It was not possible to reply earlier owing to incessant travelling.

Whilst I should fall in with your scheme if it was accepted by the provinces I could not shoulder the burden of pressing the other provinces to re-open the Pact in respect of the number of seats allotted in their case<sup>s</sup>.

I have been trying to do what I can to placate Bengal, but so far without success. If the Harijan population in Bengal is as was believed at the time of the Pact they have nothing to complain. If as a matter of fact it is much less than the figure on whose basis the number was fixed, I should think there would be no objection on your part to an amendment bringing the number to the figure required.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. Gandhi

15

April 12, 1934

MY DEAR PYARELAL,

I am enclosing herewith two copies of my speech delivered at the Annual Session of the Federation of India Chamber of

Commerce and Industry. Please give one copy to Bapu and ask him to find time just to glance through it. I do not think, I have said anything superfluous and therefore probably he may have to go through the whole of it. And after he has read it, I should like to have his criticism and opinion. It may be that some day I may try to elaborate the theme and therefore his suggestions may be of great help to me. People have begun to take more intelligent interest on this subject nowadays and it would not be a bad idea if public opinion was educated on proper lines. Please, therefore, ask Bapu. I know it is adding to his existing burden, to go through it whenever he finds time in his library.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

PYARELAL, ESQ.  
PRIVATE SECY. TO MAHATMA GANDHIJI  
JORHAT (ASSAM)

## 16

April 14, 1934

PUJYA BAPU,

As you are inviting an informal meeting of the Working Committee and later on a formal meeting of the A.I.C.C. I thought I may put in my views about the formation of the Swaraj Party. So far as your two interviews go, I have nothing to say. Some how or other, I always agree with you and therefore please don't think that I am lacking in reasoning powers. After all what am I to say if you are ever correct? Now about the Swaraj Party. Since Dr. Ansari, Bhullabhai and Dr. Roy have announced the formation of the new party, Panditji (Malaviyaji) seems to be very much upset. He is not quite sure what attitude he would take at the time of election. You know he holds strong views about the Communal Award, and the Hindu Sabhaites who are eager to go to the Assembly have already begun to exploit him. There is a Jauger of another party being formed under the leadership of Panditji if the situation is not handled tactfully and in time. About the communal question Panditji is sailing between the Congress and the Hindu Sabha. He agrees with none. He would like to have an amicable settle-

the Congress a body of men who believe in council-entry and who will do nothing else if they cannot have that programme. Their ambition must be satisfied. The other decision about confining C.D. to myself so far as the goal is concerned is much the most important. It was inevitable. Having arrived at it, I can see the rightness of the decision for a thousand reasons. I have given the precipitating cause. But the decision was slowly coming to me. I do hope that you have not been upset by it. You were before my mind's eye the whole time the decision was taking shape. I concluded that though it might produce a momentary shock, you would ultimately see the truth of it and be glad. I wonder!

We all often talk about you. We are a large party. I was with mother and the members of the family for nearly two hours when I passed through Allahabad.

Love

Bapu

## 19

April 14, 1934

MY DIAR C. R.,

I have many things to write to you but Father Time is a cruel parent. Here is a copy of correspondence between Sir George Schuster and me

I do not see how the Swarajists are to be bound to our programme. We shall have to suggest these things. Our democracy will follow the ways of all the other democracies that are nurtured on Parliamentary traditions. A Parliamentary Party is as inevitable as a Khaddar Party or Prohibition Party. All Parliamentarians won't be of the same hue in the Congress. It may be, indeed it is certain, there will be Congressmen fighting Congressmen on different policies. We shall have to do our part in shaping the policy of Congress Parliamentarians.

This is written in the midst of disturbances.

Love.

Bapu

April 14, 1934

DEAR SATISBABU,

Your letter.

You will on no account overdo things and overtax your energy. I have the evil habit of putting burdens on willing shoulders which are often all able to bear. I expect truth from you and truth demands that you give me notice when I expect too much from you.

You are wrong in thinking that my decision on C.D. is in any way a reflection on any single one of you. If it is a reflection it is on me. But I need not plead guilty. I am but a co-seeker with you all—*primus inter pares*, we have lost nothing by the past doings. We would have lost, if I had not had the courage to halt when I saw the clear necessity for it. There was no warrant for a fast. It would have been simple coercion if I had gone for it.

The Mayoral election is an indication. We must go through the fire. The council-entry decision is sound. We must have a preliminary party of Congressmen and perhaps part of the Congress machinery when the latter can function legally. Now that Congressmen will act as councilwalla, things will presently shape themselves. We must mount to truth through mistakes.

I shall watch your Bengal Programme.

Hemprabha has written to me. No time to write to her separately. She will feel her way and do about khadi in the manner she decides after weighing what I have said. No heroic measure is necessary. And we discuss the thing more fully when we meet.

I had Arun's note. I must not write to him separately. He must build up a strong body.

Love to you all.

Bapu

21

DADAR,  
BOMBAY 14,  
April 15, 1934

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 9th. I put forth the scheme more for your benefit than mine because I thought it might help you to placate the Bengal Hindus and that is why I marked it private and personal. However, if you are not prepared to shoulder the responsibility of pressing the compensatory part on it on other provinces, I must leave matters as they are. But if you are hoping to readjust the seats by again opening the question of population then I must tell you quite frankly that you will encounter from the strongest opposition. As Mr. Thakkar will tell you we did take into account the dispute regarding the total population of the depressed classes and made simple allowance for it in fixing the seats in Bengal and other provinces where the dispute was existing when the Poona pact was made. Nothing more now could be done in that direction and that part of the problem must be taken to be settled once for all.

*Yours sincerely,*  
B.R. Ambedkar

22

JORHAT,  
April 16, 1934

MY DEAR SRIPRAKASHI,

In coming to the decision I have not judged a single follower or co-worker. I have judged myself if I have judged at all. I am free for the decision. It will do us all good, if I remain true to myself. Satyagraha is a unique weapon. You have there-

fore, no need to reproach yourself. But I do not want you to be found ready when the time comes.

Love.

Bapu

SHRI SRIPRAKASH  
BENARES

23

AS AT PATNA,  
April 19, 1934

DEAR DR. DUTTA,

Many thanks for your letter and telegrams. All I can suggest is that you should ask the Bishop not to be satisfied till the Khan is released or at least those who have influence with him are permitted to see him without let or hindrance.

Yes, indeed. For me the present is merged in eternity. I may not sacrifice the latter for the present. And that has driven me logically to the statement. But I am hoping that this latest decision will bring Swaraj nearer than it ever was, so long as the people retain the view that it can be had only through non-violent means. What can be obtained through violence won't be swaraj of my dream.

Love to you both.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

24

April 19, 1934

DEAR SIR HARI SINGH GOUR, :

I thank you for your letter

I have not even thought of the way you have looked at the revival of the Swaraj Party. I have simply looked at it from the

Congress viewpoint which has been hitherto opposed to council-entry altogether. Is there anything to prevent you from being a member of that party? Must your nationalism differ from theirs?

I did indeed read your book on Buddhism with great interest. I do not remember that I had to write to you after my having read it. Your novel is never reached. My views on social reform remain as they were and they have taken active shape in the present campaign against untouchability.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

25

April 20, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have fully read your letter to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. I liked it very much, indeed. It should be sent privately to editor. If he so wishes he may publish only the relevant portion withholding your name and personal element in it. If he does not want to, he may withhold it altogether.

I hope you are maintaining good health and have been taking proper exercise as well.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

26

April 22, 1934

MY DEAR BAPU,

When you were touring in Madras I had sent some cuttings to Thakkar Bapa from the *National Call* writing discrediting things about me. I had also written to Thakkar Bapa to tell

you how the *National Call* was planning writing libellous things about me and thereby compelling me to prosecute it. One of its plans was to say something about Nila Nagini and thereby involve my reputation. When I received these threats I had sent back a message that it was at liberty to write anything and that it need not fear prosecution. I sought your advice at that time. But as I never received any reply, I inferred that the cuttings were never shown to you. The matter has now assumed a serious form which you will be able to see from the cuttings enclosed. The paper has been writing in this way for the last eight months. I need hardly say that everything mentioned in it is baseless and written out of malice. I have contradicted the same as you will be able to see from the enclosed statement. Now the question is, what is to be done? So far as I am concerned, I have no desire to prosecute the Editor because I do not believe that prosecution is the only efficacious way for vindication of one's reputation. Shaukatali prosecuted Sadanand. Although he got the decision in his favour, he did not thereby clear the public mind. In fact, public put little faith in Court judgments and although the case against the *National Call* is very strong, I wonder whether prosecution is the only method of vindicating one's position. But on the other hand Rajaji strongly advises me that I should be failing in my duty if I did not prosecute the paper. There is much in what he says and therefore pending your opinion I have instructed my Calcutta Firm to put the matter in the hands of the Solicitors. Probably the retort to my contradiction from the *National Call* may be that why should I not prosecute them for libel if I am sure about my position. It will then become inevitable on my part to prosecute them. You know it will be a great botheration for me and also waste of time and energy. I have, therefore, to choose whether I should not rely more on the decency of public opinion and my own character or choose the way to Court. What would a poor man do to vindicate his position if prosecution was the only course? This is a point on which I seek your advice. I am also writing to some friends in Bombay to get the Western India Match Company to state the truth in order to clear my position. This is the firm which has been referred to in the *National Call*.

One thing more. The Directors of this Paper are Babu



Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Ansari, Mr. Khaliqzama and some other Congress friends. Is it fair that they should allow the paper to play with my honour in this way? I may humbly point out that my honour is no longer a personal matter. Having associated myself in public life with so many important positions and also with the Presidentship of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, I do not think I deserve to be in the public office if I am what I have been depicted by the *National Call*. I fear, the Directors have not realised their responsibilities. If I am not what I am depicted then they have done the greatest injustice to me and at times I feel legitimate grievances against them. I know poor Rajendra Babu even does not know what is being written. But that, of course, is not consolation to me. I think, it is up to them either to substantiate the charges against me or publicly dissociate themselves from such writings.

Please do not think I am very much distressed on account of this attack. My conscience being quite clear, such attacks do not have much effect on my mind except a momentary shock did not last more than fifteen minutes. But then there is much truth when Rajaji says that I should not allow the things to go unchallenged and the public to believe stupid things about me. One might say the truth could never be suppressed and one should rely more on personal character and the decency of the public opinion. But then there is the other side also.

I am deputing Parasnathji specially to consult you because I know, you are keeping very busy these days and if I have to take legal course then the matter has to be treated very urgent. I do not feel happy to have to waste your time for my personal matters. But you will realise, Bapu, that this is something exceptional and therefore, I hope, you will not mind wasting a few minutes in giving your well-considered opinion.

I will be staying here for a week more and then will go back to Delhi before I proceed to Calcutta to meet you there.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI

April 23, 1934

DEAR LORD HALIFAX,

I write this with great diffidence. But the inclination was too strong to be resisted.

More than three years back for the first time in the history of India two big men met each representing his own country and brought India and England closer than before. In taking the initiative your Lordship set an example to both the countries that through mutual understanding and negotiations alone lay the road to peace and goodwill. The subsequent history is very tragic. But I am told that a provincial Governor recently remarked to a friend of mine that Gandhi carried out cent per cent of his obligation under the 'solemn pact'.

Be that as it may The present position is most unhappy and intolerable. Not only is there more bitterness and greater lack of faith in British pledges than were such ever before manifested; but what is worse is that the only method of peace, that is, the way of mutual understanding and human contact is thrown to the seas once for all. The old man is represented sometimes as an unpractical and unconstructive visionary and at others a dishonest, astute and insincere politician. He cannot be both and you know what he is. There is no desire to understand him. There is a horror for human contact. When Gandhiji said to Lord Willingdon in a recent letter which I have seen: "Believe me when I say that I am yours and England's true friend", he means it. He did not stand on prestige but unconditionally offered co-operation in reconstructing Bihar proving thereby that a staunch non-co-operator as he calls himself, he is the best co-operator. He has also now withdrawn the Civil Disobedience movement earning the displeasure of the left wing of the Congress. I have not the slightest doubt that his course will be approved by the Congress. His influence over the country and the Congress is today even more than ever before.

But what next? To my mind a better mutual understanding more than a better constitution is the greatest requirement of the day. A constitution prepared in an atmosphere of distrust can never succeed. On the other hand, a mutual understanding can itself lead spontaneously to a satisfactory solution on the

constitutional tangle. I go further and maintain that this is the only method even to persuade 'Churchills' to see that in trusting India they are not jeopardising the best interests of England. Every well-wishers of the England and India thus for the time being can only have one mission at heart that is of establishing mutual appreciation between leaders in the two countries. You were, Sir, the first to recognise this essential truth and today the need for realisation of this simple truth is greater than before and may I submit that those who on this side of the seas believe in this expect your active help. During all these days of distress those who still greatly admire your Lordship have one question on their lips: 'What is Lord Irwin doing?' I know the keen interest you still take in our affairs. But if I am allowed, I may say that India needs your help much more than what you unstintedly gave in the past. You set an example in 1931, but it has not been fully persuaded. I still feel that this course is the only hope for both the countries and may appeal to you to pursue the course initiated in 1931. In the present atmosphere success may be distant, but that is no reason for giving up good efforts.

Please allow me to be excused for this lengthy letter. My only justification is my attachment to Gandhiji, admiration of you and my love for my country.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G. D. Birla

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD HALIFAX

G.C.S.I., G.C.I.G., P.C.

88 EATON SQUARE

LONDON, S.W. 1

April 24, 1934

'Your letter, I must not exchange my rupees for one-anna pieces. Satyagraha is not at a discount. It commands for me a premium. Therefore the true ones are reserved. On due occasion

they will give a good account of themselves. Therefore I want you to rejoice over my decision.

Love.

Bapu

SHRI NURGISBEHN CAPTAIN  
OOMARA HALL  
PANCHGANI  
Via POONA

29

RANCHI,  
April 30, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSIYAMDASJI,

Bapu arrived here last evening. We are all being very well looked after. Among those who besides Bapu, are housed in the Birla House are Rajendra Babu. Mr. & Mrs. Munshi, Mathuradasji, Thakkar Bapa, Miss Lester and Miss Harrison. Rajaji arrives this evening with Dr. Ansari. The latter will stay with Abdul Aziz. Bhulabhai and Mrs Naidu are staying in some hotel. Bapu has been given an airy corner room on the upper storey, and is observing silence today.

Bapu looks very much pulled down. The rush he is made to go through has told on his body, and there is a weaky look about him which no one can fail to see. He has to keep last hours and get up sometimes as early as 12-15 to overtake arrears of correspondence for which little time is left during the day. Everyone who has seen him after a time feels considerable anxiety on account of his health. But one does not know what can be done in the circumstances.

I am enclosing herewith copies of some letters bearing on the present political situation that Bapu has written during the last few days.

You might have read Bapu's interview to the 'A.P.I. about the Sanatanists' goondaism that he met with in South Bihar. I have wired the full text to A.P.I. of a speech Bapu delivered

after the incidents. Bapu himself has prepared the report. I am also enclosing herewith a copy of an article on the same subject that Bapu has written for the next issue of the *Harijan*.

I thought of sending it to you earlier, as the *Harijan* would reach you not earlier than Monday next. The report of the incidents has caused considerable anxiety among friends in England. Rumours are afloat that these Sanatanists are going to make a greater row at Puri. Nothing but public condemnation can stop this thing, if anything at all is to stop it. Bapu has written to Malaviyaji requesting him if he thought fit, to condemn publicly this rowdyism. Those people have become mad out of frenzy, and Bapu's life might some day be in danger, as it indeed was at Jasidih that morning. A condemnation through the Press also seems necessary and may have some good effect. I am going to wire the full text of the article to A.P.I. on Thursday next so as to be published on Friday morning, simultaneously with the publication of the *Harijan*.

With kindest regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Chandrashankar

### 30

RANCHI,  
April 30, 1934

DEAR BAPUJI ANNY,

I have gone through your letter to Nariman.

I agree with you entirely that the A.I.C.C. had to be held at a place and date firstly convenient to the members at large and then to me so long as my presence was necessary.

I also agree that the co-operation of Sjts. Kelkar, Jamnadas and others should be invited.

Of course there can be no settled programme. It will vary with the circumstances as they may arise from time to time.

I am quite clear that it will be wrong for the Congress to abandon C.D. altogether. I would have the Congress an illegal

body so long as even the C.D. as restricted by me is objected to by the Government.

But that is my personal view. If the majority do not want it as restricted by me it should be definitely abandoned.

Yours sincerely,  
M.K. Gandhi

SHRI LOKNAYAK ANEY

31

May 5, 1934

MY DEAR MRINAL BABU,

The enclosure is a letter which I had intended to send to you for publication in the *Patrika* when I read your criticism against my interview on the formation of the Swaraj Party. An esteemed friend suggested that I should not enter into any public controversy on the subject and so I refrained. But it just occurred to me that I may at least send this for your private information. You may not agree with my views, but I am afraid, there are so many things which the public do not know and which I feel an editor of an important Paper would like to know. Similarly there are many things about the Poona Pact which are not known to the public in Bengal. As you know I played a very important part in the Poona Pact and I may tell you this much that before I left Calcutta for Poona I was authorised by an esteemed friend in Bengal whom you all respect to offer even all the seats to the Harijans if that could bring about an amicable settlement. This is of course by the way.

Hope, you are well.

Yours sincerely,  
G.D. Birla

MRINAL KANTI BASU, ESQ.  
C/o Amrita Bazar Patrika  
CALCUTTA

*Personal*

May 7, 1934

MY DEAR MRINAL BABU,

With reference to my letter of the 5th May. I think I should explain a little more my reference to the Poona Pact because what I wrote is likely to be misunderstood if not properly explained.

Before I left Calcutta for Poona I discussed the things with a prominent Hindu Sabha leader and asked him whether it would be possible for the Hindus in general to make a generous gesture to the Harijans. He thereupon consulted an eminent Bengali leader who is just now opposed to the Poona Pact and he agreed that it was very desirable that such a generous gesture should be made. He even went to the extent of saying that if it could satisfy the untouchables we should offer them even per cent of the seats allocated to Caste Hindus. Such an offer thereupon was made publicly by the said Hindu Sabha leader with the express authority of the friend in Bengal about whom I have made reference.

In opinion, at Poona we did our best not to be generous at the expense of any province. But later on it was realised by us that in making the Pact we had not given satisfaction to the Bengalee friends although in some respects it was a painful surprise as the Press interview I am referring to given by the Hindu Sabha leader was done so with the express authority of a very important friend in Bengal. This is just in explanation of what I had written.

*Yours sincerely,*  
G.D. Birla

MRINAL KANTI BASU, ESQ  
C/o *Amrita Bazar Patika*  
CALCUTTA

May 7, 1934

MY DEAR CHANDRASHANKARBHAI,

Thanks for your letter and also the enclosure. I have made good use of it in the *Hindustan Times*. Panditji may condemn the rowdyism of the Sanatanists; but I hope, you all will guard Bapu's body very carefully. I have just heard from Thakkar Bapa that Bapu has decided to spend his rest period after Bengal tour at Ranchi. This is splendid. But unless Bapu has got any special attachment to Ranchi, I would suggest that he may take rest in one of the villages near Ranchi. I can make suitable arrangements in a village 20 or even 30 miles away from Ranchi. The place would be quiet and also quite healthy. If he does not like to stay far from the town, then of course Ranchi is there. I hope to have the good luck of staying with Bapu during his rest period.

I have two letters from Bapu before me and also his message through Parasnathji. First of all, as regards the scheme of Baba Raghobdas I have already told him that I will arrange about finance when I go to Calcutta. I think, there will be no difficulty about this. I have also asked him to see me in Calcutta when I go there.

As regards the *National Call* affair, Bapu's view fits in with my own and therefore I am not taking any action now. Parasnathji told me that Bapu had asked Rajendra Babu to write to Dr. Ansari. I do not think, anything will come out of it. But I would not worry any more about this. The *National Call* has not yet stopped its crusade against me. In spite of all what it writes I am not inclined to take any legal action until I feel the position to be most intolerable. I hope, however, that stage will never come.

Dr. Ansari saw me the day before yesterday. He was asking for funds for the new Swaraj Party. I will do nothing without consulting Bapu in this matter and therefore I could not give him any definite reply. It was very funny, however, that although he talked about everything in the world, he did not say even a word about the *National Call* affair. How funny



Please convey my pranams to Bapu.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
CUTTACK

### 34

#### **Extract from a Letter from Mira Ben Dated May 10, 1934**

I was to tell you how Bapu's mind has developed in this direction. Here is what he has been saying to the Orissa workers since the pilgrimage has begun. "If this pilgrimage on foot develops in the way I hope and expect it to develop I am quite capable of not returning to jail, but of going on walking, walking throughout the land to the end of my days. It is not only Harijan work that I can do best in this way. I can do khadi propaganda and all service of the masses best through this walking. This is the ideal way to spreading a spiritual message. All those who went before me did this. Buddha left his horse behind him and from that day went only on foot. He did not make use of the conveniences of his for quick locomotive though they were there. I would like to walk on and when the rains come just sit down in one place wherever I happen to be, and wait for them to pass. Those who want political aid and the like from me can come to me wherever I am."

At last Bapu is truly coming into his own. But we must play our part if he is to be truly freed. Then we shall find that this pilgrimage will solve all our problems.

Just now as I am writing Bapu is talking to workers and he has this moment said:

"My time is up on 31st July, but I am hoping and praying that something will turn up which will enable me to continue this march."

He is in a highly inspired mood, and I have utmost faith in the possibilities of the great pilgrimage if it is enabled to go unchecked.

35

46/B BOSE PARA LANE,  
CALCUTTA,  
May 11, 1934

MY DEAR MR. BIRLA,

Your letters dated 5th and 6th are to hand. I am thankful for the private information you have given. Much of what you say I already knew. I have not the smallest doubt that you did what you thought best for the cause which we will all hold dear. I am by no means insensible of the great, if unobtrusive part, you have played in these and many other affairs of national importance. Our views about the Communal Award remain however unchanged. I would have been very glad to publish your letter with liberty to make such comments as we would think proper. Even now I am quite willing to publish it if you will permit. I don't know why you should desire to avoid a newspaper controversy. Nobody will question the absolute sincerity of your views.

I trust this will find you quite fit.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Minal Kanti Basu

36

AS AT MANIBHUVAN,  
BOMBAY,  
May 11, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I was not able to see your first letter to me as I was at that time away from Bapu, and Bapu, after replying to it immediately

ture it up. A copy of Bapu's reply was sent to me. I was thinking of writing to you again, but I now learn that you have seen Bapu in Orissa. This is just to enclose Bapu's criticism on the socialist programme framed at Patna. It was invited by Masani of Bombay. In the covering letter Bapu writes: "With reference to the resolutions adopted at the first All-India Congress Socialist Conference, I should have very little to say against them if your programme was sound, which for the reasons I have given does not appear to me to be. The resolution is perhaps bombastic, it is certainly prolix." I think Bapu should make a comprehensive statement setting forth his views on socialism as it is understood and propagated in India today. The similarity in phraseology creates a misunderstanding. Both Bapu and the so-called socialists use many words in common but with different connotations.

I hope to be with Bapu during the remainder of the tour. Mahadevbhai says he will be released on July 14 at the latest.

With kindest regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Chandrashankar

### 37

88 EATON SQUARE,  
S. W. I.,  
May 11, 1934

DEAR MR. BIRIA,

I got your letter a few days ago, and I wish to write and thank you for it. I think you may rest assured that I shall not cease to do everything that I can, in circumstances that are not too easy, to assist in the task of winning through to better understanding on all sides of the matters that make for India's contentment and peace, and I have never lost my faith that with the efforts on the part of all those who wish for this end the great task will be accomplished. So you may feel certain that anything I can do will be gladly done. I have always felt that

the present situation is one demanding great patience on all sides, and a readiness to see through our present difficulties in the light of the larger hope.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Halifax

38

May 13, 1934

MY DEAR MRINAL BABU,

Thanks for your letter. I think the matter has now become very stale and it is hardly necessary to publish my letter.

I will be coming to Calcutta in the near future and hope to have the pleasure of meeting you. We may differ on important matters. It is quite possible that on Communal Award I may be mistaken in holding the view that it could not be changed without the consent of all the parties. In any case I can have the pleasure of discussing the matter with you and I will take the opportunity of doing so when I come to Calcutta.

*yours sincerely,*  
G. D. Birla

MRINAL KANTI BASU, ESQ.  
46/B BASU PARA LANE  
CALCUTTA

39

May 13, 1934

PUJYA BAPU,

Just after posting a letter to you, today I received yours which has been redirected from Calcutta. You seem to have been under the impression that I have already left this place. But as you are reaching Calcutta about the 1st of June, I pro-

pose to reach there about a week before your arrival.

I did not deliberately comment on your pedestrian tour. I liked the idea and so kept silent. I entirely agree with you that changing of peoples' heart is more important than collection of funds.

Now about my speech. Your criticism that I did not try to lay down a plan is correct although I have given an idea as to how my mind is running. The omission, however, was deliberate. In the first place the speech was meant mainly for the Government and those who want a thinking. I am not without a Plan but I thought it would be presumptuous on my part to be dogmatic and try to offer a Plan when my own ideas are yet to be experimented. And therefore, instead of offering a Plan I have decided to work it myself in about 100 villages, if possible with my own funds. The scheme is enclosed herewith. It is meant only for my province. For other provinces it has to be different. For instance at many places poultry farms may be undertaken. I am already conducting a small industrial school at Pilani. It covers wool spinning and weaving, carpentry, tanning and shoemaking, dyeing and printing and carpet making. I have deliberately omitted cotton khadi from my programme and I hope, you remember that I told you about this in Delhi. My province is not a fit place for cotton khadi and you approved of this omission.

I now want to widen up the field. This scheme could be worked up independently of Government. The State can do many more things and I could make a lot of useful suggestions. But I hesitated to say anything because I felt I will be misunderstood. A lot could be said about the method of taxation. I have got my own views on taxing the idle capital, consumption tax, excise inheritance tax and so many other things. But I would have given the Government unnecessary handle about new taxation without achieving my object. Besides I would have alarmed my colleagues in the Federation. I therefore, chose the better course that is keeping silent over the question of taxation and carrying out the work on a miniature scale myself. Please guide me where you think I stand to be corrected.

I agree with you that Planning in India has to be done with Indian conditions before our eyes. There could be no slavish

imitation of the West. When I was advancing a plea for Planning I had never for a moment in my mind the five years' Plan of Russia or anything of the kind. In fact, I see a great danger in over-centralization as they are doing it in other places. Yet there are many good things that can only be done by the Government. We can only advocate. Taxation, Trade Pacts, Tariffs, Land Laws, etc., are things in which Government alone can help. But I will discuss the matter at length when we meet.

As regards charkha I admit that I have not as strong a faith in it as you have. I have no doubts about its efficacy. But the difficulties unnerve me. And yet you know, I have been interesting myself in Mahabirprasadji's work and also financing him. But you would not value my financing so much as you would my active association. And as I do not have the same enthusiasm as one desirous of achieving success ought to have, I feel hesitation in actively undertaking the job myself.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA M. K. GANDHIJI  
PATNA

40

May 13, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had offered to write to you in English if you had difficulty in deciphering my handwriting. Today I have to dictate if I am to write to you at all, not because I have not got the time to write but because the heat is terrific and some kind of insects are so pestering me that it is better for me to dictate than to write.

I am anxious to know how you have taken this walking pilgrimage and if you have appreciated the step, I want you to throw yourself heart and soul into it. If you are in Calcutta I would like you to collect as if I was in Calcutta and a purse had to be presented to me. That very purse can be sent to me here. I have told Dr. Bidhan that about the middle of June I should

come to Calcutta for two purposes, first to talk with those who would wish to about Poona Pact and secondly for collections. But I am developing a reluctance even for doing that. On the contrary if nobody would care to come to me to discuss the thing, I need not go to Calcutta for it. It can be attended to in August wherever I may be. There is no hurry about it. As to the collections I should have faith enough that whatever is to come will come whilst I am performing the walking pilgrimage. Every day makes me stake all on this walk. I have discussed the whole thing with Satisbabu. He must give you some of his own experiences. Of course I am having experiences which I would not have on any other account.

I read your letter to Chandrashankar. In the altered circumstances I have given up the idea of having any rest. This easy walk every day obviates the necessity of rest. Therefore we can meet now only at some point in the tour. It is no use thinking of my inviting you to Patna. After finishing Patna, that is, on the morning of the 20th or the night of the 19th, I leave for Cuttack or some point in Orissa to resume the walk and to continue it till the middle of June, that is, till the rains set in here. You could come and pass one or two days in the pilgrimage or pass a Tuesday with me, because on Monday there will be no march and on Tuesday also none except in the evening. The idea is to resume the march at 5.30 on Tuesday.

I have already written to you telling you what action Dr. Ansari and Rajendra Babu had taken about the *National Call*. I would like you to furnish me with all the cuttings that you may come across.

In view of Sahni's letter I do not despair of his abiding by the instructions that might be given to him. That should be enough for us

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

May 20, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am penning this letter at a village called Chandanpur ten miles away from Puri. The urge had persisted all along, though it had lacked the present immediacy about it. The incidents of Deoghar and Buxar had their own contribution to make in lending added force to this feeling. That a learned man like Panchanan had a hand in the Deoghar incident, there is no doubt whatever. Was it possible to dissipate this darkness from a railway compartment? I am no longer keen about collecting funds which in this particular field of activity can have only a minor part to play. What matters just now is how to bring about a metamorphosis in the ingrained outlook of the people. To me this appears more feasible through a walking tour than by any other means. If only I could persuade my co-workers to fall in line with my thinking I should prefer to confine my tour to Orissa alone. I am not much inclined to visit Patna either.

I hope you approve of my proposition in regard to the *National Call*.

Sahni has sent a longish communication to Rajendra Babu promising to act in keeping with his wishes and mine. You might have heard from Rajendra Babu as well. Ansari also is quite favourably inclined.

I have gone through your Prosperity Plan. The idea is good enough, though it has failed to impress me quite as much as your other things. It contains sufficient material for a plan, but the plan itself is not there. A plan should be such as could be immediately taken in hand by the Government as also by the others, no matter if it fails to attract wider notice. Such a plan will not be beyond your mental capacity. Think over and then do what you deem proper. I am convinced that in any such plan the charkha should occupy the pivotal point. If you disagree, explain why after dissecting the entire issue. If the Government, which means the State, could be persuaded to lend a helping hand, that would result in a saving of millions of rupees quite easily. There is no such thing as planning after the models perfected in the West. You know how wakeful I am in this respect. In fact, my own line of thinking in



this regard has received a fresh impetus recently, as you will find yourself. The dismissal of the charkha from the people's daily life has resulted in widespread lethargy, while the absence of scientific animal husbandry is making the animals devour human beings. If we could only blend the charkha with scientific cattle breeding this country of ours would attain to a stage of prosperity denied to the other nations so far.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

*PS.* I hope you are keeping quite fit. In case you find it difficult to decipher my handwriting I can easily take to writing in English, which of course means getting my letter typed in English.

42

May 26, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have read your plan. The sixth page is numbered 11. Has something been left out?

The scheme strikes me as rather expensive, but my difficulty lies in the absence of any year-wise result at the conclusion of each year. Is it not the salient feature of the Russian Plan that in it you can find the achievements of each year after its completion with its self-sufficiency proven at least on paper. I fail to find any such attempt in this scheme.

I hope you are maintaining good health. I like this pilgrimage very much indeed, though I find it difficult to visit the village on the way on account of physical exhaustion. This distresses me much.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

*.PS.* The Calcutta purse can be sent here wherever I happen to be. During this tour I have not been getting information about the other provinces.

CALCUTTA,  
 June 9, 1934

MY DEAR SIR TEJ,

I have just returned from Orissa where I was with Gandhiji for a few days. Discussing the general political situation I casually remarked to him that I did not agree with some of those who said that between the Montague-Chelmsford Reform and the White Paper Scheme the former was better and that therefore the White Paper even if modified is not worth the paper on which it was written. He was astonished to hear my views and he did not agree with me that people who talked of the total rejection of the White Paper were talking in a bargaining spirit. He therefore asked me to prepare a note comparing the two constitutions and pointing out the advances proposed under the White Paper Scheme. I said that while I could undertake the task, I was not competent to do this. And then I asked him whether I could write to you to seek your help and he liked the idea. I know you are a very busy man. But as nobody knows about the White Paper than yourself, I should think everything is on the tips of your fingers and it would not be a labour for you to dictate five foolscap pages pointing out the salient features of both the constitutions and showing how the White Paper is undoubtedly better than the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme. You can either send this note direct to Gandhiji or if you will send it to me I will forward the same to him. I hope, you will not mind this encroachment on your time. Had there been a better authority in India on the subject I would have not troubled a busy man like yourself.

*Yours sincerely,*  
 Ghanshyamdass Birla.

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU  
 ALLAHABAD

CALCUTTA,  
June 9, 1934

DEAR MIRA BEN,

The *Indian Jail Manual* is not available here. I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter received from Lord Halifax or rather Lord Irwin as I should like to call him. I think, it is not bad. And since it concurs with my own views, I call it a good letter. I think we have to keep patience and continue the work. I will send him a suitable reply. Please show this to Miss Harrison.

I have written to Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas to introduce Miss Harrison to Sir Osborne Smith, the Governor of the Imperial Bank of India. So please speak to Miss Harrison about this. The copy of my letter to Lord Irwin is in my file at Delhi and therefore I could not send you a copy of the same just now. Please, however, show the reply to Bapu and write to me what he thinks of it.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MIRA BEN  
C/O ASHRAM  
WARDHA (C.P.)

WARDHA,  
June 9, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Bapu's fast continues in ideal condition of peace. The atmosphere is fully favourable. He has been resting a lot, sleeping a lot. The doctors also are quite satisfied. I have not troubled Bidhan and Jivraj especially. My account of 'Bapu's first days of the fast is enclosed herewith. Today is the third day and yet there have been no complications.

*Yours humbly,*  
Mahadev

46

CALCUTTA,  
June 9, 1934

MY DEAR RAJAJI,

I enclose herewith a copy of a letter which I have written to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. I do not know whether in spite of all your simplicity and modesty you are not as good a constitutionalist as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. In any case, I have the authority of Bapu to ask you to prepare a Note for him. So I need not to humour you to exact the work from you.

I hope yourself, Devdas, Lakshmi and the baby, all of you are quite well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI, ESQ.  
C/o *Hindustan Times*  
DELHI

47

CALCUTTA,  
June 11, 1934

DEAR LORD HALIFAX,

I am gratified to note the contents of Your Lordship's letter dated the 11th ultimo for which I am sincerely thankful. I quite appreciate the virtue of patience and as you know more than any of us Gandhiji has it in tons. But if there is anything which you think we could do here to improve the situation we would like to have your definite guidance on such points because I know that it will carry great weight with Gandhiji.

Miss Harrison is returning to England shortly with very important impressions and information which will give you an idea as to how much Gandhiji is working for peace all around. She will also give you some idea about his Harijan tour too

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as she was with Gandhiji for a pretty long time when he was walking through villages situated at great distance from railways.

I hope you are quite well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

THE RIGHT HON'BLE LORD HALIFAX

P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E.

88 EATON SQUARE

LONDON, S.W. 1

48

19 ALBERT ROAD,  
ALLAHABAD,  
June 22, 1934

MY DEAR MR. BIRLA,

Your letter of the 9th instant was redirected to me at Simla where I happened to be between the 8th and the 18th of June on professional business. I note that with the consent of Mahatma Gandhi you wanted me to write a sort of memorandum showing that the White Paper Scheme was better than the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme.

I have already expressed my views at length on the White Paper in my memorandum and I would have had no objection to writing a short memorandum for the personal use of the Mahatma if I was free to do so at Simla. Unfortunately I was not. I do not think that any useful purpose will be served by my writing any memorandum on the subject as the Congress has already taken a decided line and I cannot flatter myself that anything coming from me can have the least chance of persuading them to alter their viewpoint. I have all along held the view that the White Paper falls short of our expectations and is open to serious criticisms in some respects, but I have never shared the view that it is so black as it is painted to be in certain newspapers and by certain politicians or that it will

make our position worse than it is now. Indeed with all its defects I have been of the opinion that in certain respects it will make our position distinctly better as it will enable us to achieve the rest of the success much more effectively provided we do not get ourselves involved in academic theories or try to bring about reconstruction of the entire social organization as if we had a clean slate to write upon. In the events which have happened therefore it will serve no useful purpose if I write anything about it and I have therefore decided to keep at least for the present absolutely silent.

With kind regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Tej Bahadur Sapru

G.D. BIRLA, ESQ.  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE  
CALCUTTA

49

June 28, 1934

MY DEAR SIR TEJ,

Thanks for your letter. I agree with what you say in defence of the White Paper but I am afraid you have misunderstood my previous letter. It was not that I wanted to write something for the public. You have already expressed your views in your memorandum. I, therefore, wanted you to write a note only for the personal use of Mahatma Gandhi. He wanted me to prepare a note for him but you know my limitations. This is not a subject in which I could claim to be well versed and therefore I had to seek your help.

I do not think Mahatma Gandhi has made up his mind. The resolution of the Working Committee, in my opinion, does not say that the White Paper is worse than the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme. The Congress may reject it as falling far short of its demands but that does not mean that the Congress

rules out all possibilities, to make it a good stepping-stone for the final goal

With kind regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla

SIR TIL BHADUR SAPRU  
ALLAHABAD

50

July 9, 1934

THAKKAR BAPA  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
KARACHI

MUCH PERTURBED ABOUT BAPI'S HEALTH YOU ARE TAKING GREAT RESPONSIBILITY IN NOT CURTAILING PROGRAMME DRASTICALLY I STRONGLY SUGGEST CREATING ONE REST WEEK AT QUITE PLACE ABOUT 15TH CUTTING LAHORE CANNONPORT BUNARFS PROPORTIONATELY CALCUTTA MAY BE POSTPONED BY A WEEK PLEASE DON'T ALLOW CONTINUATION UNTIL HE THOROUGHLY BREAKS DOWN.

GHANSHYAMDAS

51

KARACHI,  
July 9, 1934

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
NEW DELHI

ALARM UNJUSTIFIED TAKING EVERY CARE PROPOSE TAKING SEVEN DAYS' FAST FROM FIFTH OR SIXTH AUGUST. DATE AFTER REACHING WARDHA REGARDING ASSAULT LAINATH HOLD THIS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE MADE NOW. WIRE APPROVAL

BAPU

**Shri Chandrashankar's Statement on Bapu's Fast**

KARACHI,

July 10, 1934

The news of Bapu's impending fast of seven days will come to friends as a stunning blow, or as Mahadevbhai has called it "an earthquake shock". In the very meeting in Ajmer at which the unfortunate incident happened resulting in slight injury on the head of the Sanatani Swami Lalnath, Bapu had declared his intention to undertake penance after inquiring into the details of the happening. The result of the inquiry Bapu has described in his statement of the Press. As soon as the summary of the speech appeared in the Press Sjt. Natarajan wired to Bapu: "No call for penitential observance. Condemnation sufficient. Pray desist." Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla wired: "Have read with great concern assault on Lalnath. Hope you will not make up your mind about penance without giving chance of discussion." This was on the 6th instant. Yesterday was Bapu's silence day and he spent it in a palatial building on the seaside. He had arrived at some decision, and in the afternoon sent the following wire to Sjt. Birla: "Propose taking seven days' fast from fifth or sixth August. Date after reaching Wardha. Regarding assault Lalnath. Hold this absolutely necessary. Announcement should be made now. Wire approval." To this reply came from Devdas at midnight. "While reverently entirely acquiescing on consideration humbly urge four days." And the following came from Sjt. Birla this morning: "Personally hold such a long fast unwarranted. Will give unnecessary shock to country which hope Lalnath does not desire. Request showing this telegram to Lalnath. Hope you will agree reducing period of fast. Step rather drastic. Finally your discretion." Bapu wrote out the statement in the morning between 8 and 9 and after it was shown to Sjts. Jairamdas, Thakkar Bapa and Kakasaheb, it was issued to the Press. I asked Bapu last night if he would not consider the request for reducing the number of days. He replied: "Seven is the least number. This is to be a penance, and that too a public one. One should not be calculating in such matters." He has written to Mira Ben today: "The incident calls



for the penance because there was a clear breach of pledge. Nothing on earth is so serious perhaps as breach of pledge of safety. If I had greater capacity I would have taken a longer fast. You must not be disturbed. You would go on with your appointed task unmoved. To Sjt. Natarajan he wired: "Cause too great for overlooking Ajmer neglect duty." And to Sjt. Birla: "Nothing less than seven days meets case." A telegram came from Sjt. Mathuradas this evening: "Postpone decision penance. Letter posted Lahore," to which Bapu replied: "Decision taken. Inevitable Read statement." Another moving appeal came from Mahadevbhai: "Pranams. Hoping report myself Lahore fourteenth latest. Pray have mercy spare us further earthquake shocks." But it was too late. The statement probably appeared in the evening papers today, and an appeal has been addressed to Sjt. Thakkar by Swami Anand, Mahadevbhai and Mathuradas from Bombay, which might be endorsed by hundreds in the country and abroad: "Urge you in name of humanity substantially curtail tour daily programme and enable Bapu by every means conceivable conserve energy stand impending fast. India expects you firmly act avert tragedy." And I feel sure that the appeal will not go in vain. Indeed he has been of late very anxious about Bapu's health and has been trying his best to have the programme as light as possible. He has already issued instructions to that effect to organizers of the tour in the remaining provinces.

Chandrashankar

### 53

July 10, 1934

GHANSHYAMDAS  
"SEWAK"  
DELHI

LAHORE FRIENDS PUBLISHED PRIVATE LETTER CONTAINING MY  
PURPOSE BY EXAGGERATED STATEMENT. PLEASE DON'T BE PERTURBED,

OFFERED BAPUJI CANCEL REMAINING TOUR BUT RELIUSED CALCUTTA VISIT URGENT IN HIS OPINION. WAITING.

THAKKAR

KARACHI

54

2 CRANBOURN COURT,  
ALBERT BRIDGE ROW,  
July 14, 1934

DIAR MAHATMAJI,

This week brought out the news of your week's fast to be undertaken at the end of your tour. About this there is nothing to be said—for you have made up your mind. All your friends can do is to strengthen you by their good wishes during these days.

Since seeing you in India trying to cope with correspondence that never can be overtaken, I have given much thought as to whether I should and should not bother you about the news from here. There is so much I would like to tell you, and wish at this moment I was accompanying you on another walking tour so that in that comparatively peaceful setting we could talk. You will have received my last week's letter. I expect it must have revealed what my state was—I was extremely tired—as a result of Mira's coming. Well now she has been here for a week, things are shaping and yesterday she came to town, and we spent time going over her tour. I think it is too strenuous. As I tell her even you stop for a day. We will try and find someone to help her—for letters must be dealt with, etc. I tell her that I feel she should collect money where possible for the earthquake relief and for Harijan work—I'm sure that though it would not be much—people would gladly give.

My week has been a mixture of meetings and interviews. I saw the S.O.S., Sir Fredrick Sykes, Sir Stafford Crisp and Major Atlee and am seeing Lord Halifax today—Lord Sankey next week and also Sir Stanley Jackson. I pick these names out of a

number—not because as Mira calls them they are what are termed “Big Bugs”—but because in their different ways they can help. Time is short, in another week people will be beginning to make treks for their holidays—so it needs the most intense work now to get a sense of the urgency across. Attention has been concentrated here on what Churchill has attempted to do—this has been and is, in the fore-front of many minds. Through interviews, the Press and meetings we are doing all possible to correct this. Happily Dr Ansari has just arrived—these talks above have been working up to his coming. For he can do what none else can. The interview about which we talked is arranged—and much will I hope come of it. The ground has been carefully prepared. Dr. Ansari will do the rest.

I can never be too thankful that I came to India. The experience during those months makes me able to speak with great conviction here. Having been on the spot when you wrote your statement and there when the Government communique was issued makes it possible to convey the atmosphere created. In all talks I stress the fact that more must immediately be done than removing political prisoners, and the “Three”. And all the time I say “This man’s mind is set towards peace”. And to illustrate this I have many examples—some of which you probably never know I was taking in!

I find the S.O.S. also thinks that you are an honest person—I told him what I heard you say about him. I had half an hour with him and every second of it was used. This is the first time I have seen him and it took place just before the reception to Lord Willingdon—need I say more? I saw him alone and probably there is no more busy man in London just now. You will read between the lines. Will you please tell whoever is now with you that any letter I send by next air mail is brought to you—if you are able to see letters during your coming ordeal. And please do not prevent C.F.A. (Andrews) from coming to India from Africa.<sup>1</sup>

*Your. in fellowship,*  
Agatha Harrison

<sup>1</sup>This letter is incomplete. The remaining portion is not available.—  
G.D.B.

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LAHORE,  
July 14, 1934

MAHATMA GANDHI  
LAHORE

MOST HUMBL Y SUBMIT YOU SHOULD NOT GAMBLE WITH YOUR  
HEALTH AGAINST DOCTORS' ADVICE .

GHANSHYAMDAS

56

July 14, 1934

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
NEW DELHI

AM FOLLOWING DOCTORS' ADVICE

BAPU

57

July 14, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. Whatever action has been taken against Ramnarayan was not at all prompted by anger. It is absolutely essential to resort to fasting over this issue. Not to do so would be only a sign of weakness. There is no other way to educate public opinion. I have been having practical experience every moment of my life how deep violence has rooted itself in the people's conduct.

I also got your wire. A reply has been sent. I am exercising

great precaution. The doctors are fully satisfied that I am free from any kind of complication; nor do they wish to dissuade me.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

PS. Dr. Bidhan's resignation may as well be accepted. You write to Satisbabu. In case you find it inconvenient to proceed to Calcutta, don't go. We shall of course meet at the Station.

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CAWNPORE,  
July 23, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I enclose herewith a note on Bapu's views on swadeshi expressed in recent conversations. Bapu has returned from Calcutta without achieving the main purpose of his visit. He could neither see H.E., as the latter conveyed on the last day his inability to see Bapu. Probably there were orders from higher authorities.

Bapu is getting good rest here. The elaborate police arrangements at yesterday's public meeting, with sowars and rifles, gave deep pain to Bapu to which he could not help giving expression in his speech.

With kindest regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Chandrashankar

## Swadeshi—Its Implication

During the last few months Gandhiji has been approached by several workers for a comprehensive definition of swadeshi for their guidance. In trying to prepare an exhaustive definition and in the course of discussion with co-workers in the extreme South, he discovered that such a definition was almost impossible and that swadeshi was its own definition. It was a spirit that was daily growing and undergoing variations. Any attempt at a definition must fail and was likely to retard the evolution of the swadeshi spirit. He therefore suggested the following workable formula for the guidance of the All-India Swadeshi League and kindred organizations.

“For the purpose of the All-India Swadeshi League swadeshi covers useful articles manufactured in India through small industries which are in need of popular education for their support and which will *accept* the guidance of the All-India Swadeshi League in regulation of prices and in the matter of the wages and welfare of labour under their control. Swadeshi will, therefore, exclude articles manufactured through the large and organized industries which are in *no need* of the services of the All-India Swadeshi League and which can or do command State aid.”

This formula created consternation among the workers. The result was a discussion between some members of the League and Gandhiji at Bombay during his visit in the course of the Harijan tour. The following is the gist of the discussion.

—Chandrashankar

My formula, as stated clearly, is for the guidance of the Swadeshi League. It does not purport to cover the whole field of swadeshi. It is only by way of suggestion to the League to restrict the scope of its work to the encouragement and propagation of minor, particularly home industries to the exclusion of major organized ones. The object of making this suggestion is not to decry major industries or to ignore the benefit those industries have bestowed and in future may bestow on the country. But a body like the Swadeshi League need not become

the self-appointed advertising agent of these industries as it has hitherto been. They have ample resources at their commands, and they are well able to take care of themselves. The spirit of swadeshi has been sufficiently generated, and it helps them without any effort of swadeshi organizations. These, if they are to be useful, have to concentrate their attention on struggling industries. Any attempt to advertise the wares of large organized industries can only result in sending up prices. This will be unjust to the consumer. It is waste of effort to bring into being a philanthropic organization to help a successful business organization. We may not delude ourselves with the belief that our efforts have helped the growth and advancement of these industries. It will be a cheap self-satisfaction not substantiated by facts. I recall a conversation I had with Fazalbai in 1920 when I was on the eve of launching the movement of swadeshi. He characteristically said to me, "If you, Congressmen, become advertising agents of ours, you will do no good to the country except to put a premium on our wares and to raise the prices of our manufactures." His argument was sound. But he was non-plussed when I informed him that I was to encourage hand-spun and hand-woven khadi which had been woefully neglected and which needed to be revived if the starving and unemployed millions were to be served.

But khaddar is not the only such struggling industry. I therefore suggest to you to direct your intention and efforts to all the small-scale, minor unorganized industries that are today in need of public support. They may be wiped out if no effort is made in their behalf. Some of these are being pushed back by large-scale industries which flood the markets with their manufactures. It is these that cry for your help.

Take the sugar industry. The largest major industry next to the textile is that of the manufacture of sugar. It stands in no need of our assistance. Sugar factories are fast multiplying. Popular agencies have done little to help the growth of this industry. It is indebted for its growth to favourable legislation. And today the industry is so prosperous and expanding that the production of jaggery is becoming a thing of the past. It is admittedly superior to refined sugar in nutritive value. It is this very valuable cottage industry that cries out for your help. This by itself furnishes large scope for research and substantial help.

We have to investigate the ways and means of keeping it alive. This is but an illustration of what I mean.

I have no doubt in my mind that we add to the national wealth if we help the small-scale industries. I have no doubt also that true swadeshi consists in encouraging and reviving these home industries. That alone can help the dumb millions. It also provides an outlet for the creative faculties and resourcefulness of the people. It can also usefully employ hundreds of youths in the country who are in need of employment. It may harness all the energy that at present runs to waste. I do not want any of those who are engaged in more remunerative occupations to leave them and take to the minor industries. Just as I did with regard to the spinning-wheel, I would ask only those who suffer from unemployment and penury to take to some of these industries and add a little to their slender resources.

It will thus be seen that the change in activity that I have suggested to you does in no way conflict with the interests of the major industries. I want to say only this much that you, national servants, will restrict your activities to the minor industries and let the major ones help themselves as they are doing today.

The minor industries, I conceive, will not replace the major ones, but will supplement them. I aspire even to induce factory owners to take interest in this work which is purely humanitarian. I am a well-wisher of the mill-owners too, and they will bear me out when I say that I have not failed to help them when I could.

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BIRLA HOUSE,  
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,  
NEW DELHI,  
July 24, 1934

MY DEAR CHANDRASHANKARBHAI,

I have read Gandhiji's definition of swadeshi very carefully. I had heard his views in Orissa and I entirely agree with it. I



have, however, one comment to make on it. Bapu does not want the production of organized industries to be put on the level of the imported material. But that is not sufficiently made clear. If it is made clear, it may cause misunderstanding the other way. Without, therefore, in any way contradicting what he has already said, is it not possible for him to make it clear that he does not mean that the foreign imported articles are to be treated on the same level as the products of the Indian organized industries?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
CAWNPORE

61

CAWNPORI,  
July 26, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have got your letter of the 24th. I showed it to Bapu. He was very much pleased to know you agreed with his views, and said with a sigh how unfortunate it was that swadeshi workers could not understand and agree with this very clear and reasonable proposition. But it was implied in his exposition of the formula that foreign imported articles were not to be treated as being on the same level as products of Indian organized industries. He has said clearly that the minor industries are to supplement the major ones and not to replace them. However, he said, he would make the point clear in the article on this subject that he was going to write for the *Harijan*. The note on swadeshi, you will have seen, has been released to the Press. Bapu is going to take up the matter in right earnest. He will probably ask the Working Committee to endorse the formula, and may even set up a separate department for it. He is ver-

optimistic about its successful working and also about the benefits accruing from it.

With kindest regards,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Chandrashankar

62

WARDHA,  
August 7, 1934

DEAR SARDAR SAHEB,

I have to write this in English today to save time.

Rajaji passed Wardha yesterday by the Grand Trunk Express. Mahadev, Thakkar Bapa and myself saw him at the Railway Station. He was accompanied by Papa and Shankar—all travelling third. Bapu had sent him a short message about the growing urge that he is feeling within him to leave the Congress organization and to pursue its ideals from outside it. "The growing corruption and untruth are becoming unbearable," his message ran. Rajaji, of course, did not quite like this new development though he saw the logic of it, and in reply requested him not to take any precipitate step. The caution was unnecessary as Bapu is contemplating no immediate action. "I am only trying to prepare friends for a possible eventuality", he remarked, when he was told of what Rajaji had said. He has written about it to Mira also in the course of a letter this morning. In the letter to Agatha which he wrote after the morning prayer today he has described his attitude towards the Frontier question and Abdul Gaffar Khan. "The authorities bring a serious charge of violence against the Frontier Red Shirts and their leader. The latter deny it in toto. Both sides are probably sincere in their belief. I must have a chance of going to the Frontier, living in the midst of the people there, to disown them if I find them really guilty of violence or, if I find them to be innocent, to defend them against the slur that is cast upon them. To Bengal I want to go in order to wear the terro-

rists from violence. Here I want to go in order to discover the truth and act accordingly. The latter is of even more basic importance than the former. The detention of Abdul Gaffar Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru though an unnecessary irritant does appeal to me just now as a cause of war." This in short is the analysis of his mind at present.

This morning, after the prayer, he addressed a few words to the inmates of the Ashram about his fast. Referring to the Butow incident, among other things, he hinted at the possibility of advising the organizers of the Wardha Ashram—particularly the Kanya Ashram—to disband it if as a result of contemplation during the week of grace the conviction came to him that we were not yet quite worthy to run an institution like this. He had already broached the subject to Jamnalalji and Vinoba.

He had his last feed (for the next week) of milk and pomegranate juice at 5.30 this morning. At a few minutes to six the feed was over. So he will break his fast, God willing, on the morning of the 14th at 6.

Three doctors—Dr. Khare from Nagpur, Dr. Shahany who is the Civil Surgeon here and Dr. Sherlekar examined Bapu this morning. Their report will be in the Press by the time this reaches you. They tried to persuade Bapu to postpone his fast till he was physically in a fitter condition to undergo it. The result, as you can well imagine, was a polite but summary rebuff. The doctors will be coming here daily and examining him and do whatever is needful. There are all the facilities here for daily urinalysis to be made. So there need be no anxiety on that score. Janakidevi, Thakkar Bapa and Kakasaheb have been appointed "Jailors". They will divide the watches between them. Prabhavati, Om and Vasumati, Amtul Salam, Bal, Krishnadas and myself will be the nurses in charge. Bapu himself went through the appointment regarding his nursing which we had made. Bā of course will be there in general charge.

Bapu has been put up on the terrace room which he generally occupied when he stays at Wardha. Tiled sheds have been put up both on the eastern and western side, to afford protection against rain and the wind. A part of the shed on the western side has been further enclosed to serve as a bathroom. So far as the physical environment is concerned this is an ideal place to undergo the fast. Bapu himself is very optimistic about

successfully completing the fast and as his mind is just now free of any particular worry or strain, we all hope for the best.

Aney arrived here this morning. This is in consequence of a special invitation that Bapu had given to him while at Benares. He will be reciting to Bapu some Sanskrit verses which he composed while he was in prison and which Bapu had expressed a desire to hear from him. Bapu has also expressed a desire to have the *Ramayana* recited to him during the fast which Vinoba will do.

Today being the first day he is following his normal programme. From tomorrow will commence the fasting regime.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Chandrashankar

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SATYAGRAHASHRAM,  
WARDHA,  
August 8, 1934

*Confidential*

DLAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Pyarelal is having a well deserved nap and I must not let the post go without a small newsletter. Bapu is, as usual, falsifying the fears of doctors and feeling stronger every hour. He had several snatches of sleep during the whole of yesterday, at the end of the day had a good well-formed stool—the first satisfactory one since the breakdown in Benares—and this gave him wonderfully restful sleep leaving him fresh at the morning prayer. He insisted on being taken out to the terrace for the evening prayer, but after a lengthy argument I could succeed in persuading him to remain in the bed which was taken right up to the door so that all may have a sight of him before and at the end of the prayer.

The fast has come none too soon. He badly needed it. I would say, even at the risk of being misunderstood. He had been storing up his agony all these days and it has had a con-

venient, healthy outlet. The corruption in the Congress and the laxity of discipline to be noticed everywhere in the atmosphere had been torturing him and it is a mercy that he did not impose on himself a severer penance. The way in which the least trace of impurity harrows up his soul may be seen from an instance I cite here. He insists on reading the papers himself. On the first page of the *Chronicle* he read the painful circumstances in which Vinodini, Sir Ramanbhai's daughter, a well educated young lady, apparently of great promise, had allowed herself to be driven into a clumsy marriage. "What a monstrous thing", he exclaimed and was silent, as the doctor's came in to examine him.

But the thing was haunting him all day long and at night he reverted to the thing again: "How could she so far forget herself and her parents? What a terrible tragedy! What misery for the poor woman who suddenly finds herself replaced by an America-returned co-wife! And what a clumsy choice! I see no redeeming feature about it. Whither are we drifting? 'Follow your impulses as they arise' is the lesson that your youths have readily learnt from the West. What else is socialism? I have just finished reading Engels' book. (He finished it on the evening of the seventh and has taken up Cole's book!) They want the sources of production to be given to the masses. But what kind of masses? Are they ready for it? Don't they need to be educated? How long will it take to educate and organize them? The cry for equality has deprived us of our reason. Where is equality? Is there no difference between enlightenment and ignorance? Until the end of time the difference will remain, and if you are vesting the ignorant with power and weapons they cannot wield, they will deal their own destruction. Russia is still in the melting-pot and is maintaining the present regime by sheer brute force. Everywhere there have been terrible reactions and our youths will not see that in trying to help the masses we will end in making them more miserable and landing them into more tragic straits than ever before. Varnashramadharma was the only true solution. But we failed to develop it, we prevented its growth with the result it has become an encumbrance. Where is there another institution which provides for varying aptitudes and varying intellectual and physical gifts and equipments?"\*

He might have gone on indefinitely like this, but I stopped him. "But how can I stop?", he said impatiently. "You must be fair to the doctors", I said. "The doctors do not know," he rejoined. "My need is rest and sleep. They will be my food. I feel I am getting stronger and I should not be surprised if the fast leaves me completely refreshed and rejuvenated. I was in perfect health in Orissa but the programmes after that ruined the glory of the tour and made it a mechanical performance and a long-drawn-out agony. You must not forget that I have to cover nine months' arrears of rest and sleep. The fast, you will see, will be a blessing."

Need I add anything more?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

64

*Confidential*

WARDHA,  
August 10, 1934

Bapu's condition continues to be satisfactory excepting for one disturbing factor, viz., the presence of a fair quantity of acetone in the urine. But it is not unusual on the fourth day and the general condition gives no cause for anxiety. He has very long and refreshing intervals of sleep throughout the day and the doctors found him sleeping soundly when they came in at about 4.30 p.m. They did not disturb him until 5.15 when he awoke and got up in bed to greet the doctors with a smile. "Are you feeling drowsy?", they asked him. "Not at all", he said, "I have to cover heavy arrears of sleep which I am comfortably doing." The urine was examined there and then and indicated a fair quantity of acetone, but he assured the doctors that it was not unusual on the fourth day. "I am maintaining strength extraordinarily well", he said, and left the doctors wondering at the large reserve of vitality in him. The blood-pressure is still unaffected by acetone and was found to be 155/95. The

pulse was 68, temperature 97, and weight 97 indicating a loss of four pounds on the fourth day which is not very much. His voice is almost normal, and he continues to sit up in bed without any support or help. But the doctors have now urged him not to exert himself in any way, and he has agreed. He did not do much reading today, but insisted on having a look at the newspapers. He glanced through an interview given by the much-talked-of Vinodini and said that it was more revolting than the marriage itself and that he had a good mind to write to her. As soon as the doctors left, he again fell off to sleep.

The presence of the acetone worried us for a moment, but all the conditions being sufficiently reassuring I decided not to summon any outside help. Bapu himself, I know, would be shocked if he knew that I had committed that folly. But I spoke to the Civil Surgeon, Mr. Shahany, about this and said that he should tell me plainly the moment he ceased to feel confident. He does not seem to be worried: nor are we. Three more days and all will be well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

## 65

WARDHIA,  
August 11, 1934

I am sorry my last evening's bulletin could not be posted in time on account of heavy rains having dislocated our arrangements. I am sending it along with today's.

The acetone, as I said in my yesterday's letter, did disturb some of us for a while, and some even suggested that Dr. Bidhan or Dr. Jivraj may be telegraphed to come. I had not the slightest anxiety, however, having known Bapu's condition during the previous fasts and had no hesitation to decide against any panicky action. Bapu's condition today—3 p.m.—is excellent. He had about 14 hours sleep yesterday and has quite a lot of it even today. I am quite convinced that the fast was the

least drastic of all measures that could have been adopted in order to relieve the terrible tension of the past two months and to cover the arrears of sleep of the past nine months. When I mentioned to him the fact that some of the friends were alarmed by the acetone and were pressing me to summon outside help he laughed and exclaimed, "How silly!" His condition on this the fifth day could not be better and though we have no means here in the local hospital for a quantitative analysis of the urine and could not be exact about the quantity of acetone, the practically steady blood-pressure is a sure indication that it does not exist in any alarming proportion.

Every effort is made to keep down the quantity of the acetone. He took 75 grains besides the 40 to 60 grains in the high enema that is being given to him for two days. The feeling of nausea, I am happy to say, is entirely absent and he does not find much difficulty in increasing the dose of soda with the water he sips. Today he has had 30 ounces of water and as many grains of soda already.

The pulse and the heart continue to be entirely satisfactory, and I have no doubt that he will come through quite scatheless, more refreshed, and with renewed vigour.

Yours,  
Mahadev

66

WARDHIA,  
August 14, 1934

DLAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Bapu had a most uncomfortable time as he neared the end of the fast. This was hardly expected as the urinalysis yesterday showed some less acetone, but in spite of large doses of soda did make its appearance and allowed him no sleep last night. The voice was practically gone this morning and all of us were profoundly thankful that the ordeal was over at the first signs of a crisis: The abnormally high blood-pressure was the result



partly of the excitement of the occasion though nothing could have been less fussy. There was no "Vaisīnava janato tene kahiye" this time, as Bapu wanted Balkrishna to sing the hymn that he loves and which Balkrishna sings soulfully. Vinoba led with the superb hymn of praise and prayer in which Tukaram utters his ecstatic delight on his life's mission being fulfilled. Dr. Datta was there to represent Christian friends and Shrimati Amtul Salaam the Mussalmans. Datta read the 13th Corinthians and Amtul Salaam, some suras from the Koran. Aney, at Bapu's desire, recited some verses of his own composition. Shrimati Jankidevi had the privilege of handing to Papu the breakfast cup of honey and hot water which considerably refreshed him. It was fortunate that he did not make an effort to speak, otherwise there would surely have been a breakdown. And yet within an hour of the first feed he dictated a few telegrams. He had alternate feeds of lime juice and orange juice, at each half hour, had some grapes in the afternoon, had sound sleep for about a couple of hours and was strong enough at 2 o' clock to dictate letter to Jawaharlal. But he will have to go slow and we are continuing the strict discipline and the nursing arrangements of the fast for at least four days. The doctors will be seeing him daily.

*Yours,*  
Mahadev

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WARDHA,  
August 14, 1934

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
BIRLA MILLS  
DELHI

THANKS GOD BROKE FAST. A.M. WELL.

BAPU

68

August 16, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

The enclosed copy is to be shown to Bapu. I need not explain it as it is self-explanatory. The majority of the Board, I am sure, will be inclined to agree with me. I wonder whether it would be right for me to stand up against Panditji. I should, however, like to have Bapu's opinion on this matter. I feel pretty sure that Panditji would not accept my resignation. He may, on the other hand, send in his own resignation. What is my duty? Please ask Bapu and write.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DISAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA (C. P.)

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WARDHA,  
August 18, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter of the 15th. Bapu read your letter to Panditji. "It is certainly strongly worded," said Bapuji, "but quite necessary." I do not know what you mean when you say you "wonder whether it would be right for me to stand against Panditji". You have stood against him already. The resignation has not to be accepted by Panditji but by the Board and if as you say the majority is with you, it is not likely to be accepted, in which event your fear that Panditji may send in his own resignation may be realized. Bapu says that if such a thing happens you or either the Board should request him to withdraw the resignation and appeal to him to continue to serve, in view of the fact that a particular policy not acceptable to him is pursued by the majority of the Board. It is not a matter

which should be magnified into one of conscience. But if he insists, the Board should accept the resignation.

Bapu is rapidly regaining strength. The blood-pressure is normal, the heart stronger and the pulse less rapid than before or during the fast. For a month at least he does not propose to move out of Wardha.

I returned this morning from Bombay where I had gone with Janakiben for Jamnalalji's operation. He stood the operation extraordinarily well, and should emerge out of it absolutely free from the trouble which once threatened his life.

I hope you are doing well.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

## 70

September 19, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADI VBHAI,

Purshottamdas (Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas) returned yesterday from Simla. He had seen the Viceroy and I understand that the Viceroy casually enquired of Purshottamdas whether he thought Bapu was really retiring from the Congress. Purshottamdas said, "He may." On this the Viceroy remarked, "I will send for him immediately after he gets out of the Congress." Purshottamdas replied, "You did not see him when the Congress followed him. What would be the use of seeing him when he would be without any following in the Congress." The Viceroy retorted, "But I want to see *him* and not his followers." Purshottamdas said, "But you could have seen him as a man and not as a leader of the Congress." The Viceroy concluded by saying that Mr. Gandhi is much influenced by his followers and they are not the right type of men. I hope Bapu will find this talk of some interest.

\* The statement was simply splendid. I personally do not believe that Bapu would be able to stay any longer. The members of the Working Committee would exercise their votes

dispassionately in view of his threat to retire in case his amendments were not passed. I personally believe that it would lead to further deceptions. People would be thinking in one way and still would be voting in quite a different way. After all, Bapu has to judge things for himself.

I would be leaving for Gwalior most probably tomorrow.

I hope you are quite well.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

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WARDHA,  
September 22, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter of the 19th which I read out to Bapu who asked me to tear it up immediately, lest the story should spread. I asked him what he thought about it. He said, "It is quite likely that he may give me the left-handed compliment that I had done just the thing he had asked me to do, viz., disown my followers, and that therefore I would be quite welcome, but he does not know that not to speak of disowning my followers, there is no question even of dissociation. But even if that sort of advance came I should know how to deal with it." Then again he said it was equally likely that the friend was not serious at all and that therefore no importance should be attached to it. But even if it was a serious conversation, and the advance did not come, it would be more or less of the nature of a Greek gift: You know the Latin *Maxim Timeo Danaos et Dona Ferentes*. Bapu was put in mind of it and had a hearty laugh.

Your silence about the operation means that you again succeeded in shelving it. Why so? Bapu wants to know why you left Bombay without having had the operation.

Bapu does not at all think that the next voting would be dispassionate. In fact it was because he knew that it would not be such that he had decided to retire. Some of us were genuinely sorry that the agony should have to be prolonged for a month and a half, but I now think that what has happened will be all to the good. The comments and criticism—public and private—should indicate the pulse of the country in an absolutely unmistakable manner and you may be sure that even if there is a favourable vote at the next Congress Bapu will not be taken in by it.

I am rather surprised that the London papers are silent. The most acute criticism thus far has been that of the *Times of India* from the hostile camp and that of the *National Call* from the friendly camp. You must be meeting numerous friends. It would be very helpful if you acquainted Bapu with their views. Old S. P. Shivaswami Iyer says, "It is Bapu's Swansong!" That is the extremist Liberal opinion expressed up to now. So you did not after all give me your reading of one of those Marwari stories. How I wish I could have a brief holiday some day to run away from the din and bustle of my daily routine and spend it in quiet chats and recreation with you!

Yours affectionately,  
Mahadev

72

WARDHA,  
September 24, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVJI,

I enjoyed your lengthy letter.

First of all about my operation. Why do you think I have shelved it? I have promised Jamnalalji that after the 15th of October, I am at his disposal wherever he wants me. Most probably, he will select Calcutta because, somehow or other I do not like Bombay very much. Delhi would be the best place for me because it is so quiet. But it all depends on Jamnalalji. But

apart from the nose operation, I fear I will have to undergo another important operation immediately, that is, the operation of piles. I have been bleeding for the last six months and I think I should get it done. It is possible that once the piles are cut off, probably, my general digestion will improve. I have got myself examined in Bombay and now I propose to get the operation done in Delhi some time before the 15th of October.

You have asked me to acquaint you with general criticism about Bapu's statement. Well, to tell frankly, I have not come across one man who really understands the real spirit of Bapu's statement. Lallubhai said that it was a very good statement and he was going to write to you about it. But I would not say that even he too realizes the full significance of it. Puroshottamdas is not a man of imagination and therefore its deeper spirit is beyond his comprehension. He simply remarked, "Did not Gandhiji know two years back about this corruption? If he did, then why this belated decision?" But, of course, who is going to argue with a man who has not got a mentality to grasp deep philosophy. Roughly speaking, those who like Bapu's retirement from the Congress and those who dislike it have got their own motives. Moderates like his retirement because that will lower the prestige of the Congress. Socialists like it because they hope to have a free hand after his retirement. The Parliamentary Board dislikes it because they fear that it may harm them. But in spite of all this, there is also a common feeling and that is this that Bapu is hopeless. I think everyone has begun to realize that he is too big to be properly understood. Just as all of us see the Sun and the Moon every day and also get benefit from them and yet we do not know what they really are, similarly, the world may be benefited by Bapu but it cannot understand what he is. If the world does not worry about the working of the Sun and the Moon, so long as they give light, why should it worry any more about the philosophy of Bapu who is very nearly as much beyond their grasp as the working of the Sun and the Moon is. Just as the masses worship the Sun and the Moon as individual deities, so they would worship Bapu as a saint. But the "Intelligentsia" (I do not think they have any intelligence) neither recognizes the divine power in the activities of the Sun and the Moon, nor they see any use in the saintliness of Bapu. I think he is getting every day beyond the

reach of worldly men. This probably explains why there has not been any acute criticism friendly or unfriendly towards his statement.

I sent a message to you through Devdas that I am very sorry that I could not read the Marwari book to you. But I am so fond of its language that I have made a mental note that some day I must read that book to you as, I am sure, you will very much like the same.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA (C.P.)

73

FOLFSHILI,  
FRANKLIN, P.O.,  
EAST GRIQUALAND,  
September 25, 1934

MAHATMA GANDHI  
THE ASHRAM  
WARDHA, C.P., INDIA  
DEAR SIR,

I have received the letter written by Mr. Rhys Jones which was written at your request pointing out your difficulties with sheep in your country. This letter was written on the 2nd September and arrived here on the 15th inst. I have delayed writing as I wanted a friend of mine in Durban—Mr. Hugh Dottridge—to interview the Kunwar and talk the matter over with him, but have received no reply so far, so he may be away from home.

We have been thinking over the business and the following points have come to us which we think you might clear up for us.

1. If milk is wanted one would think that your native goats crossed with a milk strain goat would supply the want as we out here have never heard of sheep being used for milk as it is seldom that they have more than sufficient to rear their own lambs.
2. If meat is required we would think that if you crossed your native sheep and say an improved Africander ram—they call them Rond Rib Africanders—your object would be attained.
3. If improved wool is the object, the question arises as to whether a good Merino ram would live in your climate as these sheep prefer a dry climate and are apt to sicken in long hot-wet periods.
4. We are wondering if there is an Agricultural Department in India to which you might write asking them to give you their opinions on your object—which is to improve the breeds of your native stock.

If you think it would really be necessary for a man in whom we would have the greatest confidence to go out and study the question on the spot I dare say we could find one. I suppose he would want his expenses paid and a small salary as well.

As soon as I have heard from Durban and probably the views of the Kunwar, I will let you know.

*I am,*  
*Yours faithfully,*  
R.A. Richardson

WARDHA,  
September 29, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your precious letter about Bapu's statement and am happy to see that you have used a simile I have often used about Bapu. I would use another. He soars high up in the skies



but his feet always on the ground. That is why we never miss the human touch about him and yet always know that we can never soar where he soars!

But to business. Dinkar Pandya<sup>1</sup> is ready to take up the job. Now please let Bapu have the terms that you can offer him. It would be best, says Bapu, to accept his terms and then to test him. If he is found wanting we should have no hesitation in asking him to go. As soon as I hear from you I shall let him know.

There is Agatha's bill of £43 to pay. I have not just now her letter by me. I shall send the details she has sent as soon as I can get hold of her letter. But it only covers the train fares in India, so far as I remember. Will you kindly send her the cheque direct?

I am glad you are going to have the operation Bapu was afraid that you had been avoiding it over and over again!

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

<sup>1</sup>Dinkar was appointed for Dairy Farm in Pilani

## 75

October 4, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I had gone to Pilani for four days and had also taken Thakkar Bapa with me. We returned only day before yesterday and on my return, I found that Panditji was awaiting me. We talked at length but it is so difficult to understand Panditji (Malaviyaji). He shows great eagerness to come to compromise with the Congress and yet he has no definite plan. He likes the principle agreed upon between Bapu and Mr. Aney. But when I suggested that without the help of an umpire, it may not be possible to come to any definite conclusion about the merits and demerits of the candidates, he gave evasive replies. He is still hopeful that some compromise will be arrived at. He was non-committal about his opposition to Asaf Ali. He could not

explain why he was supporting the candidates with whom he had nothing in common and he confessed that at the most he expected to get about a dozen candidates returned. He was looking pale and tired and really I felt sorry that he was working so hard for nothing.

I was to get the pile operation performed but Dr. Joshi is not much in favour of it. I have asked him to have a talk with Dr. Bidhan who will be passing through Delhi about the 15th and then he will decide finally. As regards my nose operation, I am waiting for Jamnalalji who writes to me that he will not be free before the end of this month.

Bapu has written to Thakkar Bapa suggesting that I should write to Dr. Bidhan about ...'s misappropriation of money. Dr. Bidhan is a very careless man as many of our leaders are. Debiprasadji also is to be blamed for that. But, I fear that I too would have committed a similar mistake because it was not an ordinary misappropriation. As you will see from the enclosed note, ... went on debiting money to various district committees and naturally when you trust a man, you do not suspect that he is writing false accounts. But does Bapu think that Bidhan or Debiprasadji should pay off the money themselves because one was the president and the other was the secretary? I personally do not think that morally they are liable to pay. Undoubtedly, both of them have been very careless to the extent of their being callous but I would not say that this misappropriation could not have been committed even under a more active but figurehead president. This incident has made us very alert and we have taken some extra precautions to guard the money but yet nobody can guarantee that we too may not be deceived.

Bapu has not written to me whether he has heard anything from Mr. Dinkar Rao Pandya. Please also write to me what is Bapu's programme after the Congress. You know, he has to scrutinize the provincial budget of the Harijan Sewak Sangh and therefore I should like to know where he is likely to be in the month of December. Most likely, throughout November, I will be staying in Calcutta as after the nose operation I would not be able to leave the place. Please also remind Bapu about his promise to stay in Delhi after we have started the Industrial Home. As the land has already been acquired we can im-

mediately erect a small hut for Bapu before we put up other buildings. If he decides to pass two months in Delhi during winter, it would be splendid.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA (C.P.)

*PS.* Since writing the above, I got your letter. As regards Dinkar Rao Pandya, he can join immediately, the land is transferred to the Harijan Sewak Sangh. As regards the terms, I thought Bapu was going to settle. Therefore, I have no comments to make. I am sending 43 pounds to Agatha.

October 4, 1934

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

It has been so very generous of you and of the Trustees of the Sabarmati Ashram to make an offer of the grounds and buildings of that Ashram, as per your letter dated Wardha, the 30th September to dedicate them to the service of the Harijans and for that purpose to hand over the same to the Servants of the Untouchables Society. I have no hesitation in accepting the kind offer and hope that the Society will prove itself worthy of the trust that you have reposed in it. I am accepting the offer without waiting for the opinion of the members of the Central Board fully hoping that they will all approve of my action.

The four objects for which the property is to be used mentioned in the para 2 of your letter will constantly be kept in mind by the Society. I further hope that all of them will be undertaken without any avoidable loss of time. The services of Sjt. Budhabhai and Juthabhai as well as the third gentleman (whose name is, I believe, Bhagwanji Gandhi) will be taken

advantage of and I am confident that they will prove valuable helpmates.

You have suggested in para 3 of your letter that the Society should appoint a Special Committee consisting of five persons, with power to add, to take over the Trust and give effect to its objects. Besides myself and the General Secretary of the Society you suggest that three Ahmedabad citizens should be included in the Committee. These three gentlemen will no doubt be selected in consultation with you.

May I not say that the formation of Committee of management be entirely left to this Society, who will be wholly held responsible for the fulfilment of the Trust? However, if the three Ahmedabad citizens happen to be or be nominated as members of the Central Board of this Society and also be appointed as members of the Committee of the management of the Trust, it will then consist wholly of members of this Society and not partly of members of this Society and partly of outsiders. But this is a small point which we may agree to settle by personal discussions if necessary.

It will evidently take some time before the property together with the crops and trees standing thereon can be taken charge by this Society. I would therefore request you to ask those who are at present in charge to continue to do so and look after the Estate as heretofore.

Expressing you my gratitude again for your magnanimity,

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas Birla  
President

MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

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WARDHA,  
October 9, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had your letter about . . . I wish I could share with you all the correspondence on the subject. Bapu has written most

moving letters to . . . It is a terrible tragedy, but no case for prosecution. Bapu is clear that Deviprasadji and friends must reimburse the amount and if that is not possible the amount should be written off as bad debts or losses. The tragedy is not peculiar to Bengal. I think the mentality we have fostered during the last ten or fifteen years is partly responsible for it. A man gives up his practice, his so called sacrifice is applauded, he gains a sort of reputation and he feels that he must live up to it, but in trying to live up to it, he goes under and then goes on deluding himself and deluding others. Now this man, I do not think, even earned more than an average hundred rupees per month during his practice. But we forget the fact and the man instead of going back to his usual means of subsistence keeps up a pretence of living in poverty and doing national service. Did . . . ever earn enough, I ask, to maintain his large family on comfort? He never did so and the national movement came in to delude him into the belief that he was always doing so! Well, well, he does seem to have taken the obvious lesson to heart and threatens to earn his living as a protest! What you say about Malaviyaji is only too true. The whole thing is sickening in the extreme, but those who have sowed the wind will have to reap the whirlwind. I am surprised that Panditji can bear all this!

Bapu has asked Dinkar Pandya to start immediately. He will go to Delhi through Wardha.

Did Bapu promise to stay in Delhi for two months? Will not a great deal depend upon the happenings at the Congress? All that we know today is that he hopes to be back here on the first of November. The Khan Brothers, who should have been here, have gone on a visit to Bengal, which is getting protracted more and more every day and there is no knowing definitely when they are coming.

Vallabhbai and Sakinalalji are coming tomorrow and Dr. Ansari the day after.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Māhadev

October 13, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

As regards..., I had a talk with Bhagirath (Kanodiya) who is here. He said that he also felt that the money should be paid by some of them but he does not find any one else to share his views. He has promised to find the money somehow or other. I fear eventually I will have to pay a share of it.

I note what you say about Dinkar Pandya.

Yes, Bapu did promise to stay in Delhi if his assent to my request could be called a promise. I had suggested that after we had taken over the land, he should stay there for some time as it would be a great blessing to the new Home. He agreed and said that if he stayed there, he would also be able to improve the Delhi atmosphere. You remind this to him.

The enclosed cutting will be found to be of some interest to Bapu.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
WARDHA

October 17, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Brother Dinkar Rao Pandya is leaving for Delhi today. Place him wherever you like. As for his remuneration, he may be given Rs. 200 per mensem. He has explained to me why.

The letter about Ghate has arrived. The correspondent has asked certain questions. I shall send the letter on to you after answering these questions.

You can ask Dinkar his experience while in America.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

October 17, 1934

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Dinkar Pandya should already be there.

I have had a talk with Jayaprakash. He has been incurring debts for quite some time. Prabhavati's expenses will be met here. Jayaprakash's monthly remuneration may be fixed at Rs. 325. For the present a cheque for Rs. 250 may be sent. Out of this amount I propose to send Rs. 200 to Jayaprakash, retaining Rs. 50 for Prabhavati's needs. So far I have charged nothing on her account. She has been to Patna recently and this amount of Rs. 50 will cover the expenses incurred on that visit.<sup>1</sup>

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

*PS.* How does my second submission strike out?

<sup>1</sup>Mr J. P. Narayan has permitted the publication of this letter.—G.D.B.

CALCUTTA,  
November 10, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I came here yesterday and have talked to the Doctor who after examining me on the next Monday will probably perform the operation on the next Wednesday. Please pass this on to Bapu. Please also tell him that if there is anything where my service could be of any help, for his new organization, he has simply to command. When I read in the papers about the donation of 20 lacs by some multi-millionaire, I thought it may have some reference to the proposed trust by Jamnalalji but it appears that it was, as usual, a Press canard. But I do not think there would be any difficulty about money. Bapu rightly remarks the

chief difficulty would be of getting right type of men.

How did Bapu's letter to Hqare leak out? Don't you think it is high time that greater care was exercised to prevent such leakages in future. You know the consequences of such leakages. I hope the matter is receiving careful attention.

I wonder whether Bapu has noticed the anxiety on the part of Lancashire about the Indian market. Last year, Mody-Lees pact was concluded but no action is yet taken on it. But Mody-Lees pact no longer satisfies the Lancashire interests. At present, Lancashire has got about 25% preference against Japan but the Indian mills are still enjoying a protection of 25% against Lancashire. Mody-Lees pact allows 5% cut in the present tariff but even 20% tariff against Lancashire is too much for them. I do not think therefore that the Mody-Lees pact is going to help Lancashire much and she has begun to realize its doubtful value. She is clamouring for more but I do not think it realizes that whatever be the tariff, it no longer can compete the Indian mills. The present tariff of 25%, if removed, may put the Indian mills in a very precarious position but I think, in course of time, they will adjust their position and still compete Lancashire by increasing their efficiency and reducing wages. Any reduction in the tariff will though directly hit the Indian labour but will not help Lancashire. The only way in which she could be guaranteed a market for those goods which could not be produced in India is a political pact. Bapu gave some such assurance when he was in Lancashire but he got no response then. From the reports that I have got from London, it appears that Lancashire interests are very keen to conclude some kind of trade pact (not a political pact). They are already negotiating with the Government. For the reasons of their self-interest, as is known, they are very much afraid of any constitutional advance and I think their power should not be ignored. I wonder whether time has not come when our Parliamentary party should take these conditions into consideration and seriously think whether some sort of pact may not be helpful to us. I personally feel that a trade pact without sacrificing the Indian interests and yet benefiting Lancashire's interests is possible but the greatest *Quid-pro-quo* could only be Lancashire's political support. Mody-Lees pact for them is of no value. On the other hand, Gandhi-Lees



pact could be of great value. Should not Bapu give his thoughts to the position to find out whether it is not possible to utilize their anxiety to our mutual advantage? As it is, I have asked the Federation to lodge its protests against the negotiation that is going on between the Lancashire and the Government of India behind the back of the Indian mercantile community and also the Indian politicians. But while we may protest I would suggest that the circumstances should not be ignored and if properly tackled, I think we may be able to enlist a good ally in Lancashire. I only wonder whether the time is ripe and whether Bapu feels like thinking of it.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADI VIBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

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CALCUTTA,  
November 12, 1934

PUJYA BAPU,

I have just received your Hindi letter to which I am replying separately.

I thought I had already written to you that I was going to Calcutta to get the nose operation performed. I do not therefore understand your remark when you say that I should make a final decision.

On coming here, I heard very strong comments against the exclusion of Bengal from the Working Committee. I think the comments are justified but I do not know whether I should write to you at all on this point since you have given up your connection with the Congress. If you think that this is a question worth taking up with Rajendra Babu, I would suggest that you should try some accommodation for Bengal.

By separate post, I am sending to you a book named

*A Recovery Plan for Bengal.* The author is Mr. S.C. Mitter, B.Sc. (London), M.L.C. Enclosed please find a letter addressed to you by him. Satish Mitter is the eldest son of Sir Vinod Mitter and nephew of Sir Prabhash Mitter. He is just now a Deputy Director of Industries in the Government of Bengal. I know Mr. Mitter personally. As you might be aware, he is a rich man but he has taken up a job simply for service and I know he is very enthusiastic about the uplift work. I had some time back paid him Rs. 5,000 because I was impressed by his sincerity. I am going through his book but I am sure you would find it an interesting reading and if you can drop him a few lines in appreciation of what he is doing, I am sure he will feel encouraged.

Your remarks about polished rice and gur. I will make further enquiries about polished rice but from what I have heard after coming to Calcutta, I understand that very few mills make polished rice. Whether the milled rice is as bad as the polished rice, I have yet to find out. You have correctly understood my remarks in favour of "Unkhal" Every action taken in the cottage means so much saving of money. I would wish that you would apply the same economics test to gur. Even as regards gur, my own information is that neither the sugar nor the gur contains any vitamin. The question of vitamin, therefore, should not be mixed with your programme. Gur is better than sugar in many respects but you have to understand the difficulty that gur cannot be stocked during monsoon and there would also be difficulty about its transportation. Besides, as you know, it is very unclean. Two years back I had suggested to you in Yeravda that we should try to encourage cottage sugar industry. Now, in the month of March last, an excise duty was imposed by the Government on the sugar mills. The Sugar Mills' Association wanted that small "khandsari", that is, cottage sugar mills should also be compelled to pay the excise duty and it was on account of my opposition that the "khandsaris" were saved. I would even now suggest that you would not concentrate on sugar but on cottage sugar. I admit that at present cottage sugar could not be produced without capital of at least Rs. 10,000 but I think it should be possible to manufacture sugar even on a smaller scale. This is how I feel.

I do not quite understand the last sentence of your Hindi letter. You say that you are intending to write about

“Utmanzai”. I think this is the name of the Frontier tribe. I do not know what you are writing about and to whom.

*Yours affectionately*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

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WARDHA,  
November 14, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your long letter of the 10th for which I thank you. I wonder whether this will be handed to you—for today is the day of the operation and you may not be permitted to handle correspondence within a couple of days of it. But I hope everything will be all right and there won't be the slightest hitch. Poor Jamnalalji is for another month or more in Bombay, for evidently everything is not all right about his car, and he has yet to be regularly attended.

You seem to have rather misunderstood the correspondence with Hoare on the so-called Rome interview. It was released for publication by Horace Alexander on express advice from Bapu and more for English and European readers than Indian. There was no question of leakage there. I read with deep interest all that you said about a possible Gandhi-Lees Pact. That is the only workable thing and that only would be the basis of a rapprochement. But that could be possible only if there was a move in that direction at the other end. Are they yet in a mood to come to terms with us? When they do, i.e., when they are driven to it some day, the other thing will follow as the night follows the day. Just now I am afraid even a request from Lancashire itself would fall on deaf ears. I do not think the Parliamentary Party is yet much to speak of. When it comes into existence and is in possession of tangible powers it may perhaps be able to initiate some such thing. But I suppose at

the present moment it would be a case of just counting the chickens before they are hatched!

I have not talked with Bapu on this matter. I did place your letter before him, though. But I am simply passing on my own views to you for what they may be worth. Bapu would tackle the matters certainly, when he really felt he could tackle it. In England some such thing was suggested when we were at Hays's Farm on the border of Yorkshire and Bapu asked them to discuss the matter with the Cabinet first. I suppose they tried without any success.

Shanmukhan's defeat was an event big enough to gladden even Bapu's heart. The Congress has more than vindicated itself and will do so. The moral effect of Satyamurti's and Venkatachalam's triumph will be very great

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

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WARDHA,  
November 14, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I thought that I had already sent you the letter received from South Africa. I am sorry that it was overlooked. In clearing the file I came across the letter only last night. Here it is. I send you also copy of my reply.

I see from a letter addressed by you to Mahadev that you expect me to pass some time on the new ground at Delhi. I remember having told you that I would love to do so when you were ready to receive me, if at all I was free at that time. Of course, you are not yet ready as I understood from Thakkar Bapa. And it would be useless for me to be in Delhi in your absence. What is in store for me next month, I do not know.

I would like you to telegraph when the operation is over.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

Encl. 2  
SRTH GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
NEW DELHI

Copy

DFAR FRIND,

WARDHA,  
November 14, 1934

I thank you for your letter of 25th September last. I can tell you whether you should send someone out here. I expect, as promised in your letter under reply, a further letter from you. We have an Agricultural Department here and an attempt is being made to ascertain through that Department the possibilities of improvement. The object that we have in view is to get better meat and only secondarily richer and more milk.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. Gandhi

R. A. RICHARDSON, ESQ.  
FOLESHILL  
FRANKLIN P.O.  
EAST GRIQUALAND

Copy

DIAR FRILND,

WARDHA,  
November 15, 1934

His Excellency has probably seen the public statement I have made of my intention to visit the Frontier Province as soon as possible, consistently with my preoccupations. I am likely to be free after the middle of December. My object in wishing to visit the Frontier Provinces is to be with its people, know them at first hand, and to understand how far the teaching of non-violence by Khan Saheb Abdul Gaffar Khan has permeated his followers. It is also my intention to help them in the development of their village industries. I need hardly say that I have no desire whatsoever to inculcate among the Frontier people the spirit of disobedience (civil or otherwise) of authority.

Though I know that there is no legal bar against my enter-

ing the Frontier Province, I have no desire to do anything that may bring me in conflict with the Government. It is my earnest effort to avoid such conflict in so far as it is humbly possible.

Will you kindly ascertain His Excellency's wishes in the matter and let me know?

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY  
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY  
NEW DELHI

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WARDHA,  
November 15, 1934

DEAR FRIEND,<sup>1</sup>

The All-India Village Industries Association which is being formed under the auspices of the Indian National Congress will need the assistance of expert advisers in the various matters that will engage its attention. It is not intended to trouble them to meet together or even become members of the Association, but merely to advise the Association whenever reference is made to them in which they possess special knowledge, e.g., in chemical analysis, food values, sanitation, distribution of village manufactures, improved methods of developing village industries co-operation, disposal of village waste as manure, methods of village transport, education (adult and other), care of infants, and many other too numerous to mention here.

Will you please allow your name to appear among such advisers of the All-India Village Industries Association? Naturally I approach you in the belief that the object of the Association and the method of approach to its task have your approval.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. Gandhi

<sup>1</sup>Addressed to many specialists

CALCUTTA,  
November 17, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

The operation was not done on Wednesday because I am still waiting for Bidhan Babu who is to come here tomorrow. Dr. Judah, the nose specialist, said that my tonsils as well as nose both were infected but he cannot say whether the primary infection was in the throat or in the nose. He feels that it may be that throat is bad due to bad nose and in that case operation in nose should also cure the tonsils. In case, however, the tonsils are the primary cause of infection, he thinks it would be desirable to take out the tonsils first and then watch the nose and therefore I have decided to wait until Dr. Roy comes when he will give his decision as to what should be taken up first, whether nose or tonsils.

I have Bapu's letter asking me to allow my name to appear among the advisers of the All-India Village Industries Association. I think he should not have asked me about this. There is another letter from Bapu enclosing the original letter from Africa. I have noted the contents of the letter as well as his reply to the same. Please also tell him that I hope to be able to leave this place about the 20th December, and if he can still make his decision to come and stay in Delhi. I can erect a temporary hut for him. It will, of course be a great impetus to the Ashram to have him there for a few weeks. Please write to me therefore, whatever be his decision.

I note what you say about the correspondence with Hoare.

The Congress had a splendid victory. Thakkar Bapa writes to me that my letter to Walchand was exploited. Please tell Bapu that there was no question of its exploitation because I had written that letter deliberately and it was meant for publication. I honestly felt that Walchand would be a good acquisition and so I supported him and I hope he will be returned. As I am not a congressman myself, there is nothing wrong in my supporting individuals where I think that they would serve the cause better than the Congress candidate. Now that the election is completed and the Congress has been victorious at the polls, the question arises what next. I still feel that much is possible to

be done, by tactful handling of the case, and now that Bapu has given up the fight of C.D. movement, I think he should not leave other sources untapped to get peace. I am not pessimistic about the future.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

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November 19, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am in receipt of your letter.

How can I tell you what I need? When it is a question of hundred of a couple of hundred rupees I approach you, but village industries work is an ambitious undertaking and in the process of accepting its responsibilities I have considerably expanded its scope. The only thing I can usefully say in this respect is that, if, after helping those other parties whom you consider important enough to deserve your help, you are left with any remainder still to be disposed off, you can safely hand it over to me.

I have been facing some difficulties in forming a board for the village industries organisation. I am aiming at a small-size board consisting of members who should not be fewer than three and not more than ten in number. These must be dedicated souls having firm faith in its ideals and willing to work whole time. This has been a source of some worry to me. Have you any helpful suggestions to offer in this regard?

Do you know Rajkumari Amrit Kaur?

Utmanzai is Khan Saheb's native village. I have long been cherishing the ambition of camping there. I have sent a letter to Delhi on Thursday last, explaining the reason why I should like to visit the place and enquiring if there was any harm in



my entering the Frontier Province. Let us see what kind of response I get.

Has any date been fixed for the operation?

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

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CALCUTTA,  
November 22, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I had received a letter today from Bapu and this is in reply to the same.

First of all, as regards my operation. Dr. Bidhan has come here and he has decided that first of all my tonsils should be taken out. He thinks my nose is not in such a bad condition and that the nose infection may be due to bad tonsils. The tonsils shall therefore be taken out on the next Sunday. I will wire after the operation is done. Mr. S.C. Mitter approached me yesterday and asked me if Bapu could send him a line about his book before the 1st of December. He is very keen to collect opinions and then put up before the Government in order to get Government support. I have read a portion of the book and in my opinion, it is a good effort and deserves support.

As regards Bapu's remarks about his difficulty in constituting a Board, and asking me whether I could give him any idea, I fear I do not know what exactly is the line on which Bapu wants to work the new institution. Personally, I would take up intensive work and only in a limited area and would not extend it until the experiment was complete. For instance, I would start a centre in selected areas in a few provinces and concentrate on making successful those centres first. For instance, if we may take up ten to twenty villages under each centre and try to make those villages self-contained and model in every respect. These centres thus become example to be imitated by others. If that be the idea then in my opinion, a Central Board

would not be necessary. On the other hand, if the idea is just to give a plan to the whole of the country, without taking up any intensive work under the direct charge of the Association, then it would be desirable to have a sort of survey done for each district through the recognised workers and economists. Even then the Central Board would be useless except for compiling the reports that it receives from the provincial boards. Thus, in my opinion, at any rate in the beginning, the Central Board may be absolutely superfluous. Our Harijan Board is superfluous and so are most of the Boards of Directors in commercial firms.

What Bapu should have is not a Board but real workers to take charge of the uplift centres. But there should be no difficulty in getting the right type of workers provided he pays them their value. The whole Government of India is based on service system and if Bapu is to treat this village association as a business proposition then he should be prepared to pay men their value although he would always get men much cheaper than their value. We cannot solve the problem of seven lacs of villages in any other way than what we shall adopt when we have our own Government to spend money. Please do not misunderstand that I am undervaluing the utility of the Board. I simply do not emphasise it more than what is necessary. In my opinion, Bapu should be dictator. Under him, should be a good secretary and then heads of various centres. I think this will be enough in the beginning. But I can write much more if I knew exactly the line on which Bapu wants to work. I have taken for granted that it is going to run purely on a business line.

I want to say a word about the Harijan Sewak Sangh. Thakkar Bapa was there and he might have told Bapu my views about our budgets. I told Thakkar Bapa that I was not satisfied with them. It is almost physically impossible to scrutinise these budgets and if we employ a crowd of Inspectors and Auditors, then the cost itself would be prohibitive. The money, therefore, has to be paid to the Provincial Boards simply by trust in the presidents and secretaries of the Boards. But you know the implication of trust. We burnt our fingers in Bengal. Frankly speaking, if I were running this as a business concern, I would not pay a single penny to the Provincial Boards under the present system. In business we trust but there is always a limitation. In Harijan Sewak Sangh we are trusting our Provin-

cial Boards more than what we would do in a business concern. But I do not see any way out of it unless we changed the scope of our work. If we dissolved all the district boards and curtailed items on which we spend money, it would be more manageable. For instance, if we confined only to scholarships or Boarding Houses, or well or dispensaries, then the administration charges and propaganda charges would become absolutely unnecessary. We shall have simply to scrutinise the list of the students, inspect the construction of wells and such other activities and pass on the bills. But now it is a very complicated task. I, therefore, write to tell Bapu that he should know how the business is being done and that is purely a question of trusting the office bearers of the Provincial Boards. Most of them are undoubtedly honest men but we are liable to be cheated and shall have to suffer for their mistake. As Bapu trusts me, I am relating my difficulties and would like to know what he says.

I do not know Rajkumari Amrit Kaur except by her name.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

## 91

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,  
NEW DELHI,

November 25, 1934

D.O. No. 10739—G.M.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am desired to communicate to you His Excellency's wishes in regard to your proposed visit to the Frontier Province. His Excellency is glad that you have consulted him in this matter and notes that you have no desire to do anything that may bring you into conflict with Government. He has discussed the question with the Government of the North-West Frontier and with his Council, and regrets that he and they are unanimously of opinion that it is not desirable for you to pay a visit to the

Frontier Province at the present time. He trusts that you will act in accordance with his wishes.

*Yours sincerely,*  
E.C. Mieville

M.K. GANDHI, ESQ.

92

WARDHA,  
November 28, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I had your letter of the 22nd. Since then we have had your telegram. We await a detailed letter about the progress you are making.

Well the letter has arrived—a seemingly polite negative. A gentle, yet firm reply is going today asking for the reasons for the decision and also what exactly is meant by saying “the present is not the time for the visit”.

Under these conditions the Delhi visit has become rather problematical, but Bapu would like to know when exactly you could be there. He thinks it unfortunate that the matter should have already appeared in the Press.

Bapu did write a letter to Mr. Mitra, but evidently he wants some thing more which he can have only when Bapu can find time to go through a considerable portion of his book. Perhaps the next best thing will be for me to read the book myself and tell Bapu what it is like. Bapu understands and appreciates what you say regarding the All-India Village Industries Association Constitution, but it is he who thinks it essential to have a Central Board in order to formulate policy and discuss problems as they arise, in the light of it. You will perhaps be in a better position to say after you have read the Constitution which has yet to be drafted. Bapu is in substantial agreement with you with regard to the matter of the Harijan Sangh Budgets, but it is not a matter that can be discussed in a half hearted way through correspondence. He will do so fully when you meet in Delhi.

As regards your "instalment" he has already written to you. I do hope that the operation has done you good and the nose operation will not be necessary.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

93

WARDHA,  
November 28, 1934

DEAR MR. MIEVILLE,

I must thank you for your prompt reply to my letter of 15th instant.

But I cannot help saying that the decision come to in regard to my contemplated visit to the Frontier Province is painful and places me in a very awkward position. In that sense perhaps the decision may be regarded as unfortunate.

The only ray of hope I see in that the undesirability of my visit refers to 'the present time'. Could you please give me a definition of the expression?

Could you please also tell me, if my inquiry is not inappropriate, why it is considered undesirable for me to visit the Frontier?

While it is my earnest desire to abide by His Excellency's wishes, I may be pardoned for repeating what I have said in my letter of 15th instant, that I could do so in so far as it was humbly possible. This is a point which your letter under reply seems to have overlooked.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. Gandhi

E.C. MIEVILLE, ESQ.  
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO  
HIS EXCELLENCY, THE VICE-ROY  
NEW DELHI

CALCUTTA,  
November 30, 1934

MY DEAR BAPU,

I am writing this from my bed. I am just entering the convalescence period. The progress in my case is bound to be slow because my stomach trouble is always there. After I get a little better I will remain on milk and fruit. Unfortunately for me, so long there is a kind of cold in the throat and nose which has accompanied the throat operation as it was bound to do, I cannot digest milk and fruits without increasing the trouble. So, I have been living all this time on vegetable broth. Today, I have taken a little less than an oz. of rice flakes and a few dates.

I fear I will not be fit to travel before at least three weeks. This means I could be in Delhi about the third week of December and it would really be a great personal blessing to me if you stay in Delhi because then I will have the opportunity of having some quite time with you. At any rate, that is what I hope.

Mahadevbhai writes to me about the correspondence. He tells me that the matter has appeared in the Press. How did it leak out? You know, this has been my complaint all along. You may again take it somewhat indifferently but may I implore you to make your secretariat more vigilant in these matters. You have no secrets of your own but then other peoples' secret must be guarded and the Government will not feel happy if they know that things are likely to leak out easily from your confidential files.

I note that Mahadevbhai says about Mr. Mitra's book. He also says that you have written to me another which, of course, has not so far reached me.

Mahadevbhai hopes that the tonsils operation has done me good and the nose operation will not be necessary. Well, I do not know. I have got it done because doctors were very keen and when Bidhan said it must be done. I put myself under their knife. But I am not quite sure about the success. In any case the tonsils were bad and they must have been doing some injury to my health. They kept me under chloroform for forty

minutes. It was a peculiar sensation and was my first experience. I slept taking Ramnam and when I awoke I thought the period was pocket edition of death.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

95

WARDHA,  
December 2, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

So even an operation for tonsils could be an ordeal: Bapu is so anxious. Please tell some one to write, if not daily, every alternate day.

I am afraid you misunderstood— or misheard— my letter. Or was I half asleep when I wrote mine? For there are no less than two places where there seems to have been a complete misunderstanding. First about *the* correspondence. I did not mean that the news of *this* correspondence had got into the Press. I meant the news of Bapu's going to Delhi for a brief stay with you, at your invitation; and that is what Bapu did not like. That news did *not* issue from here. Thank God, there is not a line yet in the Press about *the* correspondence. But I admit that Bapu sometimes, all unconsciously of course, oversteps the limits. He did so the other day at a meeting of the Gandhi Sewasangha. He did so in the course of a "private" talk with a dozen friends— if any talk to a dozen friends could be called "private"! However, when all is said and done, we may not worry over much about this matter. Where everything is carried on in broad daylight and above board, why should we fear? Loose talk or loose rumours of course may do us a lot of harm, and it should be stopped as best we can.

The other misunderstanding is about Mr. Mitra's book. I

said Mr. Mitra had written a letter to Bapu thanking him for Bapu's letter to him, but that he wants something more, for which he would have to wait until Bapu has had time to read the book.

I have just sent on the MSS of my book on the Khan brothers to Devdas who was keen on printing and publishing the book. Let me know what you think of the book when you have time to read it.

But your immediate business is to get well. It is difficult to believe that you had to be under chloroform for 40 mts. My boy was under chloroform for only a few minutes and the operation took a few seconds. Of course he took about half an hour after the operation to come back to himself. Perhaps by 40 minutes you mean all the time before and after the operation? So far as my boy was concerned there were no after-effects at all and he proudly said the next day that it was a fleabite. But I suppose the operation for tonsils at a late age makes all the difference.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

December 2, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your telegrams both to Vallabhbai and myself duly arrived here. How troublesome this minor operation is proving to be. I have also received a communication from Dr. Bidhan. He says you are doing well, but your telegrams indicate something defferent. I await another telegram.

I do not think it proper to ask the Viceroy for an interview at the present juncture, though I have written to him again. In my letter I have sought more light on the word "not at present" and have also asked the reason why. Now let us see what happens. But whatever happens, it will be the best.



I shall try to be in Delhi around the 20th provided, of course, that you are by then strong enough to bear the strain of a journey in case you do decide to proceed there.

*Blessings from  
Bapu*

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*Copy*

D. O. No. 10936-G. M.

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,

NEW DELHI,

December 2, 1934

Many thanks for your letter of the 28th November.

In reply I am desired by His Excellency to say that the expression "at the present time" implies that His Excellency's decision will hold good till he is satisfied that conditions are such as to render a visit unobjectionable. His Excellency's decision was arrived at after a full consideration of the events of recent years and present condition.

*Yours sincerely,*  
E.C. Mieville

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

WARDHA

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WARDHA,

December 5, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

In enclose herewith the whole of the correspondence. Some fool from here, seems to have written to a brother fool in Ahmedabad about this thing and hence the A. P. I. news there. But it is amusing-- the way in which the news has been given

The last letter received yesterday would seem to bang the door irrevocably. But Bapu is still in no hurry. Charlie arrives on the 7th. If you are fit enough to go to Delhi by the 19th, he proposes to reach there on the evening of the 19th. But if not, he does not know what is in store for him. He seems to be pretty certain though that the jail is in store for him as soon as he is ready for it. I do hope you are progressing rapidly.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

99

WARDHA,  
December 12, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I find that you are anyhow striving to reach Delhi before October 20. If all this effort is for my sake it is wholly uncalled for. Please do not try to undertake the journey at the cost of your health. Then there is another question to be taken into consideration in regard to my visit to Delhi. After my correspondence with the Viceroy, a correct or garbled version of which has already appeared in the Press, the thing to be considered is whether your association with me would not raise eyebrows in certain quarters. Then again, there is the question of a likely addition to the volume of business as the result of your arrival in Delhi. If you think that I must go to Delhi, this I can do even four or five days later. As far as I know I may leave this place on the 19th, reaching Delhi the following day. Mahadev is also writing, and in greater detail

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

CALCUTTA,  
December 12, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADI VBHAI,

I was to leave this place on the 15th, reaching Benares on the 16th and I had desired to stay for two days at Benares with my mother and had decided to leave Benares on the 18th reaching Delhi on the 19th. For the last 2/3 days, I find, however, that pain in my throat had increased and on showing it to the throat Doctor and Dr. Bidhan, it was found that there has been a slight set-back due to some infection which I may have caught through dust or something else. I had been attending office regularly for the last 4/5 days, so both of them told me to stop attending office and today I am writing this from house. Last night, they cleaned the wound and it is much better now. There is absolutely nothing serious and I think that I should be quite fit to travel very soon. But both the doctors tell me definitely not to leave this place until my wound is perfectly healed. They tell me that they are sure that I would be able to be in Delhi before the 30th but they do not allow me to leave this place until the wound is healed, which probably means at least one week more. I have therefore wired you accordingly. I feel ashamed that I could not reach Delhi on the 19th. Physically, I am quite fit but the throat trouble is undoubtedly there though only in a very minor degree but the doctors would not allow me to take any risk. I fear the consequence of my delaying by a week more may not be a disappointment to me. On the 26th, the meeting of the Federation Committee is to be held in Delhi to discuss the J.S.C. report. My presence was very essential, but this, I fear, I will have to cut off. What I feel however, is that I may have put Bapu to unnecessary consequence by alteration in my programme. I would have left the place on the appointed date in spite of Doctor's advice but I know Bapu would not like it. Therefore, I am obeying the doctors. Please now write to me on which date Bapu is expected to reach Delhi.

Bapu's statement today about the North-Western Frontier visit was simply splendid. I am sure it will have a good effect. You know, it is all personal between him and Delhi and this is

the chief trouble. In any case, his statement is bound to have nothing but a good effect.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
WARDHA

101

CAI CUTTA,  
December 14, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I had a long talk with Arthur yesterday at my house lasting for about two and half hours. Mr. Muggeridge the new man came with him. The topic of the conversation from the beginning to the end was Bapu. He casually asked my opinion on the report when I pointed out that it was more the prevailing atmosphere than the contents of the report which in my opinion mattered most and I strongly criticised the lack of personal contact. He agreed but said that everyone in the Government feared that any contact with Mr. Gandhi may arouse all sort of speculations. He is going to tell the Viceroy everything that I talked to him. He said that the British community was getting warmer towards Mr. Gandhi. He had a talk only yesterday with the Viceroy who asked him that Bapu's motive in publishing the correspondence about the Frontier. Moore replied that Bapu's motive was sincere and that he had no desire to teach civil disobedience at the Frontier and that he only wanted to study the situation and so some village work. He said that the Viceroy may have agreed with his views but added that there was another school of thought which believed that Mr. Gandhi was difficult to understand and that his ways were subtle. Many thought he was waiting for another opportunity to launch movement against the Government. He added that in his second letter to the Viceroy, he should not

have uttered a threat of disobedience. From what I have learnt, it appears that a lot of misunderstanding prevails which requires to be removed and it will be removed though, of course, it will take some time.

It is reported that Cunningham who knows Bapu and who is now the Governor of the Frontier Provinces feels that Bapu's visit may cause great excitement and thus may embarrass the administration. Moore told me that the Bengal Governor was very keen to see Bapu but somehow or other interview could not come. He asked me whether Bapu was coming again to Calcutta implying thereby that if he did, he would try to fix up an interview. I said he had nothing to do in Bengal and so was not coming unless the authorities desired to see him. I said he was going to Delhi and would stay there probably for some time.

I think the ban against him is partly due to a feeling of suspicion and partly due to the resultant embarrassment which his visit may cause. I think it is very essential that this suspicion should be removed and I hope it will be removed. I also learn that Willingdon entertains more suspicion against Bapu than hostility. It is naturally difficult for them to understand the true philosophy of "satyagraha". Moore said that only "satyagraha" was the fast of Bapu but the other actions were more akin to violence than to satyagraha. Of course, he was exaggerating but it could not be said that the masses performed anything even approaching pure satyagraha.

Somehow or other, I find that these men do not take Andrews and such with much kindness. They have no opinion for their intelligence and unfortunately they have a sort of prejudice which I had not discovered until now.

Yesterday, I suddenly realised that Bapu was taking all this trouble to come to Delhi for my sake and when I realised this, I felt a feeling of embarrassing oppression. Why should Bapu trouble himself to undertake the journey in severe cold for my sake alone? Am I not quite fit to come to Wardha? I have a great desire to pass a few quiet days with him if that could be done so long as I am fit to travel to Wardha. I had persuaded Bapu to come to Delhi because I felt that this would put a new life in the Harijan Sewak Sangh and I also wanted to utilise his stay for my own benefit but if he thinks that he

need not come for the Harijan Sewak Sangh just now, then please tell him on my behalf with folded hands that I would rather come to Wardha than give him the trouble of coming to Delhi. I realised this when I read his remarks to Malkani.

My wound is healing and I think in a week's time, I will be quite fit.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.,  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

102

CALCUTTA,  
December 16, 1934

DEAR SIR SAMUEL HOARE,

I am writing this after reading the J.S.C. report very carefully and after the splendid speech that you delivered in the House of Commons.

I am naturally writing this with some amount of hesitation as I know I have not found myself generally in agreement with you. But if my personal regard for you, and my constant humble endeavour to explain you and your efforts in a friendly light in quarters where they are misunderstood, entitle me to tell you what I sincerely feel, I may not resist the urge.

I have nothing to say about the report. You have rightly stated in Parliament that in India it has satisfied few. On the other hand, your words spoken to me during my last interview with you "howsoever radical a Secretary of State may be, with the present Parliament, it is impossible to go beyond a certain stage" are still ringing in my ears. I frankly recognise that, in the present Parliament, it may not be possible to go beyond the recommendations of the J.S.C. report. But I am looking upon the situation entirely from a different angle.

I analogise the recommended scheme with the grant of

powers of attorney in commercial house. We grant general and special powers as need be to our managers and assistants. We can suspend the powers, and even dismiss the men, if we cease to trust them. But I do not know in my own firm and in many other firms where such suspension or dismissal has not been a matter of rare occasions. The arrangement has worked most successfully because the employer trusts the manager and the manager reciprocates and both work for a common aim. This means that mutual trust and a common aim are more important than the contents of the powers of attorney. I believe that full responsible Government is the common aim in our case. Can it be said that mutual trust, goodwill, sympathy and mutual understanding so essential for the realisation of the aim—whether the first step in reforms be very substantial—is prevailing today in India? I am not blaming any party, but I sincerely feel that the Government being the governing party, it is they who have to cultivate this position. I would ask you to analyse the psychology of the events which, in my opinion, more than the defects of the schemes is causing the talk of rejection rather than modification.

The Irwin-Gandhi pact recognised:

1. Responsibility at centre.
2. Federal Government.
3. Reservation and safeguards demonstrably to be in the interest of India.

Evidently, it was recognised by the signatories to the Pact, that, whatever be the ultimate goal, reservation and safeguards were essential during a period of transition. Even those who talked of independence—and different men attached different meanings to the word—did not find reservations during transition to be incompatible with the ultimate goal of complete and full responsible Government. Was it not so because there was no personal touch in the Irwin-Gandhi Pact which is missing just now? You have rightly emphasised the conception of partnership, but is this conception to be translated into practice while avoiding the personal contact, which alone could establish mutual understanding, and trust between the two countries? May I submit that it is the method of advance, rather than its

measure, which will always count? Montague-Chelmsford reforms were introduced in an unfortunate atmosphere and I hope the mistake will not be repeated.

I have ventured to write this, though uncertain of my credit with you, because I am and have been most anxious to see a permanent friendly and peaceful relation restored between the two countries, and have been, in my own humble way working in this direction.

With kindest regards,

*I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
Ghanshyamdas Birla*

THE RT. HON'BLE SIR SAMUEL HOARL, KT.  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON

103

WARDHA,  
December 16, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your kind letter giving most interesting details of your interview with Moore. What you say is quite true, but how is that suspicion to be dispelled? Not certainly by go-between like C.F.A. for whom these men in high places have a very poor opinion, but by those who know Bapu well and who know the other party also well, and enjoy his confidence. But unfortunately, most of those who come in this category are backboneless and can be easily brow-beaten and snubbed.

It is not that Bapu wanted to go to Delhi just for your sake. The sentence in his letter to Malkani meant only that the date of his reaching Delhi depended on you, only to the extent that if you did not go there, it would be hardly worth his while to go, for the simple reason that he should be able to do nothing in the Sangh meeting without you. He very much doubts the



advisability of having the Harijan Sangh meeting without you. If therefore, you could not reach Delhi on or about the 30th, the meeting should be postponed. I hope I have made myself clear. If the doctors are not against your going to Delhi by the 30th the meeting will stand and Bapu will also reach there about the same time. Let us now have a telegram, say about the 22nd.

C.F.A. went to Delhi to meet the Home Secretary and the Home Member. Whether he succeeded in meeting both or one we do not know, but he quietly wires in his illusive way—"Had long interview. Glad I came. Writing fully. Wire your plans." Then there is a wire saying he is to arrive here tomorrow!. I am afraid he has been able to do very little, as usual. But let us see. I shall let you know.

In spite of quantities of cuttings that are being sent to Agatha's weekly, she simply ignores the facts here, and writes in blissful ignorance: "A gesture of reconciliation is wanted at your end. You could do it." There is a limit to one's patience. "The J.P.C. Report", said Bapu to the Conciliation group people appealing to him for a 'constructive gesture', is "bare-faced denial of freedom" and "my patience is almost exhausted". Look at the wanton imperviousness to all moral appeal that the people here are exhibiting at every step. Bapu got Gaffar Khan to make that noble statement. It fell on deaf ears—or was like 'pearls before swine' as the Sardar said. He has got 2 years' rigorous. And in Sind a quiet worker like Ghanshyamdas is now going to be prosecuted on the same charge! So 124A is now the order of the day.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

104

CONGRESS HOUSE,  
MOUNT ROAD,  
MADRAS,  
December 17, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I had not expected that you would be in bed for so long a time. How are you now? I hope the surgical injuries are all healed. It is good that you don't expose yourself till you are sure that there is no risk.

I have just returned from Delhi with Lakshmi and baby. Devdasji is there, but just now he has gone to Bombay, I suppose to raise money for the *Hindustan Times*.

*Yours sincerely,*  
C. Rajagopalachari

G. D. BIRIA, ESQ.

105

CALCUTTA,  
December 18, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

I will send a wire the day I leave and I hope I would be leaving most probably on the 22nd, staying at Benares for a few days with my mother and then reaching Delhi most probably on the 28th. If it would be necessary, I would curtail my stay at Benares but hope to reach Delhi about the 28th, unless something unforeseen happens.

After I saw Moore, I talked to Governor on the same topic and he, while agreeing with me and pointing out his limitations, remarked "Why don't you speak to the Viceroy?" I said, "I am an untouchable with the Viceroy." He said "Surely, you saw him last year." I said, "No" and added that I would like to see him only if he would encourage me to talk but I do not want to go, if he thinks me to be busy-bodied with some axe to

grind. He said, "The Viceroy would feel hesitation in talking, if he thought that you were an emissary of Gandhi." I said, "I am emissary of none and so far as I know, Gandhiji has not appointed any one as his emissary." He said that he believed in my sincerity and would speak to the Viceroy and would write to me if he felt it was any use my seeing him. He asked me whether I would stay at Calcutta for a few days more to which I replied in affirmative. I am told that after this, one Mr. Sharma of *Hindu* also discussed the same thing with him and Governor is reported to have told him that he was going to speak to the Viceroy about me. After that, I am told that Mr. Sharma had a talk with Lady Willingdon. They are going to consult C. P. (C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar). I do not know what would be the subsequent development but so far, it is all interesting. I believe it is no use C.F.A. seeing them. I fear it may be spoiling the things.

I like to develop more intimacy with them and thus effectively represent Bapu and I could do this easily but I fear there is no natural opportunity just now. Had I been in the Assembly, it would have been quite different. But now I am working in my own way and allowing the things to take their natural course.

After brooding for a week, I decided yesterday to write also to Samuel Hoare in the same strain. I realise that it is impossible in the present circumstances for the Government to open negotiations with Bapu on constitution matters and therefore I am not pressing this. The only thing that I am pressing is that they should know Bapu and have personal contact with him. I think if they do this, the rest will look after itself. The best "go-between" between the Government and Bapu can be Bapu himself.

There is nothing in the Joint Select Committee's report. Its recommendations are nothing more than the provision of granting of powers of attorney by a master to his employee which could be cancelled at will. But even this with a proper understanding between Bapu and Government could bring us nearer to swaraj and help us in getting a better constitution in course of time. I therefore attach more importance to the constitution than to the "change of heart" as Bapu always termed the phrase.

I have heard from a reliable source that there is a strong impression at Viceroy House that all this organisation of villages by Bapu is merely to mobilise villages for the ultimate aim of starting another campaign of civil disobedience.

I am relieved to hear from you that Bapu is not coming entirely for me. This would have really been very embarrassing. Now I am looking forward to the pleasure of passing a few quite days with him. But would people leave him alone?

Please tear off this fether after you have read it and shown to Bapu.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

106

WARDHA,  
December 18, 1934

BHAI JUGALKISHOREJI,

Please go through the enclosure. If the land Satisbabu wishes to have is of no use to you and not unduly costly it may be given back to him and the amount of Rs. 2,500 be taken back. But if the land is much more valuable than that, that would be a different matter altogether.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

107

CAI CUTTA,  
December 20, 1934

MY DEAR RAJAJI, '

,Thanks for your letter.

'I was not at all in bed for any short or long time. Of course,

I had to take rest for three or four days in bed but then I was quite free to move about in my own house. They did not allow me to go to office or to go out of Calcutta because the doctors feared infection.

I heard about your visit to Delhi and I also read your interview about the Joint Parliamentary Committee's report. And I was amazed that you thought that it was something worse than the present constitution. I thought we were both of the same opinion that even with its worst phases, it could not be worse than the present constitution. Maybe that your speech was misreported. Personally, I think that what is necessary and what is possible is not any constitutional change but a great change in the present atmosphere. If the atmosphere was friendly on both the sides and there was goodwill on behalf of Great Britain, the constitution would work well even though it is not satisfactory. On the other hand, even a better constitution would fail if the present atmosphere did not improve. I thus attach more importance to the atmosphere than to the measure of advance.

Agatha says that you should go to London and I have myself begun to feel that if a go-between is necessary, it is far better that you and Vallabhbhai went to London rather than that Mr. Andrews, with his best intentions, should move about and achieve nothing. He is just now with me and is going to see the Viceroy tomorrow. Bhulabhai is the best man for seeing the Viceroy and now that he has got a constitutional position, I think his seeing would mean something.

I hope Laxmi and the baby both are quite well. Devdas is going to turn into another Tusharkanti Ghosh who during the day tells for the *Patrika* and at night dreams about it.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Ghanshyamdas

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI, ESQ.  
CONGRESS HOUSE  
MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

CALCUTTA,  
December 21, 1934

MY DEAR MAHADEVBHAI,

Andrews saw Sir Henry Craig and the Viceroy today and he came back quite pleased. We cannot expect much visible results from such interviews but, in my opinion, he must have done something to break the misunderstanding. I had seen the Governor last Saturday and he had promised to speak to the Viceroy on the same day. Moore also must have spoken. I saw Sir C.P. yesterday and he was going to have a long talk with the Viceroy last evening and the last goes Mr. Andrews who finds the Viceroy quite congenial. He has not brought any promise from them that they would now be prepared to establish personal contact. But he feels that they are more inclined towards it. I am not quite sure of this. But I think every step that is being taken is helping us.

I forgot to tell you that the Governor told me that they expected to establish personal contact with the Congress in the Assembly. But I told him that it is no use meeting the leader of the opposition who himself will have to take instructions from the man behind. A better course for the Government would be to establish personal contact with the Principal and he agreed. There is not the least doubt that there is a genuine misunderstanding about Bapu and I think this will have to be removed. It is quite possible that Bapu's staying in Delhi may be helpful. In my opinion Bhulabhai can do much. He being leader of the opposition has greater claim for being a go-between than anyone else. But we shall talk more when we meet.

I am seeing C.P. today, and will write you what he talked to the Viceroy. I forgot to mention the name of Dr. Bidhan due to whom C.P. decided to see the Viceroy.

I personally feel that we have not yet made the best efforts to remove the misunderstanding between Bapu and the Government. In one respect, I have to change my opinion. I always maintained that, it was the Viceroy, who was reluctant to come in personal contact with Bapu. The Governor, during my conversation with him, made it quite clear and these are his words: "Curiously, this has become a major policy with the Govern-

ment here as well as in England that Mr. Gandhi being an all-India personality should not be seen until he withdraws the civil disobedience movement." Bapu always maintained that it was Hoare. I said it was the Viceroy. But I heard it from an ex-Government member that it was not the Viceroy but chiefly his cabinet and Hoare is simply acquiescing in the Indian Cabinet's policy.

Enclosed please find a copy of the resolution passed by the Federation. Most of the drafting was done by me and therefore I naturally was satisfied that the resolution was passed in the form I had drafted although I could not go to Delhi.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Ghanshyamdas

Encl. As specified  
MAHADEVBHAI DESAI, ESQ.  
C/O MAHATMA GANDHI  
WARDHA

WARDHA,  
December 23, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

This is just to tell you that the Delhi party will be fairly big, growing daily like a snowball! I count nothing less than 12 names today (including five women), and Bapu wants me to warn you beforehand, so that if you think that it is unwieldy you may unhesitatingly send a wire saying so in which case Bapu will shed the superfluous members!

Your full letter to hand. Let us hope something may come out of the interview. I do not set much store by Bhulabhai's influence either, but we shall see. Why cannot the Assembly have a resolution on the Frontier correspondence? I myself am an ignoramus in these matters and do not know whether such a resolution can be brought or not but I am simply throwing

out the hint. Why can't the Assembly ask the Government to remove the embargo? I hope you are quite fit now.

*Yours affectionately,*  
Mahadev

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ASHRAM,  
WARDHA,  
December 26, 1934

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Swami Anand wrote for *Harijan* the accompanying article on the plight of the sugar-cane growers of Bihar and U.P. on the strength of notes made during his stay in Bihar. Whilst Babu has no doubt about the general accuracy of the statements, he thinks he should not publish them until they were corroborated by independent witnesses who have observed conditions obtaining in different parts. Will you kindly let Babu have your own experience in this connection, and your opinion on Swami Anand's statements?

*Yours sincerely,*  
Mahadev

Encl. 1



## Letters without Date'

### 111

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your two letters are before me. About rice, I have seen for myself that the rice available here is polished rice. A rice dealer told me that people prefer the polished variety. Still please find out in Calcutta and let me know. You say you would favour the husked variety from the economic point of view. How so? Because that would contribute to the villager's comparative prosperity? If there is something more to it. Please write to me.

Please also study the comparative superiority between jaggery and factory made sugar from both angles and let me have the result. How far are you going to interest yourself in this new institution? Do you propose to contribute to it financially? Do you feel inclined to effect a change in your way of life to the extent it would be possible for you to do so?

What about your operation? You have got to make up your mind one way or another.

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

*PS.* For the time being I am here. Just now I am planning to write on Utmanzai.

### 112

SYLHAT,

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have had all your letters. What kind of a reply do you propose to send to *Amrit Bazar Patrika*? What has been appearing in it is full of substance. Those who have been contributing this stuff know perfectly well what they are driving at. As for converting friends to our point of view, this object can be achieved in other ways.

The Award is beset with difficulties. The path I have chalked out will become so much easier to take provided the Muslims co-operate. Even if they do not, the path is clear enough. What I apprehend is the Swarajists' disapproval of it. I do not find the climate congenial for a co-ordinated effort on the part of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

I have studied the question of Council-entry independently. It seems to me that the Congress will always contain elements favouring Council-entry. I also feel that ultimately the reins of the Party should pass into the hands of such elements. It is this group that stands in need of identification with the Congress. The feature of Congress politics seems to have come to stay permanently. If ever there is any occasion for boycott of the legislatures, it is this group that will do the needful.

The question of council-entry, too, is beset with difficulties. The problem will resolve itself in course of time. Mistakes will be committed and rectified off and on. Often the number or mistakes will grow progressively small with the passage of time.

I like Ranchi better than Calcutta, though Ranchi is lacking in suitable accommodation for those who choose to visit it. Ranchi will give me the sort of peace not available in Calcutta. I have left it to Rajendra Babu to decide what would be better course to adopt.

I shall certainly go through your Federation speech and will let you have my opinion on it.

In case the meeting is held at Ranchi and you find it possible to go there, your presence may serve some good purpose. But I have no definite opinion about it

*Blessings from*  
Bapu

*PS.* The enclosure is from Baba Raghavdas. There is certainly a need for training Hindi teachers. To me the scheme appears to be quite good. If this can be managed with the amount specified by him, well and good.

Bapu

C/O DEVDAS AND LAKSHMI

MY DEAR BAPU,

Thanks for letter just received. We'd love to come on to meet you at Behar—if you are sure we won't be too much of an extra burden, in that devastated district. We could have here on Saturday, if that suited you, arriving on Monday at Patna because Dorothy has never seen Agra and I want her have that joy and she is keen too. (We spend Saturday night at Agra).

Devdas, who is as good as you in looking after every imaginable creature comfort of his guests, thinks this is a good plan and is looking up trains, so that we can let you know later what hour we arrive in Patna on Monday.

We are so very happy here in Birla Mills. We have one of the ground floor suites, and it is good, sleeping on the verandah walking in Shah Jehan's daughters' gardens, getting our laundry done and mending, altering and making a few cloths. Devdas has got hold of a sewing machine and an electric iron and marmalade and all sorts of homely things, we never expected or dreamed of. He even offered us porridge!

He takes us to 2 exhibitions of paintings today.

Well, now to business. Poor Willingdon, his is a limited little soul, though he looks so handsome, isn't he?

He was much friendlier than I had expected—and it was possible to say *all* that was in my heart to say—and at the end to make a fairly straight-forward appeal to him. But though he listened, he is quite hardened up, isn't he, in the crust of his own self-righteousness. He kept saying, "I'm afraid I am very materialistic." His mind did not seem *quite* so closed however as I had expected. So long as he continues honestly to think you are not sincere, he can't act otherwise, I suppose, than he is doing. I think, I did a little bit of useful work there. I said, 'Lord Willingdon, call Mr. Gandhi mistaken, inconsistent as often as you like, but there is no shadow of doubt, honestly there isn't, about his complete sincerity.'

I had said it quietly, and definitely, and when he went on to say he couldn't agree with me, I reminded him that "I know you, you were an old personal friend of my sister's and mine, that I had been with you on all sorts of occasions, and at all

sorts of hours, and in all sorts of moods, but never for a single instance were you insincere. On that I would stake my soul!

He says you have given him a lot of trouble and you have made *and keep* making mistakes, over your relations with him, over Temple-entry, over your tactics, etc. He said if you co-operated, you would be able to embarrass him a great deal more but that is what you ought to do. He wants the Government of India to be taken in hand completely by Indians. He is giving his life to get that assured.

We talked for about half an hour, and as I say I feel it was useful. At any rate, it has given him perhaps a sort of warning, a sort of chance to see himself in another light. I told him that the eyes of the entire world are on *you* and that people all over U.S.A., Japan and China kept enquiring of me as to when peace was going to be achieved here, a real peace which allowed the *best* of India to co-operate with the best of Britain.

He has a grudge against you, evidently for the trouble you have given him in the past. He thinks you are utterly conceited—and as that is his own weakness—he naturally dislikes it wherever he thinks he sees it in others.

He said it is nonsense to call your movement non-violent. It is always breaking out into violence. He said he intended seeing you, when you landed in 1932, but your wire made it impossible. He said, he would see you gladly, directly if you gave up civil disobedience. I said, remembering Ansari's word, how could any leader throw away his best weapon *before* he had made peace! He said he didn't want great pronouncements, or pledges or things like that, but for the Working Committee or some group of leaders to get together and decide to suspend it.

I said, I was only speaking for myself and was ignorant of many of the ins and outs of policy. that when I had seen you last, you did not know I was going to have this interview with him but I, personally, should imagine that even if you wanted to call off civil disobedience you could not, because of the young enthusiasts, hot heads perhaps, who would feel 'let down', and might turn to really serious bloody revolution.

He said he didn't think they would.

He said J.N. had a great influence on you. I said, "Of course and he has a great influence on J.N. Who knows what

he, who has been a rather temperamental person, 'might not have been persuaded into by the young hot heads, if you had not exercised your restraining influence all the time, so that J.N. has learnt at last the wisdom of non-violence. That cut no ice however."

At last I gave my parting shot, "Even if Mr. Gandhi is all wrong, granted he has given you trouble, we as Christians know the greatness of forgiveness. Easter is nearing; can't you have a shot at making a new start and meeting him knowing God wants us to have peace?"

He took it in but parried it with the admission he was rather materialist. It is the educational system that is at fault. It has made most of the mischief out ever since Macaulay instituted it, so that instead of building up the welfare of the people, from the bottom upwards—it is top heavy—and a host of young more or less educated are left unemployed at the top.

There was lots more about Sanatanists and Temple-entry and why didn't you stick to your fine work of uplifting untouchables instead of raising a hornet's nest by asking for Temple-entry and getting the bill for it introduced.

I laughed and said that familiar argument was constantly used by people at home about social work. "Oh! Miss K", they say, "you are doing such excellent work in the East End, why don't you confine your energies to your health work and educational and social programme there, why do you go up to Westminster and waste your time lobbying members of Parliament and trying to introduce new legislation.

He said that two situations were not analogous and that the Sanatanists would do more harm, now that you had attacked them than they would have done if let alone.

I said, "Your Excellency, supposing we Christians suddenly came to realise there had grown up in the Churches some practice that violated and vitiated the teaching of Jesus, wouldn't we attack it openly and energetically, however much opposition we aroused?"

Once more, this was counted irrelevant. But all the time he seemed rather interested, though that may only be his diplomacy. No! I think he did appreciate the frankness, and perhaps he liked "being stood". He may get weary, a bit of pomp and ceremony, even though his lady glories in it perennially.

I think Sir John Anderson had written to him about my 3½ hours visit to him. I had asked him to, you know—and he mentioned the fact of my visit to him almost at once.

Well—I must stop.<sup>1</sup>

*Yours in fellowship,*  
Muriel Lester

<sup>1</sup>Copy being sent under instructions of Bapu

## 114

MAHATMA GANDHI  
KARACHI

PERSONALLY HOLD SUCH A LONG FAST UNWARRANTED. WILL GIVE UNNECESSARY SHOCK TO COUNTRY WHICH HOPE LALNATH DOES NOT DESIRE. REQUEST SHOWING THIS PROGRAM TO LALNATH. HOPE YOU WILL AGREE REDUCING PERIOD OF FAST STEP RATHER DRASTIC. FINALLY YOUR DISCRETION.

GHANSHYAMDAS

## 115

### Ministerial Pay

A well known educationalist worker says in effect:

“I hope you are not elated over the newspaper report that the Congress Ministers are going to pay themselves Rs.500 each per month with allowance for house and travelling amounting to Rs. 300 extra. It is not enough that this scale is lower than the former. But that would be a wholly wrong way to look at the thing. The proper and only way to look at the thing is what proportion does the scale bear to the

average income of this, the poorest country in the world. What is the difference between the Secretary or the Congress and a Minister? Your scale for the Vidyapith, for the A.I.S.A. and other institutions is Rs.75 as the highest. Why should a Vidyapith Professor getting Rs. 75 get Rs.500 per month on becoming a Minister as he well might be? Then look at the Fergusson College. There too, the Professor used to get no more than Rs.75 per month. And why should there be any difference between the pay of a Minister and his Secretary? These are all self-appointed. Have they any right to make these distinctions? I must confess that I do not understand this business. I can only hope that the report is baseless and that the Congress ministers in all the six provinces will show that they are the real representatives of the starving millions in whose name and for whose sake they are taking office. And why should they need cars? Why may they not walk to their work or use tramcars or buses? I have been to Japan. The Japanese scale is much lower than the reported scale. And Japan is an independent country much richer than ours. If we make of Ministerial offices comfortable jobs for ourselves, it will be like wrecking the Constitution at its very threshold. Now that you have begun to deal with such things in the columns of *Harijan* will you not give your opinion and arrest the course of the evil, assuming that there is truth in the report?"

This is the gist as I recollect it of a conversation. The speaker poured out his heart in sorrow and distress. I shared his sorrow. I share the hope that the newspaper report is not a correct forecast. It should be remembered that the Congress resolution fixes Rs. 500 as the maximum. So far as I am aware it is inclusive of everything. A clear need for the maximum should be proved.

M.K.G.

### Congress Ministries (By M. K. Gandhi)

Since the Working Committee and other Congressmen have allowed themselves to be influenced by my opinion on the office issue, it is perhaps due to the public for me to explain my conception of Office acceptance and what is possible to do in terms of the Congress election manifesto. I need offer no apology for crossing the self-imposed limit in the conduct of *Harijan*. The reason is obvious. The Government of India Act is universally regarded as wholly unsatisfactory for achieving India's freedom. *But it is possible to construe it as an attempt however limited and feeble to replace the rule of the sword by the rule of majority. The creation of the big electorate of three crores of men and women and the placing of wide powers in their hands cannot be described by any other name.* Underlying it is the hope that what has been imposed upon us we shall get to like, i.e., we, shall really regard our exploitation as a blessing in the end. The hope may be frustrated if the representatives of the thirty million voters have a faith of their own and are intelligent enough to use the powers (including the holding of offices) placed in their hands for the purpose of thwarting the assumed intention of the framers of the Act. And this can be easily done by *lawfully using the Act in a manner not expected by them* and by refraining from using it in the way intended by time. Thus the ministries may enforce immediate prohibition by making education self-supporting instead of paying for it from the liquor revenue. This may appear a startling proposition but I hold it perfectly feasible and eminently reasonable. The jails may be turned into reformatories and workshop. They should be self-supporting and educational instead of being spending and punitive departments. In accordance with the Irwin-Gandhi Pact of which only the salt clause remains still alive, salt should be free for the poor man but it is not. It can now be free in Congress Provinces at least. All purchases of cloth should be in khadi. The attention should now be devoted more to villages and peasantry than to the cities. These are but illustrations taken at random. They are perfectly lawful and yet not one of



them has as yet even been attempted.

Then the personal behaviour of Ministers. How will Congress Ministers discharge themselves? Their chief, the President of the Congress, travels third class. Will they travel first? The President is satisfied with a coarse khadi, dhoti, kurta and waist-coat; will the Ministers require the western style and expenditure on the western scale? Congressmen have for the past seventeen years disciplined themselves in rigorous simplicity. The nation will expect the Ministers to introduce that simplicity in the administration of their provinces, they will not be ashamed of it, they will be proud of it. We are the poorest nation on earth, many millions living in semi-starvation. Its representatives dare not live in a style and manner out of all correspondence with their electors. The Englishmen coming as conquerors and rulers set up a standard of living which took no account whatsoever of the helpless conquered. If the Ministers will simply refrain from copying the Governors and the secured civil service, they will have shown the marked contrast that exists between the Congress mentality and theirs. Truly there can be no partnership between them and us as there can be none between a giant and a dwarf?

Lest Congressmen should think that they have a monopoly of simplicity and that they erred in 1920 in doing away with the trousers and the chair let me cite examples of Aboobakar and Omar. Rama and Krishna are pre-historic names. I may not use these names as examples. History tells us of Pratap and Shivaji living in utmost simplicity. But opinion may be divided as to what they did when they had power. There is no division of opinion about the Prophet, Aboobakar and Omar. They had riches of the world at their feet. It will be difficult to find a historical parallel to match their rigorous life. Omar would not break the idea of his lieutenants in distant provinces using anything but coarse cloth and coarse flour. The Congress Ministers if they will retain the simplicity and economy they have inherited since 1920, they would save thousands of rupees, they will give hope to the poor and probably change the one of the services. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that simplicity does not mean shoddiness. There is a beauty and an art in simplicity which he who runs may see. It does not require money to be neat, clean, and dignified. Pomp and pageantry are often syno-

nymous with vulgarity. This unostentatious work must be the prelude to demonstrating the utter insufficiency of the Act to meet the wishes of the people and the determination to end it.

The English Press has been at pains to divide India into Hindus and Muslims. The Congress majority provinces have been dubbed Hindu and the other Muslim. That this is demonstrably false has not worried them. My great hope is that the Ministers in the six provinces will so manage them as to disarm all suspicion. They will show their Muslim colleagues that they know no distinction between Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Sikh or Parsi. Nor will they demonstrate in every action of theirs that with them all are the sons of the soil among whom there is no one low and no one high. Poverty and climate are common to all without distinction. The major problems are identical for all of them. And whilst so far as we can judge from actions, the goal of the English system is wholly different from ours, the men and women representing the two goals belong to the same human family. They will be thrown together as they never have been before. If the human reading that I have given to the Act is correct, the two parties meet *together, each with its own history, background and goal, to convert one another.* Corporations may be wooden and soulless but not those who manage them and extract work from them. If the Englishmen or the Indians deeply influenced by the former's culture accept the Indian viewpoint which is the Congress viewpoint, half the battle is already won by the Congress and Complete Independence will come to us without shedding a drop of blood. That is what I call the non-violent approach. *It may be foolish, visionary, impractical, nevertheless it is the best that Congressmen, other Indians and Englishmen should know it. This office acceptance is not intended to work the Act anyhow. In the prosecution by the Congress of its goal of Complete Independence, it is a serious attempt on the one hand to avoid a bloody revolution and on the other to avoid a mass civil disobedience on a scale hitherto not attempted. May God bless it.*

SIR,

Being a humble admirer of your paper I read your criticism of my interview in connection with the formation of the new Swaraj Party with the respect that it deserved. Knowing my limitations as I do I rarely tread on outside my own sphere. Being neither a politician nor having any special interest in the initiation or the formation of the Swaraj Party, probably it would have been more discreet on my part to say nothing on this subject. Had the Press Reporter never approached me and put direct questions which I replied as they later appeared in the Press I would have to my great relief escaped that fate of being torn to tatters by an eminent journal like yours. Yet, Mr. Editor I say that what I have said in my interview about Communal Award is not the views expressed at random 'mischievously' and 'illogically' as you call it but are deliberate views repeated in conversation a thousand times before without provoking any serious objection to the same. And I was pained to see that immediately I expressed these views publicly, a number of friends jealous of my career rebuked me not because I held certain views, but because I had the rashness to say them publicly. Your objection being not on the ground of my giving publicity to them on their own merits, I could quite appreciate it.

But let me make it clear that I am no admirer of the Communal Award or the Communal Decision as it should correctly be called. And yet I say that it should be left alone because I see no other practical alternative to it.

When two communities after making most serious efforts, sincere or insincere, cannot come to any decision by mutual agreement, pra., what other method is left there except that of the intervention of the third party mighty and powerful, capable of imposing its decision. As you, Sir, know almost all the big men of our country have tried their hands to settle this tangle at one or the other time with failure writ large. I admit that sinister influences were working at all times which did not allow an honourable settlement, but if we are amenable to such influences, I fear we have no right to complain. I happened to be in the know of what was going on behind the scenes at the second R.T.C. in London and it may shock

many to hear that if there were reactionary Mussalmans determined not to have a reasonable settlement there were equally reactionary Hindus—I need not name them—who did not lag behind the reactionary Mussalmans in their communal frenzy and did everything to wreck the best efforts of Gandhiji for an honourable settlement. The Hindu Sabha lead from the time of the first R., T. C. were so strong in their desire that the Premier should arbitrate, that when some one hinted in the Gandhi Committee that Gandhiji and Aga Khan should be asked to arbitrate, the greatest opposition came from the Hindu Sabha leaders themselves.

And the situation at the end grew so intolerable that it was unanimously agreed—but by some with great anguish—that the Government should be asked to give their decision. The decision of the Government, good or bad, thus became inevitable. I fail to understand, Sir, what is mischievous or illogical or confusing if under the circumstances, I said that the Communal Award be left alone. Of course, I do not rule out any efforts which may be made for the revision of the Award by mutual consent between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. In fact, Pandit Malaviyaji, that revered old man who is never tired in his zeal to work for rapprochement, has been trying season in and season out to find a substitute for the present Award by a better agreed settlement. All credit to him! If men more optimistic and energetic than Pandit could be found to take up the job, well and good. Let them try their hands and let us all pray that such efforts may be crowned with success. But I cannot say how our country is going to be helped if we fail to produce an agreement, refuse to accept what is before us and keep the fire burning incessantly by preaching bogies of Hindu or Muslim rules. This, I think, Sir, is most disastrous.

You talk of 'Muslim rule' in Bengal and the Punjab. Probably the Mussalmans will retort and accuse the Hindus of their design of establishing 'Hindu rule' in C.P., U.P., Behar, Madras, Bombay, etc. But Mr. Editor, do you really believe the bogey of 'Hindu rule' in these provinces? If not, they why talk of 'Muslim rule' in Bengal and the Punjab? I cannot conceive of any question except the stupid things like music before a mosque and *ajan* behind a temple where voting can take place on communal lines. And even this after a few years may disappear.

But on the important question of daily life, I cannot imagine that the interests of the Hindus are to clash with those of the Mussalmans or vice versa. Even today voting does not take place on communal line. A Muslim Sir Abdur Rahim opposes the Ottawa Pact followed by a number of good Hindus while another Mussalman Hajee Abdulla Haroon supports it followed by a great Hindu, Bhai Parmanand. Even only a few days back a Muslim Mayor has been elected for the Calcutta Corporation largely by Hindu votes though had I been a voter myself, I would have voted for Mr. Nalini Sarkar.

The following results of the voting that took place from the 24th February to 21st December, 1933 will be interesting regarding:

**Divisions in Which Government Took Part  
(Closure Divisions Omitted) in 1933**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>For Govt.</i>	<i>Against Govt.</i>	<i>Muslims against Govt.</i>
24th Feb. '33	Railway Budget Cut Motion	48	18	5
6th March '33	Income Tax Cut Motion	41	33	8
7th March '33	Army Cut Motion	37	38	12
8th March '33	Army Cut Motion	44	39	12
16th "	Finance Bill Amendment	49	31	5
22nd "	Postage Redcn.	46	36	9
24th "	Sarda Act Bill			
	Amendment Circulation Motion	46	44	19
25th "	Finance Bill	51	38	13
25th "	Finance Bill	56	41	13
25th "	Finance Bill	43	48	14
27th "	Finance Bill			
	Income Tax	57	47	14
27th "	"	33	59	16
1st April '33	Calcutta Congress Adjournment	49	30	5
5th "	Criminal Law Bill	51	28	6
" "	"	51	26	5
" "	"	50	32	8 <sup>n</sup>
7th "	"	48	30	6

Date	Subject	For Govt.	Against Govt.	Muslims against Govt.
8th "	Merchant Shipping Bill	54	10	6
10th "	"	54	10	7
11th "	Income Tax Bill	61	20	4
11th "	Income Tax Amend- ment Bill	45	1	Nil
12th April '33	Medical Bill Circulation	43	24	5
23rd Aug. '33	Workmen's Compnsn	50	19	6
29th "	Ci. P. Amendment	49	27	5
9th Sept '33	States Protection Bill Circulation	66	7	Nil
5th Dec. '33	Reserve Bank Stock vs Shareholders	76	33	7
6th "	Option to Buy Shares	70	24	7
6th "	More Branches	50	12	5
7th "	Limiting Shares to 200	49	48	14
8th "	75% Shares to Indians	52	30	4
8th "	Limiting Shares to 250	63	28	7
9th "	More Branches	46	39	10
9th "	London Branch	45	46	13
11th "	2 Indian Governors	53	28	6
13th "	Banking Experience	62	31	6
13th "	Co-operative Societies	42	40	9
14th "	One Vote One Man	55	28	6
14th "	Ban on Legislatures	47	55	8
15th "	Investment of Funds	54	13	3
19th "	Exchange Rate	63	45	8
19th "	Exchange Rate	57	47	11
21st Dec. '33	25 Yrs Clause	45	16	4
			1202	330

The total votes registered against the Government on various occasions number 1202 out of which the Mohammedans provided 330. It will be seen from the above figures that out of the total votes voted against the Government 27½ per cent was supplied by Mussalmans. There are altogether 62 elected non-Mohammedan seats and 30 Mussalmans. The Muslims thus out of the total elected seats for the Indians enjoy 32½ per cent

seats whereas in voting the percentage is 27½. I would not say that the record is bad. And this at a time when the Nationalist Mohammedans are not in the Legislatures. I do not understand how the Communal Award is going to change even the present situation and perform a horrible miracle by coming Hindus with Hindus and Muslims with Muslims, a thing unprecedented so far and thus create communal rules—against common sense patriotism and self-interests of Hindus at some places and of Mohammedans at other.

You, Sir, maintain that the Communal Award is the foundation of the White Paper. With all due respect to you, I differ. The White Paper is not based on the Communal Award. It is based on the stupid fears of the Britishers that their interests could best be protected by insisting on so called safeguards most ridiculous in their nature and neither in the interest of Great Britain nor of India. It refuses to recognise the fact that the best safeguards of England lay in a contended India. The White Paper as it will help neither England nor India in the truest sense. It will make good Government impossible. It will cause greater financial burden on the masses. It would make the Government machinery most complex. The result would be greater discontent and bitterness—a thing which all well wishers of the country would like to see avoided. The opposition to the White Paper thus is not because it concedes certain number of seats to Hindus or to Mussalmans but because the whole scheme is fundamentally wrong and it could not do good to anyone. A better constitution could be prepared even with the present Communal Award. This itself disproves the suggestion that the Communal Award is the fundamental basis of the White Paper.

In the end I wish to add a word more and this I do with some amount of delicacy and diffidence. You charge me of being blind to Bengal's interest because of my being a non-Bengali. I may for your information submit that we in Jaipur— from where I come— had for three generations two successive Bengali Prime Ministers and it never occurred to us that a Bengali Prime Minister would be incapable to looking after the interests of Rajasthanese simply because he was not a Rajasthani himself. I admit that to me your reminding me that I am not a Bengali is the unkindest act of all.

118.

M. K. GANDHI  
AHMEDABAD

GOD HAS STRENGTHENED HARIJAN CAUSE ENHANCED YOUR GLORY.  
TERRORISM IN ITS NAKED FORM. THANK GOD I SEE NOTHING BUT  
GOOD IN INCIDENT.

GHANSHYAMDAS

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**Salient Features of the Communal Award**

1. Separation for Muslims, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians besides Europeans.
2. Hindus to stand from General Constituencies. Even in N. W. F. where they are in a very small minority they do not get either separate electorate or separate seats. This is a complaint to their nationalism.
3. Depressed classes not entirely cut off from Hindus. In Bengal and the Punjab no reservation of seats for the depressed classes. In Bengal however, the matter will be reconsidered. From 'Depressed' constituency one who does not belong to the depressed class can stand. The arrangement comes to an end after 20 years or even before with consent of the depressed classes.
4. Out of 54 seats for Commerce 36 go to Europeans. This recognises as if the Europeans have got a greater stake in the country than the Indian Merchants.
5. The Europeans get 10% of the total seats in Bengal although their population is very small.
6. Silence has been maintained as regard the composition of Central Legislature. This can mean anything.



7. The present arrangement could be revised so far as it concerns any particular community with the consent of that community after 10 years. This means that with the consent of the Mussalmans separate electorate could be abolished. This may be possible even before 10 years.
8. The whole award could be revised with the unanimous consent of all parties, i.e., Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Christians, etc. This will remain a pious hope, as even if the Indians are unanimous the Europeans will never agree to reduce their weightage in Bengal.
9. Other matters such as the question of services and composition of cabinet, etc. so far left untouched.
10. The Premier in his statement has exhorted the Indians to remember when examining the scheme that "they themselves failed when pressed again and again to produce to us some plan which would give general satisfaction. In the end naturally the Indians themselves can settle this question." This seems somewhat preposterous when he knows perfectly well that all the important leaders just now are behind the prison wall. During the last two years the Indian leaders never got peace to settle important matters like these and in London it was simply impossible to come to any agreement with a packed conference where people were simply clamouring not for national but for sectional interests.

The position is now that while the Hindus for all practical purposes enjoy majority in most of the provinces, the Mohammedans will have majority in Bengal, Punjab, Sind and N.W.F. Every community where it is in majority is entitled to have substantial control over the administration of that province and therefore no one will grudge the Mohammedans a majority in Bengal and the Punjab if they want it. But the question is whether such a majority will be in the interest of a few communal leaders or of the masses in general. It is impossible for any majority to rule unless it has the goodwill of the minorities and the very fact that the communities have been divided in water-tight compartments will prevent them from working together for the common weal. The energy and time of the majority in every province will thus be wasted over fruitless

wranglings and I have not the least doubt that though a few muslim communalists may take a temporary delight in that they have got all they wanted, the masses will very soon realise such an arrangement is not in their interests. No swaraj could be built on the basis of the present Award and therefore it will cause the greatest concern to all the nationalists, whether they be the Hindus or the Muslims, that a definite setback has been given to the cause of swaraj.

## Communal Award

	Madras	Bombay	Bengal	L P	Punjab	B & O.	C.P.	Assam	N.W.F.
Labour	6	8	8	3	3	4	2	4	2
Non-communal	153	108	80	144	44	114	88	57	9
Landholders	6	3	5	6	—	5	3	—	—
University	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	—	—
Mohammedans	29	63	119	66	88	42	14	34	36
Sikhs	—	—	—	—	33	—	—	—	3
Christians	9	3	2	2	2	2	—	1	—
Anglo-Indians	2	2	4	1	2	1	1	—	—
European	3	4	11	2	1	2	1	1	—
Com. { Indian	2	3	5	1	1	2	1	3	—
European	4	5	14	2	—	2	1	8	—
=	215	200	250	228	175	175	112	108	50

I do not trust anybody blindly. But it is our duty to have faith in mankind, since we ourselves aspire to other people's confidence. When both parties are in the wrong, it is rather difficult to decide which one deserves greater blame. I have therefore, worked out a simple plan—do good even to the evil-doer.

7-2 1924

No one is perfect in this world. Our duty is to shed our imperfections and that is what human effort is for. Despair has no place as long as we put in our own efforts. What we need in worldly matters is self-confidence. Self-confidence should never be belittled. Faith renders everything possible.

15 11 1930

When truth alone is to be sought, suppression of one's opinion becomes fault. Equality by no means implies uniformity. Equality only means equal justice for all. An atom and the Himalayas are equal in the eyes of God. He does not discriminate between the atom and the Himalayas.

18-10 1930

**M. K. Gandhi**